

Further to the responses to my enquiries from the Qualifying Body and the Local Authority I have now completed a visit to the Neighbourhood Area and I have a few further queries of the Qualifying Body.

1. The Local Authority update on the SAP will have been noted no doubt. Do you wish to revisit any parts of the text where it has become dated/potentially misleading (albeit the local authority notes that the SAP may be subject to further change)?

Yes please. We believe minor revisions should be made to reflect the fact that further changes are possible.

2. You ask about the successful use of a Policies Map - here is an example:

[www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/1\\_the\\_wolds\\_villages\\_neighbourhood\\_plan\\_referendum\\_version1/1.%20The%20Wolds%20Villages%20Neighbourhood%20Plan%20Referendum%20Version.pdf](http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/1_the_wolds_villages_neighbourhood_plan_referendum_version1/1.%20The%20Wolds%20Villages%20Neighbourhood%20Plan%20Referendum%20Version.pdf)

The critical point is that the map should only include for Neighbourhood Plan Policies and not designations made by others eg Conservation Areas, Local Nature Reserves. You will note that the Policies Map can bring together other maps, not necessarily replace them, which allows for suitable scales per subject.

Thank you, this is very helpful. We would be happy to follow this advice and replace the map/s in due course.

3. You comment "In our view the fact that the areas shown are 'potential' sites following survey by a competent authority, should carry some weight and therefore development on these potential sites should be avoided." Providing the source of the maps will help to establish that they are provided by a "competent authority" and the local authority has identified specific support from Policy CS.6 of the Core Strategy. But the maps are provided, apparently, for information. No explanation of the status "potential" is provided. No connection is made with Policy NA4 which refers more generally to "ecological networks" and references not the Ecological Survey but the Neighbourhood Plan Environmental Survey. I presume that figure 7 provides information upon which the wildlife sites with potential for designation are derived and shown on figure 6, but there is no obvious, direct correlation? And since 2018 has it been expected that 'potential' would be further assessed/progressed? As a representation suggests, the current status of the information needs to be stated clearly, and it will be challenged. As I previously asked, what is the Plan seeking to identify and recognise? Similarly, paragraph 11.7.2 of the Policy refers to "primary hedge lines" but in the absence of mapping or at least a definition then the Policy cannot be implemented (the Preliminary Ecological Report does map hedgerows but, as far as I can see, they use other categorisations). Further clarification please.

In simple terms the plan is seeking to identify and highlight important ecological areas across the parish so they carry a higher profile than is currently the case and so there is a wider awareness. Following on from this there is an expectation from residents that because these areas have been highlighted as important there would be some avoidance from disturbance or development, although as you have

previously stated we are not able to state that 'we do not want something' in the NDP.

There have been no further assessments made since the initial 2018 surveys.

The ecological survey and the environmental survey are the same thing – the same term needs to be used here.

The supporting Ecological Report contains a recommendation to 'Conserve and restore all primary hedge lines...' (see p.39). The report contains a definition of 'countryside hedges' (see p.6 [NDP Ecological Report \(fennycompton-pc.gov.uk\)](https://www.fennycompton-pc.gov.uk)) under the heading Hedgerows. The hedges are mapped on page 21. As it stands, we felt the terminology in CS.6 was too technical for the audience. Phrases such as 'biodiversity asset' and 'ecological networks' sound like jargon and we wanted to use plain English that our community would understand and endorse through the referendum. We need to strike the right language to suit both audiences – planning professionals and the residents.

4. My reference to "paragraph 3.0.2 notes that "The buildings of Fenny Compton centre are predominantly made of local Hornton Stone"" derived from the Regulation 14 consultation version of the Plan; I'm not sure how I did that but apologies for the confusion.

Thank you for the clarification.

5. You comment "there is a wealth of evidence of insufficient off-road parking on housing developments built within the last 20 years which demonstrates that existing parking space policies are insufficient". However, I have not been presented with any evidence and my visit, albeit on a weekday, did not provide evidence of a local issue on new housing developments. There is a balance to be struck here with the design expectations of Policy DE1.

Would you like us to include further photographic evidence? There will be ample opportunity to provide photos taken in roads such as Meadow Way in an evening when parking on roads and pavements is a problem. There is also a substantial number of responses from residents through the main survey which highlights this as a problem.

6. I note that Figure 9 shows two facilities numbered as "1"; the single mention in the text is to the prominent Church of St. Peter and St. Clare, but the more hidden Methodist Church is not mentioned. Is the map or the text correct?

The text is correct. The Methodist Chapel closed permanently in 2021, and as such the map needs updating to remove reference to this.

7. You comment "We would suggest that we reference the most up to date maps used as a part of the recent WCC flood property protection scheme" - what is that reference please?

We have discussed this with the Aqueous Flood Group within the village. The maps used as part of the WCC flood property protection scheme are not in the public domain because of their sensitivity. For this reason we think we should revert to the previously discussed plan whereby we take the map out of the NDP and instead provide a reference to the equivalent publicly available online map.

8. You comment "Our definition of minor commercial is defined in 9.1.1 – i.e. 100m<sup>2</sup>" but on what basis has it been determined that this is an appropriate scale for "minor"? Without a map I could not readily identify the significance/extent of the location descriptions provided eg Wharf Road. Core Strategy Policy AS.10 supports "conversion", "redevelopment", "small-scale expansion", "extension", "building related to agriculture etc", "farm based business activities", "garden centres and nurseries" and "equestrian-related activities". These seem to relate well to rural locations whereas, as worded, your Policy appears more open, provided the proposal is "minor" and the site is "brownfield"? That gives rise to a potential issue of general conformity.

We wanted to positively state that we welcome small-scale non-residential development that creates employment in and for the local community. The phrase 'appropriate scale' is more important than the 100m<sup>2</sup> size reference, which was chosen to reflect the existing commercial premises at the locations listed. The policy is intentionally broader than CS Policy AS.10, more like Use Classes B1 (Business) and B2 (General Industrial) which are broadly in line with existing properties at these locations. We are happy to adjust the wording. If you have a suggestion, we would be happy to include it.

9. I can see why Policy NA1 might address the vista from high ground to the SE of the village, including views toward the Church. However, views from the High Street toward higher ground are really just glimpses, significantly restricted by buildings and the topography, and the sensitivity of the intermediate ground for development is already addressed by the high-level view. I therefore query whether the blue vista is actually a vista at all. Your comment is invited.

Having reviewed this, the main blue vista is actually quite a bit narrower than is reflected on the map. The section of High Street from where the blue vista is visible is the section from the Merrie Lion to the Methodist Chapel – in other words the section next to the bowling green. We would be happy to amend the blue lines on the map to reflect this narrower aspect.

10. My viewing of the proposed Local Green Space prompted me to realise that one of the representations has not been addressed: "Colleagues in Education Services have commented on the reference to the school playing field being designated as green space. The concern is whether this could have an adverse impact on the school's ability to expand or reconfigure accommodation in the future. The freehold of the land I believe will be in WCC ownership although as a Voluntary Controlled School, the buildings will belong to the Trustees of the school. I am unclear whether the Parish Council can designate the land as green space when it isn't in their direct control." Whilst it is clear from the Planning Guidance that the land does not need to be owned or controlled by the Parish Council for designation to occur, the concern that a tightly drawn boundary around the school buildings could inhibit

expansion/reconfiguration is a fair question. Similarly I am concerned to know that the owners of the site - apparently two bodies may be involved - have been directly consulted on the proposed designation, as required by Planning Guidance, and what the responses were. Further, I note from my visit that there is no public access to the site; whilst public access is not a requirement for LGS designation, it does limit the recreational value of the land. Lastly, what is the nature of the 'natural flood management' - tree planting? Your further comments are invited

There is public access to the site. It is crossed by a footpath which the school restricts access to during school hours. Out of school hours (approx. 8am to 4pm), the field is well used by the community.

A letter was sent to WCC's Estates Department in September 2019 outlining the LGS proposals. No formal written response was received. However verbal discussion between the school authorities and the NDP steering group resulted in adjustments to the boundaries of the proposed LGS prior to the final proposal being included in the NDP.

We do not believe that a LGS designation would prohibit development or expansion of the school itself. We have sought advice from a planning consultant on this point. However it would place a layer of protection on the site against other forms of development e.g., housing.

In terms of the natural flood management techniques – we do not know specifically which techniques these will be at this point. It could be tree planting or it could be other forms of works which would hold water further back up the site rather than it flowing down unimpeded into the road.

11. Do the other important 'features' mentioned at paragraph 12.2.3 have an existing heritage asset status?

No

A response within 7 to 10 days would be helpful to the concluding of the Examination.