



MAY NEWSLETTER

Good to go on the Plan - now preparing for the future



On 23 April we provided SMBC with all the required documentation for the Neighbourhood Plan to set out on the last leg of its journey



Putting SMBC's delayed start of Neighbourhood Plan consultation to good use

The delay reported last month was hugely disappointing. But things have not stood still. We've been busy making best use of the time by putting the Draft Plan 'through its paces'. It has undergone a rigorous 'Health Check' undertaken by independent Neighbourhood Planning (NP) specialists (part of central government technical support available to those developing NP's). The main aim was to identify any potential areas that an Independent Examiner may pick up on for improvement, address these early and thus help streamline future stages.

We've summarised the outcome of the Health Check below. After careful review of recommendations, and follow up discussion with the author, we've made quite a few related changes to the Draft NP. It is this updated document that we have now submitted to SMBC as the basis for their consultation.

The Draft Plan incorporating Health Check changes, along with the full set of documents submitted to SMBC (all 18 of them representing our 'Evidence Base'), are available at kdbh-np.org.

Health Check: summary of outcomes

The Health Check provided a very valuable opportunity to thoroughly 'test' and 'scrub' the Plan prior to it being formally submitted to SMBC and onward to the Independent Examiner.



It's important to note that the Plan review took two important but different perspectives - described below. There were a few points that required change to improve the Plan for **Independent Examination**. However, although the recommendations are not binding, the Forum has undertaken a considerable amount of additional work to address the majority of points that were aimed at making the Plan easier to interpret and apply by **future users of the Plan** (such as SMBC planners and those undertaking new development). This has inevitably made it a slightly more 'technical' document than earlier versions. Most importantly, though, the additional work has increased our confidence that the Plan should pass Independent Examination without significant issues.

1. From an Independent Examiner's perspective the key exceptions highlighted and addressed are:

- bringing detail already in our supporting documentation into the body of the Plan itself
- including more on sustainable development. We've made some updates, while also referencing the strong focus on this already in the Solihull Local Plan that's applicable also to the Neighbourhood Plan
- for a number of Policies, a need to include more explanatory text by way of justification.

2. For future users of the Plan, notable examples of suggestions that we've addressed include:

- requests for more mapping graphics, eg. of KDBH roads and community facilities, and photographs of the village centres
- moving maps from the Appendices into the relevant part of the body of the Plan for ease of cross-reference
- recommendation to add a Plan Monitoring and Review Section.

SMBC confirm that the Draft NP meets all legal requirements

On 26th April, the Forum was very pleased to receive formal notification from SMBC:

"In accordance with paragraph 6(4)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, please accept this letter as notification that the Council is satisfied that the relevant statutory and legal requirements for the Submission Draft NDP have been met."

SMBC to launch Draft NP consultation 4 May - 15 June 2018

The Council plans to launch their consultation on the Draft NP this Friday, 4 May lasting for 6 weeks to 15 June. This time around, it is they (not us) who are responsible for publicising the consultation and for managing feedback.

SMBC will make all the documentation we have submitted available on their website, along with a way for people to provide feedback to them.

What happens next

Once the SMBC consultation is over, everything goes for review by an Independent Examiner in June/July. We will again need to review the Draft Plan in the light of feedback received from the Examiner. All being well, the Referendum is likely to be held in late September/October 2018.

In the meantime, there's still much to do working with Forum members. Amongst other things:

1) How best we organise to ensure effective implementation of the NP by SMBC - **we will be contacting members shortly about current planning applications where we need your urgent input.** A useful test of how processes could/should work once the Plan is 'made'.

2) Continuing work in preparation for the next stage of the SMBC Local Plan proposals/consultation for new housing in Knowle - with our current focus on landscape assessment.

Keep watching this space.....!

More information on the Forum website at kdbh-np.org