

# WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

## RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE INITIAL SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

### ISSUES WHERE ALTERNATIVES HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD FOLLOWING CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT OPTIONS FOR THE MDD DPD

**Issue 3 (Size of dwelling sites to be allocated) - Alternative option following consultation - No minimum figure in Limited Development Locations. Should account for developments of 1-4 dwellings.**

We agree with the alternative. All sites from 1 dwelling upwards to be counted, and total numbers in specific areas all count towards infrastructure needs.

**Issue 6 (Appraisal of residential development on unallocated sites) - Alternative option following consultation - Sites should be decided on merit. No need for policy.**

We agree with alternative. All sites to be decided on merit and infrastructure needs.

**Issue 11 (Boundaries for Development Limits) - Alternative option following consultation - To provide flexibility for alternative residential 'opportunity sites' within the countryside.**

We agree with the original MDD suggestion. However, flexibility is a useful option provided that it is not used to increase overall numbers of dwellings or additional sites.

**Issue 15 (Housing Mix and Internal Space Standards)**

**(a) Alternative option following consultation - To not have a policy and to let market decide.**

We disagree with the alternative option of letting markets decide, and prefer the original MDD suggestion regarding policy.

**(b) Alternative option following consultation - To include a flood risk policy including provision and maintenance of SUDs and other water management issues.**

We are not sure why Flood Risk Assessment is relevant to Housing mix since it applies to every location. However, due to short notice of flood possibilities locating disabled or elderly persons/dwellings in high risk flood areas would be inappropriate.

**Issue 37 (Employment within the countryside, including rural diversification) - Alternative option following consultation - To have a more flexible policy to encourage small scale rural enterprise/housing for local communities and not solely seek to protect character and amenity.**

We agree with the alternative allowing small scale local enterprise to flourish.

**NEW SITES WITHIN THE WOKINGHAM TOWN BOUNDARY THAT HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD  
FOLLOWING CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT OPTIONS FOR THE MDD DPD**

**3WK189 Mulberry business park**

Whilst the MDD DPD evaluation indicates convenience to town and relevant services and would be developed on a brown field site, placing residential development in a location which is better suited to and already established as a recognised employment site deprives longer term employment opportunities. Would envisage problems with car parking due to visitor activity to business premises plus parking restrictions (plus residential? )

**3WK190 Mulberry business park and surrounds**

This area, which contains industrial units and lies in a flood plain, is inappropriate for a residential development of this size.

Distance from Primary and Secondary schools makes unescorted travel to such locations both inconvenient and risky. In addition there is no public transport to minimise this risk.

Whilst the MDD DPD evaluation indicates convenience to town and relevant services and would be developed on a brown field site, placing residential development in a location which is better suited to and already established as a recognised employment site deprives longer term employment opportunities. Would envisage problems with car parking due to visitor activity to business premises plus parking restrictions (plus residential? )

Policy CP2 concerning suitability for disabled and elderly is worsened by location within flood plain and volume of dwellings.

**3WK191 – The Chestnuts**

Such development would be a major expansion in this low density area which has limited road width access and the existing road is subject to flooding.

This development has been objected to by Wokingham Town and Borough Councils and is currently awaiting the outcome of appeal on October 19<sup>th</sup>.

**WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES NUMBERS 1 – 22 SEPTEMBER 2011 – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**SOCIAL**

**Objective 1 - Local housing needs**

Housing provision is essential but location is critical due to scale of infrastructure, public transport and essential services. Provision of infrastructure must be early on in all developments to avoid chaos. Also care must be taken to minimise disruption during construction phases.

**Objective 2 – Flooding**

Latest technology construction techniques and properly chosen sites should be considered to minimise impact of flooding. Much of the flooding policy causes relocation of the flood area rather than removal or avoidance of the risk. Short notice flood alerts are particularly difficult for the elderly and disabled and thus housing mix and location is significant for these reasons.

**Objective 3 – Safety**

Several issues apply here. eg: Street lighting, elderly/disabled high risk in flood areas, access to good transport especially evenings, winter weather procedures in rural and unlit areas.

**Objective 4 – Health and well-being**

Current government requirements for health and social provision must match the growing needs of new developments.

**Objective 5 – Vibrant Communities**

This suggests that developments should be more than just buildings or homes, but that they should either benefit from existing local characteristics (countryside/parks, identifiable community, accessible transport and services etc) or contribute to them by virtue of imaginative and careful planning to enhance that new development - it should try to create a sustainable and safe community aspect. That requires some creative thought, not just a tick in a box.

**Objective 6 – Poverty and Social exclusion**

No comment on this Objective.

**Objective 7 – Education**

All schools should be readily accessible within practical and affordable limits. Development of employment opportunities (offices, factories, shops) needed to maintain those employment opportunities.

**Objective 8 – Accessibility**

Require adequate and affordable parking plus good public transport, cycle lanes, cycle parking and effective traffic management. (Monitor traffic lights, inappropriate parking, minimising vehicle routing).

**Objective 9 – Travel and congestion**

Good public transport should be high on the agenda in order to minimise congestion and pollution.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL**

### **Objective 10 – Reusability of resources**

More use should be made of brown field sites especially those abandoned or unusable. Avoid use of green field sites where ever possible.

### **Objective 11 – Pollution**

Good public transport minimises pollution and congestion.

### **Objective 12 – Biodiversity**

Follow government guidelines.

### **Objective 13 – Countryside**

Using more brown field sites with creative planning to minimise development of green field sites.

### **Objective 14 – Sustainability of resources**

Follow government guidelines on energy generation, usage and effective insulation.

### **Objective 15 – Waste and recycling**

Continue with existing policies.

### **Objective 16 – Water**

Maintain effective control against pollution and wastage.

### **Objective 17 – Soil quality**

Continue with existing policy.

### **Objective 18 – Energy efficiency**

Follow government guidelines and maintain government grants on generation and insulation. Energy provision should not be detrimental to the visual landscape and environment.

### **Objective 19 – Appropriate development**

Very important that development is manageable, beneficial, affordable, non-polluting and in character with the existing surroundings.

## **ECONOMIC**

### **Objective 20 – Employment**

Need to build areas creating employment and not just residential: offices, shops, factories and educational/training facilities. Easy access between residential and employment locations should be high on the list.

### **Objective 21 – Economic growth**

Understanding and training the population for the most suitable local employment is important.

### **Objective 22 – Competitive economy**

Greater development and licensing flexibility may be required to allow for a wider range of working hours/job types and transport requirements.

Wokingham Town Council  
Planning & Transportation Committee  
12<sup>th</sup> October 2011