

PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO CABINET – 10 May 2018**Question 1**

Mr J Milln, Hereford

To: cabinet member, infrastructure

In her report on the [Local Plan Core Strategy] LPCS, the Inspector wrote that a lower build-rate of affordable homes of 369 dpa county-wide over the period 2012-2031 was more realistic than the “highly unlikely” [Local Housing Market Assessment] LHMA figure of 691 dpa for the period 2012-2017. Has this lower ambition been achieved and how many affordable dwellings have been built in Herefordshire in the two years since adoption of the Core Strategy?

Response

The reference to the Inspector’s report needs to be considered within the in the context of the full section on affordable housing. The figure of 369 affordable dwellings per annum was considered to be a “realistic assumption of what could be achieved”. It was not an “ambition” as suggested in the question. The Inspector did not suggest a modification to the plan to incorporate any target for affordable housing but did indicate in paragraph 40 of the report that:

“..... the percentage of affordable housing identified in policy H1 is the result of balancing affordable housing against other strategic aims of the plan, including the development of large sites and associated social and transport infrastructure. In the circumstances, the approach to affordable housing is the reasonable and realistic and will bring forward much needed affordable housing.”

In the two years 2015-16 and 2016-17 some 264 affordable dwellings were completed (see appendix A of the Authority Monitoring Report 2017). However, although total housing growth in the county was significantly below that anticipated for the period, housing supply in the county is continuing to increase and this should result in increased delivery of both market and affordable housing in future years.

Question 2

Mrs V Wegg-Prosser, Breinton

To: cabinet member, infrastructure

Aided by consultants at vast expense, the Council continues to claim that ‘The Hereford Transport Package will support the delivery of 6,500 homes and 6,000 jobs’. What information has the Council gathered from the Technical Advisory Group of the Nutrient Management Board to indicate that phosphate levels will be sufficiently contained by 2027 to permit these ambitious growth targets to be pursued?

Response

The growth targets for Hereford were established through the preparation of the Core Strategy and a key element of the supporting information for this document was the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) produced jointly by the Environment Agency and Natural England.

The NMP was developed taking into account proposed development growth within Herefordshire and Powys and it demonstrated that the levels of development proposed in the Core Strategy are deliverable over the Plan period whilst achieving and maintaining Favourable Condition Status for the River Wye SAC. The inclusion within the Core Strategy of policies such as SS3 (Ensuring sufficient housing land delivery) and SD4 (wastewater treatment and river water quality) complement the NMP measures.

There has been no indication from the Nutrient Management Board that this position has changed. However, it is important to continue to monitor the impact of the Core Strategy proposals and the measures set out in the NMP action plans to ensure that the Conservation Objectives of the SAC are achieved. The NMP Board has, through its Technical Advisory Group, commissioned the preparation of a monitoring dashboard which is being compiled by the Environment Agency and, once approved by the board at its next meeting, will be publicly available and will include data to 2017/18.

Supplementary

Independent research based on the Environmental Agency's phosphate data shows that in autumn 2017 only five out of 49 sampling points in Herefordshire along the Lugg and Upper Wye recorded phosphate levels as being within the phosphate ceilings. Two years previously, eleven of the 49 points were recorded as being within the ceilings. The trend is going in the wrong direction. The data dashboard has been delayed. When will the Technical Advisory Group meeting minutes be made publically available?

Response

The data dashboard is in draft and is fed by data from the Environment Agency who are the technical experts. The dashboard will be made public following the next Nutrient Management Plan Board meeting.

Question 3

Mrs E Morawiecka, Breinton

To: cabinet member, young people and children's wellbeing

The Council's Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy 2017 reported that Marlbrook Primary school had no travel plan. This school is located close to good walking and cycling infrastructure, with £7 million of active travel investment coming to South Wye soon. Why is this Cabinet considering 53 additional car parking spaces for a school with no travel plan and how does this fit with the objectives of the strategy?

Response

Marlbrook Primary School, judged 'outstanding' by Ofsted, is popular with parents and on a site shared with a private nursery, some children's centre services and the local resident's association with space to expand. There are already issues of traffic congestion and excessive on-street parking at peak travel times; the streets around the school cannot accommodate non-residents' parking and the peak-time pressures lead to parking on footways and a potential increase in traffic hazards as well as potentially impeding emergency vehicles.

Marlbrook Primary School has a draft travel plan and is committed to maximising the number of children walking or cycling to school, or using sustainable modes of transport. The schools' catchment area extends well beyond the city into the rural area south of

Hereford. As a result of demographic change and a bulge in numbers of children born in recent years capacity must be added to primary provision in South Wye. Parental preference and a site with space to expand strongly argues for enlarging Marlbrook. The need for additional car parking to address congestion and excessive on street parking was raised by many respondents to the consultation on earlier proposals for work at the school conducted in May 2017.

The provision of additional parking space for use at the start and finish of the school day will improve the safety of pupils, parents and residents by providing a workable alternative to on-street parking, thereby supporting achievement of the first of the Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy objectives to improve the safety of pupils and parents. The provision of safe car parking for users of facilities at the site is not an alternative to further development of sustainable modes of travel to school, but is an important component in managing travel in a busy area with limited capacity to accommodate on-street parking.

Supplementary

The council's vision of the Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy is to improve safety, but also to improve the health and well-being of pupils and to encourage sustainable travel.

There is a need to ensure there is adequate play space for pupils. How much open play place will be available per child, how much parking per member of staff and how much parking for scooters/bikes – expressed as square meterage?

Response

There is additional scooter/bike provision in the outline design and a covered walkway to encourage walking and cycling. Details of the exact areas will be provided in written form.

Further written response

The recommended areas of school sites and buildings, including play space and internal areas, is set out in the Department for Education's Building Bulletin 103 "Area Guidelines for Schools" (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mainstream-schools-area-guidelines>). Marlbrook has a large site that exceeds the recommended minimum and this will still be the case after the completion of the new building project, including the additional car parking.

The design of the new development comprising the extension of the school building and car parking has not yet been finalised, however an outline plan is being used in the procurement process which gives a reasonable guide to the likely footprint of the new build and carpark. This indicates that there will be at least 24,500m² of space available for formal and informal play. With a maximum of 630 statutory age children on roll, this equates to 38.8 m² per child. This area is shaded yellow on the attached plan. However it is likely that there will be even more space available for play depending on the final layout agreed, with additional play space in the north eastern corner of the site. This is well above the recommended areas set out in BB103.

When the works are complete there are likely to be 111 car park spaces. These would be for: school staff, Merry-go-round nursery staff, children's centre staff, visiting professionals (midwives and other staff working from the children's centre or school), residents' association members as well as parents visiting the school or in some cases dropping off or collecting their children. The likely square meterage of new parking is likely to comprise: 250 m² which will provide 12 spaces, but will be used for the site compound during the construction period. And 800 m² in the area in the south west corner of the site south of the

cycle track providing 40 car park spaces: an area not currently used for sports. This area is south of the yellow shaded area in the corner of the site. The total car park area including existing parking could be 2,500 m² – however this is dependent on design work which will be developed when the design and build contractor has been appointed. The approximate number of staff working on the site when the works are complete will be: 90 (school); 14 (Merry-go-round), 4 (children's centre) and then additional staff from a variety of health and other agencies as set out above, alongside the use of the areas for drop off/pick up.

There is currently a bike shelter provided and additional provision will be made in the plans for the new development. The school has a small bike track for use by early years and KS1 pupils and a larger bike track for educating older pupils about road safety and cycling proficiency which will not be affected by the proposed works.