

Purbeck Local Development Framework

Core Strategy Examination

Statement submitted by Savills on behalf of the Redwood Partnership on Matter 2: General Location of Development (Policy LD).

Respondent reference: 4948

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Matter 2: General Location of Development (Policy LD)

Issue 2.1 What evidence led to the inclusion of each of the settlements within each category? Does the sustainability appraisal support the chosen hierarchy?

1. The settlement hierarchy in Policy LD is based on the ranking of settlements set out in the Review of Community Facilities and Services Provision Background Paper (Purbeck District Council, May 2009). This ranked settlements according to the number of different types of facilities available, and was aimed primarily at categorising towns and villages as category A, B, or C settlements in accordance with the emerging RSS at that time.
2. Swanage and Wareham clearly function as market towns, with a full range of services and facilities. Upton is also recognised as a town in its own right, although it is less well provided for in terms of facilities than many of the Key Service Villages, as demonstrated by the ranking of settlements at paragraph 4.3 of the Core Strategy Background Paper Volume 10: Settlement Strategy, and its function is closely related to Poole with many residents travelling there for employment, leisure and shopping.
3. The hierarchy at the Key Service Village level does not fully reflect the different roles and characteristics of the District's settlements, or the potential for these settlements to accommodate growth in a sustainable manner, as highlighted in our response to issue 2.2.

Issue 2.2 Is the apportionment of growth between the settlements properly justified? Why are no settlement extensions proposed at Corfe Castle, Sandford and Wool which are all identified as key service villages?

4. The apportionment of growth between the settlements at the Key Service Village / Local Service Village / Other Villages with a Settlement Boundary level is not adequately justified and fails to meet identified housing needs and does not reflect the role and characteristics of the District's settlements or the potential to accommodate sustainable development.

5. In particular, the Wool area has a high level of services, good transport links including bus and rail services, and a significant employment site which is allocated for further development. The Wool area has few of the constraints to growth experienced by other settlements in Purbeck, as illustrated at Map 1 of the Core Strategy. It is uniquely placed to act as a sustainable and self contained community serving a wider rural area, and should be identified as a key location for growth in Policy LD.
6. The draft Core Strategy that was presented to the Council at the special committee meetings on the 5th and 12th October 2010 included provision for a settlement extension for 50 dwellings at Wool, with the location to be identified though the Site Allocations Plan.
7. Following discussion by Members at the 12th October committee meeting, the Council resolved to remove the proposed 50 dwellings for Wool from the Core Strategy as it was considered that the Purbeck Gate development had met housing growth requirements for the plan period. There is no evidence to justify this position. The site for the Purbeck Gate development was originally identified in the 1997 Purbeck District Local Plan Deposit Draft in order to help meet housing requirements to 2011. The site has since been taken forward through the various stages of the planning process and is now nearing completion. Housing need in the Wool area remains a critical issue, with 657 households currently on the housing register in the South West Purbeck area.
8. As part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy Pre-submission published in November 2010, the work commissioned by Purbeck District Council to examine the potential for additional housing development at several key locations in the District, including Wool, was published in the Additional Growth Scenarios Report (Footprint Ecology, 2010). This highlights Wool has the potential to accommodate additional growth in line with the Habitats Directive, and that with a range of mitigation measures, Wool could support higher growth up to an additional 1,000 houses. Instead of responding positively to the findings of this work, and further exploring the opportunities for growth at Wool as indicated in the 2010 Core Strategy Pre-submission, the Council has introduced further changes at paragraphs 6.1.3 and 6.1.4 of the 2011 Core Strategy Pre-submission document which reverse their position, do not provide any flexibility to allow the Local Plan to adapt and evolve to meet identified needs, and fail to address the future direction of growth for the District.

Proposed changes

9. Despite the evidence base, Policy LD has failed to make adequate provision for growth at Wool. The most appropriate strategy is to include a reference to the need for settlement extensions at Wool in order to meet identified housing needs. This should include an allocation for 50 dwellings within the Core Strategy, as supported by the findings of the consultation on *Where Shall we Build in Purbeck?* (page 16 of Consultation Results report, November 2010), with a further requirement to deliver a settlement extension of 1,000 dwellings at Wool (in line with the Additional Growth Scenarios Report) through an immediate review of the plan.

Issue 2.3 Have the proposed amendments to the green belt boundary been properly justified and has the Council's approach heeded the advice in PPG2: Green Belts? What are the exceptional circumstances that exist to justify such revisions? Has sufficient consideration been given to opportunities for development within urban areas and on other sites beyond the green belt?

10. Paragraph 84 of the NPPF advises that when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries local planning authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. This should include consideration of the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary.
11. The proposed approach of distributing new development to settlements both inside and outside the Green Belt has failed to give sufficient consideration of the opportunities for development beyond the outer Green Belt Boundary. Many of the settlements within the Green Belt lie within close proximity to the South East Dorset conurbation, and rely on the conurbation for employment, services and facilities, whereas certain settlements beyond the Green Belt boundary offer a good range of services and facilities and are well places to meet the needs of the rural parts of the District. For example, opportunities for sustainable development at Wool have not been adequately considered through the plan-making process, as highlighted in our response to issues 2.2 and Matter 15.

2.4 Paragraph 2.12 of PPG2 states that any proposals affecting green belts should be related to a timescale which is longer than that normally adopted for other aspects of the plan, in order to ensure that green belt boundaries will not need to be altered again at the end of the plan period. How does the Core Strategy address the possible

need to safeguard land? Should a review of the complete green belt boundary have been undertaken?

12. The availability of suitable and sustainable opportunities for additional growth at settlements located beyond the Green Belt boundary is an important consideration; provided the Core Strategy indicated that longer term growth can be directed towards these locations, there is no need for further alterations to Green Belt boundaries.

2.5 How and when will settlement boundaries be reviewed?

13. The timetable and mechanism for reviewing settlement boundaries is currently unclear. An immediate review of settlement boundaries should be undertaken to identify sufficient sites to meet identified growth needs beyond the level currently set out in the Core Strategy. The parameters of this review need to be clearly identified in the Core Strategy.

2.6 Bearing in mind the environmental constraints within the District is there sufficient flexibility within policy LD to ensure that the formulation of the ‘subsequent plans’ is not unduly constrained?

14. Policy LD has the effect of carrying forward existing settlement boundaries apart from the three locations where Green Belt reviews are proposed. The scope of the settlement boundary review to be undertaken in subsequent plans is not adequately defined and the approach is overly reliant on out-dated settlement boundaries that do not provide sufficient flexibility to meet the identified growth needs of the area; an immediate review of settlement boundaries is required to identify sufficient land to meet housing needs identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.