

MESSRS KEITH, CLIVE AND STEPHEN ALLARD ISSUE 4

RE: North Dorset Local Plan – ID No: 3108

Thank you for your email and please accept this email as confirmation that my clients do not wish to attend the hearing sessions in person. They however would like the following statement placed before the Inspector for his consideration. Their primary concern is in regard to Issue 4, due to be heard on 12th March 2015, and in dealing with the questions raised by the Inspector they comment as follows.

4.1 The figure proposed by the Council of 4200 dwellings is not justified. This is significantly lower than is required and there is so much evidence in the public domain of the need for new housing to fulfil a national need that Local Planning Authorities must be required to set more ambitious targets for dwellings to be constructed within their plan period.

Therefore, we consider that the Inspector should find that the Local Plan is unsound because it does not make sufficient provision for new dwellings with the plan period.

4.2 The Council's target of 280 dwellings per year is not justified and is nowhere near sufficiently aspirational. In particular as we comment above, there is a clear and identified need for more housing which has simply not been recognised by the Council and therefore the Local Plan in terms of its overall housing numbers is flawed.

4.4 It is quite clear that Strategic Market Housing Assessment is not sufficiently up to date and is not clear in its expression of the number of dwellings required and therefore we do not consider that the updated Strategic Market Housing Assessment can be relied upon.

4.5 We do not consider that the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is sufficiently up to date.

4.6 We do not consider that the Council can adequately demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing and therefore it does not provide a satisfactory basis for the Local Plan.

GENERAL CONCLUSION:

We consider that the Inspector will conclude that insufficient provision has been made in the Local Plan for additional dwellings and that the Inspector will conclude that the Local Plan does not have a sufficient 5 year supply of housing. In those circumstances, we believe that there needs to be a complete reassessment of the availability of sites for development and in particular it should not simply be a case of putting additional dwellings within the existing allocated sites; there should be a review of where the additional dwellings should be located. For instance, if it is accepted through the plan period the correct number of houses is 370 dwellings per annum, then that is an additional 1,350 dwellings. Indeed, with the recent demonstration of the shortfall in the provision of housing against the national need for new houses, it may well be that on an updated SHMA the additional requirement of houses over the plan period may be 1,500 homes, and therefore there should be a complete reassessment of the sites that could deliver these additional houses to the extent that the site that we are promoting on behalf of Messrs Allard should be considered as a site for some of these additional houses. To that end, the Council should be asked to undertake a further assessment of the additional sites required to deliver the additional housing needed for the plan period.

Yours faithfully

For SYMONDS & SAMPSON LLP