

Summary Key Points On New Housing Development Arising From Peter Brett Associates Report and Solihull Local Plan Review

The Peter Brett Associates Study (PBA) is valuable, but of most immediate interest to the KDBH Neighbourhood Forum is the consultation by SMBC in relation to reviewing the Local Plan. The consultation runs from 30th November 2015 to 22nd January 2016 - so we need to act quickly.

Key points are:

1. The PBA Report -

- was commissioned by the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). The study area was Greater Birmingham (GB), Solihull, the Black Country, N Warwickshire, S Staffs and part of Stratford on Avon
- (GB area = Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Cannock Chase, E Staffs, Lichfield, Redditch, Solihull, Tamworth & Wyre Forest. The study did not include E Staffs and Wyre Forest)
- is evidence based and identifies need. It does not say how Councils could meet that need - that is for Councils to agree, and they will have to work together to discuss how housing growth will be distributed. Greater Birmingham and Solihull areas have a forthcoming Spatial Plan for Growth. Councils have a duty to co - operate with other Councils
- identifies a shortfall of 37,572 dwellings across the study area
- over 90% of this is in Birmingham and cannot be met within the city boundary. Solihull & Tamworth have shortfalls. The Black Country thinks it has capacity to meet requirements for the Black Country up to 2031
- the economic potential of the area will not be fully realised if there are not enough homes for the workforce.

2. Solihull MBC Consultation on Local Plan Review -

- SMBC has to find enough housing to meet identified needs in order for the Local Plan to be found to be sound. Failing to meet needs is not an option - it means more overcrowding, rising house prices and insufficient affordable housing. The latter two effects have been identified in resident feedback as concerns.
- SMBC has identified that it needs to accommodate 13,500 new homes, as a minimum, between 2011 and 2031. Of these, 9000 are already included in the current Local Plan. So at least 4,500 more homes will be needed (over twice the size of Dickens Heath).
- These figures have to be seen as a minimum, as SMBC may have to help other Councils (e.g. Birmingham) meet their needs - see shortfall stats for PBA Report.
- The HS2 Interchange & UK Central Hub are an opportunity to create new jobs and new homes. However, the current Local Plan does not provide an adequate framework to maximise the benefits of the new jobs and housing. The station will be on green belt land.
- Green belt land that makes the least contribution to preventing unsuitable urban growth will be considered first for development.
- The Council believes that the policies Supporting Economic Success (P1) and Provision of Land For Housing (P5) need to be significantly changed or replaced.

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- SMBC is considering seven options for where growth should take place:-
 - **Option A** - focus development along high frequency public transport corridors and hubs. This makes planning sense, but with implications for Dorridge.
 - **Option B** - focus development in and around Solihull Town Centre. This also makes sense from a planning perspective. However, the existing Local Plan already proposes a lot of new development in this area, leading some to wonder whether even this can be delivered. So adding more raises issues of deliverability.
 - **Option C** - focus development in and around N Solihull / Chelmsley Wood. This area has been the subject of massive regeneration funding for over 10 years, and the current Plan already proposes over 700 houses. Realistically, what capacity is there to add many more?
 - **Option D** - focus development in and around Shirley town centre and along the A34 corridor. With all the investment in Shirley town centre, and now the large scale housing at Blythe valley, it seems increasingly likely that this corridor will be developed out up to the motorway.
 - **Option E** - focus on UK Central Hub and HS2 Interchange. SMBC seems committed to this. It affects an area of green belt that is reasonably self-contained and of low landscape quality, despite being in the Meriden Gap. The proposals include some 2,000 houses. The big question here is whether / how many could actually be built in the Plan period, and therefore count towards reaching the housing target.
 - **Option F** - limited expansion of rural villages and settlements - this would include Knowle, Dorridge & Bentley Heath. This is the option that the Neighbourhood Forum could have most control over, as it is about finding relatively small scale opportunities in and around the villages. On its own, it will not be enough to meet housing need, but will almost certainly be one of the options to be added to the mix.
 - **Option G** - New settlements, large scale urban extensions or significant expansion of rural villages and settlements. This has significant implications for our Area. A major extension of about 1,000 dwellings around Bentley Heath is included, as well around 500 houses around Knowle and Dorridge. This potentially has the biggest impact on the KDBH area and, if taken forward as an option, would require changes to the greenbelt. As such, we would have to rely on seeking to influence SMBC, if the proposals are not supported by local people.
- The Local Plan review also includes a Call for new development sites.
- It's not easy to find Solihull's document, as it is not under the current consultations button - you have to go to the planning page, then planning policies and then to local plan review. We have extracted the documents for access from the KDBH website.
- The main focus at this stage is whether we think all the main issues and options have been identified - but people can express opinions as well.
- Views can be expressed in writing, online or by email - although SMBC prefer people to fill in their questionnaire, which repeats all the questions asked in the main part of the document.