

INSPECTOR'S FURTHER MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

1. I am Philip Lewis, a chartered Town Planner appointed by the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities on 25 July 2022 to examine the soundness of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan – Single Issue Review (of its 2015 Local Plan) Proposed Submission Stage (Reg 19) (the Plan), and whether it meets the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Act) and associated Regulations.
2. Following the hearing held on 8 November 2022, I issued my post hearings advice to the Council (EX.INS08) in which I explained my soundness concerns. The Council responded to my letter (EX.LA09) suggesting amendments to the submitted Plan; namely that the housing requirement would be based on the local housing need which has been assessed using the standard method as set out in the national planning practice guidance, and to cover the period 2022 to 2031. Having considered the Council's response, I have decided to hold a further hearing session to discuss their suggested amendments. The hearing will be held at **9.30am on Tuesday 28 March 2023**, by way of an online meeting.
3. At my request, the Council has prepared a topic paper regarding their suggested amendments to the Plan (EX.LA11). Following receipt of the topic paper, I have prepared matters, issues and questions (MIQs) for the further hearing which are set out in this document.
4. Only those who have made representations seeking to change the Plan have a right to appear before, and be heard by, the Inspector. If you have a right to be heard, and you wish to exercise that right, you should contact the Programme Officer by **5pm on Monday 6 March 2023** to confirm whether you wish to attend. Please note that if you do not contact the Programme Officer by that date, it will be assumed that you do not wish to appear and be heard, and you will not be listed as a participant for the further hearing, or be sent an invitation.
5. The scope of the further hearing session is limited to the MIQs set out in this document. If any representor wishes to submit a brief statement in response to the further MIQs, it should be in accordance with the guidelines set out in my Guidance Note (EX.INS03) and should be sent electronically to the Programme Officer by **5pm on Friday 17 March 2023**. It is expected that hearing statements will only be submitted electronically. It is important to note that written representations and oral representations carry the same weight, and I will have equal regard to views put at a hearing or in writing.

6. Please note that I do not intend revisiting those questions posed and discussed previously, where I consider that I have sufficient information for me to reach my conclusions on the legal compliance and soundness of the Plan.

Matters, Issues and Questions

Matter 2: Provision for housing (continued)

Issue: Are the proposed amendments to Policy GROWTH1 and the explanatory text of the Plan positively prepared, clear, justified and consistent with national policy and will they be effective?

Housing requirement

- Q.1 The Council suggest that the housing requirement for the Plan set out in Policy GROWTH1 would be based on the minimum local housing need calculated using the standard method, to cover the period 2022 to 2031. Would the resulting housing requirement of 600 dwellings per annum derived from the minimum local housing need be sound?

Strategic Policy

- Q.2 It is suggested that Policy GROWTH1, in respect of the delivery of housing, should be amended so that it would cover the period 2022 to 2031. Would the amended Policy be justified, positively prepared, effective and consistent with national policy? If not, how should the proposed Policy be amended to make it sound?

Delivery shortfall in the adopted plan period to date

- Q.3 There is a shortfall in the delivery of housing in the current plan period to April 2022 of 2,688 dwellings against the adopted requirement. The Planning Practice Guidance is clear that the standard method (for calculating minimum local housing need) identifies the minimum uplift that will be required and therefore it is not a requirement to specifically address under-delivery separately, as the affordability adjustment is applied to take account of past under-delivery. The Council's suggestion to rebase housing need to 2022 and for the housing requirement in Policy GROWTH1 to be amended so that it covers the period 2022 to 2031, rather than commencing in 2011, would address the existing shortfall to April 2022. Would this be sound?

Main Modifications

- Q.4 The Council has suggested an updated schedule of Main Modifications (EX.LA11). Are the suggested Main Modifications necessary for soundness?

Philip Lewis

Inspector 17 February 2023
