

# ROCHFORD CORE STRATEGY EXAMINATION

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Ref:

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Dear Mr. Hollingworth,

Thank you for your letter of 19 August. I would not seek to interfere in the Council's decision making procedures or protocols and I will wait to hear from you regarding the outcome of the meeting on 31 August. However, you make reference to '*reverting back* to the housing policies of the original submitted Core Strategy', and that this would entail a *change in Council policy* (my emphasis). The basis on which the examination of a Development Plan Document proceeds is that the Council has submitted what it considers to be a sound plan. If the Council no longer considers the Core Strategy, as submitted, to be a sound plan, it should withdraw it. You will recall that I indicated to you in my letter of 11 May that if the Council would not wish to adopt a CS which contains the RS housing numbers, it may not be sensible for you to continue. In the circumstances I would welcome a clear statement that the Council still considers the submitted Core Strategy to be a sound plan, if the decision is taken to continue with the examination process.

If the Council meeting on 31 August decides to seek withdrawal of the document then the examination process will be brought to a halt. If the meeting decides to progress the Plan along the lines set out in my letter of 11 August, you will need to consider what level of consultation should be undertaken on the necessary changes. As I have already indicated, I take the view that the changes could be considered minor. Nonetheless, the failure to have a 15 year plan period at the time of adoption raises the issue of conformity with national policy and is therefore a matter of soundness. In the circumstances you may feel it is prudent to allow a period of 4 weeks for respondents to comment. You will also have to satisfy yourselves that the

requirements of your SCI will be met. As consultation will have to be undertaken on the recently published draft NPPF, this course of action would not have any impact on the overall timescales. I would be grateful if you could give this due consideration and advise me on whether you would intend to undertake consultation and likely dates.

*Laura Graham*  
Inspector