

## 6 Place-making Policies

and does not have a significant effect on international or national nature conservation sites. Where housing sites are released, as outlined above, the provision of employment opportunities as an element of this would be beneficial.

### Local Services

**6.88** The overall spatial strategy seeks to ensure that a range of services and facilities that meet the day to day needs of communities continues to be provided in rural places. In key rural settlements some modest and sympathetic growth will support the viability of the existing services and facilities and enhance their local service centre role. Similarly preventing their loss from these settlements is a priority and will not be permitted unless there is an overriding justification that outweighs the loss of the service or facility to the community. This will include where an appropriate alternative service or facility has been provided or where it is demonstrated that it is no longer viable.

**6.89** In demonstrating that a use is no longer viable the Council will expect submission of a full financial appraisal for the business and for it to have been subject to appropriate marketing. Appropriate marketing includes the following:

- Through two or more local agents;
- An independent valuation of price;
- For a reasonable period of time (about 18 months).

### Policy P 4

#### Key Rural Settlements

Proposals for development in the Key Rural Settlements will be supported which meet the following objectives:

- Enhance their role as service centres for their local community;
- Improve self-containment;
- Support the needs of the local community
- Respect environmental limits.

#### Housing

Housing proposals for redevelopment, infill, subdivision and conversion within existing settlement boundaries will be supported where it is appropriate to the scale, design and character of the existing community.

#### Local Priority Housing Sites

Outside of the settlement boundaries of the identified Key Rural Settlements (as defined on the Proposals Map), housing proposals on sites specifically released for that purpose will be supported only where it is demonstrated that it meets all of the following:

- Fulfils an identified local housing need for affordable and market housing as evidenced by a Local Housing Needs Assessment;
- The affordable housing provision (notwithstanding the requirements of Policy D6: Affordable Housing) will normally be at least 40% of the total number of housing units provided on the site;

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- The scale of development should be appropriate to the size, accessibility, character and physical identity of the settlement;
- The development will integrate the open market and affordable housing and be well related to and complement the existing built form of the settlement, providing opportunities for walking and cycling to local services and facilities;
- Improve access to local job opportunities, including on-site provision where appropriate;
- Promotes high design standards and achieves a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 or equivalent;
- Contributes to local infrastructure including education, service provision, accessible open space and community facilities;
- Incorporates local environmental and landscape enhancement, including where appropriate habitat creation and community woodland planting.

It will generally be expected that schemes demonstrably accord with relevant parish plans and have the support of the appropriate Town/Parish Council following robust engagement and consultation with local stakeholders. Site proposals will be required to include assessment under the Habitats Regulations and have been informed by its findings.

### Employment

Employment proposals will be supported within or adjacent to existing settlement boundaries where they are compatible with the scale and character of the community, and encourage local job opportunities. In addition the retention, remodelling or appropriate expansion of existing businesses will be supported. However employment proposals that have a potential significant effect on internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites will not be supported.

### Local Services

Proposals to provide or enhance local services and facilities will be supported. In order to sustain the local service centre role of the Key Rural Settlements, the loss of existing services and facilities that meet the day to day needs of the local community will be resisted unless an over-riding justification can be demonstrated.

### Delivery

**6.90** Following the adoption of the Core Strategy, the Council, working with local communities, landowners, Registered Social Landlords, the Community Council and developers will facilitate neighbourhood or parish planning exercises (including where necessary the preparation of an up to date housing needs survey). This will include the identification of the key local priorities for the individual communities and potential development sites.

**6.91** At Nether Stowey the assessment of the Core Strategy has identified potential disturbance to Barbastelle bat roosts arising from new housing development and requires that before any new housing is occupied, there must be signs at entrances to woodland west of Nether Stowey requesting users to keep to Public Rights of Way and that dogs are kept on leads. This requirement should be taken into account when preparing any potential housing development scheme.

**6.92** The Council will continue to seek provision of onsite and offsite infrastructure through the use of planning obligations (Section 106 agreements) on a site by site basis as set out in Policy S2: Infrastructure Delivery. This will enable contributions towards a range of infrastructure to assist the