

CABINET MEMBER RESPONSE TO DETAILED MATTERS RAISED BY ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE 11 JUNE 2012

Extract from Draft Minute	Response	Proposed Change
<p>Clarity on the Community Infrastructure Levy was requested, and it was explained that the Council was awaiting publication of regulations from Central Government.</p>	<p>No further information required.</p>	
<p>Air Quality in particular locations was discussed. Core Policy 55 of the draft Core Strategy refers to the Air Quality Strategy giving it policy status and the need for decisions on development to take this into account. Recognition of the importance of other strategies has been made during the production of the draft Core Strategy.</p>	<p>No further information required.</p> <p>Although not within the minutes, clarity on the position in relation to AQMAs was requested.</p> <p>Local authorities have a duty to carry out assessments on air quality in line with the UK Air Quality Objectives which specify which pollutants are to be considered and how they should be measured. Where there is likely to be a breach of the objectives and failure of the air quality standard is found the Local Authority should declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and take steps to try to reduce the levels of pollution. The declaration of an AQMA does not mean that there will be a complete ban on development within that area. Rather it means that greater weight must be given to the consideration of air quality impacts and their mitigation.</p>	
<p>The amount of Member involvement was raised, and it was clarified that Members had been involved throughout the process including through signing off the consultation documents, with the last stage approved</p>	<p>In summarising the comments, the detail of comments will be subsumed into the general response Appendix 12 of the full Consultation Report, although still a summary, contains more detailed comments on who responded</p>	

<p>by Council. In addition, all Area Boards had received presentations on the emerging Core Strategy during the course of its preparation.</p> <p>The Committee then raised that in the appendix summarising the consultation document, representations from Members had not all been included, and it was firmly recommended that it would be appropriate and preferred to do so. In response it was stated that more detailed consultation responses were available on line.</p>	<p>and what they said than the overview provided in the Appendices to the Environment Select Committee and Cabinet reports.</p> <p>The full responses have been considered by Officers and informed the proposed minor changes to the draft Wiltshire Core Strategy. These can all be accessed on the Council's website and are publically available.</p>	
<p>Clarity on renewable energy policies, such as wind farm separation distance, was raised.</p>	<p>Core Policy 42 includes a requirement for standalone renewable energy proposals to consider residential amenity. Separation distances are one of the criteria that can be considered.</p>	
<p>Core Policy 47, 'Meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers', was raised as regards public perception of specialized treatment securing sites in the countryside, which was clarified as a governmental direction.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>	
<p>The use of artificial administrative boundaries such as the Trowbridge Community Area as a basis for planning and development strategies was raised.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>	
<p>The status of the Regional Spatial Strategies was sought. It was stated that they were still in place until formally revoked, which the government could do at any time, but officers felt they had diminishing weight attached to them ahead of abolishment due to the more up to date evidence on which the Core Strategy is based. Irrespective of revocation, the Core Strategy when adopted would carry greater weight.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>	
<p>With regards to references to Area of National Beauty (AONB) within the Core Strategy, it was suggested that</p>	<p>Amend Proposed Change 21 of Appendix 1 of Cabinet Report to clarify which AONB is being referred to. This applies to all</p>	<p>Yes</p>

<p>the draft was not always clear in differentiating which AONB was being referenced.</p>	<p>Community Areas other than Westbury, Trowbridge, Salisbury and Melksham.</p>	
<p>The companion Infrastructure strategies referred to within the draft Core Strategy was discussed. It was suggested that the strategies did not provide extensive solutions to potential infrastructure concerns, and that either they should be developed further, or the Core Strategy clarify where solutions were not to be contained within the Infrastructure Strategies. In response, it was stated that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is a live document and would continue to be developed and inform decision making as new evidence is prepared including the detail within Transport Strategies for the Principal Settlements. Officers stated that the infrastructure work underpinning the Core Strategy had shown that there were no showstoppers to development proposed.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>	
<p>Consistent treatment for potential sites for railway stations was raised with reference to Core Policy 66, and it was suggested each Area Strategy includes reference to aspiration for development or improvement of railway stations, rather than specific reference of only a few within Core Policy 66. It was agreed that where stations are included within Core Policy 66 they should also be referred to in the Community Area Strategies.</p>	<p>The following changes are proposed:</p> <p>(i) Amend Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area Strategy at paragraph 5.99 to include reference to the promotion of a railway station at Royal Wootton Bassett consistent with Core Policy 66.</p> <p>(ii) Amend penultimate sentence of paragraph 6.168 to read: <u>“Subject to the provision of suitable stopping train services, priority will be given to new stations at Corsham and Royal Wootton Bassett and an improved service station at Melksham.”</u></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>The increase in out-commuting as a result of plans within the draft Core Strategy in locations such as Chippenham was raised. It was stated in response that although the intention is to address out-commuting for</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>	

<p>the county, it is acknowledged that commuting will still happen although the level can be influenced through the level of jobs and housing provided.</p>		
<p>In response to queries, it was stated that officers consider that predicted levels of transport increase should be able to be absorbed within those areas, but some Committee members expressed scepticism at this.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>	
<p>In response to queries, the Cabinet Member stated that the Core Strategy would encourage developers to bring site allocations forward for particular uses and would hope that developers would not sit on sites for years.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>	
<p>The identification of sites at Chippenham which have raised local objection, as against alternative local sites, was discussed. The Cabinet Member and Service Director stated it would be very difficult to reconsider other sites at such a late stage when the judgement of officers is that the sites identified are still the most appropriate. All sites for development had been considered, and that concerns/objections were presented for all sites. Specific discussion of the Hunters Moon site in Chippenham as an alternative to Rawlings Green took place. The Cabinet Member promised to inform the Committee of the details of objections to the Hunters Moon site at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<p>Having reviewed the comments submitted there are few representations explicitly supporting the Hunters Moon site as an alternative location to the Rawlings Green strategic site with no clear support from the local community.</p>	
<p>The designation of Principal Employment Areas (PEA) within the Strategy was questioned, specifically in respect of Mere, where the local member felt a recent major development merited note, and also regarding</p>	<p>The reference to one bedroom dwellings is taken from the South Wiltshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2010), which identified a total requirement of 48 affordable 1-bed dwellings to be provided in the Mere Community Area. This has</p>	

<p>provision of one bedroom homes for Mere. It was clarified that the site in question in Mere did not meet the technical definition for a PEA, but that other encouragement within the place would support the retention of employment at the settlement.</p>	<p>been superseded by the Wiltshire wide SHMA (2011), which supports the policies contained within the Wiltshire Core Strategy including Core Policy 45 (Meeting Wiltshire's housing needs). While the Wiltshire SHMA recognises the need and demand for to provide 1-bed accommodation in Wiltshire this is not prescriptive at the local area and is informed by local evidence available when determining planning applications.</p>	
<p>The impact of the consultation and response to views of the public was raised.</p>	<p>The Consultation Output report provides a comprehensive summary of the comments received and the changes that have arisen following consideration of these.</p>	
<p>Concerns were raised about the development of former and current agricultural buildings within the draft Core Strategy, and it was agreed that the title of Core Policy 48, 'Supporting Rural Life', was not reflective of its policy objective and that Core Policy 2 also provided for development to take place within villages in the rural area supporting rural communities and could be revised.</p>	<p>Paragraph 6.61 explains the approach taken to support rural communities outside of identified settlements. Cross referencing to Core Policy 2 is required to clarify the approach to development within small rural settlements.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Comments were made about inconsistent classifications of settlements as single urban entities or separate communities. Specific reference was made to the need to put in protection for the land between Wilton and Salisbury to maintain separation, and querying of the status of Seend and Seend Cleeve as separate entities, but Melksham and Bowerhill as a single urban area.</p>	<p>The Strategy recognises the spatial distinctiveness of different places. It acknowledges that while there are strong functional relationships between Melksham and Bowerhill, requiring these places to be considered together for the purposes of the strategy, that each has individual characteristics that should be protected where practicable.</p>	
<p>Concerns were raised regarding the vulnerability of communities when the Core Strategy was approved before neighbourhood plans were in place, resulting in lack of protection from unwanted development. It was stated that it was hoped neighbourhood plans would be</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>	

<p>commenced in place the market towns (where strategic sites are not allocated) and local service centres within the calendar year. Officers acknowledged that funding of neighbourhood planning within communities is an issue and that provision is also made for the Council to prepare a site allocations develop plan document if necessary to help manage growth appropriately.</p>		
<p>The definition of Brownfield sites within the draft Core Strategy was queried. It was clarified the definition as contained in the National Planning Policy Framework had been utilized and would be distributed to Members.</p>	<p>Definition of 'brownfield sites' as referred to in Proposed Change 111, as follows:</p> <p>Previously developed land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation ground and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape on the process of time.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>The Committee referenced the recent presentation of a long term climate change projection report and potential impacts for the county, and raised whether the Core Strategy should make reference to the predictions as they impacted on strategic plans. It was noted that there remained scepticism regarding the long term climate change predictions by some members and officers stated the Core Strategy responds to the issue of climate change.</p>	<p>No further response required.</p>	

