

WNP Review Steering Group response to Examiner's request, in blue below.

14 October 2024

In the first note, I invited the Town Council to respond to the representation from Nicholas King Homes (Representation 16).

The Town Council's response to that representation overlapped with its responses to other representations on the Plan from the development industry. This approach is acceptable and avoids repetition.

Nevertheless, I would appreciate the Town Council's response to 'The Process' section of the Nicholas King Homes' representation. It raises important issues about the process followed and the extent to which Nicholas King Homes was involved.

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1. Thank you for your Second Clarification Note. Here is the response from the WNP Review Steering Group to the issues raised by Walsingham on behalf of Nicholas King Homes under the section 'The Process'.
 2. The WNP 2021 included Policy WS3 which supported development within the Built-up Area Boundary of the town. Whilst WTC believed that Wallingford was a compact town and the built-up area boundary was relatively clear, this was tested on a few occasions, with proposals going to appeal. To provide clarity as to the extent of the built-up area, we are proposing a Built-up Area Boundary in the WNP Review.
 3. Two proposals were submitted by Nicholas King Homes at Purely Plants. **P23/S0872/O** and **P23/S3067/O** which were both Refused by South Oxfordshire District Council.
 4. In providing responses to those applications, WTC gave considerable thought to whether the site met Policy WS3 of the made WNP and fell within the built-up area of the town. The made WNP 2021 does not include a map defining the boundary. The WTC took the view that the site fell outside the built-up area. This view was supported by SODC in the refusal of those two proposals, the reasons for their decision are set out at:

<https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P23/S0872/O#exactline>

and

<https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P23/S3067/O#exactline>

5. An Appeal Number APP/Q3115/W/23/3334025 by Nicholas King Homes was withdrawn on 13 February 2024, just before it was due to be heard. The Town Council had prepared a Rule 6 Statement for the Appeal. It should be noted that the Appeal was due to be held during the WNP Review Reg 14 consultation from 3 February to 6 April 2024. Nicholas King Homes did not give a reason for withdrawing the Appeal.
6. In preparing the WNP Review it was felt that defining the Built-Up Area Boundary within the Plan would provide important clarity for Policy WS3. Whilst the Steering Group was mindful of the WTC and SODC responses to the Nicholas King Homes applications,

careful consideration was given to this site and the exact position of the boundary in preparing both the Reg 14 and 16 consultation documents. This work included site visits, investigating site history and desk-top studies of maps and aerial views.

7. The boundary shown in the Reg 14 consultation document was openly identified for all consultees to comment on, in the same way as the other draft policies. It is agreed that Appendix H providing a detailed explanation for the boundary was not included at that stage. The principles used to define the Built-up Area Boundary were set out in the supporting text of the Reg 14 version of the WNP Review. In specific relation to this site, these principles and boundary proposed were consistent with the WTC's recently-expressed views on the planning applications, and the conformity with WNP Policy W3.
 8. The WNP Review Steering Group followed the statutory process for consulting interested parties, including developers, landowners, the community and statutory consultees. All landowners were given equal opportunities to contribute to the statutory consultation process. No landowners or developers were excluded from the WNP Review consultation process. Nicholas King Homes was invited, along with other developers with an interest in Wallingford, to take part in both Reg 14 and Reg 16 consultation processes, and submitted their representations on both occasions.
 9. The WNP Review Steering Group considered all representations from Reg 14 and Reg 16 consultations and prepared Consultation Summaries setting out our responses to comments made.
 10. Plan preparation inevitably impacts both landowners, developers and the community, so to have involved a landowner or developer without the community could have demonstrated a bias in the process. Consultation stages such as those undertaken at Reg 14 and Reg 16 provided clear opportunities for all parties to be equally involved in the process.
 11. During the consultation another landowner raised queries about the exact line of the Built-up Area Boundary, and as a result changes were made to the Built-up Area Boundary.
 12. Appendix H providing a detailed explanation for the final proposed Built-up Area Boundary was included with the Reg 16 consultation documents to give landowners, developers and the community a clear explanation for all parts of the boundary.
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