

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE THIRSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:  
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To Northumberland County Council and Thirston Parish Council

By email to [REDACTED] Northumberland County Council and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Clerk, Thirston Parish Council  
Copy to [REDACTED] NCC and [REDACTED] TPC

Dated 8 June 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

## **Thirston Neighbourhood Development Plan Independent Examination – Examiner Letter Seeking Clarification of Matters**

Further to my initial letter of 25 May 2021 I am writing to seek clarification of the following matters:

### **Policy 1**

1. The term “*minimised*” used in part e) is imprecise. Is it intended “external lighting is limited to that which is essential and includes measures to avoid light spillage beyond the application site”?

### **Policy 2**

2. Parts of the policy re-state national policy and the representations of the County Council and Historic England highlight variations from national policy. Paragraph 16 of the Framework states plans should “*serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant).*” The approach to residential development in the second paragraph of the policy is inconsistent with the reference to isolated homes in the third paragraph of the policy. I invite comment on a possible modification to replace the text after “will be limited to” with “proposals that are in accordance with national policies, or strategic planning policies or allocations, and which comply with the other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.”

### **Policy 3**

3. The term “along *the river*” in the final paragraph is imprecise. Is it intended this reference is to the River Coquet or to the more generic term “along rivers”?

## Policy 5

4. The final paragraph of the policy seeks to describe how development will be managed within the Local Green Spaces. Decision makers must rely on paragraph 101 of the Framework that states “*Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts*” and the part of the Framework that relates to ‘Protecting Green Belt land’, in particular paragraphs 143 to 147 inclusive. That part of the Framework sets out statements regarding the types of development that are not inappropriate in Green Belt areas. The policy must not seek to introduce a more restrictive approach to development proposals than apply in Green Belt without sufficient justification. (*R on the Application of Lochailort Investments Limited v Mendip District Council. Case Number: C1/2020/0812*). The wording of Policy 5 has adequate regard for the terms of the designation of Local Green Spaces set out in paragraph 99 of the Framework where it is stated communities will be able to protect green areas of particular importance to them. I invite comment on this conclusion.

## Policy 7

5. Is it intended the term “*existing large-scale holiday parks*” refers to Bockenfield Holiday Park, and Felmoor Park, and holiday chalets at Burgham Golf Course? I invite comment on a possible modification that the policy should specify those locations?
6. The term “*new large-scale holiday parks*” is imprecise. The final sentence seeks to establish support for visitor accommodation associated with farm diversification. Is it intended proposals for greater than a specific number of units of accommodation in any one location within the Neighbourhood Area will not be supported?

I request any response to these requests for clarification is agreed as a joint response of the Parish and County Councils wherever possible. This request for clarification and any response should be published on the County Council website.

In order to maintain the momentum of the Independent Examination I would be grateful if any reply could be sent to me by 12.00 Noon on Tuesday 15 June 2021.

As the Independent Examination progresses, I may seek clarification with respect to other matters. For the avoidance of doubt recommendations of modification of the Neighbourhood Plan that may be contained in my report of Independent Examination will not be limited to those matters in respect of which I have requested clarification.

I should be grateful if the County Council and the Parish Council could acknowledge receipt of this email.

Best regards

Chris Collison  
Independent Examiner  
Planning and Management Ltd