

# **Poole Local Plan Examination**

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Dear Mr Perrins

## **Examination of the Poole Local Plan**

I would like to thank the Council for its helpful and constructive contributions to the hearings earlier this year which, along with those of all other participants, have enabled me to significantly progress the Examination. Thank you also for the further evidence and clarifications produced following the hearings and to those who have provided consultation comments on matters of relevance to their original representations on the plan.

I write to set out my thoughts on the plan at this stage and on the way forward for the Examination. My comments are based on all that I have read, heard and seen to date, although I emphasise that the Examination is not yet complete and, in particular, Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), insofar as they are necessary, and full public consultation on Main Modifications to the plan will be required. Further HRA work in the light of the recent Court of the European Union (*People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta*) judgement may also be necessary. Consequently, these comments are without prejudice to my final conclusions on the plan.

At this point, and subject to the above provisos, I conclude that with the Main Modifications detailed below the plan is likely to be capable of being found legally-compliant and sound. I will set out my reasoning for this conclusion in my final report on the Examination. In summary the Main Modifications I consider to be necessary for the plan to be sound are:

- All those which I indicated were necessary during the hearings, as confirmed at the final hearing session. In addition, it is necessary to include in policy PP7 a clear statement that the ongoing assessment of housing land supply in the Borough will be undertaken on the basis of the "Liverpool" approach to recovering any past shortfall in housing delivery, the reasoning for which will be set out in my final report;

- Modification of the Green Belt boundary at Canford School as detailed below;
- Modification of policy PP33 as detailed below; and
- Modification of the plan in respect of Talbot Village/Heath as detailed below.

#### Green Belt Boundary at Canford School

I will set out my reasoning on this matter in detail in my final report. However, having regard to all the relevant evidence and circumstances, I conclude that, subject to the outcome of SA/HRA (insofar as is needed) and consultation, exceptional circumstances exist to alter the boundary of the Green Belt at Canford School as shown on the plan submitted by the school entitled "Revised Policy Boundary: Revision 1", dated 09/05/18. Modification of the plan to reflect this is therefore necessary for soundness. The Council has previously proposed a modification to policy PP20 (albeit that this is likely to be renumbered) in respect of the school which would no longer make sense in the light of this boundary change. However, reference to Canford School in policy PP20 (as renumbered) would continue to be appropriate and I will liaise with the Council over the wording of this modification.

#### Policy PP33

At the hearings I indicated that I would give consideration to the need for alterations to this policy/its supporting text in terms of parking, public transport and air quality. I have concluded that for the policy to be positively-prepared and justified it is necessary for it to refer to the Council's parking strategy and for the supporting text of the policy to reference the Council's rail service improvement aspirations, discussed at the hearings, and which are of relevance to policy PP33 criterion (f). However, air quality impacts of new development are addressed in policy PP34 and the air quality objective behind the policies seeking to reduce car use is adequately referenced in paragraph 10.2 of the supporting text. No change to policy PP33 in this particular respect is therefore necessary for the plan to be sound.

#### Talbot Village and Heath

I would particularly like to thank those involved in the preparation of the Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) on issues relating to Talbot Village and Heath. I appreciate that not all the relevant parties have felt able to sign the statement and I have had regard to the separate representations submitted in response to the drafts of it. I will set out my reasoning in detail in my final report but, at this point, I conclude that modification of policy PP20 to the broad effect of that set out in Appendix 1 of the SOCG is necessary for the plan to be sound. However, I will liaise with the Council over some possible detailed wording changes. My final report will also explain why other changes to the plan

in relation to this issue, advocated by a number of Examination participants, are not necessary for soundness.

### Conclusion

Assuming that the Council would be content to adopt the plan subject to these modifications I should be grateful if you and your colleagues would prepare for my consideration a full schedule of their precise wording, to be then subject to HRA and SA (insofar as are necessary) and full public consultation. Should this not be the case I would be grateful if you would advise me of the Council's position as a matter of urgency.

Please arrange for this letter to be published on the Examination website, although I am not inviting comments on it from other parties and nor do I envisage accepting any.

Yours sincerely

*Malcolm Rivett*

INSPECTOR