

Inspector's response to Council's queries is shown in red and underlined.

Westminster's Core Strategy Examination in Public

Note Seeking Clarification

30th June 2010

Dear Inspector Kingaby

The council is seeking clarification in relation to a number of matters relating to the Pre-Hearing Meeting Minutes (PHM Minutes) and the draft Matters and Issues for Examination (draft Matters).

1. There appears to be some inconsistency between these documents in relation to the Matters. On page 2 of the PHM Minutes, under '*Hearings – Draft Matters and Issues*' the matters stated are (1) context and general approach; (2) the Spatial Strategy for Development; (3) Housing; (4) Economic Development; (5) Climate change and renewable energy, flood risk and water; (6) Countryside; (7) Transport; (8) Infrastructure and Delivery; (9) Waste.

However, we understand the correct matters to be: (1) Parts I and II and general approach; (2) Part III Local Spatial Strategies; (3) Paddington, Victoria and Tottenham Court Road Opportunity Areas; (4) Part VI Housing; (5) Business and Employment; (6) Part V Creating Places; (7) Transport and other infrastructure; (8) Implementation; and (9) Waste, as set out in the draft Matters and draft timetable.

Yes, there is inconsistency. The second list of matters is the correct, updated one

2. In relation to the PHM itself, one of the matters we noted as raised by you verbally does not appear to be included in the minutes. At the PHM, you noted that the purpose of the hearings was to investigate soundness, not making the plan 'more sound' or deal with matters of presentation. The council considers this to be a fundamental point, and one which underpins the entire process. We would welcome its inclusion, particularly for the benefit of those attending.

Noted, I shall make clear at the Hearings that the underlying purpose will be to achieve a sound Core Strategy

3. We understood from the PHM that the matters to be addressed at the hearings may change following receipt of written material on the 8th July. Could you please clarify this and, if possible, advise when the revised matters might be made available. On this point, we note your reference in the PHM Minutes (page 2 The Hearing Sessions, paragraphs 2 and 4) to consideration of representations which have been made with respect to soundness issues. However, in considering the draft matters for the hearings, we note that some specific questions arise directly from representations, that were not identified as relating to soundness. For example, Matter 7 Question 2 relating to transport assessments was raised as a comment by the Mayor of London (specifically from Transport for London), but they

have clarified that they do not consider it to be a soundness issue. We would be grateful for your advice on such matters.

I expect that there will be no further changes to the nine Matters shown on the Programme – all nine will need to be addressed. However, after reading the further written responses, I may decide that some of the related issues and questions need not be pursued further at the Hearings. As a result, agendas for each of the sessions are likely to be shorter than, and different from, the initial lists of questions.

As you are aware, there have been some changes to the timing of hearing the various Matters from the draft Programme available at the PHM.

4. With respect to the word limit, the council has applied the 3,000 word limit to each question, rather than the matters as a whole. We do not come close to the word limit on any individual question, although for some of the matters we would exceed it if the matter is taken as a whole (for example, housing, which has 21 individual questions, some of which are made up of various parts). We have been concise and avoided unnecessary detail throughout, and where possible, responses are kept to a couple of sentences. We trust this is acceptable, and a correct interpretation of your note, as it accords with our experience at other boroughs' examinations.

The 3,000 word limit was devised by Inspectors who carried out the earliest DPD Examinations, and was intended to apply to each Matter, rather than individual questions. I am not seeking to apply the 3,000 word limit rigidly, but would regard 3,000 words for each question as excessive. I welcome concise answers, with cross-references to the evidence base if significant detail is necessary.

Specific questions relating to the draft Matters:

Matter 2 Question 16

The council is having some difficulty interpreting what is meant by a 'swap' in this context. We would welcome your clarification.

The representation by Covent Garden London, (Ref 1278/30) - Policy CS7 - provides the background.

Matter 3 Question 5

For clarification, Stockley House has always been included in the Victoria Opportunity Area. Therefore, it contributes towards that area's housing target and is subject to the policy approach to tall buildings set out in Policy CS4.

The representation was about its inclusion within the specific designated site, Core Strategy Appendix 1 Proposals Site 6 Victoria Railway Station. This change was made between Publication and Submission stage.

Again, we would welcome your clarification on this matter.

Noted; a useful answer to the question.

Yours sincerely

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