

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF KNIGHTSBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: Jill Kingaby BSc (Econ) MSc MRTPI

Simon Birkett
Chair - Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Forum

Sean Walsh
Westminster City Council

Examination Ref: 01/JK/KNP

Via email: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

06 March 2018

Dear Mr Birkett and Mr Walsh

KNIGHTSBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Plan for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters.

1. Examination Documentation

I confirm that I have received a complete submission of the draft Plan and accompanying documentation, including the Basic Conditions Statement, the Consultation Statement and the Regulation 16 representations, which will assist me to undertake the examination.

Subject to my detailed assessment of the draft Plan, I have not at this initial stage identified any very significant and obvious flaws in the Plan that might lead me to advise that the examination should not proceed.

2. Site Visit

I intend to undertake a site visit of the neighbourhood plan area in due course, and will inform you of its timing before it takes place. This will help my assessment of the draft Plan, including the issues identified in the representations.

The site visit will be undertaken unaccompanied. It is very important that I am not approached to discuss any aspects of the Plan or the neighbourhood area, as this may be perceived to prejudice my independence and risk compromising the fairness of the examination process.

3. Written Representations

At this stage, I consider the examination should be conducted solely by the written representations procedure, without the need for a hearing. However, I reserve the option to convene a hearing in future should a matter(s) come to light where I consider that a hearing is necessary to ensure the adequate examination of an issue, or to ensure that a person has a fair chance to put a case.

4. Further Clarification

The Forum has indicated to IPe that it wishes to comment on the Regulation 16 responses, which have been made and form part of the evidence base for my examination of the neighbourhood plan. In assessing whether the Plan meets the basic conditions and other legal requirements, I consider that it would be most helpful to understand the Forum's position on many of the points raised. I note that the 99 responses cover a range of important issues. When responding to the Regulation 16 representations, I would be grateful if the Forum could assess whether the additional information necessitates amendments to the policies, text and other material in the submitted plan. Where amendments are deemed necessary to meet the Basic Conditions, I request the Forum to put forward the precise changes to wording of policy and text, and any changes to illustrative material, which it wishes to have made.

You will appreciate that in putting forward any amendments, it is important that these are not so significant as to risk undermining the public engagement and consultation undertaken on the draft Plan to date. Any need for significant amendments might point to the withdrawal of the draft Plan or, at the very least, the need to undertake a further round of consultation on the proposed changes (and, where appropriate, updated evidence).

Examination Timetable

As you will be aware, the intention is to examine the Plan (including conduct of the site visit) with a view to providing a draft report (for 'fact checking') within 4-6 weeks of submission of the draft Plan. As the Forum has requested that it will require an additional 4 weeks, until 4th April 2018, to respond to the Regulation 16 representations, it is clear that I will not meet the anticipated usual timetable and this will have to be extended. However, once I have received the additional information, and conducted the site visit, the IPe office team will provide an indication of the expected date for receipt of my draft report (assuming that there is no need for a hearing).

If you have any process questions related to the conduct of the examination, which you would like me to address, please do not hesitate to contact the office team in the first instance.

In the interests of transparency, may I prevail upon you to ensure a copy of this letter, the e-mail from the Forum to IPe requesting further time to consider the Regulation 16 representations and consequential responses, are placed on both the local authority and Forum websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

Jill Kingaby

Examiner