

Marshfield Parish Council response to Local Plan phase 3

The SGC Local Plan phase 3 raises questions about future development in Marshfield, a designated Conservation Area and an AONB. Via the MCLT, Marshfield Parish Council take a keen interest in local housing provision, particularly in providing affordable housing for local people.

MPC accepts the need for a modest scale of growth to ensure Marshfield remains a vibrant active community and that its various facilities such as its leisure facilities, its school, its pubs, the Community Centre, the shop, the medical practise, can be sustained over time. Against SGC's own criteria, Marshfield does not have the necessary transport facilities or infrastructure to absorb significant growth.

In line with that approach, 20 houses have been built in Marshfield in recent years, with a further 27 in the pipeline, including the 18 MCLT affordable housing development shortly to start on site. Marshfield and MCLT are making a significant contribution to providing additional houses without resorting to extending the existing settlement boundary or relaxation of environmental and rural protection areas.

Having considered four different development options, **MPC wishes to argue that Marshfield should not receive a housing allocation in the Local Plan. Future housing development should be through CLT or CLH (Community Led Housing) initiatives.**

If there were no allocation, the current sites submitted to SGC's 'call for sites' would remain as potential Rural Exception Sites, thereby limiting the 'hope value' expectation of a commercial opportunity. It would also mean that sites beyond the village boundary would not be opened up for commercial development.

The number and tenure of any homes built would be driven by an up-to-date independent Housing Need Survey -the last HNS was in 2018. If that revealed a housing need for local people, then the MCLT would continue to use the Rural Exception Sites policy to develop its second housing project which could be either for affordable houses or a mixed tenure scheme for local people as is the case with our Garston Barns development. A new MCLT project would of course be dependent on acquiring a site and access to the financial resources required to embark on another project.

Supporting CLT and community- led housing developments is in line with the SGC Local Plan's statement that it wants to 'enable communities to investigate and bring forward sustainable growth where it would help in meeting local and identified needs'. Marshfield is the only community in South Glos that has shown it can do this.

We realise that waiting for confirmation of housing needs through an HNS does not fit the current timetable for the Local Plan consultation. Also, the picture of housing need in Marshfield will become clearer when our current scheme begins to be built and the housing allocation process gets underway. MCLT should be able to provide further clarification within the next few months and we hope that SGC would be amenable to accepting this at a later date, before the Local Plan is finalised.

It should also be noted that Marshfield is currently exploring the possibility of developing a Neighbourhood Plan.