

# **STRENSALL WITH TOWTHORPE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

## **Submission Draft Version**

### **Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's Questions by Independent Examiner, Rosemary Kidd**

Rosemary Kidd MRTPI  
NPIERS Independent Examiner  
12 May 2022

## Strensall with Towthorpe Neighbourhood Development Plan Examiner's Questions

Following my assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan and representations, I would appreciate clarification and comment on the following matters from the Qualifying Body and/or the Local Planning Authority as appropriate. In order to ensure openness and transparency of the examination process, these questions and the responses should be published on the Council's website.

In addition to questions, I am including proposed modifications to the wording of policies and the justifications where I consider it necessary, in order to give the QB and/ or LPA the opportunity to respond, if they wish, in advance of receiving my examination report. A full explanation will be included in my examination report of the reasons for proposing the modifications.

The Response to Consultation refers to Representation 14 from City of York Council. Would you provide me with this representation. Would CYC place all representations and correspondence concerning the examination (except for contractual matters) on their website.

**Policy CP2** – The first part of the policy “requires” development to provide parking to the Council's parking standards. Whereas the second paragraph “expects” new residential development to provide parking to the Council's parking standards. Developers cannot be asked to provide parking spaces to meet local shortfalls as proposed in the third paragraph. It is unclear which area is referred to.

Is the provision of parking adequately addressed in the Council's policies on parking? I am proposing that either the policy is deleted or if there is a need for a policy in the NP, the first paragraph retained and revised to state “should” instead of require.

**Policy CF1** – point 1 refers to “unacceptable planning problems”. This is considered to be vague and ambiguous. Point 2 is also unclear as to what type of development this refers to or how this is to be applied.

Would the QB comment on the suggestion to revise the final paragraph to read: **“Development that would result in the loss of a community facility will only be supported where:” and retain only points 3 and 4.** (“Development will only be supported where” to be deleted from the beginning of point 3.)

### **Policy CF2 Local Green Space**

Would the QB review the sites and amalgamate those closely associated as proposed in their response to my Procedural Note. Would they provide a updated assessment of all sites including their naming.

The policy should be worded to formally designate the sites and better reflect NPPF paragraphs 101 – 103.

Would the QB and LPA comment on the following proposed revision to the policy:

**“The sites listed in Table G and shown on the Proposals Map are designated as Local Green Space and will be protected from development in a manner consistent with the protection of land within the Green Belt:**

**List of sites:** XXXX

**Design and Heritage** – it is considered to be inappropriate to refer to the Character Appraisal by the name of the consultants “Woodhall Planning and Conservation”. It should be named after the parish. I am proposing that reference to the consultants should be deleted throughout.

**Policy DH1** – what is the status of the Strensall with Towthorpe VDS? Is it approved as SPD?

**Local Landmarks** – para 5.3.6 refers to these as being worthy of protection but they are not identified on the Map or policy.

It is suggested that a new section on **gardens and open spaces** should be created and the relevant paragraphs amalgamated.

**Large rear gardens in area specified**– has the importance of these gardens been identified in background studies? If they are to be included in the policy, the boundary of the area should be shown on the Proposals Map. This policy needs to be carefully worded so as not to be overly prescriptive. How would proposals for domestic outbuildings and extensions be considered? Would the suggested revision below be sufficient without making reference to the specific area of large gardens?

The fourth paragraph of the policy refers to “spatial qualities” of the area. Will the QB define what this term means. I note that VDS design guideline 19 refers to “character and visual amenities”.

**Views - Paragraph 5.3.7** states that it is not considered necessary to include a policy specifically to protect the key views as the Green Belt policy will achieve this purpose. However Policy DH1 includes a section on views and they are shown on the Proposals Map. Would the QB agree that the last 2 sentences of para 5.3.7 should be deleted. Should a reference be made in this paragraph to the views in the Conservation Area appraisals?

The policy wording on views is considered to be overly restrictive. A modification is proposed that development that may affect the views should be assessed through a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

The sections on highways and rights of way are written as requirements. Would the CYC comment on whether this is possible or should some flexibility be introduced by using the word “should”.

It is not clear why allotments have been singled out as important open spaces when 42 sites have been selected as LGS.

The policy on the provision of open space as part of new development is considered to be vague. I am proposing that it should be revised to refer to the Local Plan policies and placed in Policy DH2.

No changes are proposed to the sections on Signage and Strensall Common SAC/SSSI.

Would the QB and LPA comment on the proposed revisions to Policy DH1 which have taken account of the various suggestions for revised wording made in the representations:

***“Development proposals should have regard to the Strensall with Towthorpe Village Design Statement and Strensall with Towthorpe Character Appraisal. Development should be laid out and designed to make a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the character area. It should respect the following matters:***

***“Gardens and open spaces***

***“Gardens and open spaces between buildings that contribute to the visual character of the neighbourhood plan area should be retained. Development that would result in the sub-division of gardens should not harm the local character, distinctiveness and visual amenity.”***

**The loss of front or side gardens areas to hardstanding for vehicle parking should be avoided. *Proposals should not impact on visual amenity or road safety.***

***“Open spaces, particularly those designated as Local Green Spaces, should be safeguarded and enhanced.***

***“Views***

***“The impact of development proposals on the key views identified on the Proposals Map should be assessed through a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Development should be designed to incorporate views over adjacent countryside, where appropriate.***

**Highways and Rights of Way – change “must” to “should”**

**Delete the last two sentences from paragraph 5.3.7.**

**Delete reference to “Woodhall Planning and Conservation” throughout.**

**Define the boundaries of the Character Areas more clearly on a map.**

If it is considered important/ necessary to make reference to the area of large gardens, the following should be included in the Gardens and Open Spaces section and the area shown on the Proposals Map.

***“The openness of the large gardens in Strensall village along the west side of Moor Lane/Princess Road, both side of Lords Moor Lane (to the north of York Golf Club) and along the north side of The Village shown on the Proposals Map should be maintained.”***

## **Policy DH2**

I am proposing that a new section should be added on Heritage Assets and the first two points included and strengthened to better reflect national policy and make reference to national and local plan policy. I have proposed that the section on layout should be renamed Open Space and should combine elements of Policies DH1 and DH2 on the subject and make reference to Local Plan Policies. I have sought to include other revisions proposed in representations. Would the QB and LPA comment on the proposed revisions to Policy DH2

Include a new heading “Heritage Assets” and include the first two points of Scale and Massing revised as follows:

**“Development within or affecting the setting of Strensall Village, Strensall Railway Buildings and Towthorpe Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and other designated and non-designated heritage assets should respect the significance of the heritage asset and make a positive contribution to the conservation of the heritage asset. Proposals will be considered in accordance with national and Local Plan policies and will take account of the Conservation Area Appraisals and the significance of the heritage assets.”**

Revise the third paragraph second line of Scale and Massing to read: **“...of its surrounding context and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness of the character area as identified in the Strensall with Towthorpe Character Appraisal. If appropriate....”** Add the following to the end of this paragraph: **“Buildings of an outstanding contemporary design will be supported.”**

Revise the heading “Layout” to “Open Space” and add a new paragraph as follows:

**“Open spaces shall be provided on site as part of development proposals in accordance with the requirements of the City of York Local Plan. Open spaces should be designed to provide an attractive feature to enhance the appearance of the development as well as provide areas for children’s play, sports and allotments.”**

Include the two paragraphs from Layout in the Open Space section. Add **“where appropriate”** at the beginning of the first paragraph of “Layout”.

Revise the second sentence of “Boundary Treatments” to read: **“Where appropriate, front boundaries should be defined....”**

Add the following to the end of the first paragraph on “Roof Form”: **“.....or modern materials with a similar appearance.”**

Replace the second paragraph on Roof Form with **“Roof forms and materials are expected to match desirable local characteristics, particularly in conservation areas. Plan depth should be sympathetic to desirable existing village plan forms so as to generate familiar pitched roof geometries and roof heights.”**

Add the following to the justification: **“Conservation Area Appraisals for the Strensall Village, Strensall Railway Buildings and Towthorpe Conservation Areas provide an assessment of the character of the conservation areas and identify suggestions for future management improvements.”**

## **Policies DH3 and DH4 Shopfronts and Signage**

It is considered that the policies add no locally specific details to the Local Plan policies and in any case does not fully reflect the adopted or emerging Local Plan

policies on Shopfronts and Advertisements. Would the QB and LPA agree a form of wording for these policies that better reflects the updated policy position. Does the LPA have an SPD on Shopfronts that could be referred to in the justification?

### **Policies DG1 – DG3 – Area Based Development Guidance**

These policies expect development within the areas of the MOD housing to respect the character and layout of the existing housing in the area. A description of the features is included in each policy. The descriptions draw on the Character Appraisal; they should not be regarded as policy requirements as this would be unduly prescriptive. They should therefore be set out in the justification or in the description under each area in the Character Appraisal.

It is unclear what type of development the policies are intended to manage as there are no proposals for housing development in these areas and most housing extensions would be permitted development. Would the QB explain the purpose of these policies.

### **Policies DG4-5 – Queen Elizabeth Barracks**

This is an important site in the plan area which has the potential for all or part of it being redeveloped. The QB has indicated that they would agree to revisions to the policy in response to the representations made. As commented on by CYC the features listed in Policy DG4 are descriptions of the existing Barracks buildings and do not set out the policy requirements for the design of future redevelopment of the site if this is approved.

I am proposing to recommend that Policy DG4 should be deleted and that Policy DG5 should be revised to include reference to the preparation of a heritage assessment (including a photographic record of the site and buildings) and clear design principles that have sufficient flexibility to be capable of use in considering the redevelopment of the site for housing or other uses.

If the boundary of the site is shown on the Proposals Map and referenced in the opening paragraph of the policy, point 2 would be unnecessary.

I would also welcome clarification on the term “commensurate facilities” in point 3 and “a good proportion” in point 10 of DG5. What is the evidence to support the housing mix?

Would the LPA and QB agree revisions to Policy DG5 to address these matters. To improve the clarity of the policy, it would be helpful to identify any areas (eg sports grounds) and buildings (eg Hurst Hall) that are to be retained on a map to be included in the text and on the Proposals Map. Would you also consider whether some flexibility could be included in the policy to address the replacement of these community and sports facilities?

### **Policy DG6**

I am proposing to revise the policy to include reference to the latest housing needs assessment and to replace “private housing” with “market housing”. A local connections policy is a housing policy, not a planning policy. I am proposing that the second paragraph should be placed in the Community Actions as it is a housing policy:

**Add a new Community Action: “*The Parish Council will seek to ensure that affordable housing is made available to those with a local connection to the Parish in the first instance, in accordance with the local connections criteria set out in Appendix Three.*”**