

City Development
Spatial and Economic Development

Mr S J Pratt BA (Hons) MRTPI
c/o Mrs H Wilson
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Date: 19th February 2010
Your reference:
My reference:
Please ask for: Mark Jaggard
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Dear Mr Pratt

Oxford Core Strategy

Thank you for enabling a full and fair exploration of the various issues and points of view relating to the completion of the Oxford Core Strategy examination, during the Procedural Meeting held at Oxford Town Hall on 9th February 2010.

In concluding the meeting, you asked the City Council to outline a suggested timetable and programme, including any further work, by 19th February 2010. You indicated that you would consider this when deciding what progress could be made with the examination in advance of the resolution of the legal challenges to the South East Plan.

The City Council has given serious consideration to the issues raised at the Procedural Meeting. Unfortunately, we have been unable to conclude all the internal and external discussions required to fully inform our response within the timeframe outlined at the Procedural Meeting (which has included half-term week).

I would therefore be grateful if the comments below could be regarded as an interim summary of the Council's position, and we will seek to respond fully by Wednesday 3rd March 2010. I hope that this is acceptable to you.

Summary of the City Council's views following the Procedural Meeting

The City Council would wish that you conclude the Core Strategy Examination, and publish the report, as soon as is practicable. This view takes into account the following key points:

- PPS12 is clear that local planning authorities should be positive in bringing forward their Core Strategy, irrespective of whether a 'final' Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is in place (e.g. PPS12 paragraphs 4.14-4.15, and paragraphs 4.53-4.55);
- The City Council is of the view that the removal of cross-references to the South of Oxford Strategic Development Area (SOSDA) from the Core Strategy would not fundamentally affect the overall strategy;
- Conclusion of the examination is considered vital in providing certainty as to whether important housing and regeneration projects can continue to be progressed, for example bringing forward land at Barton;

- The South East England Partnership Board (SEEPB) confirmed at the Procedural Meeting that the Core Strategy was in general conformity with the RSS; and it was anticipated that the Core Strategy would still be in general conformity with the RSS, as amended following the legal challenges;
- Should a future alternative sub-regional spatial housing strategy be judged to have a significant impact on an adopted Oxford Core Strategy, this could be addressed through an early partial review of the document.

Suggested programme

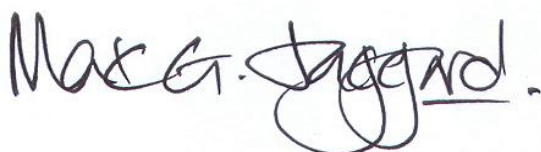
The City Council would hope that the following indicative timetable could be achieved. It is acknowledged that this is a best case scenario, which reflects internal legal advice that we can proceed with further consultation during the period leading up to and including local elections, and potentially a General Election.

The timetable below takes into account the availability of a suitable room in the Town Hall for the hearing sessions. It also assumes that participants at the hearing will be relying on original representations, rather than drafting further examination statements; this will of course depend on your views. If you feel that a further exchange of statements is necessary, then the hearings would clearly need to move back to late June rather than the first week of June.

Date	Action
19 th February	Council submits interim comments to Inspector
By 3 rd March	Council submits full response to Inspector
By 12 th March	Inspector's response received
By 2 nd April	Subject to Inspector's response, Council to prepare further changes
2 nd April	Consultation begins
14 th May	Consultation closes (6 weeks later)
By 21 st May	All consultation responses available on the Council's website and in the examination library
1 st June	Hearings recommence

I would envisage that our full response will provide more details about the nature of the further consultation to be undertaken, and whether any further sustainability work will be required. It is also our intention to set out briefly our thoughts on the various issues that you flagged up towards the end of the Procedural Meeting.

Yours sincerely



Mark Jaggard
Spatial and Economic Development Manager