

5th February 2020

Dear Mr Ward,

Examination of the Northumberland National Park Local Plan

Once again we would like to thank you for assistance in the inspection of our Local Plan.

We appreciate your conclusions and are also hopeful that the submitted Local Plan can be made sound by modifications.

We understand from the Programme Officer that you would like a steer from us on Policy DM3. We thank you for the time to reflect on the policy following the hearing and our conclusions are set out below.

Policy DM3

To reiterate, parts 3-5 (of Policy DM3) refer to affordable housing provision on a site accommodating more than five dwellings. We had assumed that such a development would only be considered sustainable within a Local Centre (with the exception of Rural Exception Sites considered by parts 1-2 of the same policy).

After deliberation we agree it is not necessary to limit parts 3-5 to Local Centres. We suggest removing this phrase and replacing it with '*within a Named Settlement*' in parts 3-5, as set out in a schedule sent with this letter.

Consequential Changes

As a result of this change, there would then be minimal policy difference between a Local Centre and a Smaller Village and we therefore propose merging these categories into a singular 'Named Settlement' category in Policy ST4.

Whilst the settlement hierarchy could be retained, on reflection of the discussion at the hearing, we would accept references to Local Centres or Smaller Villages are changed to 'Named Settlement'. This would require just one further policy change (to part 1 of Policy DM3) which is also set out in the attached schedule.

We look forward to receiving your outline of the main modifications shortly.

Yours Sincerely,

Susannah Buylta

Interim Head of Planning

Tony Gates

Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

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