



Bedford Borough Council Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan POST- EXAMINATION DECISION STATEMENT

Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

This document is the decision statement required to be prepared under Regulation 18(2) of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). It sets out the response of Bedford Borough Council (“the Council”) to each of the recommendations contained within the independent examination report of the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan (“the Plan”) by independent examiner Wendy Burden, which was received by the Council on 21 July 2021.

This decision statement, the independent examiner’s report and the submission version of the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents can be viewed on the [neighbourhood planning pages](#) of the Council’s website.

BACKGROUND

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the Council has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of neighbourhood plans and to take plans through a process of examination and referendum. The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6, Chapter 3) sets out the Local Planning Authority's neighbourhood planning responsibilities.

This statement confirms that the modifications proposed in the examiner's report have been considered and accepted and that subject to making the recommended modifications (and other minor modifications) the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan may now be submitted to referendum.

The Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan relates to the area that was designated by the Council as a Neighbourhood Area on 27 September 2017. This area is coterminous with the boundary of the parish of Sharnbrook and is entirely within the Local Planning Authority's area.

Between 19 August and 23 October 2020, Sharnbrook Parish Council undertook consultation on the draft Plan in accordance with Regulation 14.

Following the submission of the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan to the Council on 14 January 2021, the Council publicised the draft Plan and representations were invited in accordance with Regulation 16. This consultation took place between 17 February and 26 April 2021. This period was longer than the statutory six week period as there were amended submission plan documents received during the consultation period.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION

The Council appointed Wendy Burden, with the agreement of Sharnbrook Parish Council, to undertake the independent examination of the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan and to prepare a report of the independent examination.

The examiner examined the Plan by way of written representations supported by an unaccompanied site visit of the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 2 June 2021.

The examiner's report was formally received by the Council on 21 July 2021. The report concludes that subject to making the modifications recommended by the examiner, the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in the legislation and should proceed to referendum. The examiner also recommends that the referendum area should be the same as the designated Neighbourhood Area, which is the same as the administrative boundary for Sharnbrook parish.

Following receipt of the examiner's report, legislation requires that the Council considers each of the modifications recommended, the reasons for them, and decides what action to take. The Council is also required to consider whether to extend the area to be covered by the referendum.

DECISION AND REASONS

Having considered each of the recommendations made in the examiner's report and the reasons for them, the Council has decided to accept all of the examiner's recommended modifications to the draft Plan. These are set out in Table 1 below.

The Council considers that, subject to the modifications being made to the Plan as set out in Table 1 below, the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions explained in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), is compatible with the Human Rights Convention and that the requirements of paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) have been met.

The examiner recommended that the Plan should proceed to a referendum based on the designated Neighbourhood Area. The Council has considered this recommendation and the reasons for it, and has decided to accept it. The referendum area for the final Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan will therefore be based on the designated Sharnbrook Parish Neighbourhood Area.

These decisions were made by the Mayor on behalf of the Council's Executive on 12 August 2021.

As a consequence of the required modifications, the Council will alter the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan in order that it can proceed to referendum.

The Neighbourhood Plan document will be re-titled **Referendum Version**. The date for the referendum and further details will be publicised shortly once a date is set by the Council.

Table 1: Decisions on the Examiner's Recommended Modifications to the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan

Proposed Modification Number	Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan Reference	Examiner's Report Reference	Recommended Modification and Reason	Bedford Borough Council Decision/reasoning
PM1	Front cover	Para 3.3 Page 10	Insert under Heading "to 2030".	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report
PM2	Policy S4, page 22	Para 4.29 Page 15	After "500 homes" insert "at Hill Farm, Mill Road".	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report
PM3	Policy S1, page 20	Para 4.35 Page 17	Delete clause b. and clause e. and amend alphabetical listing.	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report
PM4	Policy S2, page 21	Para 4.36 Page 17	Delete Policy S2 and accompanying text below the Policy.	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report
PM5	Page 24 and Appendix 3 Policies Map	Para 4.44 Page 18	Delete Indicative Site Layout plan page 24. Modify Policies Map to delete SPA boundary around "Proposed Site".	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report

			Increase area of "Proposed Site" to include all that shown outlined in red on the submitted Indicative Site Layout on page 24.	
PM6	Policy S5, page 23	Para 4.50-4.56 Page 19	Insert after c. and before "land" "approximately 13.99 ha of". Delete d., e., f. and insert: "d. approximately 2.2 ha will be provided for a community hub to include a potential site for a community building and/or a new doctor's surgery and provision of small scale retail units to address the day to day needs of local residents. Within the community hub 2 ha will be provided as a serviced site for a replacement primary school." Change g. to e. and insert after "treatment": "will be incorporated". Change h. to f. and insert after "cycle access": "will be provided". Change i. to g. and delete "the provision of " then insert after "vehicular access": "will be provided". Change j. to h. and insert after "parking": "will be provided". Change k. to i. and delete the first sentence. Replace "should" with "shall". Insert after "environment.": "The development shall include the incorporation of at least 3 ha of existing and new woodland and provide for the protection of the setting of the Grade II listed former farmhouse at Hill Farm."	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report

PM7	Policy S10, page 27	Para 4.61 Page 20	Replace the second sentence of Policy S10 with: "Policies for managing development within Local Green Space should be compatible with their designation, being consistent with those for Green Belt."	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report
PM8	Policy S12, page 29	Para 4.67 Page 21	Delete that part of the Policy which follows "Conservation Area".	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report
PM9	Policy S15, page 31	Para 4.75 Page 22	Delete the following from the list of community facilities: "k. – v." "y. z." "aa." "cc." Amend the alphabetic list to reflect the deletions.	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report

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