

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE LOGGERHEADS NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:
Christopher Collison BA(Hons) MBA MRTPI MIED MCFI IHBC

By email to Mark Kirk Planning Policy Officer Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough
Council and to Karen Watkins MBE Clerk Loggerheads Parish Council

Dated 10 July 2018

Dear Karen and Mark

Loggerheads Neighbourhood Development Plan Independent Examination

Further to my appointment to undertake the Independent Examination of the Loggerheads Neighbourhood Development Plan and my receipt of the Regulation 16 representations today the examination can now formally commence. I am writing to clarify how I will conduct the examination.

1. Communications

It is essential that the examination process is open and transparent to all interested parties. I would be grateful if the Borough Council and the Parish Council could publish this email on their respective websites. I will address all future communication to the Borough Council and send a copy to the Parish Council. It would be helpful if the Parish Council could channel all communication to me through the Borough Council, and that, when writing to me, the Borough Council copies-in the Parish Council.

2. Examination documents

I have today received a hard copy of the Submission Plan documents posted to me by the Borough Council. I have access to electronic versions of the Submission Plan documents. I have noted additional evidence base documents and electronic links are listed on the Parish Council website. The Borough Council has today sent me electronic versions of each of the Regulation 16 representations submitted before the close of the publicity period at 5.00pm on 19 June 2018. All documents provided to me should be available to all interested parties, which is best achieved through the Borough Council and Parish Council websites.

I am now providing an opportunity for the Parish Council to comment on the representations of other parties. There is no obligation on the Parish Council to offer any comments but this opportunity can prove particularly helpful where representations of other parties include matters that have not been raised earlier in the plan preparation process. The Parish Council should submit any comments to me within 2 weeks of the date of this letter, that is no later than 24 July 2018, and any comments should be published on both the Parish Council and Borough Council websites. Any Parish Council comments should not include new evidence.

The Borough Council has confirmed to me what are regarded as the strategic policies of the Development Plan that apply in the Loggerheads Neighbourhood Area.

Subject to my later detailed assessment I have not identified any obvious fundamental flaws in the submission documents that would lead me to advise the examination should not proceed. If I find that there are significant issues which may prevent the Plan meeting the basic conditions I will let you know during the examination.

3. Independence

From my initial review of the submission Plan documents and the Regulation 16 representations it would appear that there are no conflicts of interest that would call into question my independent status. I will keep that matter under review throughout the examination.

4. Visit to the Plan area

After I have thoroughly reviewed the Plan documents, representations, and any comments of the Parish Council I intend to visit the plan area as this will assist me in understanding the nature of the Plan and points made in representations or comments and help me decide if there are any issues to be clarified. I will undertake this visit on an unaccompanied basis as it is important that there should be no perception that I have heard additional representations.

5. Clarification procedures

I may at any time during the Independent Examination seek written clarification of any matters that I consider necessary. I will direct any request for clarification to the Borough Council, copying in the Parish Council. Any request for clarification and any response should be published on the Borough Council and Parish Council websites.

I am proceeding on the basis that the examination can be concluded without the need for a hearing. At any time before I issue my final report I may call a hearing if I consider this is necessary to ensure adequate examination of any issue, or to allow a person a fair chance to put a case.

6. Examination timetable

The main determinants of how long the examination will take are firstly the number and complexity of the Plan Policies; the clarity of supporting evidence; and the number and nature of representations. Assuming a hearing will not be necessary I anticipate that within approximately 4 weeks I will be able to send a confidential draft of my report to the Borough Council and the Parish Council to allow an opportunity to check whether there are any factual errors. This will not be an opportunity for any further representations to be made. This indicative timescale may be extended to accommodate responses to any requests for clarification that I may make.

7. Procedural questions

I would be pleased to address any questions relating to the examination process that the Borough Council or the Parish Council may have.

I would be grateful if both the Borough Council and the Parish Council could confirm receipt of this email.

Regards

Chris Collison
Independent Examiner
Planning and Management Ltd