



Winchester Submission Draft Local Plan 2020-2040

Hearing Statement

Matter 6: Winchester Housing and Mixed-Use Allocations

April 2025

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Respondent Reference: TBC

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Management | Development | Planning

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Matter 6 Hearing Statement has been prepared on behalf of Cala Homes (Southern). Our client has previously made representations on the Winchester District Submission Draft Local Plan 2020 – 2040 (Regulation 19). Our client has land interests at Land West of Courtenay Road (Policy W4) and Barton Farm Major Development Area (Policy W1). These sites are fully within our client's control and there are no legal or viability issues to prevent these sites coming forward.
- 1.2 Notwithstanding our client's land interests this Statement has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) and associated Planning Practice Guidance.
- 1.3 This statement provides a response to the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions raised under Matter 6 including the following:
- **Policy W4 Land West of Courtenay Road (Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6)**
 - **Policy W1 Barton Farm Major Development Area (Questions 1 & 5)**
- 1.4 This Statement highlights a need for amendments to be made to Policy W4 including:
- a) **Increasing the site capacity to 160 dwellings.**
 - b) **Phasing of the development within the next 5 years.**
 - c) **Amending the site boundary to exclude a corridor of land on the northern edge of the settlement boundary to Worthy Road.**
 - d) **Revised policy wording to confirm cycle access to the east via Courtenay Road / Stoke Road linking to the Kings Worthy to Winchester cycleway.**
 - e) **Removal of Policy W4 criteria (iii) which is not required for soundness.**
- 1.5 I consider that the proposed changes would improve the soundness of the Plan in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 35.

2. RESPONSE TO MATTER 6: WINCHESTER HOUSING AND MIXED-USE ALLOCATIONS

Issue: Whether the proposed housing site allocations in Winchester would be justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Policy W4 Land West of Courtney Road

1. What is the justification for the site capacity, given the site constraints including proximity to the Barton Meadows Nature Reserve, and its location within the Winchester to Kings Worthy/ Headbourne Worthy settlement gap, proximity to the railway, biodiversity, and access and transport impacts?

- 2.1 The Vision Statement for West of Courtenay Road¹ demonstrates that the proposed allocation is deliverable with a capacity of 160 dwellings. The Vision Statement has been informed by site Masterplanning and a range of technical assessments relating to transport, ecology / biodiversity, landscape, utilities, drainage and noise.

Proximity to Barton Meadows Nature Reserve

- 2.2 The site is separated from Barton Meadows by the northern site boundary tree belt. Masterplanning demonstrates how development will be set back from the northern tree belt with an appropriate landscape and ecology buffer including open space and net gains in biodiversity (informed by a Preliminary ecological assessment² and Initial Landscape Assessment)³. This provides an appropriate buffer to the nature reserve to the north and will not affect the deliverability of the site for approximately 160 dwellings. The development will provide a pedestrian connection to Barton Meadows via the established footpath network as part of a managed approach of access to the nature reserve.
- 2.3 The Regulation 19 IIA site assessment HWO9, Appendix F, page 520 identifies a ‘minor negative’ impact on biodiversity with no significant impact on the Barton Meadows Nature Reserve.

¹ Land West of Courtenay Road Vision Statement (Luken Beck, October 2024).

² Preliminary Biodiversity and Net Gain Assessment (Aspect Ecology, September 2024)

³ Initial Landscape Assessment (Green Landscape Studio, August 2024).

Location within the Winchester to Kings Worthy / Headbourne Worthy Settlement Gap

- 2.4 The development is a natural rounding off of the built form at Kings Barton and Courtenay Road and is well contained and suited to development. The allocation would not extend the built-up area beyond its current northern boundary, retaining the openness of the gap and will not undermine the function and integrity of the gap. This conclusion is also supported by the Council's Settlement Gap Review⁴ at paragraph 4.39.

Proximity to the Railway

- 2.5 A Noise and Vibration Assessment⁵ has been undertaken to assess the impact of noise from the railway line and this has informed site layout and mitigation measures. Site capacity of 160 dwellings can be achieved with mitigation measures in place including an appropriate dwelling set back from the railway line and provision of noise barrier adjacent to the railway line.

Biodiversity

- 2.6 A Preliminary Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment⁶ has informed Masterplanning for the site, ecology and biodiversity net gain strategy. This demonstrates that a development of 160 dwellings is deliverable while achieving appropriate ecological enhancements and 10% biodiversity net gain.
- 2.7 The site mainly comprises a single arable field of relatively low ecological value including a small woodland block, boundary hedges and a tree line. The development will retain important ecological features, protect and enhance them through new planting and other associated ecological enhancements. Appropriate landscape and ecology buffers will also be delivered to the northern tree line and on the western site boundary. The Local Plan IAA concludes that the site would have a 'minor negative' impact on biodiversity, and this does not affect the suitability of the site for allocation.

Access and Transport Impacts

⁴ BNE29 Settlement Gap Review (LUC, July 2024)

⁵ Noise and Vibration Assessment (24 Acoustics, August 2024)

⁶ Preliminary Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Aspect Ecology, September 2024).

- 2.8 Vehicular access to accommodate 160 dwellings is achieved via an extension to Courtenay Road through the existing field access with associated pedestrian footway improvements. The site Masterplanning prioritises active travel to establish a well-integrated development that connects to the wider area. A pedestrian and cycle connection will be provided to Kings Barton to the west utilising the recently constructed pedestrian and cycle route and the existing railway underpass. This active travel route provides access to services and facilities in Barton Farm including primary education, retail, community, leisure and sports provision. Cycle and pedestrian connections will also be established to Courtenay Road which links with cycle and pedestrian routes to the Winchester City Centre.

2. How has the capacity had regard to the potential traffic impacts?

- 2.9 The site is deliverable for 160 dwellings which is demonstrated by Masterplanning⁷ undertaken for the site, the Transport Feasibility Assessment and Initial Traffic Assessment undertaken by i-Transport and the Council's Strategic Transport Assessment.
- 2.10 A Transport Feasibility Assessment has been undertaken by i-Transport⁸. The assessment demonstrates that the proposed site access at Courtenay Road is capable of supporting development of up to 200 dwellings. Hampshire County Council Highways were engaged in the preparation of the assessment and agree that the proposed site access is suitable with capacity to accommodate the proposed allocation.
- 2.11 An Initial Traffic Assessment⁹ has been prepared, which demonstrates that a development of 160 dwellings will have limited impact on the local highway network. The traffic distribution and assignment show that the development would add less than one additional vehicle movement per minute to the worst affected junction (Worthy Road / Stoke Road). Traffic will dissipate quickly from the site with other junctions in the vicinity anticipated to experience an increase of around one vehicle movement every two-minutes during peak periods. This demonstrates that the Worthy Road / Stoke Road junction will continue to operate well within capacity.
- 2.12 The Council's Strategic Transport Assessment¹⁰ (STA) has modelled the impact of all proposed site allocations, known developments, committed transport schemes and forecast conditions to 2041. The STA concludes at paragraph 12.28 that, *"the quantum and distribution of the*

⁷ Masterplanning as set out in the Land West of Courtenay Road Vision Statement (October 2024).

⁸ Land off Courtenay Road, Transport Feasibility Assessment (i-Transport, September 2024).

⁹ Land off Courtenay Road, Winchester: Initial Traffic Assessment (i-Transport, March 2025).

¹⁰ ST15 Winchester Local Plan 2020 – 2040 Strategic Transport Assessment (Hampshire Services, August 2024)

development proposed in the Winchester Local Plan, and the resulting transport impacts, are capable of mitigation at the strategic level, and the plan is therefore deliverable and sound from a transport perspective.” A Statement of Common Ground¹¹ has also been signed between Winchester City Council and National Highways which confirms agreement of the Council’s STA.

- 2.13 In relation to Policy W4 the Highway Authority state that the site is in a highly sustainable location, well served by public transport. The Highway Authority are also developing plans for a high-quality active travel corridor along the B3047 Worthy Road to complement the existing cycle route to the City Centre. In accordance with LTP4 development in this location is supported by regular public transport and active travel routes which reduce the need for car journeys.
- 2.14 Therefore, the transport impact the Transport Assessments undertaken by i-Transport and the Council’s Strategic Transport Assessment demonstrates that Policy W4 is deliverable in transport terms with a capacity of 160 dwellings.

3. What is the justification for the indicative site capacity? How has the site capacity had regard to the provision of open space and community amenities, including parks and allotments in the locality?

- 2.15 The Masterplanning demonstrates that a site capacity of 160 dwellings can be delivered with 1.5ha of flexible, multifunctional accessible informal green spaces in accordance with Policy W4.
- 2.16 The Council’s Open Space Assessment (2022)¹² has informed requirements for open space provision in the district and standards applied to new developments. The Council has acknowledged that this evidence study contains an error on Pages 34 and 35 where Land West of Courtenay Road was incorrectly included within Barton Meadows (Area 9).
- 2.17 The Council has considered provision of open space, sports pitches and allotments in the surrounding area including within the adjacent Kings Barton Estate. Kings Barton performs a strategic role in providing in delivering sports and recreation provision as part of a community hub. This includes delivery of a wider sports offer including playing pitches, pavilion, running track, trim trail, MUGA, NEAP and LEAP. Land West of Courtenay Road has excellent

¹¹ SD08g Statement of Common Ground between Winchester City Council and National Highways (October 2024).

¹² RL01 WCC Open Space Assessment (2022).

connectivity to the Kings Barton development and open space / playing pitch provision through existing pedestrian and cycle connections to the west through the railway underpass.

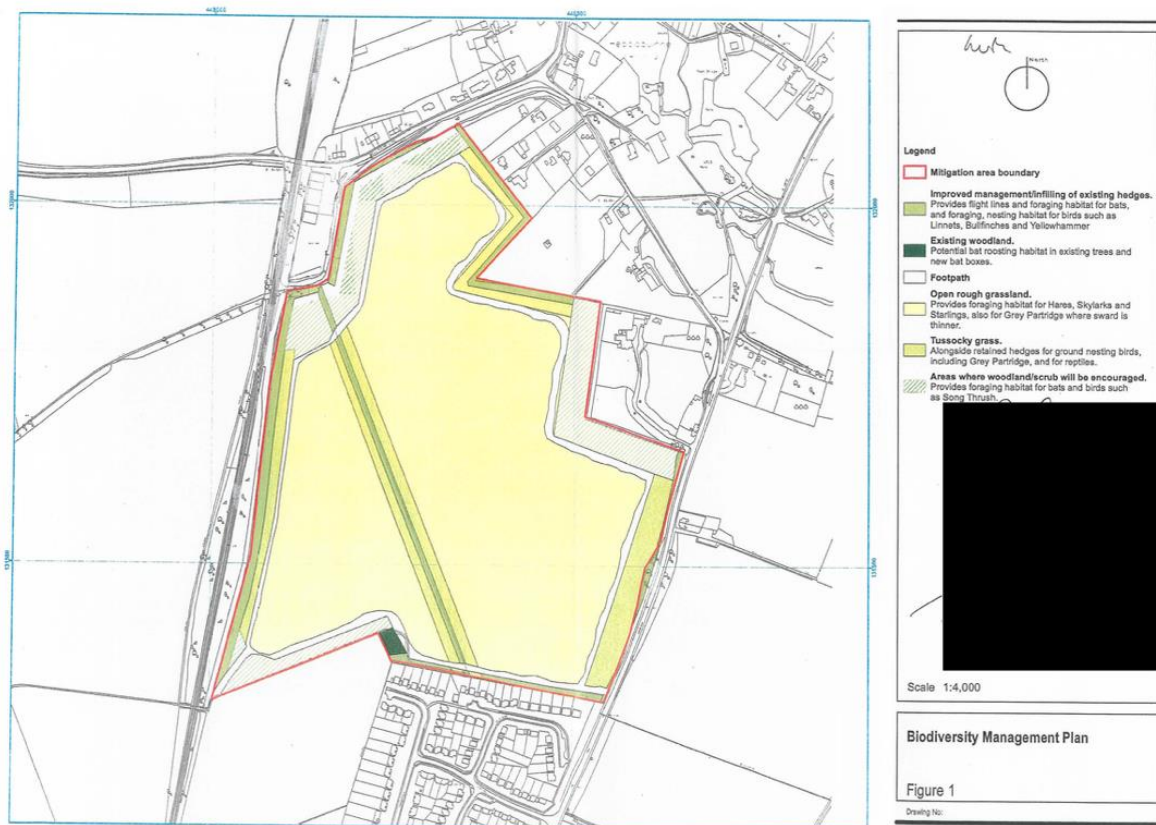
- 2.18 Through the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan¹³ the Council has assessed requirements for open space, recreation, green / blue infrastructure in the plan area. Therefore, the Council has robustly considered the requirements of open space and community amenities, including parks and allotments and the requirements for Policy W4 are consistent with the evidence base.

4. Can the Council please confirm the status of this site allocation in relation to the Barton Meadows Nature Reserve and comments referred to in an Inspector's decision letter with regard to the Barton Farm development (APP/L1765/A/10/2126522)? Is clarification in this respect required for the purposes of soundness?

- 2.19 The site is known as Kings Barton (permission refers to Land at Barton Farm). There is no requirement within the S106 agreement (Appeal reference APP/L1765/A/10/2126522, Outline Application 09/02414/OUT as varied by S73 application 13/01694/FUL) for Policy W4 to provide for biodiversity in conjunction with the development of Kings Barton. That requirement has been met by provision of Barton Meadows (located to the north of Policy W4) and does not impact on the soundness of the allocation.
- 2.20 Pre-Commencement Condition 15 required the setting out and management of land to the east of the railway (drawing marked Figure 1: Biodiversity Management Plan) to provide a circular footpath to reduce visitor pressure on the River Itchen SSSI. The land identified for biodiversity and delivery of Barton Meadows excludes Policy W4. Therefore, there is no requirement to safeguard Land West of Courtenay Road in relation to ecology mitigation and the delivery of Barton Meadows Nature Reserve.

¹³ IN01 Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (August 2024).

Figure 1: Biodiversity Management Plan



5. Would the phasing of development until 2033 be justified by the evidence?

- 2.21 The proposed phasing of development in Policy W4 is not justified by the evidence and the policy should be amended to enable delivery of the site within the next 5 years.
- 2.22 The Council states that the phasing of new greenfield allocations post 2030 will enable a balanced housing trajectory and a 5-year housing supply to be maintained in view of identified housing supply from completions, commitments and windfall in the first half of the Plan period (2020 – 2030). However, this does not take account of potential delays to the delivery of strategic sites and a non-implementation rate for planning permissions which may affect the ability to maintain a 5-year land supply early in the Plan period. Therefore, it is important for housing supply from greenfield sites that can be delivered without delay to be phased within the next 5 years.
- 2.23 NPPF Paragraph 60 states that, *“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.....”*. Land West of Courtenay Road is a medium sized green

field site that is immediately deliverable and will support the delivery of a sufficient amount and variety of land.

- 2.24 The draft Local Plan identifies an unmet needs allowance of 1,900 dwellings but there remains a substantial housing shortfall in the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) area which is not effectively addressed through emerging Local Plans and the PfSH Spatial Position Statement. Therefore, there is a need for the site to be phased within the next 5 years to enable the Council to make a greater contribution to unmet housing needs.

6. Would policy requirements in relation to off-site transport improvements and infrastructure be required for the purposes of soundness?

- 2.25 Criteria (iii) of Policy W4 is not required for soundness as the Council's transport evidence does not identify a need for off-site junction improvements.
- 2.26 The Council's STA has considered potential interventions that may be required in relation to the cumulative impacts of growth in Winchester City. The STA does not identify the requirement for off-site junction improvements in relation to allocations in the north of Winchester including Policy W4 as set out in 8.10 and 8.11 of the STA. The STA states that in accordance with LTP4 any potential mitigation requirements for Policy W4 are anticipated to be in relation to encouraging sustainable travel and prioritising active travel as opposed to junction improvements.
- 2.27 The Initial Traffic Assessment prepared by i-Transport demonstrates that a development of 160 dwellings will have a small impact on junction flows and the most affected junction Worthy Road / Stoke Road will operate within capacity. The assessment concludes that any mitigation schemes that may be needed are expected to be directed to encouraging sustainable travel and prioritising active travel and not off-site junction improvements.
- 2.28 In conclusion, the Local Plan STA, i-Transport Initial Transport Assessment and Transport Feasibility Assessment demonstrate that transport mitigation requirements are expected to be directed to encouraging sustainable travel and prioritising active travel in accordance with LTP4. The Local Plan IDP also does not identify a need for off-site junction improvements. Therefore, policy criteria (iii) is not required in relation to soundness and deliverability of Policy W4.

Policy W1 Barton Farm Major Development Area

1. This development has an extant outline planning permission for a development including 2,000 homes. That includes a comprehensive access strategy which incorporates the diversion and rerouting of the Andover Road. Is there any justification to promote a site allocation policy that differs from that outline permission?

- 2.29 There is no justification to promote a site allocation policy that differs from the implemented outline planning permission. The latest position regarding the access strategy and rerouting of the Andover Road has been agreed with the Highways Authority and will be formalised through a variation to the Section 106 agreement.
- 2.30 A change to the current trigger point for Andover Road to be closed and diverted through Kings Barton from 650th occupation to 1000 occupation has been agreed with the Highway Authority.
- 2.31 A highways assessment has been undertaken of the forecast trips associated with additional occupations on Andover Road. The Highway Authority has reviewed the evidence base and is satisfied that the impacts on the safe operation of the highway are acceptable.
- 2.32 A timetable for the implementation of the diversion of the Andover Road has been agreed between the Highway Authority and Cala Homes and implementation will be in accordance with this timetable. The timetable sets out that the works will be completed by December 2027 corresponding with the forecast occupation of 1,000 homes.
- 2.33 The Highways Authority have agreed that the revised trigger points will enable the development to come forward safely and enable the necessary works approved through the outline planning consent to be delivered.
- 2.34 The Highway Authority Position Statement¹⁴ regarding the diversion of Andover Road is included in the footnote below.

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<https://democracy.winchester.gov.uk/documents/b13070/Update%20from%20Hampshire%20County%20Council%20on%20S106%20highway%20trigger%20points%2011th-Mar-2025%2018.00%20Kings%20Bart.pdf?T=9>

5. Given past delivery on this site allocation, what is the evidence that it would be would deliver in its entirety within the Plan period?

2.35 Cala Homes has confirmed that 670 dwellings have been completed and occupied and in accordance with the planning consent Cala Homes are committed to delivering the allocation in full within the Plan period. The Housing Topic Paper (EDO2) sets out a trajectory for Barton Farm and this has been updated below by Cala Homes confirming delivery within the Plan period.

Site	Total Dwellings	2024 / 25	2025 / 26	2026 / 27	2027 / 28	2028 / 29	2029 / 30	2030 / 31	2031 / 32	2032 / 33	2033 / 34	2034 /35	2035 / 36	2036/ 37	2037/ 38
W1 Barton Farm	1408	115	115	115	115	115	115	115	115	115	115	115	90	53	0

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