

The Chief Executive
Wycombe District Council
Queen Victoria Road
High Wycombe
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Dear Sir

Public Inquiry into objections to the Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011

1. I was appointed by the First Secretary of State to hold a public inquiry into objections to the Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011. The inquiry was held between 3 October 2000 and 4 October 2001 and sat for a total of 63 days. I held a pre-inquiry meeting on 24 May 2000. Before, during and after the inquiry I visited all of the sites the subject of objections.
2. The Plan was placed on deposit in December 1998 for a period of 8 weeks. In response, a total of 5841 duly made objections were received. After these had been considered, the Council decided to progress changes to the Plan (PICs) which were published on 3 March 2001 and put out to non-statutory consultation for a period of 6 weeks. This generated a further 1657 objections. These were considered by the Council which decided to make some further changes to the Plan (FPICs) which were published on 30 June 2001 for a consultation period running until 28 July 2001. Another 69 objections were made in response to the FPICs. I have considered all these objections, 7567 in total. I have attached the same weight to those dealt with by way of written representations as I have to those heard at the inquiry, either in formal inquiry sessions or at less formal hearings. I have also taken into account representations in support of Plan proposals.
3. My report follows the structure of the Plan itself. The Council already has copies of the summaries of representations received at all stages, the schedule of all duly made objections, the list of inquiry appearances and the list of core documents. These should be added to the Appendices to the report.
4. For the most part I found the Plan to be well written and logically ordered. In some instances I have supported the Plan's approach, but for clarity I have recommended changes to the wording of policies or supporting text to improve clarity. In general, I have tried to include a precise form of wording where I have recommended modifications to policies. Where this has not been possible I have attempted to give a clear indication of those matters that need to be addressed in re-drafting the policy. My report concentrates on the objections, but also covers the full range of issues raised, even if they are not specifically mentioned in the report. I have also taken into account other changes prepared by the Council as the inquiry progressed. In a few places I have made informal suggestions which I think may improve the final Plan, on matters indirectly related to the formal objections. A summary of my main conclusions is appended to this letter.
5. The report takes into account planning guidance published since the inquiry, most notably the revised version of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17 – Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation published in July 2002.
6. The format of the report reflects the skeleton template prepared by the Council at my request, based on a model from the Inspectorate. This has eased my reporting task and has been much appreciated.

7. I wish to record my thanks for the courtesy, help and co-operation I received from all participants at the inquiry, including Morag Ellis and all other members of the Council's team. I was very grateful for the able assistance from John MacBryde, my assistant inspector, and David Crook and Neil Jillings, Higher Planning Officers with the Inspectorate, both during the inquiry and in preparing this report. While, the Assistant Inspector in particular has made a significant contribution to the report, I fully endorse all the recommendations it contains. Finally, I wish to express my thanks to Tom Currie, the Programme Officer for the inquiry, for all his hard work, support and invaluable contribution to the smooth running of the inquiry.

Geoff Salter BA MRTPI
Inspector

Cc Government office for the South East Region and the Office of the Deputy Prime
Minister (PCID)