

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE THRUXTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: Mary O'Rourke BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Sarah Hughes  
Test Valley Borough Council

Heather Bourner,  
Clerk to Thrupton Parish Council

Examination Ref: 01/MOR/TNP

01 November 2019

Dear Ms Bourner and Ms Hughes

## THRUXTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Thrupton Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of preliminary questions for Test Valley Borough Council and the Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body (QB).

### 1. Examination Documentation

I can confirm that I am satisfied that I have received a complete submission of the draft Plan and accompanying documentation, including the Basic Conditions Statement, the Consultation Statement and the Regulation 16 representations, to enable me to undertake the examination.

Subject to my detailed assessment of the draft Plan, I have not at this initial stage identified any very significant and obvious flaws in the Plan that might lead me to advise that the examination should not proceed.

### 2. Site Visit

I intend to undertake a site visit to the neighbourhood plan area during the week commencing 4 November 2019. This will assist in my assessment of the draft Plan, including the issues identified in the representations.

The site visit will be undertaken unaccompanied. It is very important that I am not approached to discuss any aspects of the Plan or the neighbourhood area, as this may be perceived to prejudice my independence and risk compromising the fairness of the examination process.

### 3. Written Representations

At this stage, I consider the examination can be conducted solely by the written representations procedure, without the need for a hearing. However, I will reserve the option to convene a hearing should a matter(s) come to light where I consider that a hearing is necessary to ensure the adequate examination of an issue, or to ensure that a person has a fair chance to put a case.

#### 4. Further Clarification

I have a number of initial questions seeking further clarification, which I have set out in the Annex to this letter. I would be grateful if you can seek to provide a written response by **2 weeks** from the date of this letter.

#### Examination Timetable

As you will be aware, the intention is to examine the Plan (including conduct of the site visit) with a view to providing a draft report (for 'fact checking') within 4-6 weeks of submission of the draft Plan. However, as I have raised a number of questions, I must provide the opportunity to reply. Consequentially, the examination timetable will be extended but please be assured that I will seek to mitigate any delay as far as is practicable. The IPE office team will seek to keep you updated on the anticipated delivery date of the draft report.

If you or the qualifying body have any process questions related to the conduct of the examination, which you would like me to address, please do not hesitate to contact the office team in the first instance.

In the interests of transparency, may I prevail upon you to ensure a copy of this letter and any respective responses, are placed on the Parish Council and local authority's websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

*Mary O'Rourke*

Examiner

## Annex

From my initial reading of the submission draft Thruxton Neighbourhood Plan (TNP/the Plan) and the supporting evidence, I have five questions for Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC/Borough Council) and ten questions for Thruxton Parish Council (QB) plus a request for access to a document. I have requested the submission of a response within **two weeks** of receipt of this letter.

### Questions to Test Valley Borough Council:

1. Please confirm the date of submission of the Plan, in accordance with Regulation 15, to TVBC.
2. Please confirm the dates of the first Regulation 16 public consultation. The Consultation Statement refers to this commencing in February 2019 but does not give the full dates of the first 6 weeks period.
3. Please clarify for me why the TVBC think the NP should have a 15 year time horizon, to 2034, when paragraph 1.4 explains that it looks ahead to 2029 to coincide with the plan period of the Test Valley Local Plan, and advice in the PPG is that 'neighbourhood planning provides the opportunity for communities to set out a positive vision for how they want their community to develop over the next 10, 15, 20 years ...' (PPG Reference ID: 41-003-20190509).
4. The Plan at paragraph 5.27 refers to the Test Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy. The Strategy is dated July 2014 and covers the period 2014-2019. Has it been updated?
5. Representations made by Orchard Homes and Developments Ltd, in respect of the Basic Conditions Statement, refer to various indicators in TVBC's ward profile for Thruxton, more particularly house prices and affordability. I would appreciate if I could be provided with a copy of the most recent ward profile.

### Questions to Thruxton Parish Council:

6. Please confirm that the Consultation Statement dated January 2019, but marked as V2.6, includes the amendments that were required to be made by the Borough Council, as explained at the top of page 3 of the Borough Council's response dated September 2019 (reference pages 11-8 of the TNP).
7. Please confirm whether the QB carried out a local housing needs survey and, if so, please provide the survey results.
8. As Thruxton lies well to the west of the western boundary of the South Downs National Park, please clarify for me the relationship of the National Park Authority (whose logo is on the front of the Basic Conditions Statement and the Consultation Statement) to the Parish Council and, as I am not familiar with the role of the South Downs National Park Consultancy Services.
9. Other than the 3 page document entitled Views Policy Research September 2018 (listed in the TNP Evidence Base and in the Consultation Statement at Appendix B), is there any other evidence as to what is important about the 15 views listed in policy EN3?
10. The Local Green Space Assessment Report January to July 2017 refers at paragraph 4.1 to the Neighbourhood Planning Group Potential Local Green Space Allocation May 2017 Report and its identification of 12 sites, whittled down from an initial 18 sites (paragraph 5.30 of the TNP). However, the latter document only puts forward 5 sites within the Thruxton

Conservation Area as potential LGSs. Where do I find the evidence of the initial 18 sites considered as possible suitable Local Green Spaces and the selection of the 12 sites taken forward?

11. Please provide the area in hectares of each the 7 Local Green Spaces designated in policy EN8.
12. Please provide an amended Map 5 correctly annotated to show Flood Zones 2 and 3, as referred to in paragraph 5.39 of the NP, to include an Environment Agency copyright, and entitled Flood Zones, not Flooding.
13. The TNP at paragraph 5.17 describes the River Test as a complex chalk river of international importance. Please give details of any relevant national/international nature designations.
14. Where do I find evidence to support the parking standards proposed in policy HD6?
15. Appendix 1 of the TNP lists parish heritage assets. The 'barn/garage at Hamble House' is not listed in policy H3. Should this property be deleted from Appendix 1?

#### **For information and request for document**

On the Thruxton Parish Council website, Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base, I was unable to open the following documents – Nos 7, 11, 13, 14 and 16, and on the Further Evidence Base, the Comparison of Village Appraisals 1981, 1997, 2009. However, other than No 16, I was able to access these documents via Appendix B of the Consultation Statement. Can I be provided with either a link to this document, or the document itself?