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12th June 2012

Dear Sir / Madam,

Northampton Borough Council Central Area Action Plan (the AAP) Examination

Further to your representations in respect of the above named strategy. I write to inform you that Hearing Sessions are to be held by the appointed Inspector to examine the soundness of the Central Area Action Plan. The Hearing Sessions will open at 10.00am on **Tuesday 4 September 2012** within the Jeffrey Room of Northampton Borough Council's Council Offices, The Guildhall, St. Giles Square, Northampton NN1 1DE.

I have been appointed as Programme Officer for this Examination and will deal with all administrative, procedural and programming matters. I am not a Council Officer and have not been involved in the preparation of the DPD. I work solely to the direction of the Inspector.

The Inspector intends to hold a Pre Hearing Meeting (the PHM) at 10.00am on Tuesday 10th July 2012 at 10.00am and as a representor you are welcome to attend. The PHM is purely procedural in nature and will largely cover the guidance covered in the accompanying Guidance Note but it nonetheless affords you the opportunity to raise any procedural queries direct with the Inspector. The merits of individual representations or the content of the AAP will not be discussed. These will be matters for the Hearing Sessions. If you are unable to attend the PHM you will not be disadvantaged and should you have any procedural queries at any stage you are welcome to raise them with me and I shall be happy to assist.

I appreciate that this is a lot of information and many of you will be unfamiliar with the Examination process. Therefore, in an effort to be helpful I will summarise your options and explain some of the common queries associated with DPD Examinations.

Essentially you are faced with three options . . .

- a) If you are content to rely on your original representations and do not intend to provide any further written comments or attend the Examination you need do nothing further. The Inspector will take your submitted comments into consideration when preparing the report in so far as they relate to the Examination of Soundness.
- b) If having considered the Inspector's Issues and Questions you feel you would like to make further written comments but not participate in the Hearing Sessions you may do so. Guidance on the form and submission of written statements can be found in the Guidance Note. The submission of further written statements must however specifically address the questions the Inspector has posed. The Inspector will not now accept further representations beyond his intended Issues for discussion or in relation to elements of the Plan that you have personally not

commented upon previously. The deadline for submission of written statements is the 6th August 2012.

- c) Lastly, if you wish to participate in the Hearing Sessions you may do so provided the Issues for discussion relate to your representations. If you wish to participate please let me know by 20th July 2012. If you wish to participate in the discussions the Inspector would find a written response to his relevant questions helpful. The deadline for written statements is the 6th of August 2012.

Commonly Asked Questions

The Issues I've raised do not appear for discussion, why?

The Inspector has read and will be considering all submitted representations when considering soundness and in preparing his report. Many of the Issues listed have either been put together following the Inspector's personal queries or in direct relation to the representations of those parties who have already indicated a wish to appear at the Hearing Sessions. If you feel there are important considerations of soundness omitted please let me know by the 20th July 2012 and I shall discuss the matter with the Inspector.

Will I be disadvantaged if I cannot attend?

No, the Inspector is keen to stress that views submitted in writing or made orally at the Hearing Sessions carry equal weight.

I'm supportive of the document but can I still participate in the Hearings?

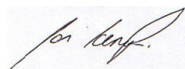
It is not usually necessary for those supporting the document to participate in the Hearing Sessions. This is due to the fact that as a starting point the Inspector must assume that the Council has submitted (in what they consider to be) a sound Plan. It is for those seeking changes to the DPD to demonstrate why they feel the Plan is unsound and what changes are sought to make it sound. This is why parties in support are not usually heard except in circumstances where the Inspector feels they have specific knowledge of the subject in question which may assist the discussions.

I do not wish to participate in the Hearing Sessions but can I still attend and observe?

Yes of course, the sessions are all open to the public and if you're not listed as a Participant you remain welcome to attend to observe.

If you have any queries at this stage please do not hesitate to contact me and I shall be happy to assist.

Yours faithfully



Ian Kemp
Programme Officer