

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE GEORGEHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: Andrew Mead BSc (Hons) MRTPI MIQ

Councillor Margaret Beaumont
Lead Councillor for the Steering Group
Georgeham Parish Council

Elizabeth Dee
Senior Planning Officer
North Devon Council

Examination Ref: 02/AM/GNP

Via email

3 August 2021

Dear Councillor Beaumont and Ms Dee

GEORGEHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Having carried out my visit to the Georgeham Neighbourhood Plan (GNP) Area, I have identified some matters on which clarification from the Georgeham Parish Council (GPC) and North Devon Council (NDC) would assist me in my examination of the GNP. May I request the submission of responses to my questions within **2 weeks** from the date of this letter, although an earlier response would be most welcome.

Policy H1

1. **Question to NDC.** How does the principal residence policy generally conform with the strategic policies of the North Devon and Torridge Plan?
2. **Question to GPC.** What is the reasoning behind the exclusion of like-for-like dwellings from the principal residence policy? Comments from NDC would also be welcome.
3. **Question to GPC.** Should the policy apply to all new dwellings, not just those within the development boundaries of Georgeham and Croyde?

Policy BE9

4. **Question to GPC.** Please could “existing complex” be explained? For example, does it mean an existing cluster of buildings that may or may not already be used for recreation or sport? See also question 7 below.

Policy NE3

5. **Question to GPC and NDC.** Policy NE3 states that policies for managing development within a Local Green Space (LGS) should be consistent with those for Green Belts and then refers to the Green Space Policy Compliance Statement on pages 30-36 of the Plan, which includes accurate references to the NPPF (albeit the paragraph numbers of which will require updating to reflect the 2021 NPPF). In the Regulation 16 consultation response, the District Council recommend adding a significant amount of detail to the policy to assist applicants, the community and decision makers and make a specific suggestion.

However, given the NPPF advice and the quantity of case law concerning managing development in the Green Belt, my initial conclusion is that the policy should merely state: *“Local Green Spaces (LGS) are defined at: The Rabbit Field, Croyde; Croyde Village Green; Croyde Village Car Park; Georgeham Recreation Ground and Georgeham Glebefield and Green. Policies for managing development within the LGS should be consistent with those for the Green Belt and development should not be approved except in very special circumstances.”* I would be pleased to have comments from both Councils.

Policy NE4

- 6. Question to GPC.** Policy NE4 is titled “Energy Efficiency” and appears to be aimed at small scale features. However, the final sentence of the policy refers to wind turbines, albeit excluding them from support. Am I correct to assume that the policy is not intended to consider larger scale items such as solar farms?

Policy ED2

- 7. Question to GPC.** Does “existing complex” in Policy ED2 a) mean a complex of buildings already used for agriculture, or does it include a complex or cluster of buildings in any use, not just agriculture?
- 8. Question to GPC.** The traffic criterion in Policy ED2 b) specifies that where proposals would generate a significant demand for travel, they can be served by public transport, walking and cycling. Given that the policy considers any development which is reasonable for the purposes of agriculture, including making a continuing contribution to the economic viability of an existing farm unit, it may be that, for example, agricultural products could be made at and despatched from the premises. In those circumstances, I do not perceive the need for public transport especially as, despite a regular service (21C), the buses, understandably, do not vary from the main roads linking Croyde and Georgeham with Braunton and beyond. Please could the reasoning behind this criterion be explained?

Policy ED4

- 9. Question to GPC.** Does criterion c) refer to both temporary and permanent ancillary facilities?

National Planning Policy Framework July 2021

- 10. Question for GPC and NDC.** A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework was published by the government on 20 July 2021, alongside a final version of the National Model Design Code. I would be grateful if you could please advise me whether you consider any modifications in relation to the non-strategic matters covered by the draft GNP are necessary as a result of the publications and, if so, what these are?

In the interests of transparency, may I prevail upon you to ensure that a copy of this letter and any subsequent response are placed on the Parish Council and Local Authority websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

Andy Mead

Examiner