

**SOUTH SOMERSET LOCAL PLAN 2006-2028****EXAMINATION – POST SUSPENSION****BOYER PLANNING LTD ON BEHALF OF ABBEY MANOR GROUP****ISSUE 7: WINCANTON HOUSING (PMM7)**

1. In its representations to the Submission Local Plan and at the Examination, Abbey Manor Group (AMG) set out its concern that in effect there will be no new housing in the last 10 years of the plan at Wincanton. This has no regard to longer term development needs at the town and will absolutely restrict market and affordable housing at the town. This could not be considered a positively prepared aspect of the plan and is neither an effective or justified proposal.
2. During the Examination, the District Council, fairly and rightly, acknowledged the limitation of its approach and proposed the inclusion of additional worded in the supporting text that would enable a priority review of the housing requirement at Wincanton and if necessary the allocation of further land for development. It was initially proposed that this additional text was be included as a Minor Modification (M234).
3. The Examination Inspector’s Preliminary Findings refer to this as an “important” addition to the Local Plan, without which the strategy in the Submission Local Plan would not reflect an appropriate strategy for the town.
4. It follows therefore that AMG support PMM7.
5. However, that is not to say that the additional text is the most appropriate way of addressing the circumstance summarised above. AMG remain of the opinion that the strategic direction of growth should be returned to a ‘mixed use scheme’ rather than employment provision alone. This would not only provide additional housing provision at the town but assist with the viability of providing essential infrastructure to the Urban Extension.
6. Moreover, it is not clear what indicators the District Council propose to assess the strength of the housing need and demand at Wincanton through its on-going monitoring exercise which is referred to as the means of evidencing whether a priority review is required. Clearly, the circumstances at Wincanton differ to elsewhere, and thus general District- wide indicators will not be appropriate.

*OJ/12.812*