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## **Examination of the Darlington Local Plan**

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### **INSPECTOR'S NOTE NO. 17: PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS AND CHANGES TO THE POLICIES MAP**

Examination hearings were held between 25 May and 7 September 2021. The Council has now prepared revised versions of the schedule of proposed main modifications to reflect all of its responses to my action points and to make a number of other consequential changes, along with revised changes to the policies map. Further sustainability appraisal and habitat regulations screening have been carried out and reports prepared.

I am satisfied at this stage of the examination that the proposed main modifications are all necessary to address soundness issues and will be effective in so doing. However, this is without prejudice to my final conclusions which will ultimately be made having regard to representations made about the main modifications, in addition to all of the evidence currently before me.

The Council can make minor changes to the Plan when it is adopted in addition to the main modifications. Such changes ("additional modifications") would not materially affect the Plan's policies and proposals, but rather would relate to matters such as typographical errors, minor editing, and factual or name changes. These would not be matters for my consideration.

The Council should now carry out public consultation on the proposed main modifications, changes to the policies map, and sustainability appraisal. This should be for a minimum six week period and be undertaken having regard to the Council's Statement of Community Involvement in a similar manner to that in which it would be carried out under regulation 19. The consultation will only be about the proposed main modifications, changes to the policies map, and sustainability appraisal, not about other aspects of the Plan or "omission sites".

Representations about the consultation documents should be sent to the Council, not the Programme Officer.

At the end of the consultation period, the Council should forward the representations to the Programme Officer along with a report listing all of the representations; a summary of the main issues raised; and the Council's brief response to those main issues. I will then consider all of the representations, and the Council's responses to them, before finalising my report.

Unless I consider it essential to deal with substantial issues raised in representations about the proposed main modifications, or to ensure fairness, no further hearing sessions will be held after the consultation period.

Any queries about the consultation exercise should be taken up with the Council, rather than the Programme Officer.

*William Fieldhouse*

13 October 2021