7th September 2011

Dear Mr Phillips,

The Inspector has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the Core Strategy (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). This will be held on Wednesday 12 October 2011 and I will be putting in train the arrangements for that. An agenda for the meeting is attached.

The Inspector’s concerns are set out in the attached note which contains a number of questions. He would be grateful if the Council and the NPA could produce a written response to these questions and to the note generally by Tuesday 4 October 2011. The Inspector’s note and the Council/NPA response will then be the focus for the EM. If the answers to any of the questions are contained within the existing evidence base then the response can direct the Inspector to the appropriate part.

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.

The EM will be a public meeting and the Inspector will ask those who have made representations on the CS whether they would wish to attend or contribute. He would be grateful if publicity for the EM could be included on the Council’s website.

Yours faithfully

Lynette Benton

Lynette Benton
Programme Officer