

Uppingham Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

Hearing Note

Context

This note clarifies the next stages of the examination process and expands on the earlier note about the need for a hearing.

The examination of the submitted Plan is proceeding well. I have visited the neighbourhood area, read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also prepared a clarification note and read the responses to that note.

Hearing

I am satisfied that most of the Plan can be examined by way of written representations. However, in accordance with paragraph 9(3) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, I have concluded that to ensure an adequate examination of the Plan it is necessary to hold a hearing on the contents of Policies H1-H4 of the submitted Plan.

Hearing Details

The hearing details are as follows:

Date: Friday 12 April 2024

Time: 10.00

Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Uppingham. LE15 9PY

The participants

Uppingham Town Council (UTC) and Rutland County Council (RCC) have a statutory role at the hearing.

The private sector organisations listed below have been invited to attend the hearing:

- The Robinsons (via Matrix Planning);
- Uppingham Gate Limited (via Ancer Spa);
- Allison Homes;
- Langton Homes (via Insight Town Planning); and
- Vistry Homes (via Marrons)

The developers will be able to expand on their representations to the Plan at the hearing insofar they relate to the hearing issues. Where appropriate, they may have a role in assisting the Town Council with its answers to specific questions.

The public and other interested parties will be able to attend the hearing. However, only the organisations invited to attend will be able to participate on the day.

The issues and the hearing sessions

For the purposes of this note I refer to the five proposed housing allocations as follows

U-HA1 Land off Leicester Road

U-HA2 Land off Ayston Hill

U-HA3 Land at Uppingham Gate

U-HA4 Land to the east of The Beeches

U-HA5 Land off Goldcrest/Firs Avenue

The hearing will have six related sessions as follows:

Session 1:

The strategic delivery of housing in Uppingham

This session will address the following issues:

- the extent to which the proposed allocation of land to deliver 330 homes in the neighbourhood area in the Plan period reflects the most up-to-date information on the strategic housing requirement in the County, and the contents of the emerging Rutland Local Plan; and
- the extent to which the Town Council anticipates considering the need to review the Neighbourhood Plan further once the emerging Local Plan has been adopted?

The participants for this session will be UTC, RCC and the various developers/landowners.

Session 2:

The site selection process used for the proposed allocated sites and the reasonable alternatives considered

This session will address the following matters:

- the way in which the Environmental Report (by AECOM) assessed the various potential housing sites in the neighbourhood area;
- the extent to which any of the proposed housing allocations perform better than the others; and
- the extent to which UTC and the Environmental Report considered reasonable alternative approaches which included different densities across each of the five sites and/or delivering 330 homes on a reduced number of sites at a higher density?

The participants for this session will be UTC and RCC.

Session 3:***The appropriateness of the proposed densities for the allocated sites***

This session will address the following matters:

- the way in which the proposed densities for the five sites were determined by UTC;
- the extent to which the proposed densities have regard to national policy, are in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan and would make the best use of the sites concerned;
- the underpinning purpose of the Plan's proposal to include retail floorspace within the development of U-HA3; and
- the extent to which the five proposed housing sites are deliverable and viable at the densities proposed?

The participants for this session will be UTC, RCC and the various developers/landowners.

Session 4:***The proposed phasing of the development of the housing sites***

This session will address the following matters:

- the significance of the five-year period in Policy H4 (and the point at which the five-year period begins);
- the extent to which parts B and C of Policy H3 may conflict with the phasing proposals in Policy H4?
- the extent to which the developments of sites U-HA5 and U-HA4 are dependent on the substantial development of sites U-HA2 and U-HA3 respectively; and
- the anticipated start dates and build rates for each of the five sites.

The participants for this session will be UTC, RCC and the various developers/landowners

Session 5:***The extent to which the proposed allocations can be sensitively accommodated into the landscape and topography of the town***

This session will address the following matters:

- the impact of the package of proposed housing sites on the setting and character of the town;
- the specific issues associated with the development of each of the proposed allocated sites; and
- the extent of any mitigations measures which may be required.

The participants for this session will be UTC, RCC and the various developers/landowners.

Session 6:

The extent to which the proposed sites can be adequately accessed from the highway network, and where relevant, from each other

This session will address the following matters:

- the way in which sites U-HA1, U-HA2 and U-HA3 would be connected to the highway network;
- the way in which the proposed access point for sites U-HA2 and U-HA3 would be designed to cater for the associated developments of sites U-HA5 and U-HA4 respectively;
- the extent to which the details of the proposed connections need to be addressed in the policy;
- how and when would sites U-HA2 and U-HA3 provide access into sites U-HA5 and U-HA4 respectively; and
- whether agreements are in place, or are planned to be in place, to secure the necessary connections between sites U-HA2 and U-HA5 and sites U-HA3 and U-HA4 respectively.

The participants for this session will be UTC, RCC and the various developers/landowners

Other Matters

The Arrangements for the Hearing

The hearing will address the matters above in turn. I will ask the various questions and lead any further discussion on the issues.

The details in the Plan and the representations made by the various parties are thorough and comprehensive. As such hearing statements are not required.

The Next Steps

I will finalise my report on the Plan as soon as possible after the hearing. The parts of the report which are unaffected by the hearing will have been completed by the date of the hearing.

The Examiners Report

The hearing introduces an additional stage into the examination process. It does not affect the way in which the report will be produced and finalised. I will send a fact check report to the County Council and the Town Council (as set out in the note on examination arrangements). The main findings of the hearing will be incorporated within the report on a policy-by-policy basis. The final report will be published once the fact-checking process has concluded.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Uppingham NDP Review

7 March 2024