

## **PORTFOLIO HOLDERS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND FOR PLANNING**

### **HEMINGTON & LOCKINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – PRE-SUBMISSION (REG 14) CONSULTATION**

**FEBRUARY 2023**

1. Hemington and Lockington Parish Council has published a pre-submission draft of its Neighbourhood Plan for consultation between 30 January and 13 March 2023. The timing of the consultation means there is no available Local Plan Committee to report this matter to. Under the Council's Constitution the Strategic Director of Place (James Arnold) has delegated authority in relation to the discharge of the Council's functions, including planning policy.
2. The purpose of this report, therefore, is to consult with the Portfolio Holders for Planning and Infrastructure in respect of officers' concerns and to seek their views in respect of the suggested response to the draft plan.
3. The draft Neighbourhood Plan contains policies under three main headings:
  - Housing and the Built Environment
  - The Natural, Historic and Social Environment
  - Community Sustainability
4. Officers have reviewed the plan and formulated the proposed response in Appendix A which incorporates comments from the Planning and Development Team Manager. The feedback is intended to be helpful to the next stage of the plan's preparation and is of two broad types:
  - Matters which may be important to the effectiveness of the plan. The response schedule identifies whether these relate to conformity with strategic policies, evidence, effective decision-making or compliance with the NPPF. These are matters which, if not resolved, may mean that the council needs to raise formal objection/s at the next stage.
  - Comments on matters which could improve the plan but are unlikely to be fundamental as to whether it is supported at Examination stage.
5. Matters in the first category include:
  - a) Concern that the approach in Policy H1 (housing mix) to require fewer 4-bed properties in the future is not supported by the evidence.
  - b) Concern that there has been insufficient viability testing of a First Homes discount of 40% (the national default is 30%).
  - c) Concern that the proposed Local Green Space designation does not comply with NPPF.
  - d) Concern that the detailed requirements and thresholds in Policy ENV13 – Renewable Energy are not adequately justified.

#### **Next steps**

6. Once the current consultation period ends, the Parish Council will have to consider all of the comments received, including those of this council. Following any changes to the Neighbourhood Plan that they believe are necessary, the Parish Council will then submit a revised version to this council. At that point, the council arranges a further stage of consultation (Reg 16) and makes its own response to the revised plan, which will be considered by Local Plan Committee provided there is an available meeting during the consultation period.

7. Thereafter the council appoints an independent examiner (with the agreement of the Parish Council) who will examine the Neighbourhood Plan. The examiner must consider whether the plan meets the 'basic conditions' namely:
  - a) have regard to national planning policies and guidance;
  - b) contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
  - c) be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan; and
  - d) be in line with EU obligations and human rights requirements.
  
8. Assuming a favourable Examiner's report, the neighbourhood plan can proceed to Referendum and, subject to the result, it will then be confirmed as a 'made' neighbourhood plan and form part of the Development Plan.

### **Recommendation**

That the response in Appendix A is agreed as the council's response to the Hemington and Lockington Neighbourhood Plan pre-submission consultation (Reg 14 stage).