

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE CHRISTELTON AND LITTLETON

NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

EXAMINER: Andrew Mead BSc (Hons) MRTPI MIQ

Examination Ref: 02/AM/CLNP

Your Ref: CCOP1/BRA21636/8

Carl Copestake
Partner
Knights

cc. Councillor John Beckitt, Christelton Parish Council
Charlotte Aspinall, Planning Policy, Cheshire West and Chester Council

Via email

24 August 2026

Dear Mr Copestake

Thank you for your letter of 20 August 2026, acting on behalf of Brampton Strategic Land, principally concerning the land outlined in red at Appendix 1 of the Christleton and Littleton Neighbourhood Plan.

In reading your letter, there are two key points I must address initially.

1. The Basic Conditions

You suggest that the revised Basic Conditions, as brought into force by *The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Saving and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026*¹ (the 2026 Regulations), do not apply to this examination. I disagree with that assessment. Neighbourhood plans, whilst forming part of the development plan for the relevant area, are not 'Development Plans Documents' for the purposes of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) (PCPA 2004). Section 20 (1) of the PCPA 2004 provides that "The local planning authority must submit every **development plan document** (my emphasis) to the Secretary of State for independent examination." The transitional provisions in the 2026 Regulations relating to the 31 December 2026 saving refer only to "a proposed local planning **development plan document**". Therefore, the transitionals in the 2026 Regulations do not apply to neighbourhood plans. It is the revised Basic Conditions and legal compliance requirements, effected by implementation of the sections 98 and 99 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, that are to be applied.

2. The National Planning Policy Framework

You cite the requirements of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), in particular PM17, which was published on 17 August 2026. To be clear, **the August 2026 NPPF does not apply to this examination**. Annex 1, Paragraph 6 of the revised NPPF provides, inter alia, neighbourhood plans that have been submitted to the local planning authority under Regulation 15² on or before 17 August 2026 should be prepared in accordance with the Framework published in December 2024. Therefore, **I am examining**

¹ View at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/169/made#top>

² *The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012*:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents>

the Christleton and Littleton Neighbourhood Plan in the context of the policy requirements of the December 2024 NPPF.

Turning to the purpose of your submission and the necessity, or otherwise, of convening a hearing, you correctly observe that this is a matter for my determination as the Examiner.

Based on all the written information I have received, including the clarifications provided in response to my Examiner questions, I remain of the view that the examination can be conducted solely by the written representation procedure. I have sufficient information to make my recommendations and, accordingly, I will not be convening an examination hearing session.

As you are aware, you were provided with an opportunity to submit a fulsome Regulation 16 representation, which you may be assured I have read thoroughly (alongside all the other representations made) and I have further accepted this additional letter from you in the interests of fairness and transparency.

I am copying your letter, and my reply, to the Christleton Parish Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council, requesting the letters are placed on the respective websites to ensure that all parties with an interest in the examination are apprised of the current position.

Yours sincerely

Andy Mead

Examiner