

Purbeck Core Strategy – Main Modifications June 2012.

Comments of DCC

MM2 – 1.2 Purbeck Local Plan - Future Partial Review

Para 1.2.3

This is new text which discusses the proposed level of housing provision within the Plan area, the difficulties Purbeck has in meeting its housing needs and how neighbouring authorities' growth plans relate to Purbeck..

Comment

It is recognised that Purbeck has considerable housing needs but at the same time faces severe constraints in finding sites for new development. However it is not yet certain as the modification claims that: "across the Poole/Bournemouth strategic housing market area sufficient housing and employment is planned to meet forecasted requirements" since the housing and employment land proposals in all local authorities except the Borough of Poole have yet to be adopted.

The Dorset authorities have shown their willingness to work together to address future needs through their desire to draw up a "Memorandum of Understanding" (MoU). It should however be recognised that the MoU is only a template for how the authorities intend to co-operate and cannot in itself represent a strategy or evidence base for matters of cross boundary significance (such as housing, employment or infrastructure.)

Until such time as there is agreement between the authorities on how their strategies for matters of cross boundary significance join up, the Purbeck Core strategy, like others in the area has some degree of uncertainty about future spatial relationships with neighbouring areas (notwithstanding the RSS evidence base).

Bearing this in mind, Dorset County Council supports the statement at the end of para 1.2.3 that an early review of the Core Strategy may be necessary, particularly if any emerging evidence or strategy work under the Duty to Co-operate reveal a need to adjust the strategy approach.

However until that review has been undertaken and the consequences of any housing target has been considered against a Habitats Regulations Assessment, it is considered premature to advocate a housing figure (as in the first bullet point).

Proposed changes

The following changes to para 1.2.3 are proposed:

1.2.3 The Local Plan makes provision for 2,520 dwellings for the period 2006-2027. ~~Across the Poole and Bournemouth housing market area sufficient housing and employment is planned to meet forecasted requirements.~~ In preparing this Local Plan, the Council was unable to provide certainty that strategic housing development over 2,520 dwellings could be successfully mitigated and not have an adverse effect upon the integrity of European protected nature conservation sites. However, a considerable affordable housing need will not be resolved. The 2012 Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Bournemouth and Poole Housing Market Area recommends a housing target of 170 dwellings per year in Purbeck District, although it recognises that this target has yet to be tested against the Habitats Regulations. Therefore, following adoption of the Local Plan, the Council will, *in the context of any strategic assessment of development requirements prepared under the Duty to Co-operate*, undertake a partial review to further investigate ways of meeting housing

needs. The partial review will plan for growth in the medium to longer term and will be started by the end of 2015. The partial review will need to consider the following:

- A district housing target of ~~170 dwellings per year for the later part of the plan period~~, that seeks to address local housing needs as identified in the latest *Strategic Housing Market Assessment*, with associated mitigation measures, tested against the Habitats Regulations and transport constraints;
- The contribution Purbeck makes to meeting the housing and employment needs of the South East Dorset conurbation;
- The role of Purbeck in facilitating strategic growth at Crossways as proposed in the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan;
- Additional settlement extensions to help satisfy Purbeck's housing needs;
- A longer term strategic view to Green Belt including the potential to identify land for future growth;
- Identifying opportunities to work with large landowners to ensure that the cumulative impact of new housing in the countryside provides opportunities to improve the sustainability of rural settlements, enhance landscape character and biodiversity and provide mitigation measures for European protected sites;
- The enhancement of biodiversity and habitats.

MM3 - 1.5 Duty to Co-operate.

This is new text which discusses the Duty to Co-operate. Comments that we made on the previous consultation on the changes relating to the NPPF (letter dated 07.06.2012) apply.

Comment

Dorset County Council supports the introduction of this new section and in particular the statement in Para 1.5.1.

Para 1.5.2 As noted in respect of para 1.2.3 it is premature to state that the Local Authorities of Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch have made sufficient provision for housing and employment growth to meet their own needs since the Borough of Poole is the only authority that has an adopted Core Strategy. As such alternative wording is proposed.

Para 1.5.3 Whilst recognising the need to investigate possible opportunities for development at Crossways, Dorset County Council as minerals planning authority would advise that the emerging Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Core Strategy proposes a Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) protecting minerals of likely economic importance from sterilisation by built and other development which covers much of the land around Crossways including that within Purbeck District.

Should development be promoted at Crossways in the future, the County Council as highway authority would wish to be involved in any discussions with West Dorset District Council regarding possible transport links to Moreton railway station.

Proposed Changes

1.5 Duty to Cooperate

1.5.1 The Council, through the duty to cooperate, will work with local authorities in the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area on an on-going basis to

agree matters of a strategic nature that may steer any future review of the Local Plan. These councils are currently producing a memorandum of understanding to facilitate the duty to cooperate.

~~1.5.2 Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch Councils, have in their adopted or nearly adopted Core Strategies, made sufficient provision for housing and employment growth to meet their own needs. Therefore, there is no requirement for the Council to help meet these needs in Purbeck before 2027.~~

The Local Authorities in the Dorset LEP area are addressing the housing and employment growth needs of the area within their individual adopted and emerging development plans, having regard to cross boundary issues. Purbeck's Core Strategy has been prepared in this context, based upon relevant evidence of strategic needs and its role in meeting these."

1.5.3 West Dorset District Council (WDDC) is proposing strategic growth at Crossways. The Council will work with WDDC to help deliver the associated infrastructure that is required in Purbeck District, in particular links to Moreton railway station.

MM8 – New Para 6.1.5

This new text explains the need for additional monitoring and an early review of the District's housing provision. The text reflects comments made in our earlier response of 07.06.2012.

Comment:

Dorset County Council supports this statement of intent to introduce a formal review process.

MM 22 Proposed change to Policy CEN (Wareham Middle School Playing Fields)

Comment:

The proposed change under MM22 introduces restrictions on the future use of school playing fields at Wareham Middle School which are intended to reflect policy in Para 74 of the NPPF. However the proposed wording does not fully reflect Para 74 of the NPPF which allows for development of open space "*if an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements*".

Some of the school playing fields are required for continuity of existing community sport use as well as a possible re-organisation of an access route through to the Lady St. Mary's Primary from the main road and provision of the playing areas for Lady St. Mary's Primary School.

If there is surplus playing field after the school / community use is accounted for and if the District Council is satisfied, having undertaken an assessment of local recreational and open space needs, that there is no outstanding need for such a use, it ought to be possible for the surplus land to be disposed of for development. As currently worded, the proposed modification would protect the whole of the current area of playing fields, (or an equivalent area in a suitable location) whether shown to be needed or not. This could therefore prevent disposal of any surplus land (subject to a successful application under s77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for any other purpose.

It is not yet known how much of the playing fields will be required for continuation as community/sports use. The proposed modification should therefore be amended to allow for the possibility that, if a smaller area is required, and providing that there is no other outstanding need for recreational or open space in the locality, the policy would not prevent disposal of the surplus land for an alternative use.

The proposed modification goes on to specify that if suitable replacement facilities are provided, the playing fields should be re-used for "housing or public buildings". It is considered that the term "public buildings" is ambiguous and does not describe a particular land use. It could encompass offices for a public service, community uses, or commercial activities to which the public can gain access. It may be better to specify a particular use class such as Class D1 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), which includes a number of public assembly and non-residential institutions such as clinics, crèches, museums and libraries. If the intention is also to allow a wider variety of buildings which serve the public (such as assembly and leisure) then the wording could also include reference to D2 uses.

Proposed change:

Reword Modification 22 to read:

“Wareham

The role of Wareham will be supported through

- The Wareham Middle School playing fields will be safeguarded for recreation needs, *providing it is shown through an assessment of local requirements that there is a need for that amount of recreation or open space land in the locality, unless equivalent or better replacement facilities in terms of quantity and quality are provided in a suitable location. In the event that any part of the land is not needed for recreation or open space needs or suitable replacement facilities are provided, the playing fields should be re-used for housing or public buildings uses within Class D1 [and D2?] of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) order 1987 (as amended)..”*

MM51 Policy GT: Gypsies Travellers and Travelling Show People.

This modification proposes deletion of the detailed policy requirements under Policy GT to ensure that there is no conflict with the latest national guidance on traveller sites. The change reflects a suggestion that we made in our comments to the Inspector on 01.05.2012.

Comment

Dorset County Council supports the proposed modification.

MM72 – Policy IAT: Improving Accessibility and Transport.

This modification points developers towards the Local Transport Plan when seeking advice on parking standards.

Comment

Dorset County Council supports the proposed modification.