

Table 2. Great Houghton Regulation 14 Consultation -Comments from others and suggested response

Reference	Respondent	Comment	Suggested Response
1	Lichfields on behalf of Duncan Investments	<p>GHNDP2 Great Houghton Conservation Area</p> <p>Criterion (c) of the draft policy requires that planning proposals should have regard to, and will be assessed against the following:</p> <p><i>“Where consent is needed, encourage the sympathetic location of solar panels to inconspicuous building elevations where they will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area”</i></p> <p>3.2 The landowner considers that the use of “sympathetic” and “inconspicuous” are, in this context, ambiguous terms that lack clarity, such that a decision maker would be unable to apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications.</p> <p>In order to meet the tests of basic condition (a), the landowner recommends that this part of the policy is amended as follows:</p> <p><i>“Where consent is needed, encourage the sympathetic location of solar panels to inconspicuous building elevations where they will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area”</i></p>	Comments noted, no change.
2	Lichfields on behalf of Duncan Investments	<p>GHNDP3 Sustainable Design and Construction</p> <p>The landowner objects to the wording of Policy GHNDP3 on several grounds and recommend that the policy is amended to ensure it meets the tests of the basic conditions.</p> <p>Energy Efficiency</p> <p>4.2 In respect of energy efficiency, the draft policy seeks to require the following: “Development should seek to exceed minimum standards for energy efficiency and resource use and seek to be carbon neutral, thereby making a contribution to reducing the</p>	Comments noted, no change. Policy GHNDP3 does not set a standard – development should seek to exceed minimum standards as set through Building Regulations

	<p>effects of climate change.”</p> <p>4.3 As worded, the policy would fail the tests of the basic conditions on two grounds:</p> <p>1 It requires that development “should seek to exceed” minimum standards which is not in accordance with policies within the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (‘WNJCS’) and emerging NLP2; and</p> <p>2 The policy does not incorporate any allowances or exceptions for instances where satisfying the policy would prove unfeasible, inappropriate, or unviable.</p> <p>4.4 Firstly, Policy S10 (Sustainable Development Principles) and Policy S11 (Low Carbon and Renewable Energy) of the adopted WNJCS set out the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy S10(b): “Development will be designed to improve environmental performance, energy efficiency and adapt to changes of use and a changing climate over its lifetime” [Emphasis added] • Policy S11: “Major development and sustainable urban extensions should contribute to reductions in carbon emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change through the sustainable development principles (Policy S10), so as to minimise energy using sustainable design and construction, maximise energy efficiency and the provision of low carbon and renewable energy, including where feasible and appropriate, through provision of decentralised energy.” [Emphasis added] <p>4.5 The explicit and intended wording of both policies above clearly do not require new development to exceed minimum standards for energy efficiency, but rather they require new development to either improve (as in Policy S10) or maximise energy efficiency (as in Policy S11) suggesting a markedly lower threshold as to energy efficiency standards than that required by draft Policy GHNDP3.</p> <p>4.6 Basic condition (e) requires that neighbourhood plans are “in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area)”. The PPG clarifies that, when considering whether a policy is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan, consideration should be afforded to, amongst other matters: “Whether the draft neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal provides an additional level of detail and/or a distinct local approach to that set out in the strategic policy without undermining that policy” (PPG ID: 41-074-20140306)</p> <p>4.7 Given that draft Policy GHNDP3 seeks to require a markedly higher threshold as to the energy efficiency standards of new development, this would clearly represent “an</p>	<p>– no change.</p>
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3	Lichfields on behalf of Duncan Investments	<p>Design and Character</p> <p>4.16 Criterion (j) of the draft policy seeks to require that development is designed to take account of and will be assessed against the following:</p> <p><i>“It makes a contribution to local identity, and sense of place. Proposals should not feature generic designs and should set out how they take account of the locally distinctive character of the area in which they are to be located within any submitted Design and Access Statement”</i></p> <p>4.17 The landowner considers that the use of “generic designs” is too loose of a term and fails to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics of the area.</p> <p>4.18 The use of the term “generic designs” fails to provide “sufficient clarity” for the decision maker and it is equally unclear as to how it contributes in reflecting and responding to the characteristics of the area.</p> <p>4.19 In order to meet the tests of basic condition (a), the landowner recommends that this part of the policy is amended as follows: <i>“It makes a contribution to local identity, and sense of place. Proposals should not feature generic designs and should set out how they take account of the locally distinctive character of the area in which they are to be located within any submitted Design and Access Statement”</i></p>	Comment noted. No change.

4	Lichfields on behalf of Duncan Investments	<p>Criterion (k) of the draft policy seeks to require that development is designed to take account of and will be assessed against the following:</p> <p><i>“It respects the height of the buildings in the immediate surrounding area. Future development will generally be expected to be no more than two storeys”</i></p> <p>4.21 The requirement that “future development will generally be expected to be no more than two storeys” is an onerous and arbitrary parameter that will artificially and unnecessarily constrain development.</p> <p>4.22 Such a requirement is clearly contrary to the PPG which requires that policies should be “supported by appropriate evidence” (ID: 41-041-20140306), particularly given that no evidence or justification has been presented to demonstrate that development exceeding two storeys within the Neighbourhood Area is having a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Area.</p> <p>4.23 Additionally, given that existing development in the Area is likely to exceed two storeys in height, it is very likely that future development of more than two storeys will still be able to “respect the height of the buildings in the immediate surrounding area” and thus be in accordance with the general objective of the policy.</p> <p>4.24 In order to meet the tests of basic condition (a), the landowner recommends that this part of the policy is amended as follows:</p> <p><i>“It respects the height of the buildings in the immediate surrounding area. Future development will generally be expected to be no more than two storeys”</i></p>	Amend to “ <i>Future domestic development will generally be expected to be no more than two storeys.</i> ”
5	Lichfields on behalf of Duncan Investments	<p>Materials</p> <p>4.25 Criterion (l) of the draft policy seeks to require that development is designed to take account of and will be assessed against the following:</p> <p><i>“It uses, and where appropriate re-uses, local and traditional materials appropriate to the context of the site, or suitable high quality alternatives that authentically reinforce or</i></p>	Comment noted, no change – criterion l includes the words “appropriate to the context of the site”.

		<p><i>positively contribute towards local distinctiveness”</i></p> <p>4.26 The requirement that development “uses, and where appropriate re-uses, local and traditional materials” is an onerous and unnecessary condition that will disproportionately impact the cost of delivery.</p> <p>4.27 Such a requirement is clearly contrary to the PPG which requires that policies should be “supported by appropriate evidence” (ID: 41-041-20140306), particularly given that no evidence or justification has been presented to demonstrate that new development has failed to positively contribute towards local distinctiveness.</p> <p>4.28 Additionally, the use of traditional and local building materials are typically managed through development affecting heritage assets and therefore it is inappropriate to apply a blanket requirement on all development including non-heritage assets.</p> <p>4.29 In order to meet the tests of basic condition (a), the landowner recommends that this part of the policy is amended as follows:</p> <p><i>“It uses, and where appropriate re-uses, local and traditional materials appropriate to the context of the site, or suitable high quality alternatives that authentically reinforce or positively contribute towards local distinctiveness”</i></p>	
6	Lichfields on behalf of Duncan Investments	<p>Policy GHNDP4 - Protecting Local Green Space</p> <p>5.1 The landowner seeks to comment on the objective and wording of Policy GHNDP4 on the grounds that insufficient evidence and no clear rationale has been provided to demonstrate the need for Local Green Space designations. Additionally, as the Neighbourhood Designation Area is not within the green belt, the landowner considers it would be inappropriate to try to use Local Green Space designation to attempt to impose green belt type protection on these sites.</p> <p>Evidence</p>	Local Green Space is a national policy designation that can be used by local communities. The comments misinterpret national policy for Local Green Space (LGS). The GHNDP has been prepared

		<p>5.2 As earlier established, the GHNDP does not confirm whether an evidence base has been prepared to underpin its policies or whether it seeks to rely on evidence produced by WNC in preparation of the emerging NLP2 and WNSP. Paragraphs 5.26 to 5.29 sets out the background and justification of the policy but does not make reference to or draw upon any findings or recommendations from a technical document assessing the landscape setting.</p> <p>5.3 As the policy is seeking to apply Local Green Space designation to specific sites which are currently directly unaffected by any designation, the landowner recommends that evidence is presented to justify the objective of the draft policy.</p> <p>5.4 In accordance with basic condition (a), which requires that neighbourhood plans have “regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State”, the landowner is concerned that the policy is not “supported by appropriate evidence”, as required by the PPG (ID: 41-041-20140306), and is therefore unlikely to meet the test of basic condition (a) at the independent examination stage.</p> <p>5.5 This recommended approach is supported by guidance contained within Locality’s <i>“Making local green space designations in your neighbourhood plan”</i>, a guidance document specifically prepared for local communities, Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Forums and others involved in neighbourhood planning. In planning for Local Green Space, the document sets out:</p> <p><i>“Good planning requires that green infrastructure be considered in terms of its values to the local community, local environment and local economy. This can be demonstrated by providing a clear rationale and evidence for Local Green Space designations or policies.”</i> (Page 7)</p> <p>5.6 The document later sets out the types of evidence that could be used in determining whether there is a need to improve existing green space or for new green space to be provided, which will ultimately inform consideration of Local Green Space designation.</p> <p>5.7 The landowner therefore recommends that either appropriate evidence is prepared to support justification for the policy or that it is made clear where the policy relies or draws</p>	<p>with an evidence base. Review evidence in relation to LGS, but no change to policy.</p>
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		<p>upon evidence prepared by WNC in preparation of the emerging NLP2 and WNSP.</p> <p>Existing Designations Affecting Green Space</p> <p>5.8 It is noted that Policy GHNDP4, as drafted, seeks to require that “development of the designated Local Green Spaces will only be permitted when consistent with national planning policy for Green Belt.” In this regard, it is noted that none of the identified Local Green Space sites, nor as the Neighbourhood Designation Area as a whole, are within the green belt.</p> <p>5.9 In this regard, Locality’s guidance document “<i>Making local green space designations in your neighbourhood plan</i>” recommends the following:</p> <p><i>“Where there is no green belt, it would not be appropriate to try to use Local Green Space designation to attempt to impose green belt type protection of land around an urban area. This would be a misuse of the designation and <u>would be likely to result in the neighbourhood plan running into difficulties in meeting the basic conditions at the independent examination stage.</u>”</i> (Page 15) [Emphasis added]</p> <p>5.10 Consequently, the landowner recommends that this requirement of the policy is removed for the policy to meet the basic conditions.</p>	
6	Lichfields on behalf of Duncan Investments	<p>Policy GHNDP6 - Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape</p> <p>6.1 The landowner objects to the wording of Policy GHNDP6 and recommends that the policy is amended to ensure it meets the tests of the basic conditions.</p> <p>6.2 Criterion (f) of the draft policy requires that new development should conserve or enhance the local landscape by:</p> <p><i>“Seek to minimise the encroachment of development into visually exposed landscapes and where development is proposed on the edge of the village, it enhances views of the settlement edge from the surrounding countryside and does not lead to inappropriate</i></p>	Noted, no change.

		<p><i>incursion into the surrounding countryside by reason of its siting, design, materials or use of landscaping”</i></p> <p>6.3 The landowner considers that the use of “visually exposed landscapes” is an undefined term that is ambiguous and lacks clarity, such that a decision maker would be unable to apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. In drafting neighbourhood plan policies, the PPG advises:</p> <p><i>“How should the policies in a neighbourhood plan be drafted?”</i> <i>A policy in a neighbourhood plan should be clear and unambiguous. It should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared.”</i> (PPG ID: 41-04120140306)</p> <p>6.4 Furthermore, such a requirement is clearly contrary to the PPG which requires that policies should be “supported by appropriate evidence” (ID: 41-041-20140306), particularly given that no evidence or justification has been presented to demonstrate the landscape sensitivity of specific areas in and around the Neighbourhood Ares that are vulnerable to harm.</p> <p>6.5 In order to meet the tests of basic condition (a), the landowner recommends that this part of the policy is amended as follows:</p> <p><i>“Seek to minimise the encroachment of development into visually exposed landscapes and where development is proposed on the edge of the village, it enhances views of the settlement edge from the surrounding countryside and does not lead to inappropriate incursion into the surrounding countryside by reason of its siting, design, materials or use of landscaping”</i></p>	
7	Environment Agency	Based on a review of environmental constraints for which we are a statutory consultee, we find that there are areas of fluvial flood risk and watercourses within the neighbourhood plan area. In particular, we note that the boundary does extend into areas of flood zones 2	Comments noted, no change.

		<p>and 3 of the River Nene, River Nene Navigation and Hardingstone Dyke.</p> <p>On the basis that future development is steered away from the sensitive aspects of the environment highlighted which from reading the Neighbourhood Plan is the case, we do not consider there to be potential significant environmental effects relating to these environmental constraints.</p> <p>The Great Houghton neighbourhood plan mentions the SPA (section 3.1) but this is also the Northampton Washlands which is an Environment Agency operated Flood Storage Reservoir. The Washlands has designated flood defences surrounding it. The storage area and flood defences fall under the Reservoir's Act (1975). We have looked to see if there are any Environment Agency projects within the plan boundary and confirm at present there are none.</p> <p>Your plan includes areas within the boundary village of Great Houghton which are located on Principal Aquifer. This should be considered within your plan when development is proposed here. The relevance of the designation and the potential implication upon development proposals should be considered with reference to our Groundwater Protection guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/groundwater-protection</p> <p>Any development proposed within 20 metres of a main river may require a permit under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 from the Environment Agency if works or structures are proposed in, under, over or near a main river (including where the river is in a culvert), on or near a flood defence on a main river, in the flood plain of a main river, on or near a sea defence. This was formally called a Flood Defence Consent. Some activities are now excluded or exempt. A permit is separate to and in addition to any planning permission granted. Further details and guidance is available from https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits</p>	
8	Art Group	Comments on historic development made.	Amend section 1.0 Background.
9	Great Houghton Short Mat Bowls Club	Support protection of village hall and playing field.	Supporting comments noted.

10	Historic England	<p>The area covered by your Neighbourhood Plan includes a number of important designated heritage assets. In line with national planning policy, it will be important that the strategy for this area safeguards those elements which contribute to the significance of these assets so that they can be enjoyed by future generations of the area.</p> <p>If you have not already done so, we would recommend that you speak to the planning and conservation team at your local planning authority together with the staff at the county council archaeological advisory service who look after the Historic Environment Record. They should be able to provide details of the designated heritage assets in the area together with locally-important buildings, archaeological remains and landscapes. Some Historic Environment Records may also be available on-line via the Heritage Gateway (www.heritagegateway.org.uk). It may also be useful to involve local voluntary groups such as the local Civic Society or local historic groups in the production of your Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Historic England has produced advice which your community might find helpful in helping to identify what it is about your area which makes it distinctive and how you might go about ensuring that the character of the area is retained. These can be found at:-</p> <p>https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/plan-making/improve-your-neighbourhood/</p> <p>You may also find the advice in “Planning for the Environment at the Neighbourhood Level” useful. This has been produced by Historic England, Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Forestry Commission. As well as giving ideas on how you might improve your local environment, it also contains some useful further sources of information. This can be downloaded from:</p> <p>http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140328084622/http://cdn.environment-agency.gov.uk/LIT_6524_7da381.pdf</p> <p>If you envisage including new housing allocations in your plan, we refer you to our</p>	Comments noted, no change.
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		published advice available on our website, "Housing Allocations in Local Plans" as this relates equally to neighbourhood planning. This can be found at https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-local-plans/heag074-he-and-site-allocation-local-plans.pdf/	
11	David Lock Associates on behalf of Homes England	The Plan Objectives We note the careful wording of the first objective, which seeks to minimise the impact of major development on the village rather than seeking to prevent development from happening. We commend the Plan for taking that stance and support that objective.	Support noted.
12	David Lock Associates on behalf of Homes England	The History of the Village The Plan sets out a comprehensive history of the village and its growth but does not mention the advent of the railway nor its demise. Given references in policy to improving cycle links, and the use of part of the route as an existing cycle connection, we consider it a relevant part of the village's history which could be incorporated into the Plan.	Add in reference to railway.
13	David Lock Associates on behalf of Homes England	Policy GHNDP1 The Policy seeks to retain the character and identity of the village and is supported in its objectives. As with Policy GHNDP4, protection is sought for the extent of land illustrated in Figure 20 of the NLPP2 which relates to the draft allocation for The Green. Whilst Homes England accepts and supports the need to establish a green buffer to the village, it is premature to exactly define that extent now, particularly given discussions which are anticipated to take place as part of the NLPP2 Examination. The Inspectors have sought clarification in relation to the extent and delivery of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) in relation to The Green, which means that the extent of land broad forward as green space may differ in its extents and boundaries from that identified on Figure 20 of the NLPP2. It would be inappropriate for the GHNDP to predetermine the extent of protection in the absence of this discussion, and the conclusions to be reached by the Inspectors. Homes England is willing for the green space (the final details of which would be agreed, in due course, through master planning and the grant of any planning permission) to be protected in the longer term from unsuitable development, and for that to form a green buffer to the village. For that reason, it is appropriate to establish (within the policy objective) the principle of protecting the strategic green space to be delivered by the	Discuss with Group.

		<p>development, but not to precisely define its extent now through policy. That is a matter for the Local Plan Examination and any subsequent planning application.</p> <p>We recommend that objective (a) to Policy GHNDP1 is amended to read:</p> <p>“a) Preserve the Green Buffer to be established by Policy 41 of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 or as otherwise determined by any successful planning application for land at The Green;”</p>	
14	David Lock Associates on behalf of Homes England	<p>Policy GHNDP3</p> <p>Homes England supports the objectives and criteria set out under Policy GHNDP3, noting that the policy sets out aspirations rather than obligations to exceed minimum standards.</p>	Support noted.
15	David Lock Associates on behalf of Homes England	<p>Policy GHNDP4</p> <p>Echoing the provisions of Policy GHNDP1, the policy seeks to protect the buffer to the village from the draft allocation at The Green by designating land as Local Green Space, in accordance with NLPP2 Figure 20. We have set out above our concerns that pre-determining the extent of the buffer between future development and the village is inappropriate in this case, given that the matter will be properly discussed and resolved as part of the NLPP2 Examination.</p> <p>Homes England accepts that it is appropriate to establish a buffer to the village, and that SANG will be necessary to meet other legislative and policy requirements. Such measures will be agreed in principle through the Local Plan, and in detail through any subsequent planning application. Measures will be subject to planning obligations which offer certainty as to the form, nature and delivery of mitigation. It would be appropriate to consider any long-term designation in that context, rather than to pre-determine such outcomes now.</p> <p>It is also important to consider the purpose and function of Local Green Space and whether its application here would be appropriate. At present, the land is farmed and has no public access provisions. The benefit to the community derives, in our view, predominantly from its potential function as a buffer to future development. At present, we do not consider that</p>	Discuss with Group.

		<p>the space serves the purposes of Local Green space as defined by National Planning Policy. Guidance notes that such spaces must be demonstrably special, and be of particular importance to local communities, and should not be an extensive tract of land. In our view, those requirements are not met at present: the land is not accessible to the public; it is subject to intensive arable farming which limits its ecological benefits; at around 11 hectares in area is an extensive tract of land; and, it holds no particular relevance to the village beyond its potential role as a future buffer to development. For these reasons, a Local Green Space designation is inappropriate in its current form. It may be appropriate, however, should development occur and new green space is established to benefit new and existing residents, that such a designation should be re-considered. At that time, the benefits to the local community may be demonstrable and a designation may be justified. Homes England’s concern in this case is therefore that the designation is premature, and its appropriate extent is yet to be defined, rather than having an in-principle objection to the provision of an appropriate buffer to Great Houghton (which is provided for under GHNDP1).</p> <p>For the reasons set out above, a Local Green Space designation should not be sought for site GHNDP4/6.</p>	
16	David Lock Associates on behalf of Homes England	<p>Policy GHNDP6 Homes England supports the objectives and criteria set out under Policy GHNDP6, recognising the importance of existing landscape features and the potential for establishing new and sympathetic features. Criterion (b) seeks to require in situ preservation of known assets of architectural value. It is an established role of the ‘County Archaeologist’ to determine, based on appropriate evidence (which may involve surveys or trial trenching, for example), the appropriate method of preservation which may be by record rather than in situ. It would be inappropriate to predetermine the method of preservation in advance of an assessment for any given archaeological asset.</p> <p>We recommend that objective (b) to Policy GHNDP6 is amended to read:</p> <p>“(b) Seeking to conserve by an appropriate method known heritage assets of archaeological value, including “ridge and furrow”;</p>	General support noted, no change to GHNDP6a.

17	David Lock Associates on behalf of Homes England	<p>Policy GHNDP9</p> <p>We support the provisions of Policy GHNDP9 which seeks to minimise traffic impacts on key elements of village infrastructure. We support the ambition to improve walking, cycling and public transport provision including extensions where appropriate.</p>	Support noted.
18	W Garner	<p>Not only the junction of the High Street with the A428 is a major concern. The stretch of the A428 between Great Houghton and Little Houghton has recently been the location of yet another road accident, leading to yet another fatality. I believe this stretch of the A428 should be included in the policy.</p>	Amend GHNDP9b.