

## Matter 5 Development Management

### Policy 12

- 1 The Cranborne Chase AONB Partnership notes that paragraph 12.30 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Plan emphasises the use of existing safe accesses to the primary network and in sensitive areas the AONB recommends that that principle should be reinforced. Whilst paragraph 12.36 suggests limiting vehicle sizes in sensitive areas such as AONBs, there is no indication of the scale of size that might be appropriate and this element of the policy seems open to considerable interpretation. The AONB has experienced damage to both the highway surfaces and the verges of lanes used as diversions during recent years when signed HGV routes had been temporarily closed.

### Policy 13

- 2 The standard guidance on landscape and visual assessments, where the term 'sensitive receptors' occurs, frequently identifies AONBs as being particularly sensitive. That aspect therefore has to be weighed against proposals in AONBs.

### Policy 14

- 3 The statutory purposes of AONB designation are both conserving and enhancing natural beauty. It is not a case of achieving one or the other. In that respect the development allocations and proposals in the insets in relation to this AONB do not conserve or enhance the AONB. The proposal at Blandford is not based on the Management Plan for this AONB. In relation to the adopted AONB Management Plan in the Planning and Transportation section, is the Aims:

*'We want planning and transportation strategies, policies and decisions, that effect this nationally important AONB to conserve and enhance its special qualities. Where development is necessary, we want it located and designed to integrate fully with the landscape character and natural beauty.'*

- 4 The AONB has consistently argued that the location at Blandford would not enable the scale of the facility to integrate fully with the landscape character and natural beauty. The industrial nature of the combined household recycling centre and waste transfer facility means that type of development is most unlikely to comply with adopted Policy PT 13 of the AONB Management Plan which indicates that permitted development should complement the special qualities of the AONB and take full account of the area's setting and context.

*PT13 Local Planning Authority partners ensure that where new development is permitted it complements the special qualities of the AONB and takes full account of the area's setting and context through the consideration of appropriate Landscape Character Assessments and sensitivity and design studies.*

- 5 In terms of sustainability this AONB has consistently viewed village recycling and composting activities sympathetically, as they appear to contribute to the self-sufficiency and sustainability of villages. The AONB has always been concerned that local can be defined very loosely. From an AONB perspective local is interpreted as the village or community.
- 6 The adverse impacts of importation of material outside of the local community was a matter that the AONB Partnership had in mind when it made its in-principle statement at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016. Given the scope for interpretation of policies the AONB advises that anything in the policy that side-stepped the definition of waste development as 'major development' could lead to an unsatisfactory situation where a small, local facility was approved which then, over time and by incremental additions, became a major site.

#### Inset 2

- 7 In connection with this site at Blandford, this AONB Partnership finds it hard to believe that there are no alternative sites. Furthermore, using 'there are no alternative sites' as the primary argument for allocating the site seems scarcely credible. For example, there does not appear to have been a detailed assessment of utilising a site in the Shaftesbury/Gillingham area, outside of the AONB. A site there could reduce the HGV traffic from that part of the County travelling through the AONB to the waste transfer site being proposed for Blandford. Furthermore, as significantly more development is proposed in the northern part of the County, not least because of its connections with the main line railway and the A303 Expressway, waste collection vehicle movements from Blandford could be re-directed in the Poole direction whilst the smaller number from the villages within and around the AONB could gravitate northwards. The AONB is, therefore, **very concerned** that the exceptional circumstances for Inset 2, and the policy requirements, are not demonstrated. The allocation is, therefore, not sound.

#### Other matters. Implementation and Monitoring

- 8 The targets in table 12 appear to require robust action by both Councillors and development management staff. That seems to indicate a need for both political will and adequate staff resources. Experience indicates that achieving both is difficult and uncommon. One has to conclude these days targets are more aspirational than practical.
- 9 The trigger points seem to be open to interpretation. For example, what is meant by 'high number of permissions being granted' when only one or two are envisaged in a locality by the Plan? The AONB advises that a more precise threshold would be more credible and effective.