



Huntingdonshire Local Plan Examination

Matter 3 – Development Strategy

Natural England Further Written Statement to Address the Inspector's Questions

15 June 2018

Infrastructure

22) Is the approach to Green Infrastructure set out in Policy LP3 justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

As stated in our response to the Proposed Submission consultation in our letter dated 5 February 2018 (ref. 234429) Natural England is fully supportive of this policy.

However, we advise that the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds, a key component of the green infrastructure network, which straddles the Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire border, should be included within the Green Infrastructure Priority Areas of the policy and indicated on the 'key diagram' and the Policies Map. This is required to ensure the protection and enhancement of this important area of ancient woodland habitat, including several SSSIs, in accordance with paragraph 117 of the NPPF.

To ensure consistency with the aspiration of paragraph 109 of the NPPF to protect and enhance the natural environment, Natural England welcomes proposed delivery of the GI Strategy projects identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (IDS) (June 2017). However, there is currently no requirement in the Plan to secure delivery of the projects. We advise that this be addressed through a minor amendment to Policy LU 3 with additional text to require relevant development (specifying this where possible) to deliver, or provide contribution to enable delivery, of the projects identified in the IDS.

Natural England strongly advocates inclusion of a requirement within this and/ or relevant

site policies for the early provision of on-site green infrastructure, ahead of residential occupation. Policy requirements for on-site green infrastructure within residential developments is welcomed by Natural England. This will provide alternative informal accessible green space for new residents; an important element of the mitigation required to minimise additional visitor pressure at sensitive designated sites. Mitigation land must be functional from the outset in order to minimise the adverse effects of increased recreational pressure to nearby sensitive sites. This will ensure that the plan is sound and consistent with the NPPF in conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including designated sites, and delivering sustainable development. We have provided further advice on this issue in response to Matter 6 question 6.

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