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Winchester District Local Plan

Winchester City Council Local Plan Examination

Hearing Statement Matter 18:

The Plan Viability

April 2025



Winchester
City Council

Matter 18 The Plan Viability

Issue: Whether the Plan is positively prepared and justified, effective and consistent with national policy in relation to viability?

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The Plan Viability

- 1. The Local Plan Viability Report July 2024 [V01] concludes that the Plan's approach and policy directions are viable on the whole. In addition, it concludes that sites will be able to come forward viably with the Plan policies in place. Is the methodology used for that study robust and fit for purpose and are its findings justified by the evidence?**

WCC response:

- 1.1 Yes. The city council considers that the Local Plan Viability Study evidence and associated appendices (LPV01 – LPV18) made reasonable assumptions, based on adequate, proportionate and up to date evidence about meeting the cost of all of the plans policy requirements and other relevant national standards.
- 1.2 The assumptions used in the study are set out in Appendix 1 to the July 2024 and August 2025 reports (LPV01 / LPV05) and noted within the Local Plan Viability Study report detail ([LPV01](#)). The comprehensive study involved an iterative testing process including regular two-way dialogue between the Council and Dixon Searle Partnership (DSP) to both inform and test Local Plan policy. The study also included a two-stage consultation with a range of stakeholders including housebuilders, developers, planning agents etc.
- 1.3 The Local Plan Viability Study evidence (LPV01 – LPV18) reflects and is consistent with the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which sets out how viability should be considered in plan-making. Paragraph 1.9 onwards of the Local Plan Viability Study report ([LPV01](#)) describes the established methodology approach (using 'residual valuation') applied in the assessment and consistent with other studies carried out by DSP that have successfully been through the examination process.
- 1.4 The city council therefore considers the study methodology is robust with the findings appropriately justified by the detailed evidence.

- 2. Are the policy requirements such that the cumulative cost of all relevant policies would not undermine the deliverability of the Plan having regard to the types of development and sites proposed?**

WCC response:

- 1.5 Yes. Building on the above response, the adopted cost assumptions are based on a range of publicly available information, detailed information provided by the Council alongside DSP's extensive experience. Appendix 1 to the July 2024 and August 2025 reports (LPV01 / LPV05) sets out the technical assumptions detail and Chapter 3 of report discusses the key policy areas (including national policy) tested alongside general development costs. Consistent with national

policy and guidance, a range of residential and commercial development typologies have been tested reflecting emerging site supply on both PDL and greenfield land. In addition, bespoke testing was conducted for Sir John Moore Barracks as a key housing allocation as described in the 'Local Plan Viability Study report – further information' (August 2024) (LPV05).

- 1.6 Overall, the Local Plan Viability Study report ([LPV01](#)) and the Local Plan Viability Report – Further information (August 2024) ([LPV04](#)) concludes, on this basis, that the plan strategy and policies are viable and do not undermine deliverability of the plan.