



Our Ref: FD8(ii)

13 December 2022

Cotswold District Council
Neighbourhood Planning
Trinity Road
Cirencester
GL7 1PX

THE ERNEST COOK TRUST

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Dear Sirs

Fairford Neighbourhood Development Plan Pre-examination Consultation

Please find enclosed completed consultation form detailing Part A, with Part B covered in the contents of this letter.

Firstly, the Trust has enjoyed a longstanding and productive relationship with Fairford Town Council (FTC) and offer our overall support to the submission, and the detailed and extensive work put into the production of the Fairford Neighbourhood Development Plan. We are grateful for the ongoing dialog we have with them as both a land and property owner within the community, and majority land owner within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary.

- There are significant challenges around sewerage, water and potential expansion, highlighted throughout the document. This is an important issue to the Trust, as we own the stretch of River Coln from Town Bridge, north up to Quenington. There is reported impact from sewerage treatment facilities upstream of Quenington, visible in terms of water quality, with incidence more frequent now given the well documented pressures on infrastructure. However, the adjacent landscape to the river also provides an opportunity, in terms of the potential to return land within the catchment to water meadows / flood plains, which the Trust is actively exploring. This may provide mitigation for increasing and significant rainfall over short periods of time. This valued landscape is highlighted in **FNP10** and supported.
- **FNP1** sets out the rationale for the town's development boundary, although this excludes a potential brownfield site at Waiten Hill at the junction of Mill Lane and Coronation Street, currently being promoted through the recent Cotswold District Council (CDC) issues and options consultation process. The Trust understands why **FNP10** is drawn as such but wishes to note this site has the potential to come forward as a rural exception site.
- The Trust is pleased to have worked with FTC in relation to Policy **FNP2**, and the provision of a new site for the interment of ashes. It continues open dialog about the potential to find further new burial sites, either of a conventional nature or natural.

Interim Chief Executive
Dr Ian Gambles

Trustees
Andrew Christie-Miller
(Chairman)
Simon Eliot
Jenifer Greenwood OBE
Harry Henderson
Ian Pigott OBE DL
Mary Riall

- The Trust is open to discussions with several sports clubs listed under **FNP3** regarding the provision of improved facilities as the Trust recognises the importance of them within the community.

It is disappointing that there has been a general demise in the use and availability of the Farmor's Sports Centre as a community facility. The Trust would be welcome further discussion regarding its future.

- With respect to **FNP4**, the Trust recognises that as the major landowner to the north of Fairford there may be opportunities to help either control flow or alleviate potential flood events. We would welcome the opportunity to work with FTC whilst also recognising that the land forms an integral part of the local rural businesses currently farming it.
- Ensuring new development does not have a detrimental impact on the sewer network is of paramount importance to improve and protect water quality of the Coln and adjacent water bodies south of Fairford. Whilst there are measures that can be put in place by developers, this will be futile unless there is significant commitment and investment by the infrastructure providers in improving facilities not only to cater for existing use, but future expansion.

The Trust questions **FNP5.4** given the potential for increased and frequent traffic movements to tanker off sewerage, which still needs to be pumped back into the existing infrastructure, albeit directly into a core facility, rather than existing pipework.

- **FNP7** is a welcome inclusion, promoting pedestrian and cycle use and connectivity outside of the Neighbourhood Plan boundary. This is to be encouraged but supplemented with additional text recognising the challenge this brings and potential conflict, with local farming businesses, the improvement of habitat and related increases in wildlife species that as a community, we must support. It is well documented that dog ownership in the UK has increased exponentially which not only encourages walking and connection with the outdoors as more people get out and use the great British countryside, but this must be undertaken in the knowledge and appreciation of the impact uncontrolled dog access can have. The Trust would welcome acknowledgement of this within the Neighbourhood Plan and a policy/partnership approach to highlighting the issue and finding solutions that are acceptable to all stakeholders within the community.
- **FNP17** highlights the need to encourage growth in the local economy which the Trust believes is vital to support the sustainability of the town and economic vibrancy on the doorstep of those currently living in Fairford, and those who will eventually move to the town.
- **FNP19** is a welcome addition to the Plan and the Trust would appreciate an opportunity to work with FTC over potential options and the provision of

such accommodation, well designed and well considered, in a suitable location to promote Fairford and the landscape it sits within.

- A separate representation has been submitted by Gleeson Land over land owned by the Trust relating to **FNP14**.

The Trust is supportive of the Plan subject to the above comments and look forwards to working with FTC and realising the ambitions for Fairford in the coming years.

Yours faithfully

Michael Birnie MRICS FAAV
Property Director

