

Text of Inspector's second letter – 27 July 2011

(i) Further to my letter to you of 15 July 2011, I should welcome some indication of your Councils' intentions following my conclusion that the Core Strategy, as it stands at present, is not sound in so far as its housing policies are concerned. It would also be useful to have some idea of the likely programme of the preparation of changes, sustainability appraisal and consultations etc. This would much assist me, and the Planning Inspectorate, in devising my own work programme. As I intimated in my letter, I have already started on the preparation of my Report and I am willing to continue to deal with those matters which seem to be capable of examination at this stage. I am, however, concerned that if the Core Strategy is to be fundamentally changed, with the revised housing contents having substantial implications for much of the rest of the document, a good deal of reporting time could be wasted and at considerable cost to your Councils. I am sure that this is something which we all want to avoid. It is an urgent matter for all concerned, and I should appreciate your comments as soon as possible.

(ii) As you know, the Draft National Planning Policy Framework (DNPPF) (July 2011) has recently been published. Of particular note as far as the Core Strategy is concerned are its policies for housing. These include significantly increasing the supply of housing by, for example, including an additional allowance of at least 20% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. This gives greater credence to my conclusion about unsoundness. Whilst accepting that this Framework is in draft form, I consider that your Councils and those parties who made representations on housing matters should be given an opportunity to comment on the DNPPF. Indeed, as it addresses other matters including business and economic development, transport, climate change and the natural and historic environment, it would be prudent to invite further comments from all those who have made representations on the Core Strategy. This will also have implications for the programme of further work on the Core Strategy.

Richard E Hollox
Inspector
27 July 2011