

Jenny Poxon  
Head of Planning Delivery and Conformity  
01924 331601  
jenny.poxon@yhassembly.gov.uk

Our ref: Hambleton/40b – Planning Conformity/Final responses/Hambleton, Allocations, Submission, Mar 09

5 March 2009

Graham Banks  
Planning Policy Team Leader  
Hambleton District Council  
Civic Centre  
Stone Cross  
Northallerton  
DL6 2UU

Dear Graham

**Hambleton Local Development Framework  
Confirmation of General Conformity with the RSS for Allocations  
Development Plan Document**

Further to your letter of 22 January 2009, I am pleased to confirm that the Assembly's opinion is that the Allocations DPD is in general conformity with the Yorkshire and Humber Plan, the Regional Spatial Strategy to 2026 (May 2008).

Under new Regulation 29 (2008), this opinion is issued when the local authority publishes the DPD for comment prior to submission to the Secretary of State.

There are no issues of conformity between the Allocations DPD and the Yorkshire and Humber Plan (RSS). Details are given below of matters of alignment that need to be addressed.

As with the Core Strategy and Development Policies DPDs for Hambleton, the role of the RSS in providing a strategic policy context for the local policies is clear throughout the document. This helps to reinforce the close relationship that there needs to be between the RSS and the DPD and it demonstrates how the DPD will help to implement the RSS.

We welcome the fact that the need for there to be 'general conformity' between the RSS and the Allocations DPD is addressed in **paragraph 1.11** of the

document. The Assembly also welcomes references made throughout the document to RSS (May 2008) and welcomes the regional planning policy context that is set out throughout the document.

Overall, the DPD reflects the policy direction of RSS (2008). In particular, the Assembly supports the scale and distribution of new development proposed by the DPD, which is supportive of the settlement hierarchy, set out in the Core Strategy (2007) and RSS (2008).

The Assembly is encouraged that **paragraph 2.5** states that the RSS (2008) sets out the context for this Allocations DPD, in terms of the overall scale of provision for housing required, and its time period. Policy H1 of RSS (2008) provides an indicative net build rate for Hambleton of 280 dwellings per annum for the period 2008-2026. **Paragraph 2.8** of the document states that for clarity and consistency, and to provide correctly for new housing, the figures in the DPD are based on gross rather than net requirements. The Assembly however would suggest that for consistency (with Policy H1, annual monitoring and the findings of your Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) it would be more beneficial to use the RSS net housing figure instead of gross.

RSS (2008) identifies Northallerton and Thirsk as Principal Towns. Policy YH5 of RSS (2008) provides for Principal Towns to be the main local focus for housing, employment, shopping, leisure, education, health and cultural activities and facilities. The Assembly is encouraged that **paragraph 2.11** states that 51% of housing development will be focussed in the Principal Service Centres of Northallerton and Thirsk.

The Assembly is encouraged that in determining site allocations, Hambleton District Council has followed the sequential approach as set out in Policy YH7 of RSS (2008).

In considering specific site allocations, the DPD also lists accessibility as a key factor in assessing site acceptability and suitability. In the Assembly's previous response to the Preferred Options consultation concerns were raised that there was a need for full consideration to be given to the accessibility criteria as set out in RSS (2008) or a suitable more local alternative. The Assembly still has concerns that there is no reference made to the accessibility criteria set out in RSS (2008) nor a more locally evidenced alternative. Ensuring the accessibility of development by non-car modes is a key principle of regional planning policy. Accessibility criteria are set out in Table 13.8 and 13.9 of RSS (2008) and they provide guidance for developments in terms of accessibility to employment and social infrastructure uses.

In the Assembly's previous response to the Preferred Options Allocations, concerns were raised that there was only likely to be a district-wide proportion of housing

development on brownfield land of just over 38%. The Assembly is encouraged that **paragraph 2.12** states that the objective of the document is to ensure that the allocations proposed address the District target for housing development of brownfield land set by Policy DP12 as 55%.

**Paragraph 9.2.7** states that the Allocations as a whole would be likely to result in a District-wide proportion of development on brownfield land that is 46%. Therefore it will be important that local evidence support why a lower target is proposed.

In the Assembly's previous response to the Preferred Options Allocations, concerns were raised that it was not clear whether the Allocations DPD made provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. The Assembly would like to reiterate these concerns. The RSS (2008) recommends that the region needs to make additional provision to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers to address a shortfall of at least 255 pitches. Policy H6 states that in the North Yorkshire district at least 57 pitches will be required by 2010 to address the shortfall in the region. Policy H6 also requires local authorities to carry out an assessment of the needs of Gypsies and Travellers by May 2008. This is now in place.

Policy H6 was therefore set as an interim policy until all local authorities had carried out their own local assessments. The estimates set out in Policy H6 will be superseded by the findings of local Gypsy and Traveller accommodation assessments which are expected to conclude that greater numbers of additional pitches will be required.

We consider that the Allocations DPD should make reference to the *Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment – North Yorkshire Sub Region (May 2008)*, which identifies a need for 55 additional pitches in the North Yorkshire sub region in the period up to 2015. Planning for the Gypsy and Traveller Community should not be treated separately from housing allocations for the settled community.

The Assembly has commissioned consultants to review the local accommodation assessments that have been carried out by local authorities and will provide District targets through the RSS Update work.

The Assembly notes that the Allocations DPD seeks to provide for a scale of employment land in line with the Council's adopted Core Strategy (75 hectares). As previously commented, the Assembly would encourage the Council to ensure that this figure is based on an up-to-date and robust local evidence base to ensure that there is not an oversupply of employment land in the District.

It should be noted that Table 11.3 of RSS (2008) gives a figure for potential net change for industrial and storage/distribution land in Hambleton of 20 hectares to 2021.

If you have any queries about these points, please do not hesitate to contact Jenny Poxon on 01924 331 555.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Box', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Cllr. Peter Box  
Chair, Regional Planning Board

Cc: Margaret Jackson, Government Office for Yorkshire and Humber