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Your ref:

25 February 2008

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Dear Sara

Re: Richmond Core Strategy

As requested, I have had a look at the Planning Committee Report entitled 'Local Development Framework – Core Strategy' to see if Baker Shepherd Gillespie's assessment¹ remains valid given the amendments that have been made since the publication of the Preferred Options report. I have concluded that the assessment still remains valid, but I attach caveats to this position as described below.

In paragraph 3.6 of the Planning Committee Report it is stated that "*The main changes are to clarify that the Council will aim 'to exceed the minimum strategic dwelling requirement' and to strengthen CP7 (maintaining and improving local environment). Officers consider that the target can be exceeded without an adverse impact on local character or open space. GOL were concerned that the spatial strategy didn't identify the overall quantity and relative distribution across the borough of different types of development, including housing*".

It is noted that the inference in the above statement is that dwelling targets will be exceeded but it is unclear by how much and where within the Borough this will take place. It should therefore be noted that the assessment presented in the BSG report is based on the housing targets highlighted in Section 3.1 of that report.

The BSG report (August 2007) also concludes that policy CP11 River Thames Corridor is important as the provision of improved recreational access adjacent to the River Thames will help to off-set some of the increased visitor pressure to Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common that might arise as the local population increases. Consequently the implementation of this policy is considered to be closely linked to the provision of new housing within the Borough.

¹ Baker Shepherd Gillespie (August 2007). Assessment of likely significant effect carried out under Regulation 48(1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994. London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Core Strategy – Preferred Options Report.

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Yours sincerely

Steven Betts CEnv MIEEM
Partner