

Planning Policy

From: Judy Venables <.....>
Sent: 13 September 2018 11:00
To: Planning Policy
Subject: TVBC Response to Issues & Options_1808
Attachments: TVBC Response to Issues & Options_1808.pdf

Dear Sir/Madam – please find attached my response to the Issues & Options Consultation Document.

Regards

Judy

JUDY VENABLES

Tel: .

Email: _____

Submitted by: Mrs Judy Venables Email: _____

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Q1	What is good about living and/or working in Test Valley?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has a good balance of urban and rural areas. Although some of the architecture in Andover leaves a bit to be desired, Romsey town centre has retained it's character. Some of our villages are extremely pretty and show the real history and character of the Test Valley. • There is an abundance of green space. • Very good lines of communication: A303; A34; M3; M27; rail links; proximity to Southampton Airport.

LIVING IN TEST VALLEY

Q8	Do you have any comments on the approaches suggested above?
	<p>I am broadly in agreement with the approaches outlined in Paras 5.8 – 5.26 and offer the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Para 5.9</u> - I agree with the national policy that development should be distributed in a way that: reduces the need to travel; promotes regeneration of previously developed land; promotes and retains existing services; and supports rural areas. However some of these may, in reality, be mutually exclusive, eg reducing the need to travel (to what?) could lead to increasing the built area footprint. Over-riding this is the need to keep a clear distinction between what is classified as an urban and as a rural area. • <u>Para 5.12</u> - I agree that housing in rural areas is becoming increasingly unaffordable to those on <i>lower incomes</i> (the definition of “families” and “young people” makes a judgement about their ability to afford to buy/rent in a rural area – some may well be able to afford to do this). And I would also suggest that a definition of “lower incomes” is needed so that it is evidence-based (otherwise it may be perceived as a subjective descriptor). • <u>Paras 5.13 and 5.14</u> – it is beneficial to maintain a mix of people of different age groups within a community; I support the national planning policy that aspires to enable people to live in the communities with which they have a connection. This could partly be achieved by allowing older folk, who live in large houses with large gardens, to downsize by building a property appropriate to their needs in part of their garden thus releasing the larger house for occupancy by younger folk/a family. • <u>Paras 5.17 – 5.20</u> – the distribution of development in rural areas is always a sensitive issue. The current strategy needs amending to allow the possibility of appropriate development (both style and size) in even the smallest of villages – approval processes can be used to veto those proposals that are inappropriate. The fact that a parish council has chosen not to participate in the Community Led development process should not penalise the submission of applications from within that parish. • <u>Paras 5.21 – 5.23</u> – whilst the proportionate distribution [of the housing requirement] across parishes has some merit it could lead to anomalies, especially in very sparsely populated parishes, eg if the parish's population is significantly less than 1% of the Borough's total population this would lead to significantly less than 1% of the new development, eg a parish with 120 on the electoral roll = 0.09% of the projected population for 2021 which equals half a house per year (or one house every other year). This could lead to either no development at all, or an unseemly rush to be first in the queue with an application!

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Para 5.26</u> – in small rural communities a view needs to be taken on the difference between small developments, eg up to 10 dwellings in a suitable rural location (perhaps the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings) versus an application for one dwelling in a large garden (for the purposes of downsizing whilst retaining community links).
Q9	How should the settlement boundaries be defined in the next Local Plan?
	I think the current approach to Settlement Boundaries is about right. But I believe that every village should have a Settlement Boundary as the impact of NOT having such a boundary is such that it appears to preclude any development at all. If there is a Boundary then applications for, eg downsizing type applications (for older people), stand a chance of approval, and those for inappropriate developments can be refused using the current processes.
Q10	Do you think we should continue with seeking up to 40% of new homes to be affordable, or should we change the percentage?
	The problem with “affordable housing” is how to ensure it remains “affordable” beyond the first owner! The term “affordable housing” has also received bad press in terms of perceptions about who occupies such properties, and can encourage NIMBY-ism from existing residents.
Q13	How should we meet the requirement for Self Build plots? Should it be as part of sites over a certain threshold or separate sites?
	Not sure what is meant by Self Build housing? Is it when an individual physically builds the dwelling themselves? Or is it a new individual dwelling which is not part of a larger development?
Q15	Should the Council change its approach and set out a requirement that certain sites should provide for the needs of such groups as the elderly?
	<u>Para 5.39</u> – It is clinically proven that allowing a person to remain in their own house for longer means that they will live well for longer. And there is a definite need to have planning policy that can ameliorate the problems currently experienced with Adult Social Care (and which are projected to get worse) where “frail elderly” remain in hospital when they are not clinically ill because their home environment is not conducive to returning there; thus they deteriorate further. If planning policy were to allow folk to downsize within communities with which they already have close links this would enable them to live in properties with which they could cope as they become increasingly less able. And it is said that one should move to a more manageable property before it is actually necessary. So perhaps the first issue is to define what is meant by “elderly”? If an application demonstrated that the dwelling would have the needs of individual(s) in mind as they became less able (even if the applicant appeared to be “young” at the time of the application), and was either sympathetic to the style and type of dwellings in the locality or was of exceptional/sustainable design/construction then I believe that application should be treated sympathetically. This could be achieved either by having a quota as part of a larger development or, predominantly in rural areas, by allowing individual builds within village Settlement Boundaries, eg in larger gardens.
Q19	Do you think we should establish internal space standards for future homes?
	No – to have a third set of standards over and above those contained in Building Regulations and those adopted by the Government would be confusing.

Q21	Should the Local Plan set out a definition of rural worker? And if so what should it include?
	There is a difference between a land-based rural worker and someone who merely works in the rural area. The former may require employment-related accommodation, whereas the latter may have a home office from which they work. To attempt to define "rural worker" will be extremely tricky – the use of the phrase "land-based" (as is used in the educational sphere) may help to categorise relevant sections of the community. Perhaps a conversation with Sparsholt College would help? Or with the Country Landowners Association (CLA), the Regional Office for which is based in Andover, or the NFU, the regional office for which is in Petersfield.
Q22	How do you think we should best meet Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople's needs?
	All I can say is "Good Luck" as this topic generates much emotion on both sides!!
Q23	Do you agree that we should have a specific policy on health and wellbeing? What sort of issues do you think it should cover?
	Yes. Anything that would help in the prevention and reduction of obesity, diabetes and poor dental health. And anything that would promote healthier lifestyles. Folk will still source their various addictions but the Council must be seen to be playing its part in helping to address the health issues that are fast becoming a national epidemic. Public Health will be able to advise I'm sure!
Q24	Should some types of facilities and services be given more protection than others?
	Community involvement is critical to this as there is no point in preserving a community facility if it is little/under used. And such buildings fall into a poor state of repair, fast becoming an eyesore and a health and safety hazard. In involving the local community it should be incumbent on them (the Parish/Town Council) to demonstrate that they have consulted widely amongst their community before decisions are made.
Q25	Should we continue to protect all existing community facilities and services?
	No – see Q24

COMMENT

I can see no mention in this document of anything relating to digital technology. The need for fast and reliable broadband is critical, both now and as you plan for the future. I have no idea how this can be reinforced through the planning process but it is acknowledged that the lack of such infrastructure is a real limiting factor particularly in rural areas. So please do whatever you can to make this a reality for those of us that do not live in more urban areas.

