

Your Reference:
Our Reference: 16/11/Localplan
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Melvyn Middleton Inspector

C/o Tony Blackburn
15 Ottawa Close
Blackburn
BB2 7EB

Dear Mr Middleton,

EDEN LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION - final position statement: Barton Wilmore and HBF

Following receipt of the OAN position statements on 18 November 2016, our consultants PFK undertook a review of the submissions following their appointment on the 21 November 2016, which was received on 25 November 2016.

In respect of the most recent OAN information, the Council considers that it represents a robust and realistic representation of population change over the lifetime of the Plan.

Whilst opinions expressed by the HBF and Barton Wilmore consider that the figure is suppressed, both welcome the fact the Council has uplifted its figure. However, a line does have to be drawn under this matter as soon as possible, to enable the Local Plan to progress towards adoption. The Council contends that the 216 figure is appropriate. It represents a figure which is positively prepared, can be suitably evidenced and is based on an amended methodology as advised by the inspector.

The figure of 216 is above the demographic OAHN of both the Council and Barton Wilmore, it is also above these migration OAHN+ market signals uplift indicated by Barton Wilmore. This follows the inspector's own guidance confirming that 2014 data should be used, with the consequence that there are indicated reductions in housing demand from the figures the Council originally set, which is both realistic and evidenced in addressing the development need for Penrith. Had the Inspector thought there was a fundamental problem with the methodology used by the council this should have been directly addressed at a much earlier stage of the Local Plan Inquiry.

It is the case that the number is not a ceiling, but one which is used as a realistic target for delivery, which can be exceeded if there is a realised need by the housebuilders to respond to demand. Accordingly, agreeing to a figure of 216 need not further delay progress on the delivery of the local plan as it represents a positive response to the advice of the inspector and provides clarity for development in Eden. In moving forward, the local plan has provided for full consultation with the public and housebuilders, agents, land owners etc who have been fully engaged and participated at every stage and is a plan

which can robustly accommodate the views of the inspector in final amendments and modifications.

The Council is currently working towards a tight timetable with the major modifications consultation procedure in the middle of January. Therefore, as the main interested parties have clearly set out their positions, the Council does not wish to provide any further information with regard to this issue and will look forward to the Inspector's early response.

Yours faithfully

Kevin Hutchinson
Principal Planning Officer (Policy)