

RAVENSTONE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Submission Draft Version

**Questions to the Qualifying Body and Local Planning
Authority on
Ravenstone Neighbourhood Plan
by Independent Examiner, Rosemary Kidd**

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13 December 2018

Ravenstone Neighbourhood Plan Examiner's Questions

Following my initial assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan and representations, I would appreciate clarification and further evidence on the following matters from the Qualifying Body and/or the Local Planning Authority. Where I have proposed revisions to the wording of policies I would appreciate confirmation from the QB and LPA that they are satisfied with the wording proposed. In order to ensure openness and transparency of the examination process, these questions and the responses should be published on the Council's website.

1. What was the date that the SEA and HRA screening reports were undertaken?
2. **Policy CD1 Countryside** – the first two paragraphs state that development proposals will be considered against national and local strategic policies for development in the countryside. They do not add a local policy approach. I shall therefore be recommending that they be deleted. Text may be included in the justification to explain how development proposals in the countryside will be considered.

3. **Protection of areas views across open areas**

A number of policies in the NP make reference to the protection of areas marked on the Proposals Map as Important Views. I have concerns that the way that the policies are worded and the views are shown on the Proposals Map that the protection of the areas could be classed as a blanket restriction on development and would be contrary to national planning policy unless it is justified by robust evidence. The selection of these areas is not justified by agreed selection criteria or by other robust evidence such as a Village Character Appraisal or a Conservation Area Appraisal. The Ravenstone Village Plan has not been included in the background evidence, and in any case it is very dated and its status is unclear.

On my site visit it was evident that views over some of the areas were restricted by high hedges or trees and many views were limited by the contours of the land. I am proposing therefore to recommend the deletion of the reference to protecting important views from policies and the areas from the Proposals Map.

4. **Conservation and Heritage**

I do however agree with the sentiments in Policy CE1 that the open areas within and around the village contribute positively to the character of the conservation area and the setting of heritage assets. However until the work has been done to assess and evaluate the significance and the value of the contribution of specific areas through a Conservation Area Appraisal, the areas cannot be identified on the Proposals Map. I shall be recommending that the third bullet point of Policy CD1 should be revised as follows: ***“The impact on the important open areas that make a positive contribution to the setting and character of the Conservation Area and heritage assets.”***

There is a degree of overlap and repetition between Policies CD1 and CD2. I shall be recommending that they be amalgamated with the opening paragraph of Policy CD1 revised as follows: “***Development proposals should protect, conserve and, wherever possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and the character of the Conservation Area and their settings.***”

5. **Policy H2 Housing Allocation** - Has any work been done to show how many houses can be accommodated on the housing allocation? Why has the figure of up to 8 dwellings been selected? Is there any reason why only part of the housing allocation site is included in the settlement boundary?
6. **Policy H3 – Windfall Infill Development** - Is it intended that Policy H3 should be applicable to the conversion of existing buildings which may be within the settlement boundary or in the countryside? Is there any evidence to support the cap of one or two dwellings?

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