

Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2033

Exploratory Meeting between the Examiner, QB and LPA.

22nd August 2019

Parish Centre, Blandford Forum

Examiner:

Mr Terry Kemmann-Lane JP DipTP FRTPI MCMI

Meeting Attendees:

Blandford+ (QB)

Roger Carter (Chair B+, Blandford Forum TC)

Malcolm Albery (Blandford St Mary PC)

Bobbie (Bryanston PC)

B+ Consultants

Jon Dowty (O'Neill Homer)

Locality appointed planning expert, funded by MHCLG

Dave Chetwyn (Urban Vision Enterprise CIC)

Dorset Council, Local Planning Authority (LPA)

Ed Gerry (Planning Policy)

Ed Denham (Pupil Planning)

Richard Dodson (Planning Obligations / Education / Waste)

Dorset Council Observers

Cllr David Walsh (Dorset Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning)

Hilary Jordan DC (Service Manager, Spatial Planning)

Meeting Notes:

+ Sally Gardner (BFTC, Blandford+ Co-ordinator)

Audience Attendees:

Names to be collected at the meeting.

Meeting Notes:

1. Mr Kemmann-Lane (Mr KL) introduced himself to attendees, and outlined his aims for the meeting:
 - 1.1. To explore the examiner's concerns with respect to the extent the plan meets basic conditions
 - 1.2. To establish whether the Neighbourhood Planning process is at the correct planning 'level' to be used to make strategic allocations within an AONB, ahead of the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan.
 - 1.3. To clarify what has changed, and to clearly specify what is different in the new version of the plan (and the evidence base) since the previous examination
2. Mr KL explained that, in his opinion, it is unclear what has changed since the previous plan, and so to achieve a different outcome for the new plan he requires much clearer evidence of the change. He explained that he would need clear, evidence-based justification before he could come to a rational decision about whether to change or overturn the findings of the previous examiner.
3. Mr KL invited comments from the table:
4. Jon Dowty (JD) explained to Mr KL that O'Neill Homer had supported Blandford + throughout the development of both plans. JD outlined the comprehensive and much deeper level of analysis of issues that had been undertaken for the new plan, including a new and independent Sustainability Appraisal for all the sites identified within the Local Plan Issues & Options Consultation, an updated Pupil Planning Statement plus a range of other documents undertaken in response to views of original inspector and concerns expressed by other parties.
5. Ed Gerry (EG) explained that the LPA at the time, North Dorset District Council (NDDC), did raise concerns as part of the examination of version 1 of the plan regarding whether the B+NP met the basic conditions applicable to neighbourhood plans. EG set out the context for these concerns including the

fact that Version 1 of the B+NP and the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (LPP1) were being progressed at same time.

6. EG went on to say that the situation has moved on significantly since then, and that the LPA considers that the proposals in version 2 of the NP are complimentary to ,and supplement, the . growth areas in LPP1.
7. From the LPA perspective, the B+NP does not undermine LPP1.
8. Dave Chetwyn (DC) raised the point that the purpose of the examination of a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is to test whether the plan meets basic conditions. It is not to decide on the 'correct' level that site allocations should be made. DC commented that a growing number of NPs have made large site allocations. The term 'General Conformity' made allowance for the difficulties some plans experienced when trying to conform with both local and national policy. DC emphasised that the B+NP must be compared in its entirety against the Spatial Strategy, not by individual policy.
9. Mr KL responded the he has no problem with NP's making allocations, strategic or otherwise.
10. Mr KL raised the fact that the previous LPA has recently been disbanded and is now part of Dorset Council. The North Dorset Local Plan Review has been 'abandoned', so Mr. KL would like to understand what this abandonment means in terms of the new Dorset Council Local Plan.
11. Mr KL noted that NDDC (the LPA) originally raised issues regarding the extant LPP1 (adopted Jan 2016), and that policies within the plan are still of significant importance. Mr KL expressed concerns over the apparent 'vacuum of explanation of what has changed' and forewarned the group that he will be asking questions in future.
12. Mr KL also noted that respondents to the consultations raised major objections (e.g. Cranborne Chase AONB, Natural England) that were repetitive of previous feedback, and so their understanding will need to be explored and thoroughly responded to.
13. Mr KL explained that the concerns raised above directed the thinking behind his questions and approach. He also had concerns about whether the issues raised should be dealt with in an NP examination as this only considers conformity, rather than the soundness of plan, as would happen within a Local Plan examination.
14. Mr KL announced his intention to hold a public hearing which will enable in depth evidence-based questions.
15. Regulations require that 6 weeks' notice is given for a public hearing, so allowing time for the notice to be drafted and published, it is likely that the hearing will take place later in October.
16. EG has received responses from people/organisations who would want to participate in a hearing.
17. Mr. KL will set out questions that he will need answering in advance of the hearing.
18. DC emphasised that planning legislation for neighbourhood plans is rigorous. Whilst some NPs are simple, other NPs are dealing with complex issues and site allocations. A rigorous approach and thorough examination is necessary – it should not be considered as a 'light touch'.
19. Mr. KL acknowledged that DC had a clear overview of NP examinations to date and would appreciate guidance on what is happening on a wider scale.

ACTION DC to supply Mr. KL with background information on the issues and outcomes from other, similar NP examinations

20. Mr KL asked if there is there a planning application in existence for the land to the NE Blandford, and if so, instructed that he would like to be brought up to date with the current situation.
21. EG confirmed that the developer was working towards submitting an application,
22. JD summarised the conformity of the B+NP by emphasising the unique characteristics of Blandford, the agreement between the Local Plan and B+NP strategies, the decision by the QB and LPA to work together on a new joint plan (rather than walking away), and the shared desire to work within a plan led system.
23. Strategy of LP and NP in agreement.
24. EG mentioned that the previous examiner stated in her report that she did accept that there can be circumstances where a neighbourhood plan may be considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of a development plan 'as a whole' even though there may be specific policies where there may be apparent conflict. EG went on to outline that the Examiner gave great weight to Policy 16 although it could be argued that great weight should also be given to Policy 2, Policy 6, Policy 11 and Policy 14 and potentially less weight to Policy 16.

25. Mr KL made reference to the fact that NDDC had objected to version 1 of the plan on the basis that it did not conform with Policy 16 of LPP1. He also re-emphasised that he would need to be provided with a clear explanation of the process that has gone on since the previous examination
26. Ed Denham informed Mr KL of the considerable work that has been carried out since the previous examination looking into future school / pupil placement needs for Blandford and the options for future expansion. The outcome of this work is a clear decision that the northern site being proposed in the B+NP is the only viable option.

ACTION: Sally Gardner (SG) to forward previous iterations of the Pupil Planning Statement to Mr. KL.

27. Mr. KL asked the audience if any reps from the AONBs were present, as he wanted to give assurance that AONB issues will be on the agenda, and that as examiner, he will be thorough in giving full consideration of what is being said in opposition to the plan.
28. Roger Carter (RC) explained that it is the desire of community to expand Blandford in the right way, and that one reason for going ahead with the B+NP was to counteract the proposals to build out along 'Poole corridor' to the SE of Blandford. RC said it was in line with the spatial strategy in LP1 to expand the five towns; the alternative to meeting Blandford's OAN (housing) is to expand the villages along the A350 corridor - contrary to the spatial strategy in LP1.
29. JD referred Mr. KL to the Sustainability Appraisal (page 16 - Assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan 2) which sets out the options for expansion that help put the alternative options in context.
30. Mr. KL suggested that it might be a good way forward to carry out a site visit to the areas under concern as part of the hearing process so that it can inform discussions and enable a clearer understanding of committed land and of capacity / suitability of other options. The group agreed.

Next Steps:

- B+, LPA and Mr. KL to liaise through Penny O'Shea (Trevor Roberts Associates) to:
 - Establish the dates & venue for a Public Hearing
 - Agree parameters / arrangements for the site visit
- LPA, B+
 - Announce the Public Hearing
 - Ask previous respondents if they wish to attend and/or participate.
- SG to send meeting note to group and to Mr. KL to review/approve before circulating to all attendees.

Mr. KL thanked attendees and their contributions.

Meeting Closed.

Sally Gardner
4th Sept 2019

List of Audience Attendees:

Name	Position	Organisation
Simon Sherbrooke	Resident	
Barry Watson	Resident	
Andrew Fido	Planning Consultant	Savills
Peter Slocombe	Chairman	Pimperne Parish Council
David Walsh	Portfolio Holder for Planning	Dorset Council
Emma Woodhouse	Planning Consultant	David Lock Associates
Jeremy Farrelly	Planning Consultant	Genesis Town Planning
Tim Hoskinson	Planning Manager	Wyatt Homes
Laraine Southwood	Director	Wyatt Homes
Alice Drew	Planning Consultant	Barton Wilmore
Steve O'Connell		CPRE
John Stayt	Councillor, B+ Steering Group	BFTC, Blandford St Mary PC