

From: [REDACTED]
To: [PlanningPolicy](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: NH/24/09120 Consultation on the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 Proposed Main Modifications
Date: 17 January 2025 13:34:57

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FAO: Planning Policy Team, West Berkshire Council

Our Reference: NH/24/09120

Consultation: Consultation on the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 Proposed Main Modifications

Dear Sir or Madam,

Thank you for your email dated 6th December 2024 inviting National Highways (NH) to comment on the main modifications to the West Berkshire Local Plan as recommended by the Planning Inspector.

The West Berkshire Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in March 2023. Following hearing sessions in May, June and October 2024, the Inspectors subsequently wrote to the council setting out the next steps for the examination process which involved consulting on a number of changes to the Local Plan, known as main modifications, for which further review and comment are now required.

National Highways has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the strategic road network (SRN). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such National Highways works to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.

We will therefore be concerned with proposals or policies that have the potential to impact the safe and efficient operation of the SRN in the vicinity of the plan area, in this case the M4 which passes east-west through the area and the A34 which passes north-south through the area and forms a junction with the M4 at M4 J13.

The documents provided for review detail a number of changes to the Local Plan. The changes are relatively minor and importantly, do not significantly change land allocations or transport policies. There is a minor increase to the housing requirement over the plan period, to match the extension of the plan period from 2039 to 2041, however this is proportionate to the end date extension and does not change the yearly housing requirement. It is noted that on page 29 of the main modifications document it is now proposed that a small number of dwellings in Lambourne and Hungerford will be allocated in their neighbourhood plans, rather than the Local Plan. The small number of dwellings to be allocated combined with the relative large distance to M4 J14 means that this is unlikely to cause any concerns, but National Highways should still be consulted when these plans come forwards. An new document in the form of an updated Sustainability Appraisal has also been submitted, however this does not contain anything or relevance to the SRN.

Having reviewed all the proposed main modifications, there are none that we would deem to have an effect upon the SRN. We therefore have no objection to the proposed main modifications submitted.

Regards

Patrick Blake, Area 3 Spatial Planner

National Highways | Bridge House | 1 Walnut Tree Close | Guildford | Surrey | GU1 4LZ

Tel: [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

Web: <http://www.highways.gov.uk>

GTN: 0300 470 1043

From: PlanningPolicy <PlanningPolicy@westberks.gov.uk>

Sent: 06 December 2024 10:30

Subject: Consultation on the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 Proposed Main Modifications

The West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 (LPR) is currently being independently examined by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The Inspector's role is to assess whether the LPR has been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Cooperate, legal and procedural requirements and whether it is sound (positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy). If the Inspector concludes that the LPR is sound and meets the necessary tests, it can then be adopted by the Council and will form the Local Plan for the District.

The Inspector issued his preliminary findings on 31 July 2024, and a note on the Main Modifications consultation on 24 October 2024. The findings are without prejudice to his final report but set out the Main Modifications he considers are required in order to make the LPR sound. These proposed Main Modifications are now subject to an 8-week public consultation from Friday 6 December 2024 to 31 January 2025.

It is important that any proposed Main Modifications do not undermine the sustainability process that has informed the preparation of the LPR. The Council has therefore updated the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA), and produced an addendum to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), both of which accompany the LPR.

We are therefore now inviting representations on the following documents between **Friday 6 December 2024 and 11:59pm on Friday 31 January 2025:**

- Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications to the West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2022-2039 (November 2024)
- Schedule of Proposed Changes to the Policies Map (November 2024)
- Updated Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Report – Proposed Main Modifications (November 2024)
- Addendum to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Proposed Main Modifications (November 2024).

All documents relating to the Consultation on Proposed Main Modifications can be viewed electronically on the Council's website at <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/lpr-proposed-main-modifications>.

Please note that representations may only be made in relation to the documents as set out above. If you previously submitted representations to the earlier consultations on the LPR the

Inspector has already considered these during the examination and there is no need to make them again.

Representations must be received no later than 11:59pm on Friday 31 January 2025. Late representations cannot be taken into consideration by the Inspector. The Statement of Representations Procedure attached explains where the relevant documents are available for inspection and how your comments should be submitted. I hope this is helpful, but if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Planning Policy Team on the contact details below:

Email: planningpolicy@westberks.gov.uk

Tel: 01635 519 111

Yours faithfully,

Clare Lawrence
Executive Director for Place

You have been sent this email because you have previously made representations on the Local Plan or have asked to be kept informed. If you no longer wish to be contacted, please e-mail planningpolicy@westberks.gov.uk.

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