

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK CORE STRATEGY

INSPECTOR'S NOTE 2 PRE-HEARING MEETING

**HELD AT PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY OFFICE, ALDERN
HOUSE, BASLOW ROAD, BAKEWELL
ON 3 FEBRUARY 2011**

- 1.0 At the Pre-Hearing Meeting (PHM) I orally presented my Guidance Notes that were circulated to all Representors prior to the PHM.
- 2.0 The Authority informed that its main witnesses at the Hearings sessions will be; Brian Taylor, Peter Abbott, Sue Marriott, Ian Fullilove, Judith Fidler, Emily Davies, David Brent and Anthony Northcote, but other Officers may be called upon as necessary.
- 3.0 The Authority confirmed that all procedural matters concerning the preparation and examination of the Core Strategy have been met.
- 4.0 The Authority and attendees of the PHM confirmed that the 9 main matters identified in my Main Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQ) papers cover all the matters necessary to examine the soundness of the Core Strategy and its compliance with the legal requirements.
- 5.0 The Authority summarised its responses to my Note 1 (CD GO12). This summary is contained in Appendix 1 to this Note 2. The Authority's full written response is set out in CD GO13.
- 6.0 I requested that the Authority suggests a change that would add text to the Core Strategy, which explains that the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) (RSS) is currently part of the development plan for the National Park. However, I acknowledged that the RSS may be revoked by legislation presently passing through parliament, before the Core Strategy is adopted, in which case such suggested change would not be endorsed.
- 7.0 I also commented that although the mechanisms for implementing and monitoring delivery of the Core Strategy Vision may be sound, this is not transparent from the submitted document. For soundness therefore a short section should be added to the Core Strategy explaining these mechanisms. Such a suggested change should be prefixed 300 since it is a matter that I have also raised in my MIQs.
- 8.0 I explained that changes to the Core Strategy suggested by the Authority arising from its responses to my Note 1 are prefixed 200 in the 'living' changes schedule CD GO11. The change requested above should also be prefixed 200. Those changes prefixed 100 in the schedule are suggested by the Authority in response to representations received to consultation on the publication Core Strategy. Any changes that are suggested in response to my MIQs will be added to the schedule and will be prefixed 300. Those changes arising from discussion at the Hearings sessions will also be added and will be prefixed 400. In addition, any suggested changes that go to the heart of the soundness of the Core Strategy, rather than being an 'improvement' will be further prefixed S.
- 9.0 The Authority brought to my attention that there is an error in Table A of Appendix E to the Delivery Plan (CD A002) in that footnote 13 should be

removed. This error will be corrected by a suggested change that will be prefixed 100 and will be added to the changes schedule CD G011. This correction is shown on the version of the schedule that is attached to this Note 2.

10.0 The procedural questions concerning the Examination, together with my responses, are summarised in Appendix 2 to this note.

11.0 I closed the PHM at 11.45.

Shelagh Bussey

Inspector

4 February 2011

Appendix 1 –Questions asked in the Inspector’s Note 1 and a Summary of the Authority’s Responses. (Inspector’s questions in bold italic)

- 1.0 ***To assist my examination of the justification for and the soundness of the policies of the Core Strategy please can a schedule of the evidence source for each of the policies be provided, with reference to the CD Examination List?***
- 1.1. This has now been prepared and is available to view at Appendix A of the Authority’s formal response note CD G013.
- 2.0 ***I appreciate that at the time of the publication of the Core Strategy, the Secretary of State had indicated that Regional Strategy (RS) was revoked and thus did not form part of the development plan for the National Park. However, as you are aware, the RS has been re-instated and for the time being, forms part of the development plan. For soundness the Core Strategy should be in general conformity with it. Clarification is required of which Regional Spatial Strategy(s) (RSS) form part of the development plan for the National Park.***
- 2.1. For spatial planning purposes the entire National Park falls within the east midlands and while it remains in force the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) is a formal part of the Development Plan. Proposed changes to this effect have been set out at S200.2 in CD G011.
- 3.0 ***Clarification is also required of which policies of the Core Strategy were amended in response to the temporary revocation of RSS, the nature of those changes, and if in the light of the re-instatement of RSS those changes are sound. Any other policies that are not in general conformity with the RSS should be identified and the reasons for their non-conformity should be explained.***
- 3.1 It was not necessary to make substantial changes to policy in order to take account of the Government intention to revoke the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009). Rather, the supporting text was modified to remove many references to it. This included the removal of a separate section on regional context from the introduction and the amendment of the policy context section in each chapter to refer to “national” rather than “national and regional” policy. Some references were retained, however, particularly where knowledge of the regional role in the development of or support for local policy provides useful evidence.
- 3.2 The only policy modification made as a direct result of the intention to revoke the East Midlands Regional Plan was the addition of the first sentence of Policy MIN1. This is a key element of strategy and repeats that set out (at present) in Policy 37 of the regional plan. It is, therefore, in conformity with the regional plan. Given the anticipated revocation of the regional plan it needs to be repeated in the Core Strategy in order to ensure continuity of this element of the Development Plan. Its inclusion is not considered to affect the Core strategy’s soundness.

- 3.2.1 All Core strategy policies are in general conformity with the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009). This has been confirmed in the East Midlands Councils' letter of 17th January 2011 (CD G018).
- 4.0 ***In addition, the few references in the Core Strategy to the revocation of the RSS should be removed by a suggested change. I acknowledge that it is likely that RS will be revoked by legislation before the Core Strategy is adopted, and possibly prior to the end of its examination, so it may be prudent to word such suggested changes with this eventuality in mind.***
- 4.1 Changes have been proposed in CD G011
- 5.0 ***The Core Strategy delivery plan, which is contained in a separate document, acknowledges that to be sound the Core Strategy should be demonstrably deliverable. However, I am not satisfied that it contains sufficient information to show who the main delivery partners are in respect of each of the policies, when policies are intended to be delivered, what necessary funding sources are necessary, potentially available and/or secured. Furthermore, in the absence of clear and meaningful indicators and targets for each policy, it is not clear how the Core Strategy will be monitored or how its policies and proposals will be managed to ensure that its vision and objectives are achieved. I would suggest that this information should be contained in implementation and delivery schedules that should be added to the Core Strategy document, either as an additional section or as additional appendices.***
- 5.1. The Authority has worked closely with local authorities (particularly in the Peak Sub area) during the preparation of the Core Strategy on the issue of delivery. In addition to regular consultation on the emerging options and policies, a series of 'delivery' workshops were held prior to the publication stage to engage the key delivery and infrastructure bodies across the Peak Sub area. The supporting Delivery Plan document takes a proportionate view on the 'delivery' of the Core Strategy, bearing in mind the low expectation for development in the protected area of the National Park.
- 5.2. The Core Strategy and its Delivery Plan describe the way in which the LDF will operate alongside the National Park Management Plan to establish a National Park focussed approach to spatial planning and monitoring.
- 5.3. A description is given of the way the Core Strategy and Delivery Plan set out board expectations for directing development across particular areas and settlements in accordance with the spatial and development strategy.
- 5.4. The delivery plan emphasises that the only theme for which there is a firm programme of delivery centres around affordable housing, for which detailed information at Appendix E sets out the expected numbers to be achieved through the plan period depending on resources and further work needed on assessing capacity.

- 5.5. Although the Delivery Plan sets out the role of partners and related programmes in jointly delivering the spatial vision and outcomes, it is accepted that this information might be presented more clearly. As an interim measure for discussion through the examination process the Authority therefore proposes a new implementation schedule (see Appendix B of the Authority's formal response note) describing Delivery Partners / Related implementation mechanisms / Timeframes / Funding status as suggested by the Inspector. Arrangements for managing delivery are being developed in the context of the review of the National Park Management Plan happening concurrently to the preparation of the LDF. The Authority is keen to join-up the processes for review and monitoring of its strategic documents, particularly the LDF and National Park Management Plan. This will provide a strategic overview of progress for the National Park as a whole and, within that, the spatial components as delivered through the LDF. It is intended that reporting on the new National Park Management Plan will commence in 2013/14. The creation of a 'spatial approach' to delivery is, therefore, under development across a number of key strategy documents, rather than simply the LDF.
- 5.6. The delivery plan at paragraph 3.10 explains the joint work that has taken place with local District Councils to consider the infrastructure needs emerging from the Spatial Strategy. The conclusion reached was that there were no additional requirements for infrastructure resulting from the plan proposals that are of a scale beyond that suited to discussion on a case by case basis.
- 5.7. Nevertheless, the Core Strategy includes a policy (GSP4) that will enable greater planning benefit from development proposals, to assist service providers where there are particular priorities for funding and investment.
- 5.8. Delivery Plan Appendix F sets out a comprehensive range of indicators for every policy to aid the monitoring process. These include both contextual indicators to aid our understanding of the 'State of the Park' and local output indicators which reveal more about the impact of planning decisions and their contribution to higher level vision and outcomes. These indicators will form the basis of future Annual Monitoring Reports.
- 5.9. In response to the point that "***in the absence of clear and meaningful indicators and targets for each policy, it is not clear how the Core Strategy will be monitored or how its policies and proposals will be managed to ensure that its vision and objectives are achieved.***", the Authority would contend that there is a comprehensive range of well considered indicators set out for each policy. The issue of targets is more difficult. In some areas, such as housing, there is appropriate detail. Despite there being no target for housing development, the Authority has worked closely with the local housing providers to develop a set of figures which estimate anticipated delivery. However, in many other areas there are no easily quantifiable figures that can be proposed in relation to planning. Instead, they are dealt with by related monitoring of the National Park Management Plan and its strategy documents. The Authority has chosen not to duplicate these associated monitoring arrangements and to describe the approach to spatial planning and monitoring as a combined process between the LDF and the National Park Management Plan.

- 5.10. We note that the monitoring schedules in the Lake District National Park Core Strategy do set out generic goals such as “bigger better” or “smaller better”, and if this kind of approach is the desired model, the Authority would be prepared to look at it in more detail. However, it was not possible to consider this in a thorough manner by the 21st of January deadline. It may be possible to undertake further work as part of the response to MIQ’s (deadline of the 11th March).
- 5.11. One possible suggestion to improve the monitoring schedules would be to group batches of policies under theme headings to show more clearly how planning decisions contribute to the achievement of higher level vision and outcomes.
- 5.12. In the context of the full range of work undertaken by the Authority and others in pursuit of National Park purposes and duty, the overall approach to spatial monitoring is, perhaps, best described as “work in progress.” In the period to 2013/14 (when reporting is anticipated to commence on the new National Park Management Plan), it will be possible to carry out further work to develop spatial approaches to monitoring, that capture both:
- The impact of development management on broad spatial areas defined and supported by the landscape strategy and its associated monitoring framework; and
 - the links between the LDF and other associated strategies (some led by the NPA, some by other bodies) as noted in the proposed new delivery schedule at Appendix B of the Authority’s formal response note. This will require a degree of flexibility in order to respond to changing drivers such as the emerging Local Economic Partnerships, and new community level work that might flow from the Localism Bill.

Appendix 2 – Summary of Attendees’ Questions on Procedural Matters and Inspector’s Responses (Summary of questions in bold italics)

- 1.0 ***What is the process for statements of common ground and reaching agreement on suggested changes prior to the Hearings sessions?***
- 1.2 The Respresentor should generally take the lead on seeking to achieve statements of common ground since the presumption is that the Authority has submitted what it considers to be a sound Core Strategy. However, I urge the Authority to be as proactive as time allows and enter into such discussions in a positive manner with the aim of reaching agreement on as many matters as possible, especially factual details, prior to the Hearings. A similar approach should be taken in reaching agreement over wording for suggested changes, whether promoted by the Authority or a Representor. However, there will be opportunity to discuss changes at the Hearings with the aim of reaching a consensus on as many as possible. Any outstanding matters can also be discussed at the last Hearing session.
- 2.0 ***Is it possible for those people who did not make a representation at the publication consultation stage to make one now and be invited to participate in the Hearings?***
- 2.1 The regulations are clear on which representations I should take into account and when they should be made. Unfortunately a submission at this late stage cannot be accepted. However, the Hearings are public so anyone may observe whether or not they have made a representation. Perhaps in these circumstances, those that have been invited to participate in the Hearings could also represent the views others, providing that an entirely new point is not being made.
- 3.0 ***Will my report and recommendations be referred to Government Ministers for their final decision on the soundness of the Core Strategy?***
- 3.1 No I have been appointed by the Secretary of State under section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act to hold this Examination and my recommendations are not subject to intervention by Ministers.
- 4.0 ***What weight will I attach to emerging Government legislation in my examination of the Core Strategy?***
- 4.1 All such emerging legislation is capable of being a material consideration, but the weight that I shall attach depends upon its progress through the legislative/statutory process at the time I submit my report to the Authority. I shall afford substantial weight to the Government’s intention to revoke Regional Strategies. However, since at the present time the RSS is part of the development plan for the National Park, I shall conduct the Examination on that basis until such time as it is revoked.