

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE WESTGATE-ON-SEA**

**NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022-2040**

EXAMINER: DEREK STEBBING BA (Hons) DipEP MRTPI

Gill Gray  
Clerk to Westgate-on-Sea Town Council

Jo Wadey  
Thanet District Council

Examination Ref: 02/DAS/WOSNP

22 March 2023

Dear Ms Gray and Ms Wadey

**WESTGATE-ON-SEA NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN EXAMINATION**

I am writing to place on record an important procedural point in relation to the transparency of the examination process.

In the Town Council's response (dated 31 January/received 13 February 2023) to my procedural letter and questions (3 January 2023), paragraph 1.30 makes reference to providing the Examiner with confidential correspondence between the Town Council and the landowner in relation to Westgate Countryside Triangle Question 8 – Policy WSNP13. In the event, the relevant confidential correspondence was not included with the Town Council's response, however, it was subsequently forwarded separately to the IPe office team on 7 March 2023.

It is not permissible in the interests of an open and transparent examination to have confidential information submitted to an examiner. Accordingly, on my instruction, the office team sought clarification from the Clerk to the Town Council as to whether permission could be secured to place the relevant correspondence on the respective Council websites.

The Clerk has advised that permission cannot be secured, therefore I have not accepted these confidential submissions (and hence, not read them). The Clerk has subsequently confirmed that the relevant correspondence has been withdrawn.

In order to ensure that those with an interest in the examination are clear on this procedural point, may I prevail upon you to ensure that a copy of this letter is placed on the Town Council and District Council websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

*Derek Stebbing*

Examiner