

Yaxham Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

Examiner's Clarification Note

This Note sets out my initial comments on the submitted Plan. It also sets out areas where it would be helpful to have some further clarification. For the avoidance of any doubt, matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

Initial Comments

The Plan provides a distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area. Its presentation is good. The difference between the policies and the supporting text is clear.

The package of submission documents is proportionate to the neighbourhood area in general, and to the review of the Plan in particular. In combination the various documents helpfully identify the aspects of the Plan which have been updated.

The Parish Council's ambition to review the Plan responds positively to national guidance and associated best practice. The review addresses a specific range of issues. Moreover, it properly takes account of the adoption of the Breckland Local Plan and updates to national planning policy since the Plan was made.

Points for Clarification

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now able to raise issues for clarification with the Parish Council.

The comments made on the points in this Note will be used to assist in the preparation of my report and in recommending any modifications that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

Policy ENV3

I looked carefully at the proposed additional Local Green Space (LGS) to the east of St Peter's Close during the visit. I have also noted the Parish Council's assessment of the way in which the proposed LGS meets the criteria for such designations in the NPPF.

I am satisfied that the proposed LGS is 'in close proximity' to the community it serves, and is local in character (in accordance with paragraph 106 of the NPPF).

During the visit I noted that the proposed LGS was part of the wider agricultural landscape and was crossed by an established footpath. The LGS assessment relies significantly on the local recreational benefits of the footpath, and I saw evidence of such use during the visit. Nevertheless, given that footpaths are already protected by highways legislation two questions arise:

- would there be any additional benefit to the community should the parcel of land be designated as a LGS?
- are there any other aspects of the parcel of the land which the Parish Council would suggest are 'demonstrably special to the local community' (NPPF 106b)?

The District Council's representation objects to the proposed designation. The Parish Council's comments on this representation would be appreciated, and with a specific focus on the following matters:

- the extent to which the proposed designation would be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs, and other essential services (NPPF 105); and
- the extent to which the designation would be capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period (NPPF105).

Representations

Does the Parish Council wish to comment on any of the representations made to the Plan?

Breckland Council suggests a series of revisions to some of the policies and parts of the general text in the Plan. It would be helpful if the Parish Council responded to the various issues raised.

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses and the information requested by 28 July 2025. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

If certain responses are available before others, I am happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled please could it come to me directly from Breckland Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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7 July 2025