

Woking Site Allocations Development Plan Document**Inspector:** G J Fort BA PGDip LLM MCD MRTPI**Programme Officer:** Chris Banks

17 September 2019

Dear Mr Amoako,

PRELIMINARY MATTERS**Introduction**

1. The following matters have arisen from my preliminary appraisal of the submitted Woking Site Allocations Development Plan Document (the SADPD) and the supporting material. These are general procedural matters and points of clarification, which I am raising at an early stage to assist with the examination.
2. In due course, I will be setting out the Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) that will need to be addressed during the Examination and which will be considered in any further written responses I may request and in the hearing sessions. The MIQs will be published alongside my Guidance Note and draft Hearings Timetable, which will set out how I intend the Examination to progress.
3. I have made it clear below where I consider that a reply would be helpful. I would appreciate responses to these questions and requests to be sent to the Programme Officer (PO) by close of business on 27 September 2019.

Procedural Guidance

4. The Planning Inspectorate's *Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations (5th Edition)*¹, was published in June 2019. Please could you ensure that this latest version of the Guidance is appropriately referenced on the Examination website?

Hearing Sessions

5. We have agreed provisional dates for the Examination hearing sessions, which are in the weeks commencing 2 and 9 December 2019. I am proceeding on the basis that hearings will take place Tuesday to Thursday of those weeks, with the Friday mornings kept in reserve in case of discussion over-runs.

Scope of the Examination

6. The Regulation 19 version of the SADPD² was published for consultation in November 2018. Included with your submission is a document described in the covering letter as a "Schedule of Minor Modifications following

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/examining-local-plans-procedural-practice>

² Document reference: WBC/SA/001

Regulation 19 Consultation”³. I note that related changes also appear to have been made to the proposals map and insets since the Regulation 19 stage (dated July 2019). From my perusal of this table, and the related tracked changes version of the SADPD (dated July 2019) also submitted, as several of these proposed amendments would have material effects on the SADPD’s policies and the interpretation of them, they clearly fall outside the scope of “additional modifications” as set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

7. I have no material before me to suggest that consultation on the modifications has been carried out on the same basis as it was for the unmodified Regulation 19 document. Moreover, whilst I note the May 2019 version of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) relating to the McClaren Campus and Poole Road Industrial Estate, it is not clear whether the mooted modifications, taken together⁴, have been subject to SA and Habitats Regulation Assessment. It would be helpful if the Council could clarify these matters. However, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary I am proceeding on the basis that the Regulation 19 document dated November 2018 should form the basis of the Examination.
8. I appreciate that the Council’s position may have evolved on some of the matters on which modifications are proposed. However, if these prove necessary for soundness and/or legal compliance, they will need to form the basis of main modifications to be consulted on at the appropriate stage in the Examination, alongside any other main modifications that may be necessary.
9. Nevertheless, I only have the power to recommend main modifications should I be specifically requested to do so by the Council⁵. Consequently, I would be grateful if you could confirm whether you wish me to proceed on this basis. In terms of any additional modifications, i.e those that do not have a material effect on the SADPD’s policies and interpretation of them, these are a matter for the Council prior to the adoption of the plan and are not subject to the Examination process.
10. In addition, in the interests of clarity, please could you ensure that the July 2019 versions of the SADPD, the proposals map and insets are assigned document reference numbers?

Housing Supply

11. I have been provided with a *Five Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement*⁶ dated April 2017. Could you confirm whether this is the most up-to-date assessment. If not, please could you send me the latest position statement and make this available on the Examination website? If it is the most up-to-date position, please could you advise when an updated assessment is anticipated?

³ Document reference: WBC/SA/002

⁴ Including for example requirements for air quality assessments and incorporation of optional technical standards relating to the accessibility and adaptability of housing

⁵ In accordance with Section 20 (7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

⁶ Document reference: WBC/SA/E023

Neighbourhood Plans

12. I would be grateful if you could provide me with a narrative highlighting the current status of any neighbourhood plans in the Borough, whether these be emerging, and if so at what stage, or form part of the development plan. Please could you supply copies of any adopted neighbourhood plans and add these to the Examination website?

Infrastructure Capacity Study and Delivery Plan (the IDP)

13. The fourth draft of the IDP⁷, dated April 2018 is included with the Examination documents. I note that Policy CS16 of Woking's adopted Core Strategy⁸ commits the Council to annual review of the infrastructure schedule which forms part of the IDP. Could you confirm whether the April 2018 draft of the IDP remains the most up-to-date version? If not, please could you provide me with any updated version of the IDP and also make it available on the Examination website?

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) etc.

14. Reference is made within the SADPD to a Parking SPD, a Climate Change SPD, the Thames Basin Heaths SPA Avoidance Strategy, the Natural Woking Strategy, and *Biodiversity Opportunity Areas: the basis for realising Surrey's ecological network*. Please could you supply me with copies of these documents and also make them available on the Examination website?

Conclusion

15. Whilst I have aimed to be comprehensive in relation to the matters set out above, if you require any further clarification or further explanation of these requests, please contact me via the PO.

Yours sincerely

G J Fort
INSPECTOR

⁷ Document reference: WBC/SA/E036

⁸ Document reference: WBC/SA/E017