

Fareham Borough Council

THE LOCAL PLAN PART 2: DEVELOPMENT SITES AND POLICIES ISSUES AND POLICIES

Southern Water's response to the Inspector's Issue 3: The Natural Environment (DSP7-DSP16)

1. Southern Water is the statutory wastewater and sewerage undertaker for the area covered by Fareham Borough Council. We note that Fareham Borough Council has not proposed any modifications to policy DSP12 of the Local Plan Part 2 in response to our written representations. We explained in our representations at the submission stage that we were unable to support policy DSP12 as sound. This is because it could present a barrier to service providers, such as Southern Water, from preventing the infrastructure needed to serve new or existing customers or meet stricter environmental standards.
2. The soundness criterion it fails to meet is 'consistent with national policy' as it does not accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance. Paragraph 76 of the NPPF recognises that there might be very special circumstances when development should be allowed on open space and paragraph 88 of the NPPF explains that special circumstances exist if the potential harm of a development proposal is clearly outweighed by other considerations. The National Planning Practice Guidance (Reference ID: 34-005-20140306) states that '*it will be important to recognise that water and wastewater infrastructure sometimes has needs particular to the location (and often consists of engineering works rather than new buildings) which mean otherwise protected areas may exceptionally have to be considered*'.
3. Our formal representations to the Local Plan explain our position in detail. This statement is intended to supplement our original representation and in the interest of brevity we will not expand further here.

Proposed amendment to Policy DSP12:

4. We propose the following additional provision in policy DSP12 to make it sound:

Should the need arise, development for essential infrastructure will be supported in special circumstances, where the benefit outweighs any harm, and it can be demonstrated there are no reasonable alternative sites available.