

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE CANNOCK WOOD PARISH
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

EXAMINER: Andrew S Freeman BSc (Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI

Councillor Elizabeth Whiteley
Cannock Wood Parish Council

Jemma March
Cannock Chase Council

Via email

Examination Ref: 01/AF/CWNP

21 August 2023

Dear Councillor Whiteley and Ms March

CANNOCK WOOD PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Cannock Wood Parish Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of questions for Cannock Wood Parish Council (the Qualifying Body/Parish Council) to which I would like to receive a written response by **Monday 4 September 2023**, if possible.

1. Examination Documentation

I can confirm that I am satisfied I have received the draft Plan and accompanying documentation, including the Basic Conditions Statement, the Consultation Statement, the Strategic Environmental Assessment & Habitats Regulations Assessment 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 11 September 2023. 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 10 questions seeking further clarification, which I have set out in the Annex to this letter. I would be grateful if you can seek to provide a written response by **Monday 4 September 2023**.

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, as I have raised a number of questions, I 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 Cannock Chase Council websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Freeman

Examiner

ANNEX

From my initial reading of the Cannock Wood Parish Neighbourhood Plan, the supporting evidence and the representations that have been made to the Plan, I have the following questions for the Qualifying Body. I have requested the submission of responses **by Monday 4 September 2023**, although an earlier response would be appreciated if practicable. All of the points set out below flow from the requirement to satisfy the Basic Conditions.

1. Please confirm the dates of the Regulation 14 consultation period.
2. Policy CW1 – Housing Design: Are there some words missing at the beginning of the policy?
3. Policy CW1 3a – “appropriate housing type and tenure”: Apart from small bungalows and starter homes, what other types and tenures of housing are considered appropriate to the area?
4. Policy CW3 – Non-designated heritage assets: Please direct me to the evidence that supports the designation of the identified assets including the selection criteria (I have been unable to find this in the quoted Historic Environmental Assessment).
5. Policy CW6 – Is there an error in the wording at the end of the second paragraph?
6. Policy CW7 – Is it contribution to the overall objectives identified under each of the AONB¹ Management Plan chapter headings (eg. Landscape Character and Planning) that is sought under this policy? Does the requirement apply to *all* development proposals?
7. CW8: Does Paragraph 3 apply to *all* development proposals? Please comment on the representations of Cannock Chase Council regarding the proposed 20% minimum biodiversity net gain in the Green Belt.
8. CW8 4. – “Detailed advice and evidence will be sought to inform the design of any buffer zone”: Is this intended to be an instruction to applicants?
9. CW12: Please comment on the representations of Cannock Chase Council regarding Community Assets.
10. Please comment on the representations of Cannock Chase Council regarding the Cannock Wood Design Code.

¹ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).