

**Working Site Allocations Development Plan Document
Hearings Closing Session and Inspector's Closing Remarks
11 December 2019**

NB this is not a verbatim note but reflects the points covered.

The purpose of this session is to review the schedule of proposed changes and to consider how it is to be dealt with. Furthermore, it is also to give some indication of the next steps in the process and to deal with any procedural questions that you may have. None of this should be taken as pre-judging the contents of the final report which will take into account all relevant matters and representations.

Turning to the proposed changes to the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD)- some were suggested prior to the submission of the SADPD; some were proposed in response to the publication of my Matters, Issues and Questions document; and some have emerged during the course of discussions in the hearing sessions.

To assist the next stage of the Examination it will be necessary to produce a consolidated list of main modifications- incorporating all of the changes suggested since the Regulation 19 Version of the SADPD- for the purposes of consultation and possibly sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulation assessment.

There is a distinction between main and additional modifications as referred to in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Additional modifications are those that (taken together) do not materially affect the policies of the SADPD. Main modifications can therefore be taken to be those that do materially affect the policies. They will therefore comprise any changes to the policies themselves or to the supporting text which have a significant bearing on the interpretation of policy. Part of the production of the consolidated list of changes will be the assessment of which of them are main and which of them are additional modifications and this exercise should be carried out by the Council in conjunction with me, following the closure of the hearings and prior to the consultation process.

In addition to the potential changes that have already been identified, following the closure of the hearings I will be reflecting on whether other elements of the SADPD are potentially unsound and whether any revisions would be necessary to ensure soundness. For my part, I intend to provide a "without prejudice" interim view relating to soundness in certain respects as a first step. This is intended to be helpful and to give the Council an opportunity to consider what further modifications, if any, should be made, or whether any further work may be required. I intend to deal with this as a first stage of the post-hearing process and these initial views should be with you in due course, but hopefully by the end of January 2020.

My letter will be publicly available and published on the website in the normal way.

People may have different opinions about any of the main modifications proposed; but that is a matter for me to resolve in due course through my

report- and in any event the main modifications would be subject to further consultation.

Additional modifications need not be the subject of consultation. However, if the Council wish to include them for completeness then the distinction with main modifications should be spelled out clearly and they should be contained in a separate schedule.

The period of consultation on main modifications should be for a minimum of 6 weeks. In carrying out further consultation you should make it clear that comments should solely be addressed to the proposed changes and the implications arising from them. You should also bear in mind the possible need for further sustainability appraisal and any necessary assessment under the Habitat Regulations. The Council should keep me informed of progress particularly the date of the close of the consultation period.

I will then need to consider the consultation responses before finalising my report. At the moment, it is difficult to give definitive guidance about when this will be produced but I expect this to be late Spring/ early Summer 2020. A firmer date will be given nearer the time-particularly once we have a date for the close of consultation on the modifications.

Closing Remarks

Finally, I would like to thank Chris Banks and Claire Jones-Hughes for the efficient and effective work they have done as Programme Officers. I would also like to thank the Council for their timely responses to my various requests and for their contributions during the hearings and also thank all representors who participated for their input.

The hearing sessions are now closed.

G J Fort
INSPECTOR