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Our Ref:

PINS/D3125/429/7

Your Ref:

RGA/LEL00293456/5

Date:

29 July 2022

Dear Leigh Day

Examination of the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (the AAP) - Policy 2 – Net zero carbon development

Thank you for your letter dated 25 July 2022 on behalf of your clients Rights: Community: Action.

You may be aware that similar queries were raised with us last week via email. Although we expect you may have had sight of our response, we have included it as an Annex to this letter.

Following our response, West Oxfordshire District Council have indicated a wish to consider this matter further. As you rightly point out, the question of whether to commence public consultation on the Main Modifications is a decision for them.

We wish to hear the outcome of the Councils consideration on how they would like to proceed before deciding whether we have anything further to add. The indication we have received is that this is unlikely to occur until towards the middle of August. We will of course ensure that you are kept up to date.

Please note that we have instructed that your letter and this response be placed on the examination webpage.

Darren McCreery and David Spencer

INSPECTORS

Annex

Policy 2 was discussed at length during the Hearing sessions, with views heard from a number of parties. The potential need for modification to the policy was also raised by the Inspector and prompted the Council to document an action relating to the policy and the question of whether it was inconsistent with national policy. These actions by the Inspector were sufficient to meet the aim of ensuring that the Council had a reasonable understanding that potential main modification was likely to be needed, in line with the best practice set out in the Procedure Guide.

It is not usual practice for Inspectors to share more detailed reasoning ahead of Main Modifications being identified and consulted upon. This is because any final conclusions are subject to the outcome of that consultation. However, in this instance, as the Inspectors knew the issue was of particular importance to the Council, as a courtesy they took the step of providing some additional explanation in the letter of 26 May [Insp17].

The consultation on the Main Modifications is on the substance of the modifications themselves. It is not on whether parties agree or not with the Inspector's reasoning for saying that a Modification is needed. As such, the full reasoning is not required in order to take part in the consultation. Providing such reasoning would instead pre-empt the outcome of the consultation.