

## Belfast LDP 2035 - Plan Strategy

### Overview

We're developing the new Local Development Plan (LDP) which is the land use plan for Belfast up to 2035. The Plan will guide investment and set out policies and proposals for the use, development and protection of land across the city. Once adopted the plan will be used to determine planning applications. It will take approximately four years to develop and formally adopt the new LDP.

A series of consultation stages are built into the process for creating the LDP and are defined by legislation to help local people input into this Plan. We are currently undertaking the second stage of the consultation process in relation to the draft Plan Strategy.

Your opinions matter to us and we want to hear from you during the various stages throughout the preparation of the plan. While you can provide feedback using this form, we encourage you to use our online questionnaire via the Council's Consultation Hub at:

<https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk/>. The consultation closes on 15th November 2018.

### What is the LDP?

The LDP:

- Guides development
- Provides certainty and a framework for investment
- Facilitates sustainable growth
- Puts communities at the heart of the process
- Allows for speedier decision making under the new plan-led system

### How will this impact on me?

Our LDP will have an impact on everyone who lives, works and visits Belfast because it will shape how the city will develop in the future. Your views are important so we'd like you to get involved in its preparation.

### What is the Plan Strategy?

The Plan Strategy will be a strategic policy framework for the plan area as a whole across a range of topics. It will set out an ambitious but realistic vision for Belfast as well as the objectives and strategic policies required to deliver that vision. Establishing this strategic direction early in the plan process will provide a level of certainty on which to base key development decisions in the area as

## **A. Data Protection**

Belfast City Council is the Data Controller under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for the personal data it gathers for the purposes of sending regular email updates on the Local Development Plan from Belfast Planning Service.

It should also be noted that in accordance with Regulation 17 of the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, the council must make a copy of any representation available for inspection. The Council is also required to submit the representations to the Department for Infrastructure and they will then be considered as part of the independent examination process.

The council accepts that you are providing your personal data on the basis of consent and are positively agreeing for the council to hold and further use it, publish it (without personal information such as name and email, but will include organisation). Belfast City Council must also share it with the Department for Infrastructure and whoever they appoint to undertake the independent examination.

Any personal details that you provide the Council will be handled in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. As such we will only use your data for the purposes that you have given this information for and will only be shared where necessary to provide the service that you are contacting us about. If you would like further information in regards please see the website [belfastcity.gov.uk/about/privacy](http://belfastcity.gov.uk/about/privacy)

The personal data is held and stored by the council in a safe and secure manner and in compliance with Data Protection legislation and in line with the council's Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.

If you wish to contact the council's Data Protection Officer, please write to:

Belfast City Council,  
City Hall Belfast,  
BT1 5GS

or send an email to [records@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:records@belfastcity.gov.uk)

well as the necessary framework for the preparation of the Local Policies Plan. You can find out more about the Plan Strategy, and access all relevant documents, on the Council's website at: [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/LDP](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/LDP).

### **Accessibility**

The relevant documents are available, on request, in alternative formats - Braille, audio, large print, easy read. The council will also consider requests to produce it in other languages. If you require the documents in these or other formats please contact us:

**Belfast Planning Service  
Belfast City Council  
Cecil Ward Building  
4-10 Linenhall Street Belfast  
BT2 8BP**

**Telephone: 028 9050 0510**

**Email: [localdevelopmentplan@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:localdevelopmentplan@belfastcity.gov.uk)**

**Q1. Please tick to confirm that you have read and understood the privacy notice above.**

**(Required)**

I confirm that I have read and understood the privacy notice above and give my consent for Belfast City Council to hold my personal data for the purposes outlined.

**Q2. Do you consent for us to publish your response?**

Under planning legislation we are required to publish responses received in response to the Plan Strategy. On this page we ask for your consent to do so, and you may opt to have your response published anonymously should you wish.

Even if you opt for your comments to be published anonymously, we will still have a legal duty to share your contact details with the Department for Infrastructure and the inspectorate they appoint to oversee the examination in public into the soundness of our plan. This will be done in accordance with the privacy statement above.

**(Required)**

*Please select only one item*

Yes, with my name and/or organisation

Yes, but without my identifying information

## B. Your details

**Q3. Are you responding as an individual, as an organisation, or as an agent acting on behalf of an individual, group or organisation?**

(Required)

*Please select only one item*

- Individual (Fill in the remaining questions in this Section, then proceed to Section C)
- Organisation (Fill in the remaining questions in this Section, then proceed to Section D)
- I'm an Agent (Fill in the remaining questions in this Section, then proceed to Section E)

**Q4. What is your name?**

Title

First Name (Required)

Last Name (Required)

**Q5. What is your telephone number?**

Telephone number

**Q6. What is your email address?**

Email

**Q7. Did you respond to the previous Preferred Options Paper consultation phase?**  
(Required)

*Please select only one item*

- Yes    No    Unsure

If yes, and you have your previous response ID (beginning ANON) please enter it here:

## C. Individuals

If you are responding as an individual, please complete this Section, then proceed to Section E

**Q8. What is your address?**

Address Line 1 (Required)

Line 2

Line 3

City (Required)

Postcode (Required)

## D. Organisation

If you have selected that you are responding as an organisational respondent, there are a number of pieces of information that we are legally required to gather from you.

**Q9.** If you are responding as a representative of a group or organisation, please complete this Section, then proceed to Section E.

Organisation (Required)

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST,

Your Job Title (Required)

Organisation address (if different from above):

Address Line 1 (Required)

Line 2

Line 3

City

Postcode (Required)

## E. Agents

If you have selected that you are responding as an agent on behalf of other people/organisations, there are a number of pieces of information that we are legally required to gather from you.

**Q10. Please provide details of the organisation or individual you are representing:**

The name of the organisation or individual you are representing: (Required)

**Client contact details:**

Title

First Name (Required)

Last Name (Required)

Address Line 1 (Required)

Line 2

Line 3

City

Postcode (Required)

Telephone number (Required)

Email address (Required)

**Q11. Would you like us to contact you, your client or both in relation to this response or future consultations on the LDP?**

(Required)

*Please select only one item*

Agent    Client    Both



## F. Is the plan sound?

Your comments should be set out in full. This will help the independent examiner understand the issues you raise. You will only be able to submit further additional information to the Independent Examination if the Independent Examiner invites you to do so.

**Q12.** Do you consider the Plan Strategy to be sound or unsound?

(Required)

*Please select only one item*

I believe it to be sound (*Proceed to Section G*)

I believe it to be unsound (*Proceed to Section H*)

## G. Sound

**Q13.** If you consider the Plan Strategy to be sound and wish to support the Plan Strategy, please set out your comments below, then proceed to Section I:

(Required)

**Note:** If you wish to attach any evidence to support your comments above, please enclose your document(s) with this form. However, if you wish to refer to specific sections within a separate report, this is best included within the above text box.

## H. Unsound

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**Q14.** To which part of the Plan Strategy does your representation relate?

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Relevant Section or Paragraph

PARAS 7.1.1 - 7.1.5 ; PARAS 7.1.77 - 7.1.82

Policy (if relevant)

POLICY HOU12 & POLICY HOU 5

**Q15.** If you consider the Plan Strategy to be unsound, please identify which test(s) of soundness your representation relates, having regard to Development Plan Practice Note 6, available at: <https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/practice-notes/common-newpage-9.htm>

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(Required)

*Please select all that apply*

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**Q16.** Please give details of why you consider the Plan Strategy to be unsound having regard to the test(s) you have identified above. Please be as precise as possible.

*SEE ATTACHED SHEET*

**Q17.** If you consider the Plan Strategy to be unsound, please provide details of what change(s) you consider necessary to make the Plan Strategy sound.

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## Belfast Local Development Plan - Draft Plan Strategy 2035

### Representation from Queen's University Belfast

#### H. Unsound

**Q14.** Chapter 7 '*Shaping a Liveable Place*', Policy HOU12 - Large scale purpose built managed student accommodation (PBMSA), pages 86-87.

**Q15.** Coherence and Effectiveness Test CE2.

**Q16.** The unsound matters, under CE2, relate to the following: reference to '*specialist housing*', the Policy Aims, criterion b of Policy HOU 12, the policy title, relationship to Policy HOU5 and outside of term use.

**Q17.** QUB notes that Policy HOU 12 is a topic-based policy under the strategic LDP aim of '*Shaping a Liveable Place*'. The introduction to Chapter 7 notes that '*The LDP needs to ensure that new development offers a variety of house types, sizes and tenures to meet the different needs of the population...*' (Chapter 7, para 7.1.2) and also notes that '*An appropriate house mix not only refers to type, size and tenure, but also to a number of specialised housing types that need to be planned for*' (Chapter 7, para 7.1.4). The introduction states that '*student accommodation*' falls within the definition of '*specialist housing*' (Chapter 7, para 7.1.4).

Notwithstanding the above, it is noted that there is no explicit reference to '*specialist housing*' in any of the 10 '*Policy aims*' (Chapter 7, para 7.1.5). It is considered that the topic-based policy should, to ensure soundness, include a reference to '*specialist housing*' in the '*Policy Aims*' and, in this context it is noted that Policies HOU8 (Specialist Residential Accommodation), HOU9 (Traveller accommodation) and Policy HOU12 also relate to '*specialist housing*'.

It is considered that the additional '*Policy aim*', to ensure soundness, would be as follows: '*Ensure an appropriate supply of specialist housing to provide for those with specific housing needs including shared housing, student accommodation and specific accommodation for travellers*'.

In relation to Policy HOU12, QUB notes that PBMSA is described as '*accommodation that is built or converted with the specific intent of being occupied by students undertaking a full-time course of higher or further education*' (Chapter 7, para 7.1.79). It is also noted that Policy HOU12 is a criteria-based policy and that part of one of the criteria is that '*The development consists of a minimum of 200 occupants*' (Chapter 7, criterion b). It is considered that in the context of PBMSA being accommodation which is '*built or converted*' that this would be an unnecessary and inappropriate restriction on conversion schemes. It is considered that the second sentence of criterion b, should, to ensure soundness, be amended to add after '*...phased development of larger schemes*' the following: '*or conversion schemes that are appropriately designed, located and managed*'. In this context, the policy heading should be amended to Policy HOU12 Purpose built managed student accommodation (PBMSA).

In relation to Policy HOU12, it is noted that the final paragraph of the policy states '*Planning Permission will be subject to meeting all other policy requirements*'. It is considered that, in the interest of soundness the '*justification and amplification*' text for Policy HOU12 should clarify that Policy HOU5 Affordable Housing does not apply to proposals under Policy HOU12.

In relation to the use of bed spaces outside term time (Chapter 7, para 7.1.81), the University notes that this can provide short-stay holiday accommodation, contribute towards the viability of a development and provide conference accommodation related to the University's function. On the basis that the '*justification and amplification text*' is not planning policy and in the interest of soundness, it is considered that an additional sentence should be added to the policy as follows: '*The use of PBMSA outside of term times will be assessed on a case by case basis and, if permitted, will be for a specified period using occupancy conditions*'.

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Relevant Section or Paragraph

PARAS 7.4.15 - 7.4.25

Policy (if relevant)

POLICY BH2 & POLICY BH3

**Q15.** If you consider the Plan Strategy to be unsound, please identify which test(s) of soundness your representation relates, having regard to Development Plan Practice Note 6, available at: <https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/practice-notes/common-newpage-9.htm>

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## Belfast Local Development Plan - Draft Plan Strategy 2035

### Representation from Queen's University Belfast

#### H. Unsound

**Q14.** Chapter 7, '*Shaping a Liveable Place*', Policy BH-2 Conservation Areas and Policy BH-3 Areas of Townscape Character, pages 118-123 of DPS.

**Q15.** Coherence and Effectiveness Test CE2 & Consistency Test C3.

**Q16.** The unsound matters, under CE2 and C3, relate to the following: Policies BH-2 and BH-3, the related justification and amplification text, the matter of prior agreement for redevelopment and prohibition of demolition/signing of contracts.

**Q17.** QUB notes that Policy BH2 Conservation Areas states that '*Total or partial demolition of a building will only be permitted where:*

*j. it makes either a negative or no material contribution to the character and appearance of the area; and/or*

*k. The quality of design is considered to enhance the overall character of the conservation area paying due regard to viability of retention or restoration of the existing'.*

QUB considers that the inclusion of the term '*and/or*' in relation to criteria j. and k. is a lesser test than that applied under Policy BH3 for Areas of Townscape Character where the term is solely '*and*'. It is considered that this is not an appropriate policy approach. In addition, it is noted that whilst Policy BH2 refers to '*character and appearance*' in the policy text, Policy BH3 refers only to '*character*' in the policy text but refers to '*character and appearance*' in the '*justification and amplification*' text (Chapter 7, para 7.4.23).

It is considered, in the interest of soundness, that in Policy BH2 the '*and/or*' should be replaced with '*and*'.

In relation to demolition under Policies BH2 and BH3, the '*and/or*' in Policy BH2 implies a balancing test (where consent can be granted for a better new design even if the building to be demolished makes a material contribution to the character and appearance of the area). In Policy BH3, the '*and*' denotes the application of two tests i.e. the demolition test and the new development test must be separately met. In the interest of soundness, clarity is required in the '*justification and amplification*' text for Policy BH2 and BH3 in order to explain the application of the demolition test and new development test.

QUB notes that Policy BH2 states that '*Where consent is granted for demolition this will be conditional on prior agreement for the redevelopment of the site and appropriate arrangements for recording the building before demolition*'. The justification and amplification text do not explain the meaning of the term '*prior agreement for the redevelopment of the site*' and, in the interest of soundness, this should be amended to '*appropriate arrangements for the redevelopment of the site*' which is in accord with SPPS guidance (SPPS, page 40, para 6.19).



QUB notes that Policy BH3 states that *'Where demolition consent is granted this will be conditional on prior agreement for the redevelopment of the site, including prohibition of demolition until contracts have been signed for the approved redevelopment of the site'*. QUB considers that this is a much more onerous test than that applied under Policy BH2 where there is no requirement for the signing of a contract. In addition, QUB considers, in the interest of soundness, that the reference to the signing of a contract should be excluded from Policy BH3 and, in line with Policy BH2, replaced with *'appropriate arrangements for the redevelopment of the site'*. The requirement for the signing of a contract is not only onerous but often conflicts with procurement policy.

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Relevant Section or Paragraph

PARAS 8.1.36 - 8.1.41

Policy (if relevant)

POLICY EC6 & APPENDIX F (REF. 22)

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(Required)

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#### H. Unsound

**Q14.** Chapter 8 '*Creating a Vibrant Economy*', Policy EC6 - Office development, pages 154-155 & Appendix F, page 326, ref. 22, Policy EC6).

**Q15.** Coherence and Effectiveness Tests CE2 & CE3.

**Q16.** The unsound matters, under CE2 and CE3, relate to the following: criteria a. of Policy EC6.

**Q17.** QUB notes the criteria-based office development policy for the Queen's Office Area and the smaller Queen's Campus Area. QUB notes the 3 criteria that apply to office development within the Queen's Office Area and considers that criterion a. (the gross floorspace does not exceed 200m<sup>2</sup>) is inappropriate in light of criterion c. (the development is for '*university-related uses*'). QUB considers that Class A2 office use which is for '*university-related uses*' should be encouraged in the Queen's Office Area and that the policy should not be restricted to small-scale office sector. QUB considers that the need for Class A2 offices to be located in close proximity to the university '*due to an inter-relationship in business activity*' (Chapter 8, para 8.1.40) is not and should not be confined solely to the small-office sector. The policy should facilitate conversion schemes for under-used and vacant buildings with a gross floorspace larger than 200m<sup>2</sup>.

In relation to raising the 200m<sup>2</sup> to 400m<sup>2</sup> for the Queen's Office Area, it is noted that the Target for the relevant Monitoring Indicator (Appendix F, page 326, ref. 22, Policy EC6) already uses the 400m<sup>2</sup> figure.

It is considered, in the interest of soundness, that criterion a. should be amended to state '*a. The gross floorspace does not exceed 400m<sup>2</sup>*' (which, it is noted, applies under Policy EC6 to district and local centres).

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Relevant Section or Paragraph

PARAS 8.1.43 ~ 8.1.47

Policy (if relevant)

POLICY EC 7

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Please note your representation should be submitted in full and cover succinctly all the information, evidence, and any supporting information necessary to support/justify your submission. There will not be a subsequent opportunity to make a further submission based on your original representation. After this stage, further submissions will only be at the request of the independent examiner, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies at independent examination.

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**Note:** If you wish to attach any evidence to support your comments above, please enclose your document(s) with this form. However, if you wish to refer to specific sections within a separate report, this is best included within the above text box.

## **Belfast Local Development Plan - Draft Plan Strategy 2035**

### **Representation from Queen's University Belfast**

#### **H. Unsound**

**Q14.** Chapter 8 '*Creating a Vibrant Economy*', Policy EC7 - Higher Education Institutions, pages 156-157.

**Q15.** Coherence and Effectiveness Test CE2.

**Q16.** The unsound matters, under CE2, relate to the following: ancillary uses to Higher Education Institutions and connectivity with city centre.

**Q17.** QUB notes that Policy EC7 is based on the growth and expansion of Further and Higher Education institutions as drivers of improved skills and as employment hubs for the innovation sector and the wider knowledge economy. QUB considers that Policy EC7 should be amended to reflect the importance of ancillary uses (such as staff and student residential accommodation and sport and recreational facilities), business uses (including the research and development of products with a functional linkage with the Higher Education Institution) and the potential for better connectivity between the Institutions and the city centre.

## H. Unsound

Here we will be asking you to specify which part of the draft Plan Strategy you believe to be unsound and why.

**Note:** If you wish to notify us of more than one part of the plan that you consider to be unsound, each part should be listed separately. Complete this page in relation to one part of the plan only. You will then be able to make further responses to other parts of the plan by completing and submitting a copy of Section H for each part you choose to identify.

**Q14.** To which part of the Plan Strategy does your representation relate?

This should relate to only one section, paragraph or policy of the draft Plan Strategy. If you wish to notify us of more than one part of the plan that you consider to be unsound you can choose to submit further responses to other parts of the plan by completing and submitting a copy of Section H for each part you choose to identify.

Relevant Section or Paragraph

CHAPTER 11 DELIVERY : 'MONITORING' AND 'REVIEW'

Policy (if relevant)

POLICY EC 7

**Q15.** If you consider the Plan Strategy to be unsound, please identify which test(s) of soundness your representation relates, having regard to Development Plan Practice Note 6, available at: <https://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/advice/practice-notes/common-newpage-9.htm>

You can select more than one reason you believe this part of the draft Plan Strategy to be unsound. However, the soundness test(s) you select here should only relate to the relevant section, paragraph or policy identified above.

If you wish to notify us of more than one part of the plan that you consider to be unsound you can choose to submit further responses to other parts of the plan by completing and submitting a copy of Section H for each part you choose to identify.

(Required)

Please select all that apply

- P1 - Has the development plan document (DPD) been prepared in accordance with the council's timetable and the Statement of Community Involvement?
- P2 - Has the council prepared its Preferred Options Paper and taken into account any representations made?
- P3 - Has the DPD been subject to sustainability appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment?
- P4 - Did the council comply with the regulations on the form and content of its DPD and procedure for preparing the DPD?
- C1 - Did the council take account of the Regional Development Strategy?



- C2 - Did the council take account of its Community Plan?
- C3 - Did the council take account of policy and guidance issued by the Department?
- C4 - Has the plan had regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the council's district or to any adjoining council's district?
- CE1 - The DPD sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations logically flow and where cross boundary issues are relevant it is not in conflict with the DPDs of neighbouring councils
- CE2 - The strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust evidence base
- CE3 - There are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring
- CE4 - It is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances

**Q16.** Please give details of why you consider the Plan Strategy to be unsound having regard to the test(s) you have identified above. Please be as precise as possible.

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

**Q17.** If you consider the Plan Strategy to be unsound, please provide details of what change(s) you consider necessary to make the Plan Strategy sound.

Please note your representation should be submitted in full and cover succinctly all the information, evidence, and any supporting information necessary to support/justify your submission. There will not be a subsequent opportunity to make a further submission based on your original representation. After this stage, further submissions will only be at the request of the independent examiner, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies at independent examination.

SEE ATTACHED SHEET

**Note:** If you wish to attach any evidence to support your comments above, please enclose your document(s) with this form. However, if you wish to refer to specific sections within a separate report, this is best included within the above text box.

## Belfast Local Development Plan - Draft Plan Strategy 2035

### Representation from Queen's University Belfast

#### H. Unsound

**Q14.** Chapter 11 *'Delivery'* (pages 289-293) & Appendix F: Monitoring Indicators (pages 322-329).

**Q15.** Coherence and Effectiveness Test CE3.

**Q16.** The unsound matters, under CE3, relate to the following: monitoring and review for Policy EC7 and use of indicators, triggers and corrective steps.

**Q17.** QUB notes the proposals for *'Monitoring'* and *'Review'* set out in the Draft Plan Strategy which include the collation of information on a number of indicators each financial year (Chapter 11, para 11.2.2). In relation to the indicators it is noted that the Draft Plan Strategy states *'Not all policies within the plan require clear targets or do not easily translate into measurable indicators, so not all policies have an associated indicator within the monitoring framework'* (Chapter 11, para 11.2.3).

It is considered that for *'Monitoring'* and *'Review'* to be clear and effective, the reference in the Draft Plan Strategy to *'collaborative planning....data collection, performance management and project delivery'* (Chapter 11, 11.1.3) in relation to *'community planning'*, could be applied to *'Monitoring'* (section 11.2) and *'Review'* (section 11.3). This would be appropriate for Policy EC7 - Higher Education Institutions (Chapter 8, pages 156-157).

In the interest of soundness, the *'Indicator'* for Policy EC7 would be *'Floorspace developed and converted for Further and Higher Education Use'*. The *'Source'* would be *'Planning Decisions of BCC and liaising with the Further and Higher Education Sector'*. The *'Target'* would be *'Planning Applications processed within the target decision period for local and major applications'*. The *'Trigger'* would be *'More than 10% of planning applications failing to meet the target decision period'*.

In the interest of soundness, it is considered that an additional column should be added to each *'Indicator'* to enable an assessment of the severity of the situation when a *'trigger'* is activated. The *'corrective steps'* (Chapter 11, para 11.2.8) should be further developed and applied depending on the grade of severity. A sample table should be included in the *'Delivery'* chapter ranging from least severe to most severe i.e. monitoring, review of application of policies (training), provision of supplementary planning guidance, policy research, policy review and plan review. The sample table and application of *'severity'* grading to *'Indicators'* should be incorporated in the Annual Monitoring Report. It is considered that the 10% *'Trigger'* for Policy EC7 would, under the *'Monitoring'* and *'Review'* system, be a serious matter.

## I. Type of Procedure

Q19. Please indicate if you would like your representation to be dealt with by:  
(Required)

*Please select only one item*

- Written representations (Choose this procedure to have your representation considered in written form only.)
- Oral hearing (Choose this procedure to present your representation orally at the public hearing event(s))

Unless you specifically request a hearing, an independent examiner will proceed on the basis that you are content to have your representation considered in written form only. Please note however that an independent examiner will be expected to give the same careful consideration to written representations as to those representations dealt with by oral hearing.