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Date: 25 January 2008



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Dear Mrs Hart

**Response to Councils Proposed Modification to Policy EC10**

I write in response to a paper prepared by the District Council following the hearing session on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January concerning proposed minor modifications to Policy EC10 and the accompanying text, as currently set down in the submitted Core Strategy document. I have now consulted my clients on these proposals and can make the following comments on their behalf. I would be grateful if you could bring them to the attention of the Inspector.

1. We are pleased to see that the Council recognises that the existing policy as drafted in the submitted Core Strategy may not be appropriate for caravan and holiday parks. We are however still very concerned that the proposed modifications would not resolve all of our concerns and could still create very real problems for holiday park operators for the reasons explained at the Inquiry. It is our belief that the modifications would not meet the tests of soundness in that they would be contrary to national planning policy and are not supported by convincing evidence to justify such a departure. We are also concerned that they were originally drafted without sufficient consultation with the holiday parks and caravan industry such that its views have not been adequately taken into account in the formulation of the policy.
2. We believe the starting point for the holiday occupancy condition should be the Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism, which explains how such conditions should work and provides an example of a condition to control the use of holiday caravan and other holiday park accommodation. Paragraph 3 of Annex B of this document reiterates Government advice that such conditions should be 'reasonable and fair' and that they should be readily enforceable by the Local Planning Authority. The example given in the good practice guide makes no reference to time limits but includes a practicable and workable series of criteria to ensure they will adequately control holiday occupancy on holiday caravan and holiday parks generally. It is to be noted that this policy was derived following consultation with stakeholders including the British Holiday and Home Parks Association (BH & HPA).
3. The Council's suggested modification still insists on retaining a time limit on occupancy, which was explained at the Inquiry with supporting evidence from BH & HPA would be totally inappropriate to holiday and caravan parks. The use of the Valuation Office definition of self catering accommodation to justify this was demonstrated by the submission to the Inquiry from the BH & HPA to be inappropriate to holiday parks. The fact that it will only refer to new accommodation is in our opinion irrelevant to the argument as that is what the case against the policy is all about. Also new accommodation on extensions to existing parks would still be subject to the policy. It is also debateable that the policy would be consistent with that applied in the Broads Authority. Holiday accommodation in the Broads is subject to Policy TR 12 of the



Broads Local Plan, which is a saved policy, and does not contain time limits for the occupancy period. If time limits are imposed under this policy, they are presumably the result of an assessment of the material considerations pertaining to a particular planning application.

4. It is our opinion that the options for resolving our concerns are to either delete bullet point 2 of EC 10 in accordance with the Good Practice advice as suggested in our representation, or specify that this bullet point would not apply to holiday park accommodation. The use of explanatory text or footnotes as suggested by the Council is not considered acceptable as they would not be clear and would still retain a negative presumption towards holiday park accommodation. Alternatively, it could be made clear that EC10 does not apply to holiday and caravan parks and a new criteria containing a non-time limited holiday occupancy condition as suggested in Annex B of the Good Practice Guide for holiday caravan and holiday park accommodation be specifically included in policy EC 11.

Finally, our clients want to make it clear that we do not wish to challenge the need for holiday occupancy conditions in the Core Strategy and support their inclusion in an appropriate policy. We believe that our suggestion would enable the Council to achieve its aims in this respect in a reasonable and enforceable manner. We do not accept that the additional amendment proposed by Nigel Morgan of the Edwin Watson Partnership would achieve this aim.

Yours sincerely



**Glyn Davies**  
Partner

Copy Mrs P Wake – North Norfolk District Council  
Messrs P & M Timewell – Blue Sky Leisure