

Questions for Clarification Blunsdon Neighbourhood Development Plan.

I am Deborah McCann, the independent examiner of the Blunsdon Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019-2033. I seek clarification on the following policy/supporting information. These questions are directed to the Qualifying Body.

Policy 1: Allocation of Sites for Housing

Planning applications for minor developments on the three sites allocated within this plan will be supported where: -

- ✦ *They comply with all other policies in this plan especially, but not exclusively, Policy 4 which encourages early interaction with developers and Policy 5 regarding the Village Design Statement; and*
- ✦ *They comply with the provisions of the Development Brief outlined in Appendix J; and*
- ✦ *There are no adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment of the area or the built environment of the BENP area, or such impacts are appropriately mitigated; and*
- ✦ *Flood Risk Assessments and drainage strategies in accordance with Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 Policy EN6: Flood Risk are provided*

Question

Please Clarify the following:

- **How capacity for the sites was calculated on the basis that they all appear to have the potential to accommodate more than the number of dwellings indicated.**
- **why they are annotated differently on Fig 7**

Policy 3: Rural Buffers

The character and identity of Blunsdon Village will be preserved and enhanced by:

- ✦ *The establishment of three rural buffers as shown on FIG 9 which should remain as open countryside.*
- ✦ *Ensuring that Blunsdon remains a separate and distinct entity separated from the Swindon Urban area.*
- ✦ *Respecting the local landscape character including its setting and views into and out from the village.*
- ✦ *Respecting the setting of the Broad Blunsdon and Lower Blunsdon Conservation Areas by conserving their special character and appearance.*

Development proposals in these Rural Buffers will only be supported where they are in accordance with SBCLP 2026 Policy EC5 (Farm Diversification) or are an essential requirement directly related to the economic or social needs of the rural community⁷. Where there is potential for development as set out in this policy and which results in harmful impacts, appropriate mitigation measures will need to be proposed.

Question

It is not clear why the proposed “buffer” areas were selected, why some areas were included and others excluded and what the “buffer” is intended to achieve in policy terms. Please can you clarify the selection process undertaken, how and why each area was finally selected and the intention of the policy when considering the areas selected.

11th February 2020