

SOUTH WILTSHIRE CORE STRATEGY EXAMINATION

AWS/BRIMBLE, LEA & PARTNERS/2919

**MATTER 2. CORE POLICY 1. THE DISTRIBUTION OF DEVELOPMENT
– SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY**

AMPLIFIED WRITTEN STATEMENT

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- QUESTION 2.1** **WHY A SIX TIER SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY? – NO EVIDENCE TO BE SUBMITTED**
- QUESTION 2.2** **THE CHOICE OF SETTLEMENTS – NO EVIDENCE TO BE SUBMITTED**
- QUESTION 2.3** **. WHY CHOOSE THIS DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY – NO EVIDENCE TO BE SUBMITTED**
- QUESTION 2.4** **PROPOSED LEVELS OF GROWTH IN SETTLEMENTS**

Representations were made at the publication stage in relation to the South Wiltshire Core Strategy setting out why the level of housing growth for Mere as a Local Service Centre should be increased from 290 to some 500 dwellings. A copy of these representations is attached as [Appendix 1](#).

Representations have been made under Representor Reference 2920/1 and 2920/2 as to why the amount of employment land in Mere must be increased from the saved 3ha allocation to include an additional 10ha of land at Dead Maid’s Quarry.

When the former Salisbury District Council published “Our Place in the Future” (September 2008) reaffirming the intention that Mere would be a Local Service Centre/Development Policy B Settlement, it was proposed that the Mere Community Area should provide about 510 new homes (about 26 per year) during the Plan period of which 300 (15 per year) would be in Mere. It was indicated that the remaining 220 houses would be provided elsewhere within the Development Policy C Settlements proposed in the Mere Community Area hinterland.

This figure has now been revised down to 290 homes throughout the Mere Community Area as a whole. There does not appear to be any clear evidence/justification for this reduction.

It is our opinion that an additional 220 houses (difference between 510 and 290) should be built within the settlement of Mere within the Plan period in line with the former Salisbury District Council’s recommendations to deliver the level of growth recommended in the RSS.

It is understood from information contained within the South-Wiltshire Core Strategy Topic Paper 3 Addendum 2 – Sustainable Settlement Strategy, that the various Community Areas beyond Salisbury are required to provide 2,951 houses during the Plan period of which 50% (1476) is proposed to be accommodated within the Community Areas. It would seem that a disproportionately high amount of this housing provision is directed towards the Tisbury Community Area (some 440 homes within the Plan period) of which in the region of 90 will be from an allocated

site. Despite Tisbury being located on the mainline railway to London it has very significant limits to growth of this order – particularly in terms of the poor quality of the road network, topographical and physical constraints and low level of employment provision. On this basis, Mere is in a far more suitable location with the capacity (without such constraints) to accommodate in the region of the additional 220 houses as originally proposed.

It is not believed that the Core Strategy is sound with respect to the reduced quantum of housing (290) now proposed for the Mere Community Area. This approach for a lower level of growth does not appear to be “justified” on the basis that the evidence does not appear to be robust or credible taking into account the points made above.

Similarly, in this regard the Core Strategy is likely to be found ineffective on the basis that the level of growth identified for Tisbury is not deliverable. There is insufficient flexibility within the Core Strategy to allow for the distribution of growth within the rural community areas to be better adapted to the specific constraints and potential of the proposed Local Service Centres.

It is not considered that the *reasonable* alternative of promoting proportionately greater growth in Mere has been fully and properly evaluated.

For the above reasons it is considered that this aspect of the Core Policy 1 is not sound.

The Inspector is requested to reassess the distribution of growth between the various Local Service Centres and their hinterlands for the reasons set out above and as put forward in earlier representations and to agree a figure of 500 houses for Mere as originally prepared by Salisbury District Council.

QUESTION 2.5 REMOVAL OF HOUSING POLICY BOUNDARIES – NO EVIDENCE SUBMITTED