

RESPONSE OF OUNDLE TOWN COUNCIL TO THE (PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT) LOCAL PLAN PART 2 REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION

Para. 8.12

This deals with the residual requirement for further residential development in Oundle and in doing so makes reference to two development sites allocated for residential development by the existing local plan (the Rural North Oundle and Thrapston Plan) namely

Land at Ashton Road/Herne Road (50 dwellings) and

Land at Dairy Farm, Stoke Hill (20 dwellings).

It is considered reasonable that the proposed replacement plan treats both these sites as being undeliverable as no application for planning permission to develop either site has been made since that allocation. It is, therefore, accepted that if these sites are not considered then the residual requirement in Oundle would be a minimum of 242 dwellings. In reaching this conclusion this element of the proposed plan has been positively prepared.

STRATEGIC HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

Paras. 8.20 – 8.23

Para. 8.20 refers to the identified housing requirement for Oundle stating that to ensure that Oundle meets this requirement approximately 300 houses are to be provided under the proposed local plan. There is no explanation of justification given for the figure of 300 dwellings as opposed to the 242 dwellings referred to in para. 8.12.

The plan should be considered in the light of the decisions by ENC to grant outline planning permission for the residential development of two of the three sites allocated for residential development in Oundle during the period of the proposed plan namely land off Cotterstock Road and land off St. Christopher's Drive.

In June 2020 ENC granted outline planning permissions as follows:

19/01327/OUT Land off Cotterstock Road for up to 130 dwellings

19/01355/OUT Land off St. Christopher's Drive for up to 130 units

(the plan indicates that if it is not possible to secure agreement under section 106 to develop this as 65 dwellings and an extra care facility of up to 65 units then the site will have to include an appropriate amount of affordable housing)

These two sites would appear capable of delivering the whole of Oundle's residual housing requirement of 242 dwellings without the third site, land off Stoke Doyle Road, being allocated for residential development at all. In the circumstances the proposed plan's allocation of the land off Stoke Doyle Road for residential development cannot be justified as there is no evidence to show that it is required to comply with the provisions of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and no evidence to show that (a) it is appropriate to allocate more than the minimum amount of land for residential development and to allocate up to 330 dwellings/units (b) that if it is this site is better placed to deliver any additional housing in Oundle during the plan period than other deliverable sites in Oundle. OTC contends that this part of the proposed plan is not sound as the specific allocation proposed is not justified ie an appropriate strategy taking into account the reasonable alternatives and based on proportionate evidence.

Paras 8.23 – 8.26 inclusive

Para. 8.23 states that ENC published its own assessment of sites together with a sustainability appraisal of strategic options for Oundle to inform the site selection process which was followed by a more detailed reassessment of shortlisted sites undertaken by DLP Planning Ltd suggesting that “together these assessments provide a robust and systematic justification for the chosen site specific allocations”.

Policy EN24 allocates three sites for housing development in Oundle during the plan period:

1. land off Stoke Doyle Road
2. land off Cotterstock Road
3. land off St. Christopher’s Drive.

Prior, however, to ENC undertaking its pre-submission consultation it had granted outline planning permission for both the land off Cotterstock Road and the land off St. Christopher’s Drive rather than seeking to defer considerations of the applications for permission in respect of these sites pending the outcome of the regulation 19 consultation. It should be noted that the existing local plan (RNOTP) identified the land off Stoke Doyle Road and the land off Cotterstock Road as being potential sites for future residential development after the period of that plan. In both cases RNOTP suggested that the potential housing on each site substantially exceeded that shown in the proposed plan.

Although policies EN24, EN25, EN26 and EN27 are consistent with the relevant strategic policies for the area (the NNJCS and the RNOTP) and likely to be deliverable over the plan period of the proposed plan and would enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework these policies are not justified because the selection of these sites for the scale of development proposed is not based on good evidence and did not properly take into account the reasonable alternatives. It would appear that granting outline planning permission for the land off Cotterstock Road and the land off St Christopher’s Drive before the local plan part 2 was subjected to regulation 19 consultation and submitted for examination was intended to circumvent the process of proper public examination of the proposed plan given the degree of opposition to both the draft plan and both applications for outline planning permission from OTC, the ENC District Councillors for Oundle and from numerous members of the public.

The proposed plan fails to make sufficiently clear that part of the Cotterstock Road site lies outside Oundle and is in the parish of Glapthorn and that the part of the proposed development site within the parish of Glapthorn had not been specifically allocated for any residential development in the adopted Glapthorn Neighbourhood Plan. The Glapthorn part of the land off Cotterstock Road is remote from the existing built environment of the village of Glapthorn and the number of dwellings likely to be constructed on that part of the site would very substantially increase the amount of additional residential development in the parish of Glapthorn provided for in its neighbourhood plan. No thought appears to have been given in including this part of the site in the land allocation in the proposed plan to whether children aged up to 11 living in the Glapthorn part of the site would attend the village school in Glapthorn (which would be unlikely to have sufficient capacity to accommodate them) or whether they would attend the school on the other side of Cotterstock Road which is in Oundle. The residential development of this part of the site would fly in the face of public opinion in both Glapthorn and Oundle about coalescence both communities having made it clear

during the consultations on the adopted Glapthorn Neighbourhood Plan and the Oundle Neighbourhood Plan (which failed at public examination).

INCLUDE HERE AN ANALYSIS OF THE EVIDENCE FOR AND AGAINST THESE THREE SITES AND THE EVIDENCE FOR AND AGAINST THE ALTERNATIVE SITES FROM THE OUNDLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN TOWN STRATEGIES (OUNDLE)

Paras 10.55 to 10.64

In para 10.57 the reference to the surrounding hinterland and closely connected villages fails to make reference to the parish of Barnwell which abuts the parish of Oundle and is bisected by the A605 with the built environment of the village of Barnwell being detached from that part of the parish more closely aligned with Oundle including the Marina, Barnwell Mill and the Country Park although both the Marina and the Country Park and the Mill are referred to in table 24, as Oundle Marina and Barnwell Country Par. Mill respectively.

Table 26 is flawed and should make clear that the historic core of Oundle is defined not only by West Street and North Street but also by the Market Place which links them and by New Street. It should also not refer to the “main employment areas – Nene Business Park/Fairline Boats, East Road” in the context of the historic core of the town.

Para. 10.60 is misleading in referring to “the former council car park” and the words “former council” should be deleted. There is a dearth of public car parking available to service the centre of Oundle. The car park formerly owned by East Northamptonshire Council was sold off by it with other land on the basis that the car park would continue under a lease to Oundle Town Council. It operates as a free long stay car park.

DETAILS OF THE LEASE DATE AND TERM TO BE INSERTED HERE

The proposed plan should not state at para. 10.61 that the “former council car park could provide development opportunities”. It is essential that this asset remains available to the community for use as a car park since otherwise the impact upon the town centre would be extremely damaging. Furthermore the proposed plan fails to refer to the existence of the Oundle Town Council owned Joan Strong Centre, a community facility currently leased by the council for use by scouts and guides, which is situated next to the long stay car park leased to OTC. The town council has no plans to redevelop its site for either commercial or residential use.

Paras 10.62 – 10.64 deal with the Riverside Hotel. Figure 33 is headed Riverside Hotel, Station Road, Oundle although it is, in fact, situated in the adjoining parish of Ashton (as is stated at 10.62).

QUERY POLICY EN41 RE RIVERSIDE HOTEL. DOES OTC FEEL THAT THIS POLICY IS APPROPRIATE OR SHOULD IT BE REVISED?