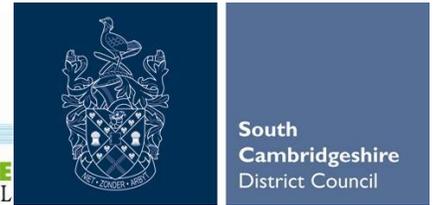


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1 September 2015

Dear Miss Graham and Mr Wood

### **Cambridge Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan**

Thank you for your letter of 28 July 2015. The comments that you make are very helpful and will be taken on board by the Councils as we progress matters during the suspension of the examinations. We also note your further letter of 18 August 2015 in relation to the CIL examinations.

The work outlined by the Councils in our letter of 30 June 2015 is progressing and we will provide an update on progress in due course. We welcome your intention to provide an outline programme during the Autumn together with matters and issues for the remainder of the examination issues yet to be heard. It will be helpful for all parties to have that information as soon as possible. We recognise that it will not be possible to publish a full programme at this stage for the hearings that include any matters arising from the additional work and we look forward to receiving that as soon as possible after February 2016.

We note your encouragement to provide as much transparency as possible with regard to the evidence the Councils present and to do so was, and remains, our firm intention. We intend to provide clear audit trails and signposting to where underlying data can be found to enable you, stakeholders and those making representations to understand what information is available and where it can be found.

There are two issues arising from your letters that we would like to follow up with you, as set out below.

### **Joint Housing Trajectory**

You advise that you did not comment on the issue of the joint housing trajectory in your letter because any questions regarding five year housing land supply are inextricably linked to the objectively assessed need and housing requirement. We agree entirely that, as further work on the objectively assessed need for housing is being undertaken during the suspension, it would not be possible to comment on the issue of whether the Councils are able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply at this stage. We also recognise that examination of housing supply will not be completed until hearings on the site allocations and omission sites have been held later in the examination process.

However, the question raised in our letter of 30 June 2015 was directed at the soundness of the principle of the use of a joint trajectory rather than the detail of five year supply and more general matters of quantum in terms of housing supply.

We consider the soundness in principle of the adoption of a joint trajectory should be capable of being considered separately from the assessment of whether a five year housing land supply can be demonstrated and from more general matters concerning the quantum of supply. Our position, as presented to the examination, is that the principle of the joint trajectory is a logical response to the development strategy and development sequence across the Greater Cambridge area and the consequential phasing of development.

We remain of the view that the principle of the joint housing trajectory could be addressed at this stage through the issuing of a partial report. The Councils would therefore be most grateful if you would be prepared to reconsider issuing a partial report limited to the soundness in principle of the joint housing trajectory. Such a partial report would plainly be without prejudice to future consideration of the soundness of the submitted plans in respect of general housing supply matters and all other relevant matters. Our offer to undertake early public consultation on our proposed modifications in relation to the housing trajectory remains.

It is important to the Councils to have an understanding about the joint trajectory at this stage. The principle of the joint housing trajectory is directly relevant to our consideration of any wider modifications arising from the work undertaken, which you have agreed should be addressed as part of the current process. To reiterate, we are not asking you to indicate your view on whether a five year supply has been demonstrated, or indeed to comment on the basis on which a five year supply should be calculated (including the appropriate buffer and the method of dealing with any shortfall from the early part of the plan period).

You will of course appreciate that the joint trajectory has significant implications for housing supply over the next few years for South Cambridgeshire, in view of the anticipated trajectory for delivery of strategic sites. This is particularly relevant to the joint sites on the edge of Cambridge and when they will start to deliver housing in significant numbers on the South Cambridgeshire side of the administrative boundary. If we are to address any wider modifications at this stage to avoid later delays in the examination process, it would be of great assistance to understand your conclusions on the principle of the joint trajectory now so it can inform our current work.

Furthermore, and as made clear in our letter of 30 June 2015, the principle of the joint housing trajectory is also relevant to development control decisions presently needing to be made in South Cambridgeshire on speculative applications until the five year housing land supply situation is resolved.

## **CIL**

The Councils noted with interest and indeed welcomed your comment in your letter of 28 July 2015 that you were considering whether it would be possible to progress the CIL examinations whilst the Local Plan examinations are suspended in order to expedite matters. We noted that you advised that you had not yet come to a view on the feasibility of this but have said you would welcome any views we may have. We have been giving this issue our consideration and were about to respond to you when we received your letter of 18 August 2015 advising that you have now given further consideration to this issue and reached a view that it would be inappropriate at this stage to proceed with the CIL examinations.

The Councils' view was, and remains, that there is likely to be an opportunity later in the year to give formal consideration to bringing forward the examination of at least the South Cambridgeshire CIL charging schedule, reflecting the approach to exempt strategic sites from the remit of the CIL charging schedule. However, as you identify in your letter, the infrastructure and viability studies supporting the submitted CIL are the subject of review as part of the additional work on the Local Plans. In light of this, we agree that it would be inappropriate to proceed with the CIL examinations at this stage, or to reach a firm view on this issue. We consider it would be appropriate to give further consideration to the potential to expedite the CIL examinations during the autumn once the review of those evidence documents is complete, having regard to the outcome of the review in light of the issues you raise in your letter.

We therefore consider it would be premature at this stage to address this matter in full or to request that the CIL examinations be expedited. We suggest that it would be appropriate to keep this matter open and to revisit it later in the year.

Yours sincerely,

*Sara Saunders*

*Caroline Hunt*

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