

PMB/MAG meeting 7th June 2011, 2pm -

Present: Martin Woods, Rina Singh, Cllr Ric Pallister, Cllr Tim Carroll, Andrew Gillespie, Helen Rutter, Cllr Sue Steele, Charlotte Jones, Kim Close, Dave Norris, Andy Foyne, Jean Marshall, Andrew Gunn, Colin McDonald, Debbie Moseley, Cllr Tony Fife

Ali Cameron, Rob Parr 3pm -

Jo Wilkins 2pm – 2.40pm

Margaret Bignell 2pm – 2.40pm

Jo Manley 2.40pm – 3.30

Liz Arnold 2.40pm – 3.30

Keith Lane 3pm -

Keith W Green 3pm -

1. Notes of last meeting

AF clarified 2 points - updated everyone re the Yeovilton figures, Bakers report did not specifically factor these in. AF asserted that the housing growth associated with the base would be additional to the District Housing total and would have to be taken into account accordingly in monitoring. AF also clarified that the figure of 17,200 dwellings was the District Housing target figure even though individual settlement target figures add up to slightly more than this target. The requirement figure of 17,200 dw from 2006 – 2028 would require statement in upper case policy for clarity.

2. Summary Report

agreed to use as agenda and address each individual report as it fell in the summary.

3 Housing density

AF explained target based policy in draft CS and suggested remove policy after Government density standards removed (and RSS). RP asked re Cala judgement. AF – responded that we would need to be clear that any policy we set aside as a result of the demise of the RSS would need to be rethought if Localism Bill is not enacted prior to our Submission document.

Density site specific and design led approach supported by representations received and borne out through research. RP asked if this is defensible in Devt. Management terms. DN explained legibility lost when trying to meet targets, can still refuse if inefficient use of land. Can also refuse on grounds of density if too dense, must fit character of area. JW cited appeal case on just this point

PMB/MAG AGREED delete draft Core Strategy Policy HG2 and amend EQ2 to provide an additional design criterion and make ref to PPS3 para 46 criteria on density

4. Affordable Housing

Proposed to remain as in draft Core Strategy as Target 35% on sites of 6 or more dwellings. Clarification needed in supporting text re types of affordable rents given recent Govt. statements and recognition needed that HCA funding requires affordable housing to comply to affordable rent regime (80% market rent).

CMcD explained what affordable rent is. RP said unlikely to build social rent in future, need to get roofs over people's heads by best method. AF clarified that social rent can still be sought where non-HCA funding used but that otherwise with HCA funding

affordable rent (market rent) would need to apply. Recognition that this needs to be reflected in supporting text

CIL will be charged on all eligible properties but proposed policy only seeking affordable housing on 6 or more. RP queried why not same – why don't we seek AH on every dwelling? AF explained Strategic Housing Land Viability Assessment already been used to test levels, in general in South Somerset sites with obligations and affordable housing are not viable below 6 dwellings. Will need to be checked again after IDP. RP disagrees with this in rural areas although accepts need a target and hopes that affordable housing goes into CIL in the longer term. CMcD pointed out that with CIL we would lose the ability to spread out housing through developments.

CJ asked about relationship to Policy SS2, which will allow development for the benefit of the community if the housing was all affordable or 50% affordable or at least 50% affordable. AF explained that SS2 would in future enable cross subsidy of affordable housing where a local sustainable case can be made and that this remains unchanged by the proposals on affordable housing.

AF also indicated IDP may affect viability and the recommendation on affordable housing target will need to reflect this and be reviewed in context of all other obligation costs – hence the recommendations at this stage were provisional on that review.

PMB/MAG AGREED: -

- Retain 35% target for Affordable housing subject to review in context of IDP report.
- Agree to threshold of 6 dwellings and amend area to 0.2 ha for all settlements
- Clarify in text nature of affordable rents (NB PPS3 has just been changed to reflect this)

5. PDL

Govt removed their own targets, Recommending 30% as have a lot of Greenfield allocations. RP questioned if reasonable. MW explained that has been a lot of intensification of housing, TF explained Yeovil is caught by lot of intensification of use of flats often without parking. AF indicated have to decide if want a target at all? RP do we need a target? AF logical to have if we want to maximise and keep pressure on for PDL as a priority over Greenfield

PMB/MAG AGREED retain 30% target for PDL

RP asked for clarification regarding the use of garden land – DN explained ministerial status didn't really change anything in reality!

6. Employment Land

AF set out background and reason to change to jobs rather than solely hectares of employment land and to better relate economic projections to housing growth. Bakers report robust and policy doesn't address land requirement for uses other than B uses. Other policies in Core Strategy are permissive enough and supportive to allow for these types of jobs coming forward.

Land allocation therefore solely for B uses but the jobs target is for both B and non-B uses. Looking at table, Rural Centres overall figure not split down as amounts too small generally. Figures for additional land dependant on finding new sites justified

through consultation with D Julian and R Murray principally on viability grounds. In smaller towns minimum viable 3 ha (Somerton, Langport, Castle Cary), 2 ha in rural centres.

AF two huge issues in policy document – huge range of jobs per hectare depending upon the nature of the employer and also have to make a qualitative assessment on choice of sites for different B classes and B1 B2 B8. Some towns hadn't got sufficient choice of land or variety of size as sites. JM explained looked at past distribution. TC - are you treating all market towns as the same? JM stated we've looked at past deliverability and trends and also looked at quality of land available, this feeds into the job numbers and the amount of land. Also had to consider the distribution of employment land and distribution of housing have to go together. Could have argued to take housing out of Market Towns and put into rural areas, that wouldn't be right as we shouldn't re replicating the past and should be moving towards more sustainable development in accord with the settlement hierarchy and its objectives.

MW what about the need to pump prime sites, question will be asked as to "how" are you going to deliver the sites? RP - Should we be doing things proactively? TF explained ED went out with money and bought sites? AF explained that's not for a Core Strategy but is for a future ED strategy incorporating things like Chard Regeneration. CJ indicated that she felt Town Councils are not thinking about employment in the same way as housing.

When queried re validity of producing more employment allocations AF indicated allocations take time, small allocations are not strategic in nature and therefore not appropriate to allocate. Policy SS2 is much more permissive to let Devt. Management approach sort it out.

RP happy to leave this debate for another day but Council do need to be more proactive to bring forward employment land. MW may need to use priorities in IDP to assist with pump priming. RP - it's a real chicken and egg situation, need housing to bring forward employment and vice versa. JM we did look at possibility of bringing forward some form of phasing to bring in employment and housing step by step, but this raises hope value and just brings whole market to a halt. IDP will also allow us to dictate where growth goes.

PMB/MAG AGREED

- Amend policy SS5, EP14 and text on individual settlements as suggested in revised policy text handed out at meeting but amend "deliver" to "encourage delivery of" in the first line of policy
- No land to be allocated for non B uses
- Amend SS5 to include jobs by settlement and supporting text.

7. Open Space Standards

AF - SSDC being unique in trying to put standards into Core Strategy everyone else seems to have cross referred to other strategies. This will mean the onus is on others to keep documents up to date. Very little objection to actual standards from the public consultation other than from development industry stating open space requirements making sites unviable. That is issue for IDP and CIL charges as viability will be tested. Those priorities will need to be considered through viability.

AC/RP found policy statements in current local plan have been helpful but can see that flexibility needed and can be supported through CIL. Background evidence still in place through open space strategy etc. LA explained that standards are seen as a

wish list whereas in reality won't ask for all types of open space. RP - but where will the parks of the future come from? Developer won't pay. HR maybe the way forward is through the neighbourhood plans and letting the communities themselves decide on opportunities. DM - current policy CR2 is very simple and straightforward open space is required and for SSDC to decide what type using standards. AF - again going to have to look at IDP and to prioritise where we put provision. RP - the benchmarks should set the land value. JHM - that's effectively what the IDP/CIL approach will do with development industry workshop assisting in setting the parameters.

PMB/MAG AGREED to take out standards from policy which must be generic in nature and will refer in supporting text to cross referred strategies, PPG17 assessment, open space standards etc. Recognised final view on standards must await the IDP.

CJ, but space is not something you can put back, it's not the same as a package of obligations and would like this to be noted.

8. Climate Change

KL explained need to reword and clarify elements of the policy and to define Zero Carbon. This area of govt policy is frequently changing and need to have policies reflecting up to date national position. DN asked if extra costs of renewable energy sources would be factored into CIL – JHM said yes.

Solar panel parks need to check end dates, think August 2011 not April 2012.

Flooding – need to clarify supporting text re sequential text.

Need to ensure Bracketts Coppice text correct and in line with habitat's regs.

LDS opportunity to look at renewable energy but just need the hook in Core Strategy.

RP asked about 10% reduction. KWG explained the proforma we currently use to demonstrate carbon reduction.

PMB/MAG AGREED 8 bulleted proposed amendments to Policy EQ1 as per Summary Doc presented

9. Appropriate Assessment

RSPB thought we had impact wrong and that visitor pressure associated with growth would have significant adverse impact on Somerset Moors and Levels SAC. Considered that RSPB arguments were over inflated and flawed and noted Natural England and SCC were happy that level of impact was not significantly adverse

PMB/MAG AGREED not to accept RSPB criticism of Appropriate Assessment and proceed with a sound Plan therefore in terms of level of overall growth and get this conclusion double-checked with Consultants who have yet to review responses in peer review.

10. AOB None

11, Next meeting Yeovil Urban Extension.