

**Eastleigh Local Plan Examination
Inspector Christa Masters MA (Hons) MRTPI**

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4 August 2020

Mr. Graham Tuck,
Planning Policy Senior Specialist,
Eastleigh Borough Council

By email only

Dear Mr Tuck

EASTLEIGH LOCAL PLAN

Office for National Statistics: 2018-Based Household Projections

As you will be aware, the Eastleigh Local Plan is subject to the transitional arrangements set out in paragraph 214 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) ('the Framework'). Under the transitional arrangements the policies in the 2012 Framework, and in previous versions of the National Planning Practice Guidance (the 'PPG'), continue to apply.

Relevant guidance in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Housing and economic needs assessment (Paragraph 016: Ref ID:2a-016-20150227) advises that:

The government's official population and household projections are generally updated every 2 years to take account of the latest demographic trends. [...]

Wherever possible, local needs assessments should be informed by the latest available information. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that Local Plans should be kept up to date. A meaningful change in the housing situation should be considered in this context, but this does not automatically mean that housing assessments are rendered outdated every time new projections are issued.

When the Eastleigh Local Plan was submitted for examination in 2018, the most recent household projections were the 2014-based projections published by the then Department for Communities and Local Government in July 2016. The 2014-based projections were taken into account in the evidence provided by the Council to support the housing requirement figures in the submitted Plan including the Objectively Assessed Needs background paper (HOU004).

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As you will be aware, the ONS recently published their 2018-based household projections (2018-2028) on 29 June 2020. On the face of it, from my understanding of these latest ONS projections, there is a reduction in the household projections for Eastleigh between the 2014-based and 2018-based projections. For the purpose of the guidance above, the 2018-based household projections by the Office for National Statistics on 29 June 2020 now need to be considered as part of the latest available information.

In order for me to determine whether or not the Plan's housing requirements are soundly based, I will need to consider whether or not the publication of the 2018-based household projections represents a *meaningful change* in the housing situation compared with the position as set out within documents HOU004, HOU020, ED61A , ED61B as well as the Council's responses to housing matters as discussed at the hearing sessions.

As a first step, I invite the Council to address this question. Please could the Council provide a statement, with evidence-based reasons, on whether or not they consider that the publication of the 2018-based household projections represents a '*meaningful change*' in the housing situation from that which existed at the time of the Plan's submission. Furthermore, if it is considered that there has been a '*meaningful change*', could the Council set out what the implications are for the housing requirement figures in the submitted Eastleigh Local Plan and those subsequently stated during the hearing sessions in the form of documents ED61A and ED61B.

Please would you provide the information requested to the Programme Officer by **4pm on Friday 21 August 2020** and publish it on the Examination website. If you require more time, please let the Programme Officer know as soon as possible. The Council should be aware that it may be necessary to seek the views of Examination participants on this question, but I will review the need to do this once I have received your response. However, I am not seeking representations from participants at this stage and any unsolicited correspondence will be returned.

Please ensure that a copy of this letter is placed on the Examination website.

Yours sincerely

Christa Masters

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INSPECTOR