



FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

LOCAL PLAN PART 2

DEVELOPMENT SITES AND POLICIES PLANS

Issue 1: The Duty to Cooperate, Legal Requirements, Sustainable Development and the Relationship between the LP2, The Core Strategy and other Planning Documents

STATEMENT PREPARED BY

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ON BEHALF OF PERSIMMON HOMES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 I attended Local Plan Part 3 and I made representations in respect of the Duty to Cooperate and the “soundness” of the Plan.
- 1.2 These representations are made in respect of Persimmon Homes who hold an option on land in Cranleigh Road. The site specific aspects are considered primarily in respect of Issue 7: Housing Allocations.
- 1.3 Local Plan Part 2 has not addressed the very clear cut “shortfall” in the housing provision at Welborne. It is clearly “unsound”.

2.0 THE BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The principal elements of the planning history in respect of the Core Strategy and the subsequent Local Plans Part 2 and 3 are set out in the following paragraphs.

The South East Plan

- 2.2 There are two points with regard to the South East Plan. The South East Plan established the figures for South Hampshire for the period to 2026 of 80,000 of which 10,000 was to be provided at Welborne (North of Fareham Strategic Development Area). This represented 12.5% of the total requirement and, therefore, any reduction from 10,000 would be significant and require adjustments elsewhere.
- 2.3 The second point is that, when the Inspector published his Report on the Fareham Borough Core Strategy in 2011, the South East Plan had still not been abolished. It is too late to remedy this but the Core Strategy was always ‘unsound’.

Fareham Borough Core Strategy: Inspector’s Report

- 2.4 The Examination of the Core Strategy took place in 2011 and the Inspector’s Report was published in August 2011. The Inspector concluded that it was “sound” in spite of the fact that he identified a serious ‘shortfall’ in the provision of housing. He recommended that this ‘shortfall’ was referred back to the sub regional body ie PUSH for re-distribution rather than to the remainder of Fareham Borough, at that time. Paragraphs 28 and 29 are of particular relevance:-

28. Core Strategy policy CS2 carries forward the rest-of-Borough housing total (outside the SDA) that is set out in the SEP and sub-regional strategy. As discussed above, the justification for the SDA derives from a sub-regional, rather than a Borough-based, housing need. I therefore reject the view that the proposed reduction in the SDA's likely housing yield from the 10,000 dwelling figure contained in the SEP should simply be added to the Core Strategy's rest-of-Borough requirement. Any reassignment of sub-regional housing requirements within the South Hampshire area is more appropriately considered at the sub-regional level. (my italics)

29. Nevertheless, as already noted, THE SUB-REGIONAL HOUSING REQUIREMENT APPLYING TO THE SDA WILL NECESSARILY HAVE A BOROUGH-BASED COMPONENT. It is therefore possible that, subject to further sub-regional analysis of housing provision and future refinement of the likely levels of housing delivery in the SDA through work on the AAP, the reduced scale of the SDA may imply an increased need for new housing in the REMAINDER OF THE BOROUGH. At present this cannot be quantified, and I agree with the Council that it would be both premature and lacking in justification to make such provision in the Core Strategy. (My Caps and Italics)

2.5 The Inspector reduced the SDA provision to **5350** houses in the period to 2026 and he also made the questionable decision to accept the Council's proposal to make provision for **7500** completions in the period beyond 2026. This proposal did not have any basis in sub regional guidance. He did recommend that the shortfall of **4650** should be referred back to the 'umbrella' organisation known as PUSH. He also confirmed **3729** for the Remainder of the Borough.

2.6 The Inspector recognised that there was a shortfall. He expected the Borough Council, in discussion with PUSH, to address the shortfall and to re-distribute this figure to the Districts in PUSH including that part of Fareham Borough outside of the North of Fareham Strategic Development Area (NFSDA) now known as Welborne. The shortfall has not been addressed and it has not been re-distributed. There is no evidence that PUSH has

considered the re-distribution. No other Districts in PUSH have considered this issue.

2.7 The Inspector's Report also stated, page 59,:-

Change No 5.24 The development of the SDA is due to start on site during 2014/15 and to be completed by 2031. The estimated housing trajectory, set out in Appendix 3 predicts that around 5,350 dwellings will be completed within the Plan period, though the AAP will explore mechanisms to expedite this rate of delivery.

2.8 The SDA is no longer expected to start in 2014/15 and it is now proposed to commence in 2016. On this basis, the SDA would have to provide 5350 dwellings from 2016 to 2026 ie an average of *535 completions each year*. Many of the participants at the Examination of the Core Strategy argued that this was an impossible target as the highest figure achieved in South Hampshire SDAs was 283 and this figure was only achieved in one year.

2.9 It is also important to note that the Inspector in his Report stated that it was confirmed that *"the SDA will necessarily have a Borough based component"* (see paragraph 29; Inspector's Report). The Council contends that Welborne can be 'ring fenced' but, counter intuitively, it also acknowledges that there is an interrelationship.

Fareham Borough Core Strategy

2.10 The Core Strategy was adopted in 2011. The reduced figure of 5350 is set out in paragraph 5.94. The Inspector's changes to the Core Strategy that extend the plan period to the period beyond 2026 for Welborne (Change No 5.36; document pages 71-74) and the revised figures of 6500-7500 were also taken forward in the Core Strategy (Policy CS13 (page 171)).

South Hampshire Strategy (October 2012)

2.11 The SEP proposed 80,000 new dwellings for South Hampshire. Following the abolition of the SEP, PUSH reduced this figure to 74,000 for the period 2006-2026.

- 2.12 Policy 4 of the South Hampshire Strategy states, inter alia, that 55,600 net additional dwellings will be provided in South Hampshire in the revised period 2011-2026 (page 13). The distribution of these homes is set out in Policy 11 (page 27).
- 2.13 With regard to Fareham Borough it introduced new figures. For the New Community North of Fareham, it proposed 5,400 net additional homes and it proposes a new figure of 2200 for the remainder of the Borough for the period 2011-2026.

Welborne Plan: Local Plan Part 3

- 2.14 The figure of 5400 by 2026 in the South Hampshire Strategy has been reduced to **2860 dwellings by 2026 for Welborne** (Local Plan Part 3). **This represents a shortfall of 2490 (ie 5350-2860)**. This is 46% of the figure in the Core Strategy.
- 2.15 This figure will undoubtedly be compounded by the additional shortfall in the early years as set out in the Trajectory (page 145). The Plan requires an average of 286 dwellings per annum but the trajectory assumes a gradual increase to 340 per annum for the last six years of the plan period. The Council contends that the trajectory is achievable because it has been supported by the Report prepared by GVA. However, even the trajectory shows a shortfall in the first five years (page 145, Local Plan Part 3).
- 2.16 The development of Welborne is only due to commence in 2016. The trajectory in the Plan shows that only 1160 units are anticipated in the first five years of the Plan 2016-2021 whereas to achieve the average of 286 per annum it should provide 1430 completions. This represents further addition to the shortfall of 270 units.
- 2.17 If the five year period is taken as 2014-2019 then shortfall would be increased by 930 (ie $286 \times 5 = 1430$ less 500 = 930). Even this trajectory seems highly improbable. It is evident that the trajectory is too optimistic.

GVA Research: Welborne Build Out Rates Study

- 2.18 It will have been noted that the Inspector in his Report (2011) accepted the Council's position, supported by PUSH that the

NFSDA could achieve 5350 completions in the ten year period 2016-2026 (ie an average of 535 per annum) in spite of the challenge by Participants that this was fanciful.

2.19 The Welborne Plan now proposes that 2860 dwellings can be completed in the same ten year period. The Council engaged GVA to examine this element. The research examined a wide range of large sites across the country and within the PUSH area including stand alone and extension sites. The Study concludes that Welborne can achieve this figure. It supported the trajectory (page 145) that reached the figure of 340 per annum for the last six years of the plan period. This was based upon the development of five to six marketing sites and the lower level of affordable housing provision (30%).

2.20 The Study acknowledged the uncertainties. However, there is no reference in the Study of the implications of the competing sites especially of Whiteley where a further 3500 houses are proposed to be developed as an extension to a well developed settlement served from the next Motorway Junction to the west. This SDA already enjoys the benefits of a District Centre, primary schools, leisure facilities and a wide range of employment opportunities on the very extensive Business Park.

Winchester Local Plan Part 1

2.21 It is a matter of fact that Welborne is in competition with other areas including the two SDAs at Whiteley and West of Waterlooville in Winchester District. The Core Strategy for Winchester District was adopted in 2013 and there are trajectories for both Whiteley SDA (3500 dwellings) and West of Waterlooville SDA (3000).

2.22 There is an acknowledgement in the Winchester Local Plan that, if the number of completions fail to achieve the trajectories, then land will be identified to make good any shortfalls. Paragraph 5.25 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 states, with regard to Whiteley, that:-

“If at some point in the future it becomes clear that the site is failing to deliver the level of housing proposed, the implications

for the Council's ability to ensure adequate housing supply across the District will be assessed."

- 2.23 Surely, the same approach should be applied to the Fareham Borough Local Plan Parts 2 and 3.
- 2.24 The Council responded that Welborne is a sub-regional SDA one of two in South Hampshire. It is claimed that it is not Fareham's responsibility to resolve the shortfall. However, the other one in Eastleigh has been abandoned and the housing figure set out in the original PUSH Strategy spread around the Borough of Eastleigh.
- 2.25 With regard to "ring fencing" there is also the fact that Para. 6.17 LPP3 and Policy WEL 18 state that a substantial proportion of the Borough's affordable housing needs must be met in Welborne. Clearly, any delay in meeting the shortfall will impact upon the provision of affordable housing in the short term. This can only be made good by the allocation of more sites in the Remainder of the Borough.
- 2.26 The provision of infrastructure at Welborne was a very contentious issue at the Examination and the probability of further delays to the provision of housing, especially in the short terms, seems inevitable. The developers stated that they hoped to submit an outline application in the New Year. It is looking increasingly unlikely that a significant number of completions will take place in 2016/17.

South Hampshire Market Assessment

- 2.27 The Council has stated publicly that it is committed to an "Early Review". However, this is based upon the proposal by PUSH to prepare a revised Strategy for South Hampshire by 2016. Even if the document is prepared by 2016, it will take time to feed into revised Plans and a further delay of a few years is inevitable. Thus, the so called "Early Review" is unlikely to be in place within the next five years. The existing shortfall can only be seriously compounded leading to the inevitable lodging of appeals.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.28 It is noted that both the NPPF and the NPG were published after the Core Strategy was examined. The Core Strategy and, in consequence, Local Plans Part 2 and 3 are out of date.
- 2.29 The Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places a duty on local planning authorities and other bodies to cooperate with each other to address strategic issues relevant to their areas. The duty requires ongoing constructive and active engagement on the preparation of development plan documents and other activities relating to the sustainable development and use of land, in particular in connection with strategic infrastructure.
- 2.30 Paragraph 181 of the NPPF states that 'Local planning authorities will be expected to demonstrate evidence of having successfully cooperated to plan for issues with cross-boundary impacts when their Local Plans are submitted for examination'.
- 2.31 Paragraph 179 of the NPPF states that "Local planning authorities should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in individual Local Plans. Joint working should enable local planning authorities to work together to meet development requirements which cannot wholly be met within their own area for instance, because of a lack of physical capacity or because to do so would cause significant harm to the principles and policies of this Framework. As part of this process, they should consider producing joint planning policies on strategic matters and informal strategies such as joint infrastructure and investment plans."
- 2.32 Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states that "Local planning authorities should take account of different geographic areas, including travel-to-work areas."
- 2.33 There is no evidence that Fareham Borough Council or the sub regional body known as the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) has considered the shortfall of housing numbers in Fareham Borough. This shortfall was identified by the Planning Inspector who presided at the Examination into the Core Strategy. It is considered

that the current Plans Part 2 and 3 are therefore “unsound” and should be rejected until the shortfall is addressed.

East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy

- 2.34 The Inspector who examined the Joint Core Strategy decided to suspend the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy. I referred to the issues of the performance of the Whitehill-Bordon strategic allocation and that the Inspector considered that this could not be ‘ring fenced’ and that the same approach should be taken in Fareham. As a result, Interim Allocations have been proposed to address the shortfall in the District.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The development of Welborne is only due to commence in 2016 and the trajectory in the Plan shows that the shortfall will be compounded in the first five years as completions slowly build up to the target of 2860 for the plan period with just 500 completions expected in the five years (2014-2019). The ‘shortfall’ is clearly made far worse by the figures in the trajectory which are themselves questionable.
- 3.2 None of the Districts in PUSH has considered any possibility of absorbing any additional housing to make good the Fareham SDA shortfall.
- 3.3 All of the Core Strategies in the other 9 Districts are well advanced. Five have been adopted; the remaining four are sufficiently advanced that it is possible to confirm that none has addressed the shortfall or any prospect for re-distribution.
- 3.4 There is no evidence that this shortfall has been examined by PUSH. The shortfall has not been considered by any of the other Districts in PUSH.
- 3.5 The shortfall has not been considered by Fareham Borough Council. The Borough Council has therefore failed the Duty to Cooperate.
- 3.6 It follows that the Fareham Borough Local Plan Part 2 are ‘unsound’.

