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NORTH DORSET LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Issues and Options Consultation

27 November 2017 to 22 January 2018

Response Form

As part of the Local Plan Review (LPR), North Dorset District Council has prepared an Issues and Options Document for consultation. The Issues and Options Document, the Sustainability Appraisal and associated documents can be viewed online via:

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning/north-dorset/planning-policy>

Please return completed forms to:

Email: planningpolicy@north-dorset.gov.uk

Post: Planning Policy (North Dorset), South Walks House, South Walks Road, Dorchester, DT1 1UZ

Deadline: 5pm on 22 January 2018. Representations received after this time may not be accepted.

Part A – Personal details

This part of the form must be completed by all people making representations as **anonymous comments cannot be accepted**. By submitting this response form you consent to your information being disclosed to third parties for this purpose. Personal details will not be visible on our website, although they will be shown on paper copies that will be available for inspection by members of the public and other interested parties.

*If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name, Job Title and Organisation boxes in the personal details but complete the full contact details of the agent including email address. All correspondence will be sent to the agent.

Personal Details*		Agent's Details (if applicable)*
Title		Mr
First Name		Jonathan
Last Name		Coombs
Job Title(<i>where</i>)		Principal Planner
Organisation (<i>where relevant</i>)	Lightwood Strategic	Pegasus Group
Address	c/o Agent	████████████████████ ████████████████████ ████
Postcode		██████
Tel. No.		██████████
Email Address		████████████████████

Part B – Representations

Please answer as many questions or as few questions as you wish. There is a box at the end of the form where you can provide any comments that you may have.

Housing

1. Do you consider that a housing need figure of 366 dwellings a year is an appropriate figure on which to plan for housing growth in North Dorset? If not, please set out what you consider to be an appropriate figure and provide reasons for this.

Yes

No

If you have answered 'No' please set out an alternative housing figure and provide reasoning to support your answer.

Employment

2. Do you consider that additional employment land should be allocated for development at Blandford as part of the Local Plan Review?

Yes

No

3. Do you consider that there is a need to allocate additional employment land in any other part(s) of the District?

Yes

No

Spatial Strategy

4. Do you consider that the existing spatial strategy, as set out in LPP1, should be amended to allow for some limited growth at Stalbridge, beyond just meeting local needs?

Yes

No

5. Do you think that the Council should consider implementing any other alternative spatial strategy through the LPR? If so, please explain your reasons why.

Yes

No

See attached letter

Blandford (Forum and St Mary)

6. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Blandford?
- Yes
- No
7. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?
- Yes
- No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out what you see as the further issues.

8. What are the additional infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Blandford?

Please set out what you see as the additional infrastructure requirements.

Gillingham

9. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Gillingham?
- Yes
- No
10. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?
- Yes
- No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out what you see as the further issues.

11. What are the additional infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Gillingham?

Please set out what you see as the additional infrastructure requirements.

Shaftesbury

12. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Shaftesbury?

Yes

No

13. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out what you see as the further issues.

14. What are the additional infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Shaftesbury?

Please set out what you see as the additional infrastructure requirements.

Sturminster Newton

15. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Sturminster Newton?

Yes

No

16. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please set out what you see as the further issues.

17. What are the additional infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Sturminster Newton?

Please set out what you see as the additional infrastructure requirements.

Stalbridge

18. Do you agree with the conclusions regarding the areas of search identified at Stalbridge?

Yes

No

19. Are there any further issues relating to the areas of search that you think should have been considered as part of the assessment process?

Yes

No

See letter

20. What are the most important infrastructure requirements that are likely to result from potential future development at Stalbridge?

See letter

The Villages

21. Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach in relation to future development at the eighteen larger villages within the District or do you think that the Council should consider an alternative approach?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'No' please set out your alternative approach and information/reasoning behind this.

Affordable Housing

22. Do you consider that the existing reference to nine dwellings in Policy 9 of LPP1 should be removed from the policy to allow larger schemes to come forward where there is evidence of local need in excess of that which could be met by the provision of nine dwellings?

Yes

No

23. Do you consider that the existing policy approach, which seeks to prevent exception sites coming forward adjacent to the four main towns within the District, should be amended?

Yes

No

24. Do you consider that the Council should continue with its existing policy approach, which allows for a small number of market homes on rural exception sites?

Yes

No

Self-Build and Custom-Build Housing

25. Do you consider that the Council should facilitate the provision of self-build housing by any, some, or all of the following options?

Yes

No

a. Allowing serviced plots to come forward under the current development plan policies.

Yes

No

b. Updating Policy 7 (Delivering Homes) in the Local Plan Part 1 to promote the provision of serviced plots of land for self-build housing.

Yes

No

c. Requiring on sites above a certain size that serviced self-build plots should be made available as a proportion of the total number of dwellings permitted (with or without a minimum number being specified) on-site.

Yes

No

d. Allowing a proportion (up to 100%) of self-build plots on exception sites (with controls over the resale value of the properties).

Yes

No

e. Identifying land in public ownership which would be sold only for self-build development.

Yes

No

f. The use of Local Development Orders to facilitate self-build development.

Yes

No

26. Are there any other approaches that could be used to meet the demand for self-build housing?

Yes

No

If you have answered 'Yes' please outline the other approaches which the Council could pursue.

Ensuring the Vitality and Viability of Town Centres

27. Do you consider that the existing hierarchy and network of centres, as set out in LPP1, should be amended to include Stalbridge as a 'local centre'?

Yes

No

Important Open or Wooded Areas (IOWAs)

28. Do you agree that those IOWAs, which are protected from development by other planning policies or legislation, should be deleted?

Yes

No

The A350 Corridor

29. Do you consider that the land which is identified and safeguarded for the Shaftesbury Outer Bypass and the Charlton Marshall and Spetisbury Bypass should continue to be identified and safeguarded for such purposes?

Yes

No

Comments

If you have any comments about the Issues and Options Document or the Sustainability Appraisal please set them out in the box below. If your comments are in relation to a specific question or chapter of the Issues and Options Document then please state which question or chapter your comments relate to.

See letter

necessary

Continue on a separate sheet if

Do you wish to be contacted about future consultations relating to the Local Plan Review?

Yes

No

Signature: n/a [Electronic]

Date: 22/01/2018

If submitting the form electronically, no signature is required.

When completed please send form to planningpolicy@north-dorset.gov.uk

JCM/BRS.5093

22 January 2018

Planning Policy
North Dorset District Council
South Walks House,
South Walks Road
Dorchester
Dorset DT1 1UZ

BY E-MAIL

Dear Sir or Madam,

Representation on North Dorset Local Plan Review - Issues & Options Consultation

Pegasus Group has been instructed by our client Lightwood Strategic to submit representations to the North Dorset District Council Local Plan Review: Issues and Options Consultation.

As you are aware, Lightwood Strategic are currently seeking outline planning permission for residential development at two sites in Stalbridge; known as Land off Barrow Hill (ref: 2/2017/1094/OUT) and Land off Thornhill Road (ref: 2/2017/1095/OUT) for 98 and 60 dwellings respectively. Lightwood Strategic therefore wish to comment on the consultation in respect of their interests within Stalbridge.

Overview

The North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (LPP1) was adopted by North Dorset District Council (NDDC) on 15th January 2016 covering the period from 2011 to 2031. The Inspector who examined the LPP1 recommended several modifications to the plan to enable it to be adopted. One of these modifications was the need for an early review of the plan to take account of new evidence including housing need evidence detailed within the Eastern Dorset 2015 Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

The Inspector detailed that the review should be all encompassing in respect of its content and should seek to include those matters which were to form part of the Local Plan Part 2 document which will now not be pursued. Whilst a comprehensive review is being undertaken it is understood that given the Plan was adopted only two years ago the Council intends to roll many policies forward.

These representations respond directly to the questions raised within the Issues and Options document where relevant. The representations have been structured to directly correlate with the structure of the aforementioned document.

PLANNING | DESIGN | ENVIRONMENT | ECONOMICS

Housing (Question 1)

Policy 6 of LPP1 details that at least 5,700 net additional homes will need to be provided over the plan period. This equates to an average rate of approximately 285 dwellings per year. The latest monitoring evidence (March 2017) shows an existing shortfall of some 424 dwellings and NDDC acknowledge that they are unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply.

We understand that the Eastern Dorset SHMA which is based on the 2012 ONS household projections equates to an annual requirement of 330 dwellings, such an increase would result in an additional 900 dwellings to be found through to 2036 (new plan end date).

As the consultation document sets out, the Government is proposing to introduce a new methodology for the calculation of Objectively Assessed Need. When applying this to the North Dorset District, this would see a further increase to 366 per year which would result in a need to find an additional 1,620 dwellings. This equates to around a 30% increase.

The Issues and Options document proposes to proceed with this higher figure. We consider that it is positive that the Council is taking a pro-active approach. We are supportive of this, considering it prudent to take account of this higher figure that may well become required of the Council. We would however highlight that the new methodology has yet to be adopted and therefore a review of this figure might be necessary if there are any changes to the proposed methodology.

Spatial Strategy (Questions 4 & 5)

The Issues and Options document does not propose to change the current focus of growth of the spatial strategy which sees most of development directed to the 'four main towns' of Blandford (Forum and St Mart), Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton.

The only substantive change that appears to be suggested is the consideration of Stalbridge for a 'limited scale of growth'. The town of Stalbridge is clearly the most sustainable settlement of those outside of the four main towns, as acknowledged under the previous local plan evidence base and its singling out of Stalbridge amongst the 18 villages is reflective of this.

Stalbridge benefits from a primary school, a supermarket, local shops and services, two community facilities and a business park that provide for employment opportunities, with comparatively close national rail access than the vast majority of the district via the station at Templecombe within 3.5 miles to the north. The settlement therefore provides many of the services and facilities necessary to accommodate sustainable growth, while acknowledging that these will require further investment to cater for any growth.

It is therefore considered appropriate to consider Stalbridge alongside the currently defined 'four main towns' for growth.

We are also acutely aware that the Council finds itself in a position whereby it cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply which in part is directly related to the slower

delivery rates at the strategic allocations, including that at Gillingham. This is indicative of the current strategy being insufficiently flexible to meet the district's housing needs. Accordingly, we would favour a more permissible approach at the sustainable settlements within the district to ensure that the increase in numbers is more evenly distributed, which we believe would assist delivery rates.

As such, in response to Questions 4 and 5, we welcome the change in focus at Stalbridge.

Stalbridge (Questions 18-20)

As you will be aware, Lightwood Strategic's interests relate to land in Areas C and D of the 'areas of search' and no objection is held to the extent of the area of search in broad terms. However, we have concerns with regard to how this area is drawn in reflect of Area D and the knock-on effects of this. This is also addressed in part by the categorisation of areas discussed below.

The area of search is predicated on a distance measurement from the current defined settlement boundary. To the western edge this is arbitrarily extended by the town playing field's inclusion within the settlement boundary, despite their removal from the built-up area. This is of relevance, as in doing so, the listed 'Basel Bridge' Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) is artificially incorporated into the edge of Area D.

In terms of the defied areas we consider that the categorisation has been rather simplistically divided by the main roads extending from the settlement. From our experience of the Barrow Hill site we specifically consider that Area D would logically benefit from severance across Wood Lane into two areas. This forms a natural break in the landscape currently from west to east and currently hosts a number of dwellings outside of the defined settlement boundary. Failure to do so results in miscategorisation of constraints within the wider extent of Area D to this more logical narrower area of search and we have concerns for how this may impact future more nuanced assessment on areas for the growth of Stalbridge.

Nonetheless, we agree with the conclusion that areas C and D are suitable for development. Consultee comments have now been returned on both of Lightwood Strategic's ongoing planning applications and these demonstrate no technical constraints to delivery upon these sites within areas C and D. It is therefore of relevance to note the following with respect to the listed criteria within the consultation and its associated Sustainability Appraisal:

- (i) That all three ongoing applications for a cumulative 278 dwellings have submitted cumulative transport impact assessments that demonstrate growth of this scale can be accommodated without objection from the highway authority (including in relation to the A357).
- (ii) That the relevant portion of the Conservation Area at Area D is defined as 'Town Setting' and proposals that maintain an appropriate open edge can sufficiently mitigate the expansion of the settlement from its post-war developed (and comparatively hard) edge without harm to the historic core of the town or its setting. This has been demonstrated by the Conservation Officer commentary upon the Barrow Hill site.

(iii) Development at the Barrow Hill site has been established in submissions and commentary from Natural England and the County Ecologist to have no impact upon the 'Basel Bridge' SNCI.

Summary

We note that this is the first stage of the Local Plan Review process and that by and large the Council's existing policies are in conformity with national guidance. We particularly welcome the positive approach the Council seeks to take with pursuing a higher OAN figure which is in line with the Government's expected new methodology.

Whilst the District's main four towns (Blandford, Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton) remain the most sustainable settlements and deservedly the focus of development as a result. Stalbridge remains a highly sustainable settlement and therefore is appropriate for planned further growth resulting from the significant increase in housing numbers (around 30%) against an existing strategy which is failing to deliver appropriate numbers given the Council's failure in its 5-year supply (existing shortfall of around 400 dwellings). A more flexible and permissible approach should therefore be pursued over the existing strategy.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Coombs
Principal Planner



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