

Ashdon Neighbourhood Development Plan

Examiner's Clarification Note

This Note sets out my initial comments on the submitted Plan. It also sets out areas where it would be helpful to have some further clarification. For the avoidance of doubt, matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

Initial Comments

The Plan has been prepared and presented in a very professional and effective manner. Section 5 is particularly effective in the way in which it links a series of key issues, the Vision for the Plan and its objectives. This approach then feeds into the structure of the policies. This provides a clear and compelling future for the neighbourhood area.

The photographs are excellent in their own right and highlight the issues addressed in the Plan.

The Plan is underpinned by a package of excellent supporting documents. In particular, the Design Code is an excellent local response to the national design agenda.

Points for Clarification

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now in a position to raise issues for clarification with the Parish Council. The comments made on the points in this Note will be used to assist in the preparation of my report and in recommending any modifications that may be necessary to ensure that the Plan meets the basic conditions.

I set out specific clarification points below in the order in which the policies appear in the submitted Plan:

Policy ASH1

This policy establishes a clear spatial strategy for the Plan.

Policy ASH4

This is an interesting policy. I saw the way in which the built-up parts of the parish sit within their surrounding landscape. I also saw first-hand the wider topography as clearly highlighted in Map 2.

Policy ASH7

This is an excellent policy. It provides a very positive local response to Section 12 of the NPPF.

I am minded to recommend a modification to the policy so that it can be applied in a proportionate way based on the scale and nature of the proposal concerned. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy ASH8

This is a good policy which takes account of the dark skies in the parish.

Its first sentence reads as supporting text rather than policy. As such, I am minded to recommend that it is relocated into paragraph 8.32. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy ASH13

The policy is helpfully underpinned by the excellent Local Green Spaces Appraisal.

I looked at the proposed local green spaces carefully during the visit.

Representations

Does the Parish Council wish to make any comments on the representations made to the Plan?

In particular, does it want to comment on the representations made by:

- Essex County Council;
- Uttlesford District Council;
- Bidwell and Son; and
- Essex Bridleways Association?

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses by 24 June 2022. Please let me know if this timetable will be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

In the event that certain responses are available before others, I would happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled, please could it come to me directly from the District Council and make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Ashdon Neighbourhood Development Plan.

7 June 2022