

Minutes of Council 7 January 2009

Item 5. PETITION UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 15

The Mayor informed the Council that there was one petition to be presented.

Mr G Blackman presented a petition submitted by the Save Barton Farm Group, which requested that the Council protect Barton Farm from massive development by omitting Barton Farm from the sites in the 2009 Preferred Options proposals for housing.

Mr Blackman spoke in support of his request. He explained that the most prevalent concern of signatories had been the detrimental effect the development of Barton Farm would have on the character of Winchester. He explained that there were a number of reasons why it was premature to select Barton Farm as a preferred option and these included the housing requirement being met by windfall sites elsewhere; that the local road network was already at capacity and that after 2011, the site would revert to being protected by countryside policies. He suggested that the Council establish a working party of interested groups to debate the long-term future of Winchester and omit Barton Farm from the preferred options proposed sites.

During debate, Councillors noted the concerns raised by the Save Barton Farm Group and discussed the difficulty of the decisions the Council faced on this issue. Points raised that would need to be considered in due course included:

- The concerns of residents to protect the countryside, setting and compact nature of Winchester
- The need to control development in the District by submitting a Local Development Framework that conformed to the Government's criteria and the need to create new affordable homes
- The extent to which the housing completion numbers could include windfall sites
- Sustainability, flood risk and infrastructure issues

However, the Leader declined Mr Blackman's offer of a working party as he explained that the Council had already undertaken very comprehensive public consultation on the Local Development Framework.

At the conclusion of debate, the Mayor thanked Mr Blackman for his submission which would be taken into consideration at the 25 March 2009 meeting of Cabinet (Local Development Framework) Committee and 22 April 2009 meeting of Council, which would determine sites for the Council's preferred options. Colin Veal Senior Democratic Services Officer Winchester City Council, telephone: 01962 848 438.