

Response to Examiner's questions following site visit on 01/02/2022

H4 Priest House. There is an apparent conflict between "8+ units" (the box on page 25), "a minimum of 7 dwellings" (page 26) and "a net gain of at least 7 homes" (page 27). I would be grateful for clarification. I would also be grateful for the basis of "The housing density is expected to reflect that of the Ash Meadow estate (45dph)". What has been excluded from the 0.26 ha site to reach this figure.

Number of Units

The required outcome is as per the wording on p26 "a net gain of a minimum of 7 dwellings."

If the existing 2 dwellings are not retained, then there would need to be 9 new units to deliver a net gain of 7. Alternatively, if a developer decided to convert the existing 2 dwellings back to the original 1 dwelling as was the position before it was sub-divided some years ago, then 8 further dwellings would be required to be built to deliver a net increase of 7.

The clearest way of expressing the required outcome is for the box on p25 to be amended to "7 units (minimum net)". The wordings on p26 and p27 would then be consistent with this.

Density

The exclusions from the 0.26ha site are the area occupied by the existing two dwellings, representing ~0.08ha and the car parking area ~0.04ha. That said, in setting an expectation on p26 that the density of new housing will *reflect* that of the rest of the estate, we are not suggesting that mathematical precision in determining housing numbers is required. On further consideration it would be better to use similar wording to that of policy MH H4 II. b) "Site layout, density and design to complement the character of the built environment of Ash Meadow." and delete the "(45dph)" on p26.

H5, Land at Hopleys. There is an apparent conflict between "up to 9 new homes" (pages 22 and 28) and "at least 9 new homes" (page 30). I would be grateful for clarification.

Thank you for pointing this out. The intention is for at least 9 new homes as stated on p30 in Policy MH H5, so a modification is required to the wording on p22 and p29.

Response to Examiner's questions following site visit on 01/02/2022

A planning application 3/20/2375 was submitted in November 2020 and remains undetermined. This was for 8 new dwellings plus a barn conversion, making 9 new homes in total.

H7, South Plot, Culver. Construction of what I guess are the permitted two detached houses is well underway. I would be grateful for the QB's views on whether policy MH7 would now serve any purpose.

Three homes are under construction on the site (the recent planning history is in the final paragraph below). For homes with planning permission or under construction to count towards the village's target of a minimum of 54 new homes over the plan period, EHC required a housing site allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan.

We would not want to remove MH H7 without agreement from EHC that the Neighbourhood Plan would still meet the requirements of District Plan Policy VILL1. If that agreement is reached, then MH H7 could be deleted and references throughout the plan be updated accordingly. This will include updating p19 Table 1 Housing Supply Sources to delete the figures for South Plot, Culver and add 3 homes to 'Other sites with approval', then include South Plot, Culver in Appendix B as a site with planning permission. The Windfall minimum would be reduced to 7 units on p19 in Table 1.

The neighbourhood plan was submitted to EHC under Regulation 15 on 9 February 2021. At that time, permission had already been granted for 2 detached houses but no significant development work had commenced. In calculating the supply sources to meet the target of a minimum of 54 homes, this site was thus targeted to provide 2 dwellings. [see p19 Table 1 Housing Supply Sources]

Policy MH H7 states that if the existing permissions were not implemented, alternative proposals for 4 to 8 homes would be appropriate.

Subsequently, ownership of the site changed hands and on 30 March 2021 a new application 3/21/0848 for 3 detached houses was submitted to EHC. Although the parish council objected to the application for many reasons, including the inefficient use of the land as it could provide more dwellings as sought in the neighbourhood plan, approval was granted. Work commenced in September 2021.

Response to Examiner's questions following site visit on 01/02/2022

I noticed the copy of my guidance and directions on the parish council's notice board in Ash Meadow only displayed its cover page, so that none of its substance was visible. I would be grateful if the QB would let me know what steps were taken to make the substance of the guidance and directions known to residents.

Several actions promoted the Examiner's guidance and directions to residents and provided pathways to accessing their substance:

1. After receipt of the final version on 9th November 2021, copies of the full guidance and directions were pinned to 4 parish noticeboards the following day, in the same way as the Examiner found at Ash Meadow. The noticeboards are not locked and can be opened by any resident so that any item can be taken out and read or photographed e.g. with a smartphone. This is our normal practice for official documentation. A copy was also placed on the internal noticeboard in the village hall, which is not enclosed so any resident could read the pages in situ.

2. At the parish council meeting on 7th December 2021, the first meeting following receipt of the guidance and directions, the minutes (available on the parish council website) record "The Chair reported that the appointed Independent Examiner had commenced work on the Neighbourhood Plan. The Examiner had issued "Guidance and Directions" detailing how the examination would be conducted and these are available on East Herts Council's (EHC) website and parish noticeboards."

3. The parish council website has a permanent link on its front page to our neighbourhood plan website. The neighbourhood plan website's news page www.muchhadhamnp.com/news was updated on 13th November 2021 with the message:

Barrister Timothy Jones from No.5 Chambers has been appointed to undertake the independent examination of the Much Hadham Neighbourhood Area Plan. He has issued Guidance and Directions, which can be found here

(Link location= <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planning-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning-activity-east-herts/much-hadham>)

The link is to EHC's neighbourhood plan website for Much Hadham.

4. An email was sent on 13 November 2021 to the neighbourhood plan's mailing list of over 160 residents who had asked to be kept informed of progress throughout the project, which included the following message:

Dear Residents

Response to Examiner's questions following site visit on 01/02/2022

At long last, an appointed independent examiner has commenced work on the neighbourhood plan (NP). Timothy Jones is a very experienced barrister in planning matters and has issued Guidance and Directions which can be found [here](#)

In accordance with his request, copies are also posted on the parish noticeboards and in the village hall. EHC will send copies to all who responded to their Regulation 16 consultation last Spring and links will be put on the PC and NP websites.

It is his intention to conduct the examination through written representations and any contact with him is to be via EHC. He will shortly undertake an unaccompanied visit to the parish – further details are given in paragraph 8.

.....

Cllr Ian Hunt
Chair, Much Hadham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

5. The parish magazine (which is delivered to ~450 households each month with a further ~80 copies sold in the village shop), carried this report in the December 2021 issue:

Much Hadham Parish Council

November Report

December 2021

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

At long last, an appointed independent examiner has commenced work on the neighbourhood plan (NP). Timothy Jones is a very experienced barrister in planning matters and has issued "Guidance and Directions" about how he will conduct the examination. This document can be found on the EHC website (search: Much Hadham Neighbourhood Plan).

It is his intention to conduct the examination through written representations and any contact with him is to be via EHC. He will shortly undertake an unaccompanied visit to the parish.

By using a variety of pathways, the intention was to reach as many residents as practically possible.

Much Hadham Parish Council

7 February 2022