

## Responses to Examiner's Questions (Part 2), January 2023

### Policy PEN2 Portishead's Green and Blue Infrastructure

#### Examiner's Question:

Policy PEN2 seeks to protect Portishead's Green and Blue Infrastructure network and refers to Figure 4, where eight different types of designation are mapped, all with different references and names. Please can the Town Council confirm which of these mapped categories are intended to be included in the term "Strategic Green and Blue Infrastructure" referred to in Policy PEN2? I note that there are reference numbers for the Local GBI corridors - ie LGBI1-4 – which are carried through from the Portishead Neighbourhood Development Plan Green and Blue Infrastructure Report to the Neighbourhood Plan mapping but there is no such numbering for the other GBI assets. I would welcome the Town Council's comments.

#### Town Council Response:

The policy is intended to refer to Portishead's Green and Blue Infrastructure network, which includes all types of designation included on Figure 4 (including the strategic corridors). It is therefore proposed that the word 'strategic' is deleted from the first line of policy PEN2, so that the first sentence reads as follows:

#### **POLICY PEN2 - PORTISHEAD'S GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE**

*The integrity, multi-functionality, quality and connectivity of the ~~strategic~~ Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) network will be protected, enhanced and managed...*

### Policy PEN4 Biodiversity

**Examiner's Question:** The second paragraph of Policy PEN4 refers to statutory and non statutory sites in Figure 4 and Priority Habitats in Figure 6 but it is unclear if the same guidance is meant to apply to each. Please can the Town Council clarify what is meant?

#### Town Council Response:

The Neighbourhood Plan aims to recognise, and contribute towards the protection and enhancement of, all designated sites in the Neighbourhood Area. Though statutory designations benefit from the strongest protection from development that would adversely affect them, the Neighbourhood Plan recognises and reflects the local priority that non-statutory and locally designated sites should also be protected from development that would adversely affect them.

For clarity of the policy wording, we suggest moving the final sentence of the second paragraph to the top of the final paragraph, so that the policy reads as follows:

#### **POLICY PEN4 - BIODIVERSITY**

*Development proposals will be expected to deliver a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity, including the enhancement and creation of ecological networks within and, where relevant,*

*connecting with those beyond the Plan Area (see Figure 4). Proposals that exceed the minimum requirement of 10% biodiversity net gain will be particularly supported.*

*Protection, connection and enhancement of statutory and non-statutory nature conservation sites (as shown on Figure 4) is a priority for the Neighbourhood Area and development proposals must demonstrate sensitive responses to these sites where necessary, such as accommodating a buffer zone to protect sensitive habitats, or demonstrating that opportunities to reduce indirect impacts, such as light pollution, have been taken. ~~Specific attention for priority habitats, as identified on Figure 6, and protected species should also be demonstrated.~~*

*Development that will adversely affect the integrity of sites of international importance for wildlife, including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites, will not be permitted.*

*Any proposals that could affect sites of international importance for wildlife, including Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar Sites must carry out screening for Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).*

*Development which is likely to have an adverse effect on an Site of Special Scientific Interest (either individually or in combination with other developments), will not normally be permitted.*

*Specific attention for priority habitats, as identified on Figure 6, and protected species should also be demonstrated. Development which could harm, directly or indirectly, species which are legally protected, or species and habitats that have been identified as Species or Habitats of Principal Importance in England (also known as Section 41 or 'Priority' species and habitats) will not be permitted unless the harm can be avoided or mitigated by appropriate measures.*

## **Policy PEN7 Other Green Spaces**

**Examiner's Question: Policy PEN7 refers to other green spaces to be protected and Figure 9 shows seven different types of other green space – can the Town Council confirm whether the policy is intended to apply to all the "Other green spaces" shown on this map? Open space standards generally only apply to certain types of open space; can the Council confirm which categories of other green or open space, referred to in the second and third bullet points of Policy PEN7, such standards are intended to apply.**

Town Council Response:

Yes, the policy is intended to apply to all of the 'other green spaces' shown on Figure 9. The open space standards referred to are set out in North Somerset Council's Development Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Development%20contributions%20supplementary%20planning%20document.pdf>), which includes 'Green Infrastructure Standards' (p.59 onwards).

## Policy PTC1 Protection of Portishead Town Centre Character and Vitality

**Examiner's Question:** Policy PTC1 refers to the Portishead Town Centre as defined in the emerging North Somerset Local Plan, under policy DM60. However, this appears to be a policy in the Sites and Policies Plan: Development Management Policies (adopted in 2016), not the emerging plan. It also refers to mapping in Figure 17, although I think this should be Figure 18. Please can the Town Council and North Somerset Council confirm which is the correct mapping for the town centre associated with adopted DM policy DM60. If Map 18 needs to be corrected, please provide an amended plan.

Town Council Response:

The policy and supporting text should refer to the relevant adopted Local Plan policies. It should also refer to Figure 18, as the Examiner suggests. We therefore propose the following amendments to the policy and accompanying 'Local Policy Context' list:

### ***POLICY PTC1 - PROTECTION OF PORTISHEAD TOWN CENTRE CHARACTER AND VITALITY***

*Within Portishead Town Centre (defined by North Somerset ~~emerging~~ Local Plan (policy DM60) and illustrated in Figure 17~~8~~), proposals for development including changes of use and operational development will be supported where they:*

- *Conform with North Somerset Local Plan Policy~~ies~~ DM60 (Town Centres)*
- *Contribute to the continued development of a diverse, high value and low carbon economy*
- *Protect or increase the viability and quality of retailing, commercial and community service ground floor frontages, and the vitality of the evening economy*
- *Conserve or enhance the character of the town centre and, where appropriate, the Town Centre Conservation Area.*

### ***Local Policy Context***

*CS1 Addressing climate change and carbon reduction*

*CS20 Supporting a successful economy*

*DM47 Proposals for economic development ~~within towns and defined settlements~~*

*DM60 Town Centres*

*DM63 Primary ~~Shopping Areas Frontages~~*

*DM64 Primary Shopping Frontages*

*DM66 ~~The sequential approach to retail development within or Adjacent to Town Centres~~*