

EXAMINATION OF THE STOGUMBER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Examiner's supplementary questions

The response of Stogumber Parish Council (SPC) to my initial set of questions was sent to me on 30th March 2017. I am obliged to the Qualifying Body (QB) for the thoroughness of their response and I can now confirm that it will not be necessary to hold a public hearing. I am satisfied that, for the most part, I now have sufficient information to enable me to complete my examination of the plan and to come to conclusions on the extent to which the plan meets the basic conditions as set out in the relevant statutory provisions.

I note, however, that the SPC have not explicitly responded to my question 25 with regard to policies EC1 and EC3. Both policies are listed in the response to question 5 as having the bullet points deleted. Does that mean that the QB proposes the deletion of policy EC1 in its entirety? Also, the deletion of criteria 1-3 inclusive in policy EC3 would leave only criterion 4 relating to retail premises. A response to my question 25b. is, therefore, still required.

I have read with interest the QB's response to my question 17. The outstanding issues are not such as to warrant an oral hearing but some further written clarification is required. I am, therefore, requesting a response to the following supplementary questions:-

1. I note that in response to my question 10 and in consideration of the representation made by the WSDC on policy EN2 and the compatibility of the proposal for 5 dwellings to be permitted within two of the hamlets in the parish, the SPC have, by a majority vote, agreed that references to development in the hamlets may be deleted. Nevertheless, the response to my question 17a. might still suggest that 19 dwellings are to be provided over the 10 year plan period. Is that correct or should all such references now be to the 14 dwellings proposed for Stogumber village itself?
2. Related to the above, in both my questions 10e. and 17a. I sought clarification of how the figures of 14 and 5 had been calculated. In particular, I am interested in the scope for the identification of potential sites for the development of housing within the terms of policy EN2 as it is proposed to be modified. A partial answer is given in response to my question 6. What degree of confidence is there that potential might be significantly higher than for the 14 or 19 houses envisaged? As those figures appear to have no status in planning terms, there being no site allocations, need they be included at all?
3. In my question 17e. I raised a particular issue in respect of the justification for the provision in policy C3 that all new open market dwellings should be what is termed 'principal residence dwellings' with occupation controlled by condition. In response, the SPC have not sought to justify the policy on the

basis of the incidence of second home ownership but relate it to support for the viability of local services, including the school. These are seen as 'sustainability benefits' within the terms of WSLP Policy SC1. The following additional questions arise, which may need to be answered by the WSDC:-

- a. In terms of the consideration of planning applications for the 'limited development' of Stogumber under WSLP Policy SC1 what evidence would be required to 'demonstrate that it will contribute to wider sustainability benefits for the area'.
 - b. It is stated in page 20 of the plan that the federated Stogumber and Crowcombe schools are over-subscribed. There are proposals in the plan (policy C6) for the alteration and expansion of the school. What is the likelihood of such expansion taking place? What effect would it have on school capacity; is there a 'threshold' in terms of form-entry? Otherwise, as the schools are over-subscribed, would the provision of additional housing make that position worse? Are there proposals for additional housing development elsewhere within the school catchments which might affect the demand for places?
 - c. The reference in policy C3 is only to control of occupancy by 'suitable condition'. What is envisaged as the terms of any such condition? Would occupancy be controlled in perpetuity? How would such a condition be enforced? Would such a condition meet the '6 tests' listed in paragraph 206 of the NPPF?
4. It is possible that, after due consideration, I may come to the view that restricting new dwellings to 'principal residence' is not adequately justified and does not meet the basic conditions for that reason. Under that scenario would the SPC still wish to see a level of housing development over and above that which may come forward through the provisions of the WSLP?

A response to these supplementary questions is required by Friday 21st April 2017.

John R Mattocks

Examiner

04.04.17