

Purbeck District Council: Core Strategy Examination in Public

Submission on behalf of ZBV (Winfrith) Ltd

Reference: 4953

MATTER 3: ACCESSIBILITY OF TRANSPORT (POLICY IAT AND ATS)

3.1 What are the transport implications of the locational strategy for housing and employment?

3.1.1 Policy IAT (Improving Accessibility & Transport) states that development proposals should be judged against five criteria, the first of which states that new development should be located in the most accessible location and reduce the need to travel. This reflects Spatial Objective 9: *“Provide an integrated transport system and better accessibility to services for everyday needs”*.

3.1.2 It is important to note that both policy IAT and spatial objective 9 have two distinct requirements; locating new development in already accessible locations may encourage journeys to be undertaken by sustainable modes of transport but will not in itself reduce journey lengths or reduce the need to travel. The only way to reduce the need to travel is through judicious land use planning, specifically locating housing, employment and services in close proximity.

Paragraph 37 of NPPF states:

“Planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities.”

Paragraph 38 goes on to state that:

“For larger scale residential developments in particular, planning policies should promote a mix of uses in order to provide opportunities to undertake day-to-day activities including work on site. Where practical, particularly within large-scale developments, key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within easy walking distance of most properties.”

3.1.3 It is clear that the intention of NPPF is to reduce the need to travel at all, then to reduce necessary travel distances and then to encourage residual journeys to take place by sustainable modes of travel. The Purbeck Core Strategy is flawed in that it focuses its housing allocation sites on green belt settlement extensions. Even if those sites were accessible by sustainable

modes they would not provide the mix of uses in close proximity necessary to achieve the aims and objectives of NPPF, or indeed the stated objective of policy IAT, to reduce the need to travel.

- 3.1.4 The Dorset Green masterplan has been developed to maximise opportunities for short journeys, both internally within the site and between the site and Wool. A critical element of this strategy is the inclusion of employment, residential and educational uses as part of a genuinely mixed-use development. The masterplan is supported by a comprehensive Travel Plan which seeks to reduce the need to travel, reduce journey distances, minimise single car occupancy and promote travel on foot by bike and by public transport. The Travel Plan has been reviewed and accepted in principle by Dorset County Council.
- 3.1.5 The Travel Plan for the Dorset Green masterplan quantifies the opportunities for internalised journeys due to the introduction of employment, education and residential development. It also examines the potential to strengthen links between Wool and Dorset Green, thereby reducing out-commuting from Wool and reducing journey lengths. The Travel Plan also suggests a wide range of measures such as smarter use of technology to reduce the need to travel as well as investment in public transport services and incentives to encourage travel by sustainable modes. The proposed improvements to pedestrian, cycle and public transport facilities would assist the development to meet ambitious future travel targets, but would also bring benefits to the wider Purbeck area. The Travel Plan that has been agreed with Dorset County Council illustrates how the Dorset Green site could be redeveloped for a mix of uses in such a way that it would generate no more single-occupancy car journeys than the maximum potential of the existing commercial buildings.

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that plans should take account of whether:

“the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure.”

The allocation of the Dorset Green site for mixed-use development would achieve this objective.

- 3.2 Have transport needs been properly identified and have those needs been adequately addressed?
- 3.2.1 Policy ATS (Implementing an Appropriate Transport Strategy for Purbeck) states that transport conditions in Purbeck will be improved through the implementation of the Purbeck Transport Strategy (PTS); however, the PTS only identifies infrastructure requirements to allow for the movement of people and goods. It does not include any policies or measures to reduce the need to travel or to reduce journey lengths.

- 3.2.2 Policy ATS also states that the impact of new development will be mitigated through financial contributions towards the implementation of the PTS. In principle this is a sound policy as it allows travel within Purbeck to be managed comprehensively and for investment to be focused on the promotion of sustainable modes of travel. However, such mitigation is still only a crude form of 'predict and provide' whereby the predicted number of journeys from any given development is then mitigated through the provision of pre-determined infrastructure improvements. Such a strategy would promote an on-going shift towards sustainable modes of travel but would not assist in reducing journey lengths nor reduce the need to travel.
- 3.2.3 As policy ATS is concerned with the delivery of a transport strategy for Purbeck rather than merely the provision of transport infrastructure, it should include a statement regarding the correct allocation of land to reduce the need to travel and measures to reduce journey distances.
- 3.2.4 The allocation of Dorset Green for mixed use development would deliver sustainable transport infrastructure and measures in accordance with the objectives of the PTS, removing the need for further highway capacity improvements, but would also have the added advantages of reducing vehicle kilometres and the need to travel.