

## Agenda item 6

For decision – Consultation response to the Proposed Main Modifications (MM) to the Mendip Local Plan Part 2.

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### Summary

Mendip District Council (MDC) is inviting responses to the Proposed Main Modifications (MM) to Local Plan Part 2. The Main Modifications form part of the examination process of Local Plan Part II ahead of the Inspector producing his final report. The schedule attached to the consultation sets out additional policies, revisions to existing policies and new development sites raised during the Examination process. This consultation only relates to the Main Modifications, and relevant supporting documents and policy map changes.

The consultation and associated documents can be viewed here

<https://www.mendip.gov.uk/pmm>

Consultation responses must be submitted by 5pm Monday 2 March.

This report sets out Frome Town Council's (FTC's) response to the consultation.

### Main Modification 01 (MM01) Future Development Plan Review

We are pleased to see the commitment by MDC set out in MM01 to undertake an immediate review of the Local Plan parts 1&2, combining strategic and non-strategic policies within two months of the adoption of Part 2 of the Local Plan. However, we would like this commitment to include a strategic assessment of the town to identify future growth areas. Whilst the infrastructure plan sets out the housing and employment need, there needs to be a comprehensive strategic assessment setting out how the town can grow, taking into account the future infrastructure needs of the town.

We are also pleased to see a commitment to reviewing the employment land requirement identified through an updated comprehensive evidence-based assessment and the commitment to carry out an evidence-based assessment of highways and other infrastructure needs in partnership with Somerset County Council Highways and Highways England. We are however disappointed that this does not include working in partnership with the Town Council.

FTC would like to work with MDC to bring forward the evidence base for Frome, for the employment land requirement, highways and other infrastructure. The supporting text to MM01 should be amended to reflect this, not just for Frome but to include all the towns and parishes.

We are also disappointed that within MM01, there is no commitment towards preparing additional policies to ensure more sustainable development is brought forward in line with the recent climate emergency declared by SCC, MDC and FTC.

#### **Main Modification 15 (MM15) Open Space**

We regret that the Inspector has not accepted the Local Green Space designations and that it will be removed from the LP Part 1 process and support the designations being reassessed through the LP Part 1 revision. FTC has met with local open spaces stakeholders and are committed to working with MDC on reviewing the existing Open Areas of Local Significance for consideration as Local Green Spaces designation.

We also note that Feltham Lane playing fields and Frome Showfield are proposed to be covered by Policy DP16 (protection from development unless it is demonstrated that there is an excess of open space or suitable alternative open space of equal benefit is provided).

#### **Main Modification 16 (MM16) Established Employment Sites**

We reiterate our previous objection to the revised boundary to Marston Trading Estate, that now excludes the former garden nursery to the rear of Frome Dental Access Centre. It is clear from the response by the MDC Environmental Protection Officer in response to the current planning application 2019/2322 that this site is not suitable for residential development.

#### **Main Modification 17 (MM17) Frome Highway Infrastructure**

We fully support the introduction of new policy DP27 and the update of the Infrastructure Plan, referring to the strategic highway improvements.

Policy DP27: Highway Infrastructure Measures for Frome, Beckington and Rode

*Key infrastructure measures will be provided during the plan period, in addition to proposals identified in other policies of this plan, in order to support the delivery of development within Frome, Beckington and Rode. The following necessary Strategic Road Network schemes shall be provided during the plan period to support the delivery of the development strategy for Frome: 1. A36 Beckington roundabout 2. A36 White Row roundabout Where necessary, Non-Strategic Road Network schemes on the A362 corridor through Frome shall be provided during the plan period to support the delivery of the development strategy for the Town.*

#### **Main Modification 24 (MM24) Saxonvale allocation**

We welcome the addition of text “provide a new footbridge on the northern boundary to Willow Vale” to the Saxonvale policy, as the provision of a footbridge is key to the accessibility of this site.

Main Modifications 25 – 28 (MM25 – 28) The Mount Masterplanning

We fully support the introduction of the new Policy DP27 and the clarification of the supporting text for the site allocation FR3a, that clearly sets out what is required for Masterplanning of the allocation site.

Recommendation

Agree the proposed response to the Proposed Main Modifications (MM) to the Mendip Local Plan Part 2.