



Historic England

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by email only

Our ref: 2017.10.17
Your ref: Radley NP
Pre-
submission KR
Comments

Telephone
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17th October 2017

Dear Ms Dymock,

Radley Neighbourhood Plan Second Pre-submission Consultation

Thank you for your e-mail of 6th September 2017 advising Historic England of the re-publication for consultation of the Radley Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan.

Following our previous comments made 10/02/2017 we welcome the amendments that have been made to the plan in response to our comments and are pleased to see the introduction of the description of the historic development of the parish in section 14.13.1 and note that it has split into sections on archaeology and listed buildings.

We are pleased to see that the local community consider the need to maintain the parish's scheduled monuments as being important and welcome the introduction of general policy PP17 and the site specific PP1 for the Old Coal yard site, and we note that the SEA finds that the plan will have no significant effect from a heritage perspective.

Listing the designated heritage assets is a good start as the basis for greater understanding of the historic environment of the parish although from this headline snapshot we feel more can be said about how, for Radley, the wider historic environment and landscape character are intrinsically linked and contribute to the special qualities of the area, as has been alluded to in your brief description of the listed buildings of Radley Hall and Lower Radley.

Paragraph 58 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that neighbourhood plan policies should be based on an understanding and evaluation of an area's defining characteristics and the neighbourhood plan is opportunity to understand the wider historic environment and potential for improving its protection, management and maintenance. Therefore we feel that the plan could be more ambitious in its understanding of the historic environment of the plan area, and do more to deliver Policy PP17 for the wider historic environment and landscape, thereby creating the



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possibility of delivering significant positive effects for heritage and landscape in the process.

In general Historic England considers that Neighbourhood Development Plans should be underpinned by a thorough understanding of the character and special qualities of the area covered by the Plan. Characterisation has been adopted and applied by Historic England to understand our landscape and we would suggest that it could be useful for your neighbourhood plan to adopt a more characterisation approach in order to provide a more detailed understanding of the heritage value of the landscape.

To reflect upon the special (heritage) qualities which define their area to best achieve aims and objectives for the historic environment we suggest that the plan could provide more information on how Landscape Character and Historic Landscape Character makes an important contribution to the overall historic environment of Radley Parish. Characterisation may also be used to model other aspects, such as change (or constancy), present and past activity levels, and the sensed qualities of place, such as sound and smell.

For example Oxfordshire's wider tradition of large parklands and mansion houses can be seen in Radley through the remnant ornamental parkland/designed landscape at Radley Hall, now Radley College. From both mapping and aerial photography its park of 16thC origins is still obvious through the designed landscape and water features present, and an ancient enclosure wooded estateland to the north

Helpfully Radley is covered by both the [Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study 2004](#) and the [Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character assessment](#), completed in 2017; both of which have very useful interactive websites. It is unclear whether the Vale of the White Horse has carried out an assessment which covers Radley at district level.

A local characterisation study can help inform location and detailed design of proposed new development, identify possible townscape or landscape improvements and establish a baseline against which to measure change. A local landscape character assessment would also be useful to consider the sensitivity of the landscape to accept change as a matter of principle that should be established before a site is allocated or supported for development and without having included this in your evidence it is still unclear how the principles of identifying sites outlined for development have been reached.

However, in its absence we would understand and support further assessment to inform the supported development sites that have been identified with regards to how they will evolve with regards to their exact development area, layout and nature of the proposed development. This further assessment should include potential impacts on the historic environment and can also identify potential sites for the other outcomes sought in the plan such as a new village hall and playing fields and cemetery. It could also lead to a positive landscape strategy to strengthen and enhance the pattern of landscape features which make up the distinct historical/landscape character of the parish and protect and maintain the significance



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of landscape patterns and features that have been inherited from earlier layers of landscape use.

In addition we would also recommend that two additional Community Actions for Lower Radley and Radley College could be included:

Lower Radley is a small nucleated settlement characteristic for its range and pattern of listed farmstead and residential buildings and open space associated with the farming heritage of the area. RPC will work together with Radley History Group to undertake a character assessment exercise to further explore the significance of Lower Radley with regards to providing more detailed understanding of its distinctive character.

Grade II* Radley Hall (now Radley College) is a successful and thriving private school situated in a former designed estate landscape. RPC will work with Radley College to identify surviving landscape features and ensure the significance and character of the parkland is maintained.

We hope these comments are of assistance in taking the plan forward to the next stage. Nevertheless should you have any queries or require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours faithfully,

Kay Richardson

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