8th September 2011

Dear Sir or Madam

I refer to the representations that you have made in relation to the above Core Strategy (CS).

The Inspector has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the CS and other submitted material and he has identified some significant concerns relating to the general conformity of the CS with the Regional Strategy and the justification for a lower level of housing provision. To inform the way forward for the Examination the Inspector will be holding an Exploratory Meeting (EM) with the Council and the National Park Authority (NPA).

The EM will be held at 10.00 a.m on Wednesday 12 October 2011 at the East Sussex National Golf Resort, Conference Centre, Little Horsted, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 5ES. Please see the link below for directions or contact me for a hard copy directions and map.

http://www.eastsussexnational.co.uk/howtofindus.php

The Inspector’s concerns are set out in the attached note to which he has asked for a response in writing from the Council/NPA. An agenda for the EM is also attached.

At the meeting the Inspector will not take any formal evidence in respect of the CS itself, nor consider in detail its policies as these would be matters for discussion at hearing sessions if the Examination were to proceed.

The purpose of an EM and possible outcomes are set out in Section 9 of the Planning Inspectorate’s Examining Development Plan Documents: Procedure Guidance (August 2009)


In this case the EM will provide an opportunity to explore with the Council/NPA the matters of concern and any implications in terms of how the Examination proceeds. The aim is to avoid the wasted time, effort and expense of all parties in continuing with the Examination if is likely that the CS would subsequently be found unsound and could not be rectified by the Inspector.
No further representations are required since views on the soundness of the plan have already been submitted in the formal consultation by the Council. Some new matters have occurred since then, including the publication of a draft National Planning Policy Framework for consultation, but the Inspector will be asking respondents for their views on any implications of these at a later date. The Inspector will primarily be looking to the representatives of the Council/NPA to address him on the matters of concern. If you have already made significant points in writing about these matters, the Inspector will consider a request to take part in the discussion, subject to the Programme Officer being given notice of your request by 5.00 pm Tuesday 27 September. Whether or not you are asked to participate in the discussion, this will have no bearing on those who have the right to be heard at Examination hearings in due course.

The EM is open to the public to attend and observe irrespective of whether you are invited to contribute. It would be useful to know if you intend to observe by 5.00 pm Tuesday 27 September so that seating arrangements can be tailored to the numbers anticipated. Please use the attached reply slip.

A note of the meeting will be published on the Council’s website. I will contact you again when the outcome of the meeting in terms of progressing the Examination is known.

If you have any queries at this stage please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Lynette Benton

Lynette Benton
Programme Officer