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Our Ref: Planning Conformity\Richmondshire\Local Development Frameworks\Final Responses\Pre-Cons Discussion Paper

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Dear David,

Richmond and Catterick Garrison Area Action Plan: Pre-Consultation Discussion Paper

The Yorkshire and Humber Assembly welcomes the opportunity to comment on the above discussion paper.

The Assembly's response is a set of informal officer comments. The Assembly will continue to provide a view, where appropriate, as the development of the AAP progresses and when the AAP is submitted to the Secretary of State a formal Assembly view on its general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) will need to be given.

Given the nature of the Discussion Paper I have limited my comments to the overall messages emerging from the document and some thoughts about how this work might feed into the next stage of developing the AAP.

To that end, I found the discussion paper to be a good starting point. It is useful in setting out the headline issues to be explored in the AAP and summarising those partners that may influence policy development. However, there are a number of points where further elaboration may prove useful.

Economic Issues

- Town Centres – suggest that an explicit objective be included under this heading along the lines of "improving their vitality and viability / reinforcing

their roles & focus". This is especially pertinent given the dual Principal Service Centre nature of Catterick/Richmond and their potential to serve quite different roles.

Social Issues

- Accessibility – suggest adding "ensuring & increasing accessibility by a range of modes" as an objective
- Housing – suggest adding "providing a mix to respond to needs / greater tenure choice" as an objective. This is especially important with regard to balancing the age structure of the Garrison.
- Homelessness – suggest adding "reducing homelessness" as an objective

Environmental Issues

- Safeguarding the area's natural assets – suggest elaborating on the key strategic priorities/assets which the AAP needs to address
- Safeguarding the area's historic assets – suggest elaborating on the key strategic priorities/assets which the AAP needs to address

I note that no reference is given to SEA at this stage, and suggest that you begin considering how it will input into AAP preparation at the earliest opportunity, not least, so as to make the evidence gathering stage robust.

I would also suggest that the issue of "Location of Development" is addressed at the Issues and Options stage. To fit with the format of this discussion paper, such an issue should have an objective along the lines of "Maximising the re-use of previously developed land and buildings / identifying opportunity sites for development" and would accord with the core approach of the RSS as set out in Draft RSS Policy YH8. I recognise that this will be a particular challenge for the AAP to tackle given the continued uncertainty around anticipated levels of development, but suggest that growth scenarios set out in the Core Strategy Issues and Options Discussion Paper (April 2007) may provide a useful starting context.

Finally, the Issues and Options stage of the AAP should address emerging issues from the Core Strategy preparation. For example, it will be important to address how the area identified in the AAP, where the highest levels of development in association with the Super-Garrison status will be directed, links to outlying areas, both within and outside of Richmondshire District Council.

The Assembly will happily input into future stages in the preparation of this AAP as required.

Yours sincerely

Mat - Elliot

Martin Elliot