

## ANNOUNCEMENT

During the last few days, and following the evidence put to me during the 7 Hearings which have taken place, I have been giving a great deal of consideration to certain housing matters contained in the Core Strategy. In essence, I have very grave doubts that the Core Strategy in its present form is sound in its housing policies. You will recall that in the note of 28 April 2011, the Programme Officer stated that the Inspector would need to be satisfied that a sufficient amount of housing could be delivered at the right time and in the right places during the plan period. I have to say that having considered the evidence from all the participants I am not convinced that this has been achieved. I am not convinced that, in matters of housing, the Core Strategy generally conforms with the RSS, and I am not persuaded that matters should be put right in the Site Allocations DPD. In my view, the Core Strategy should provide a suitable framework for the preparation of the next generation of plans, particularly the Allocations DPD, by leaving no doubt where, when and how the correct amount of housing will be delivered.

I consider that the matter can be put right, and in a timely fashion. But it implies some fairly radical draft recommendations on my part. Although I have obviously not had the time since the previous hearings to put these intended recommendations in a precise form of words, I would expect them to be along the lines of the Core Strategy having to adopt the annual housing completions indicated in the RSS throughout the plan period and set out on page 69 of the Core Strategy. I would also expect to recommend that this figure be regarded as a minimum requirement, mainly because of such considerations as the Government's agenda for growth and the relationship between housing and the economy. I would give the Council and the participants an opportunity to comment on draft recommendations on this matter, either by way of written representations or with another hearing.

I see no need to discuss this today, for two reasons:

- a) It would mean going over evidence already provided, all of which I have taken into account in coming to these conclusions;
- b) I shall be writing to the Councils setting out draft recommendations for the Core Strategy's housing policies, and suggesting a way forward. The important point to remember is that the Examination remains open until the Councils receive my Report.

Richard E Hollox  
Inspector  
12 July 2011