

Winchester District

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**Urban Capacity Study**



October 2001



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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Winchester District Urban Capacity Study has been prepared as a background paper to the Winchester District Local Plan Review. It shows how Winchester City Council has applied Government guidance and provides background information to particular policies within the Review Plan.
- 1.2 The preparation of the Winchester District Urban Capacity Study (WDUCS) and the Local Plan Review has been a thorough and comprehensive process. To demonstrate that this work complies with best practice, the methodology of the main Study is set out using the steps recommended by the Hampshire Strategic Planning Authorities' *'Guidelines for Urban Capacity Studies, July 2001'* which reflects Government guidance *'Tapping the Potential - Assessing Urban Housing Capacity: Towards Better Practice'*, Dec 2000. Government advice on planning for housing has been fully embraced and effort has been made to ensure appropriate opportunities from brownfield site development are maximised in the District. Aside from Major Development Areas, it has been concluded that there is no need for new greenfield allocations in the Winchester District Local Plan Review.
- 1.3 This paper firstly summarises the context of the Winchester District Urban Capacity Study, making particular reference to the Winchester District Local Plan Review, background advice on Urban Capacity Studies, and the impetus for commissioning work on identifying the potential for increasing housing densities in the Winchester District. The Study then describes the methodology used for the main capacity study, following Steps 1-6 of the Hampshire Strategic Authorities' *'Guidelines for Urban Capacity Studies, July 2001'*. This section brings together the Consultant's Study on the potential for increasing housing densities in the Winchester District, and comprehensive survey work. Additional studies which have been undertaken for specific sources of urban capacity are then described, including the Living Over the Shop study, a review of employment allocations and the Empty Homes Strategy. The outcome of the process, referred to as Step 7 in the Hampshire Guidelines, is detailed in the next section. This includes a summary of the influence the Study has had on the Winchester District Local Plan Review. The final section sets out the Council's proposed approach to monitoring urban capacity and housing provision.



## 2. Context

### Winchester District Local Plan Review

- 2.1 The review of the 1998 Winchester District Local Plan began in earnest at the beginning of 2000, with the approval of the Structure Plan Review's housing requirements. Following new procedures for preparing Development Plans, the impetus for the housing elements of the Review was to;
- Prepare a Local Plan for the Winchester District to reflect the Hampshire County Structure Plan Review and emerging Regional Planning Guidance.
  - Incorporate revised national planning policy guidance.
- 2.2 An objective was to prepare land use policies providing for development requirements within the District up until the year 2011 and specifically to provide for the development of 7295 dwellings. The results of a questionnaire ('Help Shape Winchester District') sent to every household in the District, and feedback from public workshops held during Autumn 1999, informed the review process.
- 2.3 In March 2000 revised Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (PPG3) was published introducing new approaches to meeting housing requirements, with specific advice for Local Authorities preparing Development Plans. These approaches included;
- A sequential approach, promoting brownfield before greenfield development;
  - Renewed emphasis on urban capacity studies;
  - A design-led approach;
  - A plan, monitor and manage approach.
- 2.4 Work on the revised Local Plan was steered by the Local Plan Members Panel, with the wider community being updated and informed of issues through the Local Plan Newsletter.

### Urban Capacity Studies – Background

- 2.5 Urban Capacity Studies are not new, however new guidance suggests previous methodologies are not comprehensive enough. The approach to urban capacity studies advocated in PPG3 and subsequent good practice guide ('*Tapping the Potential - Assessing Urban Housing Capacity: Towards Better Practice*', Dec 2000), builds upon past experience and demands studies are more rigorous and thorough than previously.
- "High levels of windfall commonly featured in the planning process have suggested that local authorities were not adequately establishing site availability and were misjudging their area's capacity to accommodate additional housing" (Tapping the Potential - Assessing Urban Housing Capacity: Towards Better Practice', Dec 2000).*
- 2.6 On sustainability grounds the impetus for optimising urban capacity increased. Greater priority was given to;
- protecting countryside for other uses and reasons (agriculture, recreation, amenity and tourism);
  - using land more efficiently;
  - minimising infrastructure cost (and resource use);
  - minimising travel journeys;
  - improving public transport and;
  - revitalising town centres.
- 2.7 PPG3 addresses these issues by encouraging local authorities to look at ways of maximising the capacity of their urban areas to accommodate new residential development. These include;
- Increasing the number of development opportunities coming forward
  - Reducing average unit size (to match smaller households)
  - Increasing densities in new development.

- 2.8 In this regard PPG3 recommends that Urban Capacity Studies consider various options in relation to density of development, levels of parking provision, different residential layouts and the mix of housing types. Best practice guidance also recommends that assumptions should be clearly specified so that capacity estimates can be refined to reflect changes in the market and political will.

### **Brief to Consultants**

- 2.9 In March 2000 the City Council resolved to undertake an Urban Capacity Study. It was expected to be relevant to the review of a number of policies within the Winchester District Local Plan. It was therefore recognised that the Study needed to be robust and transparent and capable of being defended during the Local Plan Review process.
- 2.10 Conscious of Winchester's tradition of conserving the District's settlement character and landscape, yet prepared to contemplate changes to the character of some areas, a Brief was prepared for consultants to identify areas of the District where increased densities could best be accommodated. The characterisation of areas of Winchester in 'Winchester City and its Setting' (Landscape Design Associates, December 1998) was suggested as a starting point. Consultants were also asked to estimate the expected yield from various sources of urban capacity and identify what policy changes would be needed to facilitate it. On Council-owned housing estates consultants were asked, in addition to estimating capacity, to identify areas of potential for environmental improvement. The Brief required the consultant's team to include expertise in urban design, commercial development and local markets.
- 2.11 Chesterton Planning and Economics and Jon Rowland Urban Design were subsequently appointed as consultants for this work. Their methodology is detailed in the published report 'Potential for increasing housing densities in the Winchester District', July 2000. The relationship of their work to the rest of the Urban Capacity Study is outlined in the next section. It is subsequently referred to in the rest of this paper as 'the Consultant's Study'



### 3. Methodology

#### Introduction

- 3.1 The Winchester District Urban Capacity Study comprises;
1. The Consultant’s Study ‘Potential for Increasing Housing Densities in the Winchester District’.
  2. A Comprehensive Survey of the District.
  3. Distinct studies for specific sources of urban capacity;
    - Living Over the Shop,
    - Review of employment allocations and
    - An Empty Home Strategy.
  4. A review of policies in the Winchester District Local Plan (1998).
- 3.2 To demonstrate how this work aligns with ‘best practice’ the methodology for the Consultant’s Study and the Comprehensive Survey is set out under the steps recommended by the Hampshire Strategic Planning Authorities in ‘Guidelines for Urban Capacity Studies’ July 2001. The additional studies concerning Living Over the Shop, the review of employment allocations and the Empty Homes Strategy are described in Section 4.

#### *Step 1: Identification and justification of the methodology used.*

- 3.3 The Council did not specify the methodology to be used for the Study, wanting instead to draw on advice from the consultant and emerging best practice. The Consultant’s Study was based on a Typical Urban Area<sup>1</sup> approach because of time and resource constraints. This approach was also selected because it was considered important to take account of the different character areas in Winchester District. The character areas surveyed in Winchester by the Consultant’s Study were based on those identified in the ‘Winchester City and its Setting’ Study (Landscape Design Associates, December 1998). They included:

Sleepers Hill	Largely detached, low density housing covered by policy EN1 <sup>2</sup>
Fulflod	Period terrace, high density housing
Stanmore Estate	Council Estate
Winnall Manor Estate	Council Estate
Abbots Barton East	Modern estate with extensive council housing
Castle area	Mixed use area
Highcliffe	Mixed housing types including council housing

In the other settlements the following sample village character areas were surveyed:

Droxford	Large Settlement with mix of housing styles
Soberton Heath	Cluster of ribbon development without a centre
Meonstoke	Typical policy-constrained small village with high value
Part of Kings Worthy	Representative of an EN1 policy area outside Winchester City.

- 3.4 The Consultant’s Study was not intended to be a full Urban Capacity Study, but to identify a methodology for taking the work forward and provide advice on ways of increasing the contribution of previously developed sites. It was acknowledged that a comprehensive survey would be needed to provide more accurate and realistic estimates than the Typical Urban Area approach<sup>3</sup> and would produce a more detailed and thorough base from which to subsequently monitor and update the capacity figure in the future. Therefore, Winchester City Council Officers completed a Comprehensive Survey of those areas not covered in the Consultant’s Study (see Step 3 below).

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<sup>1</sup> Character areas are sampled for the type and number of urban capacity sites. These figures are then grossed up to produce a District-wide urban capacity figure.

<sup>2</sup> A policy designation in the Winchester District Local Plan characterised by low density housing/well treed areas

<sup>3</sup> Consistent with the guidance in ‘Tapping the Potential’.

## *Step 2: Identifying sources of potential future urban housing development*

- 3.5 Identifying the settlements and the types of sites to be considered by the study included;
- A. Defining the area to be surveyed
  - B. Listing the sources of potential capacity

### **A. Defining the area to be surveyed**

- 3.6 The study area was the whole of Winchester District. The term “Urban Capacity” is widely used and established. It is therefore, used throughout this document even though the Study covers many settlements that are clearly of a rural character. The logical starting point for defining the areas to be surveyed within the study area was all ‘settlements’ as defined by policies H1 and H2 in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. However, work on the sustainability of these settlements revealed that some settlements did not contribute to a sustainable pattern of development. These settlements were therefore excluded from the study area following the Local Plan Members Panel decision to exclude them from the provisions of Proposals H2 and H3 of the Local Plan Review. Maps showing the settlement boundaries of the remaining settlements were prepared on the City Council’s Geographic Information System. The Comprehensive Survey was, therefore, confined to the defined built-up areas of the settlements listed in Proposals H.2 and H.3 of the Local Plan Review.

### **B. Listing the sources of potential capacity**

- 3.7 The potential sources of urban housing development considered in Consultant’s study and the Comprehensive Survey of the District included;
- Subdivision of existing property
  - Previously developed vacant and derelict land and buildings
  - Intensification of existing areas
  - Redevelopment of existing housing
  - Redevelopment of car parks
  - Conversion of commercial buildings
  - Vacant land not previously developed
- 3.8 Other sources of urban capacity including flats over shops, existing allocations, and empty homes were addressed through separate studies to account for their unique characteristics. Details of these studies are presented in Section 4 below.

## *Step 3: Identifying and Surveying the Capacity of sites having development potential*

- 3.9 The process of considering the housing potential of appropriate urban areas involved;
- A. Identifying sites
  - B. A desktop survey to assemble known data sets and information
  - C. Surveying capacity through a detailed on-the-ground survey.

## A. Identifying sites

- 3.10 There were certain types of sites within the settlements that did not merit consideration for development in the Comprehensive Survey because of their local, national, or international nature conservation importance. These included Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (candidate SAC's). Important large open spaces currently protected by the Winchester District Local Plan proposals were also excluded on the basis of their importance for amenity and/or recreation. However, some small amenity open space and some undesignated open space areas were included in the survey. Sites within areas liable to flooding were surveyed but discounted at a later stage.
- 3.11 To avoid double counting of capacity, sites surveyed in studies relating to other sources of urban capacity i.e. the Living Over the Shop study and the study of employment allocations were not identified through the Comprehensive Survey.

## B. Assembling known data sources

- 3.12 Once the Study area had been determined and refined it was necessary to assemble known data sets and information. These included;
- **Unimplemented Local Plan allocations** - allocations in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan (1998) that have not been implemented.
  - **National Land Use Database** - this data highlights vacant, derelict sites or those with outstanding planning consents. However, the base-date for the data held was September 1998 and required updating.
  - **Housing Land Supply in Hampshire** - Data published on an annual basis by Hampshire County Council.
  - **Industrial Land Supply in Hampshire** - Data published on an annual basis by Hampshire County Council.
  - **Unimplemented Planning Permissions** - identifying sites where development is likely and/or where higher densities may be sought than originally granted
  - **Completions** - this data is published on an annual basis by the Hampshire County Council and was subtracted from the Structure Plan housing requirement.

A broad-brush scan of the maps was undertaken to highlight obvious urban capacity sites to assess during the on-the-ground survey. All of the site-specific data sources were added to the maps of each settlement so as to build up a map-based data source and to avoid double-counting the potential on any individual site.

## C. Surveying capacity through an on-the-ground survey

- 3.13 The sample character areas and settlements in the Consultant's Study were the first areas to be surveyed comprehensively on foot. Potential urban capacity sites were identified and an assessment of the potential yield of these sites made at the same time. The methodology used to assess the potential yield is summarised in Step 4 below. In the Consultant's Study the results of this sample were then grossed up to give a District-wide urban capacity estimate.
- 3.14 In order to produce a more robust capacity figure it was decided that Winchester City Council planning officers would undertake a Comprehensive Study of the remaining areas and settlements. The Consultant's survey and assessment methodology was used in order to ensure that the results were comparable and compatible with those of the Consultants. Sufficient time and staff resources were made available to undertake this important task in order for the results to feed into the review of the Winchester District Local Plan.

### *Step 4: Assessing Potential yield of identified sites*

- 3.15 Using the Consultant's Study methodology, four estimates of potential yield were made for each urban capacity site. The estimates were based on four policy scenarios; Current Plan, Character, Optimal and

Locational. Each site was considered against the policies in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan in terms of the nature of development that may be permitted. This was extended to consider current and emerging Government planning guidance and whether development could be increased if certain current restricting policies were relaxed in Local Plan Review. These included parking standards, density policies and design considerations.

**3.16 Current Plan Scenario:**

A capacity figure that is related to the adopted (1998) Local Plan policies and standards. Where it was considered that a development would not be permitted under current policy, a zero capacity would be recorded.

**3.17 Character Scenario:**

A capacity that is related to the morphology, character and urban form of the surrounding character area, but which may necessitate the relaxation of some policies such as change of use, density and parking standards.

**3.18 Optimal Scenario:**

A capacity figure that maximises the development opportunity on all potential development sites irrespective of prevailing policy by initiating a step-change in density. For example:

- Two semi-detached units on a single plot in an area of predominantly single detached dwellings, or
- Flat or mews development in areas of terraced housing or on larger central sites.

**3.19 Locational Scenario:**

A capacity figure or scenario seeking to realise the opportunity for higher density development close to areas with good accessibility to public transport and town centre facilities. The area considered by the Consultants to possess such attributes was based on a ten minute walking boundary of Winchester railway station. This Scenario therefore equates to the Optimal figure within 10 minutes walking distance of Winchester railway station and the Character figure in less accessible areas (the rest of the District).

3.20 The Consultants recommended adopting a Locational approach, this being the approach which best respected the character of areas in the District and reflected Government guidance on integrated transport planning and increasing densities in the most sustainable locations. This approach is therefore used to arrive at the capacity estimates including in this Study and in the Local Plan. The estimated potential yield of all identified sites under the Locational scenario is 6410 dwellings.

*Step 5: Assessing the potential yield of 'unidentified' sites.*

3.21 The survey of urban capacity for the District was very comprehensive. A high proportion of sites identified in the survey had one or more constraints that were unlikely to be easily overcome before 2011. These were defined as "Medium" and "Poor" opportunities (see Step 6 below). Nevertheless, the Local Plan Review's policies do not prevent all of these sites from being developed and some may still come forward for development. It is also likely that sites will be brought forward which were not identified by the Comprehensive Survey, especially redevelopment sites, which can be very difficult to identify in advance. It is impossible to put a figure on the number of 'windfall' units that may arise until there is a more accurate indication of the development of these sites through monitoring. The fact that there has been a Comprehensive Survey suggests that the quantity should be small, but if it becomes apparent that these sites are coming forward in significant numbers they will be identified as completions and taken into account through the monitoring and review process. However it is not considered appropriate to include an estimate for windfall in the Local Plan Review until this time. This is consistent with the Plan, Monitor and Manage approach recommended in PPG3. The approach to monitoring urban capacity and housing provision in the Winchester District is set out in Section 6 of this Study.

*Step 6: Discounting potential to produce a realistic urban housing capacity figure*

3.22 The potential yield from the sites identified in the Consultant's Study and Comprehensive Survey was discounted to reflect the quality of opportunity of the sites. The assessment of the quality of opportunity

considered the likelihood of the site coming forward for development during the Plan period by virtue of ownership, physical site constraints and the local development market. These factors were recorded on the site survey sheet in the following form;

- Site address
- Current / last use of the site
- Site boundaries, marked on map
- Identification of possible adjacent sites which could be linked for land assembly
- Current development plan policy / criteria / standards
- Constraints to development;
- Physical - topography, access, etc
- Market demand - attractiveness of certain house types in certain areas
- Existing use - determining whether there is a viable non-residential use already on the site
- Environmental - Conservation Area, Listed Building, TPO, etc
- Ownership - multi-ownership, Council owned land, etc, estimating likely willingness of owners to sell their land for development.

- 3.23 The District was divided into four market areas - villages and low-density suburbs, private suburban estates, council estates, town centre and terraced housing areas - using the specialist skills of a local property agent in the Consultant's team. A description of these four market areas is provided in the Consultant's Report (see Appendix 1 for extract). The constraints of the local development market were also gauged from workshops involving developers, property consultants, and resident groups. A designed approach was used to illustrate options for development on a number of different types of sites to stimulate discussion and inform the judgements on the quality of opportunity of sites during the surveying. On the basis of the information recorded on the site survey sheet, sites were defined as being a "Good", "Medium" or "Poor" opportunity.
- 3.24 **Good:** Is where there is a good market for private and/or housing association development and little or no obstruction to development coming forward within the Plan period.
- 3.25 **Medium:** is where there is a good market for private and/or housing association development but where there are several obstructions to development requiring action to be taken,
- 3.26 **Poor:** is where there is little market demand to bring forward development and/or major obstructions to development even for housing associations.
- 3.27 In the case of conversions where the opportunity is more difficult to assess; the following factors were also considered;
- Evidence of previous conversion activity (as an indicator of demand)
  - Distance from town centre, railway station or other facilities
  - Size of dwelling
  - Quality of neighbourhood (in upmarket neighbourhoods, the cost of acquiring and converting even very large dwellings may outweigh the end value)
  - Condition of property (a property in poor condition may be more easily acquired for conversion than one which is in good condition).
- 3.28 The details of each site were subsequently entered into a database, and the sites plotted on paper maps. Of the potential yield (6410 dwellings) estimated under the Locational scenario, 3320 represented 'Good' opportunities. However, this assumed moving from a Current Plan scenario to a Locational scenario, which could require some policy changes .
- 3.29 The next stage was also aimed at informing the Winchester District Local Plan Review. A report (PTP84) to the Local Plan Members Panel linked the types of urban capacity sites to current policies in the adopted Winchester District Local Plan. The Panel considered and recommended which policies they would be prepared to change and which ones they would not. Distinction was made between policies

with a constraining effect e.g. areas liable to flooding, and those which would could be considered and respected through design, but which would not significantly constrain development on good opportunity sites, e.g. conservation area policies. An attempt was also made to identify where the relaxation of a policy may not be sufficient to realise the capacity and where a more proactive approach would be necessary. Following the report to the Local Plan Members Panel the types of good opportunity sites included in the 'discounted' urban capacity figure are;

- Unconstrained sites
- Garage Courts
- Some open spaces not formally identified in the current Plan
- Sites in EN.1 (Low Density/Well-Treed) areas
- Sites in Conservation Areas

3.30 Good opportunity sites discounted from the urban capacity figure were of the following type;

- Private and public car parks
- Open spaces designated by Proposals EN.2 and/or RT2 in the WDLP (with two small exceptions)
- Sites with access problems
- Sites in areas liable to flooding
- Sites involving the loss of community facilities

3.31 As a result of this recommendation, and subsequent viewing of these remaining mapped sites by Members at a Members Briefing on the Study, the final discounted yield of urban capacity referred to in the Winchester District Local Plan Review is 2117. All of the 500 or so sites identified in producing this estimate are listed at Appendix 2 and mapped at Appendix 3. An explanation of the schedule and maps is also provided with the Appendices. The large number of sites involved has precluded the possibility of notifying individual owners that their land is included. Prospective developers are therefore asked to use the information provided responsibly and property owners are advised that it is entirely for them to decide whether to promote their land for development.

## 4. Additional Studies and Sources of Supply

- 4.1 The Consultant's Study and the Comprehensive Survey, the methodology for which is described in Section 3 above, deal with the majority of urban capacity sources expected to contribute to the provision of housing during the Plan period. There are, however, other potential sources identified in Government and strategic advice that should be considered in order to provide a full picture.

### Living Over the Shop

- 4.2 Aside from being a source of urban capacity, Planning Policy Guidance Notes 6: Town Centres and Retail Development and 15: Planning and the Historic Environment, both recognise the benefits of upper floor use in town centres. They advise local authorities to adopt a proactive approach to the change of use and reuse of upper floors. A significant amount of experience regarding living over the shop has built up over the last two decades through various schemes and initiatives. The significance of institutional and attitudinal constraints to living over the shop implies a different methodology should be applied to accurately estimate the yield from this source of urban capacity.
- 4.3 The study area for the Living Over the Shop Study (LOTS) comprised the main shopping area of Winchester, generally covering the retail areas in the Broadway, High Street, Jewry Street, Southgate Street, Parchment Street, The Square, St. George's Street and The Brooks. Three approaches were used to provide a realistic estimate of urban capacity from living above the shop in Winchester. These were;
1. The Civic Trust methodology, derived from a report '*Dwellings Over and In Shops in London*' Civic Trust, July 1998.
  2. The yardstick approach – promoted by Urbed, authors of '*Tapping the Potential*' Dec 2000.
  3. The rule of thumb approach – suggested by Ann Petherick, Director of the Living Over the Shops initiative.
- 4.4 The Civic Trust methodology was by far the most comprehensive and involved identifying sites. In summary a survey sheet was filled out for each site with the following details recorded;
- Existing use; residential, shop, office, storage, vacant.
  - Purpose it was originally built for.
  - Access to upper floors - whether there was independent access or not.
  - Condition.
  - Ownership; whether it was the same or different from ground floor.
  - Observed number of floors per premise (a "premise" was taken as having a nominal width of 6m).
- 4.5 Estimates of potential yield were discounted using probability assumptions derived from previous studies and structured interviews with institutional investors, retailers, housing associations, etc undertaken by the Civic Trust. The number of floors per premise likely to come forward during the Plan period was then multiplied by 1.31 (the number of flats each premise floor was capable of accommodating based on a survey of large centres in London). This gave an estimated supply of 109 dwellings in Winchester for the period 2000-2011.
- 4.6 The yardstick approach, whereby one third of all premises was assumed to be available for conversion to residential and one third of those would be converted, gave an estimate of 120 units. Under the rule of thumb approach, whereby 0.5% of the population of Winchester could be accommodated above shops, the estimate was 106. All these methods gave broadly similar results, adding to confidence about the reliability of the estimates. The figure included in the WDLPR is 109, based on the more comprehensive and site-specific Civic Trust methodology.

### Local Plan Employment Allocations

- 4.7 The review of employment allocations formed part of the wider review of employment policies as part of the Winchester District Local Plan Review. The review of employment policies included;
- An assessment of planning guidance.

- Consideration of results of a survey of businesses in the District.
- Consideration of other sources of information including employment trends, needs and issues, particularly those highlighted in the Economic Profile of the District produced by Hampshire County Council.

4.8 The work, detailed in a report to the Local Plan Members Panel (PTP127), concluded that the Local Plan Review should continue to adopt a permissive approach towards employment development in the defined built-up areas of the District as Proposal E.1 does in the current Local Plan. However, in view of the overall surplus of available employment land, the current policy of seeking to resist the loss of all employment sites (Proposal E.2) should be revised. The Local Plan Members Panel recommended that employment sites on the main industrial estates and in the larger service centres should be retained, but that sites and allocations in less sustainable locations, and/or where demand is weak, could be developed for mixed uses.

4.9 The criteria for assessing existing employment allocations (WDLP 1998) comprised;

- The strategic importance of the site.
- The current use and suitability for employment development.
- Scope for optimising use of previously developed land and land within defined built-up areas.
- Relationship to the main built-up areas.
- Scope for developing a mix of uses.
- Accessibility and potential for access by sustainable transport modes.
- Likely market demand and developability.
- Other factors.

4.10 It was recommended that four of the fourteen existing (1998) Local Plan's employment allocations be reallocated for mixed use. These comprised: Freeman's Yard, Cheriton; Durley Sawmill, Durley; Station Yard, Sutton Scotney; and East of Winchester Road, Waltham Chase. The mixed use policies for these sites included in the Local Plan Review do not specify the number of dwellings that might be development on each site, but requires that 'business uses (Use Class B1) constitute the majority of floorspace on the site '.

4.11 The Local Plan Review estimates that housing provision on these four mixed-use sites could amount to 50-100 dwellings. No specific allowance has been made for this in the Local Plan because of the uncertainty about the proportion that may be residential, and the aim of securing the majority of the sites for employment use. However, these sites are certain to make a significant contribution to housing supply, over and above the figures included in Table 1 of the Review Plan.

### **Empty Homes Strategy**

4.12 The Council's Health and Housing Department have initiated an Empty Homes Strategy. However, empty homes that are brought back into use are not normally counted against Structure Plan requirements, as they are already part of the dwelling stock. However, if there were a significant area of housing which has been unoccupied for a long period (e.g. since before the start date of the Structure Plan Review) it may be possible to argue that bringing it back into use should contribute to the Local Plan's housing requirement.

### **Windfall Development**

4.13 All of the sources of housing supply in the Winchester District Local Plan Review (Table 1) relate to specific identified sites, except for the estimate for Living Over the Shop, and even this is derived from site-specific surveys. Therefore, the Review Plan's housing provision figures place no reliance on "windfall" sites which, by definition, are not identified and may or may not continue to arise at previous rates. It is nevertheless expected that additional sites will come forward and the rate at which this happens will be monitored (see paragraph 3.21 above).



## 5. Outcomes of the Process (*Step 7*)

5.1 The Winchester District Urban Capacity Study was designed to inform the review of the Winchester District Local Plan. Having the Local Plan Members Panel's recommendation on the types of urban capacity sites the Local Plan Review should be seeking to facilitate, the next stage was to draft the policies. The areas in which the Urban Capacity Study has influenced the Winchester District Local Plan Review include the;

- Design and Development Principles Chapter
- Housing Chapter
- Employment Chapter
- Town Centres, Shopping and Facilities Chapter
- Transport Chapter
- Winchester Chapter

### **Design and Development Principles Chapter**

5.2 The Design and Development Principles Chapter effectively replaces the Environment Chapter of the 1998 Local Plan. This revised Chapter reflects PPG3's objectives of making the most efficient use of land and promoting a design-led approach to new development and redevelopment. The specific protection afforded to low density, well-treed character areas in the adopted Local Plan (Proposal EN.1) has been replaced by a more general policy which requires all development to produce and follow a design statement. The exclusion of an EN.1-type policy increases the potential for sensitively designed development in these 'low density' areas.

5.3 Proposal EN.5 (criteria for new development) of the adopted Local Plan is replaced by Proposal DP.3 in the Review Plan. This revised policy makes it a specific requirement for all development to make efficient and effective use of land or buildings. Reference is made to minimum net residential density guidelines. This revised policy also changes the emphasis from making adequate provision for parking to keeping parking provision to a minimum. To minimise the sterilisation of future development sites, or constraints on them, the revised policy also requires development to facilitate the development of adjacent sites by providing for future access to be gained to them and promoting an appropriate layout.

### **Housing Chapter**

5.4 The review of the Housing Chapter incorporates the revised Structure Plan housing requirements for the District. The housing strategy in the Review Plan includes an objective to achieve at least the minimum net residential densities of 30-50 dwellings per hectare in new development or redevelopment, as recommended by Government in PPG3. Also, as part of the revised housing strategy, there is a commitment to encouraging sources of urban capacity where they would not conflict with other aims or provisions of the Local Plan Review. The types of sites that this would include are referred to in the strategy. There is also reference in the revised housing strategy to pursuing the redesign of 'committed' schemes, in cases where such alterations may achieve worthwhile housing gains and/or residential densities. To assist in progressing urban development opportunities, the revised strategy includes an objective to publish and regularly update a register of current planning permissions.

5.5 The revised Housing Chapter places the Urban Capacity Study firmly in the context of the 'Sequential Approach' promoted by PPG3. It is demonstrated that urban capacity results require no further greenfield housing allocations beyond the existing commitments and allocations (other than the MDAs). The revised strategy continues to resist development outside the defined boundaries of the built-up areas, other than in the case of approved housing "exceptions" schemes to meet proven housing needs.

5.6 The Housing Chapter clearly states what must be achieved through a positive policy lead;

- Net housing densities within the target range of 30-50 dwellings per hectare.
- Optimisation of densities in places where accessibility to local services/facilities and public transport is particularly favourable.

- Mixed developments.
- Levels of off-street parking provision that do not exceed revised standards.

5.7 It is acknowledged in the revised Housing Chapter that the Local Planning Authority may exceptionally need to take positive action to help deliver certain development opportunities within settlements. For example, in land-assembly, particularly where the City Council has a direct land-ownership or Housing Authority function, the Authority may be in a position to take on a co-ordinating role.

5.8 The revised Housing Chapter includes a sub-section on achieving higher densities. Thirty dwellings per hectare is referred to as the minimum density that housing developments should be built to. It is indicated that on housing sites close to town and city centres, with good public transport accessibility, higher densities achieved through smaller units may be appropriate. Reference to these net density ranges are included in the revised Proposal H.7.

### **Employment Chapter**

5.9 The revised employment strategy refers to the review of employment allocations carried out under the advice of PPG3. Four sites originally allocated for employment use are reallocated in the Review Plan for mixed use. These sites are not included in the Local Plan's Urban Capacity figure but illustrate how the housing requirement for the Winchester District is expected to be met or exceeded. The Housing Chapter suggests that these sites may provide an additional 50-100 dwellings. Revised Proposal E.2 is more flexible than in the adopted Local Plan, setting out the criteria for assessing proposals involving the loss (by change of use or redevelopment) of employment sites to housing use.

### **Town Centres, Shopping and Facilities Chapter**

5.10 The Town Centres, Shopping and Facilities Chapter effectively replaces the Facilities and Services Chapter of the 1998 WDLP. Encouragement for the conversion of upper floors for residential use is included in the strategy. Proposal SF.3 in the Review Plan is adapted from proposals in the adopted WDLP and encourages the residential use of upper floors in town and village centres, especially the historic settlements of Winchester, Bishops Waltham, New Alresford, and Wickham.

### **Transport Chapter**

5.11 Proposal T.4 of the Review Plan requires that parking provision should be kept to a minimum, taking account of the level of accessibility of the development site by non-car travel modes. This will help to enable increased densities by minimising the amount of land used for vehicle parking and movement.

### **Winchester Chapter**

5.12 The Winchester Chapter of the Review Plan refers to the Future of Winchester Study, which was prepared as a framework to guide development in Winchester in the long term. The Future of Winchester Study recommended an Urban Capacity Study be undertaken as part of a sequential approach.

5.13 Proposal W.1 emphasises the importance of high quality design in new development, to respect the particular architectural and historic qualities of the town as a whole and its landscape setting. It is acknowledged, under the section on housing that, given the good accessibility of parts of Winchester by public transport, there is scope to optimise the capacity of residential development opportunities without requiring large amounts of car parking provision. Proposal W.6 provides for residential development in Winchester with minimal (if any) parking provision, especially in the town centre, provided account is taken of the on-street parking situation and the scope to control residents parking.

### **Influence on Other Chapters**

5.14 In general the influence of the Urban Capacity Study on the remaining Chapters of the Local Plan Review has been through the inclusion of proposals to resist development where it would be unsuitable. The Review Plan retains proposals which resist the loss of important public and recreational amenities, valuable existing employment land and premises, 'community facilities', and which resist development in flood risk areas and beyond built-up areas.

- 5.15 The Plan does not provide for the development of every piece of land that may meet the definition of “previously developed land” or may be viewed as a “brownfield” site. To do so would over-emphasise the need for housing development at the expense of the environment, facilities and services and employment provision within the District. It remains important that policies allow for the provision or retention of non-housing uses, retain open spaces and protect the generally undeveloped character of the District’s countryside. In particular, development of housing on “brownfield” sites that are outside the Plan’s defined built-up areas (as defined by Proposals H.2 and H.3) must be carefully controlled in accordance with the Plan’s proposals, to avoid unsustainable patterns of development and the suburbanisation of the District’s countryside.



## 6. Monitoring and Review

### Introduction

- 6.1 The purpose of regular monitoring and review of urban capacity is to ensure that housing requirements are being met in line with the sequential approach<sup>4</sup> set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing. It is also a key element of the 'Plan, Monitor and Manage' approach to the provision of housing. The monitoring of urban capacity will be drawn together by the Strategic Planning Authorities as part of their monitoring of the implementation of Structure Plan policies and consideration of whether any of the Structure Plan Review's 'reserve' housing provision should be released for development. The approach to the monitoring and review of urban capacity and housing provision in the District is set out below. Because of the types of sites identified in the Study, and because none of them have been allocated in the Winchester District Local Plan Review, it is difficult to follow precisely any of the three approaches to managing the release of sites promoted in the recently-published Good Practice Guide (*Planning to Deliver-The Managed Release of Housing Sites*, DETR, 31 July 2001). However, many of the principles have been applied and reference has also been made to advice given in PPG 3: Housing on monitoring and review.

### Monitoring

#### WHAT WILL BE MONITORED

- 6.3 There are broadly three areas that will be monitored as part of the Winchester District Urban Capacity Study these are: identified urban capacity sites (mapped in Appendix 3); unidentified/windfall sites; and allocated sites. The indicators that will be used in the monitoring of these areas include;

- Completions
- Planning decisions

For sites that reach completion the following information will be recorded;

- The type of site e.g. whether the site was on previously-developed land or involved the re-use of existing buildings.
- The number of affordable dwellings provided.
- The variety of types and mix of sizes of housing.
- The density of new development.
- Car parking provision.

So as to determine whether there are problems occurring in bringing certain types of sites forward and whether the new policies are being interpreted and applied correctly and achieving their aims, planning applications and decisions will also be monitored. This monitoring will be particularly important for identified urban capacity sites where certain assumptions have been made about their 'deliverability'. This information will be used to inform future decisions on planning applications and assist in good practice.

- 6.4 All windfall development (i.e. all sites which are not commitments, allocations or urban capacity sites) needs to be monitored to check how significant this potential source of development is proving to be. Should windfall sites become available within the Plan period, especially large sites e.g. Ministry of Defence sites, public car parks, etc, they will be assessed against the criteria in paragraph 31 of PPG3. This would include an assessment of location, accessibility, capacity of existing and potential infrastructure, ability to build communities, physical and environmental constraints, and the 'lead' in time required before development, as well as relevant policies in the Development Plan.

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<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 30, PPG3 suggests LPA follow a search sequence, starting with the re-use of previously-developed land and buildings within urban areas identified by the urban capacity study, then urban extensions, and finally new development around nodes in good public transport corridors.

- 6.5 So as to ensure the provision of housing is accurately forecast from outstanding permissions, allocated sites and the phasing of the Major Development Area, account will be taken of the 'lead' in time required to bring larger-scale developments on stream. This will include taking account of the level of prior investment and the necessary infrastructure required.

#### HOW IT WILL BE MONITORED

- 6.6 The primary source of information will be up to date housing land supply data from Hampshire County Council. Meetings between the City Council, housebuilders and developers, plus more regular feedback from Development Control Officers and the Council's Housing and Estates Officers, will be used to gauge market interest and identify changes in the market. A register of outstanding planning permissions will be made available and rates of provision/completion will be published annually. Estimates of urban capacity remaining will be updated annually, taking account of completions of identified sites and the emergence of new sites through the planning process. The aim will be to provide this information to the Strategic Planning Authorities to help inform their decisions on reserve sites. After five years a comprehensive review and re-survey of urban capacity sites and allocations will be undertaken and this document will be updated and republished if necessary.

#### Review

- 6.7 The Local Planning Authority is confident that the sources of housing development it has identified in the Local Plan, along with those that are not identified but still likely to come forward, are more than adequate to meet strategic requirements. Indeed they are likely to contribute significantly towards the additional 'reserve' provision, helping to avoid the release of reserve sites in the District. Exceptionally, an early review of Local Plan policies will be considered if monitoring suggests a substantial shortfall or excess in supply. This may be as a result of:

- unforeseen physical or economic constraints or incentives;
- the required prior investment not being forthcoming or becoming available.

- 6.8 However, it would not be appropriate to make new greenfield site allocations to compensate for delays in development of a Major Development Area. Any response to such issues would need to be addressed initially by the Strategic Planning Authorities.

- 6.9 The Local Plan's estimates of housing development during the Plan period suggest there could be a substantial over-provision of housing compared to the Structure Plan Review's requirements. Therefore, the Plan holds back the development of the only greenfield housing allocation from the current (1998) Local Plan that does not yet have planning permission: land at Whiteley Green, Whiteley. If monitoring shows that likely completions have been substantially over-estimated and are not likely to meet the 'baseline' strategic requirements this site will be released. It will also be released if necessary to avoid the need to release strategic 'reserve' sites in the District, at West of Waterlooville or Winchester City (North). However, in practice it is expected that completion rates will exceed strategic 'baseline' requirements and make a significant contribution to meeting the additional provision provided for by Structure Plan Policy H.4, without releasing 'reserve' sites in the District.

## 7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The Winchester District Urban Capacity Study is consistent with Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing and addresses the principles of Good Practice Guidance '*Tapping the Potential*' (DETR, Dec 2000) and '*Planning to Deliver*' (DTLR July 2001). Importantly it has also been tailored to reflect the type of urban capacity opportunities in the Winchester District and to fully inform the WDLPR so as to provide (within the limitations of a landuse planning system) the best possible environment for ensuring development is co-ordinated and meets desired objectives.
- 7.2 The Winchester District Urban Capacity Study has been a thorough and comprehensive process, helping to ensure the reliability of its results. Consistent with the sequential approach, the results of the Urban Capacity Study mean no new greenfield allocations are required to meet the Structure Plan housing requirements in the Local Plan Review. Policies in the Review Plan have been framed to ensure that urban capacity sites are encouraged to come forward for development and the optimum/most efficient use of land/buildings is achieved. Regular monitoring will ensure that any serious problems of under or over-provision are identified and action will be taken to resolve them.

