



Purbeck Core Strategy Development Plan Document

Examination into the soundness of the plan

PURBECK DISTRICT COUNCIL RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM THE INSPECTOR REGARDING THE DUTY TO CO-OPERATE

Question 2

The Inspector has asked the following questions:

The Inspector has read the Council's Duty to Co-operate Statement. The only significant references to working with neighbouring local planning authorities are in section 2 which relates to the preparation of the draft RSS in 2006 and in the table in section 6.

The Draft National Planning Policy Framework advises that there should be evidence that Ipsas have successfully co-operated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts.

Could the Council outline what further liaison, if any, there has been with neighbouring authorities, in particular with regard to the implications (for example in terms of transportation and sustainability) of potential housing, retail and employment allocations in Purbeck. Among the suggestions in the Draft NPPF is a memorandum of understanding or evidence of an agreed position - has consideration been given to such an approach?

The Council responds as follows:

The Duty to Co-operate statement sets out a variety of examples of cooperation with other councils and other agencies. Council officers have not specifically requested meetings with neighbouring authorities to discuss Purbeck's housing retail and employment allocations. But, these proposals have been discussed with neighbouring Councils throughout the preparation of the Core Strategy as part of general cross boundary working. We would like to draw the Inspector's attention to sections, 3, 4, and 5 of the statement, which includes reference to other significant joint working with neighbouring authorities.

Section 3 (and section 6) refers to preparation of the Core Strategy and includes cross boundary working on the housing, transport, retail, employment, green infrastructure and mitigation of European protected sites. The Council works closely with Dorset County Council to implement the Purbeck Transportation Strategy (PTS). The PTS links in with the South East Dorset Transportation Strategy and transport strategy to the west of the county with the aim of improving transport across Dorset, Poole and Bournemouth. The PTS is currently under review.

Employment growth has been co-ordinated through the joint preparation on the Workspace Strategy. Holton Heath Industrial Estate was identified as a site needed in the period to 2016 to meet Borough of Poole's short term employment needs, due to a lack of sites during this period in Poole and the Purbeck Core Strategy supports this. The Workspace Strategy is currently under review and is being prepared jointly by local authorities in Dorset.

Officers contacted West Dorset District Council (WDDC) in 2009 to enquire about the sub regional role of Dorset Green Technology Park. We were informed that it isn't needed to meet employment needs in the Dorchester and Weymouth Housing Market Area. We have been given a similar response from authorities within South East Dorset where Bournemouth Airport is seen as the focus for significant employment growth.

Officers again met with WDDC on 20th March 2012 to discuss cross boundary planning issues, including 1,200-1,500 dwellings and employment growth at Crossways on the Purbeck District boundary. The railway station is in Purbeck and it would benefit WDDC if the Core Strategy includes reference to the strategic growth. It would be beneficial for both Councils to work together on a joint master plan for Crossways. It may be necessary for some development to take place in Purbeck, in terms of infrastructure and possibly housing. Therefore a reference is needed in the Core Strategy to enable this joint working to take place, subject to approval by Council. At this meeting WDDC again confirmed that employment growth at Dorset Green Technology Park is not required to meet growth at Crossways or elsewhere in West Dorset and Weymouth.

The Poole Core Strategy focuses on regenerating the town centre and large-scale green field growth in Purbeck District could compromise this. We met with Borough of Poole in 2008 to discuss the implications of 2,750 dwellings at Lytchett Minster and explained our reasons for not taking the allocation forward. Borough of Poole did not raise any concerns with us.

Section 4 refers to the joint Dorset Gypsy and Traveller DPD. Initial work by consultants has failed to identify any potential transit sites in Purbeck. Therefore cross boundary co-operation is essential to find a suitable transit site(s) within Dorset to meet county wide requirements.

Section 5 refers to the cross boundary impacts of housing growth in South East Dorset on European protected sites. Cross boundary cooperation is essential to ensure that the location of new housing and its mitigation is carefully planned as visitors travel up to 5km to visit heathland and 20km to visit the New Forest National Park, crossing administrative areas. The

Heathland Executive comprises Purbeck District Council, Borough of Poole, Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council, Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council, Natural England, and the RSPB. The Executive is responsible for the selecting and funding mitigation projects using pooled development contributions from across South East Dorset. These funds are not ring fenced to the authority where they are collected due to the cross boundary impacts. Without strategic mitigation, housing growth would not be possible. The Council is currently working with Borough of Poole to deliver a sub regionally significant SANGs at Upton Park Farm that is in the ownership of Borough of Poole, but lies within both Purbeck and Poole boundaries. These SANGs will aim to intercept visitors travelling from the conurbation to the rural heaths in Purbeck.

Another recent example is working with Borough of Poole, West Dorset District Council, the Environment Agency, Wessex Water and Natural England to agree the best way to mitigate potential harm caused by additional nitrogen from new development entering Poole Harbour. Again, this is essential cross boundary working to ensure that housing growth is achievable against The Habitats Regulations.

In response to the query about formalising the approach with a memorandum of understanding or similar, the Dorset Environment Managers Group (which is made up of senior managers responsible for planning from all the districts, the county and the two unitaries) discussed how to take forward the duty to co-operate at its last meeting in December. They discussed the potential for working with the Local Economic Partnership as well as each other to agree an approach. The group will be meeting again in April and will be discussing the potential for working up a memorandum of understanding.