

Date: 08 September 2022
Our ref: 403112
Your ref: Inspectors Matters, Issues & Questions



Ms Carmel Edwards
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Dear Ms Edwards

Inspectors Matters, Issues and Questions for Stage 2 of the Local Plan – Hearing Sessions

Thank you for your invitation to attend the above meetings in connection with your proposed Local Plan. Unfortunately Natural England will be unable to send a representative as our resources are limited and it is not possible to accept all such invitations.

Natural England's role

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Planning policy for the natural environment

Neighbourhood plans and Local Plans present significant opportunities, but also potential risks, for the natural environment. Your proposals should be in line with the National Planning Policy Framework. The key principles are set out in paragraph 109:

The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;
- recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;
- minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

You should also consider the natural environment policies in your area's Local Plan.

Natural England have no comments on the Inspectors Matters, Issues & Questions for Stage 2 of the Local Plan.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Jenkins
Operations Delivery
Consultations Team
Natural England