

LDF PMB and MAG Combined Group

Core Strategy Workshop 7

Report on the Area Workshops

Report by Jean Marshall, Spatial Policy Team Leader

Purpose of report

To inform Members of the comments raised by the 4 Area workshops held with Members in July 2011

Recommendation

That Members:

- 1. Note the comments made by the 4 Area Workshops, in particular those which differ from PMB resolutions
- 2. Consider introducing a Henstridge airfield policy and
- 3. retain wording of policy SS2 in the Core Strategy as prior agreed by the PMB

Background

Members of the 4 Area Committees attended workshops to consider the major issues arising from the consultation on the draft Core Strategy. Each Committee were invited to make comments on the major issues arising from the consultation which were:-

- Proposed levels of growth overall for the District, particularly for housing
- Balance of growth between rural and urban areas and between various settlements
- Locations/distribution and scale of growth particularly in Yeovil and the Market Towns
- Location and impact of the Yeovil urban extension (Area South)
- Employment provision, emphasis on job creation not land allocation

Each Committee concentrated on the proposed growth for individual settlements in their area and Policy SS2 for the rural areas. The agenda for Area South was slightly different being concerned primarily with the scale of growth in and around Yeovil and location of a proposed urban extension.

The notes of the 4 workshops are appended.

Generally there was considerable and consistent support for the draft Core Strategy and emerging changes related to members. In particular there was support for the settlement hierarchy, scale of growth in settlements, and directions of growth also.

Attention is drawn to the following points (generally) of variance from the emerging PMB position arising from these workshops:-

- Area North support the change of Langport's status to that of a Market Town and the proposed direction of growth
- Area East did not support the role or scale of growth for Castle Cary. They expressed concern over the non-allocation of employment land and queried the role of infilling in contributing to the scale of growth for Rural Settlements.
- Area East seek retention of the current policy for Henstridge airfield
- Area West deferred the decision on the overall scale of growth. They queried basing the distribution of growth on 2006 Nomis data and asked that past trends be studied. They also queried protection of railway interchanges for

freight traffic, the role of infilling and car parking standards and the need to review them.

- Area South raised considerable concern about the scale and location of the proposed urban extension. As a result of this 2 further Member workshops to discuss the methodology for the housing growth levels were held (see separate report to PMB/MAG Workshop 6 on 13th September – yesterday!). No agreement as to the location for the urban extension was reached although generally there was agreement that a single extension would offer more than several further key sites which would be less likely to deliver the infrastructure
- All areas bar South expressed concern that policy SS2 on rural settlements should not restrict appropriate infill development in rural settlements.

Appendix 1 Area Workshop Notes

Area South Workshop 04.07.2011 – Notes

Overall Growth

- RSS said 19,700 dwellings, but likely to go. Consultants Baker Associates have reviewed RSS figure and suggest 16,600 to 2026, roll forward to 2028 = 17,200.
- Figures have been challenged through Core Strategy consultation, so further work being undertaken to ensure the figure is robust, two workshops being held to present outcomes of this work (dates).

Distribution of Growth

- Based on the percentage of jobs, half the growth is attributed to Yeovil, with the other 50% distributed across the rest of the District. Therefore 8,600 dwellings distributed amongst the Market Towns, Rural Centres and Rural Settlements.
- Evidence demonstrates that there is a general need for employment land across all the Market Towns, Rural Centres and Rural Settlements. The Core Strategy doesn't allocate land, but shows the direction of growth for the Market Towns only and a preferred direction of growth for Yeovil based on sustainability appraisal.

Area South Comments:

- No logical link from Baker report to houses figure – not robust. No growth or decline in 2010. ONS uses 5 year figure for projections – 460p.a. cf Bakers figure not comparable (1200). Need more work done to justify housing numbers.
- Bakers doesn't quantify job growth clearly in report. Under most optimistic estimate 12,000 jobs, more likely that lower scenario 9,000 realistic.
- Response Output at end is level of housing well down from original based on economic growth. 19,000 was always too high (RSS enquiry) in danger of now going too low. Economic average post war is 2.8% and should continue with this.
- No evidence of natural change
Response +0.1 (100) increase shown on latest figures, unwise to extrapolate from ever changing figures, sensible to go with latest economic projections, tempered sensibly. Bakers are doing more work on latest figures. Bakers not just taken national figures, looked at local intelligence, projected from this. Tables on page 17 Bakers report show this.
- Economic recovery unlikely to go back to where it was. Death rate lower than was, ageing pop'n but still active in economy. How many of 17,000 new homes already got on line?
Response The slump in 70's followed by boom 80's. Bakers are specialists doing work, projections are difficult, host of info available to support the growth arguments. Bakers done both similar work for Taunton Deane BC and Sedgemoor DC, one - TDBC has been adjusted and we will see what happens in Sept to SDC's as inspector's report due.
 - Got to look at average. When will we get to point of being able to decide how much and where housing will go?
Response This workshop is shadowing PMB on doing just this. PMB comments will go to Area Committees in October. Today is about

giving some ideas if possible about housing growth. Bakers were appointed to do analysis work for us and that will be tested at Inquiry.

- This is an academic debate. On growth can't accurately predict this, occupancy changing with breakups of homes, still got housing register of over 6,000, where are they coming from if there is no growth at all? It matters if we don't get enough growth, does it matter if we allow for too much?? as developers won't build – market forces will dictate.
Response There will never be a "right" answer as the situation is ever changing, review it regularly.
 - Issue is where the growth goes? And that is what we need to concentrate on today
 - Wherever houses built they are occupied, people coming from somewhere, not coming from outside district lots of people living with family
 - Agree we need Affordable housing but do we need so much private housing?
 - Far too many houses to put in one ward area.

Housing Numbers (Rest of the District)

No comments specifically about distribution of growth across rest of district, general agreement that growth should be spread out.

Location of Growth for Yeovil

Main comments directed at the proposed extension south of Yeovil

- Putting too much growth in one area
- Can't make people live and work in a single location
- What about retailing going on industrial estates?
- Need to rethink the amount of housing going outside urban area
- PMB should be working with local representatives
- Evidence seems lacking as to why this scale and size of site.

Response If the form were to be kept tight, excluding area near riding school can get about half of required development on original Keyford site rest spread along south edge. PINS accepted the principle of Keyford development.

- Oppose development to South West
- Accept better sustainably to all be together but it isn't going to work as will have too great an impact, Split site option better
- No one has looked properly at topography, hills are a constraint, people will not walk to work
- employment will not go there and a huge number of vehicles likely.
- Lufton is better sited, has cycleway to Augusta Westlands

Response PINs in 2002 at Inquiry, quite clear Keyford is appropriate for growth. Need to get people to stay within the extension where possible, if can get 50% reduction in car journeys it's very sustainable. Lufton site a long way from town. Landscape architect looked at sites in S and SW.

- Got to get balance as to where growth goes. Keyford logical. More needs to be made of area between A37 and Barwick/Stoford as has existing community and infrastructure, buses etc. Agree some needs to go to south but to what extent?
- Presume not considering rugby club/showground. s there any exemplar of living and working on doorstep? Response Poundbury
- What Parish will they be in? Response Whatever Parish they are in. It will not be a “new parish”
 - Is 2,000 as far as you can go to south, if that is the case, you need to look elsewhere? Response If trigger any of these other, there will be delay as need to reconsult. Have to sort this by 2014 due to the coming of CIL. Cannot go back completely to drawing board. Draft IDP due by end of July. PMB will look at this September and review considerations. Will also look at additional transport modelling.

Would be logical to have some rolling workshops on housing numbers. Need Bakers to answer projections arguments

- Did PINs say road network at Keyford was ok?

Response Inspector content with road as it is

- Need additional work to be done on other options. Shouldn't be a clear choice at this stage. Options to expand other existing key sites. PINs also not comparing Keyford with other sites.

Response To get to Draft CS vast amounts of Sustainability testing to get this far. This will go to an Inspector and they will look at whether the proposed Cordon Sanitaire will work, but will not look at the specific site – will look at whether proper protection given. Wrong time to do masterplanning, that is not job for Core Strategy, got to establish direction not detailed location.

- Some housing got to go south. If there are serious flaws in assumptions better to know now.

Response have had housing numbers tested by consultants. There may be a difference of opinion If go with several sites you will not get sustainable community as will not be able to deliver community facilities in all the various locations. Will have to chose school here, health centre there etc. Will get incremental housing estates around Yeovil.

- Infrastructure also needs to look at hospital etc. What is critical size to deliver sustainable community? Response was 5,000 to get eco town money but studies demonstrated can get to about 2,500 and still deliver eco town standards.

AOB

Need to set up another workshop, with highway consultants, Bakers, etc.

Reminder about confidentiality at the present as an iterative process.

Area North Workshop 12.07.2011 – Notes

Overall Growth

- RSS said 19,700 dwellings, but likely to go. Consultants Baker Associates have reviewed RSS figure and suggest 16,600 to 2026, roll forward to 2028 = 17,200.

- Figures have been challenged through Core Strategy consultation, so further work being undertaken to ensure the figure is robust, two workshops being held to present outcomes of this work (dates).

Distribution of Growth

- Based on the percentage of jobs, half the growth is attributed to Yeovil, with the other 50% distributed across the rest of the District. Therefore 8,600 dwellings distributed amongst the Market Towns, Rural Centres and Rural Settlements.
- Evidence demonstrates that there is a general need for employment land across all the Market Towns, Rural Centres and Rural Settlements. The Core Strategy doesn't allocate land, but shows the direction of growth for the Market Towns only.

Area North Comments:

- Robust evidence required to demonstrate scale of growth, agreed to await outcomes of Baker workshops.
- Area North confirmed that they were generally happy with the split of growth between Yeovil and the rest of the District, as it was based on past trends.

Housing Numbers (Rest of the District)

Somerton

Role: Market Town still, but clearly one of the smaller ones.

Scale of Growth: 400 dwellings and 3 hectares of employment land.

Location: Suggesting the whole area from the railway line to Bancombe Trading Estate.

Area North Comments: Generally support the principle and direction of growth.

Langport

Role: In the Draft Core Strategy Langport was identified as a Rural Centre, but it is suggested that its status change upwards and Langport be identified as a Market Town.

Scale of Growth: Need to clarify the residual number of dwellings. 3 hectares of employment land.

Location: Previously direction of growth not shown, as it was a Rural Centre, now as a Market Town requires a direction to be identified. Area to the west ruled out due to historic environment and lack of sufficient land. Compared others through the Sustainability Appraisal and there is no real difference between them, though the area to the SE near the abattoir, caution should be exercised as it is near the church. The suggested area is very broad, can get quite a lot of growth quite close to Town Centre.

Area North Comments: Support the principle and direction of growth.

Martock

No changes proposed.

Area North Comments: Support.

Stoke sub Hamdon

Very early stages with the Duchy.

Area North Comments: Support.

South Petherton

Additional 100 dwellings proposed.

Area North Comments: Support.

Rural Settlements

In the past the scale of growth here has been considerable, Policy SS2 seeks to allow development, but only if it supports sustainable growth.

Explained that SS2 is trying to ensure that any growth is fully supported by local people and that market housing can be delivered provided it is supporting a community.

Area North Comments: Support.

Area East Workshop 18.07.2011 – Notes

Overall Growth

- RSS said 19,700 dwellings, but likely to go. Consultants Baker Associates have reviewed RSS figure and suggest 16,600 to 2026, roll forward to 2028 = 17,200.
- Figures have been challenged through Core Strategy consultation, so further work being undertaken to ensure the figure is robust, two workshops being held to present outcomes of this work (dates).

Distribution of Growth

- Based on the percentage of jobs, half the growth is attributed to Yeovil, with the other 50% distributed across the rest of the District. Therefore 8,600 dwellings distributed amongst the Market Towns, Rural Centres and Rural Settlements.
- Evidence demonstrates that there is a general need for employment land across all the Market Towns, Rural Centres and Rural Settlements. The Core Strategy doesn't allocate land, but shows the direction of growth for the Market Towns only.

Area East Comments:

- A diary of Core Strategy events was requested:
 1. Area Committees - October (IDP may change the situation).
 2. Full Council - 8 December
 3. Publication Plan - consultation Feb - March 2012
 4. Publication Plan and responses submitted to the Inspector for Examination (request for an examination will be made in January 2012).
 5. Planning Inspector will decide the issues and invitees (Sedgemoor Examination was 3 days).
- Robust evidence required.
- Concern over the fact that there are lots of Saved Local Plan sites which have been carried forward – questioned how does SSDC deliver these sites? Agreed this is a matter for SSDC to deal with and outside the remit of planning policy.
- Area East supported the split of growth between Yeovil and the rest of the District (50/50). AF to explore how SSDC housing growth target compares with other local district councils and report back.

Housing Numbers (Rest of the District)

Wincanton

Role: Market Town.

Scale of Growth: No need for additional housing, additional 5 hectares of employment land

Location: The directions of growth in the Core Strategy are no longer relevant (if no additional housing growth), but a direction of growth for employment land is needed. Suggested that Option 1 be the preferred option.

Area East Comments: Generally support the principle and direction of growth for employment land, but requested that the map be amended to delete a field to the southwest which is included in the officer's report.

Castle Cary

Role: Market Town still, but clearly one of the smaller ones, along with Somerton and Langport.

Scale of Growth: Reduced the scale of housing growth from 500 to 400, 3 hectares of employment land.

Location: Preferred Option is Option 1 - agreed to assess the viability of a road from Torbay Road to Station Road.

Area East Comments: Disagree with the role and scale of growth for Castle Cary, it is too much in comparison with Wincanton.

Concerned that no certainty over the delivery of employment land – concerns over failure to allocate employment land.

Bruton

Role: Rural Centre.

Scale of Growth: 120 dwellings, residual of 107. 2 hectares of employment land.

Area East Comments: General Support, but concerned about the impact of the scale of growth, and would like to see the housing phased.

Milborne Port

Role: Rural Centre.

Scale of Growth: Growth committed, residual of 89. 2 hectares of employment land.

Area East Comments: Support.

Ilchester

Role: Rural Centre.

Scale of Growth: 150 houses and 2 hectares of employment land

Noise contours have been revised.

Area East Comments: Support.

Rural Settlements

In the past the scale of growth here has been considerable, Policy SS2 seeks to allow development, but only if it supports sustainable growth.

Explained that SS2 is trying to ensure that any growth is fully supported by local people and that market housing can be delivered provided it is supporting a community.

Area East Comments: Support. Queried how many of the houses directed to the Rural Settlements would be small infill sites – officer's to explore.

Other Comments

Area East required a special case to be made for Henstridge Airfield and the existing Local Plan policy to be retained.

Area West Workshop 21.07.2011 – Notes

Overall Growth

- RSS said 19,700 dwellings, but likely to go. Consultants Baker Associates have reviewed RSS figure and suggest 16,600 to 2026, roll forward to 2028 = 17,200.
- Figures have been challenged through Core Strategy consultation, so further work being undertaken to ensure the figure is robust, two workshops being held to present outcomes of this work (dates).
- Any challenge to the figures needs to be robustly evidence based.
- The population projections used in the Baker report were based on 2008 projections, but new estimates have come out and we have asked Baker's to look at this and any outcomes.

Distribution of Growth

- Based on the percentage of jobs, half the growth is attributed to Yeovil, with the other 50% distributed across the rest of the District. Therefore 8,600 dwellings distributed amongst the Market Towns, Rural Centres and Rural Settlements.
- Evidence demonstrates that there is a general need for employment land across all the Market Towns, Rural Centres and Rural Settlements. The Core Strategy doesn't allocate land, but shows the direction of growth for the Market Towns only.

Area West Comments:

- Overall Scale of Growth – decision deferred until Baker workshops in August & September because need to check figures. Range of views expressed on both sides, needs clarification.

Housing Numbers (Rest of the District)

Chard

- Policy CV1 – Preferred Option 3 of the LDA work (3207 houses (2191 in plan period), 19 hectares of employment land (13 in plan period).

Area West Comments: Support.

Crewkerne

Role: Market Town.

Scale of Growth: 1028 houses, 928 committed with planning permission, majority of which on the Key Site.

Location: Saved Local Plan proposal – CLR.

Area West Comments: Support.

Ilminster

Role: Market Town.

Scale of Growth: 340 houses, 19 hectares of employment land.

Location: Town Council opposed to Draft Core Strategy direction of growth (Option 2) this has been revisited and their comments are justified, therefore subject to viability and highway concerns, recommend changing the direction of growth to Option 1 (Shudrick Lane).

Area West Comments: Support and agreed to a Transport Assessment being undertaken.

Rural Settlements

In the past the scale of growth here has been considerable, Policy SS2 seeks to allow development, but only if it supports sustainable growth.

Explained that SS2 is trying to ensure that any growth is fully supported by local people and that market housing can be delivered provided it is supporting a community.

Affordable Housing – some piggy backing is allowed to deliver affordable housing (market housing for affordable housing).

Development Areas will be deleted and below Rural Centres, everywhere will effectively be countryside, where presumption is against development – then Policy SS2 is applicable for development.

Area West Comments: Queried infill in Rural Settlements and the role for an infill policy.

Other Comments

1. Can Nomis past trends be double-checked to justify the distribution of growth, which is, based on 2006 Nomis data.
2. Can the protection of railway interchanges for freight traffic be included in the Core Strategy?
3. Can car-parking standards be reviewed?
