

Additional Housing Sites

I explained in a note of 17 December 2012 that I have considered the results of the consultation process on the draft Main Modifications to the South Gloucestershire Core Strategy.

Housing provision is a key issue, including the Council's ability to demonstrate it can provide a five year housing land supply. In its response to the modifications the Council said it has found a further 594 dwellings capable of contributing to the supply. It has also made clear it wants to resolve this issue through the examination process. Consequently, it has suggested that were I to decide it was necessary to find further land in order to satisfy housing land targets, it was prepared to put forward an additional site although it was very reluctant to do so.

In view of the Council's response I have decided that this matter merits further consideration. I therefore intend to hold a further hearing session starting at **10.00am on Thursday 7 March 2013 at Kingswood Civic Centre.**

As I mentioned in my previous note, if I were to conclude that an additional site was necessary I would be unwilling to settle on the one to the East of Morton Way at Thornbury, suggested by the Council, without considering other sites which were brought to my attention during the examination. I appreciate evidence has been put forward regarding the merits of individual sites but there is relatively little in the way of any comparative analysis of different locations across the District.

I would therefore like the Council to prepare a further paper explaining its reasons why it gives preference to Thornbury and, in particular, East of Morton Way, as opposed to other locations. I would ask it to cross-reference its response to previous examination documents as far as possible including the Sustainability Appraisal and any other relevant evidence. This would enable me to ensure the merits of each site are taken into account.

I also invite written representations from those who wish to comment on this issue focusing on the two matters set out below. Statements should be received by the Programme Officer by **8 February 2013** in order to allow time to collate the responses and make them available on the Council's website. They should be no more than 1,500 words in length and again it would be helpful if respondents could provide cross-references to previous submissions/documents. I am not inviting submissions on sites which have not been put forward previously.

Those who want to participate in the hearing session should advise the Programme Officer¹ of their wish to do so preferably as soon as possible and in any event no later than **22 February**. Only one seat will be allocated to each group/organisation.

There are two areas I wish to consider at the proposed hearing session in the context of the conclusions I came to in my draft modifications of September 2012:

1. Whether the additional dwellings the Council has identified (594) are valid sites which are potentially deliverable in the first five years of the plan period and do not result in double counting of other sources e.g. windfall allowances.

¹ Please respond to Kath Thorne,
Programme Officer, South Gloucestershire Council, PO Box 2081, South Gloucestershire, BS35 9BP
Tel: 01454 863742

2. The relative merits of various sites at a number of locations including (in no particular order) Thornbury, Yate/Chipping Sodbury, Severnside and the East and North Fringes. Factors to consider include the degree of coherence with the Plan's vision and spatial strategy, site capacity, deliverability, having regard to constraints including infrastructure provision and transport connections and how effectively the site could be assimilated into the existing settlement pattern.

I do not wish to revisit any other matters although in view of the comments received to the Draft Main Modifications I consider changes will need to be made to some of these. Subject to the outcome of the hearing session and revisions to the main modifications, the Council will need to review its Sustainability Appraisal and re-consult on these items before I can complete my report.

Paul Crysell
Inspector
10 January 2013