



Members Questions to Environment Committee.

Questions from Councillor Christopher Evans

Question one: The Planning Inspectors recently recommended SDC withdraw its draft local plan due to fundamental concerns they have regarding its soundness on certain major points.

SDC's response to the inspectors dated 29th August suggests adding additional housing capacity at existing sites or at potential new sites in the District. Can the council advise if sites PS24 and PS25 in Cam are being considered for additional capacity, or if any new sites in Cam are being considered? If additional housing capacity is being considered for Cam how many extra houses might there be? Will infrastructure requirements be suitably increased to match the extra housing? Most importantly, if housing allocations in Cam are being reconsidered, can SDC confirm there will be a fresh public consultation open to all (including those who have not previously commented on the Local Plan)?

Reply

Currently no work has been undertaken looking at additional housing capacity at existing or potential new sites anywhere in the district. If this work is necessary, then any additional capacity or new sites will be fully assessed for infrastructure and environmental impacts. This will be dependant on the Inspectors allowing a pause and agreeing to this approach. The Council will seek the views of the Inspectors on the nature and scope of public consultation required. Any new sites not currently in the draft Local Plan would certainly be subject to public consultation.

Question two: SDC document SLP AP-002 Appendix 2 provide a list of sites expected to generate extra traffic at M5 junctions 12 and 14. This list does not include Cam. As a resident of Cam who commutes to work via M5 J14 I see many other cars undertaking the same journey. There are not sufficient jobs in Cam and Dursley to support the housing planned, and so some people will naturally look to Bristol for employment. What evidence does SDC have that new houses built in Cam will not contribute to extra traffic at junction 14 of the M5?

Reply

The traffic modelling assessments do not state that allocations in Cam won't impact on junction 14. The assessment is that sites in Cam do not cause the same level of impacts and therefore are not as constrained as other sites like PS34, PS36 and PS37. The Council's funding and delivery statement takes a pragmatic delivery approach and any site that has less than a 5% impact on the relevant junction is not identified as part of the strategic funding package. However, the exact nature of impacts and any necessary mitigation measures would still remain to be subject to specific site modelling and assessed determined at the planning application stage.

Question three: In its letter dated 29th August, SDC said it would provide a document with details of how it proposes to address the Inspectors concerns within 10 working days. The tenth working day would have been the 12th September. Has that document now been sent to the Inspectors and if so, can a copy be made public if it has not been already?

Reply

The Council has prepared an Action Plan setting out how it intends to address the Inspectors concerns on the three issues raised. This was submitted to the Programme Officer 12th September. As this document is part of the Examination, the Council has requested the Inspectors allow the document to be published as soon as possible. Until the Inspectors allow its publication the Council is unable to share the Action Plan.