

Planning Committee

23 June 2023

Agenda item number 10

Consultation Responses

Report by Planning Policy Officer

Summary

This report informs the Committee of the officer's proposed response to planning policy consultations received recently and invites members' comments and guidance.

Recommendation

To note the report and endorse the nature of the proposed response.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Appendix 1 shows selected planning policy consultation documents received by the Authority since the last Planning Committee meeting, together with the officer's proposed response.
- 1.2. The Committee's comments, guidance and endorsement are invited.

Author: Natalie Beal

Date of report: 12 June 2023

Appendix 1 – Planning Policy consultations received

Appendix 1 – Planning Policy consultations received

Department for Energy Security & Net Zero - Developing Local Partnerships for Onshore Wind in England

Document: [Developing Local Partnerships for Onshore Wind in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Due date: 07 July 2023

Proposed level: Planning Committee Endorsed

Notes

The Government is proposing to make improvements to the way that developers and communities engage when an onshore wind site is being proposed in a local area. Ensuring a transparent and effective process will mean that the planning system works in England to deliver new, locally supported onshore wind generation and provide value for money for bill payers. The Government is also considering whether improvements can be made to the system of community benefits so that when local communities support hosting an onshore wind farm in their area, they are enabled to directly benefit from the cheap, clean, and secure power that is produced. The consultation seeks views from stakeholders and interested parties on how communities and developers can come together in partnerships so that engagement, consultation, and participation happen according to best practice principles.

Proposed response

Engaging the community:

1. Do you agree with the proposal to embed the principles of best practice engagement into planning guidance?
 - Yes – this way it is consistent around the country.
 - But can the guidance make it really clear what is expected at the planning policy stage and at the planning application stage? For example, what is required for a policy that identifies suitable land in terms of community engagement? Just the normal consultation process? Or more in order to have a policy? Or, can the policy simply say that community engagement is required as per the NPPF and NPPG? If one is identifying land in a Local Plan, what community engagement is required? That kind of information needs to be set out.
 - Linked to this, what is required at the subsequent application stage?
2. What other ways are there to improve community engagement when onshore wind developers consult with the local community?
 - Don't forget to engage with schools and school children and youth groups.
3. Are there other methods of engagement between developers and local communities that should be considered best practice?

- Some kind of visualisation, perhaps using VR headsets could help.

4. What are the main barriers to effective engagement between local communities and developers?

- No comment

5. How can effective community engagement help to gain community support for onshore wind?

- No comment

6. Are there ways community support for onshore wind can be defined?

- Voting of some kind, but need to consider the extra cost and extra burden on Election Services and including under 18s.

Community Benefits:

7. Do you agree with the proposal to update the existing Community Benefits Protocol for community benefits from onshore wind to reflect innovative and emerging schemes, like energy bill discounts? If so, in what ways should the Protocol be updated?

- Yes, agree with this.

8. How is the current system for community benefits from onshore wind working? Can it be improved and, if so, how?

- No comment

9. What community benefits packages are currently being offered by onshore wind developers and are the packages being offered sufficient? Are there other ways the host community should benefit?

- No comment

10. Are there new or innovative types of community benefits that could be offered from onshore wind developers, such as local electricity bill discounts? Are there alternative approaches to facilitating the provision of innovative community benefits from onshore wind that should be considered?

- Could there be some kind of scheme that seeks to improve the energy performance of the buildings in the area? Could identify how properties could be improved to reduce the need for energy in the first place and then grants to help pay for that improvement. Tackling the existing stock is important and would result in energy use and bills savings rather than just having a bit more money to pay for the same amount of energy or more.

11. What challenges do communities and onshore wind developers face when designing and implementing community benefits? Developing Local Partnerships for Onshore Wind in England Analytical Annex

- No comment

12. Do you agree with the impacts that have been identified? Please provide data and evidence to support this. If not, explain why with supporting evidence.

- No comment

13. Do you think there are other impacts that have not been identified? If yes, what other impacts are there that have not been included? Please provide supporting evidence.

- No comment

Carlton Colville Town Council – Neighbourhood Plan

Document: [Carlton Colville Neighbourhood Plan - East Suffolk Council, Strategic Planning Consultations \(inconsult.uk\)](#)

Due date: 21 June 2023

Status: Regulation 16

Proposed level: Planning Committee endorsed

Notes

It is vital that any new developments do not further impact on the loss of community and identity of Carlton Colville, do not create another isolated ‘bubble’ and do not cause further traffic congestion. This is particularly important for the land south of The Street known locally as ‘the Bell Farm development’ and Oakes Farm allocations in the Waveney (East Suffolk) Local Plan.

The vision of the Neighbourhood Plan seeks in particular to improve the quality of life and sense of community in the whole of Carlton Colville; to have the right housing to meet needs; to sustain its economy by improving movement; to increase and enhance the opportunity for active lifestyles by providing walk and cycle routes linking all areas; to better utilise the amenities that presently exist; to protect and enhance the existing historic assets including the Grade II* St Peter’s Church and Moated site scheduled monument; to safely link all developments with each other and with the surrounding natural environment; to have measures in place to positively contribute to climate change.

Proposed response

Summary

There is an objection to the use of the word ‘aim’ in Policy CC5 and to the clause that seems to exclude extensions from considering various design elements in CC1 – see below for detail.

Detailed comments

Bottom of page 2 says ‘to have measures in place to positively contribute to climate change’. This could be worded better as you probably mean mitigate, adapt and become resilient to climate change rather than contribute to it.

Figure 2.1 – it is difficult to read the small text.

4.40 and policy CC1, A, vi – the aim should be to not have light pollution, rather than limiting it. By saying limiting, it implies that light pollution is ok to some extent. The very fact that it is light pollution implies it is wasted light. It will be better to refer to good lighting management and design as well as refer to light spill from internal lighting needing to be mitigated.

Objection Policy CC1, B, I – the last sentence says ‘This only applies to new development as opposed to extensions of existing properties’ – however design of extensions is very important and this exclusion clause seems contrary to Local Plan policies and the NPPF in

downplaying the importance of design in development of all kinds. We propose splitting this into three criteria and amending the text relating to extensions:

- i. Use of a variety of brick, flint and render finishes along with roof styles that visually link development with the best aspects of the existing 'old village' area.
- ii. The choice of materials is expected to minimise the carbon footprint of development.
- iii. ~~This only applies to new development as opposed to extensions of existing properties.~~
Extensions need to be designed to reflect the 'host' building and the surroundings.

6.18 – says 'the site' – what site is that?

Objection - Policy CC5 – A – says 'all development proposals should aim to protect habitats and species...' the use of the word 'aim' weakens the policy stance in terms of the natural environment and is therefore contrary to SP6 and DM13 of the Local Plan for the Broads which say, inter alia, that 'development will protect the value and integrity of nature conservation interests'. The word 'should aim' needs to be removed from CC5 and replaced with a stronger stance.

Policy CC5 C – would be better if it were split up into two criteria as they are not necessarily related.

Policy CC6 B – it is not clear why householder applications are not to address this lighting guide. Such schemes could include lights that are poorly designed. The wording that says 'other than householder development' therefore needs to be removed.

Policy CC6 D – even though these may be for safety reasons, they still need to be designed well, for the lighting task. As such, this policy criterion could be improved to say that such schemes need to be designed to good lighting standards.