

Strategic Allocations

In terms of Strategic Allocation WMC6 we note there are no specific questions in regard to this allocation. It is worth underlining the fact that the site is in a highly accessible location. As such the figure for housing should be considered to be a minimum. In terms of Green Belt boundaries it would appear that the A31 offers the most logical defensible boundary for the new boundary.

The physical layout of recreational pitches will protect the gap between Wimborne Minster and Colehill/ Little Canford and the need to restrict future opportunities for community led development on this site beyond the plan period appears unnecessary. The fact is that the difficult decision to release Green Belt has been made. To ensure that there is adequate opportunity for future growth it is considered that the new Green Belt boundary should enable the master planning of the entire site to be unconstrained.

Given the extensive package of community benefits which are to be considered as part of the master plan the issue of viability will need to be carefully considered. There will also be the need to carry out extensive public engagement on this project. To ensure the flexibility and to enable full and proper master planning to be carried out it is suggested that the new Green Belt boundary should be drawn along the A31 and incorporating the entire site to ensure proper planning exercises and public engagement is not fetid by restrictions without having undertaken a full design exercise with technical input on this site.

This would enable the entire site to be considered as a whole and to be planned, with the assistance of the community, as a single site. The Policy already identifies that the site is inherently suitable for development. It would be a missed opportunity if reliance on an early concept of a master plan reduced this sites effectiveness at delivering much needed affordable housing and other community benefits through restricting how the site could be considered in the future.

Policy reference to the football and rugby club grounds being excluded from the Green Belt indicates how this designation could impede development and growth of these facilities. Similarly the master plan also shows other buildings and car parking associated with the other pitches and training areas. A flexible approach on the basis of future development in this area should be considered. The ability to provide improved facilities including all weather pitches, floodlighting and buildings associated with the sports pitches and potential facilities associated with the new Country Park would be impeded if the Green Belt boundary didn't include the entire site to the east of the line from Brookside Manor.

The suitability of the access will need to be scrutinised in some detail as well and a full technical design required. It may be appropriate for the access to come at other points on Leigh Road and limiting this at this stage could adversely affect the proper planning of the proposal.

In terms of flooding the Site WM6 is clear of any impedance in terms of a flood risk. The lack of proximity to a water course and the topography ensures that the site has no implications for this. Given the size of the policy area it is considered that any design should be able to incorporate fully sustainable drainage strategies.

In terms of biodiversity the opportunity exists to significantly enhance the biodiversity on the site. The site at present is low in terms of the ecological value and the opportunity exists to enhance habitat diversity in the area.