

22 July 2020

Councillors Questions

Question from Cllr Peter Fuller

Where do we stand with those wanting to take advantage of the current housing land supply shortfall? Can we still rely on the current Core Strategy to turn down applications?

Officer Response:

Officer response: Members attention is respectfully drawn to briefing note No.20-20 dated June 2020 which provides information and an update on the five year housing land supply position.

In summary, the 2018 Housing Land Supply Statement (HLSS) which was published in August 2019 is the most up-to-date published HLSS. However, since August 2019, the 5 year housing land supply position has changed as a result of:

- (i) the 5-year anniversary of the Wiltshire Core Strategy in January 2020 and the move to a County-wide 5YHLS position calculated using Central Government's standard methodology of Local Housing Need (which is currently 2,024 dwellings per annum as a minimum), and accounting for;
- (ii) concessions made by the Council's monitoring and evidence manager to the deliverable supply during the Purton Road appeal inquiry in February 2020 (appeal ref APP/Y3940/W/18/3202551)

It should be appreciated that the 5 year housing land supply requirement comes with an additional buffer requirement to provide for choice and competition in the market for land. At present, based on past performance over the last 3 years, the buffer requirement for Wiltshire is 5%.

The current agreed position for Wiltshire as a whole, is around 4.62 years supply of land for housing.

The Council's monitoring and evidence team are working on producing an updated HLSS which will hopefully be produced in the coming months, and this will include the recently adopted Wiltshire Housing Sites Allocation Plan housing commitments to cover the period of 2019-2024.

In the meantime, and whilst there remains a housing land supply deficit, the Council cannot apply full weight to the strategic housing policies as set out within the Core Strategy (such as CP1, CP2 and the Community Area policies) as directed by Paragraph 11 (d) and footnote 7 of the NPPF.

However, this does not mean that the Core Strategy housing policies should be ignored or given little weight in any planning assessment.

Instead, the weight to be given to the strategic housing policies for each housing proposal requires a planning judgement to be informed by a full appreciation of the material planning considerations and merits of each application.

Application proposals for housing where the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits can, and should, still be refused. Similarly, housing proposals that would lead to unacceptable levels of harm to the green belt, local green space, the AONB, designated heritage assets should also be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Thanks

Kenny Green (Development Manager)