

## **Southampton Core Strategy Examination**

### **Inspector's Opening Announcements – 7 July 2009 – 10.00 am**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

Welcome to the Examination, which is now open.

#### **CAN EVERYONE HEAR ?**

My name is Nigel Payne and I am a chartered town planner and a member of the chartered management institute. I have been appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to undertake the Southampton Core Strategy Examination and to prepare a binding report to the Council regarding the legal compliance and soundness of the document and/or any changes or further work to be undertaken before it is adopted.

It is currently anticipated that my report will be available at the end of October 2009.

As some of you will know, with me this morning is Irene Smith, the Programme Officer; she is working independently of the Council at my direction and is responsible for all the administrative arrangements for the Examination.

If you have any questions or queries about procedures or practical matters that are not addressed in the notes of the Pre Hearing Meeting or the programme, please ask Irene. She is also now responsible for the Examination Library and List of Core Documents, which participants are welcome to consult by arrangement.

The Council website is also up to date and contains copies of the relevant documents relating to the Examination, including all the further submissions made in relation to the issues that I have identified and on which discussions at the sessions over the next two weeks will be based.

You should have all seen the latest programme from the P.O. informing you of the agenda for each day but if not please ask for one or consult the website as there may have to be minor changes from time to time depending on circumstances.

Are the Press present ? If so, please identify yourselves to the P.O. to ensure that you will be sent a copy of my report in due course.

There is also a daily attendance list near the door that we need everyone to complete please for the P.O.'s records.

I have to remind everyone that there is no smoking in this room at any time and that all mobile phones or similar devices must be switched off whenever the Examination is in session, please.

If the fire alarm should sound it will not be a test and therefore we must all leave the room in an orderly fashion, without collecting papers etc, and assemble downstairs, having used the stairs and not the lift, where hotel staff will direct us as to what to do .

I have three other things to say at this point; the first is to confirm that “You are all here to help me” with my task of examining the soundness and legal compliance of the Core Strategy. This means that you may be asked to comment on matters that you have not directly referred to in your submissions but that is, partly at least, why you have been invited to take part in the discussions.

The second is that the primary purpose of the document is to set down the spatial planning policies and land use proposals against which any relevant applications will be judged; not to judge any application itself. The details of any particular schemes currently before or recently considered by the Council are not a matter for me.

The third is to make it clear that we are not going to debate the “why” or the “whether” of the new housing and employment provisions for Southampton in the South East Plan (RSS), because those have already been decided, but the “where”, “when” and “how” of their implementation in relation to the city and its environs.

I must also confirm for everyone that there are two strict rules for the conduct of the Examination; the first is that no further documents, letters, photographs, press cuttings or written submissions of any kind will be accepted during the examination, unless I specifically request them.

The second is not to interrupt one another when speaking; so if you want to make an additional contribution to the debate at any time please turn your nameplate towards me and I will bring you in as soon as possible, although I will call you to contribute anyway at certain times.

Apart from the Council who have two, you will see that each organisation has only one seat allocated at the table. However, the occupier of that seat can change at any time as long as everyone else, including me, is notified each time, which you can do by inverting the nameplate and the new occupier giving their name asap.

Could I please ask all of today’s participants around the table to briefly introduce themselves and say who they represent, starting with the Council.

Thank you.

I established at the Pre Hearing Meeting that the Council has complied with all the relevant legal formalities and so Mr Paul Nicholls for the Council is now going to make a short opening statement briefly setting out the background to the Core Strategy to set us off.

NP – 7 July 2009.