

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Local Plan Examinations and CIL Examinations - Updated 21 January 2022**

During the pandemic hearings sessions for Local Plan and CIL Examinations have been taking place by a mix of virtual, blended and physical formats (hosted by the Local Planning Authority), depending on the particular circumstances of the examination and the national situation at the time. The appointed Inspector(s) determine the format of the sessions in close liaison with the LPA.

We are very grateful for the support and commitment of LPAs in enabling local plan examination hearing sessions to take place.

Once hearing sessions have been completed examinations will generally be able to be progressed to completion, and the issuing of the Inspector's report, broadly as usual. However, the Inspector may need to discuss arrangements for consultation on main modifications, or any additional evidence, with the LPA through the Programme Officer.

The Government expects everyone involved in the planning process to engage proactively. We request that Programme Officers, LPAs and all participants use their best endeavours to work with the Inspector to help progress examinations, collectively putting in place the practical measures needed to ensure fair participation. Ultimately, decisions about how to move examinations forward are at the discretion of the Inspector appointed to hold the independent examination.

Information about specific local plan examinations will be posted on the examination website of the relevant plan and any questions should be addressed to the Programme Officer for the examination. This advice will be kept under review. Please also ensure that you check the relevant examination website regularly, if you are a participant in a particular examination. You can find the Government's advice here: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>