

Contact:

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Your Ref:

Our Ref: CT/LM

Date:

23rd March 2017

Mr Jonathan Bore, MRTPI
Inspector
c/o 260 Collingwood Road
Sutton
Surrey
SM1 2NX

Dear Mr Bore,

Thank you for your letter of 17th March 2017. As requested, this letter provides comments on the suggestions you make.

You are correct in your understanding that the Council is likely to be willing to incorporate an OAN of 876 dpa into the Plan which would be used as the basis of the initial 5 year supply. As you also indicate, Crawley's representation to the Examination indicates that it has an adequate supply of housing for the first few years of the Mid Sussex plan period, and there is a decline in Crawley's ability to meet the requirement for new housing beyond 2025. This means that the figure of 876 dpa is justified in relation to the years from the beginning of the plan period to 2025.

It follows from this logically that an overall plan requirement of a minimum of 17,442 dwellings, based on contributions of 150 dpa for Crawley for each year of the plan period, would not be sound. In line with the logic in your letter, the Council suggests instead that the overall requirement should take account of the fact that Crawley has a clearly identified housing need arising in 7 years' time but can meet its own needs for the period up to 2025, after which the annual requirement would be as identified in your main Interim Conclusions letter.

Assuming you agree with these points, the Council will submit details of its 5 year land supply position, based on 876dpa, and confirm the position on its proposed affordable housing policy.

Happily, given recent decisions and other progress, the Council anticipates that it will be able to achieve a 5 year supply position without the need for any significant further assessment, and maintain the current policy provision of a 30% affordable housing requirement.

The Council will also set out its revisions to Policy DP6 that will contain guidelines to provide a stronger strategic framework for Neighbourhood Planning in the future.

Working together for a better Mid Sussex

As the work on Examination of other Plan policies of the Plan is now largely complete, the Council suggests that it may be possible to conclude the Examination, undertake the Consultation on Modifications to the Plan, and achieve adoption in a few months. Shortly thereafter, the Council will commence work on a site allocations DPD for completion by 2020/21. The Council notes that this timescale and process is realistic in terms of the considerable further assessment that would be required to support additional site allocations, including Habitats and Transport Assessment necessary for the DPD.

The main qualification to this proposed way forward is that the Council will need to assess any proposed modifications in the light of the High Court judgment in the Wealden DC case, which as you know has just been handed down. The Council is undertaking some further technical appraisals in the light of the Judge's conclusions, and is not in a position at the moment to comment on whether, and if so to what degree, the Habitats issue is likely to affect the overall approach to the housing requirement.

Obviously, it would be very useful for all concerned to progress matters on the basis set out above, with any conclusions subject to the Habitats issues.

The Council requests your support for this overall approach so that it can move towards the adoption of a sound plan as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Tunnell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chris Tunnell
Interim Head of Economic Promotion and Planning