

Participant	Mr Roger Daniels	Rep ID	3055
		Date response received	14 th May 2015
Representing	Lightwood Strategic Ltd	Response reference number	MHD025
MHD / Change reference commented on	MHD006		
Summary of comment	<p>We welcome the recommendation that the plan period be extended to 2031.</p> <p>We welcome the correction of the allowance for unoccupied dwellings to include second homes as well as vacant dwellings</p> <p>Although the recommendation of an early plan review is supported, we do not agree that Local Plan Part 1 should proceed to adoption on the basis of an inadequate overall supply of market and affordable housing and a settlement strategy that fails to take account of housing needs in the rural settlements.</p> <p>The recommended overall housing supply to 2031 of 5,700 (285 p.a.) remains too low for reasons that were discussed on Issue 4 at the Hearing sessions in March 2015, including the influence of restrictive planning policies on past trends, the need to consider employment growth and market signals, and the fact that a rate of new housebuilding of 285 dwellings per annum would represent a reduction on recent levels of house building in the District</p> <p>The proposed rate of house building would not deliver the supply of affordable housing needed and not allow for unmet needs from neighbouring districts.</p>		
Council's response	<p>The Council welcomes the support given to the proposal to lengthen the plan period and to increase the housing target to allow for second homes.</p> <p>The Council also welcomes the support for the early review of the Local Plan but do not consider the overall supply nor the spatial approach to be issues that should hold up the process of adopting LP1.</p> <p>The 2012 SHMA Update was produced in accordance with the most up to date guidance at the time of its production. It has been tested through the examination of local plans across the HMA and found to be a robust basis for establishing housing need. The North Dorset Local Plan is the last of the Local Plans in the HMA and should proceed to adoption to enable housing delivery to be boosted and to enable the coordinated production of the next round of local plans. This issue has</p>		

	<p>been discussed in NDDC Issue Statement 1A</p> <p>The Council considers that 273 dwellings plus 2.5% for empty homes equates to 280 dwelling per annum. The Second Homes allowance (as set out in MHD006) uses the most up to date available information and adds an additional 5 dwellings per annum to give a total of 285 dwellings per annum.</p> <p>The supply of at least 826 dwellings in rural areas equates to about 14.5% of overall supply.</p> <p>The approach is for LP1 to set the strategic policies with LP2 and neighbourhood development plans to follow which will deal with detailed proposals and policies including the review of settlement boundaries in the towns and MSVs</p> <p>The review of settlement boundaries through LP1 rather than LP2 would significantly delay its adoption and, therefore, be a barrier to boosting the supply housing.</p> <p>The Council has adopted a pragmatic approach, recognising the SHMA was prepared under previous guidance and that the strategy/trajectory in LP1 looks to boost significantly supply after its adoption.</p> <p>The broad location sites in the five-year supply are all well advanced through the planning process some with planning permission, submitted applications and/or EIA screening requests, while some are subject to pre-application discussions with the Council.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>The respondent raises no issues for consideration and, therefore, no further action is required</p>

Participant	Mr Roger Daniels	Rep ID	3055
		Date response received	15 th May 2015
Representing	Lightwood Strategic Ltd	Response reference number	MHD025
MHD / Change reference commented on	MHD007		
Summary of comment	<p>The retention of settlement boundaries identified in the 2003 Local Plan is not a sound approach. They should be reviewed or a more flexible approach to development adjoining the settlement boundaries should be adopted.</p> <p>In practice, therefore, the policy approach to housing in Stalbridge and the larger villages would remain highly restrictive. The total figure taken as the housing need of the rural settlements (826) represents only 14.5% of the proposed District target of 5,700. Currently the rural areas accommodate about half of the District's population. The policy approach is one of an increasing concentration on the four main towns to accommodate 85.5% of the District's housing needs. Therefore the Council has not addressed the Inspector's concerns about the strategy for the rural areas and meeting their needs.</p> <p>The figure of 826 does not represent the housing needs arising in the rural settlements of the housing needs of existing residents. It is in fact simply the average of two highly artificial household projections, neither of which represents a proper assessment of rural housing needs; a zero net migration projection and a zero gross migration projection.</p> <p>Appendix 1 of MHD007 provides only a one-page summary of the assessment which does not include a full account of the approach. It offers the following explanation: 'To try to establish how much need arises in rural areas we have used demographic projections to look at the level of housing generated by the local population of the District, and therefore how much is supported by net in-migration.'</p> <p>The projections were a zero net migration projection and a zero gross migration ('natural increase') projection. The Council's subsequent explanation posted on the Examination web site on 11th May appears to indicate that the migration data used for the zero net migration projection was at District level and was apportioned to parts of the District in accordance with current population levels. This approach does not provide a sound basis for assessing rural housing needs. It takes no account of migration within the District and it assumes that migration flows into and out of the District are proportionately similar in different parts of the District.</p>		

	<p>The two demographic projections are purely ‘theoretical’ constructs that cannot fulfil the stated requirement in Appendix 1: ‘to understand housing need in Stalbridge, the MSVs, LSVs and open rural areas, both in terms of the needs of existing populations and the need for in-migrants to locate to the countryside.’ The Inspector’s request for an assessment of housing needs in the rural areas has not been answered. The exercise undertaken by the Council appears to be an attempt to justify the approach of concentrating housing provision within the four main towns, with minimal change to the submitted Local Plan policies.</p> <p>It is also not clear why provision for a ‘residual need’ for housing in rural settlements (whether or not the council’s figure has any justification) must await the allocation of sites in Local Plan Part 2 or neighbourhood plans, especially with uncertainties about the timing of LP2 and the take-up of neighbouring planning outside the main towns . Within Stalbridge and the 18 ‘more sustainable’ villages, it is possible to identify opportunities for extending settlement boundaries in Local Plan Part 1 and to do so on the basis of a realistic assessment of rural housing needs, using primary data sources such as local housing needs surveys and housing waiting lists. This approach should be applied in order to be consistent with the NPPF and PPG. As currently proposed the strategy is unsound.</p> <p>We have pointed out in previous submissions that an allocation for 240 homes at Stalbridge (which has a population of some 2,700) would be proportionate, for example in comparison with Sturminster Newton which has a population of about 4,300 and an allocation of 380 homes proposed in draft Local Plan Policy 6. Stalbridge has good shops, local employment and other facilities, and is well placed to serve a wider area including neighbouring settlements like Henstridge.</p>
<p>Council’s response</p>	<p>At the hearing sessions the Inspector asked the Council to assess the need for growth in rural areas and to re-assess the policy approach to rural settlements looking at housing and employment together. The Inspector also asked the Council to set out a stronger framework for LP 2 and neighbourhood development plans to meet needs in the rural area, while considering viability issues, and to re-assesses the need to retain settlement boundaries.</p> <p>In response to the Inspector’s request the Council has prepared MHD007 which sets out its approach to development in the countryside and recommends, among other things, that settlement boundaries be retained around Stalbridge and the eighteen More Sustainable Villages (MSVs) while settlement boundaries around other villages in the District are to be removed.</p> <p>MHD007 explains that following the hearings sessions, JG Consulting was commissioned to undertake further work to understand housing need in Stalbridge, the MSVs, remaining villages and the open rural areas, both in terms of the needs of existing populations and the need</p>

	<p>for in-migrants to locate to the countryside. The analysis, which builds on work undertaken as part of the 2012 SHMA Update (MHN005), shows that 41 dwellings per annum of the overall District need for 285 annual dwellings to 2031 is generated specifically from rural areas. Over the 20 year period of LP1, this equates to 826 of the 5,700 dwellings required in total between 2011 and 2031.</p> <p>MHD007 highlights there is an identified housing supply in rural areas from all sources of 649 dwellings with a ‘residual need’ in rural areas of 177 dwellings which is proposed to be allocated through LP2 and the neighbourhood development plans.</p> <p>The Council has produced MHD007A in response to a request for clarification on a factual point on the approach taken in assessing the need for housing arising from the rural areas.</p> <p>The Council considers the approach set out in MHD007 has answered the Inspector’s request and provides the most appropriate approach to development in the countryside to promote a strong rural economy and meet rural needs.</p> <p>The Council considers that if a specific need is identified in Stalbridge, the MSVs, other villages or countryside locations the appropriate mechanism for the identification of potential sites and the review of settlement boundaries is through either LP2 or neighbourhood development plans.</p> <p>Further, the approach advocated by the respondent to adopt a more flexible approach to development adjoining settlement boundaries is considered contrary to the approach set out in MHD007.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>The comments made by the respondent are noted and raise no new issues which affect the soundness of the Plan as proposed to be modified.</p> <p>No further action required.</p>

Participant	Mr Roger Daniels	Rep ID	3055
		Date response received	15 th May 2015
Representing	Lightwood Strategic	Response reference number	MHD025
MHD / Change reference commented on	MHD008		
Summary of comment	<p>We agree that care homes with planning permission should be included in the housing supply trajectory.</p> <p>We understand that 96 dwellings have been included in the housing supply trajectory from year 7 in Stalbridge and the eighteen larger villages, from SHLAA sites within the existing settlement boundaries. However, we do not understand the basis for the allowance of 177 dwellings expected to be delivered after 2020 in Stalbridge and the eighteen larger villages for sites that will be allocated in Local Plan Part 2 or anticipated through neighbourhood plans.</p> <p>If settlement boundaries are to be re-introduced for Stalbridge and the eighteen larger villages, there must be scope for the existing boundaries to be modified in Local Plan Part 1 (or neighbourhood plans). The Council's reasons for its approach to rural settlements in the submitted draft Local Plan Part 1 included concerns about excessive infill development changing the character of rural settlements by the loss of gardens and other existing open spaces. If the Policy was amended to enable appropriate developments on the edges of settlements this would avoid placing excessive pressures for change on undeveloped land within the existing settlement boundaries.</p> <p>The modified housing trajectory in MHD008 highlights the excessive reliance on a small number of larger sites in the four main towns, including the Gillingham Southern Extension and a reducing supply of housing land to less than 200 dwellings per annum after 2021, if the forecast level of completions is achieved between 2015 and 2021. It shows that the District Council is planning to reduce housing supply over the plan period rather than 'boost significantly the supply of housing.' The approach proposed will seek to increase the reliance on a small number of large sites in the main towns.</p> <p>We object to the proposal in paragraph 4.3 of MHD008 that an allowance for additional sites in Stalbridge and the 18 'most sustainable villages' should have to await LP Part 2 or neighbourhood planning. This proposal does not amount to a sound rural settlement strategy for LP Part 1.</p>		

<p>Council's response</p>	<p>The respondent's support for the inclusion of care homes with planning permission in the housing supply trajectory as set out in MHD008.</p> <p>MHD008 sets out changes that have been made to the housing trajectory as a result of requests from the Inspector and discussions about specific issues at the hearings sessions. Among other things, in addition to SHLAA sites in Stalbridge and the eighteen largest villages, an allowance has been made for sites in these settlements that will be allocated in Local Plan Part 2 or anticipated through neighbourhood plans. This allowance totals 177 dwellings expected to be delivered from 2020 onwards.</p> <p>The Council's approach to development in the countryside set out in MHD007 recommends, among other things, that settlement boundaries be retained around Stalbridge and the eighteen More Sustainable Villages (MSVs) while settlement boundaries around other villages in the District are to be removed.</p> <p>The Council's approach makes it clear that the appropriate mechanism for the review of existing settlement boundaries is through either LP2 or neighbourhood development plans.</p> <p>The respondent's comments are noted, however, the approach advocated for developments on the edges of settlements is considered contrary to the approach set out in MHD007.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>The respondent introduces no new issues for consideration at this stage and no further action is required.</p>

Participant	Mr Roger Daniels	Rep ID	3055
		Date response received	15 th May 2015
Representing	Lightwood Strategic Ltd	Response reference number	MHD025
MHD / Change reference commented on	MHD010		
Summary of comment	<p>It is not clear if this is a legal opinion as there is no indication of who has provided it. It simply identifies four legal principles that were raised by this High Court case and then asserts that the Council has complied with them.</p> <p>The 2012 SHMA Update indicates a need for 387 affordable dwellings per annum. This figure cannot be delivered as part of a total planned housing provision of 285 dwellings per annum.</p> <p>The Council's position is that the requirement for affordable housing will be met by the private rented sector and attempts to provide 387 affordable dwellings per annum would result in (unspecified) problems in the housing market. If a reduction in demand for private rented accommodation could be achieved in practice the results are more likely to be positive and could include reductions in over-crowding and sharing, improved standards of accommodation and perhaps reductions in rent.</p> <p>There is no justification in the NPPF or Planning Practice Guidance for reducing the identified need for affordable housing by the assumed continued role of the private rented sector with local housing allowance; that the availability of private rented accommodation is outside the control of the Council; and that there are substantial qualitative differences between affordable housing and private rented housing funded by local housing allowance.</p> <p>While some discounting of the SHMA's headline figure for affordable housing need may be reasonable, any discounting needs to be justified on the basis of expectations about the continuing role of the private rented sector and policy judgments about the suitability of that sector to meet the identified housing needs (e.g. for family housing) in the specific circumstances of the housing stock in North Dorset.</p> <p>It is obvious that some uplift in total housing supply is needed in the light of the gap between an assessed need for affordable housing and Policy 8.</p> <p>To ensure the Local Plan meets affordable housing needs subject to relevant planning constraints, 'the Council aims to provide as much affordable housing as can be realistically delivered within strategic</p>		

	<p>viability and other constraints, whilst also having regard to other matters.’ This is not an adequate response. The Council has not demonstrated any attempt to increase housing supply significantly with the aim of more closely meeting affordable housing needs. Nor has it considered modifying the distribution of housing provision to enhance the provision of affordable housing (including meeting the housing needs of the rural settlements).</p> <p>The Council has not made a serious attempt to meet the objectively assessed need for affordable housing need by modifying the overall housing targets of the Local Plan. The Satnam Millennium Ltd v Warrington Borough Council judgement could apply to the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1.</p>
<p>Council’s response</p>	<p>MHD010 was produced the request of the Inspector at the hearing sessions to provide a view on the legal judgement between Satnam Millennium Limited v Warrington Borough Council (2015) and the implications for meeting affordable housing needs in North Dorset.</p> <p>MHD010 identifies and considers a number of issues arising from the case. The Council considers its approach to the provision of affordable housing and the relevant Local Plan policies to stand as robust when tested in the context of the case. MHD10 recommends no changes are required to the Local Plan arising from this recent case law.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>The respondent introduces no new issues for consideration at this stage and no further action is required.</p>

Participant	Mr Roger Daniels	Rep ID	3055
		Date response received	15 th May 2015
Representing	Lightwood Strategic	Response reference number	MHD025
MHD / Change reference commented on	MHD018		
Summary of comment	<p>Our responses on MHD018 are largely about the absence of proposed changes to reflect hearing statements and the Council’s written responses to the Inspector’s questions. The changes proposed by the Council in their Additional Mid-Hearing Statements MHD006, MHD007, MHD008 and MHD010 are minimal – as discussed earlier in this note. However, it is surprising that they are not all reflected in the Schedule of Changes (MHD018). We may have misunderstood the relationship between the written responses and the proposed changes, but there appear to be inconsistencies, for example in relation to the proposal to extend the plan period to 2031 (in MHD006) which is not reflected in MHD018 or the proposal to increase the housing requirement in line with the revised plan period.</p>		
Council’s response	<p>Document references MHD003 to MHD017 have been produced by the Council to further consider certain matters raised at the hearings and to provide additional explanatory notes on topics the Inspector identified.</p> <p>Document reference MHD018 highlights proposed changes to the Local Plan arising from the Hearings to show how consequential minor amendments could be incorporated into the draft Plan—ie prior to the publication of MHD003 to MHD017.</p> <p>MHD018 does not contain any of the consequential changes to the Local Plan which may arise following the Inspector’s consideration of MHD003 to MHD017.</p> <p>Consolidated consequential changes will be prepared following the Inspector’s review of the Mid-Hearing Documents and his recommendations for proposed Main Modifications etc.</p> <p>The consolidated consequential changes will be made available for comment at the Main Modifications consultation stage.</p>		
Conclusions	<p>The respondent introduces no new issues for consideration at this stage and no further action is required.</p>		