

Acle Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

Examiner's Clarification Note

This Note sets out my initial comments on the submitted Plan. It also sets out areas where it would be helpful to have some further clarification. For the avoidance of any doubt, matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

Initial Comments

The Plan provides a clear and concise vision for the neighbourhood area.

The Plan addresses a series of issues relating to the natural and built environment of the neighbourhood area and its landscape setting. The Plan's policies are locally-distinctive. An important element of the Plan is the way in which several of its policies are directly supported by detailed appendices and assessments. In the round, it is an excellent review of a made Plan.

The Plan has been presented in a very effective way. It includes a series of excellent maps and photographs. Figure 13 provides a very clear summary of the relationship between its Vision, the objectives, and the resulting policies. This makes the review of the Plan easy to read and to understand.

Points for Clarification

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now able to raise issues for clarification with the Parish Council.

The comments made on the points in this Note will be used to assist in the preparation of the examination report and in recommending any modifications that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

I set out specific policy clarification points below in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan:

Policy ACLE1

This is an excellent policy which is underpinned by the Design Guidance and Codes (Appendix D). In the round, it is a first-class response to Section 12 of the NPPF.

Policy ACLE6

I note that this policy continues the approach taken in the made Plan. Are there any emerging proposals for the area affected by the policy?

Policy ACLE7

Does the second paragraph (on relationship between Acle Academy and the allocated housing site in the Greater Norwich Local Plan) have any bearing on the way in which the housing site was allocated in the Local Plan?

Policy ACLE10

In general terms the policy takes an appropriate approach to flood risk and has regard to Section 14 of the NPPF. However, it takes a broadbrush approach which could have a significant impact on minor and domestic proposals which will continue to be the principal type

of planning applications in the Plan period. As such, I am minded to recommend modifications to ensure that the policy takes a proportionate approach to flood risk. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy ACLE12

The part of the policy on Local Green Spaces is helpfully underpinned by the details in Appendix C. Within this context:

- what is the size of the proposed LGS 21?
- please can the Parish Council elaborate on the way in which it considers that proposed LGS22 is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.

Is there any direct evidence to support the final element of the New Green Spaces part of the policy? In addition, is there any relationship between this part of the policy and the content of paragraph 10.21 of the Plan?

Policy ACLE13

The policy takes a positive approach to biodiversity and has regard to Section 16 of the NPPF. However, the broadbrush approach taken in its first part could have a significant impact on minor and domestic proposals which will continue to be the principal type of planning applications in the Plan period. As such, I am minded to recommend modifications to ensure that this part of the policy takes a proportionate approach to biodiversity and the ecological network. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy ACLE14

I looked carefully at a selection of the proposed views during the visit. I note that the identification of the views is underpinned by the details in the supporting text.

There is a degree of tension between the first two parts of the policy. Given the contents of the second part, is the second sentence of the first part necessary?

In addition, there is a potential tension between the identification of proposed views A-C and the allocation of land in this part of the neighbourhood area for housing purposes in the Greater Norwich Local Plan. I note the commentary in paragraph 7.3 of the Basic Conditions Statement and in the details about the three views in the Plan. Nevertheless, please can the Parish Council comment further about how it has addressed this matter and the potential impact of the identification of the views on the number of homes that would be delivered on the allocated site.

Representations

Does the Parish Council wish to comment on any of the representations made to the Plan?

It would be helpful if the Parish Council responded to the representations to the Plan from:

- Repton Property Developments;
- Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service; and
- Anglian Water.

Both Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority propose a series of revisions to elements of the Plan. It would be helpful if the Parish Council commented on the suggested revisions.

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses to the questions raised by 30 September 2026. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

If certain responses are available before others, I would be happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled, please could it come to me directly from the District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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24 August 2026