



Sheffield Plan Examination

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Note to the Council on early review policies

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1. Further to our Post Main Modifications Note (5 June 2026) (EXAM 217), we are writing to you on an additional matter. It concerns the two 'early review' policies which appear in the published Main Modifications Schedule, in relation to Gypsies and Travellers and logistics land. The proposed modifications are set out below:

MM133 – After paragraph 4.30 insert new paragraph: '*4.31. The Sheffield Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2019) is dated and likely to represent an underestimate of need (which is set out in Policy SP1 and the supporting text for Policy H1). The Council will undertake an early review of this element of the Plan.*'

MM8 – Amend paragraph 3.11 to read: '*....The need for large scale logistics land should be revisited through an early review of the Sheffield Plan. This will enable opportunities for carrying out further assessment of the supply and requirements for large scale logistics over a wider area in the sub-region.*'

2. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (the Act) and associated Regulations 2026 have created a new local plans system for England, with legacy plans under the current system required to be submitted by 31 December 2026. We assume that, in practical terms, it will not be possible for Sheffield Council to undertake an early partial update on these matters and submit the policies for examination in the current/legacy system by 31 December 2026. Therefore, the proposed early review policies in the Main Modifications Schedule introduce a commitment for the local authority to produce partial new Local Plan content in the new planning system.

3. However, section 15C(2) of the Act states that 'only one local plan may have effect in relation to a local planning authority's area at any one time.' Section 15D(1) also refers to the submission of a singular plan. Taken together, the legislation provides for the submission of one plan for each local planning authority area which is to be the subject of independent examination by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. Consequently, there is no clear legal route for local planning authorities to submit an early partial update policy for examination or for an Inspector to examine such a document.
4. Therefore, we are no longer able to recommend the wording of the two proposed main modifications relating to early review of these specific issues.
5. In relation to Gypsy and Travellers, it is our view that the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) is out of date and should be revisited as soon as possible. One option could be to amend the main modification wording to specify completion of the GTAA update by a specific date, and to require the Council to subsequently:
 - assess whether there has been a significant change in local circumstances; and
 - if so, commence the production of a new local plan.
6. A similar wording approach could potentially be taken for logistics. However, as the assessment of logistics would take place across a wider area, the wording may need to be more flexible with regards to timescales and delivery. Is this assessment likely to be picked up in the forthcoming South Yorkshire Spatial Development Strategy?
7. It would be appreciated if you could respond to this note as soon as possible. This note should be published alongside our previous note relating to the main modifications (EXAM 217).

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INSPECTORS