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# Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council Local Plan Sites and Policies Examination

**Inspector: Mr Christopher Anstey BA(Hons) DipTP Dip LA MRTPI**

**Programme Officer: Miss Kerry Trueman**

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Mr A Duncan  
Planning Policy Manager,  
Planning, Regeneration and Transport  
Riverside House  
Main Street  
Rotherham  
S60 1AE

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2017

Dear Mr Duncan,

## **Rotherham Sites and Policies Plan: Proposed Main Modifications**

I refer to my previous letter dated 10 March 2017 relating to the Proposed Main Modifications and the need to find additional housing allocations in the Wath-upon-Deerne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton settlement grouping.

As you are aware I held additional hearing sessions on Thursday 19 October 2017 to consider the additional housing allocations proposed by the Council at Far Field Lane, Wath-upon-Deerne (LDF0849) and at Pontefract Road / Barnsley Road, West Melton (LDF263).

On the basis of the material submitted and the discussion at the hearing sessions I am of the view that the two additional allocations in Wath-upon-Deerne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton are justified and necessary to make the plan sound. The additional dwellings that would be secured by the allocation of these sites are required to ensure that the Core Strategy housing requirement for the Wath-upon-Deerne, Brampton Bierlow and West Melton is broadly met. Consequently they need to be included in the Proposed Main Modifications and duly advertised.

In my letter of 10 March 2017 I stated that the AHLV designation should be deleted from the plan in view of the lack of up-to-date justification. I also endorsed various changes to Policy SP35 Green Infrastructure and Landscape specifying that in planning for development reference would be made to the Rotherham Borough Local Landscape Character Areas and their sensitivity to change. The Council has requested that I give further consideration to the wording of Policy SP35 to make it clear that the most sensitive landscape character areas are those identified as of high and moderate to high landscape sensitivity. I consider that such wording would assist understanding of Policy SP35, and together with Core Strategy Policy CS21, ensure that due regard is given to landscape considerations in accordance with national policy.

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The Council should now finalise a Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications, and any changes to the Policies Map, based on the contents of this letter and my letter of 10 March 2017. Once drafts are compiled I will require copies for checking. The finalised Proposed Main Modifications, together with an updated Sustainability Appraisal (and non-technical summary of the SA), and if appropriate an Habitat Regulations Assessment report, will need to be advertised for a 6 week period of public consultation. It will be necessary for me to view, and if required, comment on all documents before publication.

In drawing up the draft Proposed Main Modifications I have given full consideration to the Council's submissions and all the representations made relating to the Plan, including the oral contributions at the hearings. My final conclusions regarding soundness and legal compliance will be given in the report to be produced following consultation on the Proposed Main Modifications. I will take into account the consultation responses before concluding whether or not a Main Modification along the lines set out is required to make the plan sound. Nevertheless, having regard to the criteria for soundness and to assist at this stage I have included a brief justification relating to each of the Proposed Main Modifications. This may alter in the light of any further evidence that emerges including the consultation process. My views, therefore, are given here without prejudice to the conclusions that will appear in my report. This report will also cover other main issues that arose during the Examination but which are not dealt with in this letter.

I shall be grateful if the Council would now draw up a draft programme for progressing the Examination for my consideration, bearing in mind the need to secure the Council's endorsement of the publication of the Proposed Main Modifications and the statutory requirements as regarding publication.

If you wish for any clarification or assistance do not hesitate to contact me through the Programme Officer.

Yours sincerely

*Christopher Anstey*

Inspector