

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE WOOL PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: Andrew Mead BSc (Hons) MRTPI MIQ

Steve Smith
Clerk to Wool Parish Council

Philip Reese
Senior Planning Policy Officer
Dorset Council

Via email

Examination Ref:02/AM/WNP

4 November 2024

Dear Mr Smith and Mr Reese

Having now had opportunity to review all the documentation submitted with the Wool Parish Neighbourhood Plan (WPNP) and conducted the site visit, I have a number of questions for Wool Parish Council (WPC) and Dorset Council (DC) which seek clarification on some of the matters within the WPNP.

In order to progress the examination, I would be grateful for responses to my questions to be provided by **Monday 18 November 2024**, if possible. All the points set out below flow from the requirement to satisfy the Basic Conditions.

Questions to Wool Parish Council and Dorset Council

Specific questions of clarification to each Council are listed below, but I would be happy to have comments from either Council about any of the questions asked and from WPC about any issues raised by DC and others in the Regulation 16 representations not considered below.

1. Date of submission to DC

Question to DC. Please could the date of the submission of the WPNP to DC be confirmed?

2. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Question to DC. I note that Natural England has not responded to consultations about the HRA or about the draft Plan at the Regulation 14 and Regulation 16 stages. I would be grateful if a reminder could be sent and be informed of any response, notwithstanding that the examination may be nearing its conclusion if/when received.

3. Policies

a. Questions to WPC and DC. I have drafted possible modifications to policies below taking into account the Regulation 16 representations received. I should be grateful for comments on the draft modifications from both Councils.

Policy WOOL 1

Amend the second sentence to: *“New buildings and property boundaries should use good quality and durable materials, the details of which should be included in planning applications.”*

Policy WOOL 2

Amend criterion a) to: *“The height of new development should not be overbearing in relation to neighbouring land uses, should not result in significant harm to the character of the surroundings and should aim to create a design which respects the character of the area.”*

Amend criterion c) to: *“Private front gardens should be provided where appropriate and where they are compatible with the character of the surrounding area. Street patterns should be legible and designed to provide rear garden space where overlooking is minimised.”*

Amend criterion e) to: *“Car parking provision should reflect the car parking strategy as agreed by the Local Planning Authority.”*

Policy WOOL 5

- b. Question to WPC.** DC suggested altering the first paragraph of Policy WOOL 5 to: *“Affordable housing provided in Wool Parish should be secured in accordance with Policy H11 of the Purbeck Local Plan 2018 – 2034”* and substituting *“Where viable, ...”* for *“Where possible, ...”* in the second sentence. I should be grateful for the comments of WPC on these suggestions?
- c. Question to WPC.** The second paragraph of Policy WOOL 5 states that First Homes provided as the first 25% of affordable housing should be made available at the maximum 50% discount in order to be affordable to local households. I should be pleased if WPC could provide justification for varying from the nationally advised minimum of 30% discount, particularly in view of the contents of the Written Ministerial Statement and Consultation Paper on Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system dated 30 July 2024?¹
- d. Question to DC.** The fifth paragraph of Policy WOOL 5 states that Social Rented and Affordable Rented homes should be allocated in accordance with Dorset Council’s Allocation Policies (sic)(DCAP). When describing the local connection criteria, Policy WOOL 5 uses the table at 13.1 of the DCAP but substitutes *“Wool Parish”* for *“Dorset”*. Is DC content with that substitution?
- e. Question to WPC.** Policy WOOL 5 omits any reference to the exceptions to the local connection criteria in Section 14 of the DCAP. Has WPC any comments about that omission?

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>

Policy WOOL 8

- f. **Question to WPC.** I would be pleased to receive comments from WPC about the following redraft of Policy WOOL 8 which follows the representations from DC and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).

“Proposals that will result in either the loss of or cause significant harm to a local community facility will be resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the facility is no longer financially viable. Unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority, this will require a site to be genuinely marketed for a continuous period of at least 9 months at a price which reflects its existing or last use.

The following sites/properties are considered to be local community facilities, etc ...

Applications for development to improve local community facilities, including shops, will be supported in principle.

New residential development within the Plan area on sites larger than 1 hectare should be planned to promote walkable neighbourhoods and active travel. Local grocery shops should exist or be provided within 800m of the whole of the development.”

In the interests of transparency, may I prevail upon you to ensure that a copy of this letter is placed on both the Parish Council and Dorset Council websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Andy Mead

Examiner