



# The Planning Inspectorate

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Nick Boles MP  
Planning and Development Minister  
Department for Communities and  
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Eland House  
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Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Date:

06 March 2014

*Dear Nick,*

## Inspectors' Reports on Local Plans

I refer to the Inspector's report on the Reigate and Banstead Local Plan and your letter dated 3 March 2014.

PINS has taken steps to reduce the risk of misleading coverage in the media about Inspectors' reports and to ensure that reports and other relevant documents are carefully worded. I have asked Inspectors to ensure that the Executive Summary of the report is clear about the origin of any modification to the plan that may alter the extent of the Green Belt. Reports will make clear that, as in the case of Reigate and Banstead Core Strategy, where modifications providing for adjustments to the Green Belt boundary are recommended, it is the Council itself that has chosen this path. Helen Adlard has put in place a 'sense checking' process so that any Inspector documents that refer to Green Belt alterations are expressed in an appropriate and sensitive way. This will reflect the importance that Government attaches to Green Belts and the National Planning Policy Framework's expectation that alterations to the Green Belt boundary will be made only in exceptional circumstances by local planning authorities through the preparation or review of their local plans.

All Inspectors have had a copy of your letter and a message re-iterating the above.

I understand that the *wording* of the Reigate and Banstead report, and not its approach to and reasoning on Green Belt considerations, is at the heart of your concerns. However, after reading your letter Inspectors now seek confirmation that in local plan examinations they should continue to question local planning authorities to determine the extent to which they have followed guidance in paragraphs 14 and 83-85 of the Framework when seeking to meet the needs of their area including objectively assessed housing needs in accordance with paragraph 47 of the Framework.

*Yours sincerely  
Mike.*

Sir Michael Pitt  
Chief Executive