

Matter 1: Overall Strategy

2 Is the Core Strategy supported by a robust Infrastructure Delivery Plan which:

- ***Identifies the essential infrastructure that is required to deliver the strategy;***
- ***Sets out programmes and timescales for delivery, linked to the housing trajectory and timing of other development which is key to the strategy;***
- ***Identifies agency/s responsible for bringing infrastructure forward;***
- ***Identifies funding streams, risks to delivery and contingencies.***

1.2.1 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan should be updated to provide more detail in regard to the infrastructure required to deliver the housing allocations. There needs to be a clearer link between the essential infrastructure required and the strategic allocations.

8 Is the need for housing to be located outside the urban areas / in the green belt justified by the SHLAA and other evidence?

1.8.1 The NPPF sets out a number of tests in respect of identifying and meeting objectively assessed housing needs. These tests are set within the presumption in favour of sustainable development, paragraph 14 for 'plan-making', and further explained at paragraphs 47 and 159 of the NPPF. These paragraphs confirm that LPAs must boost the supply of housing land, using the evidence base to meet the full objectively assessed need (47). Further that in identifying need they must cater for housing demand, and the scale of supply, necessary to meet this demand (my emphasis). The following Core Principle confirms the intended effect:

"Every effort should be made to objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth" (NPPF 17, extract from 3rd bullet)

1.8.2 In January 2013, the Planning Minister extended the requirement for housing development from an *"economic mission to a moral one too"* (Housing the next generation, Planning Minister, 10 January 2013). This clearly covers the 'economic' and 'social' dimension of the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development. The minister's statement highlights the plight of the hard working and younger generation who do not own their own home, the root cause of which is considered to be *"decades long refusal to release enough land for development."* The failure in the planning system is clearly identified as *"the failure of past governments to provide enough land for housing"*, hence this government will *"persuade local authorities to make more land available so that more homes can be built and the price of new homes comes down"*.

1.8.3 Undoubtedly, the government is committed to its *'number one priority'* to increase housing land supply. The NPPF, paragraph 47, charges local authorities with the requirement to *"boost significantly the supply of housing"* and to ensure a five-year

supply of housing.

1.8.4 There is insufficient land to meet the objectively assessed need within the urban area and the strategy for sustainable development, which looks to the existing main settlements to accommodate growth, inevitably requires the release of land from the Green Belt. This approach is entirely consistent with the NPPF paragraph 84.

1.8.5 Christchurch and East Dorset Councils have demonstrated a five-year supply set against the Core Strategy's target but this is only possible through the release of Green Belt land and the delivery of dwellings within the new neighbourhoods. These sites are needed now to deliver housing to meet the Council's objectively identified housing need.

1.8.6 In addition, there is a significant need for affordable housing in East Dorset. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA, January 2012) identifies an annual need to provide 426 additional affordable units per year (between 2011 and 2016).

1.8.7 In the four-year period, 2007/8 to 2010/11, the SHMA identifies that only just over 500 new homes have been completed and only 5.5% of those, or 28, were affordable (paragraph 2.3 and figure 2.2). These figures emphasise the scale of the affordable housing need and associated issues within the district. The recently published Consultation Draft Housing and Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (12 July to 6 September 2013) identifies East Dorset as "*one of the least affordable places to live outside London*" (paragraph 2.4). The SPD highlights that the average house price in East Dorset in 2011 was £255,000, ranking it 9th least affordable local authority outside London (paragraph 2.11).

1.8.8 In light of the urgent and substantial need for affordable and market housing, the inability to meet this need in existing urban areas, clearly demonstrates the need to plan for new neighbourhoods on the edge of sustainable settlements and provides exceptional circumstance to amend the Green Belt boundaries.

1.8.9 In this respect the core strategy provides a positive response to the delivery of housing to meet the districts needs. Through the evidence base that informed the draft regional spatial strategy, and the core strategy, the Council has demonstrated a need for greenfield development outside the existing settlement boundaries to deliver new homes to meet both market and affordable need. The evidence present in the SHLAA demonstrates there is not enough available and deliverable land in the existing urban areas to meet this need.

1.8.10 The release of the Cranborne Road New Neighbourhood (WMC5) from the Green Belt was originally identified in the evidence base of the draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy in 2005. A Green Belt review, undertaken by Colin Buchanan in 2006, summarises the work of the South East Dorset Joint Strategic Authorities which established the need to review the Green Belt boundaries in the sub-region to enable development areas to be identified to meet each districts' long-term sustainable development needs. The removal of land from the Green Belt is suggested where this would present the "*most sustainable solution for accommodating future development requirements*" (paragraph 2.2.1, Strategic Green Belt Review – Final Report, 2006).

1.8.11 Whilst this work dates back to 2005, the housing requirement has not reduced

and the strategy to direct growth to sustainable locations, including channeling it to urban areas within the Green Belt, remains a valid approach within the current policy context including paragraph 84 of the NPPF. The work therefore remains up to date and robust.