

SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
FRAMEWORK

CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN
DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT

PRE-EXAMINATION MEETING

GUIDANCE NOTES

Pre-Examination Meeting – 22nd April 2008

Hearing Sessions Commence – 24 June 2008

Issued: 25 March 2008

Swindon Borough Council Local Development Framework Central Area Action Plan Examination

Pre-Examination Meeting – Guidance Notes for Representors

1. These Guidance Notes provide information to all who have made representations on the Swindon Central Area Action Plan, whether you intend to appear at the Examination or rely on original representations. It is hoped that by providing them early in the process they will help to make the Pre-Examination Meeting (PEM) as useful and helpful as possible, as well as providing background information on the approach to the Examination hearing sessions. A fuller version will be circulated after the PEM, reflecting what has been decided at that meeting. Everyone who has made representations may find the following document useful: Development Plans Examination – A Guide to the Process of Assessing the Soundness of Development Plan Documents, published by the Planning Inspectorate. An electronic copy of the document is available via the following link:

http://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/pins/appeals/local_dev/develop_plan_docs.pdf

This may well answer any questions you may have. The Programme Officer could supply a hard copy if you do not have access to the internet.

2. The PEM will be held on Tuesday 22nd April in Swindon Borough Council's Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, SN1 2JH, commencing at 10.00am. The hearing sessions into the soundness of the Central Area Action Plan will begin at 10.00am on Tuesday 24 June 2008 in the Pilgrim Centre, Regent Circus, Swindon SN1 1PX. The Inspector appointed to hold the Examination is Linda Wride Dip TP MRTPI
3. The role of the Inspector is to consider whether the Swindon Borough Council Local Development Framework Submission Central Area Action Plan meets the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the associated Regulations, and whether it satisfies the nine tests of soundness set out in the relevant Government guidance on Local Development Frameworks (PPS12) at paragraphs 4.23 and 4.24. The presumption of PPS12 is that a development plan document is sound unless "it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered at the Examination". Following the closure of the Examination, the Inspector will prepare a report with precise recommendations that will be binding on the Council.
4. The Programme Officer for the Examination is Ian Kemp. He is not a Borough Council officer but works under the direction of the Inspector. Mr. Kemp can be contacted on 01788 562864, mobile

07723 009166, email idkemp@ntlworld.com and at the following address:

36 Campbell Street
New Bilton
Rugby
Warwickshire
CV21 2HY

5. Mr. Kemp's main duties can be summarised as follows:
- Acting as the channel of communication outside the Examination sessions between the Inspector, Council and members of the public
 - Liaising with those involved in the examination to ensure that the event runs smoothly
 - Ensuring that the documentation connected with the Examination is received, recorded and distributed
 - Maintaining a library of examination documents

The Pre - Examination Meeting (PEM)

6. The main purpose of the PEM is to explain and discuss the procedure for the hearing sessions and how they will be managed. Shortly before the PEM, the Programme Officer will be circulating the draft timetable for the hearings sessions together with the Inspector's draft list of matters and issues to be examined. The latter will be accompanied by an invitation from the Inspector to all participants for them to respond to identified matters and issues by way of a written statement. There will be an opportunity at the PEM for comments to be made about the structure of the matters and issues so that they can be finalised shortly afterwards. The PEM also gives an opportunity for any other procedural queries to be raised with the Inspector. All those who have made representations about the Central Area Action Plan, and especially those seeking changes to it, are urged to attend, or be represented, as this will make the Meeting more useful and assist with the subsequent running of the Examination. However, if attendance is not possible it will not prejudice the right to appear at the Examination. The PEM is **not** intended as a forum for discussion on the content or merits of the Central Area Action Plan; these are matters for the Examination hearings.

The Hearings Sessions

7. It is currently anticipated that the hearing sessions of the Examination will extend over a three week period, interspersed by visits to various sites. The hearing sessions will generally last from 10.00 to 17.00 hours. Sessions held on Fridays will start at 09.30 and finish at 13.00 hours.

The hearings sessions will be modelled on the procedures adopted at Examinations-in-Public of old-style Structure Plans and current Regional Spatial Strategies. Sessions will take the form of a series of round-table debates on each of the principal matters identified by the Inspector in her final list of matters, issues and participants.

8. Any person or organisation who made representations will be invited to submit a statement on any of the matters, addressing the set of issues posed by the Inspector. Such statements should be limited to 3000 words on any one of the main matters. If necessary, more detailed material can be submitted in the form of appendices. However, any such material should not duplicate the content of documents already included in the circulated list of core documents. All such statements (including those prepared by the Council) should reach the Programme Officer by noon on the 23rd May 2008 and be clearly marked in the top right hand corner with the relevant matter number and representor reference number (to be advised). A separate statement should be submitted for each matter addressed.
9. Those who made representations to the Central Area Action Plan but do not intend to participate at the hearings in person are welcome to make a **written response** to any of the Inspector's final list of matters. Such statements must be submitted to by noon on the 23rd May 2008.
10. Statements will be circulated by the Programme Officer to other participants in the same session. To avoid long delays in this process it will be essential to supply the correct number of copies. **Those participants submitting statements should therefore supply a sufficient number of copies for one to be issued to each participant at the relevant session (to be advised in due course)** together with three additional copies for the Programme Officer and Inspector. All documents should be A4 in size, with plans folded so as not to exceed this size. Any measurements should be given in metric units. Paragraphs and pages should be numbered. Appendices should have a contents page and pages should be numbered consecutively. In fairness to all parties, those not supplying the requested number of copies may be asked to obtain those of other parties directly from the website.
11. Those submitting **written representations** need to supply enough copies to be circulated to all participants attending the session together with three additional copies for the Programme Officer and Inspector. Again exact numbers required will become clear in due course but if anyone is unsure the Programme Officer will be happy to advise directly.

12. In addition to the above, a single electronic copy (as a word document or in 'pdf' format) should be sent to the Programme Officer as an e-mail attachment. This will allow swift publication on the examination website to the benefit of all parties.

Inspector's Discussion Notes

13. After the Inspector has received the statements she intends to prepare tailor-made discussion notes for each of the examination sessions. These will aim to identify the main themes emerging from statements and a further refined list of detailed topics and questions. The notes will include a starting order for contributions to the debate but the Inspector will allow the debate to develop naturally as long as it remains within the focus of the prescribed issues and is providing her with information useful to her consideration of the soundness tests. The discussion notes will be made available 1-2 weeks before each session takes place, and where possible will also be placed on the examination website.

Core Documents

14. All core documents will be held at the Swindon Borough Council Offices prior to the Examination and will be updated and maintained by the Programme Officer during the Examination. Where possible electronic copies of core documents are also available via the Examination website. Anyone interested in viewing any of the documents held in the Examination library should contact Mr. Kemp before they are intending to view to ensure availability.

Site Visits

15. The Inspector will make site visits before, during and after the Examination to see areas or sites that have been referred to. The Inspector would hope to do most of these unaccompanied but if, exceptionally, there are features that cannot be seen without going onto private land, a request for an accompanied visit should be made to the Programme Officer and the visit will then take place with the representor and a Council officer.

Miscellaneous Matters

16. A detailed note on housekeeping matters will be circulated after the PEM. During the Examination the Programme Officer will have an office at the venue. He will keep a library of Examination documents available for inspection and display the programme for the Examination, together with any other relevant information, on an Examination notice board. He will also endeavour to meet reasonable requests for photocopying, subject to payment of any

charges made by the Council. Please note that requests to assist with producing representors' evidence or copy large volumes of material cannot be met.

17. Any participant who has a disability that could affect their contribution to the Examination should contact the Programme Officer as soon as possible so that any necessary assistance can be provided.

Appendix 1 – Guidance for Unrepresented Representatives & Useful Reading

1. You do not need to engage a professional representative in order to participate in the hearings sessions. The system is designed to be 'user friendly' and these notes suggest how you can make the best use of your time and be ready to participate in the process as effectively as possible.
2. The following publications give guidance and advice on the new development plan system:
 - PPS12 - Local Development Frameworks; Department for Communities and Local Government
 - Companion Guide to PPG12 - Producing Local Development Frameworks; Department for Communities and Local Government
 - Local Development Frameworks – Frequently Asked Questions; Department for Communities and Local Government
 - Development Plans Examination – A Guide to the Process of Assessing the Soundness of Development Plan Documents; Planning Inspectorate
 - A Brief Guide to Examining Development Plan Documents; Planning Inspectorate

These documents can be downloaded from the websites of the Department for Communities and Local Government (www.communities.gov.uk) and Planning Inspectorate (www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk) respectively. Copies are also kept in the Examination library.