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Ms K Duffield
Programme Officer
South Hams District Council
Follaton House
Plymouth Road
Totnes
Devon TQ9 5NE

22 May 2008
312004 261

Dear Karen

AFFORDABLE HOUSING DPD EXAMINATION

Please find enclosed our Examination Statement in respect of the above, together with a further copy of our response to the Affordable Housing DPD Submission Version dated January 08 and Affordable Housing SPD dated January 2008 on behalf of

The Dartington Hall Trust

Mr M Sterland

Mr G Patch

Mrs C M Seager-Berry

Hopwood and Swallow

Would you kindly acknowledge receipt in due course.

Yours sincerely

HOPWOOD SWALLOW LLP
CHARTERED ARCHITECTS AND CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS

Enc As referred to above

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SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL AFFORDABLE HOUSING DPD EXAMINATION
continued

DAY 2 18 JUNE 2008

AM - SESSION 2

UNALLOCATED/WINDFALL SITES

ISSUE 1.0

We have been unable to identify relevant evidence which demonstrates that a no threshold approach would be viable. The Inspector should be aware that previously, South Hams District Council produced an earlier Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing which they adopted for development control purposes. This SPG was applied rigorously and treated more like formal Policy rather than guidance and required developers to contribute towards the delivery of affordable housing at a threshold base of one or more dwellings.

As a result, the Inspector at the Independent Examination of the Core Strategy confirmed that there was clear evidence from the Examination participants that there has been a reduced level of new housing completions in the district since the Council introduced their SPG. In addition, the low threshold and high targets therein were acting as a material deterrent to the emergence of suitable new housing sites in the district. We are therefore equally concerned that with the commuted sums proposed and the zero threshold proposed, constraint on much needed appropriate housing development in the district will be repeated.

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SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL AFFORDABLE HOUSING DPD EXAMINATION
continued

ISSUE 2.0

Other than a statement by the Council that any commuted sum will be used to deliver affordable housing in a timely manner, there appears to be no other evidence to confirm time-scale of expenditure, deliverability of affordable housing or indeed the availability of appropriate land for housing and affordable housing development.

ISSUE 3.0

Given that the District Council's evidence base in terms of housing need is to be consistent across the District, then there appears to be little risk that commuted sums would not be used in the areas of greatest need. However, Circular 5 of 05, Planning Obligations, is quite specific about the use of Planning Obligations for development and we would refer you to our comments in our representation to the Submission DPD dated 07 March 2008. We question the justification of a commuted sum being used in a location not directly related to where the obligation has originally been placed.

ISSUE 4.0

We agree that the paragraph is slightly contradictory and could be reworded in order to clarify the Council's intent.

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