



GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS

Mr Craig Jordan
Development Executive
Lichfield District Council
District Council House
Frog Lane
Lichfield
WS13 6YZ

Sustainable Futures
5 St Philip's Place
Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 2PW

Your Ref: DP/1/2/4

Direct Line: 0121 352 5285

ianr.smith@gowm.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref:

Date: 16 March 2010

Dear Craig

WM RSS Phase 2 Revision – Development Control and Plan Preparation

Thank you for your letter of 3 March seeking advice on the weight to be given to the adopted RSS, the Preferred Option, and the Panel Report.

As you now know the Proposed Changes will be published in July, and that forms the next statutory stage in the RSS process. Once published we will expect authorities to give the Proposed Changes considerable weight when preparing Development Plan Documents.

Since the publication in December 2007 we have expected authorities to give weight to the Preferred Option, and Core Strategies in preparation are reflecting that position.

The Panel Report is the result of a thorough examination of evidence and representations and is being considered by the Secretary of State as he prepares the Proposed Changes. The SoS is not obliged to accept the recommendations in the Panel Report, some of which are very detailed and may be more appropriately considered at the local level. In preparing Core Strategies authorities should always consider how flexible they are in relation to potential future changes. The recommendations in the Panel Report could be one consideration in the assessment of flexibility.

Turning to the 5 year housing land supply, the latest adopted development plan should be the starting point for this assessment, in your case the adopted RSS although clearly that does not provide district level figures in Shire County areas. The CLG Advice (on the Planning Inspectorate website) indicates the best available

estimate should be made under such circumstances. As the RSS Preferred Option provides figures at district level it would seem appropriate to use those to apportion the adopted RSS County figure (the Annex illustrates this approach). This is the absolute minimum test for a 5 year supply.

However, once the RSS is adopted higher figures may be applicable. To ensure you are prepared for that we would also expect you to consider your position against the Preferred Option. Where that assessment indicates potential problems in demonstrating a 5 year supply we would expect you to take appropriate action.

Your final question sought advice on site specific recommendations in the Panel Report. The SoS is still considering the Panel Report, but in general we would not expect an RSS to be site specific, such decisions should generally be taken at the local level.

I hope that helps you to proceed. I am copying this letter to all planning authorities as others may be interested.

If it would help to discuss any points please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ian Smith', written in a cursive style.

Ian Smith
Head of Planning & Housing



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Annex

Typical calculation of minimum 5 year requirement – Lichfield District

For Staffordshire, adopted RSS gross rate of provision 2011-2021 = 1600

Deduct demolition assumption, 110, produces net requirement of 1490/annum

From Preferred Option RSS, Lichfield District = 8,000, Staffordshire = 54,900

Lichfield proportion of Staffordshire = $8,000/54,900 = 0.146$

Applying this proportion to the adopted RSS = $0.146 \times 1490 = 217/\text{annum}$

Clearly this is only an example of the approach and similar calculations would need to be completed if figures for 2007-2011 are required.

16 March 2010

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