

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE WILSDEN

## NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

EXAMINER: Andrew Freeman BSc (Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI

Cllr Peter Allison  
Chair Wilsden Neighbourhood Plan Group

Iain Cunningham  
Senior Planning Officer  
Bradford Council

Examination Ref: 01/AF/WNP

4 October 2024

Dear Cllr Allison and Mr Cunningham

Following the submission of the Wilsden Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of questions for Wilsden Parish Council (the Parish Council) to which I would like to receive a written response(s) by **Friday 18 October 2024**, if possible.

### 1. Examination Documentation

I can confirm that I am satisfied that I have received the draft Plan and accompanying documentation, including the Basic Conditions Statement; the Consultation Statement; Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report; and the Regulation 16 representations, to enable me to undertake the examination.

Subject to my detailed assessment of the Plan, I have not at this initial stage identified any very significant and obvious flaws in it that might lead me to advise that the examination should not proceed.

### 2. Site Visit

I will aim to carry out a site visit to the neighbourhood plan area during the week beginning 21 October 2024. The site visit will assist in my assessment of the draft Plan, including the issues identified in the representations.

The visit will be undertaken unaccompanied. It is very important that I am not approached to discuss any aspects of the Plan or the neighbourhood area, as this may be perceived to prejudice my independence and risk compromising the fairness of the examination process.

I may have some additional questions, following my site visit, which I will set out in writing should I require any further clarification.

### 3. Written Representations

At this stage, I consider the examination can be conducted solely by the written representations procedure, without the need for a hearing. However, I will reserve the option to convene a hearing should a matter(s) come to light where I consider that a hearing is necessary to ensure the adequate examination of an issue, or to ensure that a person has a fair chance to put a case.

#### 4. Further Clarification

From my initial assessment of the Plan and supporting documents, I have identified a number of matters where I require some additional information from the Parish Council.

I have 12 questions seeking further clarification, which I have set out in the Annex to this letter. I would be grateful if the Parish Council can seek to provide a written response(s) by **Friday 18 October 2024**.

#### 5. Examination Timetable

As you will be aware, the intention is to examine the Plan (including conduct of the site visit) with a view to providing a draft report (for 'fact checking') within around 6 weeks of submission of the draft Plan. However, I recognise that I have raised a number of questions and must provide you with sufficient opportunity to reply. Consequentially, the examination timetable may be extended. Please be assured that I will aim to mitigate any delay as far as is practicable. The IPE office team will seek to keep you updated on the anticipated delivery date of the draft report.

If you have any process questions related to the conduct of the examination, which you would like me to address, please do not hesitate to contact the office team in the first instance.

In the interests of transparency, may I prevail upon you to ensure that a copy of this letter is placed on the Parish Council and Local Authority websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

*Andrew Freeman*

Examiner

## ANNEX

From my initial reading of the Wilsden Neighbourhood Plan, the supporting evidence and the representations that have been made to the Plan, I have the following 12 questions for the Parish Council. I have requested the submission of responses by **Friday 18 October 2024**, although an earlier response would be much appreciated. All of the points set out below flow from the requirement to satisfy the Basic Conditions.

### Questions for Wilsden Parish Council

1. Is the Parish Council satisfied that the Plan does not breach Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998)?
2. Was Natural England consulted on the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Habitats Regulations Assessment screening? If so, please provide a copy of its response.
3. Policy W/HO1 – Development within Wilsden Village: Where are details of “the distinctive qualities of the special and attractive landscape” to be found?
4. Policy W/BH3 – Hallas Bridge and Birkshead Special Character Areas: Please supply wording to replace the fourth (final) paragraph (does not appear to make sense).
5. Policy W/NE1 – Important Local Green Space: Please comment on the objection of Bradford Metropolitan District Council to the inclusion of the Fields to the East /Northeast of St Matthews Church (W/NE1-1).
6. Policy W/NE1 – Important Local Green Space: Were any of the other candidate sites the subject of objection from their owners (February 2022 consultation)? If so, please provide details.
7. Policy W/NE1 – Important Local Green Space: Given that W/NE1-2, Cricket Pitch and adjacent field (formerly football field) is already protected by Green Belt, what additional local benefit would be gained by designation?
8. Policy W/NE3 – Trees: What is meant by “productive species”?
9. Policies W/E1 and W/E2 – Existing Employment Sites and New Business Development Proposals: What is to be classed as “employment use”?
10. Policy W/CF1 and Figure 11 – Community Facilities. On the figure, there is no site WCF6. Please explain.
11. Policy W/CF2 – New and Enhanced Community Facilities: What is meant by “a parish need”?
12. Policy W/CF3 and Figure 11 – Community Sports Facilities. On the figure, there is no site WCSF3. Please explain.

-----.