



14 March 2011

Mr A McNeill  
Principal Plans Development Officer  
South Lakeland District Council  
South Lakeland House  
Lowther Street  
Kendal LA9 4DL

Your ref: AMcN/60.12.43

Dear Mr McNeill

Land Allocations Document - Public Consultation

Thank you for your letter of 10 March and your observations on the Inspector's Report. Your letter does, however, seem to highlight a contradiction in the most fundamental aspect of the planning process.

Core Strategy CS6.1 says that "...new dwellings will be built...having regard to the needs of each location and their capacity to support additional development". As a statement of policy it can hardly be faulted, but I think you will find that there is growing realisation and concern that the policy is not being followed..

The assertion is that "...there is not sufficient housing land...to meet the housing requirement in the Council's adopted Core Strategy". That may be true, but the conclusion is driven entirely by the figure chosen for the Core Strategy: the higher that figure, the greater the apparent shortage of housing land. But none of that is generated by what the policy calls for: an assessment of the "needs of the location" and its "capacity to support additional development".

(continues)

Your e-mail to me dated 20 October 2009 says (my underlining): "...the dwelling target figure for Grange is an indicative target only, and the apportionment of the overall key service centres target between the three towns (Grange, Milnthorpe and Kirby Lonsdale) is likely to vary. It is also worth noting the indicative target in part reflects the relative sizes of the towns." Forgive me, but I have difficulty in reconciling the policy statement referring to "the needs of each location" with a "target" which is "likely to vary". How was the "target" decided on, if it is not the same as "local need"? And "relative size" is surely a consequence of historical development, and certainly not an indicator of "present need".

I must hope that your present Consultation Process will include not only a consideration of the views of the local people, but also a thorough review of how your policy statements are being executed.

Yours sincerely

  
J B Andrew

PS: I would ask you to publish this letter on your web-site, which I understand is your usual practice under the Consultation Process.

Copy: Cllr P Thornton, Portfolio Holder - Housing and Development