

Matter 5: Strategic allocations – East Dorset

Individual site allocations in East Dorset

8. Any other business?

Policy CM1 Lockyer's School and Land North of Corfe Mullen

- 8.1 The site is currently not identified on the agenda for discussions and further to our representations and continued local opposition we feel the site merits specific discussion during the hearings. It is a function of the local plan to respond to local views, particularly where we believe that there are alternative sites that could be delivered.
- 8.2 The Pery Family Trust objects to the proposed allocation of land comprising Lockyer's School, allotments and playing fields for housing development. The allocation of this land has faced extensive opposition, and continues to be opposed by Corfe Mullen Parish Council. To allocate the site in the face of strong opposition, including that of the local parish council is contrary to the government's localism agenda, and the intentions of the Localism Act.
- 8.3 The approach to the delivery of housing, which has emerged through the draft core strategy, is to provide housing through a series of extensions to existing settlements. The identification and allocation of sites within the key settlements of East Dorset has been based primarily upon a master planning exercise, which sought to determine the capacity of a number of areas of search to accommodate development. The individual sites reviewed for this exercise were presented for consultation at a time when the strategic housing requirement for the district had not been defined.
- 8.4 With regard to Corfe Mullen, the master planning exercise looked at an 'area of search' that covered the area to north and west of the settlement. In this context, three contiguous sites were identified as options for housing growth within Corfe Mullen. This resulted in the 'Lockyers School and Land North of Corfe Mullen New Neighbourhood' subsequently being put forward as the preferred option and only strategic allocation included in the consolidated version of the Core Strategy (February 2013) for Corfe Mullen.
- 8.5 The earlier Options For Growth (December 2010) consultation did not present sufficient options for the delivery of housing in Corfe Mullen. Had a wider range of sites been identified at that earlier stage, there is the possibility that others could have emerged as being more appropriate to deliver growth in the village. It is likely that a suitable alternative site would not face the same level of constraint in terms of its delivery that the proposed allocation will have, as set out below. However the earlier consultation did not provide that opportunity, instead presenting a smaller range of sites, which appear to have been selected to fit with an emerging master plan.
- 8.6 Terence O'Rourke reviewed the sites suggested for delivering housing within Corfe Mullen, and in our previous representations have highlighted that they did not represent the most acceptable strategy for the community.
- 8.7 The Pery Family Trust site (Land between Pardy's Hill and Blandford Road) was eliminated on the basis of its landscape sensitivity by the master planning

exercise despite the fact that the site is well contained and only visible in the immediate area. In our view that assessment failed to take adequate account of either the benefits which our client's site is able to offer, or the difficulties presented by the proposed allocation at Lockyer's School.

- 8.8 There are a substantial number of key issues, outlined in detail in our previous representations, which affect the deliverability of the Lockyers School and Land North of Corfe Mullen allocation. In summary, the key issues include:
- Potential re-provision of Lockyers School and subsequent loss of Green Belt
 - Loss of and need to re-provide allotments
 - Loss of and need to re-provide recreation facilities (including recreation land and 'active sports pitches')
- 8.9 Each of these issues should be considered in the context of the NPPF. Paragraph 70 of the NPPF establishes the key principles for the protection of community facilities. One of the key principles is that planning policies should ***“guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs”***. In this context, the development proposal may be seen as causing unnecessary loss of facilities. No alternatives have been presented with regard to providing replacement sites for the recreation facilities and allotments, which would be lost as a result of the suggested strategic allocation.
- 8.10 The importance of these facilities to the local community have been highlighted by Corfe Mullen Parish Council and there is a need to increase the existing amount of allotment space and recreational facilities (see appendix 1) in the village.
- 8.11 The Lockyer's School and Land North of Corfe Mullen strategic allocation is therefore contrary to the core strategy's vision, objectives and policies. By contrast, the Pery Family Trust's site is not subject to the same constraints and is available for development.
- 8.12 The NPPF, at paragraph 154 states that Local Plans should be aspirational but realistic. Policy CM1 may be aspirational but, it cannot be said to be realistic due to the multiple factors which impact upon the deliverability of the allocation. As such, the policy fails to meet the test of being effective and cannot be considered sound.
- 8.13 Policy CM1 has not been positively prepared, it is not justified by the master planning process that was prepared at a time when the strategic housing requirement for the district had not been defined, and it is in conflict with the core strategy itself. Therefore, we consider that in its current form the allocation for development under policy CM1 is unsound.
- 8.14 In order to ensure that the housing needs of Corfe Mullen can be met, and in light of the significant difficulties surrounding the delivery of the allocation the council should allocate one or more 'reserve sites' within the original area of search. The Pery Family Trust's land between Blandford Road and Pardy's Hill would be well placed for inclusion as a reserve site in this respect. It is able to provide a substantial proportion of the housing requirements for Corfe Mullen,

without facing the same delivery difficulties as the allocation site. The site is well located for the existing facilities in the village, contains previously developed land, is supported by Corfe Mullen Parish Council (see appendix 1) and is well served by electricity, gas and water infrastructure. It is also able to offer benefits to the safe operation of the local road network.

Appendix 1

CORFE MULLEN PARISH COUNCIL

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27 July 2011

Dear Mr Henshaw

Local Development Framework: Core Strategy

The newly-elected Parish Council has had an opportunity to discuss the future of the village over the coming years as the start of a process to update the Parish Plan produced in 2006. During these discussions some specific points were agreed by Members which are pertinent to the drafting of the Core Strategy, and it was agreed to forward these to the District Council for consideration. I set these out below:

Green Belt

Green belt land is important in the village. The Waterloo Valley must be preserved and enhanced for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, possibly by the introduction of a network of new trailways and reduced speed limits on the roads in the vicinity;

Allotments

District and County Councils should proactively work with the Parish Council in identifying suitable land for additional allotments, for instance there may be suitable land which currently forms part of Candys Farm, either abutting the Recreation Ground County Field on either side of Candys Close. Alternatively there may be suitable land within 400m of the heath or which is unsuitable for housing. The field next to the current site used to be allotments and should also be considered.

Recreation

More recreational facilities required in the south of the village (see employment below). More facilities required for all ages, particularly older teenagers. The county field at the current Recreation Ground should be retained as an integral part of the Recreation Ground under the management of the Parish Council.

Housing

The village probably needs an extra 200 or so homes including affordable housing. Affordable housing is extremely important.

In Corfe Mullen there is no suitable land left available for housing that is not in the Green Belt. The Parish Council reluctantly realises that the Green Belt may need to be revised and suggest revisions be considered in the following locations:

- Land on Wimborne Road between East End and Lambs Green Lane (on same side as Lambs Green Inn)
- Small area of land between Hillside Road and Waterloo Road near Chapel Lane which is outside the 400m zone;
- Small area at the very top of Pardys Hill

Employment

Employment should be encouraged in the village, possibly a small industrial/business site could be created on land not suitable for housing, e.g. that within 400m of the heath: this could also bring in exchange much needed informal recreational space for the south of the parish. Possible locations could be the land on Wareham Road opposite the tip or around the Candys Lane area near Sims Metal.

Shopping

A large supermarket would not be appropriate for the village. With its linear nature it is important to retain all the shops we currently have, including the larger Co-op and the Welcome Parade.

The Council does of course reserve the right to consider specific proposals fully at a later stage for any sites, whether or not identified in this letter, which may be the subject of future planning applications or put forward by the District Council.

My Members hope that you will be able to consider these observations when considering options for Corfe Mullen.

If you need clarification on any of the locations discussed by the Parish Council, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Katrina M Blee
Parish Clerk

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24 August 2011

Dear Mr Henshaw

Local Development Framework: Core Strategy

With reference to my recent letter, I have been asked by Members to clarify the suggested development area in the Pardys Hill vicinity. The area in question is the triangular area bordering Pardys Hill, Sleight Lane and Blandford Road, plus an additional piece down Pardys Hill as far as the old pumping station.

If you require further clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Katrina M Blee
Parish Clerk