

Enquiries to: Penelope Tollitt  
Email: Penelope.Tollitt@wycombe.gov.uk  
Direct line: 01494 421519  
Our ref:  
Your ref:  
Date: 19 October 2016



Linda Cannon Clegg  
Chairman Risborough Area Residents Association  
Princes Risborough  
Bucks  
HP27 9BN

Sent via email, linda.cannon8@btinternet.com

Dear Linda

Thank you for your letter of 6 October 2016. I must admit this is not the letter I was expecting. When we spoke on the phone on 15 August you set out that you thought that there were numerous inconsistencies in the assessment of the sites in the plan. I said I would welcome you sending that information into us and that we would accept it as a late representation as the consultation had closed on 8 August. But your letter only includes a few examples, rather than the thorough analysis you had indicated RARA had undertaken.

I was also disappointed to hear from Matt Walsh, the Chairman of the Steering Group, that at the most recent meeting of the Steering Group you mentioned to him that you are not intending to submit the more detailed analysis.

I attended a meeting with yourself and some of your colleagues on 15 June to answer some of your concerns about the content of the plan, and the way it had been prepared. At that meeting, I shared with you the 'table' from the Princes Risborough Steering Group Terms of Reference (also on the website) that sets out the aspiration to work on the basis of 'constructive dialogue' rather than old-fashioned 'decide announce defend' – to put our energies into solving problems not scoring points, or using smoke and mirrors to confuse or bamboozle 'lay' people. The Council has sought to operate by those 'constructive dialogue' principles. To date, other members of the group have by and large sought to work to that agenda as well. Some people might interpret your withholding this information as an unwillingness to be constructive, or an attempt to push the Council into a 'decide announce defend' position. I am sure that this is not the case, but – self-evidently – we cannot take into account information that we have not received, let alone be constructive about it.

All that said, we are now well into the process of assessing the comments we have received and making recommendations on the sites for the final plan. Even if you were to now send in that information, it would be effectively too late for us to take it into account which is a great shame.

More recently, I have received another letter from you, dated 17 October, on infrastructure.

Planning and Sustainability - Penelope Tollitt, Head of Service

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However, as you are well aware, and as you indeed refer to in your letter of 6 October, we are not in a position to enter into detailed correspondence answering questions either on the new Local Plan or the Princes Risborough Town Plan. For both plans we held exhibitions where we were able to answer questions, and we have also held some Q&A sessions on the local plan to allow questions to be answered.

In terms of the content of your comments, you can be assured that all these matters are already being considered, as I do not believe you have raised anything that has not already been raised, either by RARA or by others. Indeed, you have raised many of these questions, which we have answered, on previous occasions

For example, when I attended a meeting with you and others in June to provide background to the project, I explained the background to the Steering Group, including how David Johncock wanted to ensure it reflected local control, given that a Neighbourhood Plan was not administratively an option, and so had passed this 'client' function to the Town Council to set up and Chair. RARA has had a seat on this Group through the entire process. I also set out the big picture of how the Duty to Co-operate works, and how the 'numbers' are playing out across the County. I think we also covered Green Belt, AONB, the situation in relation to 'the road' and a great deal besides.

More recently you have become the RARA representative on the Steering Group. Recognising that you had not been party to the previous discussions, the Chairman of the Steering Group and my colleagues Rosie Brake and Ian Manktelow gave you a full briefing of the background on 5 September to ensure you were not disadvantaged at future meetings.

You were also able to participate fully in the 'scrutiny' Steering Group meeting that took place on 8 September. Extensive notes of the answers given were made. A draft was circulated within 5 working days of the meeting, inviting comments before the next meeting of the steering group.

You also attended one of the Q&A sessions for the local plan that we held in the Council Chamber at WDC in early September, where you asked many of the questions that we had answered at the 'scrutiny' Steering Group meeting.

You are also aware of the briefing notes we have prepared on some of the more frequently asked questions, which are on our website.

However, given that in August I invited a late representation, we will make an exception in this case and log your two letters of 6 and 17 October as late representations on the Princes Risborough and Local Plan, and consider them through that process as we make final recommendations on the plans. However, we really cannot accept any further representations from RARA as this would be unfair to others as we are no longer accepting comments we receive as late representations.

We have written to everyone who has made a representation on the new Local Plan, towards the end of August, advising them how we would be dealing with their representations. A copy is enclosed.

A few final observations:

The questions you have on process will be dealt with through the Local Plan examination. We are required to prepare a consultation statement for the Inspector setting out how we have engaged with communities and how that has influenced the final outcome of the plan.

If there remain concerns that you believe mean the plan is unsound you do, of course, have the right to appear before the Inspector at the hearings that will be convened. I would just add that, in my experience working in planning in a variety of places, the public engagement on the Princes Risborough Town Plan is best practice. This is not to say that it has been perfect but considerable resource has been devoted to engagement, and, in addition to the Steering Group, we have held a number of public exhibitions and meetings which have always been well attended.

On the specific point of the chairmanship of the Steering Group, Alan Turner was appointed Chairman of the Steering Group as he was Chairman of the Town Council at the time. When the Town Council changed its Chairman, the new Chairman (Matthew Walsh) took over chairing the Steering Group. Meantime, Alan Turner was appointed as the Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning & Sustainability and I am advised by David Johncock that his appointment was based solely on his proven and extensive knowledge of "Planning" and his performance as a long-standing member of the Planning Committee. No-one, including the representative from RARA, raised any concerns at the time Alan became Deputy Cabinet Member, and the plan did not significantly change at that time to evidence your statement that he was compromised by government targets and the need to meet them.

In relation to the challenge from AVDC, we will be sending our response to the Hearne report to AVDC shortly, which will be in the public domain, and deal with the specific points you raise on that matter.

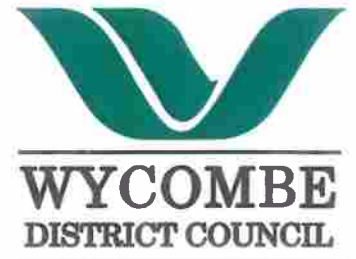
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Penelope Tollitt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Penelope Tollitt**  
**Head of Planning and Sustainability**



Enquiries to: Sarah Barfield  
Email: Sarah.Barfield@wycombe.gov.uk  
Direct line: 01494 421502  
Date: 24 August 2016



Dear Sir/Madam,

Wycombe District Council would like to thank you for your response to the New Local Plan. We have had about 3000 responses. We will have spoken to many of you at the exhibitions we held in July, these were very well attended, with about 1000 people coming along to find out more and ask us questions. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to come along to the exhibitions.

#### **Responding to representations.**

We would like to reiterate that all representations will be taken into consideration as we finalise the plan. We will not be responding to individual representations. Now that the consultation has finished, we are working on logging the responses and will then start to summarise by theme and set out our response to the issues raised. This will be published in due course, before the Local Plan is finalised.

Because of the high volume of representations we have received, if you have questions about the plan we would ask you to first look at the information on line to see if your questions can be answered. Further information about what is available on line is given at the end of this email.

#### **Requests to see representations**

We have received requests to see the representations we have received. Due to the large number of representations we are currently focusing on logging and summarising them and will be in a position to share representations in due course when we have completed this work.

#### **Question and Answer Sessions.**

Due to the large response to the consultation we have organised two question and answer sessions to provide an opportunity to answer some of the many questions you have raised on the Local Plan. These sessions will be on September 7<sup>th</sup> and September 12<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Council Chamber in the Council Offices.

We will be addressing many of the broad themes emerging from the consultation: housing numbers, the proposed locations of development, the Green Belt review, capacity assessments of sites, the role of the AONB, the provision of infrastructure... We are not holding meetings in specific locations because the proposals in any part of the District need to be understood in the context of the District as a whole, and indeed in the wider Buckinghamshire – and national – context. We will then offer the opportunity for those who attend to ask questions.

Please note these two sessions are 'repeats' to give flexibility of dates, and greater capacity. If you attended a briefing at the start of the consultation period, you may not feel the need to attend these briefings as well.

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But we ask, please, that you book your place. It is possible that if you turn up on the day without booking, there will be no room left. If we find we have huge demand to attend, we will arrange further sessions.

To book your place, please let Sarah Barfield know, 01494 421502 or email, [sarah.barfield@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.barfield@wycombe.gov.uk), along with preferred date.

### **Weekly Bulletin**

We circulate a Weekly Bulletin by email to keep people up to date with progress on the local plan, and other planning matters. If you would like to receive the Bulletin (free of charge), again, please contact Sarah Barfield, 01494 421502 or email, [sarah.barfield@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.barfield@wycombe.gov.uk), and we will add you to the circulation list.

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

The deadline to comment on the Sustainability Appraisal has been extended to 5 September (midnight). Please submit any comments to [newlocalplan@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:newlocalplan@wycombe.gov.uk).

### **Further information**

You may find some of your questions are answered by information already on the website. The following links may be useful:

- Princes Risborough Town Plan: We have prepared some briefing notes that deal with some of the more common areas of concern:
- <https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/Princes-Risborough-background-note> and <https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/Princes-Risborough-key-concern-responses>. For more general information about the Plan, the consultation events that have been held and the role of the Steering Group, please go to: <https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/Princes-Risborough-town-plan>
- Infrastructure: we have prepared a briefing note on how infrastructure is delivered through the planning process: <https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/New-local-plan-infrastructure-briefing-note>. For more general information on infrastructure, <https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/New-local-plan-supporting-evidence>
- Housing, Green Belt, AONB, site assessments and many other topics: there are a number of reports, set out by topic, available on the website here: <https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/New-local-plan-supporting-evidence>
- The consultation process: If you have queries on the consultation process, or wish to see the events exhibition boards, please go to : <https://www.wycombe.gov.uk/Consultation-draft-Wycombe-district-local-plan>

If you are unable to find the specific answer to your query, please send us another email, with 'specific question' in the title line, to [newlocalplan@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:newlocalplan@wycombe.gov.uk), and we will do our best to respond – although – as we have said, because of the high volume of responses, the reply may take a while, and may not go into the level of detail you would ideally like.

Once again, many thanks for taking the time to comment on our draft Local Plan.

Chris Schmidt-Reid  
Team Leader Planning Policy

Tel: 01494 421551

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