



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Inspector P Lewis BA (Hons) MA MRTPI
(By email only, via the Programme Officer)

This matter is being dealt with by: Richard Kay

Telephone: 01353 665555
E-mail: planningpolicy@eastcambs.gov.uk

My Ref:

Your ref

Date: 6 January 2023

Dear Inspector Lewis,

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan - Single Issue Review (of its 2015 Local Plan)
- acknowledgement of your letter

Thank you for your letter dated 14 December 2022, which was sent to the Programme Officer on 4 January and passed to myself the same day. With your permission, we will arrange for it to be published today, two days after receiving it, alongside this letter in reply.

This is a short letter in reply, partly to acknowledge receipt and partly to highlight that the Council will be responding in full in due course.

Whilst we respectfully ask that you await that full response from the Council, the Council is deeply concerned by your preliminary findings, the contradictions which appear to arise in your conclusions, and the implications of your preliminary recommendations.

We are particularly concerned by the natural conclusions which arise from your preliminary findings, should they go on to form the final recommendations. This would include your recommendation that, to make the plan 'sound', the Council's housing requirement would, in effect, be 900 per annum for 9 years (5,400 + 2,688 undersupply, 2022-2031), and an annual figure significantly in excess of that for five year land supply calculation purposes. The Council struggles to see how imposing such unrealistic figures is in some way making what you regard an 'unsound' plan into a 'sound' one, particularly when reflecting on your sentiments in para 25 (and similar in para 26): *'There is no convincing evidence that seeking to provide for housing over the minimum level of identified need is a realistic proposition, nor that it could reasonably be delivered'*.

As you will be aware, the Secretary of State requires Inspectors to work proactively with the local planning authority during examinations, and that Inspectors should seek to work with the local planning authority to clarify and address fundamental issues of concern.

In the spirit of that Secretary of State request, we will set out in a forthcoming letter within the next 2-3 weeks our proactive suggestions. Such suggestions will lead to a plan which addresses your fundamental concerns, but is also realistic and deliverable, post adoption. We are unconvinced, at this stage, that your preliminary findings will achieve that goal. We therefore look forward to working proactively with you over the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely

Richard Kay
Strategic Planning Manager
East Cambridgeshire District Council