

**Single Issue Review of Core Strategy Policy CS7 and the
Site Allocations Local Plan Examination**

Inspector: Mrs Christa Masters MA (Hons) MRTPI

Programme Officer: Mrs Annette Feeney

annette.feeney@westsuffolk.gov.uk Mobile: 07775 771026

Mrs Marie Smith
Strategic Planning Service Manager
Forest Heath District Council

By email only

13 March 2018

Dear Mrs Smith

Examination of the Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP)

Thank you for your letter dated 22 February. I note the Council's resolution following the Full Council Meeting which was to endorse option A and that you now intend to update your evidence base accordingly. This letter relates solely to the main modifications which you are intending to produce and the administrative arrangements going forward. At this stage, I am not inviting any comments about the content of this letter.

The Council should now prepare a consolidated schedule of all potential main modifications. I will need to see the draft schedule and may have comments on it. I will also need to agree the final version of the schedule before it is made available for public consultation. This schedule should include a column to explain the reason behind the main modifications to assist consultees. To clarify, it is best to group all the changes to a single policy together as one main modification.

The Council should also satisfy itself that it has met the requirements for Sustainability Appraisals by producing addendums to the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment in relation to the potential main modifications as appropriate. I will need to see drafts of the addendums and may have comments on them. The addendums should be published as part of the public consultation.

I note that since the hearings took place, the Council has also produced a list of proposed additional main modifications. These are a matter solely for the Council and if it is the Councils intention to publicise or consult on any additional modifications it should be made clear as part of that exercise that such changes are not a matter for the Inspector. Furthermore, advice on main modifications and the Sustainability Appraisal, including on consultation is provided in Examining Local Plans Procedural Practice (in particular, see

paragraph 5.24-5.28). This states that the scope and length of the consultation should reflect the consultation at Regulation 19 Stage, usually at least 6 weeks. It should be made clear that the consultation is only about the proposed main modifications and not about other aspects of the plan and that the main modifications are put forward without prejudice to the Inspectors' final conclusions. Any update of existing documents will need to be clearly differentiated on the Council's website.

The Council also produced a number of additional documents in connection with the response to us dated 13 November. All of these documents are available on the Examination website. Whilst not inviting comments on these documents directly, these documents will remain available for any general comments as part of the consultation process. You should ensure that consultees are aware of this.

At this stage, I envisage 1 to 2 days for the SALP hearing session to take place. I will endeavour to issue a hearing agenda in tandem with your consultation on the main modifications so that the consultation responses can take account of this.

You should be aware that the views I have expressed at the hearing sessions and in this letter on the main modifications are based on the evidence before me. Nevertheless, my final conclusions on the soundness and legal compliance will be provided in the report which will be produced after the final hearing session has taken place. As part of this process, I will take account of any representations made in response to the consultation. As a consequence, the views I have expressed regarding soundness could alter following the consultation process.

I would be grateful if the Council could confirm a timetable through to the publication of the main modifications for consultation.

Please ensure a copy of this letter is placed on the Examination website.

Yours sincerely

Christa Masters

Inspector