

15 July 2016

Stogumber Parish Council

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Dear Mr Cook

West Somerset Local Plan to 2032

Thank you for inviting Stogumber Parish Council to participate in the Examination; we are most grateful that a small Parish Council had this opportunity to contribute to the process.

We are naturally pleased that, as discussed at the hearings, the number of dwellings stated for the Primary Villages has been corrected to represent these settlements, to accord with the wording of Policy SC1, and not the whole of the parishes in which they are located (which in many cases includes additional settlements).

The number of dwellings stated in the modified Local Plan is lower than that given for the 'Built-up Area' in the Census 2011. For example, for Stogumber the census gives 198 dwellings in the built-up area, whilst the modified Local Plan gives 164. Presumably there are differences in the calculation methodology that account for this difference.

In the Census 2011, the total number of dwellings in West Somerset is given as 17,571 (<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/KS401EW/view/1946157382?cols=measures>). The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) gives the total number of dwellings in West Somerset on 1 April 2015 as 17,950 (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/519495/LT_100.xls).

The modified Local Plan is aiming to provide 2,900 new dwellings, which is a growth of 16.5% based on the Census 2011 figure, or 16.1% of the CLG 2015 figure.

The Local Plan rightly aims to concentrate development in Minehead, Watchet and Williton, but West Somerset Council has had some difficulty identifying suitable development sites in those larger settlements. Also, the Primary Villages that retain essential services need some additional development to increase the viability of those services. Therefore it seems to Stogumber Parish Council reasonable that the proposed growth of the Primary Villages be increased to 17% (on the baseline figures given in the modified Local Plan eg Stogumber 164). This is just above the 16.1 or 16.6% rate of growth sought for West Somerset as a whole, and so the Primary Villages would be 'doing their bit' to meet the District's housing needs.

It is very late in the process to make such a change, and there is a risk that other parish councils do not respond to this consultation because they are happy with the 10% given in the consultation draft, which was subject to consultation with the Primary Villages at an early stage. Therefore, it would be proper to directly consult the other Primary Villages about a higher rate of growth, before proceeding.

Please let me know if you need anything further from us.

Many thanks, yours sincerely

Julian Spicer

Chairman