

8 June 2020

Inspectors' Response to Southwark Law Centre

Dear Southwark Law Centre,

We have noted the contents of your letter dated 29 May and direct you to our letter of 2 June 2020 to the Council which confirms that additional consultation will be organised prior to any hearings taking place. The nature and scope of the consultation, because the plan is now in examination, will be agreed with the Inspectors. As your letter alludes to, the Government has amended the Planning Practice Guidance on 'Plan-Making' in relation to the preparation and revision of the Statement of Community Involvement to reflect the current circumstances and this has been brought to the Council's attention. We will look carefully with the Council on the timing of the consultation together with a need to ensure that the examination proceeds expediently. We have made clear in our letter that the consultation must take place before hearings are held so that anyone with soundness concerns on the amended policy content can be heard if they wish to see particular changes made to the Plan in order to make it sound. In frontloading the examination in this way we consider our initial concerns on regulatory compliance can be addressed.

We note that Southwark Law Centre has requested additional time to consider our letter to the Council of 20 April 2020. We were not inviting wider comment on that letter as its contents were to the Council to reflect on and for the Council to respond to. If the Southwark Plan examination proceeds as envisaged, there will be an opportunity to comment prior to the hearings. Should further changes emerge as a consequence of the hearings there will then be a further opportunity to comment on those changes as well. Southwark Law Centre as a consultee on the Plan will be consulted at these appropriate times and we will take into account all the responses received.

Yours faithfully

David Spencer & Philip Mileham
Inspectors.