

Part B – Representations

Please answer as many questions or as few questions as you wish. There is a box at the end of the form where you can provide any comments that you may have.

Housing

1. Do you consider that a housing need figure of 366 dwellings a year is an appropriate figure on which to plan for housing growth in North Dorset? If not, please set out what you consider to be an appropriate figure and provide reasons for this.

Yes

No

If you have answered 'No' please set out an alternative housing figure and provide reasoning to support your answer.

Employment

2. Do you consider that additional employment land should be allocated for development at Blandford as part of the Local Plan Review?

Yes

No

3. Do you consider that there is a need to allocate additional employment land in any other part(s) of the District?

Yes

No

Spatial Strategy

4. Do you consider that the existing spatial strategy, as set out in LPP1, should be amended to allow for some limited growth at Stalbridge, beyond just meeting local needs?

Yes

No

5. Do you think that the Council should consider implementing any other alternative spatial strategy through the LPR? If so, please explain your reasons why.

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out your alternative spatial strategy and provide reasoning to support it.

The Local Plan Review offers the opportunity for the Council to undertake a fundamental review of its spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy. In particular, the Local Plan Review should ensure that there is a more flexible and positive approach to new housing in the rural areas of the District which addresses the difficulties affecting rural communities including a shortage of housing supply and unaffordability. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF stresses that "to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities" and the National Planning Practice Guidance makes it clear that all settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas and consequently blanket policies restricting housing in some settlements and preventing other settlements from expanding should be avoided.

Blandford (Forum and St Mary)

6. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Blandford?

Yes

No

7. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out what you see as the further issues.

8. What are the additional infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Blandford?

Please set out what you see as the additional infrastructure requirements.

Gillingham

9. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Gillingham?

Yes

No

10. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out what you see as the further issues.

11. What are the additional infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Gillingham?

Please set out what you see as the additional infrastructure requirements.

Shaftesbury

12. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Shaftesbury?

Yes

No

13. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out what you see as the further issues.

14. What are the additional infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Shaftesbury?

Please set out what you see as the additional infrastructure requirements.

Sturminster Newton

15. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Sturminster Newton?

Yes

No

16. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out what you see as the further issues.

17. What are the additional infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Sturminster Newton?

Please set out what you see as the additional infrastructure requirements.

Stalbridge

18. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Stalbridge?

Yes

No

19. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out what you see as the further issues.

20. What are the most important infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Stalbridge?

Please set out what you see as the additional infrastructure requirements.

The Villages

21. Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach in relation to future development at the eighteen larger villages within the District or do you think that the Council should consider an alternative approach?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'No' please set out your alternative approach and information/reasoning behind this.

As indicated in the response to Q5 above, we consider that the Local Plan Review should support the provision of housing growth in key villages which offer a wide range of community facilities and services. We generally support an approach to the distribution of housing which reflects the needs and characteristics of individual settlements. However in considering the distribution of housing growth it is important to note that a fundamental objective of NPPF is to secure a thriving rural economy "by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development"¹ The NPPF seeks to significantly boost the supply of new housing and in rural areas "housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities"² and market housing may be allowed where it "would facilitate the provision of significant affordable housing to meet local needs".³

There are several benefits of providing new housing in rural areas. These benefits are:

- New housing can help sustain rural communities and businesses. Planning Practice Guidance states that "A thriving rural community in a living, working countryside depends, in part, on retaining local services and community facilities such as schools, local shops, cultural venues, public houses and places of worship. Rural housing is essential to ensure viable use of these local facilities"⁴;
- The provision of family housing in rural areas would help redress the current age structure imbalance

¹ NPPF para 28

² ibid para 55

³ ibid para 54

⁴ PPG Rural Housing 50-001-20140306

towards those aged over 65;

- The amount of affordable housing in rural areas can be significantly increased by allowing new and larger sites to be developed; and
- Locating housing development in settlements with good public transport links can assist in encouraging sustainable travel choices and can assist in maintaining the viability of those transport links.

We submit that it is inappropriate to use settlement boundaries used as a mechanism to restrict otherwise sustainable development from coming forward. The NPPF is clear that development which is sustainable should go ahead without delay. The use of settlement limits to arbitrarily restrict suitable and sustainable development from coming forward on the edge of settlements would not accord with the positive approach to growth required by NPPF. Planning Practice Guidance⁵ also advises that *“all settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas – and so blanket policies restricting housing development in some settlements and preventing other settlements from expanding should be avoided unless their use can be supported by robust evidence”*.

There is nothing in NPPF which states that development in the open countryside should be restricted in the extensive manner which the adopted Local Plan suggests. Instead, we suggest that the Local Plan Review should take a more permissive stance. In reality, in its current form, the policy approach creates a ‘presumption against development’ in all areas beyond the settlement boundaries. We recommend that the policy approach needs to be significantly revised to provide a more permissive approach to development in the open countryside. Greenfield sites on the edge of settlements, but lying outside of the currently built up area may offer opportunities for sustainable development which could help meet the housing needs of North Dorset and help achieve NPPF’s objective to *‘significantly boost the supply of housing’* and would accord with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

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We would commend to the Council the policy approach taken by Harborough District Council in its Submission Local Plan published in September 2017. Policy GD2 of that Plan concerns Settlement Development and states that:

1. *In addition to sites allocated by this Local Plan and neighbourhood plans, development within or contiguous with the existing or committed built up area of Market Harborough, Key Centres, the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA), Rural Centres and Selected Rural Villages will be permitted where:*
 - a) *In the case of housing, it does not, cumulatively with other proposals, significantly exceed the target for the delivery of new homes in the Rural Centres and Selected Rural Villages specified in Policy H1 Provision of new housing;*
 - b) *It reflects the size of the settlement concerned and the level of service provision within that settlement;*
 - c) *It is physically and visually connected to and respects the form and character of the existing settlement;*
 - d) *It retains as far as possible existing natural boundaries within and around the site and the settlement;*
 - e) *It does not harmfully diminish the physical and/or visual separation of neighbouring settlements.*

⁵ PPG Rural Housing Ref 50-001-20140306

2. *Development involving the appropriate and efficient re-development of previously developed land which is not of high environmental value and re-use of buildings will be permitted where such re-use achieves the objectives of sustainable development.*

Such an approach, which allows identified settlements to grow in order to maintain rural vitality but ensures that rural communities maintain their identity and distinctiveness, would be fully in line with the NPPF objectives for rural housing and an appropriate approach for the North Dorset Local Plan review to adopt.

Affordable Housing

22. Do you consider that the existing reference to nine dwellings in Policy 9 of LPP1 should be removed from the policy to allow larger schemes to come forward where there is evidence of local need in excess of that which could be met by the provision of nine dwellings?

Yes

No

23. Do you consider that the existing policy approach, which seeks to prevent exception sites coming forward adjacent to the four main towns within the District, should be amended?

Yes

No

24. Do you consider that the Council should continue with its existing policy approach, which allows for a small number of market homes on rural exception sites?

Yes

No

Self-Build and Custom-Build Housing

25. Do you consider that the Council should facilitate the provision of self-build housing by any, some, or all of the following options?

Yes

No

a. Allowing serviced plots to come forward under the current development plan policies.

Yes

No

b. Updating Policy 7 (Delivering Homes) in the Local Plan Part 1 to promote the provision of serviced plots of land for self-build housing.

Yes

No

c. Requiring on sites above a certain size that serviced self-build plots should be made available as a

proportion of the total number of dwellings permitted (with or without a minimum number being specified) on-site.

Yes

No

d. Allowing a proportion (up to 100%) of self-build plots on exception sites (with controls over the resale value of the properties).

Yes

No

e. Identifying land in public ownership which would be sold only for self-build development.

Yes

No

f. The use of Local Development Orders to facilitate self-build development.

Yes

No

26. Are there any other approaches that could be used to meet the demand for self-build housing?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please outline the other approaches which the Council could pursue.

Particularly in regard to the village of Motcombe where my client's site is there needs to be a flexible approach, to allow land lying between built development to come forward for development.

Ensuring the Vitality and Viability of Town Centres

27. Do you consider that the existing hierarchy and network of centres, as set out in LPP1, should be amended to include Stalbridge as a 'local centre'?

Yes

No

Important Open or Wooded Areas (IOWAs)

28. Do you agree that those IOWAs, which are protected from development by other planning policies or legislation, should be deleted?

Yes

No

The A350 Corridor

29. Do you consider that the land which is identified and safeguarded for the Shaftesbury Outer Bypass and the Charlton Marshall and Spetisbury Bypass should continue to be identified and safeguarded for such purposes?

Yes

No

Comments

If you have any comments about the Issues and Options Document or the Sustainability Appraisal please set them out in the box below. If your comments are in relation to a specific question or chapter of the Issues and Options Document then please state which question or chapter your comments relate to.

We believe that the Council needs to take a flexible approach to the 7 boundaries in order to ensure that land can come forward for individuals who wish to build their own homes for their own families.

Continue on a separate sheet if necessary

Do you wish to be contacted about future consultations relating to the Local Plan Review?

Yes

No

Signature: _____

Date: 22/01/2018

If submitting the form electronically, no signature is required.

When completed please send form to planningpolicy@north-dorset.gov.uk