

## **EXAMINATION OF THE NORTHLEACH WITH EASTINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2018-2031 Submission Plan July 2018**

### Examiner's comments and questions (supplementary)

*I visited Northleach earlier today to look at the various sites referred to in the plan as well as to gain an overall impression of the character and appearance of the town and its landscape setting. Starting at the Old Prison I walked past the proposed car parking area (Policy NE1) to the Market Square and The Green before looking at the school and proceeding across the King George V playing field to the tennis courts and The Meadows (LGS Policy NE6iii). I also drove to look at the East End LGS (LGS Policy NE6i) and the woodland strip north of Farmington Road (LGS Policy NE6ii). This has given rise to two supplementary questions to be addressed by the Town Council, as follows.*

#### Supplementary Q1.

Access to proposed car parking area (Policy NE1). Have the Gloucestershire County Council as Local Highway Authority given any indication of their requirements for a visibility splay along West End towards the north-west to ensure safe egress from the car park? If so, what would be the implication for the retention of the trees situated within the highway verge? Reference is made in paragraph 5.10 of the NENP to the 'minimum loss of trees' but what would that mean in reality? Given the situation within the Conservation Area as well as the AONB would the loss of any of the trees be compatible with Local Plan Policy EN7(1a)? *My observation was that, at the position of the existing field gate, clear visibility to the north-west is obtained at only 1 metre back from the carriageway edge.*

#### Supplementary Q2.

Local Green Space at East End (Policy NE6i.) In view of recent development at the western end of this area adjacent to the Westwoods Centre what is the function of the land lying west of the stone wall which marks the end of pasture fields on the northern side of the stream (lying between the stream and the new Westwoods development)? Is it considered that the western area continues to meet the NPPF criteria for designation as Local Green Space? Does the extent of the LGS as shown on page 28 of the NENP (Plan I) remain

correct? Can it reasonably be stated (as in paragraph 5.25 of the plan) that the western area is 'popular with walkers and well used'? Is there any reasonable prospect of access along the northern side of the stream to The Meadows as suggested in paragraph 5.25?

*I observed on my visit that the Westwoods housing development (Freeman Homes) is nearing completion. On the eastern side of Bassett Road just before the turn towards the surgery there are gates leading to Freeman Homes' sales office which is marked 'Private Road'. The gates appeared to be lockable with key code access. The land to the south and south-east of the sales office has been landscaped and fenced with gravel turning space. It appears to be in totally private ownership with no right of access to it or across it. It is also at a distinctly higher level than the pasture field to the south and east of the stone wall. Also on the eastern side of the Westwoods Centre, at a lower level, is a small parking and turning area and an enclosed recycling compound. There is no access from there to the land further east.*

John Mattocks

Examiner

06.11.18

## **Addendum To Supplementary Question 2**

Since sending my supplementary questions yesterday I have undertaken some research online into the background to the planning permission granted for the development by Freeman Homes off Bassett Road. This was with a view to establishing the planning status of the lower part of the site within what might be described as a 'dog leg' located east of the recycling facility by the Westwoods Centre and forming the southernmost part of the development area. It appears that the relevant outline planning permission reference is 14/04274/OUT and the reserved matters approval reference is 16/03403/REM. There are very many approved plans but the area to which I refer is located due south of Plot 29 on the layout plan(s). It is shown as a landscaped area containing a 'SUDS' pond and tree planting in the lower section. From the road I could see a gravelled drive or turning area as well.

I confirm that it is that part of the proposed Local Green Space which lies within the area covered by these permissions for which I am seeking further comment. Paragraph 77 of the 'old' NPPF is written in the present tense and consequently it needs to be established to what extent any piece of land meets the required criteria in its present state. It would appear that the area in question has only very recently been landscaped as part of the approved development scheme. Furthermore, the area is shown on plans forming part of the Design and Access Statement as 'Public Open Space' but I have been unable to find any further reference to that in the permissions granted or by way of any legal agreement. Is there any information on the intended future ownership of the land in question or any management arrangements? Will there be public access to any part of it?

Please treat this email as an addendum to my supplementary question 2. I am looking to the Local Planning Authority to comment on any factual matters relating to the planning status of the land in question.