

Gladman Hearing Statement
Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP)
Examination

**Matter 1: Legal Compliance, Duty to Cooperate,
Sustainability Appraisal and Consultation**



March 2019

MATTER 1: LEGAL COMPLIANCE, DUTY TO COOPERATE, SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL AND CONSULTATION

Issue 1: Whether all Statutory and Regulatory requirements have been met?

1.1 In preparing the Plan, has the Council complied with the Duty to Cooperate required in Section 33a of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

- 1.1.1 The WCS was submitted for examination in July 2012 and adopted in January 2015. It is now at a stage that it has just seven years left to run. The WCS makes reference to a planned early review of the WCS, which is a position that was reflected within the Inspector's Report and clearly influenced the conclusions that were reached. The Local Plan Review was predicated on the finalisation of the Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which was subsequently completed and published in early 2017. Despite this, the Local Plan Review has yet to reach an advanced stage and it remains of paramount importance for this to be progressed in a swift manner. In terms of the Duty to Cooperate, the Local Plan Review is critical in ensuring that the development needs of Swindon and Wiltshire can be met in full over the plan period and that cross boundary issues are appropriately addressed.
- 1.1.2 Given that the Local Plan Review has yet to be concluded, it is a matter that is relevant to the WHSAP and therefore needs to be considered through the Duty to Cooperate.
- 1.1.3 Since the adoption of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, it has become a common feature of local plans to include a clear policy mechanism that provide meaningful milestones for the progression of a Local Plan Review, particularly where the soundness of a local plan has been predicated on such a commitment to address housing need and wider than local issues associated with potential unmet needs. Indeed, the slow progress that has been made on the Wiltshire Local Plan Review has been cited by representors as a reason why such mechanisms are required to be written into policy wording within local plans elsewhere. There is scope for a clear review policy to be inserted into the WHSAP to ensure that wider than local issues are urgently addressed through the plan making process.