

Examination of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011 to 2029)

MF30 - Response to CPRE Hampshire regarding proposed amendments to policy EP4: Rural Economy

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 At the hearing session on 3 November 2015 CPRE Hampshire raised concerns about the council's policy on the rural economy – EP4. CPRE Hampshire argued that the policy was overly restrictive and the Inspector invited them to provide amended policy wording which would address the concerns they have raised.

2. **CPRE proposed amendment**

- 2.1 CPRE Hampshire have proposed the following amendments to the policy:

“The revised suggested wording is:

a) – c) delete

replace with: ‘Are for new or replacement buildings, whether located on previously developed sites or not, that fit into the landscape and make a positive contribution to the location and surroundings’.”

- 2.2 CPRE Hampshire state that they consider that this amended wording will make the aim of supporting the rural economy more apparent, whilst providing greater simplification and give ‘more meaning’.

3. **Council response to amendment proposed**

- 3.1 The council notes that the CPRE has published its own guidance on the rural economy (published in July 2014). This guidance explicitly seeks to support the rural economy, however it states that:

“P. 6 Development in rural areas should, as far as possible, make optimal use of existing infrastructure and previously developed land and should maximise re-use, renovation and refurbishment of building stock.¹”

- 3.2 Accordingly, the council consider that the policy is consistent with the guidance which has been published by the CPRE, as it supports the rural economy, but with an emphasis on building on previously developed land and re-using existing buildings.
- 3.3 However, the council recognises that the policy would benefit from some explicit support for small businesses in recognition of the importance they play in the rural economy, as stressed by the CPRE in the appendix to their

¹ <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/policy-guidance-notes/item/3669-policy-guidance-note-the-rural-economy>

Planning Policy Guidance note². Such an approach would also accord with the government's drive to support the rural economy as expressed in the publication by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - Towards a one nation economy: A 10-point plan for boosting productivity in rural areas³.

3.4 Therefore, it is proposed to include an additional clause within EP4 in order to support small-scale new businesses in rural areas. This is subject to a stipulation which would steer new business to locations which are not isolated, in order to reflect the similar requirement in relation to new dwellings in the countryside, as set out in paragraph 55 of the NPPF. A reference to 'well-designed' is also proposed for inclusion in order to respond to paragraph 28 of the NPPF.

3.5 The additional wording proposed is underlined in the text set out below:

Policy EP4 – Rural Economy

To support the rural economy, development proposals for economic uses in the countryside will be permitted where they:

- a) *Are on previously developed land; or*
- b) *Are for a change of use or conversion of a suitable permanent building; or*
- c) *Are for a replacement building that is not temporary in nature or for an extension to an existing building, provided that the proposal should not require substantial rebuilding, extension or alteration, and should not result in the requirement for another building to fulfil the function of the building being converted or replaced; or*
- d) *Enable the continuing sustainability or expansion of a business or enterprise, including development where it supports a farm diversification scheme and the main agricultural enterprise; or*
- e) *Are for a small-scale new business, provided it is not in an isolated location.*

All development proposals must be well designed and of a use and scale that is appropriate to the site and location when considering:

- f) *landscape, heritage and environmental impacts;*
- g) *the accessibility of the site;*
- h) *the impacts on the local highway network including the type of traffic generated, the appropriateness for the rural roads and the impact on their character; and*
- i) *the need for residential accommodation on site.*

Development proposals that result in an increase in HGVs on C and U roads, or a significant increase in other traffic on C and U roads will generally not be permitted.

² Appendix 1: Policy Guidance Note (PGN) - the rural economy – same web-link as footnote 1

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/454866/10-point-plan-rural-productivity-pb14335.pdf