

## Ropley Neighbourhood Development Plan

### 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. In particular it addresses a series of key issues in a positive fashion.

The layout and presentation of the Plan is good. The difference between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. The maps are generally effective. The use of colour and photographs is very helpful.

#### *Points for Clarification*

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan and have visited the neighbourhood area. I am now in a position to raise issues for clarification with both the Parish Council and the District 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. I set out specific policy clarification points below in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan.

#### *Questions for the Parish Council*

##### *Policy RNP1*

I can see how paragraph 7.008 draws a distinction between the settlement gaps and the coalescence gaps. Nevertheless, is there a specific reason why proposed development in the different types of gaps are intended to be assessed against the same policy?

**Response** – Both the Settlement and Coalescence gaps identified in the Ropley Neighbourhood Plan are expected to serve the same purpose as the gaps at a district level, i.e. to prevent the coalescence of settlements. It is merely adopting that principle at a parish level as the risk are perceived to be the same, we believe this is explained in the supporting text.

Do either or both of the gaps have the same purpose as the identified Gaps in the Joint Core Strategy 2014 (Local Plan Part 1- Policy CP23 and paragraph 7.29)?

**Response** – yes, they have the same intent.

Ropley and Ropley Dean are defined at District level as 2 separate settlements but there is no District level settlement gap defined between them. In order to comply with the wishes of local residents as outlined in the Neighbourhood Plan village questionnaire (summer 2015) we felt the need to define the space that is to be protected.

Originally this policy just talked about what the Ropley team called Settlement Gaps, the EHDC Planning team were unhappy with us naming them this as they felt there could be confusion between the District Level Settlement Gaps and the smaller more local gaps, we had identified if both were called the same name.

As a result of this feedback we re-drafted the policy identifying the smaller local gaps as Coalescence Gaps and leaving only the 2 that actually separated District level defined settlements to be called Settlement Gaps. We did not feel it necessary to write separate policies for the 2 types of gaps as their intention is the same.

The rationale for the policy is set out in more detail in paragraphs 7.002 – 7.004. The naming confusion was introduced by the feedback from EHDC.

To what extent does the volume of planning applications (and their decisions) in the proposed gap areas justify the need for their application of a specific policy approach in the Plan?

**Response** - In the last 5 years there have been a number of small to medium sized development applications (Lime Quarry, Park Lane, Dunsells Stone and Bighton Hill) some of which have been granted planning permission within the Parish. These are either adjacent to existing Settlement Policy Boundaries (SPBs) or in the countryside; all of these have had the effect of incrementally reducing the gaps between our clusters of development. The rationale behind the policy RNP1 is that if the gaps between clusters of development are not protected (as requested by local residents in the 2015 Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire) then eventually all settlements will coalesce.

Could the purpose of the policy be achieved by the application of general countryside policies in the Local Plan?

**Response** - This policy seeks to resist development which involves building in the countryside which could be permitted under CP29 which could lead to coalescence of the clusters of development e.g. solar farms, storage facilities or intensive agricultural or other types of leisure buildings.

Alternatively, could the purpose of the policy be achieved by the application of a general coalescence policy that set out to retain the separation/distinctiveness of the settlements/groups of houses without defining specific gap areas?

**Response** - It was felt that a general coalescence policy would allow incremental development to the point of coalescence. A general coalescence policy would only kick in at the point that the final gap between developments was closed. Protecting the gaps between clusters of development was identified by local residents as one of the key features of the village that they wished to see protected in the Neighbourhood Plan (2015 village questionnaire results)

The policy provides clarity as to where the policy applies, and which particular gaps are important to the local community.

### *Policy RNP2*

I saw the recent development of Colebrook Fields of Bighton Hill. In this context on what basis has the property to the immediate north-east been excluded from the proposed settlement boundary for Ropley Dean?

**Response** - The property – called Dean Cottage has an Agricultural Tie which is the reason for its exclusion. The draft East Hampshire Local Plan, currently under public consultation, also excludes this site.

What is the purpose of the final paragraph of the policy? It appears to conflict with the first sentence of paragraph 7.015. In some of the proposed settlement boundaries it might have the effect of preventing any development from taking place.

**Response** - We understand that residential development is normally acceptable within the settlement boundary as a matter of principle – the issue is one of maintaining the character and form of development within the parish which is very largely linear.

The policy is attempting to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens - ref. NPPF para 53 2012

### *Policy RNP3*

How were the Key Vistas and Areas of Significant Visual Prominence defined?

**Response** - The Areas of Significant Visual Prominence were identified following a survey by a group of interested local residents who travelled to the points identified in the attached Evidence Base document to view and photograph rural areas surrounding the village and the development within the village in order to identify the main characteristics of the Parish viewing it from the outside looking in.

This was captured in a series of panoramic photographs – see attached and the impressions and details of the points captured in the attached Evidence Base document. These photographs were used to identify open areas of land (defined by field boundaries) in which any new development would be visually intrusive and out of character with the existing settlement pattern of largely concealed properties.

**Please see the attached document (Document A) from the Evidence base which gives more detail on this.**

You will also find in the Evidence Base (referenced against RNP 3) a series of panoramic photos taken from the identified high viewpoints that show the importance of the views of the countryside surrounding the centre of the village and its clusters of development. These also show that bulk of the development within the Parish has taken place, over the years, in the hollows and river / stream beds that ran though the village in the past and is as a result virtually invisible when viewed from the elevated viewpoints.

The Key Vista points were identified following a series of “village centre walks” which were carried out in 2015 with interested local residents with the purpose of identifying aspects and features of the village which they valued. The areas identified by these walks were mapped as Key Vistas that were worthy of protection as valued by Ropley parishioner, by contrast to the Areas Significant Visual Prominence these are the views “looking out”.

**Please see the attached documents (Documents B and C) from the Evidence Base which gives more detail on this.**

It should be noted that the results from these surveys plus the initial workshops held with groups of local residents were used by the Steering Group to build initial versions of the Objectives for the Ropley Neighbourhood Plan.

There are policy overlaps between Policies RNP1 and RNP3. How would these overlaps be applied through the development management process?

**Response** – The 2 policies were developed independently, each with their specific purpose, the Ropley NP team recognise that there are areas of overlap i.e. some areas within the Parish that are covered by more than one RNP policy. We see this as reinforcing the protection of such an area. We expect the policies to be applied in an “and/or” method.

*Policy RNP4*

I agree with the intended approach set out in the second part of the policy. However how would it apply in association with permitted development rights?

**Response** - We understand that RNP4 would only apply where planning permissions apply. We would be happy for the insertion of this clarification at the start of the policy.

*Policy RNP7*

As submitted, this reads more as a process requirement than a policy. Could it be incorporated within the text of Policy RNP5?

**Response** - The rationale for this being set out as a separate policy is that RNP7 is not just intended to apply to construction taking place along sunken or narrow lanes but to any construction taking place within the Parish where traffic would have to travel along our historic narrow and sunken lanes.

*Policy RNP8*

Is there any further evidence on how the proposed sites meet the criteria in paragraph 77 of the NPPF in general terms, and on the ‘demonstrably special’ matter in particular?

**Response** - We believe that the evidence as to how the proposed sites meet the criteria of being “demonstrably special” is set out in the RLGS Evidence Base document.

**Please find this attached as document D**

What are the respective sizes of LGS1/2/3/5?

**Response**

LGS 1	-	3.668 Hectares
LGS 2	-	3.961 Hectares
LGS 3	-	2.932 Hectares
LGS 5	-	2.436 Hectares

To what extent were the owners of the various proposed LGSs notified about the Plan’s intentions during the plan-making process in accordance with national policy (PPG 37-019-20140306)?

**Response** - The owners of the proposed Ropley Local Green Spaces 2 and 3 were formally notified by letter that these sites were being proposed as Local Green Spaces on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017. (Note that the owner of proposed RLGS 2 was notified via his land agent rather than to him directly)

**A copy of the letter sent to the owners of these sites is attached as document E.**

**Proposed RLGS 1 – the Recreation Ground** is a Community Asset, it is owned and managed by the Parish Council who were notified as soon as it was suggested as a proposed RLGS, the Parish Council is supportive of its inclusion as a RLGS.

**Proposed RLGS 4 – The village Pond**, is believed to be common land, it is treated as a Community Asset. The Parish Council has taken some interest in it over the years, it also has a Management Committee. The Chair of the Management Committee was notified in person as soon as the pond was suggested as a RLGS and is very supportive.

**Proposed RLGS 5 - Hammonds Lane Field**, was added based on a significant feedback received during the Regulation 14 public consultation. The space was reassessed and added. The landowners of this space were fully engaged in the development of the NP at this stage.

The final parts of the policy offer considerably more scope for future development on the proposed LGSs than that envisaged in paragraph 78 of the NPPF (2012). Subject to the responses to the three points above I am proposing to recommend that the flexibility envisaged by the policy (for community and amenity works) is better represented in the supporting text. The policy element would then be the matter of fact approach in the NPPF. Do you have any comments on this proposition?

**Response** - We agree the change that the text outlining the exceptions be removed to the supporting text.

#### *Policy RNP14*

The third paragraph of the policy addresses both listed buildings and conservation areas. As submitted, it suggests that all buildings within conservation areas are listed. I am proposing to separate the two issues by way of a recommended modification. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

**Response** - We agree and are happy with this proposed clarification

#### *Policy RNP15*

**Response** - We understand that RNP15 would generally only apply where planning permissions apply. However, we believe that in addition permitted development requires permeable materials if over 5 sq. meters (class F part 1 schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General permitted Development) (England) order 2015).

Is this policy intended only to apply to driveways and parking areas associated with new dwellings (and where appropriate controls could be applied)?

**Response** – The policy is intended to apply to all applications for driveways even on existing properties where planning permission is required

#### *Policy RNP17*

Given the evidence about the neighbourhood area I can fully understand the purpose of the policy. However, I am minded to recommend a modification to the first part of the policy to

reflect permitted development rights enjoyed by home owners. Does the Parish Council have any observations on this proposition?

**Response** - No objections to inserting into the policy “where planning permission is required”.

*Policy RNP19*

On what basis is the site referred to as a rural exception site when it is directly allocated in the Plan?

**Response** – We would be happy to amend the text to call it an allocation site

What is meant by ‘avoids any harm’ to the Church Street conservation area and its setting? To what extent has this matter already been considered by the Parish Council in promoting the site for development?

**Response** - We would be happy to see the wording within this policy amended to read “have a design, layout and landscaping of high quality and character which respects the characteristics of the village and avoids any harm to the Church Street Conservation Area and its setting by appropriate landscaping to provide screening along the site boundary.”

*Policy RNP20*

In the second bullet point I understand how a resulting scheme should respect the characteristics of the adjacent properties. However, in what way is it anticipated that any scheme should reflect the characteristics of the village as a whole? In addition to which ‘village’ does the policy refer?

**Response** - We would be happy to see the wording of the policy amended to read “have a design, layout and landscaping of high quality and character which respects the characteristics of the neighbouring properties.”

This wording removes any reference to and confusion over “the village”.

Given the Planning Inspector’s comment on the earlier proposal for the redevelopment of the site should the ‘pattern of development’ be explicitly referenced within the generality of the ‘characteristics of the area’?

**Response** - We agree that this should include reference to linear development fronting onto the road rather than in a courtyard or urban style cul-de-sac.

*Policy RNP21*

On what basis is the site referred to as a rural exception site when it is directly allocated in the Plan?

**Response** – We would be happy to amend the text to call it an allocation site

*Policy RNP22*

Could this policy sensibly be incorporated into Policy RNP21?

**Response** - We agree and would be happy to see RNP 21 and RNP22 combined

In doing so are the definitions in the second part of the policy (on page 69) supporting text rather than policy?

**Response** - We do not believe so as the definitions qualify and give clarity as to who would qualify for one of the self-build plots and we understand that these definitions have been included in other neighbourhood Plan policies.

*Question for the District Council*

*Policy RNP20*

Is there any timescale for the determination of the current planning application for residential development on this site (30024/11)?

### **Representations**

Does the Parish Council have any comments on the following representations made to the Plan?

- Dean Farm Partnership

#### **Reference REH05:**

**Legal Compliance:** The Ropley Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to EHDC in early December 2018, some 7 weeks in advance of the deadline established in the 2018 revision of the NPPF for submission of Neighbourhood Plans to be considered in conjunction with the 2012 NPPF.

**Local Green Space notification:** The agent for the owners of the proposed Ropley Local Green Spaces 2 and 3 was formally notified by letter that these sites were being proposed as Local Green Spaces on 31st May 2017.

**RNP2 Map 1:** The site of Dean Cottage was granted permission in 1995 with a condition requiring occupation by an agricultural or forestry worker, as new dwellings would not normally be permitted in this area. Addition of this site to the SPB would most likely result in its sale on the open market and a requirement for a further dwelling for an agricultural worker.

**RNP3 Map 1 Vista C:** A very similar comment was made at Regulation 14 consultation. This is the response that was made to that comment:

*“It is considered that the viewpoints from B, C and D meet the definition of Key Vista of key to the landscape character and any development within the vista would obstruct or would have a detrimental impact on the view.”*

*Vistas connect to areas of significant visual prominence. The field is not proposed as an area of Significant Visual Prominence in the plan. However, development in the field would obstruct and have a detrimental impact on the view.”*

The consultee comments that no objections are raised to the designation of vistas B and D. In reality Vista C provides very similar views to Vista D, so should be similarly protected.

**RNP8 LGS2:** A very similar comment was made at Regulation 14 consultation. This is the response that was made to that comment:

*“Thank you for your comments, however we disagree. This field has footpaths, and key vistas, its recreational value makes it special to the local community and hence it fulfils the criteria for inclusion as a RLGS.*

*The methodology used to assess this field for inclusion as a RLGS can be found in the relevant Evidence Base document”*

**RNP18:** A very similar comment was made at Regulation 14 consultation. This is the response that was made to that comment:

*“The Neighbourhood Plan group have been advised that plans submitted for Regulation 15 examination prior to January 2019 will be considered together with the existing JCS and its associated housing requirements (including apportionment to SDNPA), as well as the existing means of assessing housing requirement. Our target remains to submit the Regulation 15 document before January 2019.”*

The review of the East Hampshire local plan has just started its initial public consultation. As the housing requirement generated by the revised calculation method did not yield a significant uplift (< 3%) in the delivery requirement the existing allocations in the current JCS for Ropley remain valid, and the reviewed plan will focus most of its allocations on the 2028-2036 period. It is anticipated that the Ropley Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed well in advance of that period and its housing allocation numbers reviewed accordingly.

- T. Hough

#### Reference REH07:

**Legal Compliance:** The Ropley Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to EHDC in early December 2018, some 7 weeks in advance of the deadline established in the 2018 revision of the NPPF for submission of Neighbourhood Plans to be considered in conjunction with the 2012 NPPF.

**RNP1:** The maintenance of gaps between the different clusters of development that form Ropley and Ropley Dean was strongly supported by the 2015 Village Questionnaire. 82% supported or strongly supported gaps between developments.

**RNP2 Village Centre SPB:** This site has never been within any of the village SPBs and its inclusion would result in the merging of two of the existing SPBs, resulting in coalescence. Additionally this site was submitted as part of the Call for Sites for the current Local Plan review and was rejected as Undevelopable as development would have an adverse impact on the rural character of the area and the intrinsic character of the countryside.



**RNP6:** As indicated in our response to your clarification request on RNP4, we would be happy to accept a modification to RNP6 indicating that this will only apply where planning permission is required.

**RNP18:** The review of the East Hampshire local plan has just started its initial public consultation. As the housing requirement generated by the revised calculation method did not yield a significant uplift (< 3%) in the delivery requirement the existing allocations in the current JCS for Ropley remain valid, and the reviewed plan will focus most of its allocations on the 2028-2036 period. It is anticipated that the Ropley Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed well in advance of that period and its housing allocation numbers reviewed accordingly.

- Simon Hombersley

#### Reference REH10:

A very similar comment was made at Regulation 14 consultation. This is the response that was made to that comment:

*“Thank you for your comments.*

*Bus 240 and its stop at the Parish Hall, to which you refer, were not considered for inclusion in the criteria as a full scheduled service is not available with the bus only running two return journeys on Mondays and Thursdays. The measurements were taken from the nearest full daily service of the 64 Bus along the Winchester Road (A31).*

*Your assessment that the exclusion of the site against RNP5.1 was a numbering error is correct and this is correct in the Regulation 14 Consultation document. Unfortunately some policy re- numbering took place after the completion of the Site Assessment Report production, therefore the correct reference is RNP 6.*

*The existing access that you mention is not considered adequate for a housing development and necessary sightlines would be impossible to achieve without considerable destruction of the hedge and bank. Thus Site 17 was “redlined” at the time of the site assessment, and is non-conformant with policies RNP4 and RNP5.*

*Ropley’s Neighbourhood Plan has allocated sufficient sites to meet the local need for new housing without needing to allocate sites along any sunken lanes.*

*Please note that RNP 5 has been amended as a result of consultation responses to a distance of 125m in place of 250m and this policy will apply by reference to the distance from the nearest two vehicle width road.*

*In a future iteration of the neighbourhood plan, this site, if proposed for development, would be reconsidered against the extent policies and assessment criteria at that time.”*

- East Hampshire District Council (Policies 1/13)

#### Reference REH11

We have assumed that the reference to Policies 1/13 above means that you are requesting our response only on RNP1 and RNP13. We have provided these, and additionally some other comments to EHDC’s consultation response:

**1.0 Plan Summary:** In order to resolve this semantic point, we would be happy to amend the first sentence of paragraph 1.003 to read *“Ropley Parish comprises several separate clusters of development in a rural area, including the village, Monkwood, North Street etc.”*

**4.0 A profile of Ropley:** We can provide these if required.

**5.0 Planning Policy Context:** We can accept this change

**6.0 Vision:** We are unsure what is being requested here, as there is no bold strikethrough to reference.

**7.0 Objectives and Policies:** We accept the two typographical suggestions.

**RNP1:** We would accept the proposed change to paragraph 7.008. In their regulation 14 submission EHDC requested that we change this policy as they felt that the use of settlement gaps within a settlement was not consistent, so we adopted the term settlement gaps where the areas being separated were settlements, for example Ropley and Ropley Dean, and used coalescence gaps to identify gaps separating clusters of development within a settlement, for example area 2 that separates the Soames/Stapley Lane area from Monkwood. Changing the policy name to “Gaps between settlements” would seem to be removing the clarity that was made following the Regulation 14 consultation.

Area 2 separates the cluster at Monkwood from that at Soames/Stapley Lanes, and Area 4 serves to separate the cluster at Swelling Hill/Gilbert Street from that at Kitwood within Four Marks parish.

Area 5 is not bounded by the A31 to the south. We accept that major roads can form effective barriers to encroachment, for example the M3 to the south of Basingstoke, but the A31 runs perpendicular to the boundary between Ropley and Four Marks parishes so does not form any kind of boundary that could prevent encroachment.

**RNP2:** We accept this change

**RNP4:** As stated above, we understand that RNP4 would only apply where planning permissions apply. We would be happy for the insertion of this clarification at the start of the policy.

**RNP8:** We accept the change to paragraph 7.028 and the listed typographical changes.

**RNP9:** We accept the removal of paragraph 7.038.

**RNP10:** We would accept the removal of the last sentence of paragraph 7.043 and the rewording of the first sentence of paragraph 7.044 to read “New development will be required to contribute towards maintaining ...”

**RNP11:** Ropley has an extensive network of rights of way and country lanes which are heavily used by walkers, riders and bicycle riders, as well as conventional roads and RNP11 is intended to ensure that new development does not erode that network, but rather enhances it and ensures appropriate junctions where they meet the conventional road network. We would support rewording of paragraphs 7.051 and 7.052 to future proof them.

**RNP13:** There has been concern over some recent developments where the trend towards steeper roof pitches has created more severe overlooking concerns, particularly when new developments are located on rising ground. This policy does not prevent developments of more than two storeys, as accommodation could be created within the roof space. In Ropley very few houses are identical, and the intent of this part of RNP13 was intended to protect that characteristic.

**RNP17:** We would accept the removal of the last sentence of paragraph 7.073. Ropley has no street lighting except for a short section of the A31 around its junction with the C18, and a number of recent developments have been successfully completed without street lighting and this has not caused an increase in crime or accidents. We would contend that the policy wording is not absolute as it states that “Street lighting should not be provided ...” and this does not completely exclude the possibility of street lighting under appropriate circumstances.

**RNP21:** As stated above, we would be happy to amend the text to call it an allocation site.

- Mike Gillott

### Reference REH13

The intention of the SPB alteration on Winchester Road was to preserve the linear nature of development in much of the village, including Winchester Road. The comment implies that leaving the SPB as currently drawn would help the provision of much needed low cost housing. The most recent example of garden development on Winchester Road has recently yielded 4 new dwellings for sale at between £600,000 and £700,000, so we believe that there would be a better prospect for low cost or affordable housing if the SPB were re-drawn and the landowners could propose a rural exception site for affordable housing.

- Historic England

### Reference REH15

No additional comments

- James Bevan/Pegasus

### Reference REH16 and REH19

The representations made in these submissions are largely repeated from their Regulation 14 consultation responses. This is the response that was made to those representations:

The rationale for the proposed amount of new housing need for the parish over the plan period to 2028 is clearly described in the neighbourhood plan. The housing needs assessment report prepared by AECOM included five projections of housing needs based on different approaches and made no recommendations that any one basis should be adopted. The Steering Group proposals for 68 dwellings considered all five approaches and takes account of the Joint Core Strategy’s spatial strategy of focusing house building at Whitehill & Bordon and in the District’s towns and larger villages. The representation received from EHDC does not dispute this approach and we are satisfied that our overall approach is consistent with the requirement to have regard to the NPPF framework and meets objectively assessed need across the parish and District.

We are satisfied that the Neighbourhood Plan has regard to the current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and have been advised that that neighbourhood plans submitted prior to January 2019 will be considered against the existing EHDC Joint Core Strategy

Our proposals for the mix of housing need take account of the 2015 village questionnaire and provide for both affordable and social housing with specific provision to restrict access to some of this housing to parish residents (policy RNP 22 Occupancy restriction)

The approach to site assessment and selection is clearly set out in the plan and its evidence base. Our approach is based on that used by EHDC for its own site assessment and is considered a reasonable framework to be applied consistently to assess the proposed desirability and priority for development. A future update of the neighbourhood plan will need to refresh this assessment framework and we note your suggestions for areas where amendments or a different emphasis could be considered. Thank you for notifying us of the error in relation to Site 14 which has now been corrected. The scoring of Site 12 as within Key Vista G is correct as the proposed site is visible from the Key Vista viewpoint. The arrows denoting the viewpoint on the Proposals Map are indicative and do not show an accurate angle of visibility splays. Therefore the site score for Site 12 is not proposed to be amended. With respect to the top ten sites 20 and 22 scored higher than, or a high as Site 14, even when rescored. Based on advice from EHDC, factors other than the pure site assessment score were considered with respect to all sites and as such Site 20 was considered to be too remote from the main settlements and Site 12 and 14 were considered to be inappropriate in their location in Key Vista G.

RNP 19 Land off Hale Close offers a unique housing provision mix with an emphasis on affordable and social housing. The landowner has offered to gift part of the site to the community as part of a development proposal which is considered positive and will protect green space in future. There are no plans to promote further development of this site beyond the proposed 14 units.

RNP 20 Former Chequers pub. We agree that development is likely and desirable on this site and that the number of units and type of units agreed remains to be determined.

RNP21 Land between Homeview and Wykeham House. This site adjoins existing housing development and offers potential plots for self-build housing with the support of the landowner.

Sites 12,13 and 14 currently comprise one large field put to agricultural use for sheep pasture and in consequence has integrity as a single site. Your proposed masterplan flyer refers to this area as a field. The subdivision into three separate areas known as sites 12,13 and 14 reflects how the landowners chose to respond to the call for sites and has therefore been adopted by the neighbourhood plan for this reason only.

We have amended the description of the site in the Evidence base to remove the word "backland" which you have objected to, but this does not change the overall view of the Steering Group on the preferred site priority for development and in any event the Steering Group has proposed the majority of this field as a Local Green Space under policy RNP 8.

We note that the masterplan that you propose includes two areas of housing provision, one on site 14 adjoining Petersfield Road that looks to be intended as market housing for five units and a second group of 4 units on site 12 adjoining Hammond's Lane which includes smaller affordable units though the location of such is not identified or quantified. We note that the masterplan proposes to gift the remaining land within sites 12,13 and 14 to the community with a suggested car park included in the northern part of the field. We welcome the willingness of the landowners to consider a community gift of land but do not consider that the village requires additional permanent car parking in this location which would be unsuitable for a car park due to the likely increased congestion of traffic at this junction that would be involved. We also note that the area of this field that is proposed by the Steering Group as Local Green Space (LGS3 under policy RNP 8) comprises sites 12 and 13 and excludes site 14.

For these reasons, we do not consider that your proposed plan amendments (paragraph 3.7.1) should be adopted.

The approach to proposed local green spaces has been set out in the plan and the assessment framework is contained within the Evidence Base appendix. Further to consultation responses, we have re-considered and accepted for inclusion an additional site (now known as LGS5) which is the land west of Hammonds Lane also in the ownership of your clients. Designation of these sites as local green spaces will preserve the special character and rural nature of Ropley village and prevent future development on them other than in very special circumstances.

We consider that the overall housing numbers provided for in the plan are adequate to meet the assessed need and have received no evidence that Ropley primary school expects or needs to expand.

We do not consider that designation of the land at LGS3 as Local Green Space contravenes paragraph 76 of the NPPF. Consultation responses to policy RNP 8 are overwhelmingly positive and in respect of LGS3 reflect the appreciation of this green space for its vistas (we note you accept the designation of this key vista from the north of the site in your paragraph 6.1.1), tranquillity and its role in preserving the historic setting and rural character of the village centre.

In respect of the land west of Hammonds Lane, we received numerous consultation responses to express support that this site should also be included as a Local Green Space. The Steering Group considered that this level of response confirmed the importance of this site to local residents and a further review was undertaken to assess whether sufficient evidence had been obtained to warrant LGS designation. A record of this review and discussion is contained in the updated Evidence Base which will be submitted with the Regulation 15 version of the Ropley Neighbourhood Plan and the decision was taken to add this site to policy RNP8 as LGS5.

For these reasons, we do not consider that your proposed plan amendments (paragraph 4.4.1) should be adopted.

In respect of policies RNP 5 and 6 we have amended the glossary definitions to define a narrow lane. We consider that significant widening of accesses or creation of new accesses is a particular issue with the sunken lanes that have higher banks and poorer visibility and have therefore retained RNP5 and RNP6 as separate policies. These policies like all the policies in the plan are intended to provide a framework within which individual planning applications can be assessed and determined. Whilst

there may be occasion when exceptions to certain policies are made by the Local Planning Authority it is not considered necessary or appropriate to introduce flexibility wording into each policy. Please also note that we are proposing additional changes to the policy wordings for RNP5 and RNP6 to reflect views and concerns raised by residents in responding to the consultation and these are detailed in the respective policy response sections of the plan.

For these reasons, we do not consider that your proposed plan amendments (paragraph 5.3.1) should be adopted

In respect of policy RNP2 we see no justification for amending the settlement boundary as you propose and consider that additional development of this part of the site would be contrary to the plan policies as regards access.

- Mr and Mrs Wood

### Reference REH18

These representations are very similar to those proposed during the Regulation 14 consultations, and were responded to in the consultation response document. The following were the responses to comments on RNP1, RNP2, RNP3 and RNP8 to which they objected:

**RNP1:** EHDC recognises Ropley (village centre) and Ropley Dean as distinct settlements in the Joint Core Strategy with which this plan is in conformity. The policy aims to prevent coalescence of settlements and clusters of development. In order to clarify this policy area we have reclassified gaps 1, 2, 3 and 4 as coalescence gaps and retained gaps 5 and 6 as settlement gaps between the parish and that of Four Marks. We agree gap 4 can be reduced in size. We believe gaps 1, 2, 3 and 4 provide protection against coalescence of clusters of development and should be retained. We are proposing a reduction in size of gap 1 and an increase in the size of gap 3. We believe the land to the South of the Dene and West of Berry Hill does provide a useful role in preventing coalescence. We can confirm Applewood House is not within Gap Area 6. In a few cases, buildings do appear within settlement and coalescence gaps which tend to follow field boundaries to maintain the integrity of these gaps and Carpenters in Gap Area 3 and the barns to the east of manor Farm in gap area 5 are examples.

**RNP2:** In the EHDC JCS the presumption in favour of sustainable development within SPBs is understood. The objective of this policy is not to impede the development of windfall sites provided that these do not harm the character and quality of the village, while placing the burden of proof of lack of harm on the applicant rather than requiring impacted residents to prove harm.

While development within SPBs is part of the EHDC JCS, all of the housing allocated in Ropley under LP2 is on SHLAA sites which were outside the SPB.

The Local plan includes an allowance for windfall developments as part of the overall district housing allocation and sites such as these would fall under the windfall allowance.

We can confirm that Dene Cottage has an agricultural tie and that it would not be appropriate to include it within the SPB as part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Map RNP2 does not show any changes around Aurea Norma.

We consider that encouraging backland development behind the houses fronting Petersfield Road and Gascoigne Lane might harm the character of Ropley and that any further development should be justified as a rural exception.

The proposed removal of the land at the corner of Dunsell's Lane and Gascoigne Lane from the SPB ensure that unsightly development does not extend down to the road at a junction where visibility is important and this area does not form part of the garden of 5 Rowdell Cottages

We do not agree that extension of the SPB south to include Highcliffe would be beneficial in order to prevent coalescence

Planning permission was granted for the second phase Hale Close development as a rural exception site on the basis that it provided affordable housing for the Ropley community in perpetuity. Incorporation of this site into the village centre SPB would reduce this level of protection.

**RNP3:** The addition of a significance qualification is not thought appropriate given the wide potential interpretation of this term.

The wording in relation to SDNP is proposed to be amended.

The land south of The Dene and West of Berry Hill is part of a proposed development / coalescence gap under Policy 2 and can be viewed from the viewpoint location marked on Map 3B.

Applewood House is not within the ASVP.

The key Vistas policy was developed following the 2015 consultation which identified a particular focus from respondents on preservation of key views and vistas looking out from the village centre.

The plan provides for housing sufficient to meet the forward needs assessment. It is considered that Vistas B, C and D meet the criteria as defined in the plan. This site is proposed as a Local green Space given its role in providing connection between the two settlements and avoiding coalescence. The plan horizon does not foresee a need for the Recreation Ground to be extended.

**RNP8:** This field (LGS2) has footpaths, key vistas and recreational value which make it demonstrably special to the local community and hence it is included as a proposed LGS. We do consider this site (LGS3) is of great importance to the village's rural character and setting and is demonstrably special to the local community as evidenced by the support for the policy within the draft Plan.

- Hornbeam Homes

#### Reference REH20

The submission seeks to justify the removal of the Ropley Lime Quarry from RNP3 and RNP10 due to the recommencement of quarrying. This quarry has been dormant for many years due to oversupply and availability of more economic sources.

The recommencement of quarrying would require a re-assessment by the Mineral Planning Authority as detailed in the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan paragraph 6.114, as follows: "All dormant sites in Hampshire will be re-assessed in the event of

re-commencement of extraction by the relevant Mineral Planning Authority to ensure that the re-commencement will not cause negative environmental or amenity impacts. In areas considered to be unsuitable for modern quarrying methods, further chalk extraction will be restricted.”

Given the negative landscape and ecological impact admitted within the representation we believe that it is unlikely that permission for re-commencement of extraction would be granted and this is therefore not a valid reason for changes to RNP3 and RNP10.

The relevant page of the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan is attached as **Document F**.

Does the Parish Council have comments on any of the other representations made to the Plan?

No other comments

***Protocol for responses***

I would be grateful for responses and the information requested by 4 March 2019. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

In the event that 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 all come to me directly from the District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Ropley Neighbourhood Development Plan.

18 February 2019



