

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2013

Miss Sam Pigden  
Permitted Development – Development Management  
Department of Communities & Local Government  
Zone J4 Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU

Dear Ms Pigden

**RE : AN APPLICATION FOR AN EXEMPTION FROM THE RELAXATION  
PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS IN RELATION TO THE CHANGE OF USE  
FROM B1(a) OFFICE TO C3 RESIDENTIAL IN RESPECT OF THE BATH CITY  
RIVERSIDE ENTERPRISE AREA**

Bath & North East Somerset Council has, together with the West of England LEP and its partner Unitary Authorities, set out an ambitious strategy for economic growth. Central to this strategy is the delivery of employment growth in the Bristol EZ and the five Enterprise Areas which have been defined across the sub-region and which are included in the Bristol City Deal proposal.

In Bath & North East Somerset the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area and the adjoining wider Bath Central Area, which is defined in the Council's draft Core Strategy, are key to the area contributing to the sub-regional growth agenda.

The Council, through the Core Strategy, is planning for up to 10,000 net new jobs across B&NES. The main focus for this growth is Bath, which has been and will continue to be, the main employment centre for the area. In practise this will mean the city accommodating, in overall terms, some 11,000 jobs, taking account of forecast job losses, including the loss of 2,500 MOD jobs.

Historically the central area has been the main focus for economic and employment growth in the city. Moving forward and in order to deliver the planned uplift in economic performance and job numbers, the Enterprise Area is fundamental to delivering the modern business space businesses required. The Enterprise Area has the capacity to provide up to 8,500 new jobs as well as over 3,500 new homes over the period of the Core Strategy. The Council is working with the LEP and through the City Deal to target investment to bring forward key development sites.

Within the Enterprise Area the existing office accommodation will continue to play an important part in facilitating business expansion, particularly for small business. However the overall make-up of much of the existing office space, the general lack of stand-alone office buildings in the city, and the disparity in value between office and residential use, will conspire to leave this existing office stock vulnerable to a change of use.

It is critical to the delivery of the higher levels of economic and employment growth provided for in the B&NES Economic Strategy and draft Core Strategy that the Council is able to manage the process of expanding and diversifying the supply of office space within the Enterprise Area.

The attached report sets out in more detail our request for an exemption from the proposed relaxation of permitted development rights relating to the change of use from B1(a) office to C3 residential in respect of the Bath City Riverside Enterprise Area.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jo Farrar', written in a cursive style.

Jo Farrar (Dr)  
Chief Executive