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Our Ref: EMP 2825/475/12

Date: 21 September 2007

Dear Sir

I am writing with reference to your application of 28 March 2007 and further correspondence applying for a direction under paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 in respect of policies in the Northampton Local Plan (adopted June 1997).

The Secretary of State's Direction is attached. Those policies not listed in the Direction will expire on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

The Secretary of State's assessment of whether saved policies should be extended is based upon the criteria set out in Planning Policy Statement 12 and the Department for Communities and Local Government Protocol on saving policies. The extension of saved policies listed in this Direction does not indicate that the Secretary of State would endorse these policies if presented to her as new policy. It is intended to ensure continuity in the plan-led system and a stable planning framework locally, and in particular, a continual supply of land for development.

Local planning authorities should not suppose that a regulatory local plan style approach will be supported in forthcoming Development Plan Documents. LPAs should adopt a positive spatial strategy led approach to DPD preparation and not seek to reintroduce the numerous policies of many local plans.

The exercise of extending saved policies is not an opportunity to delay DPD preparation. LPAs should make good progress with local development frameworks according to the timetables in their local development schemes. Policies have been extended in the expectation that they will be replaced promptly and by fewer policies in DPDs.

Maximum use should be made of national and regional policy especially given the advanced position of many regional spatial strategies and the development plan status of the Regional Spatial Strategy/Spatial Development Strategy.

Following 27 September 2007 the extended policies should be read in context. Where policies were adopted some time ago, it is likely that material considerations, in particular the emergence of new national and regional policy and also new evidence, will be afforded considerable weight in decisions. In particular, we would draw your attention to the importance of reflecting policy in Planning Policy Statement 3 *Housing* and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments in relevant decisions.

Signed by authority of the  
Secretary of State

Lesley Flint (Mrs)  
Head of Housing, Planning &  
Urban Policy