



# COTSWOLD

## District Council

Peter Richardson  
Moreton in Marsh Neighbourhood Plan  
c/o Moreton in Marsh Town Council  
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By e-mail only

Dear Mr Richardson,

### **Moreton-in-Marsh Neighbourhood Plan**

### **Response to consultation on pre-submission draft plan**

Thank you for consulting the District Council on the pre-submission Draft Moreton in Marsh Neighbourhood Plan. Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Town Council and their Steering Group on reaching this stage in plan preparation and for creating a well-considered draft plan for the future of the parish.

I have consulted colleagues throughout the District and County Council on the draft plan and have received a number of comments from various service areas. The District Council's comments are presented in the schedule that follows this letter with internal consultees comments embedded with our own.

Comments have been made about both the supporting text, which sets the context and justification for the policies, and on the policies proposed for inclusion in the Plan.

I hope that you will see these comments as supportive. They are intended to inform modifications to the Plan so that it best meets the expectation of the Town Council in terms of the future determination of development proposals, and, crucially, that the Plan can proceed to independent examination once it has been submitted, with a greater expectation of a positive outcome.

I hope the comments made by the District Council are helpful in reaching a conclusion to plan preparation. We will, of course, continue to support the Town Council and Steering Group with advice as necessary and with practical support on any modifications required to the Plan once you have had a chance to review all of the representations received in response to the current consultation.

Finally, I would advise that the comments made by the District Council in response to this consultation on the pre-submission draft plan do not constitute a *formal* opinion about whether the Plan as currently drafted meets the basic conditions. The District Council is not required to issue a decision statement in respect of that matter until the independent examination has been completed. We would therefore reserve the right to make further representation as necessary following the submission of the plan to the District Council.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Harrison

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## **Regulation 14 Consultation**

Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations require the draft plan proposal to be the subject of pre-submission consultation before it is submitted to the local authority for independent examination. The consultation should last at least 6 weeks.

A consultation for the plan is being undertaken from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025 to Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2025. Comments for the District Council are provided as relevant on the day of 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

Pre-submission consultation requirements include publicising the draft plan to people who live, work or run business in the area. The publicity must include details of the proposed neighbourhood plan, where and when it may be viewed, and how to make comments on the plan and by what date.

Certain statutory bodies must be consulted, including the district council (as the local planning authority), the Environment agency, Natural England and Historic England. It is also advisable to consult local business or community organisations, such as chambers of commerce, civic societies and local trusts.

Producing a summary of the plan may be useful to many people who do not want to read the whole document. Drop-in events may also be a useful means of allowing people to ask questions or discuss the plan on a one-to-one basis.

The draft plan and supporting documents should be uploaded to the neighbourhood plan website. Printed copies should be made available at convenient locations, such as libraries, community centres, council offices and other key public buildings. Copied should be available to send to people who can't access a digital or displayed copy.

## **Representations and Modifications**

Any comments received by the end of the consultation period must be considered by the qualifying body, but it is legitimate for the neighbourhood plan body to take a different view. Indeed, different representations may demonstrate opposing views. A planning judgement needs to be taken.

A decision will need to be made over whether or not to amend the Neighbourhood Plan in response to each representation. The decision on whether or not to amend the plan, and the reasoning behind them, should be recorded, as this information will need to be incorporated in the Consultation Statement.

## **Consultation Statement**

The Regulations require that a Consultation Statement is prepared and submitted with a Neighbourhood Plan when the plan is sent to the District Council. The Consultation Statement must:

- contain details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- explain how they were consulted;
- summarise the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
- describe how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.

The qualifying body will need to agree the modifications and approve the resulting draft of the plan for submission to the local planning authority.

### **Environmental effects**

It is a requirement that all neighbourhood plans submitted for examination be accompanied by either a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) report or a screening determination stating that the plan would not have significant environmental effects.

Local Authorities should screen emerging neighbourhood plan proposals at the earliest stage, to ascertain whether they are likely to trigger any European Union (EU) directives.

### **Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Screening**

The SEA Screening Opinion was prepared (March 2025) by Land Use Consultants (LUC) on behalf of Cotswold District Council.

It concludes that the draft Neighbourhood Plan does not directly impact on land use through the allocation of sites for housing or other forms of development and is therefore considered unlikely to have significant environment effects and that full SEA is not required.

### **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening**

Typically, a plan is screened for HRA first. If screened IN for HRA, then a full SEA would be required. As SEA screening has been undertaken, presumably the plan was screened OUT for HRA. Confirmation is required as to whether a HRA screening document available.

Both the SEA and HRA screening should be consulted on as part of the Reg 14 consultation. The SEA screening was provided upon request but did not seem to be on the consultation website. The following questions are therefore asked:

- Are those documents part of the Reg 14 consultation?
- Have they been made publicly available/ accessible?

- Have they been sent to the relevant statutory consultees e.g. Natural England, Historic England, the Environment Agency etc.?

## Considerations

The Basic Conditions an Examiner will consider for a Neighbourhood Plan are as follows:

- National policy compliance
- Contribution to achievement of sustainable development
- General conformity with “strategic policy” of the Local Plan
- Compatible with EU obligations (e.g. SEA)
- Does not breach habitats regulations

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) guidance (June 2025) on plan-making also requires:

- Clarity and certainty
- Detailed policies map(s)
- Sufficient evidence and justification

Comments provided by Cotswold District Council will be based upon these considerations, although as above a *formal* opinion on the basic conditions cannot be made until after independent examination.

## Conformity with Strategic Policy

Please note that an emerging Neighbourhood Plan can only be considered against policies in the adopted (i.e. current) Cotswold District Council Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted in August 2018). Although a Local Plan review is underway, this currently carries no weight.

However, of note is that as part of the Local Plan review, consultations and a feasibility study have been undertaken regarding housing development in Moreton.

## Comment Schedule

<b><u>Policy No.</u></b>	<b><u>Policy Name</u></b>	<b><u>Cotswold District Council Comments</u></b>
n/a	General comment	For clarity include the Policy number, title and text within a single box, excluding the objective.
	Housing Allocations	To note, the housing allocations in the supporting text are from the Local Plan – no new allocations are made. There is no requirement for Neighbourhood Plans to allocate housing sites.

1	<p>Climate Adaptation and Energy Efficiency in Developments</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> <i>was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</i></p>	<p>This policy is compatible with Local Plan Policy INF10. It introduces new criteria on topics such as householder/ domestic renewable energy generation, car charging and energy assessments, which makes it a useful addition in tandem with the Local Plan.</p> <p>At criterion (a) it refers to land allocations without making any. <i>Proposals</i> would be a more appropriate word, as they would refer to any planning applications/proposals.</p> <p>Criterion (b) is set out in Local Plan Policy INF10 1(b) and duplication is not required.</p> <p>Criteria (c) and (f) could be moved to supporting text. They express encouragement for such development but do not effectively change policy position.</p> <p>Or they could be moved into the requirements of criterion (d); which should also be more specific on which new development this applies to, or state: <i>where relevant or appropriate.</i></p> <p>In criterion (d) the term “conditional” <i>should be changed and make it clear that an energy assessment should be submitted as part of a planning application.</i></p> <p>Criterion (e) could be worded more simply e.g. <i>Provision of electric vehicle charging, to account for current and projected future need, should be incorporated in relevant planning applications whether domestic, commercial or industrial uses.</i></p> <p>Consider whether there is evidence to make a requirement e.g. 10% or 20% of spaces.</p>
2	<p>Managing Flood Risk</p> <p><b>Jo Corbett – Senior Planning Policy Officer</b> <i>has been consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</i></p>	<p>This policy duplicates much of Local Plan Policy EN14 and the NPPF. It is suggested that this policy is deleted unless it can be enhanced by anything specific, particular to Moreton.</p> <p>Criterion (a) should also refer to PPG as well as NPPF.</p>

	<p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>Criterion (b) should refer to current NPPF or future iterations otherwise this will become outdated.</p>
3	<p>Housing Mix</p> <p><b>Fin McEwan – Strategic Housing Specialist</b> has been consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>The specific number of six dwellings in Criterion (a) is queried. Evidence would be required for this number. Suggest this is removed and <i>all</i> development delivering net new dwellings should show how they meet local need.</p> <p>Alternatively, Local Plan Policy H2 Affordable Housing applies to 11 or more dwellings, or 6-10 in rural areas.</p> <p>It is queried whether the Housing Needs Analysis was available for this consultation and if so, who it was prepared by?</p> <p><u>Criterion (b)</u> 25% Lifetime Home Standards – this has been superseded by M4(2) building regulations. Ideally all properties will be built to M4(2) standards to be accessible and adaptable. A criterion could be inserted to exclude developments where the applicant can provide viability evidence.</p> <p>To be more ambitious a certain proportion could be at M4(3) standard to be fully wheelchair accessible. However, 25% would seem high; query over whether the Housing Needs Assessment provides evidence for this?</p> <p>Criterion (c)(3) is this evidenced by the HNA in criterion (a). Could (c)(1) and (3) be merged?</p> <p>Query over whether criterion (c)(5) could provide for “<i>fully serviced</i>” land? e.g. power grid, water, sewage connections. However, Local Plan Policy H1 requires 5% of plots are made available for custom build on developments of 20 dwellings or more. We understand the need to be satisfied by permissions district-wide. Is Moreton able to</p>

		<p>evidence a greater or unmet need at a local level to increase the % or lower the threshold?</p> <p>Clarity between (b) and (c)[2] required.</p>
4	<p>Affordable Housing</p> <p><b>Fin McEwan – Strategic Housing Specialist</b> has been consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>Criterion (a)[2] could add that <i>an affordable home should not be distinguishable from market homes in the same development i.e. “tenure blind”</i>.</p> <p>Criterion (b)– remove as follows: <del><i>in all new housing developments providing affordable housing the first occupancy of all affordable homes will be prioritised for households with...</i></del></p> <p>This should refer to the HomeSeeker Plus (or any subsequent) policy. It should be clear that the Local Connection Criteria (white box) is supplementary to the HomeSeeker Plus policy enabled by <a href="#">para 34.1</a> of their policy document. As such, the white box should also indicate what the ‘area’ constitutes and the ‘surrounding parishes’ mentioned in para 34.1.</p> <p>Criterion (c) as written this applies to all proposals, should it be only proposals that include affordable housing? Add: ... Strategic Housing Market Assessment or <i>any local objectively assessed need</i>.</p> <p>Criterion (d) our understanding is this would contradict national legislation. Could instead propose Discounted Market Sale (DMS) which can tie a perpetual discount to the land.</p>
5	<p>Well Designed Housing and Places</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>Criterion (b) seems superfluous to (a).</p> <p>Criterion (c) - Appendix A is not a Design Guide, and is labelled a Community Design Statement. It largely contains information on the national context of design guidance. The rest is information on heritage assets which can be separated if relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Criterion (g) whilst earthwork barriers can be appropriate alongside busy/ main roads, it can segregate the development from the current</p>



		<p>built form and lose the opportunity of good streetscape.</p> <p>Criterion (h) what proposals would be appropriate; examples could be made in the supporting text.</p> <p>Criterion (j) has an appraisal of allotment supply in Moreton been undertaken? Would extending current sites be better than smaller allotments on each development site? What size of development triggers this requirement?</p> <p>Criterion (k) best where these can be centralised to the development e.g. village green concept. Perhaps mention proportionate to the development.</p>																	
6	<p>Parking in Residential Developments</p> <p><b>Sarah Williams – Principal Transport Planner at Gloucestershire County Council</b> has been consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>Criterion (a) the current parking provision is set out in the <a href="#">Gloucestershire County Council Manual for Gloucestershire Streets (July 2020)</a> (MFGS), page 48, see excerpt below:</p> <table border="1"><tr><th rowspan="2">Urban (Rural)</th><th colspan="5">No. of bedrooms</th></tr><tr><th>1</th><th>2</th><th>3</th><th>4</th><th>5</th></tr><tr><td><b>Spaces</b></td><td>1 (1)</td><td>2 (1)</td><td>2 (2)</td><td>3 (2)</td><td>3 (3)</td></tr></table> <p>The policy proposes an additional space for 5+ bed houses. Is there justification or evidence e.g. surveys for this?</p> <p>The MFGS also has different criteria for rural dwellings. Unsure why less spaces would be needed in more car-dependent rural areas. Nonetheless, should a distinction be made in this policy too e.g. inside or outside the development boundary?</p> <p>Criterion (b) Query over whether the overall ratio needs to be maintained?</p> <p>Criterion (d) as garages are often used for storage, our understanding is GCC Highways do not accept garages in the count parking spaces, even if built to appropriate minimum internal standards.</p>	Urban (Rural)	No. of bedrooms					1	2	3	4	5	<b>Spaces</b>	1 (1)	2 (1)	2 (2)	3 (2)	3 (3)
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		Criterion (e) MFGS states visitor parking should be at 1 space per 5 residential units. Is there evidence for a significantly more onerous 1:2 ratio.
7	<p>Brownfield First</p> <p><b>Fin McEwan – Strategic Housing Specialist</b> <i>has been consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</i></p>	<p>Whilst this is a good objective, the policy criteria would not make any change to the determination of planning applications.</p> <p>Are there any sites that could be identified which could add to this policy?</p> <p>Or could consideration be given to lowering the affordable housing contribution on brownfield sites to increase their viability.</p>
8	Hard Infrastructure	No comment.
9	<p>Soft Infrastructure</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> <i>was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</i></p>	<p>Criterion (b) Advise adding: ‘<i>or where capacity can be increased through the new development</i>’.</p> <p>May need to consider how developers would contribute; is there a preference hierarchy e.g. on-site, s106 etc.?</p>
10	<p>Principal Residence Housing</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> <i>was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</i></p>	<p>Reasoned justification needs to be specific to Moreton and evidence should show the % of households as second homes/ holiday lets.</p> <p>Some authorities may have a minimum threshold of second/ holiday homes (e.g. 20%) before they would consider a principal residency policy. Cotswold District Council does not have such a threshold but the % should be evidenced as significant to take this policy forwards.</p> <p>This restriction could also undermine viability and the delivery of affordable housing or local infrastructure.</p>
11	Employment Land	Could the supporting text outline the largest employment locations in the parish please?

12	<p>Small Business Units</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>Query over what constitutes “small”? Does this apply up to a certain floorspace or number of employees?</p>
13	<p>Retail Provision</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>Moreton is designated as a Key Retail Centre in the retail hierarchy of Local Plan Policy EC7.</p> <p>The policy proposes a Core Retail Area. The Steering Group could propose to alter the Key Retail Centre boundary, which would be clearer, and ensure LP Policy EC7 still applies.</p> <p>However, there needs to be clear evidence for either and there is not enough justification for the location of the boundary.</p> <p>Could also mention retaining a retail/ shopfront appearance even if e.g. converted to holiday let.</p>
14	<p>Infrastructure Investment Priorities</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>There is some overlap with Policy 9. These policies could be merged or at least ensure they are compatible.</p> <p>For example, if viability only allows a certain amount, would the priorities of Policy 9 or 14 come first? How are these to be delivered, s106 or CIL?</p> <p>As currently worded the policy implies that all developments of 10 or more are expected to contribute to this fixed list of infrastructure priorities, regardless of whether the development creates a need or is related to those improvements.</p>
15	<p>Local Green Spaces</p> <p><b>Lesley Davis – Planning Policy officer</b> has been consulted on this</p>	<p>A separate paper could be provided (to save making the NP too long), as more evidence is required to show how the proposed sites meet the high threshold for designation as Local Green Space ; particularly around the special qualities: beauty, historic significance,</p>

	<p><i>policy and comments embedded.</i></p>	<p>recreational value, tranquillity, richness of wildlife.</p> <p>Cotswold District Council can support the production of this with methodologies, templates and advice.</p> <p>Unable to support or resist designation of any of the proposed Local Green Spaces until more understanding of their qualities is brought forward. Cotswold District Council to cooperate on Local Green Space prior to next consultation.</p> <p>Criterion (b) not required as all other relevant policies in the development framework would still apply?</p>
16	<p>Non-designated Heritage Assets</p> <p><b><i>Danielle Berry – Natural, Built and Historic Environment Team Manager</i></b> was consulted but opted to defer response to NP Officer</p> <p><b><i>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</i></b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>Could remove criteria (b) and (c) as already set out in Local Plan Policy EN12. Neighbourhood Plans generally just identify which Non-designated Heritage Assets apply to the Local Plan policy.</p> <p>Criterion (c) should be more specific on the types of development e.g. changes of use with no physical alterations could apply to this policy as written.</p> <p>A list of Non-designated Heritage Assets is provided in Appendix D but there is no justification/ evidence for each.</p> <p>Cotswold District Council can support the production of this with methodologies, templates and advice.</p> <p>There is also a list of historic assets starting on <a href="#">page 71 of the Neighbourhood Plan</a> document – can these be consolidated to one list? Listed buildings do not need to be included as they have protection at a national level.</p>
17	<p>Biodiversity</p> <p><b><i>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning</i></b></p>	<p>Policy numbering/ lettering needs reordering.</p>

	<p><b>Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>Generally supportive of this policy, but criteria could be streamlined, duplicate wording in many places.</p> <p>Criterion (f) are any Biodiversity Opportunity Areas proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan or exist in the parish? Parts that are replicating Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) should be removed.</p> <p>Criterion (h) other relevant policies in the development framework will apply regardless.</p> <p>Criterion (g) how would an applicant “ensure the viability of the surrounding Cotswold National Landscape”? Refers to both SLA and CNL in the same sentence.</p>
18	Important Views	<p>The policy text refers to Protected Views, whereas the policy title is Important Views. Suggest the use of Important or Key Views, as difficult to “protect” views in the English planning system.</p> <p>Criterion (c) is too strong. See this adopted wording from Hauxley Neighbourhood Plan (Sep 2024): <i>Development proposals throughout the Neighbourhood Area must be sensitive to the importance of maintaining key views.</i></p> <p>Better where possible to consider how design policies on specific streets/ buildings could be used to maintain the built form in a way that protects the key views in regards streetscape.</p> <p>Or in more open settings, could a view form part of a Local Green Space or Protected Open Space designation, which would give stronger protection.</p> <p>For example, in <b>Appendix D View #8 Western Entrance to Town Centre</b> ... “demonstrating how important the trees and grass verges are”. Perhaps better to protect those verges and trees as Local Green Space, in turn protecting the view.</p>

19	<p>Development Boundary</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>The policy does not appear to alter the Development Boundary already set out in the Local Plan.</p> <p>Criterion (b) is not positively worded and does not support the principle of sustainable development, suggest removing.</p>
20	<p>Transport &amp; Active Travel</p> <p><b>Sarah Williams – Principal Transport Planner at Gloucestershire County Council</b> has been consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p> <p><b>Harrison Bowley – Head of Planning Services</b> was consulted on this policy and comments embedded.</p>	<p>Criterion (a) is compatible with the additional parking requirements of Policy 6, by taking parked cars off the street and making streets more accessible for non-car users.</p> <p>Criterion (b) clarification on what constitutes a larger residential scheme is required.</p> <p>The numbered list in part (d) are the core design principles from the <a href="#">Cycle Infrastructure Guidance LTN1/20</a> However, 3 is Coherence and 5 is Comfort. This is also referenced by <a href="#">Active Travel England</a>. 6 is superfluous and protection of trees/hedgerows are elsewhere both in the plan and the Local Plan.</p> <p>Criterion (e) should also refer to the Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which has a corridor running north from Stow-on-the-Wold to Moreton train station. Also, replace Ways with Network please.</p>