Secretary of State for the Department of

Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

c/o Mr Matthew Giles, Plans Team

The Planning Inspectorate

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**Our Ref: Examination Library Document Ref SD/12**

**Your Ref:**

**Date:** 16/05/2024

Dear Mr Giles

**ASHFIELD LOCAL PLAN 2023 – 2040: SUBMISSION DOCUMENT**

In line with Ashfield District Council’s resolution at its Full Council meeting of Monday 27th November 2023, I am pleased to submit to the Secretary of State, for examination, the Ashfield Local Plan 2023 – 2040 in accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It is a fresh and responsive Plan which has actively responded to matters raised during consultation.

A file transfer has been provided to you with all supporting documents considered relevant to the production of the Local Plan including:

1. Local Plan Pre - Submission Version (Regulation 19 Publication)
2. Policies Map - North and South Maps (Regulation 19 Publication) (online only)
3. Sustainability Appraisal including Non-Technical Summary, Main Report and appendices including Site Scoring Framework
4. Statement of Consultation for the Regulation 18.
5. Statement of Consultation the Regulation 19 (Reg.22 (1) (c) (v) )
6. Duly made representations received on the Pre-Submission Version Draft Local Plan (pursuant to Regulation 20).
7. Such supporting documents which in the opinion of the local planning authority are relevant to the preparation of the Local Plan. These documents are -

* Habitat Regulations Assessment (2023)
* Equalities Impact Assessment (2023)
* Local Development Scheme (2023)
* Ashfield District Council Annual Monitoring Report (2022)
* Statements of Common Ground (9 no)
* Duty to Cooperate Statement (2024)

1. Letter to Secretary of State (notification of submission)

All of the submission documentation has been assigned a reference code as detailed in the Examination Library table accompanying this letter. The documents will be made available for public inspection as soon as practically possible, including on the Council’s examination website. We will advise the Planning Inspectorate of the weblink early next week.

The Council received a total of 438 individual representations from 122 people or organisations to the Regulation 19 consultation on the Pre-Submission version of the Local Plan Review. The main issues raised by these parties (not exhaustive) include:

* Concerns at the Plan period being 2023 – 2040 and that strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15-year period from adoption.
* Concerns regarding the release of Green Belt sites, stating that more suitable / sustainable sites are available, and for the release of more Green Belt sites to meet housing need.
* Concern that the proposed strategy only focuses on sites of less than 500 dwellings whilst there is a perceived under supply in the Local Plan and that a dispersed strategy will not deliver sufficient homes or the new and improved infrastructure.
* Concerns raised over the amount of growth in some settlements such as Stanton Hill, Skegby and Huthwaite due to existing pressures on infrastructure such as health care facilities, schools, and the impact on the local highway network.
* Concern at both strategic employment sites north and south of Junction 27 due to the potential cumulative adverse impacts on Annesley Hall Registered Park and Garden and other heritage assets.

In total, 38 parties have expressed attendance or representation at examination.

The Council has taken the opportunity to review the Regulation 19 stage representations and has prepared a Statement of Consultation and a table of proposed changes / modifications.

A summary of consultation responses was formally endorsed at Full Council on Monday 27 November 2023. The table of proposed changes/ modifications are proposed to aid discussion at examination and have not been subject to any further public consultation at this stage.

A working version of the Local Plan incorporating the Council’s requested modifications will be available on request, if the Inspector would find this helpful, but we have not included this within the examination library at this stage.

**Submission Notification**

Notification will now be sent to all those who have previously been consulted on or participated in the Local Plan during its production and have requested to be kept informed, to notify them of its submission.

**Programme Officer**

The Council has appointed Miny Schofield as Programme Officer to organise and administer the examination under the guidance of the appointed Inspector. Her public contact details are:

* Miny Schofield, Programme Officer
* [programme.officer@ashfield.gov.uk](mailto:programme.officer@ashfield.gov.uk)
* 07799 724690
* Miny Schofield, Programme Officer, Ashfield District Council, Kirkby-in-Ashfield, Nottingham, NG17 8DA

It is envisaged that the examination hearings may take around 10 days. We anticipate that the hearings could commence in September.

The proposed venue for the examination hearings is the Council Chamber at the Council’s main offices in Kirkby - in - Ashfield. This is publicly accessible, meets accessibility needs, and was previously successfully utilised for previous Local Plan examinations. We confirm that separate office facilities and on-site parking will be made available for the Inspectors sole use during the hearing sessions.

The purchase order for PINS is ADC0024655.

We look forward to working with the Planning Inspectorate to deliver a smooth and efficient examination. Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Theresa Hodgkinson

Chief Executive

cc. John Bennett, Executive Director Place