

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF GEORGEHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Examination Ref: 02/AM/GNP

Via Email to Andrew Mead and Elizabeth Dee

Dear Mr Mead and Ms Dee

Response to Examiner's Questions (dated 3 August 21)

Following your numbering:

1 Policy H1 (Q1, 2 and 3)

The wording of this policy has exercised us very much and has been revised many times. We have feared to meet with legal opposition and challenge which might cause delay or rejection of the Plan overall.

What we clearly would like as a community is **for All** new housing, including re-builds on a like-for-like basis, to be for permanent residence only, and for this policy to apply to all new residential building within the Parish not just within the development boundaries of the hamlets.

The pressure to turn small bungalows into large units without garden space, or worse into blocks of flats is increasing month by month, and pressure on the AONB is unremitting.

2. Policy BE9 (Q4 and 7))

(Q4) We envisage this policy to mean an 'existing complex' is one which could be a cluster of holiday cottages which may wish to apply for an additional extension of facilities such as a games room or covered swimming pool. In that case we expect the development to be proportionate to the existing complex to serve its declared purpose. Or in the case of a playing field, near to and serving the community, we envisaged the building of a sports pavilion.

(Q7) This policy (Ed2) applies to agricultural buildings/complex. See Paragraph 5 below.

3 Policy NE3 (Q5)

The need to alter the paragraph numbering is noted. (NPPF 21). We are grateful for the advice to amend the policy wording as you suggest.

4 Policy NE4 (Q6)

Your interpretation of the policy is correct. However, there is strong support for measures to mitigate against the effects of climate change in the parish, as well as to protect the AONB from development which has not been agreed as part of a strategic development plan. Most of the land in the parish is designated as AONB, and the Local Plan excludes wind turbines in this area.

5 Policy ED2 (Q 7 and 8))

We envisaged this policy should refer to agricultural buildings only.

Behind this policy, (which involved much pencil chewing) is the desire within the community to support sustainable economic development, but at the same time create a balance between the protection of the environment and the demands of business. The aim is to:

1. Protect the AONB from scattered development in the fields and along the skylines, with new access roads being developed to accommodate new business.
2. Avoid, if possible, the construction of agricultural buildings allowed under Prior Notice or Permitted Development which may be declared redundant after a few years, and then become subject to an application for change of use. There is a fear of 'back door' development on the AONB.
3. The use of Certificates of Lawful Development is also concerning where buildings have been adapted over time to broader uses.
4. We discussed concerns with the Local authority about the monitoring of PN and PD developments. As it stands the Parish Council, and public, may not be able to comment on such applications, but we think that the Parish Council has valuable local knowledge about the land use locally which may have relevance to decision making at the District Planning Office. The application of those rights to open campsites for (this year) 56 days is a cause for concern. Some fields are not in regular agricultural use and the access to them is problematic. Some sites would not be granted permission to operate as permanent sites, and in our view should not be allowed to operate under PD. We do not know how to create a policy to address the legal complexities in these circumstances.
5. The comments about access to agricultural units by public transport reflects environmental concerns; worry over the overwhelming volume of traffic through the parish particularly in summer on single track roads, and concern that we should not lose a public transport system, limited as it is. We accept that this policy wording may not be appropriate here.
6. A further concern in writing these policies to encourage business diversification and protect the environment, is the perceived weakness of the Local Authority to deal adequately with Enforcement issues or to afford the cost of legal action to challenge developers in circumstances when it would be appropriate to do so.

6 Policy ED4 (Q9)

Yes, we envisage this policy referring to both permanent and temporary ancillary facilities. We would be grateful for advice on how to strengthen this policy to include advertising hoardings, not wanting to see garish, over-sized advertisements for the site or its facilities, including fast food outlets.

7 (Q10) Revised NPPF 2021 and Model Design Guide Code.

I do not believe the Neighbourhood Plan needs to be modified in relation to the revised NPPF, or the National Model Design Code, though references to paragraph numbering in the revised Framework will be checked, and the NP altered accordingly.

Maggie Beaumont, Lead Councillor for the Steering Group. GPC.

