

Please contact: Brian McCutcheon

Your ref:

Our ref: BM/LDF/Exam

Date: 28 October 2013

Medway Core Strategy Inspector
C/O Programme Officer
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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Inspector,

Medway Core Strategy Examination

Thank you for your letter dated 27 September and to which I am now able to respond.

The Council is grateful for your agreement to the suspension of the Examination until 29 November and fully appreciates the caveats you have put on your decision.

As indicated in my last letter, the Council has no wish to prolong the current examination any longer than is appropriate and fair in the circumstances. For the avoidance of doubt I am able to inform you that approval will be sought to withdraw the Core Strategy if:

1. The Lodge Hill SSSI notification is properly confirmed; or
2. The current assessment of "objectively assessed needs" cannot be accommodated in the spatial strategy as submitted. We estimate the threshold for this to be if an annual housing target of more than 900 units was indicated; or
3. Our review of the evidence base, including the SLAA, indicates that it is no longer proportionate, robust or up to date; or
4. If, as a result of the above or any other factor, substantial modifications were required that could not reasonably be dealt with 'in examination'.

With this in mind the programme of work, that is now well advanced, will inform the council's own decisions in respect of items 2, 3 and 4 above. It is also designed, subject to the above, to provide you with a complete draft schedule of main modifications considered necessary to make the Core Strategy fully NPPF compliant by 29 November.

This information is available in other formats and languages from Ann Gardner on 01634 331541

A programme beyond that date was not set out as we assumed that, in the normal way, you would want to informally consider whether the main modifications were 'in principle' satisfactory before they were formally consulted on. We did not envisage any other work carrying on beyond 29 November.

On that basis and if you were able to give informal consideration to such modifications by 20 December, a formal six-week consultation could begin on 3 January and run through to 14 February. This would avoid the Christmas/New Year break but otherwise minimise any further delay.

We hope that this helps to clarify the Council's position.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian McCutcheon', with a horizontal line underneath.

Brian McCutcheon
Planning Policy & Design Manager