Fazeley Neighbourhood Development Plan

Fazeley Town Council – Response to Examiner's Clarification Note

Thank you for your comments. Please see below the responses from Fazeley Town Council to the points made by the Examiner, provided in blue text.

This Note sets out my initial comments on the submitted Plan. It also sets out areas where it would be helpful to have some further clarification. For the avoidance of any doubt, matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

Initial Comments

The Plan provides a clear and concise approach for the neighbourhood area. The Vision and the objectives provide a context for the resulting policies (as displayed in paragraph 3.1). This is best practice. This is reinforced in the Justification sections associated with each policy.

The presentation of the Plan is excellent. The difference between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. In addition, the Plan makes good use of various high-quality maps and photographs.

Thank you.

Points for Clarification

A revised NPPF was published on 17 August 2026. It includes implementation arrangements for the examination of neighbourhood plans that had been submitted at that point. For clarity, any references in this note refer to the NPPF of December 2024 against which the Plan will be examined.

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now able to raise issues for clarification with the Town Council.

The comments made on the points in this Note will be used to assist in the preparation of the examination report and in recommending any modifications that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions. I set out specific policy clarification points below in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan:

Policy F2

This is a very good policy which responds to the national agenda to secure high quality local design. It is helpfully underpinned by the details in the Design Guidelines & Design Codes (Appendix C). In the round it is an excellent local response to Section 12 of the NPPF.

The various design principles carefully set out important factors which development proposals should address. However, I am minded that this element of the policy should be applied as appropriate to the scale, nature and location of the proposal concerned. This would acknowledge that minor and domestic proposals would not trigger the consideration of many of the design principles.

Does the Town Council have any comments on this proposition?

Fazeley Town Council agrees that the proposed change to Policy F2 is acceptable and is content for the Examiner to recommend the precise wording for the proposed change.

Policy F4

I looked carefully at the town centre during the visit.

In general terms, the policy takes a positive approach to the town centre and its public realm and has regard to Sections 7, 8 and 12 of the NPPF.

I note the specific measures listed in the policy (A-G). Nevertheless, it is unlikely that a development proposal would address each of the seven measures. In this context, I am minded to recommend that 'Such proposals will be expected to incorporate the following measures:' is replaced by 'Proposals which incorporate any or all of the following measures will be particularly supported:'

Does the Town Council have any comments on this proposition?

Fazeley Town Council accepts the Examiner's proposed change to Policy F4.

Policy F10

I looked at the proposed Local Green Spaces (LGSs) carefully during the visit. I saw their significance within the town.

The descriptions of the three proposed LGSs in paragraph 4.3.30 provide a very useful context to the proposed designations.

On the one hand, the first policy element takes the matter-of-fact approach as set out in paragraph 108 of the NPPF. However, on the other hand, the second policy element comments about the type of enhancements that development proposals should make to LGSs. On what basis has the Town Council pursued the second policy element?

The proposed improvements were added to the Policy following consideration of the response by Lichfield District Council to the Reg 14 consultation – please refer to the Consultation Statement (p63 Ref No. 12). The District Council advised the following:

'*However, at present the policy is limited in how it can be implemented when making and determining planning applications, as it simply lists the designations.*

The District Council recommends that the policy contains criteria with which to assess development proposals that may impact upon these designations.

Criteria could include how the Parish Council seeks to help improve and invest in the designated local green spaces and set out ways in which development proposals within or adjacent to them can help support these goals.'

Fazeley Town Council has recently installed new play equipment to the rear of Victory Terrace at a cost of £100,000 and will continue to seek developer contributions and other funding to continue much needed improvements to the open space. The proposed improvements in the Policy provide an appropriate framework for negotiations with developers and decision making.

Section 4.0

As currently expressed, the 'Next Steps' are correct. Nevertheless, is it intended that this section is removed if the Plan is made? Plainly at that point it would no longer have a purpose.

Fazeley Town Council agrees with the Examiner's proposed change to delete Section 4.0 Next Steps.

Representations

Does the Town Council wish to comment on any of the representations made to the Plan?

I would find it helpful if the Town Council commented on the representations from Redrow Homes.

Please see below Fazeley Town Council's comments in response to the representations to the Reg 16 consultation. The Town Council's responses and comments are limited to the following representations (listed 1 to 5) only and makes no comments on the other responses.

1. **Fisher German LLP obo National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET)**

   Fazeley Town Council notes the information submitted in the response relating to NGET assets within the Plan area but considers that this is not relevant to the Fazeley NDP and is a matter for Lichfield District Council when considering site allocations in the Local Plan or in determining planning applications.

2. **Canal and River Trust (CRT)**

   Fazeley Town Council accepts the recommended change to paragraph 4.3.26 to include a reference to the short-term moorings available around the junction for boaters wishing to use the local shops/facilities or overnight stays.

3. **Lichfields obo Redrow Homes Midlands**

   Fazeley Town Council does not intend to review the Fazeley NDP in relation to the revised NPPF 2026. However if the examiner recommends policy changes during the examination process then these will be considered by the Town Council. The Town Council may decide to review Fazeley NDP following the adoption of the new emerging Lichfield District Local Plan 2046 in order to keep it up to date.

   The Town Council does not wish to amend the Vision at this stage.

   The Fazeley Civil Parish Design Guidelines and Codes document was prepared by independent consultants AECOM and the character areas were assessed and identified according to existing local character at that time. The Town Council does not accept the proposed change to reclassify the Site from Countryside Focus Area (CFA) to within a Settlement Focus Areas (SFA) - SFA 2 or SFA 3.

   The Town Council is happy to continue to engage with the developer in the future.

4. **Define Planning obo Bloor Homes**

   Fazeley Town Council notes that the revised NPPF 2026 Policy PM5 1.a sets out that neighbourhood plans should allocate land to meet the development needs of their designated area, where it is appropriate to do so. However the Town Council decided at an early stage not to include site allocations in Fazeley Neighbourhood Development Plan and it does not consider it appropriate to do so now. Fazeley Town Council notes that the area is under significant development pressure. Recent development proposals include schemes for major strategic sites often in the Green Belt and therefore the Town Council would prefer that such strategic decisions about site allocations are undertaken by the local planning authority (Lichfield District Council) as part of the Local Plan process, or through the determination of planning applications.

The Town Council does not intend to revise the Fazeley Civil Parish Design Guidelines and Codes.

Lichfield District Council suggests a series of refinements to the Plan. The Town Council's comments on these suggestions would be helpful.

5. Lichfield District Council

Fazeley Town Council accepts the proposed changes to Fazeley Neighbourhood Section 1.2, paragraph 1.2.2 Page 7 in order to provide the most up to date information about the new Lichfield District Local Plan 2046.

In relation to the Addendum to the Design Guidelines and Design Code document (p48 Addendum) the Town Council unfortunately does not have access to Adobe (or a similar programme) to edit a pdf document. If Lichfield DC wishes to make the required changes the Town Council would be happy to accept them.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond on the above matters.

Fazeley Town Council.

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses and the information requested by 27 October 2026. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

If certain responses are available before others, I would be happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled, please could it come to me directly from Lichfield District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Fazeley Neighbourhood Development Plan

6 October 2026