

Examination of the West of England Joint Spatial Plan

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Programme Officer: Robert Young

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Dear Ms Bartlett,

Examination of the West of England Joint Spatial Plan

Further to our letter of 1 August 2018 we think it opportune at this point to raise one further query with the Councils concerning the relationship between the submitted plan (the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP), a development plan document under the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act) and the forthcoming Spatial (Mayoral) Development Strategy. The latter document is referred to in Paragraph 9 of Chapter 1 of the submitted plan and it is stated that the JSP will provide a firm foundation to inform preparation of the Spatial (Mayoral) Development Strategy.

At the time of our initial preparation for the Examination in April we envisaged exploring through our Matters Issues and Questions and at the hearings the relationship between these two documents, the likely lifespan of the Joint Spatial Plan and the implications of this for the "follow-on" authority-specific Local Plans including in North Somerset. North Somerset is covered by the Joint Spatial Plan but, we understand, is not part of the West of England Combined Authority Area.

Since then, in May 2018, the duty on the Mayor to prepare and publish a Spatial Development Strategy was enacted and the Combined Authorities (Spatial Development Strategy) Regulations 2018 have subsequently come into force. Meanwhile, the timetable for the Examination of the submitted plan has been delayed by at least 7 months, with the Councils now proposing the commencement of hearings in May 2019, instead of October 2018 as originally

anticipated. We note that paragraph 5.2 of Topic Paper 2 (SD7A, of April 2018) envisages adoption of the JSP in 2018 and its first review in 2023 being linked to the requirement to prepare a Spatial Development Strategy. Clearly, the JSP will now not be adopted in 2018.

In the light of this we wonder if the Combined Authority and the Councils have given consideration to the implications of the delay to the Examination of the Joint Spatial Plan for the preparation, publication and examination of the Spatial (Mayoral) Development Strategy. In this regard it would be particularly helpful to us if you would detail:

- The current timetable for preparation, publication and examination of the Spatial (Mayoral) Development Strategy;
- The likely lifespan of the Joint Spatial Plan for Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire;
- The implications of the above for the preparation, examination and adoption of Local Plans for Bristol, Bath and North and East Somerset and South Gloucestershire;
- The implications of the above for North Somerset which would be covered by the Joint Spatial Plan but not by the Spatial (Mayoral) Development Strategy; and
- Whether or not the Councils consider there are any implications of the above for the soundness of the Joint Spatial Plan.

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Rivett and *Steven Lee*

INSPECTORS