



Department for
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Dear Sir Michael Pitt,

Re: Inspectors' Reports on Local Plans

Thank you for your letter of 6 March about the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan. I welcome your confirmation that you have made all Inspectors aware of my concerns and taken steps to ensure that Inspectors' reports are correctly worded to reduce the risk of misinterpretation of Government policy.

As you rightly note, my letter of 3 March set out concerns over the Inspector's use of language which invited misinterpretation of Government policy. It did not signal a change of policy or approach. Inspectors in Local Plan examinations should continue to determine whether local planning authorities have followed the National Planning Policy Framework in seeking to meet the objectively assessed development needs of their area.

Following the recent publication of the new planning practice guidance, I would also strongly encourage continued momentum on Local Plan examinations. The guidance supports the National Planning Policy Framework and provides useful clarity on the practical application of policy. It should provide helpful support for Inspectors and should not normally be considered a reason for extending examinations. I would be grateful if this could also be made clear to all Planning Inspectors.

NICK BOLES MP