

Examination of the Winchester District Local Plan 2020-2040 (the District Plan/the Plan)

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Examination web pages: [Local Plan Examination - Winchester District Local Plan](#)

Inspector Note 23

Stage 1 Hearing agendas

I sent out my matters, issues and questions for examination in relation to the first stage hearing session some time ago (ED13 and 17). In light of the responses received, I have produced an agenda for the stage 1 hearing sessions.

The hearing sessions will only cover issues about which I require further information, having read all written submissions. I expect to go round the table once on each item. Rebuttals of others' contributions are not encouraged and I will act to prevent the repetition of points made by previous speakers. However, I may myself seek further comment in the interests of clarification, or where there is a matter that I need to pursue further.

R Barrett
INSPECTOR

17 April 2025

10.00 Tuesday 22 April 2025 (Day 1)

Agenda

Inspector's opening announcements

Opening statement from Council

Matter 1: Procedural/legal requirements

Issue: Whether all Statutory and Regulatory requirements have been met?

Duty to Cooperate

1. Is there clear evidence that the Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with neighbouring authorities and prescribed bodies in accordance with section 33A of the 2004 Act, in respect of strategic matters with cross-boundary impacts considered through the preparation of the Plan?

Sustainability Appraisal

1. In overall terms does the Plan meet the legal requirements of Section 19(5) of the 2004 Act and accord with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 32 and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in this regard?

Community Involvement

1. Has the Council complied with the requirements of section 19(3) of the 2004 Act with regard to conducting consultation in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement?

Superseded Policies

1. The submitted Plan in paragraph 2.7 explains that it will replace the adopted Local Plan Part 1- Joint Core Strategy, Local Plan Part 2-Development Management Policies and Site Allocations and the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson Development Plan Document in their entirety. In this regard, is the Plan clear in identifying the policies of the existing development plan which would be superseded by the Plan consistent with Regulation 8(5) of the 2012 Regulations?

Inspector's closing remarks

14.00 Tuesday 22 April 2025 (Day 1)

Agenda

Inspector's opening announcements

Matter 2: Spatial strategy and distribution of development Policies SP1, SP2, SP3, H1, H2, H3, and E1 and E2

Issue: Whether the spatial strategy and distribution of development is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

1. The Settlement Hierarchy Review (2024) scores settlements and groups them which provides the settlement hierarchy in the District. Is the methodology used robust and the outcomes accurate?
2. How is the distribution of development between the tiers of settlements established?
3. Is the spatial strategy as set out in Strategic policy SP2 justified as an appropriate strategy, taking account of reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence?
4. Is the proposed distribution of housing and other development supported by the evidence in the SHELAA, settlement hierarchy, and IIA, and will it lead to an appropriate pattern of housing and economic growth?
5. Have settlement boundaries been defined in accordance with a clear and easily understood methodology that is consistently applied?

Inspector's closing remarks

10.00 Wednesday 23 April 2025 (Day 2)

Agenda

Inspector's opening announcements

Matter 3: The Plan's vision and strategic policies SP1, SP2 and SP3

Issue: Whether the Vision and strategic policies SP1, SP2 and SP3 are positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. General matters

1. What is the justification for the Plan period of 2020 to 2040?

Policy SP2

1. Given the transitional arrangements set out in NPPF December 2024 paragraphs 234-236) would a modification requiring a Plan review within a stated timescale be clear and effective? Given the above national policy would such a modification be necessary for soundness?
2. To accord with national policy at NPPF paragraph 60, to boost significantly the supply of homes, should the numbers expressed in policy SP2 be stated as minimums?
3. Policy SP2 sets out housing targets for the three spatial areas in the District. In so doing, does it provide appropriate support for employment uses to meet local needs?

Policy SP3

1. Would policy SP3 accord with NPPF paragraph 89, which states that '... The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.'?
2. Does policy SP3 provide for the particular locational needs of essential infrastructure such as water and waste water infrastructure in accordance with PPG? Should it state that development should not increase flood risk and assessed any potential loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land ?

Inspector's closing remarks

14.00 Wednesday 23 April 2025 (Day 2)

Agenda

Matter 4 Meeting housing need

Inspector's opening announcements

Issue: Would the overall strategy and provision for housing development be justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Calculation of Local Housing Need (LHN)

1. The Council has calculated LHN using the Government's standard methodology. That gives a figure of 13,565 dwellings over the Plan period 2020-2040. That figure includes an affordability adjustment to take account of past under delivery. In this regard does the Plan accord with NPPF paragraph 61, which indicates that strategic policies should be informed by a local housing needs assessment conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance (PPG)?
2. Is there substantive evidence to demonstrate that it would be appropriate to plan for a higher housing need figure than the standard method indicates in this case as per advice set out in the PPG (Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 2a-010-20201216)?

The housing requirement

1. SDNP Authority suggest a figure of 250 dwellings would be delivered with the SDNP in the Plan period. What would be the consequence should the lower figure deliver rather than the 350 accounted for in the Plan?
2. In accordance with the approach set out in the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH) position statement and ongoing cooperation with neighbouring authorities, Portsmouth City Council and Havant Borough Council have confirmed an unmet need. How has the unmet needs allowance in the Plan been calculated?
3. In stating an unmet need allowance as opposed to a figure intended to meet the need in each authority, would the Plan be effective? Would it accord with NPPF paragraph 61? If an intended figure were included in the Plan, how should that be expressed (as a percentage or specific numbers)?
4. NPPF paragraph 67 expects strategic policies to set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Would the Plan accord with this expectation?

Inspector's closing remarks

10.00 Thursday 24 April 2025 (Day 3)

Agenda

Inspector's opening announcements

Matter 4 Meeting housing need

Issue: Would the overall strategy and provision for housing development be justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

The overall supply of housing

1. Would the housing trajectory provide a sound basis for meeting the identified housing need and accord with NPPF paragraph 75, which requires a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites?
2. Does it identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended adoption and specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth for the subsequent years 6-10 and, where possible for years 11-15 of the remaining Plan period, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 69?
3. Is the housing trajectory realistic and deliverable? Are there any threats to delivery?
4. Is the contribution towards housing supply from windfall justified? Is there compelling evidence that they provide a reliable source of supply in accordance with NPPF paragraph 72?
5. Policy H2 holds back permissions for new greenfield site allocations until 2030 to prioritise previously developed land, achieve a more even housing trajectory and level of development over the Plan period. What would be the expected impacts on housing land supply, 5 year housing land supply, delivery of a variety of sites and matters such as nutrient mitigation and thereby nutrient neutrality requirements and electricity grid capacity?

Inspector's closing remarks

Five year housing land supply

In the Council's Housing Topic Paper Update (ED02) it states that the Plan is able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply on adoption of 6.7 years against an annual requirement of 679 dwellings home per annum (2025-2031).

1. Will the Plan provide for a five year supply of specific deliverable housing sites on adoption with specific regard to the definition of deliverable in NPPF annex 2?
2. Which specific sites make up the extant permissions included within the housing trajectory and what is the evidence that they are deliverable as per the NPPF definition?
3. The Council's calculation applies the 'Liverpool Method.' What is the reason for this and in so doing would this be sound and accord with NPPF paragraphs 69?

Inspector's closing remarks

14.00 Thursday 24 April 2025 (Day 3)

Agenda

Inspector's opening announcements

Matter 5 Site allocation methodology

Issue: Whether the site allocation methodology for proposed housing, mixed-use and non-residential site allocations is justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Methodology and application

1. How have the proposed allocations been identified?
2. How were the site boundaries, areas and dwelling/other capacities determined? Are the assumptions justified and based on robust evidence? In particular, are the indicative residential capacities, set out in the Plan's site allocations justified by the evidence and consistent with NPPF paragraphs 123 to 126?
3. How would the proposed allocations provide flexibility in the event that some sites do not come forward?

Inspector's closing remarks