

West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Examination

Hearing Statement for Matter 7: Community Needs and Infrastructure



Prepared by West Dorset District Council and
Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

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Matter 7: Community Needs and Infrastructure

Agenda Item 7.1: Is there sufficient detail in the Local Plan covering the key areas of infrastructure provision including type, cost, funding sources and timescales for delivery?

- 1.1 The Submission Plan provides details of three important infrastructure schemes required to support and safeguard development during the plan period. These schemes are listed because their high estimated costs are likely to have a significant draw on any Community Infrastructure Levy secured. Submission Plan Table 6.2 lists these schemes along with a description of the sources of funding, the estimated cost and the funding mechanism for delivery. Section 6.2.7 of the Submission Plan cross refers these important infrastructure schemes to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (CD/CIL18) where more detail is provided.
- 1.2 Section 9.3 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides more details about the cost, funding sources and timescales for delivery of the Weymouth Town Centre Flood Defence Scheme and the Lyme Regis Coastal Protection Scheme. Paragraph 5.3.7 of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides further details for the Dorchester Transport and Environmental Improvement Plan (DTEP).
- 1.3 Further details about infrastructure requirements by type and site are set out in detail in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan addresses both short-term and long term needs to ensure critical projects and timescales are identified.
- 1.4 This will help partner service providers in the planning and delivery of their individual service strategies. Developers and landowners will be able to better plan for future investment knowing what level of development is proposed and how that development will be supported, and members of the public will gain assurance that existing services will be improved where necessary.
- 1.5 It is likely that infrastructure needs and the details of major schemes will change during the plan period, particularly as more details emerge about the true cost of infrastructure, their funding sources change or the schemes are completed. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be updated and reviewed regularly to keep track of infrastructure provision during the plan period.
- 1.6 The Submission Plan provides details of key infrastructure projects and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides greater details of these and other projects and site specific requirement. Together these provide sufficient detail to guide infrastructure provision over the plan period.

**Agenda Item 7.2: Should there be a better definition of cultural facilities?
Should there, for instance, be reference to theatres?**

- 2.1 Section 6.3 of the Submission Plan includes a list of community buildings and structures. The list includes reference to ‘cultural facilities’ and sets out examples of cultural facilities including arts centres, libraries and museums. This definition is not meant to be exhaustive, and the council proposes a further suggested change to the list of Local Community Buildings and Structures on page 98 of the submission plan to make reference to theatres (CD/SSC).

Agenda Item 7.3: Does the policy framework provide an effective basis for assessing traffic issues?

- 3.1 Submission Plan Policy COM7 provides the policy basis for assessing individual and cumulative traffic issues. The policy reflects the requirement of paragraph 34 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which requires development that generates significant movement to be located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. Paragraph 6.5.7 of the Submission Plan recognises that development will continue in rural areas where sites may not be as easily accessible. When considering such proposals, the benefits of development should be weighed up against any disadvantages arising from its location.
- 3.2 Section 6.5.5 of the Submission Plan includes a road hierarchy diagram setting out the priorities for different road users; this is sourced from Manual for Streets (AD/ENV10) and Dorset County Council’s Local Transport Plan (CD/COM4) which together form part of the councils’ policy framework. The hierarchy has been adapted to reflect the needs of equestrians, a popular road user in more rural parts of the plan area and the public rights of way network.
- 3.3 The need for transport assessments are set out in paragraph 6.5.7 of the Submission Plan. Transport assessments are required to address transport issues relating to development proposals which are likely to generate significant amounts of movement. The impact of community severance is addressed through criterion (ii) of Policy COM7. Road safety and the mitigation of potentially dangerous conditions arising from development are addressed through criterion (iv) of Policy COM7.
- 3.4 The policy approach provides an effective basis for assessing traffic issues.

Agenda Item 7.4: Does policy COM11 have regard to the cumulative impact of renewable energy schemes?

- 4.1 Paragraph 97 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should ensure that adverse impact from renewable energy development are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts.
- 4.2 Paragraph 6.6.7 supports Policy COM11. This paragraph recognises the potential for renewable energy generation in the plan area, the high quality environment and the resulting need for careful planning. It recognises that individual and cumulative impacts of renewable energy schemes on the local environment, including the impact on landscape character and rural amenity of the countryside or resident population will need to be considered, particularly in areas sensitive to change.
- 4.3 For larger or more complex schemes, technical studies on issues such as landscape and heritage would require consideration of cumulative impacts under national and best practice guidance (English Heritage: PPS5 Planning Practice Guide (2010) and Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Practice and Management (2013)).