

Winchester District Local Plan Review

Analysis of Representations on the Proposed Modifications

General

Summary of Representation.
Change sought.

Recommended Response to Representation
Recommended Change

1.1

Omission of Proposed Modification (Appendix 1)

Representations:

- **Objections:**

D Clarke (135/1), F Clarke (136/1), C R Bradshaw (1164/1)

“Winchester City and its Setting”

should be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Local Plan.

Change sought – *adopt document as SPG*

Recommended Response to Representation

The ‘Winchester City and its Setting’ Study, published in 1998, brought together different agencies and areas of expertise, including representatives of the City Council and design consultants. The Study was intended to provide an independent input to the then forthcoming review and study of the future of Winchester, as part of the City Council’s Local Plan process. The resulting Study produced a seamless townscape and landscape assessment of the city, its setting and approaches, which was designed to inform and support the development of a holistic characterisation methodology.

As a background document, the Study has proved to be of considerable value over the intervening period, both as a source of information and as an analytical tool. Most recently, the Study has been referred to during the course of the Local Plan Inquiry and in their report to the City Council the Inquiry Inspectors have made specific reference to its usefulness.

Nevertheless, the Study was never intended to be a policy document in its own right. Therefore, it contains no formal recommendations and its findings and conclusions are not suitable for adoption as planning policies in their own right.

Similarly, although the production and publication of the Study were both overseen by a Steering Group, representing local authorities and other local bodies, it was not subject to formal public consultation. This factor, coupled with advances in characterisation techniques which have occurred in the eight years since initial publication, make it inappropriate in the Council’s view to re-launch the Study, in its original form, as Supplementary Planning Guidance in association with this Plan.

Recommended Change:

None.

1.2

Tree cover Omission of Proposed Modification

Representations:

Recommended Response to Representation

The respondent suggests that insufficient attention has been given to the need to retain and enhance tree cover, especially within the context of the City.

The Inspector considered this particular issue at the Inquiry, which he broadly summarised as a concern that too much

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- **Objections:**

A P Ames 1371/3

Insufficient weight has been given to the need to retain and enhance tree cover, particularly within the City boundary (**1373/3**)

reliance on urban capacity sites within Winchester would threaten the City's distinctive character 'particularly through trees lost to development'. However, the Inspector went on to indicate that his recommendation (under Chapter 6:Housing), favouring the allocation of some greenfield sites as a Local Reserve was, in part, intended to relieve some of that pressure which might otherwise be put on urban development and re-development sites within the City.

Furthermore, whilst acknowledging that the City Council is required to achieve the necessary PPG 3 densities on brownfield sites the Inspector also indicates that, '[the Council] must also exercise some restraint and pragmatically apply the provisions of DP.3 [General Design Criteria, for new development] and DP.5 [Landscape and the Built Environment] to accept a lower density where the character of a particular site, including its tree cover, demands it'.

Elsewhere in the report, the Inspector also indicates that Policies DP.3 and DP.5 provide appropriate environmental safeguards and that, in responding to the requirements of Government policy, the Plan adopts a design-led approach towards new development which provides for making more efficient use of land within existing built-up areas, whilst giving high priority to the retention and, where possible, enhancement of the District's important townscape and landscape features.

Indeed, on this point, the Inspector concludes that 'Nevertheless, the Plan still provides for the retention of trees, and well-designed development, while areas recognised for their special character or appearance are designated as Conservation Areas, where there is a statutory duty to ensure that is preserved or enhanced'.

It is not, therefore, considered necessary or appropriate, to exceed the terms of the Inspectors' Report, or the policy provisions of the Plan, in regard to the maintenance or enhancement of the City's tree cover.

Recommended Change:

None.

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Recommended Response to Representation
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1.3

Land at Swanmore and Oliver's Battery Schools (Inset Maps 37 & 45) Omission of Proposed Modifications

Representations:

- **Objection**

Hampshire County Council (Estates) (1434/7)

The Policy C.3 boundary has been drawn tightly round the school buildings at Swanmore and Oliver's Battery Schools. The school grounds do not contribute to or form part of the countryside. Although initially considered under paragraph 4.4.3 of the Inspector's Report, he does not appear to have addressed these objections in detail. The C.3 boundary should be re-drawn to omit the school land in both cases.

Change sought – amend wording to reflect comments

Recommended Response to Representation

In the Local Plan, school playing fields located on the edge of settlements have been excluded, on a consistent basis, from the defined policy boundary of the adjacent settlement, in order to confirm their relationship with the countryside and to protect them from development pressure.

In the instances referred to by the respondent, it has been recognised that the open parts of the two school sites, at Swanmore and Oliver's Battery, significantly contribute to the open countryside character between, on the one hand, the settlements of Swanmore and Watham Chase and, on the other, Oliver's Battery and Compton Street.

Therefore, the Local Plan acknowledges that these school grounds represent important elements in the rural setting of their respective communities and, as a result, they have been made subject to the Plan's countryside policies and, in addition, have been included within the Local Gaps defined under Policy C.3.

The latter designation gives confirmation that the undeveloped part of each school site has a functional role in helping to maintain a defined Local Gap. Such 'gaps' are intended to restrict development of a scale or obtrusiveness which, if unchecked, could lead a gradual coalescence and consequent loss of each settlement's character and separate identity.

Although the Inspector does not appear to have responded in detail in his Report on these particular issues, it is clear in his paragraph 4.4.3 that he has supported the Local Gaps as defined with the exception of land at Francis Gardens, Winchester, which he has recommended as a Local Reserve Site.

It is not considered appropriate, therefore, to delete the Local Gap designation, from the open part of either of these school sites.

Recommended Change:

None.

1.4

Land at Perins School, New

Recommended Response to Representation

It is accepted that, in educational and social terms, Perins

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Alresford (Inset Map 20) Omission of Proposed Modifications

Representations:

- **Objection**

Hampshire County Council
(Estates) (1434/8)

Concern that part of Perins School grounds is defined as within the countryside, as it is considered to be geographically part of the residential neighbourhood which it serves. Although initially considered under paragraph 4.2.2 of the Inspector's Report, he does not appear to have addressed this objection in detail. The land should therefore be within the settlement boundary, and excluded from the designated countryside.

Change sought – amend wording to reflect comments

School should be considered an integral part of the community which it serves.

However, from a land-use planning point of view, the Local Plan is more specifically required to guide, and co-ordinate, the use and development of land and buildings throughout the administrative district. In that context, the Plan acknowledges that the developed part of the Community School site forms a well defined feature within New Alresford's 'built-up area' and, consequently, the Plan's defined policy boundary around the town does include this.

However, the undeveloped part of the site, which is principally laid out as sports pitches, forms a recognisable extension of countryside which abuts the urban area and, in itself, makes a worthwhile contribution to the attractive rural setting of New Alresford. It is considered entirely appropriate for the Plan to make this distinction.

In consequence, the open part of the school site is subject to the safeguarding 'countryside' policies in the Plan. These are intended to maintain, or enhance, the quality of the local environment.

Although the Inspector does not appear to have responded in detail in his Report on this particular issue, to include this sizeable area of land within the settlement boundary would almost certainly lead to pressure for the release of this land, in order to provide additional development capacity at New Alresford. The Inspector rejected other proposals for the release of other large greenfield sites on the edge of Alresford. Given this, and taking into account its recreational use, it is not considered desirable or necessary to amend the Plan in the manner suggested by the respondent.

Recommended Change:

None.

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1.5
Entire document
All Proposed Modifications

Recommended Response to Representation

The support is welcomed.

Recommended Change:

Representations:

None.

- Support:

Durley Parish Council (2281/1)

1.6
MOD GEN.4
Proposals and Inset Maps

Recommended Response to Representation

The support is welcomed.

Recommended Change:

Representations:

None.

- Support:

Environment Agency (253/5)
Support inclusion of latest flood maps
on the Proposals and Inset Maps