

Examination of the New East Devon Local Plan 2006-26

Mr M Dickins
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By email only

**Inspector: Anthony Thickett BA(Hons) BTP
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Dear Mr Dickins,

In paragraph 2.2 of Topic Paper 5 – General Matters it states that officers of the Council do not have delegated authority to recommend any further changes to the Local Plan. Ideally a plan is sound on submission and no changes should be needed but it is common for discussions at Hearings to bring to light modifications which are necessary to make a plan sound. These are often put forward or agreed by officers representing the Council and the ability of those representing Councils to do so is an important contributor to the smooth and efficient running of examinations.

If the plan needs some modification to be sound, I was hoping that at the end of the hearings in March or very soon after, I would have a list of main modifications to aid my deliberations and which could be subject to consultation. The inability of a representative of the Council to agree modifications could lead to uncertainty and delay which could prolong the examination.

It was my intention at the end of every Hearing to agree, if and where necessary, action points which could include further work and/or changes. I would appreciate it if you would give some thought to the contents of this letter and respond or at least be prepared to explore these matters at the first hearing next week.

Yours faithfully

A Thickett

Inspector

Dear Mr Thickett

Examination of the East Devon Local Plan

Further to your letter of the 3 February 2014 I write to clarify that the reference in Topic Paper 5 to officers not having delegated authority to recommend changes to the plan was written explicitly in respect of the Written Statements that we have submitted.

At hearing sessions officers of the Council will be in the position, in response to matters that may be raised, to discuss the scope and potential for modifications to the plan should these be felt to be desirable to secure a sound plan. I would stress that any views expressed would be the opinion of the officer involved and would be in response to matters raised.

Ultimately should you make any recommendation for changes these changes would need to be reported to the Development Management Committee of this Council, but clearly if changes align with officers' view then officers would be recommending to the Members that they should accept the proposed modifications. In any event this Committee would need to give authority to undertake further consultation and would be involved in authorising the submission of the consultation responses and our comments on them (if any) to you. Accordingly there will be sufficient time in which to obtain Member authorisation to any proposed changes before you are required to conclude matters and issue your final report. Clearly if Members do not approve the proposed modifications then that will be a matter for the Council to have to deal with, depending on the conclusions you reach in your final report.

I would aim to report to Development Committee as soon as possible on receipt of any letter or email from you. We have a Development Management Committee meeting on the 1 April 2014 and if we were to receive feedback prior to this date I would aim to take a report, if need be as a late item, to this committee.

With respect to any further technical work requested by you to aid the smooth running of the examination I would not envisage any need for direct member consideration or involvement. We would aim to complete any such work in an efficient and timely manner to aid the smooth running of the examination.

Matthew Dickins
Planning Policy Manager
East Devon District Council