

THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 29 September 2022

Attendance:

Scrutiny Committee Members

Councillors
Brook (Chairperson)

Cook
Craske
Cutler
Rutter

Horrill
Laming
Westwood

Local Plan Advisory Group Members

Evans
Porter
Tod

Learney
Read
Edwards

Other members in attendance:

Councillors: Clear, McLean, Thompson, Wallace, Gordon-Smith and Ferguson.

[Audio and video recording of this meeting](#)

1. APOLOGIES AND DEPUTY MEMBERS

In addition to those noted above; Councillors Rutter and Cutler left the meeting at the end of the morning session and Councillors Read, and Laming left the meeting during the afternoon session.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Cutler declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to two Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) sites in Denmead. He left the meeting for the duration of the committee's discussion on site allocations.

Councillors Tod and Porter declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest due to their role as County Councillors, as matters may be discussed which related to Hampshire County Council.

3. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairperson advised that this was a joint meeting of the Scrutiny committee and Local Plan Advisory Group and clarified the role and purpose of the joint meeting. She advised that as part of the council's local plan-making process, the Regulation 18 local plan needed to be produced alongside an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). It was intended that the Cabinet on 18 October 2022, would agree for the plan and the IIA to be published for a six-week consultation between 2 November and 14 December 2022.

The committee would scrutinise the draft local plan policies, site allocations, and ask whether it considered that it was appropriate to proceed to the consultation stage as scheduled. The feedback and any recommendations made by the committee would be reported to Cabinet whose agreement would be sought to consult on the final version of the Regulation 18 plan and IIA.

Officers would capture the key points from the meeting which would fall into one of three categories;

1. comments that were noted but require no action
2. comments that may require the document to be altered and
3. comments that need to be taken away for review before deciding whether adjustments should be made to the plan.

4. **CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL PLAN TOPIC CHAPTERS**

The following contributions were made during the morning public participation session.

1. Mr Hearn on behalf of the City of Winchester Trust whose contributions included the following:

- The need for hooks on policies for the subsequent production of a city-wide plan.
- That there should be a specific policy regarding Development in Winchester Town and Surroundings, and he provided suggested wording for this.
- That within the sustainable travel and active travel section, there should be an additional policy referring to development in very sustainable sites within the city centre and he provided suggested wording for this.

2. Councillor Wallace whose contribution included the following.

- That the climate emergency needed to be at the heart of this plan.
- That it was important that house building methods change to minimise the carbon impact of the building and the ongoing impact of heating them.
- Ensuring that building improvements were updated throughout the life of the plan was vital.

- Addressing biodiversity requirements was crucial.

3. Councillor Bolton whose contribution included the following.

- That 40% of Winchester district planning was governed by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and the impact this had on settlements and parishes which straddle both the Winchester District Authority and SDNPA.
- That Winchester City Council and SDNPA were on different timelines for the development of their respective local plan updates and how would the statement of common grounds address this.
- The need to promote food security, especially in current, uncertain times.
- That provision for adequate parking was required where planned developments were designed for families.

4. Councillor Pearson whose contribution included the following.

- The importance that the plan was both usable and readable.
- That we should acknowledge that the design features of housing were going to change.
- That policies should be clear and unambiguous especially when they were used in the determination of planning applications, for example, page 40 and CN5 refers to unacceptable impact and would “unacceptable” be misinterpreted.
- The interchangeability of the terms nitrogen, nitrates, phosphorus and phosphates.
- That he felt that the number of existing gypsy and traveller pitches was incorrect.

The following contributions were made during the afternoon public participation session.

1. Councillor Killeen, Chair of Hursley Parish Council whose contribution included the following.

- That several elements of the Local Plan were uncertain, for example; the requirements of the Partnership for Southern Hampshire (PfSH), the calculations for the “buffer” and issues such as transport.
- That these uncertainties meant that consultation at this stage would be difficult and may lead to changes being required.

2. James Anderson whose contribution included the following.

- That the proposals for South Wonston were contrary to the principles set out in the strategic issues document, “Your Place, Your Plan” in particular, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 15 regarding a positive vision and NPPF paragraph 82 regarding sustainable economic growth.

- That the proposals for South Wonston were contrary to the Winchester City Council's approach of transitioning to a greener economy, in particular.
 - a) Housing proposals that would be remote from employment areas.
 - b) Housing in an area whose secondary schools and medical services were in other places.
 - c) Housing proposals in an area whose primary school was oversubscribed.

Councillor June Perrins, Chair, South Wonston Parish Council whose contribution included the following:

- That the Parish Council and residents did not agree with the plan for 40 homes at West Hill Road North, that this was a sensitive site, and that development here would create a severe pressure point in the village.
- That Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council had delayed the preparation of its Local Plan because of the uncertainty around planning system reforms.
- That the proposed housing figures were based on outdated information and the 2021 census data would be a more reliable source.
- She questioned the inclusion of 1450 extra homes to cover the possibility of other Southern Hampshire authorities being unable to meet their own housing need in full.
- That the Parish Council had questioned the logic of the settlement hierarchy policy and gave an example of South Wonston scoring the same as Winchester for public transport.

David Baldwin whose contribution included the following:

- South Wonston Parish Council had already rejected all the sites proposed.
- All the properties north of La Frenaye Place were not on mains drainage and it would be expensive to provide mains drainage for this site.
- Water pressure was a problem in the village and the addition of 40 houses would exacerbate that problem.
- That these proposals were contrary to the council's climate emergency objectives.
- That local infrastructure such as shops, schools or GP surgeries were either too far away from the proposed sites or had no capacity for additional residents.
- That local wildlife such as kestrels, red kites and buzzards were regularly seen in the area.
- That vehicle access around West Hill Road North was poor and could be dangerous to pedestrians especially school children on their way to or from school.
- That South Wonston had reached its physical limits due to its topography, layout and infrastructure.

Trevor Salter whose contribution included the following regarding South Wonston:

- That the inclusion of sites at South Wonston ran contrary to the policies of Winchester City Council, in particular around visual intrusion, light pollution and protection of the environment.
- That there was no information regarding the type and size of housing that would be proposed, and he asked that 3-storey housing be ruled out.
- He asked if the brownfield oil site on the A272 been fully assessed as a potential alternative site?
- That local infrastructure such as water supply, shops, schools or GP surgeries required to be assessed.

Chris Rees, Planning Director, Alfred Homes whose contribution included the following;

- That he wished to refer to the “Brownfield first” principle and the Littleton Nursery site that was not a site included in the draft Local Plan.
- That this site was a 2-hectare site, currently used as a storage yard, and close to local services.
- He asked the committee to review whether all of the brownfield opportunity sites had been assessed prior to the plan moving forward.

Councillor Pearson whose contribution included the following.

- He thanked officers for the explanations provided in the site allocation documentation.
- Regarding the allocation of 500 dwellings within SDNP, he questioned whether these dwellings would be away from the village centres and so contrary to the council's “15-minute neighbourhood” principle and gave an example of Land North of Rareridge Lane.
- That many residents need and use a car regularly and that public transport provision was often inadequate.
- That the plan refers to rural lanes but did not contain a definition of what a rural lane was.
- He made particular reference to the site “Morgans Yard” which he believed would be a controversial site for local residents.

These points were responded to by officers and Cabinet Members accordingly. Following further discussion, the committee resolved to refer several matters to the cabinet which directly related to the public and visiting councillor contributions and were listed below.

Officers introduced each of the following topic areas in turn and the committee proceeded to ask questions and debate the topic in detail.

1. Introduction
2. Carbon Neutrality and Designing for Low Carbon Infrastructure

3. High-Quality Well-Designed Places and Living
4. Sustainable Transport and Active Travel
5. Biodiversity and the Natural Environment
6. The Historic Environment
7. Homes for All
8. Creating a vibrant economy
9. Winchester Site Allocations
10. South Hampshire Urban Areas
11. The Market Towns and Rural Area

5. **COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

The committee agreed that the following comments be reported to the Cabinet:

- A. Following a discussion on the draft Cabinet report, ref CAB3357, the following comments were agreed
1. An explicit and clear statement on why the Council was using the London Energy Transport Initiative (LETI) would be useful.
 2. Could paragraph 14.42 be amended to allow Parish councils to be better briefed and consulted in future stages?
 3. Page 19, under the heading of "Reputation", complete the sentence following the words "It would be necessary".
 4. Page 18, Risk Management to include a specific risk regarding a change in national planning policy.
 5. Could the flexibility in the revised policies around the provision of car parking spaces be misinterpreted and enable a developer to reduce the number of spaces provided?
 6. Paragraph 14.19, consider changing the wording from "may not" to "would not"
 7. That an update be provided in the report to set out the council's work with the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) regarding the Green Belt and housing allocations.
 8. Explain the "buffer" within the cabinet report, its purpose, how it was arrived at etc.
 9. Two sets of page numbering could make the document difficult to follow.
 10. Review the document to strengthen wording i.e., instead of could, should, use will, would etc.
- B. Following discussion of the officer's introduction to the Local Plan, the following comments were agreed.
1. That both the Winchester City Council (WCC) and the South Downs National Park (SDNP) Local Plan timetables be included in either the Local Plan document or the Cabinet Report.
 2. It was noted that some members whose wards included parts of the South Down National Park felt that they did not have all the information required

regarding the SDNP local plan process. Members were advised to take these matters up with officers at the SDNP and Councillor Tod advised that he would take up any specific issues if required.

3. Regarding page 61, policy SP2, it was recommended that an additional comment be included regarding the placement of Sir John Moore Barracks and Kings Barton with the "Winchester Town" allocation.

C. Following discussion concerning Policy: Carbon Neutrality and Designing for Low Carbon Infrastructure, the following comments were agreed.

1. Put in a specific reference to the use of LETI due to its importance to the plan.
2. Consider whether policy CN1 could be applied to extensions.
3. Review how to measure CN3 after the consultation.
4. Consider whether policy CN5 could be amended; to articulate the balance between the use of land for food production and the use of land for renewable or low carbon energy schemes, that the right metrics were used in grading agricultural land and the enforcement of conditions that were attached to developments such as solar farms.

D. Following discussion concerning Policy: High-Quality Well-Designed Places and Living Well, the following comments were agreed.

1. Consider greater emphasis and provide additional instruction regarding the importance of community engagement being undertaken much earlier in the design process.
2. Page 95, the table of characteristics should refer to the "City of Winchester" vision not the "Winchester" vision.
3. Recommend that conversations continue with the Town Forum regarding policy D1.
4. Consider whether policy D4 should only refer to "up-to-date" Village Design Statements etc and if so, define what was meant by up to date
5. Consider whether Conservation Area Appraisals be included in policy D4.
6. Regarding policy D9, consider whether retrospective measures could be applied under this policy.
7. Review policy D11 regarding internally lit signs.

E. Following discussion concerning Policy: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel, the following comments were agreed.

1. Consider a reference in 6.4 to the District Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.
2. Regarding policy T2, recommend that officers review the requirements for visitor parking as part of this policy as these were often used for residential parking.

F. Following discussion concerning Policy: Biodiversity and the Natural Environment, the following comments were agreed.

1. Policy NE1, review whether Swift towers hedgehog highways etc should be referenced.
2. Policy NE2, whilst the policy advises that a masterplan was expected, any application could not be refused if it were not provided and so vital that communication with organisations takes place in advance.
3. Policy NE7 - could Wickham be added to the first grouping of settlement gaps
4. Review whether the settlement gap relating to Oliver's Battery and Otterbourne be reviewed and extended.
5. Review whether Policy NE12, paragraph 7.94 conflicts with the final paragraph of NE12.
6. Policy NE13. Regarding dog walking, felt that fields being used were becoming a problem with noise, and visual intrusion. It was unclear whether this activity was considered leisure activity or rural economy and whether it should be included as part of paragraph 7.96.
7. Preview policy NE16 and the wider document for the use of the terms “ phosphates/phosphorus and nitrates/nitrogen”

G. Following discussion concerning Policy: The Historic Environment, the following comments were agreed.

1. Policy HE7 refers to the results of investigations that “should” be published, it was suggested that this wording be strengthened.
2. Consider taking a more receptive approach to measures taken on non-designated historic buildings to reduce their carbon footprint.

H. Following discussion concerning Policy: Homes for All, the following comments were agreed.

1. The committee felt that the hierarchy updates could have been done better and consideration should be given to how these could be improved and updated.
2. Page 208, table H3, it was understood that the proposed allocation of 485 for Hursley was not correct. On the same table, Swanmore and Sutton Scotney should be separated out.
3. Policy H5 and dwelling sizes, reconsider criteria three to guard against sites being underused.
4. Policy H5, consider explicitly stating that self-build development should be priced at below-market values
5. Policy H5 separate out custom build and self-build
6. That paragraph 9.36 be amended as follows “be provided by **the council** **or** a Registered Provider”
7. Policy H6 how do we assess whether applicants/developers really could not afford to contribute to affordable housing
8. Policy H7 consider making a specific reference to community support in the bullet points.
9. Policy H13, recommend consistency in either using the term “pitches” or “plots”
10. Policy H13, amend the table on pages 226 and 228 and 9.94 and review the column headings to ensure clarity for example using the word

“Authorised” concerning the number of pitches, also ensure column totals were accurate.

- I. Following discussion concerning Policy: Creating a vibrant economy, the following comments were agreed.
 - 1. Reconsider paragraph 10.133, within policy D8 and review whether the wording could be strengthened to support the continuation of community services.

- J. Following discussion regarding the Winchester site allocations, the following comments were agreed.
 - 1. Page 272, to change the number in the table regarding the Central Winchester Regeneration from 400 to 300.
 - 2. Regarding site W1, Andover Road, confirm allocation details
 - 3. Site W2, bullet point 4, consider providing further clarification of previously developed land and clarify why the green area to the north of the site was not included in the master plan.
 - 4. Site W3 St. Peter's car park, concern that this area floods and so would prevent development
 - 5. Site W5, believed that this site was within the Compton Street local gap (and greenfield land) and so how would the gap be safeguarded?
 - 6. Look at whether site W5 would also impact businesses in areas such as Oliver's Battery.
 - 7. To provide further clarification, add in the adoption date of the Central Winchester Regeneration (CWR) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
 - 8. Review the text in paragraph 9.61 and clarify regarding non-residential use of site W10.

- K. Following discussion regarding the South Hampshire Urban Areas allocations, the following comment was agreed.
 - 1. Officers to check the sites within the Havant Borough Council draft Regulation 18 to understand any impacts on the City Council's proposals concerning Newlands and West of Waterlooville developments.

- L. Following discussion regarding the Market Towns and Rural Areas allocations, the following comments were agreed.
 - 1. Site NA1, to note that the documented 50 spaces of public car parking was believed to be 42.
 - 2. Site CC1, paragraph 14.50, instead of “arrangements should be made for safe crossing points”, the word “should” be replaced with “would”.
 - 3. Site KW2, regarding the B3047 having a poor safety record, officers were asked to liaise with Hampshire County Council on this.
 - 4. Site WK4, concerns were expressed about the suitability and sustainability of this site, the lack of footpaths/pavements and the

potential security issues of Ravenswood and the impact on neighbouring housing.

5. Policy O1 is considered to be a sensitive site and recommended that feedback from the Parish Council be considered/included before the consultation.
6. That feedback Sutton Scotney and Boarhunt suggest that they would welcome some local housing but that the infrastructure did not support this at this time.

M. Following public participation, the following comments were agreed.

1. That key documents such as the Movement Strategy and the Winchester Town Vision be attached as an appendix to the Local Plan.
2. That policy CN5 be reviewed to consider whether the term “unacceptable impact” could be better communicated and understood.
3. That data regarding gypsy and travellers be checked for accuracy.
4. How could the council consult on a document or plan that would inevitably change
5. Regarding South Wonston, the following points were made:
 - It doesn't have the Vision and Characteristics etc as advised in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - Its allocations contain a site that was outside of the settlement boundary
 - It was unclear why the settlement hierarchy for South Wonston scores the same as Winchester on public transport.
 - That the concerns of South Wonston parish were being ignored.
 - Sought reassurances that 3-story townhouses would not be built.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 8.10 pm

Chairperson