

Lynette Benton  
Programme Officer  
Wealden Core Strategy -  
Examination  
Pine Grove  
Crowborough  
East Sussex  
TN6 1DH

OUR REF: DP/LDF 0440  
**ASK FOR: Mr. D. L. Phillips**  
DATE: 9th May 2012  
YOUR REF: letter of 24th April

Dear Lynette Benton,

**National Planning Policy Framework - Presumption in favour of sustainable development.**

Thank you for your letter of 24th April in which the Inspector has written to ask that we comment upon the Planning Inspectorate's suggestion that we consider the insertion of a model policy into our joint submission Core Strategy to reflect the above presumption.

Your letter of the 24th April then sets out the wording of that suggested model policy to appropriately meet the expectation of the presumption in favour of sustainable development as now enshrined in the NPPF.

I am able to confirm that the District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority agree to the insertion of this wording but would suggest that, in the first line of the second paragraph of this wording for a model condition that the word **this** Local Plan be replaced with the word **the** Local Plan. This suggestion is made to avoid any ambiguity regarding the fact that this model policy will of course also apply to any subsequent DPD which will be being produced in future not only by the District Council but also separately by the South Downs National Park Authority. The inserted new Policy would accordingly read as follows.

*When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.*

*Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.*

*Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:*

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.*

In order to explain the reasoning for and purpose of the newly inserted Policy we also consider that some brief explanatory text is needed and that this, together with the inserted Policy would seem to sit best within the section of our strategy entitled "Climate change and sustainable construction" (paragraph 7.29 onwards in our submitted document).

We have therefore set out below some suggested text for consideration by the Inspector and which might be inserted after our existing paragraph 7.31 with a new title "Sustainable Development" to be followed by the newly inserted Policy as Policy WCS14.

Suggested explanatory text:

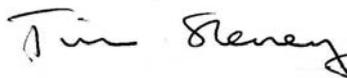
*The National Planning Policy Framework confirms that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that all plans should be based upon and reflect this presumption with clear policies to guide how the presumption will be applied locally. The Framework also confirms that there are three clear dimensions to sustainable development, economic, social and environmental. Proposed development that accords with an up to date Local Plan should be approved and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. In order to meet this requirement the following policy will be applied*

We have also considered whether there are other aspects of our Core Strategy that may need revision in order to reflect the approach of the presumption in meeting our development needs but have concluded that, with the insertion of the explanatory text and the wording of the suggested model policy, that no further revisions are necessary. We are also able to confirm that we do not wish to offer any further comments in respect of the Inspector's more general consultation on the implications of the NPPF which we feel are adequately covered by the points set out in this letter.

Yours sincerely,



**David Phillips**  
Head of Planning and Environmental Policy  
Wealden District Council



**Tim Slaney**  
Director of Planning  
South Downs National Park Authority