

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: JILL KINGABY BSc (Econ) MSc MRTPI

Simon Birkett
Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum

cc: Simon Walsh
Westminster City Council

Examination Ref: 02/JK/KNP

Via email: [REDACTED]

cc: [REDACTED]

18 April 2018

Dear Mr Birkett

Examination of the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Development Plan

I am very grateful to the Forum for its detailed comments on the Regulation 16 representations to the submitted Neighbourhood Plan.

I would like to clarify at the outset that the statutory procedures relating to the conduct of an examination are minimal, relating principally to the limited circumstances in which a hearing may be held and the scope of the examiner's report. As such there is considerable flexibility afforded to the examiner to use proportionate and appropriate procedures to conduct the examination effectively.

As you will be aware, there is no statutory right for a qualifying body (in this instance the Forum) to respond to the Regulation 16 consultation representations. Similarly, should I seek to request a Statement of Common Ground between relevant parties, I may do this at my discretion. Both procedures in my view fall within the reasonable practice parameters of a neighbourhood plan examination.

The "*Appendix 1: Forum's comments on Regulation 16 representations – 4 April 2018*" is a thorough document (extending to 145 pages) which has sought to address all the comments received on the submitted Neighbourhood Plan from nearly 100 persons and parties. Together with the "track change" update to the Neighbourhood Plan, and the detailed representations themselves, the Appendix 1 document will be most useful to me, as I undertake the examination of the Plan.

I note that a significant number of the comments, and requests for amendments to be made to the Plan, were received from Westminster City Council (WCC). The WCC is the local planning authority for Knightsbridge, and will have responsibility for determining any planning applications which might be made in the area in future. In the event that the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Plan proceeds to referendum and is adopted, it will form part of the development plan for the area when planning applications for Knightsbridge are considered. In these circumstances, and because the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood planning require Plans to be in general conformity with strategic local policy, I need some assurance that the WCC is content with the proposed modifications to the Plan which the Forum is now proposing. Therefore, I request that the Forum meets with WCC's Planning Officers, and works with them to produce a Statement of Common Ground. This should be based on

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the track change version of the Neighbourhood Plan Part 1. It should confirm where agreement has been reached and highlight any remaining items of disagreement, resolving differences as far as is possible.

I note that the Forum has put forward a number of proposed modifications in response to the representations from many other parties (not just the WCC). I am satisfied, at this stage, that the representations and responses to them from the Forum are clear, and that I do not need any additional written information from other parties and persons. I am most grateful to everyone who has sent in their comments, which will receive my full attention during the examination process.

One issue which I will address at this stage is the description of the submitted Plan as “Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Plan 2017-37 Part 1”. The Summary at the beginning of this document describes the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan “Part 1”, as well as the Knightsbridge Management Plan (Part 2) and Knightsbridge Evidence Base (Part 3). I consider that it is misleading to readers to infer that the Neighbourhood Plan comprises three parts. In reality, the submitted Neighbourhood Plan is a stand - alone document; the Management Plan and Evidence Base are supporting, evidential documents and must be treated separately. My role is to examine the Neighbourhood Plan, and not the other two documents. I propose to recommend an alteration to the Plan’s cover and Summary to delete references to “Part 1”. I shall have regard to the track changes made by the Forum to the documents named as Part 2 and Part 3, but I shall not comment on them in my examination report. I hope the above is clear, but please contact the IPe office if it is not. I would appreciate a response as soon as possible, ideally by 2 May 2018.

In the interests of transparency, may I ask that the local authority and qualifying body ensure a copy of this letter and any respective responses are placed on the relevant council websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

Jill Kingaby

Examiner

