

Tetsworth Neighbourhood Development Plan 2041

Modification Proposal Statement



Prepared March 2025

TETSWORTH MODIFIED NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (TNP₂)
2025 - 2041

MODIFICATION PROPOSAL STATEMENT

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Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

March 2025

1. Introduction

1.1 As a 'Qualifying Body', Tetsworth Parish Council ("the Parish Council") proposes to modify the made Tetsworth Neighbourhood Plan ("the Made Plan") of May 2021. This Statement is published as part of the 'Pre-Submission' consultation on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Review ("the Modified Plan"). In due course, the Modified Plan and this statement will be finalised and submitted for examination alongside a Basic Conditions Statement and a Consultation Statement, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

1.2 The Parish Council consider that the proposals do not change the nature of the Made Plan. The Local Planning Authority, South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC), is yet to formally confirm their position on this. Regulation 14v of the amended 2012 Regulations requires:

"in relation to a modification proposal, a statement setting out whether or not the qualifying body considers that the modifications contained in the modification proposal are so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the neighbourhood development plan which the modification proposal would modify, giving reasons for why the qualifying body is of this opinion".

1.3 This Statement serves this purpose and notes the following additional requirements in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG):

- the qualifying body must (at the pre-submission publicity and consultation stage and when the modified plan is submitted to the local planning authority) state whether they believe that the modifications are so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the plan and give reasons
- the local planning authority must (when sending the modified plan to the independent examiner) state whether they believe that the modifications are so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the plan and give reasons. The local planning authority must also submit a copy of the original plan to the independent examiner
- the qualifying body must decide whether to proceed with the examination after the examiner has decided whether the modifications proposed change the nature of the plan

1.4 In accordance with the requirements of the PPG as stated above, this document is therefore setting out the background reason to this modification, sets out what the modification is and will set out the reasons as to why the Parish Council believe that this modification of the plan is not significant and substantial and therefore does not change the nature of the plan.

2. Background

2.1 On 6 May 2021, SODC resolved to 'make the neighbourhood plan', following its successful referendum. The Made Plan covers the administrative area for the Parish Council and a plan period to 2035.

2.2 In 2024, the Parish Council decided to undertake a review of the Made Plan to ensure its alignment with the SODC and Vale of White Horse District Council (VoWHDC) Joint Local Plan 2041 (JLP).

2.3 The Parish Council has continued to be active in monitoring the implementation of the policies by SODC in its determinations of planning applications. For the most part it considers that the policies have been correctly and successfully applied in approving and refusing applications that confirm or conflict with the policies respectively. However, it considers that some policies warrant modification to aid their more effective implementation and there are some additional policies that it wishes to include.

3. The Proposed Modifications

3.1 The purpose of the Statement is to explain the reasons why the Parish Council considers the proposed modifications to the Made Plan do not 'change the nature' of the Plan. It should be read alongside the separate Modified Plan document.

3.2 The following table provides a summary of the modifications and explains why the Parish Council considers they do not change the nature of the plan.

Policy No.	Policy Title	Made Plan Policy No.	Summary of Modifications	The Change of Nature of the Plan Test	Y/N
TET1	Tetsworth Settlement Boundary	TET1	This policy builds upon the intentions of Made Plan Policy TET1 which sets policy provisions for development proposals within and outside the village settlement. By formally defining the settlement boundary on the policy map, additional clarity is being added which will support a decision maker in judging whether a development proposal is within or outside the settlement boundary.	It is not considered that this policy 'changes the nature' of the Made Plan since it is not introducing new policy provisions, rather it is clarifying in which areas JLP Policies SP1 and SP2 will be applied.	N
TET2	Tetsworth Development within the Village Settlement Boundary	TET1	The modification involves removing the first clause of Made Plan Policy TET1 and replacing it with wording that aligns with the provisions of JLP Policy SP2 for Tier 4 settlement, of which Tetsworth is one. At the time of drafting the policy, the outcome of the JLP examination has not been published yet. By including the wording of SP2 in the Modified Plan, if SODC loses their housing land supply position, the settlement boundary policy provisions will still apply.	The revised wording in this policy does not change the nature of the Neighbourhood Plan. It continues to restrict new development to appropriate, small-scale proposals within the existing village boundary, aligning with the Made Plan's long-standing spatial strategy. By drawing on wording from the JLP, the modifications strengthen policy clarity and conformity, without introducing new policy areas or altering the core purpose of the Plan.	N
TET3	Housing Development in the Surrounding Countryside	TET1	This policy modifies the wording from Made Plan Policy TET1 which previously addressed development outside the village settlement. The policy now only supports housing development outside the village settlement which satisfies <i>'an established agricultural or rural need and respect the countryside landscape and amenity'</i> .	The revised wording regarding development outside the settlement boundary does not change the nature of the Neighbourhood Plan. It reflects and refines the existing approach to countryside housing, is aligned with national and local policy, and strengthens the Made Plan's longstanding commitment to protecting rural character and setting. It introduces no new land use policies, allocations, or strategic shifts and continues to implement the Neighbourhood Plan's objectives in a more targeted and effective manner.	N
TET4	Sustainable and High-Quality	TET2	The modified policy removes the first clause of Made Plan Policy TET2 as well as the need for development proposals to	The modifications to Made Plan Policy TET2 do not change the nature of the Neighbourhood Plan. They preserve the	N

	Housing Design		<i>'Seek to satisfy technical space standards for commercial property converted for domestic use'</i> . In doing so, it adds additional wording to the second bullet point relating to environmental sustainability design to state that development proposals should <i>'mitigate the effects of climate change'</i> . The wording on impacting amenities/utilities <i>'does not result in unacceptable adverse impact on the amenities of adjacent residential properties'</i> has been replaced with <i>'does not overload or damage the utility infrastructure'</i> . The reference to §109 of the NPPF has been changed to <i>'relevant policies in the NPPF'</i> to allow flexibility.	original intent of ensuring that new development within Tetsworth's Settlement Character Areas is well-designed, sustainable, and compatible with local character. The changes modernise the policy by reflecting current national and local planning priorities (e.g. climate change), removing unnecessary detail, and improving clarity. They do not introduce new policy areas, change land use strategy, or alter the Plan's vision or objectives.	
TET5	Community, Commercial and Utility Development within the Settlement Boundary	New Policy	This new policy supports the enhancement of existing and provision of new community services and facilities. It also supports enhancement of existing or development of new small-scale business premises, in addition to new utility infrastructure enhancements.	The policy formalises the plan's existing intent to support small-scale development that sustains Tetsworth as a functional and inclusive rural community. The policy aligns with the vision and objectives of the plan, encourages appropriate enhancement of services and infrastructure, and supports local employment opportunities without altering the development strategy. It provides criteria-based support for sustainable, small-scale growth that reflects the established character and needs of the village. Therefore, it is not considered to change the nature of the plan.	N
TET6	Commercial Development in the Surrounding Countryside	TET3	This policy modifies Made Plan Policy TET3 by removing the second clause and refines the focus from all development proposals to just commercial development that relate to agricultural or rural activity. It also clarifies <i>'positive features'</i> and <i>'positive landscape characteristics'</i> .	The changes made to Made Plan Policy TET3 enhance its clarity without altering its purpose or intent. The policy continues to safeguard the character of the countryside while supporting appropriate rural activity. The updates refine how this is achieved by improving terminology and narrowing the focus to development types relevant in a rural setting. As such, the nature of the plan remains unchanged—its vision, objectives, and spatial approach are still firmly intact.	N

TET7	Renewable Energy Generation Development	New Policy	This new policy sets out conditions for which renewable energy developments will be supported. This includes solar farms of less than 5 hectares and wind turbines with fewer than 3 masts of a maximum height of 80 metres. The 5 hectare limit on solar farms is based on the lower bounds of the limits set out in JLP Policy CE5.	The policy does not allocate or identify suitable sites or locations of renewable energy generation development. Rather, it introduces clear, criteria-based support for commercial renewable energy schemes within Tetsworth's countryside sectors. It does not change the nature of the Neighbourhood Plan, as it aligns with existing objectives on rural protection and sustainability, complements policies on landscape character and biodiversity, and responds to national and local guidance on climate resilience. The policy provides proportionate thresholds for scale and height that reflect the plan's strong emphasis on countryside conservation and rural identity, ensuring that any renewable development is small-scale, low-impact, and appropriate for Tetsworth's landscape.	N
TET8	Key Views	TET4	This policy has been renumbered but remains unchanged.	The modifications to the original policy are not significant and it is therefore considered do not change the nature of the plan in respect to this modification.	N
TET9	Conserving and Enhancing Local Heritage Assets	TET5	This policy has been renumbered from Made Plan Policy TET5 and remains largely unchanged except for the final clause which has been removed.	The modifications to the original policy are not significant and it is therefore considered do not change the nature of the plan in respect to this modification.	N
TET10	Landmark Buildings	TET6	This policy has been renumbered but remains unchanged, other than clarifying that the third Landmark Building includes the ' <i>entrance gateway structure</i> ', rather than the ' <i>stone entrance gateway</i> '.	The modifications to the original policy are not significant and it is therefore considered do not change the nature of the plan in respect to this modification.	N
TET11	Common Land and Green and Public Open Spaces	TET7	This modified policy retains the 5 Public Open Spaces from the Made Plan policy and introduces one additional Public Open Space (Tetsworth War Memorial Setting). It also	While designating a Local Green Space is an additional policy provision to the Public Open Spaces identified in the existing policy, it is consistent with the principles of the Made Plan in	N

			designates Tetsworth Common as a Local Green Space which has been tested against the criteria set out in §107 of the NPPF. The existing clause <i>'Development within a Public Open Space should preserve and where possible enhance public access and the contribution of the site to the health and well-being of visitors and residents'</i> now also applies to Common Land, as well as Public Open Space. Additional clarification has been added to the final clause which states loss of Public Open Space will only be supported where alternative provision is located within the Neighbourhood Area.	terms of seeking to protect open spaces that are valued by the community.	
TET12	Dark Skies and Light Pollution	New Policy	This new policy supports the promotion of Dark Skies in the Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of minimising light pollution.	The policy reinforces the Made Plan's existing vision, objectives, and environmental priorities by formalising a long-standing local position on maintaining the absence of public lighting. This addition supports the preservation of Tetsworth's rural character, contributes to biodiversity and amenity, and reflects community preferences already established through consultation. It introduces no new land-use directions or development strategy and is in general conformity with both the JLP and national planning policy.	N
TET13	Biodiversity and the Natural Environment	TET8	This policy retains the provisions of Made Plan Policy TET8 but also introduces two new clauses. The first expresses a preference for biodiversity gains to be achieved on site, or elsewhere within the neighbourhood area. The second encourages tree and hedgerow planting to enhance wildlife habitats and the rural landscape.	The modified policy deliberately avoids mandating that biodiversity gains must be delivered within the Neighbourhood Area as there is already legislation in place to allow for biodiversity net gain to be delivered off-site, in certain circumstances. The additional clauses that have been added to the policy are therefore simply expressing a preference for the gains to be delivered on site or within the Neighbourhood Area, as well as supporting tree and hedge planting.	N

TET14	Road Safety and Residential Parking	TET9	This policy has been expanded from just addressing residential parking, as per Made Plan Policy TET9, to now also addressing road safety. On parking, the modified policy now also states that development proposals should ' <i>address the need for parking solutions for visitors</i> '. The new policy wording addressing road safety aims to prevent an ' <i>unacceptable reduction in road safety</i> ' by requiring development proposals take account of ' <i>traffic flow in the village</i> ' and whether transport infrastructure can be shared by footpath and road users. The modified policy also states that mitigation measures ' <i>should avoid impacts such as noise or the introduction of urbanising features</i> '.	The additional wording added to the policy addressing road safety does not represent a fundamental shift in policy direction or spatial priorities. It refines rather than redefines this policy area and addresses the desire to control urbanising effects.	N
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Table A: Summary of the 'Change of Nature of the Plan' Test

3.3 The analysis set out in Table A indicates that none of modified policies or new policy have the potential to change the nature of the Made Plan in terms of key spatial or design principles. The modifications are in conformity with the spirit and stated intentions of the original principles of the plan and overall the modifications are not considered to change the nature of the plan.

3.4 The plan period of the Modified Plan has been extended to 2041, from 2035 of the Made Plan. This change has simply been made to align with the plan period of the JLP which has been brought forward since the Made Plan was prepared. As neither the Made Plan or Modified Plan allocate land to deliver housing, it is not considered that the updating of the plan period constitutes a change in the nature of the plan.

4. Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment

4.1 SODC considered that, in relation to the modifications, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will not be required under the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), neither will a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The Screening Statement therefore accompanies the Modified Plan and this statement.

5. Conclusion

5.1 In summary the Modified Plan proposes the modification of several policies in the Made Plan and the addition of three new policies. The plan period has been extended to 2041, to match that of the JLP. The proposed modifications will ensure the Modified Plan retains the primacy of an up to date, plan-led development management framework for decision making in the neighbourhood area. The Parish Council considers the modifications do not change the nature of the Made Plan.