

Sara Loch
Chairman of Blandford+
Town Clerk's Office
Church Lane
Blandford Forum
Dorset DT11 7AD

24 March 2016

Dear Ms Loch

Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan - Pre-Submission Plan

Further to your letter of 12th February 2016, I outline below the main comments of Pimperne Parish Council.

Our main objections relate to errors in the definition of the boundary of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Area and inconsistencies in the maps used for the main Pre-Submission Plan, which raises further concerns about the wider impact of the development in relation to Pimperne parish, and the extent to which these impacts have been properly understood or assessed. However, we also continue to have significant objections over the Neighbourhood Plan's divergence from the strategy set out in the adopted North Dorset Local Plan, particularly in relation to Policy 1- Land North and East of Blandford Forum.

1. Inconsistencies in Boundaries

Plan A in Section 1.1 of the Pre-Submission Plan correctly defines the boundaries to Blandford's Neighbourhood area in respect of the Northern and Eastern boundaries. However, map no. Drawing No. 091_DI_3.2 within the supporting document, the Draft Framework Masterplan, is incorrect as the map indicates land that lies within the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan and is therefore outside of the border of Blandford. The Localism Act makes clear that neighbourhood plans may not overlap.

It is unfortunate that this map has also been reproduced on page 3 of the April 2016 edition Forum Focus as this presents a highly misleading depiction of the land proposed for development, and is therefore of great concern to Pimperne residents, particularly in Letton.

The confusion continues in Section 3 of the Pre-Submission Plan, with section 3.7 stating that "The eastern land forms 28 Ha immediately to the east of the A350 bypass to the south of Letton Park and north of Pimperne Brook and Black Lane". The supporting "evidence" for this statement is presumably the Land Budget Plan, drawing 091_DI_07.1, which identifies the potential use identified for various parcels of land. This identifies 27.45 Ha of land to the east of the A354, but approximately 14Ha of this actually lies within the Pimperne Neighbourhood Plan area.

The matter is compounded in the supporting document, "Access Appraisal for Land North East of Blandford Forum", where Figure 1 once again portrays an incorrect boundary to the Eastern Parcel, and the proposal to "to provide a secondary vehicular link to the eastern parcel via the spur of land adjacent to Bolney" again lies on Pimperne land.

We therefore request that the Pre-Submission Plan and supporting documents are amended to reflect accurate portrayals of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan area and to ensure that

none of the land within the area under the jurisdiction of Pimperne should be included within the proposals for development in the eastern parcel, and the delivery of the development similarly should not be reliant on the use of land within an adjoining neighbourhood plan area, where residents are not in support of it.

2. Divergence from Local Plan

The proposed significant expansion of the Northern and Eastern boundaries of the town and beyond the bypass are in conflict with the recently adopted Local Plan, which identifies that the main focus of development should be at the South and West of the area. A potential 400 new homes, together with related investment in commercial, educational and recycling property represent a significant strategic decision which should be the subject for consideration by the District Council Local Plan rather than via a Neighbourhood Plan, particularly given that the impact will be felt well beyond the neighbourhood plan area.

Section 1.3 of the Pre-Submission Plan document refers to further housing demand survey work in the East Dorset Strategic Housing Market Assessment, citing an additional need for 900 new homes up to 2031 to meet local needs. Firstly the distribution of this development needs to be tested against the wider environmental constraints in the housing market area to determine the most sustainable location. It appears that the SEA for the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan has been relatively superficial – for example ruling out the possibility of employment on land SW of Blandford St Mary with no clear justification. There are no maps showing the locations of the alternatives, so it is hard to know what is being assessed and whether similar errors are creeping into the assessment.

I trust you will be able to give due consideration to above comments and would be pleased to clarify any points if and when required.

Yours sincerely

Bryn MacGregor
Clerk
Pimperne Parish Council