

## **HDC response to questions regarding examination of alternative modifications to the Houghton and Wyton Neighbourhood Plan.**

1) The first question relates to Alternative Modification 1. The first Examiner advises in her report (second paragraph on page 20) that 'HDC.... consider that defining a boundary might be counterproductive.' However, HDC is now promoting a built up area boundary through Alternative Modification 1. Can HDC explain why they have altered their position on this matter, bearing in mind the specific terms of paragraph 13(1)(b) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)?

### **HDC Response:**

While it is true that at that time as part of our comments we said that we considered a defined boundary for the built-up area to potentially be counterproductive, we also stated that we did not see any fundamental conflict with existing policies. Following receipt of the first examiner's report the qualifying body were of the opinion that if applied the recommended modifications would result in a neighbourhood plan that would not reflect the community's views and aspirations. The view was taken that this constituted circumstances that met the terms of paragraph 13(1)(b) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). HDC has therefore worked with the qualifying body to address their concerns with the original modifications and the effect on the plan as a whole in order to formulate alternative modifications that would better meet the community views and be closer aligned with the original submission neighbourhood plan. This has included production of a methodology and survey to underpin the drawing up of the built-up area boundary, both of which are considered to be compatible with existing policies of the development plan.

2) The second question relates to Alternative Modification 2. Policy HWNP3 seeks to prevent the coalescence between the village and St Ives. The first Examiner, when considering the original version of Policy HWNP3, reports HDC as considering that "...decisions about which specific parcels of land should be developed 'should be determined through the full Local Plan process.'" She then goes on to state that the designation of the gap between the two settlements as then proposed would '...prevent, or at least make it harder for the District Council to plan for the strategic needs of the District, particularly given various constraints including flooding in the area'. Can HDC confirm that it is satisfied that the version of Policy HWNP3, as now proposed in Alternative Modification 2 – a policy which includes the phrase 'Development will not be permitted if, individually or cumulatively it would result in the loss of the visual or physical separation which currently exists between the two settlements.' would not prevent, or at least make it harder for the District Council to plan for the strategic needs of the District?

### **HDC Response:**

We are satisfied that the policy as now proposed is not considered to have a material effect on the ability of the Council to plan for the strategic needs of the district. This is demonstrated in the latest draft of the Local Plan, consulted upon between July and August 2017. There is a draft allocation in this area. In previous versions of the Local Plan the draft allocation included approximately 500 homes (as can be seen here -

<http://consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/portal/pp/hlp2036/lpstage3?pointId=s1348561491623#section-s1348561491623>). The allocation has been revised in the latest version of the Local Plan to accommodate the alternative modification to include approximately 400 homes (See paragraph 11.10, with reference to the diagram following paragraph 11.12 on this page- <http://consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/portal/pp/hlp2036/cd2017/cd2017?pointId=s1485342651105#section-s1485342651105>) . In this latest version of the Local Plan the full objectively assessed needs of the district are met in full.