

**HAVERSHAM-CUM-LITTLE LINFORD PARISH COUNCIL  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**RESPONSE TO THE EXAMINERS QUESTIONS**

Project: The Haversham-cum-Little Linford Neighbourhood Plan (HcLLNP)  
Date: March 2023

***Plan Content***

*As noted above, It is an expectation of Neighbourhood Plans that they should address the issues that are identified through community consultation, set within the context of higher level planning policies. The NPPF (para 16f) says that Plans should “serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant).” Representations request repetition of certain Local Plan content as affirmation that, in summary, “the Haversham Neighbourhood Plan does not prevent the ability for farmer / agricultural business to diversify their businesses outside of agriculture”. My presumption is that, as stated in paragraph 5.2 of your Plan, the Qualifying Body is content to rely on existing national and local policies in regard to these matters; if that is the case then it may be helpful to have your confirmation.*

**The examiner correctly identifies issues identified by the community as important and the Haversham-cum-Little Linford Neighbourhood Plan (HcLLNP) has been prepared to address the most important issues identified by the community. Haversham-cum-Little Linford Parish Council (HcLLPC) confirms that the examiner’s presumption, as stated in paragraph 5.2 of the HcLLNP, is correct. The matter was previously considered, as per paragraphs 3.17 and 3.18 of the HcLL Reg 14 summary report May 2022 included in Section 6 of the Consultation Statement which formed part of the submission documents.**

***Consultation Process***

*I note that a representation, reflecting comments in some others, comments: “[At the Regulation 14 Consultation] Over twelve pages of residents’ comments are included and these resulted in two changes to the draft Neighbourhood Plan. One of the two changes was also requested by Milton Keynes City Council. No feedback has been offered on the individual points we raised and overall It seems that the consultation exercise consists of requests for comments, consideration of the comments, with little resulting change and, importantly, no feedback.” The Planning Practice Guidance says:*

*“A qualifying body should be inclusive and open in the preparation of its Neighbourhood Plan [or Order] and ensure that the wider community:*

- is kept fully informed of what is being proposed*
- is able to make their views known throughout the process*
- has opportunities to be actively involved in shaping the emerging Neighbourhood Plan [or Order]*
- is made aware of how their views have informed the draft Neighbourhood Plan [or Order].” (Reference ID: 41-047-20140306)*

*I invite the Qualifying Body to comment further on how they sought to keep the community informed, to be attentive to community issues and concerns, and thereby ensure an inclusive process.*

Community comments were shared with and discussed comment by comment by the Steering Group and HcLLPC and the limited changes to the Submission Plan which the Steering Group and HcLLPC felt were necessary to clarify the process to some respondents have been completed.

All community comments received are included in the document titled Report on Community Responses to Reg 14 included in Section 6 of the Consultation Statement which formed part of the submission documents and is also available from the HcLLPC website [www.havershamtlinford.org/parish-council/neighbourhood-planning](http://www.havershamtlinford.org/parish-council/neighbourhood-planning). As the comments were made by individual members of the public they have been anonymised as far as possible. Emails were sent to all statutory and community responders to thank them for their contributions and comments following the Regulation 14 consultation and to inform them of the next steps including directing them to the HcLLPC website as follows:

*“The HcLL Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group are very grateful for your participation in the recent Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan Consultation. All the comments received have been read and discussed by the Steering Group. Where amendments to the plan are required as a result of consultation comments received, these will be included in the final Neighbourhood Plan Submission Document before it is submitted to Milton Keynes Council within the next two to three months.*

*All consultation comments received and reports detailing changes to the final plan will be included among the final submission documents and made available on the Parish Council website: [Village | Haversham and Little Linford Parish Council \(havershamtlinford.org\)](http://www.havershamtlinford.org)”*

This was confirmed at the HcLLPC meeting on 20 June 2022 at minute no. 111/22 which is also published on the HcLLPC website <https://www.havershamtlinford.org/financials>. HcLLPC continues to provide regular updates on the HcLLNP at every one of its meetings including the Chair’s report in the local magazine as confirmed at the HcLLPC meeting on 21 November 2022 at minute no. 167/22.

It may also be worth noting that the Annual Parish Public Meeting was held on 13 April 2022, a few days before the end of the consultation period. Key extracts of the plan were displayed as large posters in the meeting hall and those attending the meeting were encouraged to inspect these, which most did. Considerable time was also allowed during the meeting for an open discussion around the proposed plan, the consultation process and next steps.

#### ***Plan Period***

*I note that the Plan period is shown as starting in 2016 but the Plan was submitted in 2022. I have not identified anything that might suggest that the Plan relies on data or other material that predates 2022. I would therefore have expected the Plan period to be 2022 – 2031. This point is different from one made in a representation which confuses the Plan validity period with the span of years addressed in the Plan. Your comments are invited.*

The HcLLNP plan period aligns itself with the plan period of the adopted plan:MK. It was also in 2016 that HcLLPC made the decision to prepare the HcLLNP and the examiner will

have noted that it was in January 2017 that an application was submitted to Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC) to designate the neighbourhood area as detailed in the Timeline of Events in Section 3 of the of the Consultation Statement which formed part of the submission documents. HcLLPC therefore considers that the community consultation evidence since then has informed the preparation of the HcLLNP. HcLLPC does accept that it was in 2022 when the HcLLNP was submitted to MKCC that the policies in the emerging HcLLNP have been a material consideration in determining planning applications as set out in the NPPF<sup>1</sup> and Planning Practice Guidance<sup>2</sup>.

### ***Guide to Reading this Plan & Glossary***

*This is a helpful introductory section, especially for those unfamiliar with reading Neighbourhood Plan documents. I note the “evidence base published alongside the plan on the Parish Council’s website”; however, it is important that documents essential to the application of Policies are included with or within the Plan itself. I will be considering this issue as I progress through the Plan document.*

*A representation objects to some of the definitions used in the Glossary. However, the objections appear to relate to the context within which the terms are used later in the Plan. It is appropriate for planning terms to be introduced for the benefit of a wide range of readers. I will address the objections in the representation, as appropriate to the particular plan context.*

It is agreed that documents essential to the application of the HcLLNP policies are included with or within the plan document itself and HcLLPC would be happy to agree a modification in that regard. HcLLNP has made detailed comments on this in responding to the examiner’s enquiries throughout this document. HcLLPC confirms that the evidence base, as listed below, supporting the HcLLNP which formed part of the submission documents is also available from the HcLLPC website [www.havershamltinford.org/parish-council/neighbourhood-planning](http://www.havershamltinford.org/parish-council/neighbourhood-planning)

### **HcLLNP Evidence Base**

- Haversham NP SEA Environmental Report
- Appendices Haversham cum Little Linford NP SEA Environmental Report
  
- HcLLNP Site Assessment Report February 2022
- Appendix C - Site 11 Design Proposals
- Appendix D Site Appraisal Haversham
- Call for Sites Letter
  
- Environment & Design report final July 2022
- Supporting Evidence for HLL10 Important Views July 2022
  
- Consultation Statement HcLL July 22
- Report Questionnaire June 2018

---

<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 48 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/4-decision-making#para48>

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 41-007-20190509 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

- **Appendix A Questionnaire 1**
- **Appendix B Questionnaire 1**
- **Appendix C Questionnaire 1**
- **Final Housing Needs Survey Report**
- **NP Dec 2020 Consultation results**
- **Consultation 2020 Final2**
- **Questionnaire Corrected Final**
  
- **Haversham NP\_Reg 14 summary report\_May 2022**
- **Report on Community Responses to Reg14**

**Foreword**

*I would simply note that the Plan Examination is conducted by an Examiner rather than an “inspector”.*

**HcLLPC thanks the Examiner for the observation and would be happy to agree a modification in this regard.**

**1. Introduction & Background**

*I note that under the heading “Strategic Environmental Assessment & the Habitats Regulations” it is stated that MKC determined that a SEA was required but that a Habitat’s Regulation Assessment was not. I note that the MKC SEA Screening Report dated December 2021 concluded: “Historic England have advised that SEA is merited in this case for the limited reason of the plan’s potential for likely significant environmental effects for sites with potential for remains of archaeological interest which may comprise previously unidentified heritage assets. It is therefore the opinion of Milton Keynes Council that overall the Plan will have significant effects on the environment and that the Haversham-cum-Little Linford Neighbourhood Plan does need to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.” A Scoping Report was then produced in February 2022 which effectively establishes that the SEA should be limited to considering impacts on heritage assets – I presume that MKC supported this approach? The SEA itself is also dated February 2022 and is titled as “Draft”, authorship undisclosed. I note that there are no responses from the Statutory Consultees included within the document. Whilst these bodies were included within the Regulation 16 consultation, it would not appear they were directed to consider the content of the SEA and, of more concern, it would appear that Historic England has not responded to the consultation. If there is evidence that Historic England responded to the SEA document I should like to see it please, otherwise I would request that MKC chase Historic England for a response that includes reference to the SEA.*

*A representation comments: “Strategic Environment Assessment and the Habitats Assessment: What has been produced by the Haversham Neighbourhood Steering Group is not either of these. What appears to be have (sic) produced is a site analysis of each of the short listed site options. This was not independently reviewed. As such no reliance on this can be included within the plan relating to both the Strategic Environment Assessment and the Habitats Assessment. We would expect a qualified independent ecologist or environmental consultant to have carried out such a survey.” I invite the observations of*

*MKCC and the Qualifying Body on these comments, although I note that the reports themselves explain the approach adopted.*

The following response is a joint response which both HcLLPC and MKCC has endorsed.

MKCC undertook the Scoping and prepared the Draft SEA on behalf of HcLLPC. MKCC supported the approach that the SEA should be limited to considering impacts on heritage assets. This approach was also supported by Historic England and the other consultees did not consider that an SEA was required based on their remit.

It is recognised that paragraph 2.03 of the Draft SEA dated February 2022 confirms correspondence with the statutory consultees took place, but that such correspondence has not been included. Historic England responded to the Scoping Report February 2022, evidence of which has now been attached to this note (see document no.1). Historic England also responded to the Regulation 14 consultation of the HcLLNP and the Draft SEA alongside the Draft Site Assessment Report but confirmed that it no longer wished to be involved in the detailed development of the strategy of the HcLLNP as detailed in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 of the HcLL Reg 14 summary report May 2022 included in Section 6 of the Consultation Statement which formed part of the submission documents. A copy of that response is now also attached to this note (see document no.2). Whilst HcLLPC was surprised by this it respectfully accepted Historic England's decision on the matter. MKCC can confirm that it invited Historic England's comments on the HcLLNP including the full suite of submission documents for the purposes of the Regulation 16 consultation. HcLLPC is also aware that the Final SEA dated July 2022 has not been provided to the examiner and is now also attached to this note (see document no.3) and available on the HcLLPC website [www.havershamtlinford.org/parish-council/neighbourhood-planning](http://www.havershamtlinford.org/parish-council/neighbourhood-planning). Of importance is that comments from the Regulation 14 consultation resulted in no changes of substance and as such no changes of significance has been made to the document and its recommendations as a result. The SEA has continued to inform the content and preparation of the HcLLNP alongside the informal technical assessment and priority policy objectives drawn from community engagement exercises detailed in Section 4.1 of the Site Assessment Report dated February 2022 which formed part of the submission documents as shown on the HcLLPC website [www.havershamtlinford.org/parish-council/neighbourhood-planning](http://www.havershamtlinford.org/parish-council/neighbourhood-planning). HcLLPC notes that the Site Assessment Report dated February 2022 document has not been uploaded to MKCC's website. With regards to the informal technical assessment as part of the site selection process, see comments in relation to Policy HLL2 below.

Both HcLLPC and MKCC is aware of its obligations as a Qualifying Body and Responsible Authority in respect to the Environmental Assessments of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and has followed due process as set out in paragraphs 1.8 and 1.9 of the HcLLNP and Section 6 of the Basic Conditions Statement. The scoping undertaken by MKCC for SEA and Habitats Regulation Assessment concluded that a Habitats Regulation Assessment was not required. Therefore, there was no need for the qualifying body to employ an ecologist or environmental consultant.

## **2. The Neighbourhood Area**

*A representation challenges the accuracy of paragraph 2.2 where it refers to Wildlife Corridors – a source reference is needed and a check as to whether the text accurately reflects the MKC position. Similarly the accuracy of paragraph 2.4 is challenged where it is stated that “much of the southern and eastern part of the village flood” on the basis of a reference back to the Environment Agency Flood Maps; source referencing is again required. A challenge has also been made to paragraph 2.12 but I will be able to judge the reasonableness of that statement when I make my visit to the area.*

*It would be helpful if the boundary for the Neighbourhood Area was superimposed on Map C (and other similar maps) – I imagine that it is technical challenges that have been the issue here? However, an objection suggests that the maps reproduced are not entirely accurate or could be misleading. Whilst I appreciate that the maps are doubtless reproduced in good faith from published sources, I would appreciate comments from the Qualifying Body and/or local authority on the following matters:*

*Plan B: The representation suggests that the Plan is not “identical to the Linear Parks Plan under Policy DS6 within the Plan:MK 2016 – 2031 which is the current Milton Keynes Local Plan. The relevant Linear Park area is the Linford Lakes Linear Park.”*

*Plan C: The Plan is dated 2015 which, for the information being mapped, is not current. The representation suggests that the map should “follow the Flood Maps produced by the Environment Agency”. There is evident danger that reproducing maps which need to be updated frequently is likely to mislead unless a source reference is provided for where current maps will be found.*

**The following response is a joint response which both HcLLPC and MKCC has endorsed.**

**It would be possible to superimpose the Neighbourhood Plan area boundary (which is the parish boundary) on any of the maps taken from the Council’s interactive mapping system.**

**In relation to paragraph 2.2 and Plan B – the examiner is directed to the adopted Plan:MK Policies Map Sheet 1 and Sheet 5 for the spatial definition of Linear Park and Wildlife Corridor designations and paragraph 12.11 of Plan:MK (copied below) confirming the text in paragraph 2.2. accurately reflects MKCC’s position <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/developingmk/planmk>**

**12.11** Wildlife Corridors in Milton Keynes are a specific designation to Milton Keynes and represent linear pathways of habitats that encourage movement of plants and animals between other important habitats. These are treated in the same way as LWSs in Milton Keynes.

**The wildlife corridor (Plan:MK Policy L2) isn’t contiguous with the linear park but does follow the River Ouse valley.**

**Plan B of the HcLLNP is a copy of the helpful interactive online mapping system MKCC operates system <https://mapping.milton-keynes.gov.uk> and is considered to be accurate. HcLLPC would be happy to agree a modification to replace Plan B with the adopted Plan:MK Policies Map if the examiner considered this a necessary amendment for accuracy.**

In relation to paragraph 2.4 – the examiner is directed to Milton Keynes Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (April 2015) paragraphs 4.2.10 – 4.2.15 and Figures B5 and C6 which is the source of the text in paragraph 2.4 <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/flood-and-water-management/strategic-flood-risk-documents-0>

In relation to Plan C – HcLLPC can confirm that it did not have the resources or authority to amend Plan C, alongside other mapping from third party sources included in the HcLLNP. As stated in the HcLLNP Plan C is from the Milton Keynes Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 2015 <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/flood-and-water-management/strategic-flood-risk-documents-0>. Flood risk data is publicly available on central government’s website <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map?easting=483438&northing=241704&map=SurfaceWater>. HcLLPC would be happy to agree a modification to replace Plan C with a link to up to date flood risk mapping if the examiner considered this a necessary amendment for accuracy.

### **3. Planning Policy Context**

*This is a helpful context section. It could be improved with some additional source references:*

*MKC First Homes Policy Position Statement March 2022*

*“In light of this MKC has issued a housing requirement figure of 1 to rural parishes”  
“the Parish Council is mindful of the provisions of §14 of the NPPF in respect of securing protection for the parish”.*

*A representation challenges the accuracy of paragraph 3.5 where it is stated that “The plan [ambiguous as to which plan] requires no further housing site allocations to be made in Haversham to 2031”. The same representation challenges paragraph 3.8: “Although expansion to the north into the parish is likely to be very limited given the environmental and landscape sensitivities and constraints, green infrastructure and water management function”. In both instances, source references or actual quotes would help to assure clarity. A challenge to the accuracy of Plan D can readily be resolved because the linked content is easily accessible.*

**HcLLPC would be happy to agree a modification to include reference to MKCC’s First Homes Policy Position Statement March 2022 in Section 3 of the HcLLNP. The examiner should also be made aware in relation to the review of Plan:MK that the ambition and objectives of a new City Plan has now been published <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/new-city-plan>.**

**HcLLPC has assumed that the examiner is referencing the content of paragraph 3.7 of the HcLLNP in responding to this matter and notes paragraph 3.2 of the Basic Conditions Statement deals with the matter of housing requirement figures in so far as it is relevant to the HcLLNP. HcLLPC agrees that appropriate references can assure clarity and proposes the following modifications to paragraphs 3.7 and 3.8 for the examiner to consider:**

**3.7 Additionally, Policy DS1 of Plan:MK defines Haversham as ‘Villages and rural settlements’ where the approach to delivering new development places emphasis on neighbourhood plans. ~~The plan~~ During the preparation of this neighbourhood plan MKCC**



confirmed in a briefing note ([link](#)) that Plan:MK requires no further housing site allocations to be made in Haversham to 2031 but assumes that, across the whole Milton Keynes area, 420 35 dwellings per annum in the rural homes area will come forward as 'windfall schemes' (see Table 4.4 in the adopted Plan:MK Housing Supply). ~~In light of this~~ The briefing note also confirms that MKCC has issued an indicative housing requirement figure of 1 to rural parishes. There have been no changes to MKCC's adopted formal position on this matter.

3.8 However, there is a need for an immediate review of Plan:MK. A review of Plan:MK is currently in its early stages. A consultation on the ambition and objectives of The New City Plan will conclude on 16 March 2023 and the Parish Council will continue to engage in this process. The adopted MK Futures 2050 Strategy is a non-statutory framework for the longer-term spatial development of Milton Keynes which will inform the Plan:MK Review. The Strategy indicates that significant further growth is planned for Milton Keynes. Although expansion to the north into the parish is likely to be very limited given the environmental and landscape sensitivities and constraints, green infrastructure and water management function, as recognised at 'Discounted Options' on page 74 of the Milton Keynes Strategy for 2050 ([link](#)), the Parish Council is mindful of the provisions of §14 of the NPPF in respect of securing protection for the parish.

The links included above are as follows:

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/about-neighbourhood-planning>  
<https://www.mkfutures2050.com>

### **Land Use Policies**

#### **POLICY HLL1: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES**

*A representation comments: "Policy HLL1 should be modified so that it allows for a degree of flexibility consistent with the requirements of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and allows for the consideration of sustainable development opportunities on sites adjoining the settlement where the benefits of the scheme significantly and demonstrably outweighed any harm, if these could assist with delivering the overall objectives of the HcLLNP."*

*I can see that Plan:MK has already established the principle of defining Settlement Boundaries. My understanding is that the boundary for New Haversham repeats the boundary included in Plan:MK whereas the boundary for Old Haversham is new but follows the methodology adopted for Plan:MK. I query the former because, if there are differences in the New Haversham boundary, these need explanation.*

**HcLLPC can confirm that the examiner's understanding is correct.**

#### **POLICY HLL2: HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

*The context for Policy HLL2 appears to be appropriately explained. However, a number of representations query a potential conflict of interests with the chosen consultants both evaluating the offered sites whilst representing the interest of the owners of the site ultimately chosen through their process. It is not clear that 'representation' is actually the case; I wonder whether the consultant had been requested to report authoritatively on the*



*deliverability of the chosen site, which is one of the matters on which I would expect to see evidence. Whilst I appreciate that the site evaluations have been undertaken independently of the Qualifying Body, the independence of the chosen consultants has been questioned, and I would accordingly wish to know how convincing the Qualifying Body has found the site assessment report. Further clarity is required.*

**HcLLPC has asked its consultants to propose a response, which is included below and which it endorses in full.**

**“On occasions we are asked by Qualifying Bodies (QB) to work with a landowner that does not have an agreement with a developer to provide information for a proposed allocation. This allows the QB to put in front of the community enough information to enable them to understand and comment on a draft proposal. It also assists the SA/SEA with basic site information to provide an assessment on the reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures.**

**Here, the QB had determined its vision for the HcLLNP and had made its decision to allocate the site before we had any involvement with the landowner. It was concerned that the information provided to that point was insufficient to support an allocation policy. It required further site testing (including its deliverability or developability), a clearer site proposition to inform the allocation policy and the provision of necessary evidence for the Regulation 14 consultation.**

**In this instance the landowner wished to appoint us to provide this information – it was not in our agreed scope of the HcLLNP itself - rather than him having to incur costs of procuring a development partner, with no guarantee of a successful allocation. We came to an agreement with him, having first asked the QB to confirm that it was happy for us to do so. As is common in these cases, the QB considered that the landowner’s and community’s interests were aligned and that there could therefore be no conflict of interest.**

**Again, to be clear, the policy wording is based entirely on ensuring a policy- and constraints- compliant scheme at the planning application stage. It is drawn from applying adopted development plan and SPD policy to the scheme. It is not possible to secure a more lenient policy, given the proper scrutiny of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), others and ultimately the examiner, and nor would it serve the QB’s interest.**

**For the QB we completed the Site Assessment Report included in the submission documents as a record of the process and its outcome to date. We follow a tried and tested site assessment process (used in 100+ NP projects) as the basis for the QB to make informed decisions. The report contains only factual information relating the process and outcome.**

**After the Regulation 14 consultation, we reported the representations made, as a factual record to assist the QB in making modifications for the final HcLLNP and to include in the Consultation Statement. The QB required some minor modifications to the allocation**

policy and evidence base, as well as to other parts of the submission documentation, which we duly made.

**To conclude, we played no part in the site evaluation process, we simply provided the assessment methodology and recorded its outcome. And the proposed allocation policy does not and cannot provide a more lenient provision than would have been the case without our involvement. We note that the LPA, with which the QB has worked closely, has raised no concerns on this matter. The allegations levelled by others are therefore baseless.”**

*Further clarity is also required I feel on the matter of site drainage and the information that the Qualifying Body has received that has convinced them that there is a feasible strategy. Also I note another representation queries: “a previous small planning application in the High Street was rejected due to lack of sustainability and so [I] do not understand how the proposed site can even be considered as it is further away with the one narrow pavement and a dangerous crossing”. Were previous planning decisions examined for indications of what might be required to achieve an acceptably ‘sustainable’ development?*

*Another representation comments: “Given the still early stage of the New City Plan and the current uncertainty regarding the wider planning strategy and the lack of evidence of local housing need, it is queried whether a major development of 16 dwellings represents an appropriately sized housing allocation for Old Haversham consistent with its current status in the Local Plan settlement hierarchy as a ‘village and rural settlement’”. This seems to echo the concerns of others making representations, about the possibly under-evaluated impact on a small, relatively isolated community. One representation seems to suggest that the site is a more suitable candidate for Local Green Space designation than for housing use: “[the site is] the only green space in the Old Village free to access for villagers to meet and enjoy”. The representation goes on to say: “In accordance with the community’s aspirations and the policy objectives, Site 5 would deliver a small housing development of up to 10 dwellings on a site under 1 hectares (sic) in size with a higher proportion of affordable housing (40%) compared to Site 11 which is proposing a larger site and a major development of 16 dwellings with a lower proportion of affordable housing. Development on Site 5 would also preserve the character of the village in the surrounding landscape, maintaining the linear nature of the High Street at Old Haversham and can preserve local biodiversity*

*Representations have also queried the quantum of affordable housing being delivered given the emphasis on such housing from the housing survey and the higher offers from other landowners.*

*A separate representation notes an alternative approach that, it is suggested, would be more viable: “the site that should have been explored much more intensely is the North end of the Recreation Ground. This site is already owned by the Parish Council, is on a bus route and would have a lower impact on its immediate environment in terms of additional traffic etc.”. A separate representation suggests that “there needs to be a reserve site, if the allocated site does not come through or produces less housing than expected”; was such an approach considered?*

*Your comments on the above issues are invited.*

*I and others have a few detailed queries on the Policy wording:*

*The allocated site is actually north of 27 High Street, Old Haversham, not south.*

*In element Bi it is suggested that the “developable area is 1 Ha” – the document “Design Proposals Site 11” does not suggest there are undevelopable areas, so it is unclear what distinction is being made here. It also remains unclear how the figure of 16 dwellings has been derived.*

*In elements Bii and iii what is “full regard” (my emphasis) intended to suggest? The local authority has pointed out that “For clarity, the policy should state that it is MKCC’s First Homes Policy Position Statement”.*

*The local authority has noted that Biv contains a typo – Policy HLL4 should be HLL5.*

*The local authority has suggested amendment to elements Bviii and ix to add ‘significant’ to “environmental harm” and replace “approved” with ‘for approval’.*

*In elements Bxi and xii where is it expected that “current standing advice” will be accessed (and how will its extent be known)?*

*Element Bxiv presumably refers to ‘vehicle’ electric charging points? And the local authority has suggested the addition of ‘relevant Supplementary Planning Documents’.*

**HcLLPC is aware of, and participates in the process of local planning decisions, but has also seen the effects of the closure of the public house in Old Haversham for a period of time. In preparing the HcLLNP the local community recognised the value of a small housing development for younger people and downsizers to breathe new life into its settlements and also in sustaining its valuable community assets. It was also recognised, as demonstrated in the Environment and Design Task Group Report published in the Evidence base that Little Linford is a small, isolated settlement surrounded by agricultural land. Old Haversham is a traditional village settlement with access to a number of recreational uses including accessibility to the larger New Haversham, and its facilities. It was therefore considered that Old Haversham and New Haversham could potentially benefit from a small housing scheme with the provisions of paragraph 78 and 79 of the NPPF in mind. The Site Assessment Report included in the submission documents fully details the site evaluation process which included consideration of all of the priority policy objectives with no particular objective in isolation. HcLLPC also notes that the provisions for small-scale affordable housing schemes to meet local rural needs in the parish (Rural Exception Sites) set out in national and strategic policy will continue to operate in the parish and such a scheme has already been successfully delivered in the parish elsewhere.**

**With regards to the examiner’s detailed queries – The Site Assessment Report, in particular Appendix C for the allocated site in Policy HLL2, included in the submission documents demonstrates how site capacities has been derived at. The use of the terms ‘full regard’ and ‘current standing advice’ is intended to direct the applicant to existing strategic policy provisions. HcLLPC accepts the suggested modifications from MKCC and the corrections highlighted by the examiner.**

### ***POLICY HLL3: FIRST HOMES EXCEPTION SITES***

*The First Homes policy context is fully explained. I note that this Policy says “No other proposal for a First Homes Exception Site has been approved or implemented in the plan period”. I presume that the “other proposal” would be adjacent to New Haversham – or would it be within the Neighbourhood Area? What is the justification for this restriction – presumably the scheme should*

*be justified by need? The need for this constraint seems to arise because the opening sentence invites multiple schemes? I note that the site should be “no more than 0.4Ha” – precision unexplained - but I wonder whether that justifies the requirement that the site must have “a main road frontage”?*

*On a related point the local authority has commented: “Aii-iv - It is not clear how the maximum scheme size and site area has been arrived at. The key factors to consider are that development should be proportionate to the size of the settlement and should meet a demonstrable need” and “Aiii – greater clarity required as to what is meant by ‘main road frontage.’”*

*The Policy refers to “a Critical Drainage Catchment area” but this is not further explained or referenced in the supporting text?*

**The examiner’s presumption in relation to criterion ii. in relation to the “other proposal” being in New Haversham is correct. Paragraph 5.10 explains that First Homes Exception Site proposals are directed to New Haversham as Policy HLL2 allocates land in Old Haversham to meet some of the affordable housing for sale need in that part of the parish. The approach in defining a gross site area is to respond to the provision made by Planning Practice Guidance<sup>3</sup> to define the approach to proportionality in relation to First Homes Exception Sites. HcLLPC has adopted an approach which allows for a level of growth commensurate to the scale and character of the village which equates to approximately 5% increase in dwellings above the number of dwellings in New Haversham. The 2011 census records 350 household spaces in the parish as a whole (parish-level Census 2021 data of this nature has yet to be published), which includes Old Haversham, Little Linford and scattered homes in the wider parish. It is therefore reasonable to apportion in the region of over 200 – 250 homes to the village of New Haversham. A 5% increase would therefore equate to the approximate site size and number of homes Policy HLL3 defines. HcLLPC notes the examiner’s comments on the definition of Critical Drainage Catchment proposes the following addition to paragraph 5.11 for the examiner to consider:**

**5.11 ... Parts of the parish have been identified as a location within a Critical Drainage Catchment (CDC). As per Plan:MK Policy FR1, all sites within a CDC, as defined by the Milton Keynes Surface Water Management Plan 2016, will be expected to show that the development would not increase the CDC’s flood risk and, if possible, will improve the current situation.**

#### **POLICY HLL4: ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS**

*I note that this Policy starts with an expectation of “zero-carbon ready” but this term was not included in the Glossary at the beginning of the Plan, perhaps because there is no authoritative source? You will need to point me more explicitly to the piece of national Policy or Guidance that says that Neighbourhood Plans may impose their own energy performance standards – and without local evidence of viability – cutting across the requirements of the Building Regulations. An assertion that “Land values in the area are high relative to build costs and ought to be sufficient to ensure requirements to tackle improving energy and carbon performance are viable” is not evidence, it is just an assertion. In this regard a*

---

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 026 Reference ID: 70-026-20210524 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes#exception-sites>

*representation has commented: “The HcLLNP should however recognise the cost of such requirements which may have adverse implications on development viability. It should include a caveat whereby if it is not feasible or viable to meet the requirements, developments would need to meet alternative requirements so that proposals are not rendered unviable and undeliverable.”*

*Additionally, it would appear that Policy HLL4 requires additions to the National and Local List of Planning Application Requirements; it is not open to Neighbourhood Plans to do that; they must address land use matters.*

*I am aware of a document from the Centre for Sustainable Energy that has been circulating (Evidence and arguments for binding Energy Efficiency policies in neighbourhood plans) that says: “Whilst the building regulations are steadily strengthening regulatory requirements on development, they fall well short of requiring new development to be zero carbon, and many local plans lack such policies as well. As a result, many neighbourhood planning groups are keen to adopt binding energy efficiency policies in their plans, ideally requiring new development to be zero carbon.” However, speculation about the future direction of policy does not equate with guidance. The Government’s policy approach to the energy performance of buildings, ever since the 2015 Written Ministerial Statement and the Planning & Energy Act 2008, has consistently been that the required standards (and optional standards where applicable) will be set through the Building Regulations and not through the planning system. As the paper from the Centre for Sustainable Energy seems to acknowledge, there is already a pathway for the Building Regulations to become more demanding. Whilst there is nothing to stop Neighbourhood Plans encouraging higher standards – and Qualifying Bodies engaging with land interests to encourage their delivery – requirements are presently set at a national level through the Building Regulations. There is no expectation for Neighbourhood Plans to repeat what is already in the NPPF. Your comments are invited.*

**Paragraph 9 of Appendix A in the HcLLNP defines ‘zero carbon ready’. Many of the concerns raised indicates a misunderstanding of the policy’s intent and operation. HcLLNP does not consider that it is necessary to address matters relating to the provisions of the Planning and Energy Act 2008 or the Written Ministerial Statement 2015 as the policy does not set an energy efficiency standard. However, it should be noted that legislative framework has moved on since the publication of the Written Ministerial Statement of March 2015, which the government has confirmed, as set out in paragraph 11 of Appendix A to the HcLLNP. This was also most recently recognised by the Planning Inspectorate in its final report of the examination of the Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan Partial Update ([link](#)), see paragraph 84 copied below:**

***“84. The WMS 2015 has clearly been overtaken by events and does not reflect Part L of the Building Regulations, the Future Homes Standard, or the legally binding commitment to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.”***

**Equally, the NPPF does not make that same distinction and requires the ‘planning system’ (§152) and ‘plans’ (§153) to take a proactive approach to mitigation and adapting to climate change. S38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 includes neighbourhood plans which have been made as part of the development plan.**

Policy HLL4 simply provides an incentive at Clause C for developments to choose a higher energy efficient standard. Where it does choose that higher standard, the policy acknowledges that there may sometimes be a trade-off between its objectives and local design policy and guidance. Although meeting these standards ought not to compromise a scheme fitting in with the character of a local area, on occasions this may be the case. It therefore allows for some degree of flexibility in meeting local design policies and guidance, especially in terms of prevalent building orientation and density. Where it does not choose that higher standard it cannot benefit from this provision, and it simply requires evidence to demonstrate that buildings are performing as expected given the now widely accepted performance gap. HcLLPC is also mindful that this approach has recently been successfully examined at the Ivers Neighbourhood Plan in Buckinghamshire ([link](#)) and the Cassington Neighbourhood Plan in West Oxfordshire ([link](#)) with the former now made. HcLLPC accepts that amendments may be required to aid clarity as set out below.

The Parish Council would welcome the examiner's suggestion for a modification to wording for Clause A and the supporting text and offers the following suggested modification:

At Clause A in the policy:

A. All development ~~must~~ should be 'zero carbon ready' by design to minimise the amount of energy needed to heat and cool buildings through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping. Consideration should be given to resource efficiency at the outset and whether existing buildings can be re-used as part of the scheme to capture their embodied carbon.

At paragraph 5.15:

Its Clause B ~~requires~~ incentivises all schemes, no matter what their intended use or size other than householder extensions, to use the Passivhaus Planning Package (PHPP) or equivalent design methodology for all buildings ~~where it is feasible to do so. This means that the applicant must demonstrate those factors that make its use unfeasible, for example, the topography and orientation of the site. It is acknowledged that it may not be feasible to do so on some sites or schemes for practical reasons, which should be explained in the application.~~

The links included above are as follows:

- <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/the-plans/>
- <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/cassington-neighbourhood-plan/>
- <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/policy-and-documents-library/local-plan-partial-update-inspectors-final-report>

**POLICY HLL5: HIGH QUALITY DESIGN**

*It is perhaps surprising that this Policy only references the “Neighbourhood Plan Character Appraisal” in the supporting text, not within the Policy; is the Appraisal merely to be regarded as supporting evidence for the Policy or as a document to be used by those designing schemes?*

*Whilst neighbourhood level attention to design matters is appropriate, the NPPF (para 128) says of design guidance: “Their geographic coverage, level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety.” Expectations that buildings will always be of 1 or 2 storeys and that extensions must ‘match’ and ‘conform’ with adjacent buildings may be considered over-prescriptive. A representation comments “It may not be possible to do former farm building conversions from the materials and design matching the existing building”, and indeed it may not be appropriate. Given the Plan’s support for energy-efficient design, the NPPF (para 134) lends support for “outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.” A representation has urged: “Add to this guidance some thoughts how the wider requirements of the plan like views to the countryside and links to paths should be accommodated onto development sites - Make design quality guidance more Haversham specific and more robust.” Your comments on these lines of thought are invited.*

*The local authority has commented that “The statement ‘respect heritage assets’ in criterion Ai is too vague” and therefore some firming up is required for the Policy to be useable. I note that the supporting text (para 5.25) says “The policy requires [my emphasis] the Design and Access Statements prepared for planning applications to demonstrate that, where relevant to the location of the proposal, regard has been paid to those principles”, but this is not explicitly so in the Policy. Is there a reason behind that inconsistency?*

**HcLLPC is satisfied that the suite of policies in the HcLLNP, alongside existing national and strategic policy provisions, considers and requires schemes to respond to important design requirements, for example Policy HLL8 and HLL9 on how ‘links to paths’ should be accommodated and Policy HLL10 on how ‘views to the countryside’ should be considered.**

**The purpose of Policy HLL5 and its supporting text is not to require slavish adherence to its provisions. It is noted that paragraph 5.27 of the supporting text to Policy HLL5 explains that applicants can depart from its requirements. HcLLPC recognises that one of those reasons may be because the scheme meets the Zero Carbon provisions of Policy HLL4 requiring a design solution that cannot comply fully with the requirements of Policy HLL5.**

**The inclusion of the requirement for Design and Access Statements to demonstrate regard to Policy HLL5 at paragraph 5.25 mirrors the approach taken by Plan:MK at its paragraph 15.5 which is supporting text to its Policy D1 ([link](#)). Paragraph 5.25 of the supporting text to Policy HLL5 explains that the policy sets out the principles of essential design considerations which have been drawn from the Neighbourhood Character Appraisals undertaken. Whilst supporting evidence for the policy, the Neighbourhood Character Appraisals contain relevant information for applicants preparing proposals. HcLLPC therefore welcomes the examiner’s recommendation to make modifications in achieving this aim. HcLLPC also accepts the suggested modifications made by MKCC in relation to**



Clause A criterion i. and would be happy to agree a modification in that regard. HcLLPC recommends the following modifications:

In the policy itself:

**A. Development proposals should acknowledge and respond to the Neighbourhood Character Appraisals, attached as Appendix B, in the design of their schemes.**

**B. Development proposals, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, will be supported, provided their scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials reflect and enhance the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape in the parish and its settlements as follows:**

#### **BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

**i. Proposals should respect sustain and, where possible, enhance heritage assets and their settings in the locality in accordance with their significance.**

...

Renumbering as appropriate to policy clauses which follows.

At paragraph 5.27:

**5.27 As with all design guidance, the standards and requirements should be regarded as setting the design brief for a proposal, but the applicant may depart from them where it can be justified in the circumstances for example, because a scheme meets the Zero Carbon provisions of Policy HLL4 requiring a design solution that cannot fully comply with HLL5 policy provisions. Given the status of the settlements as ‘Villages and rural settlements’ in the settlement hierarchy, the scope for change in character will remain very limited. However, in all cases, the burden will be on the applicant to demonstrate that the SPD and this policy have been acknowledged, understood and responded to in a way that is appropriate to the location and nature of the proposal.**

The link included above is as follows:

- <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-05/PlanMK%20Adoption%20Version%20%28March%202019%29.pdf>

#### ***POLICY HLL6: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS***

*I note the proposed identification of Character Areas as non-designated heritage assets and I will be able better to judge the justification for this during my visit to the area. However, a representation comments at some length on the proposed identification of a Special Character Area at Old Haversham: “We consider that Policy HLL6 in its current form fails to comply with the various key paragraphs of the Framework and PPG. The basis of the policy and the designation in Old Haversham fails to meet basic conditions as required by the Act. The evidence needed to support a neighbourhood plan is clear in the guidance and while there are prescribed documents that must be submitted with a Neighbourhood Plan or Order there is no ‘tick box’ list of evidence required for neighbourhood planning. Proportionate,*

*robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken. The evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rationale of the policies in the draft Neighbourhood Plan or the proposals in an Order. A local planning authority should share relevant evidence, including that gathered to support its own plan-making, with a qualifying body.” It is suggested that the evidence doesn’t justify the blanket identification of an area with, it is suggested, allegedly precise boundaries as a non-designated heritage asset. Whilst it is possible that the representation overestimates the impact that Policy HLL6 may have, it is right to identify the need for “proportionate evidence” (Planning Practice Guidance Paragraph 40 (ID 41-040-20160211)) and for this to justify the proposal. I note again that the “Environment and Design Report” that is intended to “demonstrate[s] why the areas are worthy of designation” is regarded as part of the evidence base – identifying boundaries for instance - rather than a document which would be expected to inform design decisions. Is that what is intended? It may be considered that the document falls short of what would be needed?*

*Although I note the Plan is provided for information, a representation challenges the accuracy of the map on page 32 (the representation identifies this as Map F but the document shows it as Map H): “The plan showing the extent of Archaeological Notification Sites does not match those produce by English Heritage. As such we are unsure where the evidence for this plan comes from. If you look at DEFRA’s Magic Maps and on English Natures Historical maps there are no known archaeological sites on the land owned by TM Paton and Sons. As such the plan should be redrawn.” The local authority is invited to consider and advise whether the map is an accurate representation of the “MKC interactive mapping” as identified.*

**HcLLPC can confirm that the Environment and Design Report and paragraphs 5.30 and 5.32 of the HcLLNP is intended to demonstrate why the areas, as defined, are worthy of the proposed Policy HLL6 designation. It is accepted that signposting to additional evidence to support the designations at paragraph 34 of the Report, specifically to <https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/hav/>, falls short of what may have been expected to be included within the Report. The information signposted at paragraph 34 which informed the proposed Policy HLL6 designations includes specifically:**

- **A detailed assessment of the history of Haversham, including mapping, which can be seen in full here: <https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/hav/docs/history/history.html> with additional information here: [https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results\\_Single.aspx?uid=MMK1029&resourceID=1037](https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MMK1029&resourceID=1037)**
- **A detailed assessment of Haversham Church, including mapping, which can be seen in full here: <https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/hav/docs/church/church.html>**
- **A detailed assessment of Haversham Manor, including mapping, which can be seen in full here: <https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/hav/docs/history/prop.html> and here <https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/hav/docs/property/havmanor.html> with further information available here: [https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results\\_Single.aspx?uid=MMK59&resourceID=1037](https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MMK59&resourceID=1037)**

- A detailed assessment of the Old Rectory, including mapping, which can be seen in full here: <https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/hav/docs/property/havrectory.html>, and here <https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/hav/docs/property/havsale1978.html> and in its official listing entry here <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1320193>
- A detailed assessment of Haversham Mill, including mapping, which can be seen in full here: <https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/hav/docs/mill/mill.html>
- A detailed assessment of Hill Farm which can be found here: [https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results\\_Single.aspx?uid=MMK711&resourceID=1037](https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MMK711&resourceID=1037)

The following response is a joint response which both HcLLPC and MKCC has endorsed.

Plan H of the HcLLNP is a copy of the helpful interactive online mapping system MKCC operates system <https://mapping.milton-keynes.gov.uk> and is considered to be accurate. It shows potential archaeological sites as identified by the Council, based on information from the Historic Environment Record. Identification of these sites is used as an alert, that heritage assets of archaeological interest may be present. Plan:MK Policy HE1(I) states that “Proposals will be accompanied by an appropriate desk-based assessment and field evaluation where development is proposed affecting an unscheduled site of known archaeological interest or with the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest.”

#### **POLICY HLL7: LOCAL GREEN SPACES**

*I will need to make a site visit to properly assess the identified spaces against the NPPF criteria. The appraisal of these spaces does not show evident regard for the factors included in the Planning Practice Guidance, but in these instances the evaluation appears sufficient. I note the comment at the start of the evidence document “Report from the Environment and Design Task Group” that “the fourth [area identified as a potential Local Green Space] (Verge triangle on Wolverton Road) was removed after the pre-submission consultation (Policy HLL7). Milton Keynes Council had pointed out that it is too small to qualify under the ‘local green spaces’ criteria.” However, as there is no minimum size for a Local Green Space, I would suggest that the more pertinent issue was whether there was a “particular significance” as required by the NPPF criteria.*

HcLLPC recognises that there is no lower size limit, as per Planning Practice Guidance<sup>4</sup>, and that the Environment and Design Report may give the impression that this was the reason for excluding the proposed designation following the Regulation 14 consultation. HcLLPC can confirm that its removal from the HcLLNP related to the criteria for proposed Local Green Space designation. MKCC did not comment that the site was too small, simply that they were not convinced it met the criteria for Local Green Space designation.

---

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 37-016-20140306

HcLLPC would also like to confirm that Section 3 of the Basic Conditions Statement confirms that the proposed designation of each space is consistent with planning for sustainable development and of enduring beyond the plan period as Policies HLL1 and 2 makes provision for development of a scale that is in line with strategic policy as per Planning Practice Guidance<sup>5</sup>. It also confirms that landowners were notified and given the opportunity to make representations as per Planning Practice Guidance<sup>6</sup> and that the NPPF criteria has been used in assessing each space as per Planning Practice Guidance<sup>7</sup> which is further demonstrated in Section 2.2 paragraphs 30 and 31 and Annex 4 of the Environment and Design Report.

**POLICY HLL8: WALKING, CYCLING AND EQUESTRIAN ROUTES**

*Element 1 of this Policy is a statement rather than a policy. Footpaths and bridleways are protected by other routes than Neighbourhood Plans and therefore, arguably, they should not be part of this Plan's Policies Maps. However, I can see that their location is significant to the intent of elements 2 & 3 in the Policy. I note that the Policy Maps use "existing" in their keys.*

*Although 'aspirations' are essentially beyond the scope of the Examination, I note that a representation comments: "The short term aspirations put forward by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering regarding removing stiles and providing accessible gates on the Mill Road to Little Lane footpath goes through land which is grazed by our beef cattle, as such having accessible gates are not ideal as pedestrians using footpaths often leave the gates open ..... this is a footpath and not a bridlepath." Further comments include "We have already made previous representations to state we do not support these new footpaths on our land" and "Please also note that horse riding is not permitted on a footpath, so the reference to horse riding should be deleted". Plan content should not mislead.*

HcLLPC confirms the examiner's understanding that Clause A of Policy HLL8 is necessary to ensure the operation of Clauses B and C. HcLLPC also thanks the examiners for drawing the matter in relation to 'aspirations' to its attention, of which it is already aware. Paragraph 5.39 of the HcLLNP recognises that there remain matters to resolve in realising opportunities to enhance the existing network, including working with landowners.

**POLICY HLL9: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE**

*I doubt that it can be said that the Plan "designates" a Green and Blue Infrastructure Network. As the text says more realistically, it seems to locate "the presence of Green and Blue Infrastructure assets in the parish". The related Policy Map says that the Network is "existing" (but the key to the New Havesham Inset Map seems to be somewhat confused). No methodology is provided for the identification and separation of significant open space, or already recognised spaces, from open space in general. A representation consequently comments: "whilst we agree that the integrity of the Network should be maintained and improved (as Part B sets out) we do not consider that it is appropriate to resist proposals that would result in the loss of land within the Network when there is no apparent basis for*

---

<sup>5</sup> Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 37-007-20140306

<sup>6</sup> Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 37-019-20140306

<sup>7</sup> Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 37-013-20140306

Link to Planning Practice Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space#Local-Green-Space-designation>

*the identification of land to be included in the Network and the land in question may not contribute towards the Network's integrity." Another representation comments: "Certain developments are allowed within Plan MK Linear Parks relating to tourism and leisure. As HLL9 policy C should be amended to allow such developments, otherwise it conflicts with Plan MK".*

*All this is not to say that it is inappropriate that the Plan "refines Plan:MK Policy NE4", but the value of these spaces will be open to serious challenge without clarity as to how the spaces have been identified and a more appropriate evaluation.*

*Within the supporting text, but not the Policy itself, there is reference to "opportunity for a new wildlife corridor as an extension to the Wildlife Corridors already designated [unreferenced] along the railway line and the River Ouse valley". The owner of Linford Wood indicates they have never been consulted about this proposal, but I note that it is one of a few initiatives beyond the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan. Once again, referencing should have provided essential clarity on the nature of the third party initiatives.*

*Your comments are invited.*

**Clause A of Policy HLL9 sets out the areas of land which form part of the Network and the examiner correctly identifies a typing error in the Policies Map Inset 1. HcLLPC therefore welcomes the examiner's recommendation to clarify the methodology for the identification of the Network and corrections to Policies Map Inset 1 and offers the following suggested modification:**

**At Clause A of the policy:**

**A. A. The Neighbourhood Plan designates a Green and Blue Infrastructure Network, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of providing an environmental support system for the community and wildlife. The Network comprises Local Green Spaces, Linear Parks, Nature Reserves, playing fields, woodlands, rivers, streams, lakes, other water bodies and land of biodiversity value and also includes the network of footpaths and bridleways.**

**At paragraph 5.41 of the supporting text:**

**5.41 The policy defines the presence of Green and Blue Infrastructure assets in the parish. By doing so it refines Plan:MK Policy NE4. Its purpose is linked with the vision and principles of Green Infrastructure in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes by defining a network of green infrastructure assets in the neighbourhood plan area as a means of providing environmental support for the community and wildlife. It also responds to the location of the parish in Ouse Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy Area, especially its promotion of habitat creation and linkage. The Network comprises Local Green Spaces, as defined by Policy HLL7, Linear Parks and Nature Reserves as defined by Plan:MK, woodlands, rivers, streams, lakes, other water bodies and land of biodiversity value as defined by Natural England<sup>8</sup>, and the existing network of footpaths and bridleways as defined by Policy HLL8.**

---

<sup>8</sup> Land of biodiversity value in Haversham are identified as Priority Habitats here <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>

## At Policies Map Inset 1:

**HLL78** – Existing footpaths and bridleways (also part of HLL9)

**HLL89** – Existing green and blue infrastructure network

~~**HLL9** – Green and blue infrastructure network – footpaths~~

### **POLICY HLL10: IMPORTANT VIEWS**

*I note in the supporting text it is said “The policy does not seek to prevent any development lying within a view but requires that proposals recognise and take account of these in their design” – but that does not actually accord with the wording of the Policy. Given that a significant number of factors will be taken in combination to assess any development proposal, it is not realistic to suggest that “Development proposals which would have a significant adverse impact on an Important View will not be permitted”. Potentially harmful impacts can often be mitigated by care with location, or design, and those are the types of factors that can make a new development acceptable, even though it is visible in the landscape.*

*I note that the evaluation of views is, in this instance, one of the submitted documents, presumably because this might allow a prospective developer to identify what is valued about any individual view? However, a representation is critical of the helpfulness/wording of several of the view evaluations: “the evidence base should be revised to remove views which include detracting features identified in the published character assessment; or where reliance is placed on the degraded condition of features which actually require maintenance and restoration, as also set out in the published character assessment” and “We recommend that the constituent elements of each view should be broken down to identify which are the key focal features and which are the subsidiary focal features. For example, in various views, there are features which are not representative of high-quality aspects of the landscape (as set out in the published character assessment) and which are clearly not as important for maintaining in the view as other elements. These features should be recognised as of lesser or no importance on the basis that any change in views of such features would be very unlikely to have a significant adverse impact.”*

*Your comments are invited.*

**HcLLPC recognises that harmful impacts can be mitigated by care with location, or design, as does Plan:MK Policy NE5 on Conserving and Enhancing Landscape Character. Policy HLL10 Clause B does not resist proposals entirely as it goes on to identify that there may be other material considerations which outweigh harm to an Important View which the examiner has helpfully identified that the supporting text recognises. It should be noted that the updated 2022 Milton Keynes Landscape Character Assessment was published following the submission of the HcLLNP and that significant components of the landscape which are identified as key characteristics in the 2016 Milton Keynes Landscape Character Assessment have continued to be identified in the updated 2022 Milton Keynes Landscape Character Assessment. Supporting evidence for Policy HLL10 is included within the suite of submission documents and it identifies the key characteristics that are valued about any individual view as well as a description, or ‘key local features’, of each supported by photographs. It should be noted that MKCC invited the preparation of further evidence relating to Important Views at the Regulation 14 consultation and raises no further issues on the matter in its Regulation 16 response. HcLLPC recognises that it may be considered**

that the evidence document needs to be included as an appendix to the HcLLNP and would therefore have no objection to a modification in this regard. HcLLPC offers the following modifications:

At Clause B of the policy:

**B. Development proposals should conserve, and where possible enhance, the local character of the landscape, as identified in Appendix C, and through sensitive design, landscape mitigation and enhancement measures recognise and respond to the various Important Views. Development proposals which would have a significant adverse impact on an Important View will not be permitted unless other material considerations outweigh the harm to the Important View(s).**

Include submission document "Supporting evidence for Policy HLL10 Important Views" as Appendix C to the HcLLNP.

***POLICY HLL11: LOCAL COMMUNITY USES AND PUBLIC HOUSES***

*This Policy appropriately identifies local community buildings for the application of Plan:MK policies. However, as noted in the supporting text, not all use changes will require a planning consent and therefore the Policy wording needs to acknowledge that with (say) 'where a planning consent is required'. The local authority has also noted: "The policy shouldn't rely on criteria from policies in another Plan (i.e. Plan:MK). Clause B of the policy should set out relevant exceptions for when change of use of community facilities would be acceptable."*

**HcLLPC accepts the suggested modifications and would be happy to agree a modification in that regard.**

***POLICY HLL12: MANAGING ROAD SAFETY***

*Since traffic management measures normally don't require a planning consent, these are difficult matters for a Neighbourhood Plan to influence. The local authority has also noted: "A development proposal cannot be required to go beyond mitigating its own harm and impacts." The Policy will be applicable in very limited circumstances. In my estimation, the two elements of this Policy say the same thing in two separate sets of words. Your comments are invited.*

**HcLLPC accepts the examiner's estimation and would be happy to agree a modification in that regard.**

***Policies Maps and Insets***

*The maps appear to have helpful keys readily relating back to the related Policy content but, as noted above, the key to the New Haversham Inset Map needs correction.*

**See previous comments on Policies Map Inset 1.**