

## MAIN MATTER 26 - GENERAL APPROACH IN PART 2 OF THE PLAN

Issue - Does Part 2 of the Local Plan set out an effective framework for the delivery of allocations and the protection of designation sites, which is robust and in line with national policy?

### 1 Introduction

1.1 Paragraph 153 of the NPPF makes it clear that “*Local Plans should set out the opportunities for development and clear policies on what will or will not be permitted and where*”. It also makes it clear that plans should “*allocate sites to promote development and flexible use of land ... and provide detail on form, scale, access and quantum of development where appropriate*”.

1.2 Part 2 of the Local Plan identifies the proposed development sites and sets out some of the potential constraints, but it provides no guidance at all to the decision-maker or to potential developers about how these sites might need to be developed in order to deliver sustainable development. They do not provide a clear Policy steer on what will be permitted and where on these sites and fail to provide any detail on the form, scale, access etc that might be necessary or the areas that might need to remain undeveloped. Consequently, the Policy framework is unsound and does not satisfy the requirements of national policy guidance

### 2 Responses to the Inspector’s Questions

2.1 Question a) Does the inclusion of site allocation wording in text boxes, rather than policies, have implications for the effectiveness and deliverability of Part 2 of the Local Plan?

2.1.1 The approach to the site allocations used in the Local Plan is a little confusing. It is not clear whether the text set out in the orange boxes in Part 2 are intended as ‘Policies’ (in that they detail the places where future development will take place) or whether they are, what might be termed, ‘development principles’ (in that they set out the considerations which would need to be taken into account in any development proposals for those sites). If they are intended to be ‘Policies’, then they contain a lot of information which does not seem appropriate for inclusion within a Policy (such as land ownership and possible

intentions regarding green infrastructure and affordable housing). Moreover, they also provide little which actually helps a decision-maker determine how they ought to react to any application on those sites (other than the Reports which will be required to support any planning application), in the main simply listing possible constraints with no detail about how the development of each site might need to be amended in order to address them. As a result, the orange boxes in Part 2 are not particularly helpful and do not help the delivery of the Plan.

2.1.2 It would be far clearer and assist those using the Plan if:-

- (a) Part 1 of the Plan included a Policy for each proposed use (employment, housing, mixed use etc) which simply listed the sites which are allocated for that purpose. Each Policy should also include a requirement that the sites identified would be expected to be developed in accordance with the Development Principles set out in Part 2.
- (b) The boxes in Part 2 of the Plan are amended to read “Development Principles” and their content is amended to include only the requirements which a prospective developer would need to take into account in order to ensure that site can be brought forward in a sustainable manner consistent with national policy guidance.

2.2 Question c) Are other site constraints and related mitigation measures clearly defined in Part 2 of the Plan? Is there sufficient detail to effectively guide development and make it clear what will be permitted? In relation to this:

v. should Part 2 of the Plan specify mitigation measures relating to the historic environment, where relevant?

2.2.1 Whilst Part 2 of the Plan lists the constraints for each of the sites, it does provide any guidance as to how the development of each of those sites might address those constraints. As such, the approach in Part 2 does not effectively guide development at all nor does it make clear what will or will not be permitted.

2.2.2 In terms of the historic environment, many of the sites identified in Part 2 identify elements of the historic environment as potential constraints. The local planning authority has produced a number of Heritage Impact Assessments to evaluate whether or not each of those sites are appropriate in terms of their

potential impact upon the historic environment. Many of these have concluded that the site's development will result in harm to the historic environment and have suggested measures to remove or reduce that harm. However, none of these recommendations are firmly or securely tied into the Local Plan.

2.2.3 It is not sufficient to rely on the general Policy for the historic environment that is set out in Part 1 to ensure that each of those sites is delivered in a manner which will safeguard those elements which contribute to the significance of the heritage assets nearby. Many of the Recommendations are site-specific and detail specific measures needed to address the harm that these sites might otherwise cause to the historic environment. In order to ensure that the development of those Allocations which identify the historic environment as a constraint take place in a manner which will deliver sustainable development in terms of the conservation of the historic environment, the Recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessments need to be specifically referred to in Part 2 of the Plan. Such an approach would help to provide certainty to both potential developers and local communities about precisely what will, and will not, be permitted on these sites and help ensure that these sites are developed in a sustainable manner.

2.2.4 **Assuming that the Plan is amended as suggested in Paragraph 2.1.2, above:-**

- (c) The Development Principles in Part 2 include a requirement that, where relevant, the development of the sites would need to have regard to the recommendations of any Heritage Impact Assessment.