

Dear Mr Young,

You may recall that Stonehouse Barracks, Plymouth was discussed on 6 February 2018, as part of the consideration of Matter 7. I raised the fact that, although we had reached agreement with the LPA on many aspects of our representation, as set out in our Statement of Common Ground, there were two outstanding matters:

1. The requirement to retain the former artificial grass pitch as part of any redevelopment;
 2. The identification of part of the site as a Local Green Space.
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1. With regard to the retention of the former pitch, both the Council officer and myself made a number of points but no further information was requested by the Inspector.
 2. With regard to the Local Green Space, (LGS), issue, I indicated that although DIO was supportive of the idea of open space in that general area of the site as part of any redevelopment, it did not support the proposed LGS designation. Our objection was based on the fact that the Queens Harbour Master, (QHM), and Port Control facility would remain after the rest of the site was vacated by MOD and that the land that they would occupy needed to be defined having regard to their future operational requirements. Discussions between QHM and DIO regarding the area of land that would be retained by QHM had commenced but were likely to continue for some time and DIO was concerned about the potential impact of that on the future operational capability of the QHM. In our view, it was better to fix any LGS boundary as part of the masterplan that the PLY32 policy proposes for the site (and incorporating any future decisions regarding the land that QHM needed to retain).

The Council officer did not accept the points that I made and the Inspector requested that we – the LPA, QHM and DIO – explore whether a mutually acceptable boundary could be identified.

Following the Examination Hearing, MOD has looked at the issue again and I can confirm that the exact boundary of the retained land will be determined as part of the drawdown and closure of the Barracks and will be dependent on operational requirements prevailing at that time. Those future operational requirements are currently unknown. However, the boundaries of the retained land are extremely unlikely to reflect those of the proposed LGS. Given the significant restrictions on development proposed under Policy DEV29 of the Joint Local Plan, the implications are either that future operational development within the proposed LGS boundary – for the QHM and also, until the remainder of the site is vacated, for other MOD purposes - would be contrary to the Plan or that the boundaries of the LGS would need to be reviewed. A review of the LGS boundary during the Plan period would be contrary to paragraph 76 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which indicates that LGS should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period.

I would reiterate that DIO does not object in principle to the use of part of the RM Stonehouse site as open space once it is redeveloped and, in fact, we envisage a coastal park and, potentially, sports facilities, should the existing tennis courts be retained, along the southern coastal edge of the site. However, we remain concerned that the proposed LGS designation would prejudice future MOD / QHM

operational development and capability. DIO's view is that the designation of any part of the site as LGS would therefore be inappropriate at the current time and that the masterplan proposed for the site as part of Policy PLY32 would be the best way for open space and other opportunities to be considered and consulted upon. The whole of the RM Stonehouse site should therefore be covered by Policy PLY32.

I would be grateful if you would advise the Inspector of the above and that I would be pleased to answer any further questions that she might have.

Please note that I do not have the contact details for the Council officer who spoke at the Hearing and so have not copied this to her. I have, however, sent it to the Council officer who dealt with the preparation of the Statement of Common Ground between the Council and the MOD on RM Stonehouse and asked her to forward it to her colleague.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Sanderson

Rob Sanderson
Senior Town Planner
Safety, Environment & Engineering

**Defence
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Organisation**

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