

WDC Matter 13 Submission - Policy NE5 – Note to the Inspector following matter 13 hearing session.

As a point of clarification the Inspector should be made aware that as well as the changes to Policy NE5 that were set out in Document LP21 (regarding criterion c and f) and included in the Submission Draft Plan there are additional changes that were proposed in the WDC's January 2016 Council Report relating to criterion d (see below).

d) ~~avoid or~~ minimise loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land ~~unless the~~ benefits of the proposal outweigh the need to protect the land for agricultural purposes.

Amendment to the explanation was also proposed as follows (para 5.198):

*.....'This need is increasing due to the anticipated reduction in the ability of countries continuing to export food to the UK due to increased flooding, erosion or drought. A number of housing allocations have been identified on agricultural land, with the result that the remaining resource is considered to be of increasing importance or vulnerability. Development **(excluding allocations made in this Plan)** affecting the **District's residual** best and most versatile agricultural land will not be permitted unless ~~there is an~~ overriding demonstrable need for the development and it can be shown that development of lower grade land would have overriding adverse sustainability impacts, such as on biodiversity, natural resources, landscape character **or** conservation of heritage assets ~~in an~~ unsuitable location.*

Additional wording to the further amendments (**text in bold**) has been added for the consideration of the Inspector as a consequence of the matter 13 hearing session. This is to clarify that criterion (d) will apply to all development proposals going forward (excluding allocations made in the Local Plan).