

From: Derek and Sally van Tienen, [REDACTED]  
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Please forward to The Independent Examiner, Christopher Collison.

Dear Chris Collison,

Updated Denstone Neighbourhood Development Plan.  
Independent Examination - Examiner Letter to all interested parties regarding the latest National Planning Policy Framework.

Our response is focused on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan (Denstone 2023) failing to achieve sustainable development. This is due to the total allocation for development being dependant on one site, Vinewood House Farm. No other sites have been called for or assessed by the Denstone Qualifying Body (QB).

We make the following points, with regard to the updated NPPF document of December 2023 and the context, therefore, which enables assessment.

1. Paragraph 71 (pp71 NPPF December 2023).

"Neighbourhood planning groups should also give consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with pp.70a) suitable for housing in their area. The Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14, checklist states The QB - "Should carry out an appraisal of options and an assessment of sites against clearly identified criteria."

\*The QB has failed to carry out any site assessments.

2. Paragraph 83 (pp.83 Dec 2023 NPPF)

"To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities."

Vinewood House Farm is on the western fringe of the village, and approximately 1,000 metres, from the centre of the village. The site, so far away from the central, vibrant part of the village is unable to add positively to the vitality of the community.

3. Paragraph 84b.

pp.84b states that appropriate development should enable a secure future of a heritage asset.

Development south of Vinewood House Farm would imperil Oliver's Green, as both an historical and environmental asset.

4. Paragraph 89.

Development must be sensitive to its surroundings and does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads.

Development at Vinewood House Farm would be insensitive in respect of its status as agricultural land and its close proximity to adjacent agricultural land at The Elms Farm.

5. Paragraph 128 (d).

"The desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or promoting regeneration and change.

The prevailing character of land at Vinewood House Farm, contains a footpath – over Oliver's Green. Whilst there is, on the eastern side (immediately bordering residence on Narrow Lane), between 2 hedge lines an ancient track, from Moss Moor (the original farmstead at Denstone College and Elizabethan), to the Old Salt Road, now called The Staffordshire Way. Now this track borders onto residential gardens and the building line is such that these residences would have their quality of life severely compromised if this plan is passed.

6. Paragraph 130.

"Significant uplifts in the average density of residential development may be inappropriate if the resulting built form would be wholly out of character with the existing area".

Anne Skippers (Independent Examiner 2016), expressed concerns about the viability of Vinewood Farm as a site for development. Her concerns were based on 4 houses to the south of the farmhouse. As the Landowner had applied for a dwelling to the North of the farmhouse, which did not get approval (2014). However, she felt that 3 dwellings to the South and 1 to the North might 'reduce their impact'. ESBC (2016) also expressed their concerns. The QB failed to allay their concerns and offered no mitigation by response. The NP (2017), duly passed examination and was subsequently proved at referendum.

We fail to see, however, how the QB in the 2023 Consultation Statement claim that the site is 'suitable for development'. Nowhere, from 2016 to 2023 has there been any consultation, explanation or justification for 24 dwellings from merely 3.

In conclusion, it is our contention that there has been a high degree of obfuscation and lack of clarity and consultation. Specifically, in respect of The NPPF. December 2023, the document requires sustainability - consultation, evidence and justification. None of these requirements are evident in the proposed Denstone 2023 NP. We therefore, respectfully request that this NP does not go forward to Referendum.