

# Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Development Plan

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## **Initial comments of the Independent Examiner**

**Prepared by**

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**John Slater Planning**

As you will be aware I have been appointed to carry out the examination of the Aldingbourne Neighbourhood Plan and I have now completed my initial assessment of the plan. I have also carried out an unaccompanied site visit to the parish.

One of the examiner's first tasks is to determine whether the examination should proceed via the normal route, namely through an examination of the written material and the representations or whether a public hearing is required should I feel the need to call for further submissions to allow me to adequately examine matters in greater detail.

**I have concluded that it will not be necessary to call a public hearing to hear further submissions.**

I do have a number of questions which I wish to explore with both the Planning Authority and the Parish Council.

1. The front cover refers to the Aldingbourne Pre Submission Neighbourhood Development Plan. Would the Parish please confirm this a typographical error and should it refer to the submission version of the Plan.
2. I am concerned about the "readability" of all the Plans where the features are blurry and the text is unreadable e.g. Parish Plan and the Site Context Plan ( which does not cover the whole of the Plan area),  
I suspect the issue is that plans may have been provided by the Planning Authority and then passed to the Parish and these plans have been scanned and reduced and clarity has been lost. There is no value in having plans that readers and users of the Plan cannot use. It is not acceptable for a document user to be referred to a website for clarity. Would it be possible for the Planning Authority to provide digital versions of the plans so they can be inserted into the plan as I appreciate that the Town Council may not necessarily have the expertise for producing maps in plans.
3. I note from reading the LPA's Decision Statement in respect of the first Plan dated 18<sup>th</sup> December 2015 that "The Parish will engage with the community and the Plan will undergo further statutory public consultation from Regulation 14 stage." The Consultation Statement states that:  
"On 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016 a new plan was put out for consultation. It was published on the parish web site and via social media".  
Under the terms of Reg14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, the qualifying body must "**publicise**, in a manner that is likely to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area- details of the proposals of the plan, where it can be inspected and how to make representations. I would want to understand, perhaps by setting out in more detail how the Parish Council publicised the fact that the new Plan was

available to look at on the Parish Council web site and inviting residents to comment. Were articles put in local publications, were posters put up around the village? - I did see a Reg16 consultation notice on a Parish Council noticeboard when I was visiting the Plan area. Is the Town Council able to provide details of the material was produced, even if it is screenshots and are you able to advice how many hits the consultation material received on the website? In terms of social media are you able to provide me with screen shots and how many followers would have been sent details of the consultation. I did not see any resident comments, made in respect of the Reg 14 consultation, which is somewhat surprising, although I appreciate that there had been a previous Pre Submission consultation. In the Parish Council minutes, there was reference to an exhibition- when was it held and how many people attended.

4. Schedule F refers to Policy EH12 – should that be EH11?
5. Map C refers to Policy LC10 - it is a leisure allocation. I assume it should be Policy LC9. Does the allocation include land marked A which has planning consent|?
6. Map A needs to have a key and I would like to be told whether the areas shaded grey has the same status under the policy as the corridors marked in purple or is it the land referred to in the policy as land adjacent to the Biodiversity Corridors. I note from the Luken Beck representation that it refers to the strategic allocation and that this land to the east of Westergate is a common element across the 4 options. Can the LPA point me to the relevant document that deals with this strategic allocation and Arun planners confirm whether consultees such as the Wildlife Trust, the County Ecologist or Natural England have made any comments in respect of the ecological value of the agricultural fields that I assume are envisaged for residential development. Has any sustainability assessment been carried out in respect of this land.
7. Could Arun address this question. As part of the plan area is within South Downs NPA, will my report have to be considered by them in respect of the land in their area and will they also be required to make the Plan if that is the appropriate outcome?

I would appreciate receiving answers to these questions as soon as possible to enable me to conclude my examination. Please ensure a copy of this note and the answers are put on the respective council's website.

John Slater BA(Hons), DMS, MRTPI.

Independent Examiner

10<sup>th</sup> August 2016