

Status of the Policies Map

Local planning authorities are required to have an “adopted policies map” which shows the geographic application of the policies in the adopted development plan. Each time the authority submits a new local plan for examination, it should provide a map showing how the adopted policies map would be changed when the new plan is adopted. This is referred to as the “submission policies map”.

Under *The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012*, the “adopted policies map” is identified separately from “local plans” (also referred to as “development plan documents” (DPDs)). This distinction occurs in Regulations 2(1), 5(1) and 6. Section 20(5) of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* makes provision for the independent examination of DPDs. Consequently, only DPDs/local plans can be examined.

Because the policies map is not a DPD, it is not appropriate for Inspectors to recommend Main Modifications to it. Instead, where a policy has a geographic application which is illustrated on the policies map, this should be made clear in the policy. If the policy (or its geographic application) results in a change to the policies map, any necessary Main Modifications should be made to the policy. The link within the policy to the policies map will ensure that the geographic illustration of the change is addressed.

Implications for Sefton Local Plan

Firstly, every SLP policy which relates to a geographic illustration on the policies map should explicitly state this in the body of the policy. Many policies already do this - “as shown on the Policy Map” is frequently used. However, this wording (or something similar) should be added by the Council to all relevant policies (and to avoid confusion, the correct term “Policies Map” should be used).

Secondly, in the forthcoming consultation on modifications, any necessary changes to the policies map should not be advertised or referred to by the Council as Main Modifications, but should be published for consultation alongside the Main Modifications.

Thirdly, all participants should be aware that in my report on the examination I will not refer to Main Modifications to the policies map, but only to Main Modifications to the relevant policy. And unless some further change is required to the policies map as a result of the responses to the forthcoming consultation, it will not be necessary to include in my report an Appendix of changes to the policies map.

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Inspector

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