

**LATEST NEWS:**  
**Local Plan Examination Stage 1 runs from**  
**Tues 17<sup>th</sup> March – 25<sup>th</sup> March**  
**at The Crowne Plaza Hotel.**

**IT IS VITAL THAT WE RAISE ADDITIONAL FUNDS (£35k) NOW TO COVER THE COST OF THE HEARINGS. THIS IS URGENT.**

The Hearing Programme, Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions and Inspectors' Guidance Notes can be found at <https://www.southbucks.gov.uk/examination>

**TOPICS** to be covered at the Hearings mirror issues highlighted in our consultants' submissions made in August and include:

- Legal compliance and Duty to Co-operate
- Sustainability
- Public consultation and Habitats Regulations Assessments
- Housing needs, Affordable Housing needs, Employment needs
- Spatial strategy
- Principle of green belt release
- Treatment of Villages
- Residential and employment sites methodology

Before the hearings, Inspectors are inviting responses from participants on the Inspectors' **"MATTERS ISSUES AND QUESTIONS" (MIQs)** which include:

### ***Slough***

Just as South Bucks District Council (SBDC) have approached Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC), Slough have approached SBDC to meet their un-met housing need. This Plan will not necessarily avoid the Slough issue.

### ***Sustainability***

What was the spatial strategy employed? What were the reasonable alternatives? Has there been a material change in circumstances? How have Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces (SANGS) been taken into account? How has the carbon emissions increase (which would be caused by the Plan) been taken into account in shaping the Plan? Does the Sustainability Appraisal justify the policies of the Plan? Have reasonable alternatives been taken into account?

### ***Unitary***

What is the justification for progressing this Plan as opposed to a new composite Plan for Bucks?

### ***Habitats regulations assessments***

Have SANGS been considered from a deliverability and viability perspective?

### ***Employment land***

Has availability of employment land elsewhere in the functional economic market area been taken into account?

### ***Spatial strategy***

Why are significantly more new dwellings proposed in Beaconsfield than Amersham? What was the process? What alternative strategies were considered?

What is the justification for the scale of development at Beaconsfield and Chesham? Why does the Plan seek to allocate large allocations rather than several smaller sites in and around the towns?

How has the Oxford – Cambridge Arc been taken into account as part of the Plan's preparation?

### ***Green Belt***

Given the constraints - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Green Belt and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) - how did Chiltern and South Bucks (CSB) determine the amount of housing and employment development to be released from Green Belt?

Have CSB examined fully all other reasonable options?

### ***Green Belt assessment methodology***

Why is the Green Belt proposed to be altered in some settlements such as Amersham, Beaconsfield and Chesham and not others?

### ***Exceptional circumstances***

Do they exist for Green Belt release?

### ***Villages***

What is the justification for removing Denham?

What is the justification for removing Jordans? Will Jordans and Seer Green become a single connected urban area?

### ***Residential site allocations methodology***

How have the Councils considered and assessed the impact of development on transport infrastructure, air quality, heritage assets, drainage, schools and healthcare provision? Where is this set out?

Are all sites viable?

### ***Employment site allocations methodology***

Have sites been selected using an appropriate methodology? Have reasonable alternatives been tested?

Are the reasons for selecting preferred sites and rejecting others clear and justified?

Where have the Council assessed the impact of development on transport and air quality? Where is this set out?

## **SUMMARY OF INSPECTORS' GUIDANCE NOTE**

The Inspectors have been appointed by the Secretary of State. Their role is to assess whether the Plan is sound, unsound or if it needs modifications. Plans usually need modifications.

There are only two means by which changes can be made to the submitted Plan: main modifications recommended by Inspectors or additional modifications made by Councils on adoption of the Plan. Main modifications must be subject to consultation. Additional modifications are minor modifications which do not materially affect the Plan.

Main modifications may be proposed and discussed during the Hearings. Why don't CSB propose some?

The Hearings are designed to explore the matters raised. Each session is arranged by topic. There is no detailed presentation of evidence.

Anyone can observe at the Hearings.

Written representations carry the same weight as those made orally at the Hearings.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE INSPECTORS' MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS (MIQs) (e.g. HAS ANYTHING BEEN OMITTED?), YOU SHOULD CONTACT THE PROGRAMME OFFICER (PO) by 7<sup>th</sup> FEB 2020.**

**IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE AT THE HEARINGS - LET THE PO KNOW BY 19<sup>th</sup> FEB 2020. OUR CONSULTANTS WILL BE REPRESENTING US ALL AT THE HEARING, FUNDS PERMITTING.**

A final version of the MIQs will be published on the examination website about 2 weeks before the hearings.

A Hearing Statement will be produced by CSB responding to all MIQs. Statements should be concise, focused and not exceed 3,000 words per matter, and appendices can only be included where directly relevant and necessary. Statements should clearly identify the topic to which they relate. They should be submitted electronically and provided for each Matter separately not bound as one document.

If several individuals wish to make the same point, they should consider producing a joint hearing statement. Contact the PO if this is relevant.

**All hearing statements must be submitted by 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 2020.**

Representors who are not participating in the Hearing sessions may also submit a Hearing Statement in direct response to MIQs **but this is not an opportunity to introduce further arguments or points which have not previously been made through representations to the Plan.**

Statements of Common Ground between participants can be submitted, alongside Hearing Statements.

**STAGE 2 OF THE EXAMINATION**

The March hearings are STAGE 1 of the Examination. STAGE 2 will be a similar process to examine specific site allocations and will take place in May/June 2020.

Following Stage 2, the findings will be set out in the Inspectors' report or in some cases through Interim Findings. The Report will set out conclusions and any Main Modifications to make the Plan sound.