

Planning Policy

From: Charlotte Cross
Sent: 13 September 2018 22:06
To: Planning Policy
Cc: Charlotte Cross
Subject: TVBC Consultation- Issues & Options Paper

12th September 2018

To whom it may concern,

RE: Issues and Options Paper

Thoughts on the issues and options public consultation paper can be found below:

What is good about living in the test valley?

- Excellent commuter links (both road and rail) to employment hubs such as London, Southampton, Basingstoke, Reading, Swindon, Portsmouth and Bath
- The diversity of the area from attractive towns such as Stockbridge and Romsey to larger settlements within a half an hour drive with excellent leisure, retail facilities

What could be improved about living and working in the Test Valley?

- Additional housing to satisfy the demand which compliments the local character of each settlement rather than a one size fits all approach.
- Improving Andover town centre to make it a shopper destination rather than just an essential shop location. There has been a significant amount of development around the town over the past 10-15 years with little improvements to the town centre facilities and as a result residents are choosing to shop in nearby towns as Andover does not offer the variety and quality of shops required by today's shoppers.
- Make better use of the smaller main line railway stations (being a sustainable mode of transport) by developing around these areas opposed to loading all the development on the edge of current town settlements where the railway station is as extremely congested at peak times.
- Business rates placed upon retailers (particularly small and medium enterprises) are crippling their viability and need to be reviewed to ensure towns such as Andover are given the opportunity to be able to thrive again.

What should the local plan aspirations be for the next 20 years?

- Meet the housing demand which allows locals to continue to live and work in those areas in which they grew up
- Spread the proposed development between all the settlements creating less significant environmental and social impact. In turn this would assist with building back up the communities in smaller settlements which struggle to keep their community assets viable eg. Village halls, pubs, churches, shops etc..
- By increasing the number of mixed type properties in all settlements this would increase the amount of people who would live there as their primary home (creating communities) as opposed to second home owners who primarily own period properties and do not engage in village activities.

Are there any other approaches to distributing development across the borough that we should consider? No.

Do you have any comments on the approaches suggested above? The "proportion distribution to parishes" method would have less significant impact (both environmental and social). Merely adding the number of required housing units on to existing sprawling towns is not the answer to developing houses which both meet the demand of today but also become a legacy for tomorrow whilst adding value to a community.

How should the settlement boundaries be defined within the next local plan? It is my view that the Council need to think more laterally when considering "what is a settlement?". There are

settlements of in excess of 150 people which are located less than 2 miles from a mainline London train station, 0.5 miles of the A303 and have the following; church, large village hall, school within 1.4 miles, leisure facilities with a café within the village which have been classified as “open countryside”. How can this be justified? The national planning policy aims to improve the rural economy and deliver homes and support facilities to enable people to live in the communities they have connections to. This is not happening currently and won't if the Council continue to not think outside the box in terms how developments could meet the needs of rural people and replenish those communities which are dwindling.

Do you think we should be seeking up to 40% of new homes to be affordable or change the percentage? It should depend upon the type of development being proposed, up to 40% is appropriate for larger scale urban developments. However, if up to 40% affordable is insisted on smaller scale rural developments it has a major impact in terms of the schemes viability and design.

What should be the trigger for seeking affordable housing? It should be a sliding scale up to 40% for large scale sites. Developments of less than 10 housing units should not be required to deliver affordable housing.

Should there be a policy which covers dwellings in the countryside of exceptional quality? Definitely, these exceptional quality developments add character to the countryside and should be encouraged and they are tomorrow's history.

Should we include a policy which requires a mix and type of housing or should the housing market inform what mix and type of housing to build? The housing market should determine the mix and type of housing not a policy. A policy would mean that the area would end up with further homogenise bland developments which only benefit the major house builders and enable the Local Authority to meet their housing trajectory targets. People deserve better places to live and work which enhance their health and wellbeing.

Should we restrict the size or replacements and extensions to dwellings in the countryside to keep a range of dwellings? No, each dwellings proposal should be taken on its own merits.

Do you think we should establish internal space standards for future homes? No, it should be market driven. Establishing internal space standards is likely to lead to further homogenised bland developments adding no character to an area be it urban or rural.

Should the Local plan set out a definition of rural worker? And if so what should it include? Yes it should be broader than it is currently by adding the following as a minimum; agronomists, land agents, rural mechanics, grain merchants, milk recorders, farriers, gardeners and inclusive of all countryside diversification jobs egg. Clay shooting schools, equestrian, farm shipsets...

Should we allocate more land to enable more choice and flexibility to the market? Yes, with a mix of smaller sympathetic developments (adding further character to a settlement) opposed to larger homogenise bland new settlements.

What provisions or controls should be made relating to people working from home? Working from home should be encouraged as it is a more sustainable way to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. In addition it places less stress on the employee and the road network resulting in less road repairs which are funded by the Council. What purpose would it serve by controlling home working?

Should we continue to retain the principle of Local Gaps? Should we define specific boundaries or a more general policy which aims to avoid coalescence? It is agreed that local gaps are important to ensure coalescence does not occur. We should be supporting communities not joining two settlements together with the heart of each settlement being lost and in turn each losing their identity. There should be a general policy which aims to avoid coalescence opposed to an inflexible specific boundary.

Should the Local Plan identify and designate local areas of green space or should this be undertaken via Neighbourhood Plans? The Local Plan should identify areas of green space to ensure the “NIMBY” affect doesn't occur.

Should the local plan encourage energy efficiency when constructing new development?

Definitely, new homes should be required to include at least one energy efficiency measure (solar thermal panels, solar photovoltaic, ground source heat pumps, biomass, rain water harvesting, air source heat pumps etc.). This is particularly important given no new large scale solar farms have been approved for the past few years meaning the UK is heavily reliant on other countries for the UK's energy supply.

Comment: It is my understanding that the evidence should be relevant and justified. The evidence base which is included in para 3.21 of the document is not the position of today with a significant shift of in-migration to the Andover area for work. I would appreciate sight of the next public consultation paper as the Local Plan process progresses.

Kind regards,

Email address: _____

