



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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This matter is being dealt with by: Richard Kay

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My Ref:

Your ref

Date: 10 September 2018

Gemma Wildman
Peterborough City Council

Sent by email only

Dear Gemma

RE: Peterborough Local Plan Inspector's Initial Findings

Thank you for your letter of 31 August 2018 addressed to Richard Kay, which, for ease of reference, I replicate below:

Dear Mr Kay,

RE: Peterborough Local Plan Inspector's Initial findings

I am writing to you regarding the Peterborough Local Plan Inspector's Letter dated 22 August 2018 setting out her initial findings from the stage 1 hearings. You will note the following paragraph within it:

Given these findings, and providing East Cambridgeshire advances changes to meet its own needs in full, this unmet need could be deleted from Peterborough's housing target in its Plan. In light of this and my views set out in this letter it would be helpful to both examinations if Peterborough and East Cambridgeshire Councils were able to agree a joint approach on this matter and set out their position, going forward, in a statement of common ground.

The Inspector, thus, suggests a possible Statement of Common Ground between East Cambridgeshire District Council and Peterborough City Council.

Please could I, therefore, explore with you if you are, in principle, willing to engage in such a Statement of Common Ground and if so any indications of the broad parameters of such a Statement?

I look forward to hearing from you.

*Yours sincerely
Gemma Wildman*

To remove any perception of a conflict of interest, I reply to your letter rather than Richard Kay. For context, I am the Council's Director responsible for strategic planning matters.

My Council is always committed to exploring the potential of 'statements of common ground', where producing such statements can assist all parties with clarity on a particular matter.

However, in this instance, production of such a statement does not seem possible, or, at least, would not appear to assist any party if one was produced because it would not move matters any further forward than what already exists in the public domain.

As you know, my Council submitted its Local Plan for examination earlier this year, on the basis that my Council "continues to support" (para 3.3.5 of the submitted Local Plan) the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed by the Cambridgeshire authorities, plus Peterborough, in 2013. That MoC has the effect of East Cambridgeshire having a reduced dwelling requirement of 1,500 homes between 2011-31.

Notwithstanding the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan examining Inspector's Initial Findings of 30 July 2018¹, my Council's views on the MoC remain the same, and it continues to support the MoC as "a coherent and comprehensive growth strategy across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough between 2011 and 2031" (para 3.3.4 of the submitted Local Plan). My Council has, in fact, expressed "considerable concerns"² to the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan examining Inspector, in respect of the limited weight apparently being put on the MoC. Such concerns remain my Council's position today.

Accordingly, as my Council is only mid-way through its examination process, it is not in a position to, nor does it want to, amend its publicly made views on the MoC.

However, as you know, my Council is progressing with its Local Plan examination on a pragmatic and positive basis, and is working with the examining Inspector to achieve a set of modifications which would meet the Inspector's Initial Findings relating to the (ending of the) transfer of homes, assuming they become the Inspector's 'final findings'.

Accordingly, at the present time, my Council is not in a position to enter any SoCG which would confirm absolutely my Council's acceptance that the transfer of homes should cease. That is not my Council's present position. However, I can confirm that we are proactively and positively working with the examining Inspector to reach a situation whereby the ending of the transfer of homes may be the outcome of the final Local Plan which my Council will consider adopting in due course.

I hope this helps clarify my Council's position, but would be happy to clarify further if need be.

Yours sincerely

Emma Grima
Director – Commercial

¹ "I am not convinced by the evidence before me, for the purposes of this examination, that it is appropriate to continue to attribute significant weight to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Memorandum of Co-operation (2013) (PE02) and the Joint HMA Statement on Housing Redistribution (2017) (PE04) and to continue to discount the district's housing figures." See: <http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ED031%20Interim%20findings%20letter%20to%20East%20Cambs%20re%20Stage%201%20hearings%20East%20Cambridgeshire%20Local%20Plan%2030%207%2018.pdf>

² See <http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ED032%20-%20Letter%20ECDC%20to%20Inspector%20%28Initial%20findings%29%20-%20203.8.18.pdf>