

## **Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011 to 2029 Public Examination Hearings**

### **Issue 4: (Q8-10) Other Housing Matters Policy SS6 – New Housing in the Countryside**

#### **Further Submission by Dawson Consulting (for Mr Michael Frankham)**

1. This further response is made on behalf of the Frankham family of Ellisfield, following a discussion at the Local Plan Public Examination Hearings. The Inspector has acknowledged that there was unanimity of view regarding Policy SS6 – New Housing in the Countryside, and the need for flexibility in the policy and its application.

2. A number of parties at the Examination wished to see some changes to the policy, and would supply suggested wording changes to the Inspector. This was regarded as necessary to achieve the Local Plan objectives. If there were suggested wording changes to the policy, this could then be responded to by the council.

#### **Policy SS6 on Housing in the Countryside**

3. Policy SS6 is cumbersome, unwieldy and overlong. The reasons for this were outlined at the Examination. A councillor helpfully explained to the Examination that this was a 'belt and braces job' with elected members uncertain as to how the policy would operate. This seemed to result from the experience of proposals contrary to the Plan emerging without notice. These had sometimes been approved if they were regarded as sustainable development. Additional clauses had been added at a later stage.

4. In the interests of making the Plan objectives work better, and be of use to the rural area, the policy needs to be pared down. The policy lacks the flexibility to make it work for the rural area and its inhabitants. The suggested wording changes are:

In first sentence, delete 'only'

a) delete i) & ii)

c) in first sentence delete 'permanent'; delete iv), delete v)

e) delete ix & x)

f) delete

#### **Conclusion**

5. It is the view of many living in rural areas of the Borough that Policy SS6 on New Housing in the Countryside should be removed. If something is needed, it should be redrawn to reflect changing patterns of life in rural areas. There is little to be gained from a rigid policy formula that inhibits the new housing that might contribute to village life. Rural areas are essentially self-sufficient and self-controlling, and well able to articulate concerns about development locally.

6. The application of this policy through tight settlement boundaries has led to villages becoming unable to expand in beneficial ways. The shrinking down of the policy will allow the flexibility that is required, with the approach and attitude of the local rural community being uppermost. Lifting these artificial restrictions will be helpful.