

Dear Mr Cookson and Mr Canavan

Hastings Planning Strategy

Thank you for your e-mail to the Programme Officer which she has passed to me.

I note that you will be taking into account the latest national statistics on the projected number of households in England published in April 2013. I see also that you will continue to work with Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council to update the evidence base so as to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework requirements concerning the full, objectively assessed housing needs. Thank you for this.

I would suggest that you consult on the currently proposed trend-based figure of 7,493 as in HBC/MM/3 and perhaps also any further revised calculated trend based figure using the Howmanyhomes.org and/or the new ONS data. Bearing in mind the scale of the existing trend-based figure and the apparent unlikelihood of any revised trend-based figure being so much lower that it could be accommodated within the Borough, you could alternatively take the view that any such revised figure would be no more than an update, not going to the heart of the plan as would a Main Modification, and could be included in the Planning Strategy as an Additional Modification.

As the point which you are making is that Hastings simply cannot accommodate all its housing needs within the Borough because of environmental and physical constraints, it would seem to me to make little practical difference whether the fully assessed needs were for 7,493 or, say, for 5,000, 6,000 or 7,000 dwellings. I note here that you intend to keep to a target of 3,400 dwellings during the plan period, and I do not recall any evidence from any party suggesting that all the estimated housing needs could be accommodated within the Borough. I would suggest that this alternative approach is more pragmatic and could lead to a speedier adoption of the Planning Strategy. In the consultation on the Main Modifications and the revocation of the South East Plan, I agree that it would be useful to make people aware of the ONS figures. I do not think that a consultation with no actual figure would be helpful, asking people to suggest their own figures.

I would be very willing to meet you to discuss these matters to ensure progress on the plan, but other parties would have to be invited, presumably those who attended the Hearing on general housing matters. Please let me know your intentions.

Yours sincerely

Richard E Hollox

29 April 2013