



Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards (1st Revision) – Statement of Significance of Changes

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2. Statement

In accordance with Regulation 14(a)(v) of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 Bishop's Stortford Town Council has considered whether the modifications contained in the modification proposal are so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the neighbourhood development plans and makes the following statement:

The Council notes that there is only limited guidance available on the criteria for determining the answer to this question and that ultimately, the matter is a decision for the Independent Examiner. In the published guidance on updating a Neighbourhood Plan

(<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#updating-neighbourhood-plan>) it states

“There are 3 types of modification which can be made to a neighbourhood plan or order. The process will depend on the degree of change which the modification involves:

- Minor (non-material) modifications to a neighbourhood plan or order are those which would not materially affect the policies in the plan or permission granted by the order. These may include correcting errors, such as a reference to a supporting document, and would not require examination or a referendum.
- Material modifications which do not change the nature of the plan or order would require examination but not a referendum. This might, for example, entail the addition of a design code that builds on a pre-existing design policy, or the addition of a site or sites which, subject to the decision of the independent examiner, are not so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the plan.
- Material modifications which do change the nature of the plan or order would require examination and a referendum. This might, for example, involve allocating significant new sites for development.”

In relation to The Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2021-2033 (1st Revision) the modifications comprise:

- The addition of policies designed specifically to combat climate change.
- The addition of a number of new local green spaces and removal of any local green spaces which are designated as such in the East Herts District Plan.
- A number of material modifications to policies (but without changing materially the overall objectives) in the areas of Green Infrastructure, Transport and Education designed to strengthen or update these policies without materially changing the overall objectives.
- Relatively minor modifications to policies in other areas to bring them up to date and to align them with (so that they are identical to) the already very similar policies in the Bishops Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for All Saints, Central, South and part of Thorley (2021-2033) (1st Revision).
- Additional modifications of several policies in response to consultation.

Based on the guidance set out above, and in particular the examples given for each level of significance, the Council considers that these modifications are:

- More significant than ‘Minor (non-material) modifications’ as there are material changes to some policies and indeed new policies.
- Less significant than ‘Material modifications which do change the nature of the plan or order’ as there are no proposals for new development sites or any other proposal of a similar scale.
- Material modifications which do not change the nature of the plan, as the proposals are of a similar significance to the example given (the addition of a design code that builds on a pre-existing design policy, or the addition of a site or sites which, subject to the decision of the

independent examiner, are not so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the plan).

It is therefore the opinion of Bishop's Stortford Town Council that the proposed modifications require examination but not a referendum.