

Eye & Dunsden Neighbourhood Plan
Comments on Examiner's Clarification Note 17 April 2026

Policy clarifications:

ED-VL1:

We agree that proportionality would be appropriate and propose that para2 should be amended 'As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals...'

Para3 also should also be amended to read 'Where appropriate development proposals ...'

A specific response to the Gladman representation is provided later.

ED-VL2:

The final part is indeed written to be specific but a general requirement to consider potential development impact is intended. We suggest that the final para could be amended to read 'Development proposals should always consider the impact they would make, avoiding any harmful influence on views within the rural landscape. Where development proposals would have significant adverse impact on an identified view noted above, they would not be supported.'

ED-VL3:

We are pleased that you consider this an effective policy as the matter of aftercare and ongoing use of extraction sites is very important to the Parish. We would have liked to be able to influence the restoration plans for these areas but recognise that this is considered a County matter and is outside the jurisdiction of the Plan.

ED-BGI1:

The inclusion of a 20% biodiversity net gain is aspirational and reflects a target. Para2 of the Policy could be amended to read '...should seek to deliver a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%, with a target of 20%, and where possible.....'

ED-BGI4:

The LGS Assessment has been made following the process set out in the NPPF and seeks to provide evidence and reasoning behind the individual assessments. However having received a number of representations at Reg14 stage, the Steering Group decided to carry out a review of the analysis; the revised assessment indicated a number of changes. While several potential sites were marginal, the Steering Group feel that some should still be considered for designation.

We have responded to specific representations later in this document.

ED-FR1:

Your comments are understood and we agree the referenced parts do indeed read as supporting text: they should be relocated.

However, in that they serve to focus the context on the risks, we would suggest that the policy is strengthened as follows:

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Para5: add '...and surface water attenuation should be incorporated on all developments. Where existing developments have surface water connections to either foul water or combined sewers, disconnection should be encouraged and environmentally responsible drainage methods incorporated.'

Para8: add '....under any circumstances.'

We refer to the Thames Water representation made at Reg16 which strongly supports the intent of these amendments to this policy.

Representation #7: Caversham and District Residents Association

We are grateful to the CDRA for their support of the NPlan on a wide range of the proposed policies.

CDRA have understood the desire to enable limited development in the Plan area while respecting the value of the rural qualities. The character of the open countryside interspersed with copses and woodlands provides a balanced environment in which wildlife as well as local people can thrive, and visitors can share. The Plan strives to maintain and protect it.

CDRA voice important concerns over road safety, highway capacity and connectivity all of which feature in the policies of this Plan.

Representation #10: Susan Riches

We are aware of, and understand Mrs Riches' objections to the NPlan which have been made following the Reg 14 consultation period.

No objections or comments were made until Mrs Riches' architect made them known informally in February 2025, and Mrs Riches formally to SODC in March 2025 when objections to the proposed LGS designation were raised directly with the Planning Department. The prescribed consultation process has been followed in accordance with guidance, all as documented in the Consultation Statement.

The LGS Assessment was made following the process set out in the NPPF. This clearly identifies the criteria used for assessing potential sites, and provides evidence and reasoning behind the assessment of this site.

Following several representations made during the Reg14 process regarding LGS designation, the Steering Group decided to conduct a review of the LGS Assessment. The revised assessment was then incorporated in the latest NPlan documentation.

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We cannot agree with many of the detailed points raised by Mrs Riches and remain of the opinion that while not meeting the LGS assessment criteria for adoption, the site DG5 remains an important open space contributing strongly to the character of Dunsden Green.

We are happy to respond in detail to the comments made by the respondent should the Examiner feel this would be useful.

We can confirm that due process has been followed and opportunity for public engagement offered and sought several times.

Representation #12,13,15: Hiscox family

We are acutely aware of the need to protect the special historic character of the settlement of Sonning Eye which includes several Listed Buildings and is a designated Conservation Area. In particular, site SE2 is integral to the rural character of this former farming village, with its adjacent barns with historic threshing floors and Eyot House, a Grade II* property which was for over half a century occupied by the family of the manager of the nearby water mill. This field is amongst those that were part of the local withy growing industry which came to an end after WW1.

Whilst the B478 certainly is busy, the other two sides are very quiet, with one being a widely publicised and much used walking route. The hedgerow and verge here is biodiverse and views are afforded into the green space. The space forms both an essential green buffer and a beautiful welcome to the Sonning Eye Conservation Area, separating it from the busy road and maintaining a much valued tranquil environment for the community and walkers passing through.

We confirm it is not our intention to encourage any public access to the field.

While benefitting from significant historical interest and relevance, this area also contributes positively to the character of the Conservation Area, the undeveloped open space marking the boundary of the Sonning Eye settlement area.

Representation #14: Gladman Developments Ltd

We have reviewed the representation from Gladman Developments and respond to the major points raised as follows;

1. Compliance with Basic Conditions: We would respectfully confirm that that the E&DNPlan has been prepared in accordance with the appropriate regulations and guidance. In particular, we would point out that several references to strategic development fall outside the remit of a neighbourhood plan being more appropriately dealt with by national and local plans.

We would further advise that both the existing Local Plan and the emerging JLP identify a zero housing requirement within the Plan area.

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We are also unaware of any guidance to suggest that the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan should be suspended pending adoption of either a revised national framework or the new JLP.

2. Landscape Character Assessment: We have discussed the concerns raised with our landscape consultant and conclude that even though guidance has been updated and the South Oxfordshire LCA has been revised, the E&DLCA remains valid, and compliant with these revised documents.

If it would assist the Examiner we are prepared to engage our Landscape Consultant to make a short addendum to the E&DLCA which provides the evidence to support the validity of the assessment and its conclusion. An addendum would cover:

- The landscape value assessment for the E&DLCA (2020) was undertaken before the TGN02/21 *Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations* and *Guidance on Designating Local Landscape Areas 2020: NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland (2020)* were published. Additionally, the new TGN 02/21 value assessment broadly presents the same factors which were used within the E&DLCA (2020) as set out within Box 5.1 from the GLVIA3.
- Since 2020, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse have updated their original 2017 landscape character assessment, with a new one - *Landscape Character Assessment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (September 2024)*. They have also produced another report identifying valued landscapes within the district: *Local Landscape Designation Review for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse September 2024*. This assessment followed the new TGN 02/21 methodology and identified E&D Parish Local Landscape Character Areas: PLCA1, PLCA3A, PLCA3B and PLCA4 as valued landscapes.

In view of the above we believe the evidence and reasoning behind the E&DLCA supports the conclusion that all the defined area of the assessment should be considered as 'valued landscapes'.

3. Biodiversity: As advised under ED-BGI1 of our comments on this clarification note we confirm that the 20% biodiversity net gain is aspirational and reflects a target: the policy should be amended to seek to deliver a net gain of at least 10%.

Representation #16: Coppid Farm Enterprises (represented by Savills)

The Steering Group appreciates the interest shown by Savills as agent for Coppid Farm Enterprises in this matter. While agreeing that some LGS assessment scores are marginal, the recommendations remain valid. In proposing LGS designation in some cases this is held to be in the interest of maintaining the valued character of the area.

DG3: This site was assessed as drawn, however since the recent development of an adjacent site the situation is altered. As a result of this we agree with the suggestion to amend the area, and propose that the settlement area is adjusted to run along the boundary of Ivy Cottages, past the Village Hall and then directly to Dunsden Way.

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DG4: We do not agree that this space is a ‘large tract’ and that the Public Footpath on the northern boundary does offer a view into the heart of Dunsden Green. This site, falling outside the Dunsden green settlement area, offers a valuable buffer to the historic green. It should be designated an LGS.

DG6: As the Loddon Brewery has become more successful, part of the proposed DG6 area remains a wooded area but is used as a car park, and hence is inappropriate for consideration as a LGS. The remaining area continues to merit designation in accordance with the established criteria. We therefore agree with the proposal to remove the hatched woodland area from the proposed LGS.

SE7: While not providing direct access, this area borders one of the most popular stretches of the Thames; very popular with walkers, casual visitors and users of the numerous berths provided on the bank. It is therefore in close proximity and of significant value to the community. The carefully replanted and restored willow woodland is a considerable environmental asset meriting LGS designation, even though it unfortunately does not afford public access.

PH3: Even without public access to the community this rare and valuable chalk spring merits identification and protection. We also question how it can be considered a part of the current Mineral Extraction planning application but understand that this may now be a County matter and as such excluded development.

Representation #17:

The District Council have provided comprehensive comments on the submitted NPlan and its appendices, most of which seek to aid clarity, avoid discrepancy and ensure that the NPlan provides a useable and valuable.

The table below shows the actions proposed in response to these comments using comment references in the Representation:

	NPlan document	
1	Update to NPPFDec2024	NPlan has been updated but we propose to check and correct references in the appendices
2	Pagination error	We will correct this on final version
3	AONB references to be updated	Agreed
4	4.1 – ref to excluded development	Amendments agreed
5	5.2.1, 5.2.2	Amendments agreed
6	5.2.7 – ref amendment	Amendments agreed
7	5.3 Key views	We do not agree that some views should be removed, or that any clarity is gained by renaming
8	ED-VL2	Amendments agreed
9	ED-VL3	Amendment agreed
10	ED-BGI2	But there are coniferous trees growing naturally in the area?
11	ED-BGI3	Amendments agreed
12	ED-BGI4	As an area of significant environmental importance proposed LGS PH3 should not be

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		included in the current planning application area and be afforded appropriate protection.
13	ED-FR1	Rephrasing of this policy is largely agreed, however we have some concerns: -how is major/minor development determined, suggest 'all development' instead -new para2 what if the last bullet does NOT allow? -para4 this is unacceptable. The surcharging of the foul sewer network with surface water is not allowed; it is contrary to environmental regulation and categorically opposed by Thames Water in their representation. Refer to comments made to Policy ED-FR1 on pg1 of this response. The final phrase of para8 should be added to new para6 -relocation of para1,2&4 to text is agreed as appropriate, and the addition of the footnote would be useful
14	5.10.3 AONB reference correction	Agreed
15	5.10.4 Reference update	Agreed
16	ED—DH1 amendments to aid clarification, correct pagination errors, add references	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reword para1: add 'where possible enhance...', and add suggested phrase after Design Code • We will correct the pagination error on final revision • Is ref to the Joint Design Guide necessary as it is already required • Para1: we prefer 'comply with' to 'take account of' • Correct pagination and references • Para2 amendments agreed to 1,2,4,5. 6 & 8 remain as not duplication
17	Fig 36,37,39	These are local views and not designated as 'key views' in ED-VL2. We therefore see no conflict
18	Reference clarification	Agreed
19	ED-DH2	Fig 42 to be updated
20	5.15.3	If it is acceptable to refer to the JLP before it is adopted, then we would be happy for this amendment to be made
21	ED-H1	Settlement areas will remain as drawn, except for the amendment to Fig 45 to respect the change proposed to LGS DG3. We are aware of the progress of the emerging JLP and its definition of the Plan area as 'countryside', and also that both the current Local Plan and JLP identify a zero housing requirement within the E&D Plan area. We therefore propose to retain the current wording for this Policy, but expect to bring

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		forward possible allocated housing sites within the settlement areas in the near future.
22	ED-CI2	Rewording agreed. Fig 50 could be relocated if deemed necessary, though this Figure also refers to PRow.
23	ED-CE1	Correction agreed The schedule in AppXIII lists facilities by use hence the apparent discrepancy. Suggest clarifying in 5.19.2
24	ED-CE2	We disagree with the proposed amendment. 'All planning applications should be accompanied by a transport statement, and where appropriate, a traffic impact assessment.'
	Settlement Character Assessment and Design Code	
25	AONB references to be updated	Agreed
26	Pg1 picture choice	We do not agree as this photograph demonstrates quality: brickwork and detailing, timber finials, roof detailing, window arrangement, environmentally efficient window construction
27	Fig 17 omission	Fig 17 to be updated
28	Fig 12,15,18 inconsistency	These figures indicate locally important views as opposed to the Key Views identified in Fig 21 of the NPlan
	Landscape Character Assessment	
29	Comments relating to draft status	We propose to review and revise these references and finalise document status following receipt of the Examiner's report
30	SOLCA2017 now SOVWHLCA2024	We have discussed this matter with our Landscape Consultant and would be prepared to issue an addendum which clarifies the status of the LCA if this would be helpful
31	Figure modifications suggested	We are not clear on what is being suggested
32	AONB update	Update references
	Heritage Assets Evidence Base	
33	Omission to Fig 42	Fig to be updated
34-39	Typos and corrections	Agree to update

Representation #19: Oxfordshire County Council

We recognise that OCC made comments at Reg14 which were carefully considered and amendments made to the NPlan accordingly. Not all comments were agreed though and, in those instances, responses were provided by the Steering Group.

Strategic Planner:

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Para2: We do not believe it is appropriate for us to reference JLP 2041 as it has not been adopted yet.

Para3: This matter has been clarified in NPlan 5.8.6

Para4: This is an OCC motion and reflects OCC's current position. Understood but while reflecting OCC and SODC's opposition to the proposed crossing, should it proceed further the implications will need full exploration and consideration when proposals are established.

Transport Planner:

Para1-3: Considering the rural nature of the Plan area, other than through traffic and local access, most walking and cycling is recreational and other than improvement of the public footpath and cycle accessible routes, transport connectivity is not considered to need enhancement or extension.

Para5: there are only two bus routes in the Plan area including the bus which runs from Reading to Henley along the A4155. This leaves private car use as the only practical option for most journeys.

Para6: given the remote and minor road infrastructure significant further development is clearly inappropriate

Para7: We suggest that para2 of Policy ED-CI2 be amended as follows

'Development proposals should include a local transport assessment and should:

- maintain the rural quiet nature of the road links between settlements
- support the provision of safe routes for non-vehicular users
- where appropriate incorporates design which contributes to the reduction of vehicle speeds, and improves safety for all.'

Additionally, the NPlan includes community aspirations which sets out that the Parish Council wants to explore the introduction of new speed limits, settlement area 'gates', and consideration of traffic calming to improve the safety of road users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists, and hopefully deterring users of 'rat runs' (see NPlan Appendix VII).

Para8: the NPlan also includes a community aspiration which sets out that the Parish Council wants to pursue surveys to identify how cycle and footpath routes can be improved bearing in mind the known objection of landowners to formal extension of these networks. Once CIL funding becomes available this will be progressed. While agreeing with the intent of the comments made, until such time as definitive proposals can be drawn up we are not in a position to include specific policy on this matter (see NPlan Appendix VII).

Para10: the Plan currently requires improvement to public transport access as appropriate to the scale but recognises the existing rural infrastructure.

Para11: we do not believe that such a study will identify significant demand for further cycle and pedestrian links, and that this valid initiative would be more appropriate in a more densely populated area. Should CIL funding become available the PC will consider such a study.

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Para12: this point has been addressed earlier in this response.

Minerals and Waste Policy Planner:

5.4.1	Revised wording	Unnecessary wording, but no objection
5.4.2	Revised wording	This is a community aspiration not policy. Why repeat 5.4.1?
5.4.6	Clarification re current application	Add ‘...part of which is included in a current application for an extension of the working area’
Policy ED-VL3	Revised wording	Agreed
Community aspiration at 5.4.10	Replace ‘ensure’ with ‘encourage’	Agreed
5.4.10	Revised wording	Agree first two but retain last sentence
5.4.12	Para omitted	This paragraph recognises a very real concern relating to post mineral extraction and subsequent change of use, and should be retained
5.4.13	Revised wording	Revise to ‘Therefore, the policy can only apply to areas already restored and when the agreed aftercare has been completed in accordance with the planning consent, and at a point where they are no longer considered a County matter.’
5.7.3	Revised wording	Agreed
Policy ED-BGI3	Revised wording	Agreed
LGS PH3	Request removal of the LGS proposal	As an area of significant environmental importance it should not be included in the current planning application area and be afforded appropriate protection.

The Steering Group have a concern that if restoration works are not completed, and while the area remains under the authority of OCC, change of use is agreed which falls outside the jurisdiction of SODC and the NPlan.

Waste Strategy Team leader:

We believe that the requirement for efficient waste management, reduction and recycling are contained within building regulations.

This NPlan area is extremely rural in nature and enjoys a very low density of housing making such a provision within the community impractical.