

**Winchester District Local Plan 2020-
2040**

**Examination Statement
Matter 8 – Development Allocations
in the Market Towns and Rural Areas
(MTRAs)**

**Prepared by
Alice Drew**
BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI



Prepared on behalf of Croudace Homes Ltd

March 2025

Ref: WIN-2015-AD

Southern Planning Practice Ltd

Registered Office: Youngs Yard, Churchfields, Twyford, Winchester SO21 1NN
Tel: 01962 715770 E-mail: info@southernplanning.co.uk Website: www.southernplanning.co.uk
Registered in England and Wales No. 3862030

<u>Contents:</u>	Page
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 RESPONSE TO INSPECTORS' QUESTIONS	3

1.0 [Introduction](#)

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared by Southern Planning Practice Ltd and Neame Sutton Ltd on behalf of Croudace Homes Ltd who has an interest on Land at Southwick Road, Wickham which is allocated under Policy WK6 of the submission version of the Local Plan, as well as adjoining land. Croudace is also promoting SHELAA Site CC03 and CC03b, Land East of Highbridge Road, Colden Common.
- 1.2 It is pertinent to note that representations have been made on behalf of our client, Croudace Homes Ltd, throughout the preparation of the emerging Local Plan. Whilst this statement is not a duplication of the contents of representations previously submitted to the emerging Local Plan, this statement draws on previous responses where necessary.
- 1.3 Careful consideration has been given to the Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions on the relevant published examination material available on Winchester City Council's examination webpage, all of which has informed this statement.
- 1.4 This Examination Statement is prepared in response to the Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions – Matter 8 - Development Allocations in the Market Towns and Rural Areas (MTRAs). In addition to this Examination Statement, several other statements have been prepared in response to other matters being heard in the Local Plan Examination; where there is cross over between these matters we have sought to cross refer rather than repeat comments.
- 1.5 This statement focuses on the site allocations within two settlements – Colden Common and Wickham as Croudace Homes Ltd has interests in both. The site within Wickham known as Land at Southwick Road/School Road, is proposed to be allocated for 60 homes under Policy WK6. Croudace Homes also have an interest in the land to the east and north of this site allocation. The site within Colden Common, known as Land East of Highbridge Road, is not currently allocated in the Local Plan, however it is considered to be a suitable site for allocation which is available for development now, is a suitable and sustainable location for future residential development and is achievable with a realistic prospect that

housing will be delivered on site within five years, in accordance with the definition of 'deliverable' within the NPPF (2023).

- 1.6 This statement should be read alongside both Regulation 19 Local Plan Consultation representations prepared by Southern Planning Practice and Neame Sutton as well as the separate hearing statements submitted on behalf of Croudace Homes.

2.0 [Response to Inspectors' Questions](#)

Colden Common

Policy CCI Clayfield Park

1. Would the phasing of development until 2030 be justified by the evidence?

- 2.1 Croudace Homes Limited does not consider it necessary for any site in Colden Common, or indeed in the district, to be phased until 2030. The increase in housing requirement following the NPPF (2024) and the transitional arrangements show the need for imminent and swift review of this Plan, including its allocations. Evidence provided under Matter 4 clearly shows the need for more housing early in the plan period, compounded by the changing policy context of the NPPF. Phasing of development for any greenfield allocation until 20230 is not justified.

2. Given that this site is an existing allocation and has not delivered housing to date, what is the evidence that it will deliver from 2027/28 and within the Plan period?

- 2.2 It is Croudace's firm opinion that the allocation CCI should be removed from the Plan and housing trajectory. It is a site carried forward from the previous Local Plan which was adopted in 2017 and there have been no planning applications submitted to deliver the allocation in the intervening years. Further, as demonstrated by the recent grant of permission for commercial development and an established caravan business, it is evident it remains very much in business. There is clear intention for the business to continue to operate and invest in the site. There is no information available within the Local Plan evidence base that demonstrates to the Inspector that this site is likely to come forward in the next 5 years or even later into the plan period. As the site is not 'available' it fails the tests of deliverability (paragraph xx of the NPPF) and therefore should be deleted from the Plan.

Croudace Homes Limited look forward to the further opportunity to comment within the Examination setting once the evidence for CCI's site delivery is within the public domain.

In the absence of substantive evidence of CCI's delivery, alternative sites should be allocated in Colden Common to ensure appropriate levels of growth, and sufficient housing delivery in the village. SHELAA Site CC03 is available, deliverable and has a realistic prospect of housing delivery within the first five years of the plan and therefore could meet the 'gap' of uncertainty with CCI.

Wickham and Knowle

1) Is modification to the introductory text required to removed reference to policy WK2?

- 2.3 It is noted that Policy WK2 is still referred to in the table 'Wickham Housing Sources' on page 453, the reference to which should be removed. It is queried whether the number of dwellings also includes this site. Clarity should be sought on this matter. If the homes from this removed policy are relied on, it is considered that there will a shortfall in Wickham and further suitable sites will need to be allocated.

2) What is the justification for a change to the settlement boundary and would it represent a consistent application of the settlement boundary methodology?

- 2.4 The proposed new settlement boundary detailed on page 454 of the Local Plan Submission Version to include the site allocations is supported. This approach is considered to be consistent application of the settlement boundary methodology as the areas of new residential development as allocated by the policies will form part of the villages of Wickham and Knowle.

Policy WK6 – Land at Southwick Road/School Road

1) Would the policy title appropriately describe the proposed allocation?

- 2.5 Whilst the policy title does describe the proposed allocation, given that the site does not have access onto Southwick Road, only School Road, it may be more appropriate to amend the policy title to ‘Policy WK6 – Land at School Road’. However, if it were not to be amended it is still considered to appropriately describe the proposed allocation.

2) What is the evidence to justify this allocation which sits beyond the existing settlement boundary? Would it ensure that the rural setting of the settlement was preserved and the scenic beauty of the SDNP conserved?

- 2.6 The allocation of the Land at Southwick/School Road provides a logical extension to the existing residential area of Wickham in a sustainable location immediately adjacent to the existing settlement boundary of the village. It is pertinent to note that there are only very limited opportunities for development and redevelopment within the existing settlement boundary for Wickham, and as such any new residential development in the village will need to be accommodated beyond the existing settlement boundary.
- 2.7 The Site Selection Paper for Wickham (November 2024) reviewed six sites for new homes in Wickham and the Land at Southwick/School Road scored the best out of all sites on landscape sensitivity with a score of 8 out of 15 making it moderately sensitive. The selection paper confirmed that development could be accommodated on this site without changing landscape character through the retention as far as possible of the mature trees subject of TPOs and the significant mature hedgerows within and on the perimeter of the site. A robust assessment of the site is set out within the site selection paper, and it is therefore considered that there is sufficient evidence to justify the allocation in Policy WK6 for 60 new homes.
- 2.8 The allocation of the site for new homes would ensure that the rural setting of Wickham is preserved and also the scenic beauty of the SDNP also conserved. It is pertinent to note that there was recently a planning application considered by the Council on the site for 60

new homes (WCC Reference: 24/02803/FUL) , consistent with the requirements of Policy WK6, bar the phasing element. The application received no statutory objection from the key stakeholders, including the SDNP Planning Authority, WCC's Landscape and Tree Officers. Therefore, to give the Inspector comfort and to confirm how the rural setting and SDNP is conserved, the following is an extract of the site layout plan submitted with the full planning application.



Extract of Site Layout Plan prepared by Omega Architects Dwg No. 1005 Rev A

- 2.9 The above site layout plan confirms that the site can be appropriately designed to accommodate 60 homes at a density appropriate to assist in conserving the rural setting of Wickham and also the SDNP to the north of the site. Further, it is pertinent to note that

whilst the SDNP is located to the north of the site beyond Southwick Road, there are many mature trees and vegetation which provide significant screening of the site from the National Park. It is therefore considered that the scenic beauty of the SDNP will be unaffected as no views of the site are available from the National Park.

- 2.10 In addition, the response from the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) in respect of the planning application being currently considered by the Council raises two particular considerations in terms of impacts upon the special qualities of the SDNP, its setting, and the ability to promote opportunities by the public to understand and enjoy the special qualities. These considerations relate to dark skies and opportunities to access the National Park by means other than the private car. Given the sites visual separation from the SDNP though mature intervening vegetation, and due consideration to any potential light spill resulting from the development, it is considered that the proposals would preserve the scenic nature of the SDNP. The two considerations of the SDNPA can be addressed accordingly in the planning application.
- 2.11 In summary, it is considered that the Site Selection Paper for Wickham provides robust justification for the allocation of the site and given the mature intervening vegetation which encloses the site in a limited visual envelope, it is considered that the rural setting of Wickham is preserved as is the scenic nature of the SDNP.
- 2.12 We confirm that Croudace Homes strongly supports the allocation of the land at Southwick Road site for approximately 60 homes. We also confirm that the wider site is also available for further homes to meet Winchester’s housing need and would welcome the opportunity to continue working with the Council, community and other stakeholders to deliver a high quality sustainable development in which people aspire to live in the early years of the plan period.