

**REPORT 18 South Somerset's scale of growth workshop discussion paper
March 29 March 2011 – Consideration of the scale of growth for South Petherton**

Introduction

This paper examines the potential scale of growth that might be delivered through the Draft Core Strategy at South Petherton in the light of issues raised by respondents. 4 responses in support of the scale of growth proposed at South Petherton were received. Issues arising from objections are set out and considered below.

Issues:

Housing

- 2,700 dwellings should be distributed throughout the Rural Centres as a proportion to existing population, to ensure balanced growth. 245 dwellings should be directed towards South Petherton
- Specific sites have been put forward in SHLAA and found to be suitable, available and viable therefore it is inconsistent to have no provision for additional dwellings in the Core Strategy
- Without more housing South Petherton will not flourish and continue to grow.
- To blame the poor internal road structure as a reason for South Petherton not to take more growth is wrong. SSDC has not done anything for the roads of South Petherton in fact it has made it worse when Bridge Way was ordered to be closed.

Employment

- Lopen Parish Council have noted that they believe the text to be confusing and should be amended to clarify that the 1ha of employment land is as already approved at Lopen Head and not an additional 1ha of land.

Response:

Housing

The Draft Core Strategy defines South Petherton as a Rural Centre. It identifies that 145 dwellings were committed¹ in the settlement (as at Autumn 2009) with no additional dwellings to be strategically allocated. The Annual Monitoring Report 2009-2010 shows that as at April 2010, 149 dwellings are now committed. This level of growth was considered suitable as there were concerns over the highway infrastructure, specifically the South Petherton junction with the A303, where the Highway Agency had previously expressed concerns over the junction being near capacity.

Respondents have suggested that development should be spread more evenly spread throughout the district and that around 430 dwellings should be accommodated in South Petherton. There are 149 dwellings currently committed in South Petherton this proposed level of growth would result in an additional 281 dwellings being accommodated within the settlement, a 188% increase on what is currently proposed.

Growth in the region of existing committed 145 dwellings was supported and promoted by the Parish Council through the Parish Cluster Workshops and can be accommodated without causing harm to the landscape.

¹ Includes completions 06/10, under construction, commitments not started, and allocated without permission.

Local landowners have identified land available and these sites have been put forward through the SHLAA process. This is a database of land that has the potential to come forward for development and is used to inform the Annual Monitoring Report. However this process does not take into account consideration of Planning Policy and many of the sites considered as suitable, available and viable under SHLAA may not conform to policy and as such planning applications for development would not be assessed favourably. There is therefore no inconsistency as suggested, although this does inform that there is the potential for a greater level of growth for South Petherton.

Despite earlier concerns over potential infrastructure deficiencies, it is considered that the proposed level of growth for South Petherton should be increased to 245 dwellings in line with Policy SS4 of the Core Strategy. This level of housing growth coupled with the employment growth will contribute towards creating a more sustainable and self-contained settlement. This revision is subject to the findings and assessment of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Recommendation:

Change in approach. Amend the total housing provision for South Petherton from 145 to 245 dwellings.

Employment

Noted

Recommendation:

No change