

Bassetlaw Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD - Public Examination

Address for

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Mr R Schofield
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By email

Date: 08 June 2011

Dear Mr Schofield

EXAMINATION INTO THE SOUNDNESS OF THE BASSETLAW CORE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES DPD

During the Examination hearings various proposed changes to the Submission DPD were discussed. These included both essential (or focused) changes designed to address matters of soundness, and minor changes to bring the DPD up to date, provide further explanatory text etc. The Inspector explained at the hearings that he would write to the Council to identify those parts of the DPD where essential changes were thought necessary. These are set out in the attached Appendix 1.

The Council is invited to consider these suggestions and if in agreement set out the detailed wording of each proposed essential change and the reason for the change in a detailed, suitably referenced, Schedule of Proposed Council Changes relating to soundness. These proposed changes would need to be the subject of sustainability appraisal and advertised for a 6 week consultation period. Any representations received on these proposed soundness changes would be taken into account by the Inspector during the Examination.

Numerous proposed minor changes were also discussed during the hearings. These included the Council's Proposed Minor Changes submitted with the DPD, the Council's Further Proposed Minor Changes submitted the week before the Hearings, and various other proposed minor changes raised at the hearings. The Inspector would not comment on any minor changes as they do not relate to soundness issues. However he emphasises the need to ensure that any such changes are indeed minor.

In this regard the Inspector explained during the Hearings that the re-designation in the Proposed Minor Changes of Lound as a Policy CS9 settlement did not, in his view, constitute a minor change. Similarly the amendment of the Harworth development boundary, which in turn relates to Policy DM3, in the Further Proposed Minor Changes is not considered to

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be a minor change. Consequently should the Council wish to continue with these proposed changes they should be included within the Schedule of Proposed Council Changes relating to soundness. The Council is advised to examine all proposed minor changes to ensure that they have been correctly categorised.

It is important that any minor changes proposed by the Council are also set out in detail and justified in suitable referenced schedule/s, as if the DPD were to be found sound, any proposed minor changes would need to be endorsed in the Inspector's Report. No doubt the Council will ensure that suitable publicity is also given to these minor changes.

I look forward to receiving the Council's comments on these matters in the near future.

Yours sincerely



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Appendix 1

Suggested Council Changes to address soundness issues

General

- Revise text to ensure that the development boundaries shown on the Proposals Map, and referred to in the DPD, are for an interim period pending their finalisation in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD). Reason – To provide the flexibility required for site selection.

Core Strategy

- **Vision.** Increase emphasis on creating a sustainable pattern of development by focussing development in the 3 main towns and settlements and carefully managing development elsewhere. Reason – To align the DPD with national policy.
- **Introduction/Spatial Strategy.** Take account of the current position with regard to RSS and outline the strategic policies for the District. Include reference to RSS housing figures (i.e. 7000 dwellings for 2006-2026) and employment policies. Wording to be sufficiently flexible to take account of any changes in the status of the RSS prior to adoption of the DPD. Reason – To ensure conformity with the RSS.
- **Introduction/Spatial Strategy.** Extend the DPD plan period to 2028. Revise housing/employment targets accordingly. Reason - To provide at least a 15 year time framework for the SADPD.
- **Spatial Strategy.** Remove housing and employment tables on pages 20 & 21. Include simplified housing table (without commitments and remaining target) and provide explanation. Explain derivation of employment figures and what this means on the ground. Reason – To remove unnecessary and constantly changing detail and provide clarity on delivery.
- **Spatial Strategy.** Retain housing and employment percentages and include within settlement Policies CS2-CS8. Within these policies also indicate what the percentages mean in terms of additional dwellings in the settlements. Make it clear that percentages/numbers targets relate to the period 2010-2028. Reason - To provide clarity on delivery.
- **Contingency.** Under Policy CS1 policy guidance is required on what happens in the period both before and after the SADPD is adopted in terms of land release. The Council's new wording in Proposed Minor Change 9 addresses the former (this could become an Essential Change). As regards after the adoption of the SADPD the final sentence of the first paragraph of the original Policy CS1 would be appropriate, provided it is amended to make it clear that account will be taken of the failure of any committed development site to progress within a reasonable timescale, not just SADPD allocations. Reason – To provide the DPD with the flexibility required to respond to changes in circumstances.

Development Management Policies

- **Policy DM6.** Policy needs to be re-cast with a straightforward list of criteria. The policy should endeavour to recognise that sites in rural or semi-rural locations, within reasonable distance of services and facilities, may be acceptable. Need to clarify that Section B Rural Exceptions are a particular case and do not relate to all gypsy/traveller proposals. Reason – To comply with current & emerging national policy.
- **Policy DM9.** Revise policy to give general protection for existing open space and sports facilities whilst indicating that detailed areas and boundaries will be identified in the SADPD. Remove current open space designation from Proposals Map. Reason – To provide an effective policy that will ensure that the identification of areas of open space and sports facilities for protection is undertaken in tandem with the selection of sites for development.
- **Policy DM10.** Refer in supporting text of the need to take account of the Trent Valley's value for birdlife and the presence of existing large-scale energy production infrastructure Reason – To ensure that the approach to renewable and low carbon energy takes account of local issues and is supportive of the plan's objectives
- **Figures 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3.** Remove. Reason – The scale of these Figures means that they are very difficult to interpret and therefore ineffective in guiding development.
- **Policy DM14.** At present lacks clarity and locational specificity. Either delete or include more detail as to what is required of developers and relate to The Coal Authority's Referral Area. Reason – There is a need to produce effective and clear policy.