

Sparsholt Parish Council feedback on the Reg 18 Consultation

At the Parish Council meeting on Monday 12th October Councillors agreed the following submission

1. The Introduction & Vision – The phrase in Strategic Policy SP3iv “low key” should be replaced with something more objective, precise and measurable. “Low key” is too open to subjective interpretation.
2. Monitoring Framework – this requires regular publication on how issues will be resolved.
3. Carbon Neutrality & Designing for Low Carbon Infrastructure – it is worth noting that new developments will be able to achieve the targets more easily than older and existing dwellings. There is still considerable concern that WCC’s 2030 target for Zero Carbon Dioxide is unrealistic when the Govt. target is 2050 and there are no plans and finances to deal with existing homes and premises.
4. High Quality Places and Living Well – we agree the positive words on Community engagement and involvement. However Local Parish Councils and Town Councils should be informed of any pre-planning advice that has been given and ideally the parish/town council should be involved when giving such advice. How will WCC demonstrate and measure its active Community engagement in its decision making?
5. Sustainable Transport – there are some issues for new development planning where there could be too few parking spaces. It is unrealistic when multi- generational families exist and there is a requirement for extra car spaces for visitors, emergency vehicles and service vehicles. Even electric cars require spaces. And significant (re)developments require review to ensure public transport is sufficient to meet new needs eg the extensive redevelopment of Chilbolton Avenue with no additional provision of bus stops.
6. Biodiversity & Natural Environment – Policy NE7 Settlement Gaps. A new settlement gap should be created for Sparsholt to avoid it becoming over time an overspill of the city – with a boundary along Salters Lane/Lanham Lane from Sarum Road to Stockbridge Road, along Stockbridge Road to Woodman Lane, along Woodman Lane back to Sarum Road omitting the area within the Sparsholt settlement boundary. A map of the proposed area will be sent under separate cover. Regard is also required to the importance and means of preserving traditional landscapes from large commercial development or otherwise which are likely to have a negative impact on residential amenity as well as biodiversity and the natural environment. This is not to oppose the diversification of farming, agricultural development or the provision of alternative energy sources but to ensure that chosen sites are appropriate from the perspective of all stakeholders. The same applies to consideration for the preservation and protection of existing natural resources such as Crabwood SSSI, West Wood etc.
7. Historical Environment – No Issues
8. Homes For All – How will New Permitted applications be monitored to ensure they are built and the current outstanding 8560 permitted applications be dealt with? The proposed New Homes ‘top down’ target, which is now likely to be abolished by the

Govt, will need to be reflected in the plan, so how will this affect WCC Local Plan approach to targets?

9. Vibrant Economy – WCC needs a diverse range of shops and policies that encourage a wide range of rural residents as well as city dwellers and tourists to visit the City. There is considerable concern that if the Local Plan is dominated by the Movement Strategy, which seeks to eliminate vehicles from the city centre, it will hinder the economic growth and vibrancy of the city. The City Council also need to adopt Business Rates and Rental Policies to encourage business people to open a wider range of shops and businesses.
10. No Issues
11. We have no new Site Allocation requests.
12. Evidence comments - None to make
13. Missing Policies – There is a need for a Policy on small green spaces such as verges and triangles/squares in villages being protected without each one having to be separately identified. Granting a change of use from public amenity to private residential amenity should only be permitted if the relevant parish council is supportive because it would result in a greater public benefit.

Completing the Local Plan questionnaire

The Questionnaire feedback process has been designed without proper consideration of the legal requirement of parish councils to ensure public scrutiny of their responses. Whilst this arrangement might be advantageous to the City Council it shifts the burden to the parish councils, which are not resourced for this in the way that the City Council is.