Planning Policy,
Richmondshire District Council,
Swale House,
Frenchgate,
Richmond
North Yorkshire
DL10 4JE

Our Ref: HD/P5339/03

Your Ref: LDF/CS/AAP

Date: 11 September 2012

Dear Sirs,

Richmondshire Local Plan – Core Strategy: Proposed Submission: Sustainability Appraisal

Thank you for consulting English Heritage about the above document.

Based upon the limited information available in this Sustainability Appraisal (it would, for example, have been useful if the assessments of each of the polices explained precisely how the conclusions in respect of each Sustainability Appraisal Objective were reached) we would broadly agree with the overall assessments regarding the likely effects which the chosen Options and the suggested policies would be likely to have upon the historic environment.

This opinion is based on the information provided by you in the Report dated June 2012. To avoid any doubt, this does not affect our obligation to provide further advice and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the Plan) where we consider that, despite the Sustainability Appraisal, these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

If you have any queries about any of the matters raised above or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Smith
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Planning Policy,
Richmondshire District Council,
Swale House,
Frenchgate,
Richmond
North Yorkshire
DL10 4JE

Our Ref: HD/P5339/02

Your Ref: JH/CS/12282/QU/SC

Date: 11 September 2012

Dear Sirs,

Richmondshire Local Plan – Core Strategy: Proposed Submission

Thank you for consulting English Heritage about the above document. We have the following comments to make regarding its contents:-

Page	Section	Sound/ Unsound	Comments	Suggested Change
10	Paragraph 2.26	Sound	We would broadly agree that the challenges identified in this Section are the key ones for the Local Plan to address. Given the high environmental quality of the District, we would particularly endorse the identification of the need to conserve and enhance the area's considerable environmental assets (Criterion i) as one of the key issues which the plan needs to resolve (particularly given the need to reconcile the growth of areas such as Catterick with the protection of these assets).	-
11	Paragraph 3.1.2 - Vision	Sound	We support the proposed Vision, especially the intention that the area's strong cultural identity, with its rich variety of environmental and historic assets will have been sustained and enhanced and that Richmondshire retains its character and sense of place. These reflect priorities set out in the SCS.	-

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11	Paragraph 3.1.2 - Vision	Textual amendment	Taken at face value, the phrase *"Richmond has built on its heritage"* does not sound to be particularly sustainable. It might be preferable to rephrase it.	Vision, second Paragraph line 5 amend to read:- *"Richmond has realised the potential offered by its heritage and increased .. etc"*
12	Paragraph 3.1.4 - Strategic Objective (d)	Sound	Given the landscape setting of the town and its historic assets, we would endorse the conclusions about the limited capacity for growth around Richmond. The development of what is, in effect, a twin-centre Principal Town in Richmondshire would appear to be a pragmatic approach to the constraints which Richmond faces. Whilst the town can provide many of the functions and services of a Principal Town to the surrounding community, the majority of the future housing and employment needs will almost certainly have to be met in the Catterick Garrison area if the environmental assets of the area are to be safeguarded.	-
12	Paragraph 3.1.4 - Strategic Objective (e)	Sound	We support those aspects of this Strategic Objective which relate to the safeguarding of Richmondshire's environmental values and characteristics (Criterion i), and promoting its rural cultural identity (Criterion iv).	-
12	Paragraph 3.1.4 - Strategic Objective (f)	Sound	We support that part of this Strategic Objective which relates to priority being given to the protection and conservation of the plan area's historic assets	
22	Spatial Principle SP3	Sound	We support the principle that, as part of rural sustainability, priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the area's environmental assets and	-

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			character. This is reflects the approach to sustainable development which is set out in the NPPF. The policy will also assist in delivering those aspects of the Vision relating to the conservation and enhancement of Richmondshire's environmental assets and the reinforcement of local distinctiveness.	
24	Spatial Principle SP4	Sound	We broadly endorse the approach proposed for the distribution of housing across the plan area. Given the limited capacity within Richmond for either significant housing or employment development (because of its considerable environmental assets and the landscape setting of the settlement), we support the strategy to constrain the amount of future growth within the town and, instead, direct the majority of future development within the central area to those settlements with the most capacity to accommodate additional development.	-
38	Policy CRSS	Sound	We support the spatial strategy for Central Richmondshire. The development of what is, in effect, a twin-centre Principal Town in Richmondshire would appear to be a pragmatic approach to balancing the assessed development needs of the District with the environmental constraints faced by Richmond. Whilst the town can provide many of the functions and services of a Principal Town to the surrounding community, the majority of the future housing and employment needs will almost certainly have to be met in the Catterick Garrison area if the environmental assets of the area are to be safeguarded.	-

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			• We would endorse the strategy which is set out for Richmond town centre, especially the need to maintain its vitality and viability, to protect and enhance its high quality physical environment and key views of the town and its setting. • We support the requirements that new housing development should protect and enhance the heritage of the town, its landscape setting, key views and its other environmental assets • We endorse the requirement that employment development at Gallowfields Trading Estate protects the setting of the town and its environmental assets. • In terms of the Primary Service Villages, we welcome the inclusion of reference to the need for development in connection with Catterick Racecourse to safeguard the important archaeological remains in that part of the Plan area.	
46	Policy LWSS	Sound	We broadly support the thrust of the strategy for this part of the District. In particular:- • We support the intention to maintain Leyburn's vitality and viability through environmental improvements • We endorse the recognition that the potential for further development around Middleham may be limited due to environmental constraints.	-
53	Core Policy CP1, Criterion	Sound	We support the acknowledgement that, in the case of some heritage assets, it may not be possible to make carbon-savings without compromising	-

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	2.c. and Paragraph 4.1.11		their significance. The approach will assist in ensuring that carbon-saving developments safeguard those elements which contribute towards the distinct identity of Richmondshire and thereby assist in the delivery of Strategic Objective f	
59	Core Policy CP2	Sound	We support this policy and, in particular, the protection given throughout to the District's environmental assets. We especially welcome the encouragement of sustainable development which promotes:- • The character and quality of local landscapes • The distinctiveness, character, townscape and setting of Richmondshire's settlements • The historic and cultural features of acknowledged importance We also support the presumption in favour of the reuse of existing buildings unless it can be shown that this would be unsustainable or impracticable. These measures will assist in ensuring that new development safeguards those elements which contribute towards the distinct identity of Richmondshire and will assist in the delivery of Strategic Objective f.	-
63	Core Policy CP4, Criterion 3	Sound	We welcome the inclusion of this Criterion especially the requirement that development should not impact adversely upon the character of the settlement or its setting, open spaces and views, or designated and non-designated heritage assets (Criterion 3.a) and that development should not result in the loss of important areas of	

Page	Section	Sound/ Unsound	Comments	Suggested Change
			open space (Criterion 3.c). These will assist in ensuring that new development safeguards those elements which contribute towards the distinct identity of Richmondshire and assist in the delivery of Strategic Objective f	
72	Core Policy CP8, Criterion 2.b	Sound	We welcome the support for development which is necessary to secure the conservation of a historic asset.	-
74	Core Policy CP9, Criterion 2	Sound	We support this Criterion particularly the requirement for developments to respect the character of the settlement and its architectural and historic interest. These will assist in ensuring that new development safeguards those elements which contribute towards the distinct identity of Richmondshire and assist in the delivery of Strategic Objective f	-
78	Core Policy CP10	Sound	We support this policy, especially the requirement for proposals to safeguard, and where possible, enhance the environment and landscape of the area.	
81	Paragraph 4.12.4	Factual correction	The requirements of the NPPF in terms of plan-making and the historic environment are rather more onerous than is stated here.	Amend the first line of Paragraph 4.12.4 to read:- *"The NPPF requires the Council to set out within its plan, a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment …"*

Page	Section	Sound/ Unsound	Comments	Suggested Change
82	Paragraph 4.12.5	Support	We welcome the intention to produce a Heritage Strategy which will set out the priorities for the management of the historic environment and endorse the elements set out in this Paragraph which such a Strategy might cover. This, together with the policies of the Local Plan will assist in the delivery of the Plan's Vision insofar as it relates to the conservation of the area's historic assets and the delivery of Strategic Objective f.	-
82	Core Policy CP12 Criterion 2.b	Unsound	The landscapes of the plan area are as much a result of the historic environment as they are the natural environment. This Criterion should be amended to reflect this fact.	Core Policy CP12 Criterion 2.b. amend to read:- *".. to secure a sustainable future for the natural and historic environment".*
82	Core Policy CP12 General	Unsound	In order to comply with the requirements of the NPPF, there is a need for the plan to include a strategic Policy for the conservation of the historic environment of the area [NPPF, Paragraph 156]. There is also a requirement for the plan to guide how the presumption in favour of sustainable Development will be applied locally [Paragraph 15]. However, whilst we broadly support the sentiments of Policy CS12, insofar as they relate to the historic environment, overall the Policy is confusing and does not clearly set out how the NPPF requirements will be applied at the local level. We have set out, below, the areas of the Policy which we consider need to	

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			be amended to address this deficiency.	
82	Core Policy CP12 Criterion 1	Unsound	In what is, in effect, a general introductory Criterion about the approach to the conservation of the plan's environmental assets, the second sentence relating to initiatives to improve the natural environment, appears somewhat out of place. It would be far more logical to relocate it within Criterion c.	Core Policy CP12 Criterion 1 delete the second sentence beginning *"Particular support will be given.."* and relocate at the end of Criterion c of the policy.
82	Core Policy CP12 Criterion 2.e.	Unsound	The intentions of this Criterion are confusing. Conservation is defined in the NPPF as "*The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance".* If a development is going to result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, it cannot be conserving it. Where a proposal will harm the significance of a heritage asset and that development is considered to be in the public interest [as per Paragraph 133 or 134 of the NPPF], then an approach which sought to offset this harm, to some extent, by ensuring that other aspects of the significance of that particular asset were appropriately enhanced, or their significance better revealed, might be an appropriate option. However, this is not clearly articulated within this Criterion.	Core Policy CP12 Criterion 2.e. amend to read:- *"Where a proposal is likely to result in harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, in appropriate circumstances, opportunities will be sought to offset this harm by ensuring that other elements which contribute to the significance of that particular asset are enhanced, or their significance better revealed"*
82	Core Policy CP12 Criterion 3	Unsound	(a) Criterion 3 states that *"particular attention"* will be given to the conservation of certain heritage assets. However, the list of assets which it identifies as warranting *"particular attention"* includes all nationally-designated heritage assets (including Registered Battlefields - of which	Delete Core Policy CP12 Criterion 3 and replace with:- *"The historic assets which contribute to the Richmondshire's distinctive character*

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			there are none in Richmondshire), all locally-designated assets and, in addition, all undesignated assets. Whilst it may be a laudable aim to conserve everything that is historic, it is hardly a practicable proposition and does not particularly assist those making decisions about the priorities which should be given to the conservation of the assets of the plan area. Richmondshire has a distinctive historic environment (as detailed in Paragraph 4.12.16) elements of which are unique to this part of the country. This needs to be better reflected within this Criterion. (b)The final sentence of this Criterion merely virtually repeats Criterion 1 of the Policy and could be deleted without weakening the Policy.	*and sense of place will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced especially:-* • *The later prehistoric and Roman heritage of the District such as Stanwick* • *The Roman forts and civilian settlements along the line of Dere Street* • *Its medieval heritage including the network of impressive fortifications, such as Middleham and Richmond Castles, monastic houses such as Jervaulx Abbey and abandoned settlements and field-systems, including Walburn Hall, west of Catterick;* • *The buildings and structures associated with its country estates* • *The character of its market towns including*

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				their grain, plot layouts, passageways and historic shopfronts".
82	Core Policy CP12 Criterion 4	Unsound	(a) The NPPF makes it clear that the positive strategy for the conservation of the heritage assets of the plan area should also include heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This aspect is not really addressed in this Policy but could be included within this Criterion (b) There may be some debate about what constitutes the "sympathetic retention" of a feature. Consequently it would be preferable if the last sentence of this Criterion was amended to more closely reflect the terminology of the NPPF	(a) Amend the beginning of Core Policy CP12 Criterion 4 to read:- *"Consideration of development proposals will also need to take into account the objective of securing the long-term existence of the heritage asset. This is particularly the case for those assets which have been identified as being at risk. Enabling Development may be considered acceptable … etc"* (b) Amend the final sentence of Core Policy CP12 Criterion 4 to read:- " *…is the only practical means of securing the future conservation of a heritage asset"*

Page	Section	Sound/ Unsound	Comments	Suggested Change
87	Core Policy CP13	Sound	We support this policy especially Criterion b requiring development proposals to respect and enhance their local context and its special qualities. This will assist in the delivery of that part of the Vision relating to retaining the area's character and sense of place and its strong rural identity.	-

If you have any queries about any of the matters raised above or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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