

Examination of the Mole Valley Local Plan 2020-2037 (the Plan/Local Plan)**Inspectors – Ms R Barrett BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI IHBC
Programme Officer – Louise St John Howe**

Inspector Note 23

The Council's Note 31 (ED56) sets out changes that the Council wishes to make to the submitted Plan. That includes deleting all Green Belt (GB) site allocations which do not benefit from planning permission. It suggests that this is done through a main modification (MM) to the submitted Plan. It explains that this is in response to the Government's consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The Council requests guidance from the Inspector on its proposed course of action and the implications for gypsy and traveller provision in the Plan.

The Inspector responds as follows:

1. She wishes to make it clear that there has not been a change in Government policy. Rather, the Government is currently consulting on a *draft* NPPF. Until Government policy is changed (expected in Spring 2023), the Inspector will continue to examine the submitted Plan against current Government policy, contained in the NPPF 2021. She therefore cannot recommend MMs predicated on draft Government policy that may or may not come into effect in its draft form.
2. In the circumstances it may be that the Council wishes for the Inspector to pause the Examination until there is greater certainty around future Government policy. If this were the case, given the circumstances, the Inspector would be receptive to such a request. However, as previously stated she will work to ensure that the Examination does not become protracted.
3. Given the above, it is unnecessary for the Inspector to set out a response to the second Council query, regarding the implications of its suggested approach for the Plan's gypsy and traveller provision.
4. The Inspector acknowledges that this is not the answer that the Council was hoping for, but must work within the bounds of the legislation, regulations, national planning policy and advice as currently stands. Throughout the Examination the Inspector has sought to work proactively with the Council to arrive at a sound Plan, within the limitations of her role as dictated by legislation and the Government's national planning policy. She will continue to do so.

R Barrett
INSPECTOR
17 February 2023