

Examination into the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan.

Issues and questions for Examination at the Hearing Sessions.

These are the only questions upon which the Inspector now invites evidence and none should be expanded in terms of their scope. All other existing representations from persons who have elected not to be present will be taken into account. Respondents need only answer questions relating to the subject of their original representation, but the Council should answer all the questions, incorporating as appropriate material from their response to the Inspector's Preliminary Questions.

These questions relate to the tests of legal soundness, including being fundamentally consistent with national policy.

Background Notes: The Inspector is examining the Welwyn/Hatfield Local Plan (LP) Development Plan Document (DPD) as it was submitted to the Secretary of State in May 2017 – this is the August 2016 Proposed Submission version. The Council has suggested some further changes in response to representations following the Regulation 19 consultation on the Proposed Submission version. These are contained in Welwyn Hatfield Schedule of Minor Modifications May 2017 which is a submission document reference SUB/8. These suggested changes will be taken on board by the Inspector when examining the plan and where he considers that they affect soundness, if necessary will be discussed at the Hearing sessions. However, the Inspector will only consider these further in response to representations or if he personally comes to the conclusion that further change(s) is/are needed because otherwise the DPD would be unsound.

Before responding, participants should also note the "Preliminary Questions" asked by the Inspector (examination documents reference EX02) and the "Council's responses" (examination document reference EX04). All of the above documents are available on the Examination web site.

Legal Soundness questions:

- Has the DPD been prepared in accordance with the Local Development Scheme?
- Is the DPD in general accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement and its public consultation requirements?
- Has the DPD been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal? Are its conclusions sound and have they been taken into account in the DPD?
- Has a Habitat Regulations Assessment been prepared? Are its conclusions sound and have they been taken into account in the DPD?
- Has the DPD been prepared in full accordance with the relevant parts of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the T&CP (Local Plan) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended?
- Has the DPD had regard to appropriate national policy?
- Has the Council fulfilled the requirements of the duty to cooperate?

Note: I appreciate that the Councils have answered some of the above questions in various documents and the evidence base. The purpose here is to have clear answers in one place at the time of the opening of the Hearing sessions.

Mel Middleton
INSPECTOR
11 August, 2017