



# The Planning Inspectorate

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The Head of Planning Services  
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Your Ref: MSB/100D3m(b)  
fao: Dr M Bingham  
Our Ref: APP/E2001/A/01/1072744

Date: 2 May 2002

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Dear Mr Sharp

CES TL

- 1 MAY 2002

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## HUNTINGDON LOCAL PLAN ALTERATION - REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR ADDENDUM / CORRIGENDUM REPORT

I refer to your letters of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April and to your questions relating to the Inspector's Report. As you know, the Lead Inspector, Miss Whittaker, has been unwell, and unfortunately she is presently on sick leave. Nonetheless, she has agreed the contents of this letter and the appendix. I address your questions below, in the order in which they were raised. The references in italics are to the paragraph numbers in the Report. I attach as an appendix a schedule of amendments which should be made to the Report as a result of my consideration of your questions.

- **Table, p72**

I agree that the table should include Site 23 (Headlands, Fenstanton).

- **Site 26** (*paras 2.4.4.25-2.4.4.28*)

In view of the fact that the sole objection (0430/015) has been withdrawn, paragraphs 2.4.4.25-2.4.4.28 of the Report should be deleted.

- **Site 27** (*paras 2.4.4.29-2.4.4.30*)

In view of the fact that the sole objection (0430/016) has been withdrawn, paragraphs 2.4.4.29-2.4.4.30 of the Report should be deleted.

- **Objector Site 7** (*para OS7.10*)

The expression "recorded floodplain" in the first sentence of paragraph OS7.10 is incorrect. It should be amended to read "The site is crossed by a brook, from which, depending on topography, it could be liable to flooding". This amendment does not alter my recommendation that no modification should be made in response to the objections.

- **Objector Site 18** (*paras OS18.1-OS18.5*)

Paragraph OS18.1 says that this site would represent an urban extension in the site-selection sequence of PPG3, and that urban extensions to St Neots accord with the Alteration's settlement strategy. Paragraphs OS18.3 and OS18.4 identify certain disadvantages, but conclude *on balance* that it should go forward for further consideration. It is accepted that the findings with respect to access to public transport,

and to town centre services and facilities indicate that the site is not one of those especially favoured in the context of the advice of PPG3 (para 67). It is therefore a fine balance. Nonetheless, as an urban extension “*the next most sustainable option after building on appropriate sites in urban areas*,” I take the view that it is worthy of further consideration. However, you will note from paragraph 2.4.9.9 that, given the concern about the ability of St Neots to absorb development, and the merits of other sites elsewhere, I do not support the allocation. As for future plan revisions, if further growth of the town is considered appropriate, then the Council will have to assess the merits of the site in comparison to others. I do not believe my comments would fetter the Council in that task. No amendment to the Report is necessary.

- **Objector Site 34** (*para OS34.4*)

Paragraph OS34.4 states clearly that Yaxley, as the sole RGV, is “*the next tier*” of settlement after market towns, and that “*priority should be given to market towns*”. However, by saying that suitable sites in the village should be considered “*alongside*” other such sites in the market towns, I agree that the approach is unclear. The intention of the report is to acknowledge the potential of Yaxley to accommodate housing development in a similar form to an urban extension, and that such sites should be considered if a shortfall still exists after similar sites in market towns have already been considered. The final sentence of paragraph OS34.4 should be amended to read: “*Whilst priority should be given to the market towns, if there are suitable sites in Yaxley with the potential to meet any shortfall, they should also be considered*”.

- **Objector Site 110** (*paras OS110.1-OS110.5*)

I have checked the status of this objection (01037/001) with the Programme Officer, who understands that it was only *conditionally* withdrawn, but never fully withdrawn. The Report should therefore stand, unless the Council is satisfied that a formal withdrawal was received, in which case paragraphs OS110.1-OS110.5 of the Report should be disregarded.

- **Policy AH2** (*paras 3.2.14 & 3.2.17*)

I accept that the phrase “*lowest average price*” in paragraphs 3.2.14 & 3.2.17 is contradictory; and that it should logically read “*lowest price*”. I also agree that to substitute that phrase would itself be less than satisfactory for the reasons set out in paragraph 3.2.6 (ie that housing would be defined as affordable even if it were only marginally cheaper than the open-market price or rent, and that this would have no relationship to the true affordability of the properties to those in need). In practice, the Policy would be likely to bring forward *low-cost market housing*, but could not guarantee the provision of *affordable housing*. However, for Policy AH2 to overcome those problems, and thereby satisfy the requirements of Circular 6/98, would require detailed assessments to be carried out. As we know, they have not. While I recognise the inadequacy of making reference to “*lowest price*”, in the absence of the necessary information I have no firm basis upon which to recommend a better wording. In so doing, I am aware that an unreasonable burden should not be placed on developers. However, you will infer from my remarks in paragraph 3.2.13 that the policy should be regarded only as a stop-gap until such time as a policy conforming with the Circular can be adopted in the context of a full review of the Plan. The report should be amended by the replacement of “*lowest average price*” by “*lowest price*” in the first sentence of paragraph 3.2.14 and in paragraph 3.2.17.

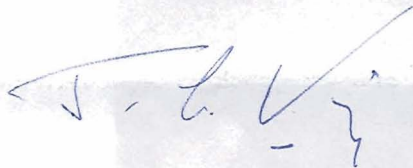
- **Policy STR2** (*paras 1.4.4.1-1.4.4.7*)

In paragraph 1.4.4.6, the definition of *Infilling* should read: “*The filling of an undeveloped plot in an otherwise built-up frontage by no more than two dwellings*”; and in the final sentence of paragraph 1.4.4.5, “*infilling*” should be replaced by “*housing groups*”.

**Para 1.25** (*paras 1.4.12.23 & 2.4.2.63*)

The recommended wording for the new paragraph 1.25 of the Report should be as set out in paragraph 1.4.12.23. Paragraph 2.4.2.63 should therefore be amended to read: “*Modify policy HL.2 in accordance with PCNs 14, 16, 212, 227, and 234, subject to the re-wording of the new paragraph 1.25 in accordance with the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.4.12.23 of this Report*”.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. G. King', is written over a large, light grey rectangular redaction area.

*Jonathan G King*

ASSISTANT INSPECTOR

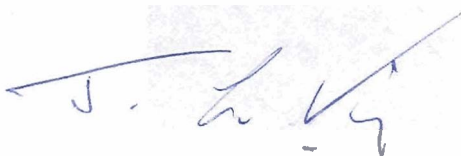
## APPENDIX

### HUNTINGDON LOCAL PLAN ALTERATION - REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR ADDENDUM / CORRIGENDUM REPORT

The following Addendum / Corrigendum relates to changes made to the Inspector's Report of a Public Inquiry into objections to the Deposit Draft of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration, Housing Land and Planning Obligations, and has been produced in response to a request for the clarification of certain matters made on behalf of Huntingdonshire District Council by letters dated 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2002.

- The Table on page 72 should be amended to include Site 23 (Headlands, Fenstanton).
- Paragraphs 2.4.4.25-2.4.4.28 of the Report should be deleted.
- Paragraphs 2.4.4.29-2.4.4.30 of the Report should be deleted.
- In paragraph OS7.10, the first sentence should be replaced by: *"The site is crossed by a brook, from which, depending on topography, it could be liable to flooding"*.
- The final sentence of paragraph OS34.4 should be amended to read: *"Whilst priority should be given to the market towns, if there are suitable sites in Yaxley with the potential to meet any shortfall, they should also be considered"*.
- In the first sentence of paragraph 3.2.14 and in paragraph 3.2.17 "*lowest average price*" should be replaced by "*lowest price*".
- In paragraph 1.4.4.6, the definition of *Infilling* should read: *"The filling of an undeveloped plot in an otherwise built-up frontage by no more than two dwellings"*; and in the final sentence of paragraph 1.4.4.5, "*infilling*" should be replaced by "*housing groups*".
- Paragraph 2.4.2.63 should be replaced by: *"Modify policy HL.2 in accordance with PCNs 14, 16, 212, 227, and 234, subject to the re-wording of the new paragraph 1.25 in accordance with the recommendation set out in paragraph 1.4.12.23 of this Report"*.

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Jonathan G King

INSPECTOR