

West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan Examination

**Consideration of the need for additional text to refer
economic viability issues**

Arising in Matter 4



West Dorset District Council and
Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

At the EIP session on Matter 4 – Housing Policy HOUS 1-7 on Thursday 27 November, the Inspector asked if a general statement about financial viability and compliance with the NPPF would be useful.

In response to the Inspectors question, it is suggested that the following text is included in the Introduction Chapter after paragraph 1.4.2:

'Pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in decision-making. The plan as a whole has been subject to viability studies which have tested a range of development types throughout the plan area. With regard to individual developments, the councils will take a reasonable approach to requests to consider viability issues when assessing the level of on and off site contributions on development proposals and / or the need for enabling development. Each request will be considered on its own individual merits, particularly taking into account the need to deliver the site, the detailed financial situation, the length of time over which the project is planned, local circumstances and the requirements of the development plan.'

Suggested changes to the Plan

1.4 PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 1.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework recognises the international imperative to tackle climate change and finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which we live our lives. It makes reference to the three aspects of sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. And it states that the planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions.
- 1.4.2 The councils will take a positive approach when determining planning applications which reflects the presumption in favour of development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The councils will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. The councils encourage pre application consultation and discussion with applicants and agents prior to planning applications being submitted, enabling applications to be determined in a more efficient and positive manner.
- 1.4.3 Pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in decision-making. The plan as a whole has been subject to viability studies which have tested a range of development types throughout the plan area. With regard to individual developments, the councils will take a reasonable approach to requests to consider viability issues when assessing the level of on and off site contributions on development proposals and / or the need for enabling development. Each request will be considered on its own individual merits, particularly taking into account the need to deliver the site, the detailed financial situation, the length of time over which the project is planned, local circumstances and the requirements of the development plan.
- 1.4.4 Planning applications which are consistent with the local plan policies (and where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay where practicable, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.