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Reply To: Neighbourhood Planning

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27 September 2019

Dear Rosemary

LAVENDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – EXAMINATION

I refer to your Examiner's Questions document dated 3 September 2019. The local planning authority's comments on the questions contained within that document are as follows:

2. Natural England were consulted on the SEA/HRA screening. No response was received from Natural England.

3. The LPA would suggest the following change to policy E2: "*Development proposals should enhance the natural environment and contribute to biodiversity net gains within the Parish, in line with Plan:MK Policy NE3. Biodiversity improvements will help*"

Plan:MK policy NE1 and the NPPF provide protection for ancient woodlands. Consequently, the LPA does not consider that any changes are required to Policy E3.

7. The LPA's view is that is appropriate for Neighbourhood Plan policies to specify that they should be applied to reserved matters planning applications.

8. The final paragraph of policy HT1 is essentially asking for a travel plan, which is deliverable through a planning condition.

11. The LPA supports the inclusion of the new policy. The third paragraph of the policy should be amended to read: "*New housing will be delivered through: a. Dwellings which have planning consent at July 2019; b. Windfall opportunities ...*"

As at July 2019, there were outstanding permissions for 133 dwellings.

The settlement boundary should be amended to properly reflect that of Plan:MK. A number of new additions to the settlement boundary that were made through the Plan:MK process are not included here (these consist of new permissions, completions and other extensions deemed to meet the criteria outlined in the Settlement Boundary Study 2018 (see attached plan) prepared as part of the evidence for Plan:MK). These sites/areas should be included within the settlement boundary. In addition, consideration should be given to including the site with permission at land north of the Glebe which is contiguous with the existing built-up area.

Those sites not within the settlement boundary, alongside all new sites within the boundary (both proposed allocations through the neighbourhood plan, and already permitted), should be included within the housing provision number which is to be inserted in the proposed new policy. This will ensure that the neighbourhood plan is clear about its housing requirement figure and the sources of supply which will deliver it.

12. Plan:MK was examined under the 2012 NPPF and as such was not required to set housing requirement figures for Neighbourhood Plan Areas. Throughout the preparation of Plan:MK, consideration was given to the inclusion of an indicative housing requirement to be delivered through neighbourhood plans within the rural area of the Borough, however due to the large number of homes already committed within rural settlements (both through allocations in made neighbourhood plans and through sites granted planning permission or won at appeal) it was determined that sufficient growth was already planned for within the rural area of the Borough and as such a further requirement would not be set. This does not however seek to restrict further growth, beyond that recognised in Plan:MK, within rural communities and Plan:MK does support the delivery of further housing through the preparation of new neighbourhood plans (of which Lavendon is one). This was found to be a sound approach by the Inspector of Plan:MK (Paragraphs 34 - 37 of the Inspector's report deals with this matter: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/assets/attach/58262/PlanMK%20Final%20Report.pdf>).

Following the publication of the revised 2018, and subsequent 2019, NPPF, the Council sought to address the requirements under Paragraphs 65 and 66 by publishing guidance for parishes who intend to request an indicative housing number for the preparation of their Neighbourhood Plan. This guidance stated:

“The indicative housing figure for the neighbourhood plan area is 1 home (1). The indicative housing figure is the amount of new homes that a neighbourhood plan should plan for, over and above any existing allocations in the development plan. Neighbourhood plans can allocate land for more homes than the indicative housing figure and are encouraged to do so. This is in the interests of positive planning and

where their local needs and circumstances indicate that additional homes would be appropriate.”

At the time of submitting the neighbourhood plan, a total of 120 homes were already committed in Lavendon, representing a 21% increase in the dwelling stock of the Parish. Furthermore, the neighbourhood plan allocates a further site for about 8 dwellings, so as to meet the indicative requirement set out by Milton Keynes Council (MKC). Given the substantial increase in dwelling stock already committed in Lavendon, and that the neighbourhood plan seeks to meet the indicative housing requirement set by MKC through the allocation of a further site, it is felt that the provision set out in the neighbourhood plan is suitable.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. J. Blandamer', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

David Blandamer
Neighbourhood Planning