

To:

Cllr Tim Carroll  
Deputy Leader, South Somerset District Council,  
The Council Offices,  
Brympton Way,  
Yeovil, BA20 2HT.

17<sup>th</sup> July 2013

Dear Cllr Carroll,

Examination of the South Somerset Local Plan  
Council's Response to the Preliminary Findings

Thank you for your letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> July and the accompanying Programme Plan.

Having considered all the implications of the various scenarios and studied the Council's timetable for addressing the issues that I raised, I am satisfied that, in principle, a suspension of the Examination can be justified.

However, the time available to undertake some of the elements of the work required does seem comparatively tight and although I have no reason to doubt the Council's commitment to completing the tasks in accordance with the timetable, I have the following concerns regarding specific timings that I would ask you to consider:

(i) is 6 weeks sufficient time for the consultants to undertake all the necessary work, being mindful that a genuine re-assessment of the situation will need to be undertaken, rather than providing a more detailed justification for the decisions that have already been taken;

(ii) is 10 days sufficient to up-date the landscape assessment (task 13);

(iii) is 5 days sufficient for the Council officers to review the consultants Report and assess its implications (task 15); and

(iv) there would be only two days between the PMB considering the Consultant's Report (task 16) and approval being sought from the PMB for public consultation (task 42). There is no leeway should the PMB on the 18<sup>th</sup> September (task 16) decide that there were further issues that needed to be addressed.

I would also request that there should be a reference, at appropriate stages in the programme, to the Council providing me with an up-date on progress. In this way I will be able to see whether or not the timetable is being achieved.

One further matter that is not clear is exactly what will be consulted on under task 49. My understanding is that all the main changes that are being proposed by the Council would be available for comment. This would seem to be a logical approach, even though representors may have a 'second bite at the cherry' when any Main Modifications are published, following resumed hearing sessions (which at this stage I am assuming will be required).

Finally I note that there is no specific reference to undertaking a sustainability appraisal in relation to any changes to employment provision (policy SS3).

I appreciate that my preliminary findings will result in significant additional work for the Council but I hope you will agree that I need to be confident that the evidence presented is robust and that therefore the Local Plan is sound.

Yours sincerely

*David Hogger*

Inspector