

THE CRANBROOK PLAN

Examination
Matter 13: Infrastructure Phasing

January 2020

JBB8750
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Issue 19: Are the Infrastructure Phasing Proposals through Policy CB7 positively prepared, justified and effective?

This Matter Statement is provided on behalf of Persimmon Homes South West (PHSW) who has a controlling land interest at the Cobdens Expansion Area.

1.1 Q152. How robust is the phasing of key infrastructure in conjunction with the housing expansion areas? How have the issues relating to infrastructure delivery in Cranbrook Phase 1 influenced the development of the phasing policy?

- 1.1.1 PHSW note that there is very limited detail in relation to the phasing of key infrastructure in conjunction with the housing expansion areas. The second paragraph of CB7 sets out an expectation that infrastructure will be delivered alongside or ahead of new housing and that spatially parcels of land close to or adjoining community and education facilities are developed earlier. CB7 also includes triggers for the delivery of the two proposed primary schools, although PHSW contend that these precise triggers have not been justified and are not supported by any evidence. See responses to Q156,157 and 158 in this Matter Statement.
- 1.1.2 Paragraph 3.2 of Cran030 notes that:
“Phasing of the infrastructure to continue to ensure viability will be critical and work will need to be undertaken with individual developers to work this through in practice having regard to the precise timing of applications and their determination.”
- 1.1.3 Accordingly, appendix 2 of Cran030 sets out very broad timescales for the delivery of each individual item of infrastructure.
- 1.1.4 PHSW consider this approach to be robust in relation to the delivery of the majority of category 1 infrastructure. However, see response to Matter 8 Q123 in relation to SANGS. PHSW are also broadly supportive of this approach in relation to category 2 infrastructure, notwithstanding the concerns raised in relation to the primary schools.
- 1.1.5 PHSW has concerns as to the robustness of this approach, as expressed in the policy as drafted, with regards to category 3 infrastructure. PHSW are concerned that such an approach could lead to individual developers being held back from the delivery of new homes if they are reliant on other developers and/or public authorities to deliver infrastructure elsewhere. However, PHSW note that in the notes to appendix 1 on page 19 of Cran030 at the end of the section on Category 3 requirements it is suggested that contributions to this category be ascribed to specific costs and subject to priority. PHSW consider that with appropriate modifications to reflect this approach, as set out in the response to AQ13 below, the policy can be made robust.

1.2 Q153. How does the approach to infrastructure funding influence the phasing of the four expansion areas?

- 1.2.1 PHSW note that no specific phasing of the four expansion areas has been proposed. PHSW consider it essential that, wherever possible, individual developers are not beholden to third parties delivering infrastructure before new homes.
- 1.2.2 PHSW consider the approach to infrastructure funding to broadly ensure that this is the case, although note that in relation to SANGS provision, particularly in ensuring access to SANGS, that it will be necessary for development reliant on third party land for SANGS provision to wait until access to that SANGS provision is in place. Nor is there any phasing identified in terms of the delivery of the 3rd category of infrastructure.

1.3 Q154. How does Policy CB7 align to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan?

- 1.3.1 Paragraph 3.52 of the Cranbrook Plan notes the link to policy CB6, which contains reference to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Cran030). However, PHSW note that while paragraph 3.4 of Cran030 requires it to be kept under review and updated as necessary, that no reference is made to this in either of the policies. Furthermore, the fixed triggers for the provision of primary schools set out in CB7 are contrary to the flexible approach that this entails.
- 1.3.2 As such PHSW consider that CB7, in its current form, is not wholly aligned to the approach envisaged in Cran030. The response to AQ13 below suggests modifications to address this.

1.4 Q155. Is the phasing strategy justified where the majority of land in three of the four expansion areas appears to be largely controlled by a single developer?

- 1.4.1 Different developers control the majority of different expansion areas. For clarity PHSW control the majority of Cobdens, but do not currently have interests in the other expansion areas.
- 1.4.2 PHSW do not consider that it is justified to require each phasing strategy to be approved prior to the granting of planning permission.

1.5 Q156. There is a time critical relationship referred to between school provision and funding via housing; how realistic is the delivery of the school?

- 1.5.1 PHSW note that paragraph 2.3 of Cran030 states that the provision of the two proposed primary schools is critical in the short to medium term. Furthermore, it is stated that provision of the first of the two schools is particularly time critical.
- 1.5.2 PHSW contend that insufficient evidence has been provided to justify the proposed timing of the proposed primary schools. Information from <https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk> notes that St Martin's CofE Primary & Nursery School has 419 pupils against a capacity of 446. Cranbrook Education Campus has 563 pupils against a capacity of 1420 pupils, although it is unclear what proportion of the current school population and available capacity is at primary level. No evidence has been presented to demonstrate that this existing capacity has been taken into account in setting the triggers for the proposed secondary school provision or how this relates to the trajectory for housing provision.

1.5.3 PHSW note that paragraph 39 of the Department for Education's 'Securing Developer Contributions for Education' document (November 2019) states that Local Education Authorities may need to forward-fund school provision within new settlements to support the delivery of strategic development at pace, with costs recouped later through developer contributions secured by a planning obligation. PHSW suggest that this offers an appropriate mechanism for addressing funding difficulties that may otherwise arise in relation to the proposed primary schools.

1.5.4 PHSW also note that the triggers appear to assume that all of the initial Cranbrook development has been completed prior to commencement of the expansion areas. PHSW contend that this cannot be guaranteed and that to do so may lead to school provision prior to being required.

1.6 Q157. Phasing of the school by the 30th Dwelling inextricably links the four expansion areas; what is the rationale behind this approach?

1.6.1 PHSW question the rationale and practicality of this approach. Should two of the expansion areas that are hosting schools come forwards at the same time, this would mean in practice unless agreement could be reached, which is not guaranteed, that both would need to start construction of a school. This would be impractical and furthermore would result in one school being constructed but without an adequate of pupils within its catchment area so it would remain closed until much further through the delivery of Cranbrook.

1.7 Q158. Should the primary school be completed prior to the first occupation of any new dwellings in these four expansion areas?

1.7.1 PHSW do not consider this suggestion to be justified as there are spaces available in the schools constructed as part of the earlier phases of Cranbrook as set out in the response to Q156 above.

1.8 Q159. What is the mechanism for funding an additional station to serve the development? How robust is the Cobden's allocation without any certainty on the timing or provision of the station?

1.8.1 PHSW contend that the Cobden's allocation is not reliant on the timing or provision of a second station as addressed in its Matter 6 response. It is noted that the policy merely seeks to safeguard land for a potential second station which is only one of the possible transport proposals for Cranbrook and that alternative solutions, such as improvements to the existing station, have not been properly explored and assessed let alone expressly ruled out at this stage. Instead the Plan seeks to safeguard the necessary land for the second station should this be decided to be the best solution.

1.8.2 PHSW question in its Matter 6 response whether the evidence base justifies this approach or adequately identifies the quantum of land to be safeguarded. In particular PHSW would not want land safeguarded for the full plan period but rather for a limit of up to three years at the most during which stage there should be a commitment to a review of the options for increasing rail services. This would broadly align with the process for confirming investment for Network Rail Control Period 7, which will be agreed in advance of it starting in April 2024.

1.9 Q160. Is it certain that power, water and sewage capacity can be fulfilled for all the additional development expected within the expansion areas?

- 1.9.1 Sewage infrastructure requirements do not feature in the Cranbrook Infrastructure Delivery Plan (February 2019). This can be explained by reference to the East Devon Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) Review (November 2017), which includes a list of infrastructure projects removed from an earlier IDP (2015). Page 84 outlines that for Cranbrook Phase 1 and Expansion, the associated infrastructure is no longer needed as SWW state no outstanding foul drainage requirements at Cranbrook. Further evidence of this can be obtained through review of the 15/0047/MOUT planning submission, whereby SWW confirm that on 26th March 2015 ‘South West Water has no objection subject to foul flows being discharged via the new transfer pumping station at Clyst Honiton installed to serve the initial Cranbrook development and which was also sized to accommodate this further phase’. In addition, South West Water were invited by East Devon District Council (EDDC) to share comments to the draft Cranbrook Plan 2013 -2031 DPD and their comments were as follows ‘we are aware of the future Cranbrook phases and have made provision for such in our strategic infrastructure put in place to serve the initial/current Cranbrook development’.
- 1.9.2 As set out in paragraph 2.5 and under line 1 of Appendix 2 of Cran030 provision is made for the expansion of the existing district heating network to address additional power capacity by providing low-carbon energy.

1.10 Q161. If power lines cannot be placed underground, how might this affect the delivery of the Cobden’s allocation?

- 1.10.1 If the 132kV pylon was not undergrounded this would reduce the overall net developable area of the site. The site would still be developable for housing; however, the quantum of housing would reduce. It would impact on the immediate landscape and saleability of homes and reduce the ability of the site to provide other forms of infrastructure for the wider Cranbrook area which would require significant re-assessment of the issues regarding the site’s overall deliverability. As noted in response to Matter 6 Q89 and Q90, PHSW do not consider the undergrounding of the 33kV pylon to be of overall benefit to the delivery of the site.

1.11 Q162. How far will the requirement for a train loop to enable stopping services to be more frequent reduce road traffic into Exeter. What is the delivery mechanism and how realistic is it?

- 1.11.1 This is predominantly a matter for the LPA to respond to working with the County and Network Rail/train operators.

1.12 Additional Question: AQ13. Are any Main Modifications proposed in relation to Issue 13?

- 1.12.1 Insert new paragraph at the end of Policy CB7 as follows:
“The phasing strategies should cover the appropriate infrastructure within each of the three categories identified in policy CB6 and the Cranbrook Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Where

contributions are secured towards funding for category 3 infrastructure this funding will be ascribed towards specific known costs and subject to priority. Subject to the appropriate payment of such contributions, individual development parcels will be able to come forwards in advance of the specific infrastructure funded in this manner.

When agreeing phasing strategies, the Council will seek to identify opportunities to forward fund the delivery of infrastructure using resources available to it.”

1.12.2 Revise the triggers in Policy CB7 for primary school provision to reflect existing capacity and to link delivery of the new schools to the delivery of homes across the entirety of Cranbrook, not just the expansion areas as appropriate.

1.12.3 Insert the following as a third bullet point:

“The timing of the provision of the primary schools will be kept under review and may be updated through a review of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.”

1.12.4 Amend the final paragraph of Policy CB7 as follows:

~~“Each phasing strategy must be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before planning permission is approved for the development of the relevant expansion area or part thereof and will be subject of legal agreements to ensure compliance.~~