

CHAPTER 6: HOUSING

6.0. Chapter Overview

INTRODUCTION

- 6.0.1 The requirement for general and affordable housing and the supply of land to meet it, is the pre-eminent issue in public consultation on the Plan. This is illustrated by the fact that with the exception of the two MDAs, Chapter 6 attracted the largest number of objections. Many of these were in the form of 'omission sites', which are considered by objectors as being preferable to many of the sources of housing land supply put forward as part of the Council's housing strategy. The justification for that strategy is set out in paragraph 6.7 of the Plan which identifies ten key factors that form the basis of the Council's approach. This is elaborated in Topic Paper 2: 'The Housing Strategy' which explains the Council's housing strategy in the context of the National policy background (in particular PPGs 1, 3 and 13); Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9, 2001); the Hampshire County Council Structure Plan 1996-2011 (Review), 2000 and the Council's preparatory work on housing for the Plan (in particular the monitoring exercise of available land and the publication of an Urban Capacity Study). Topic Paper 3: 'Housing Requirements and Supply' sets out the requirement and supply figures in detail.
- 6.0.2 I do not disagree with the thrust of any of the components of the Council's strategy as identified in paragraph 6.7 of the Chapter. But from my examination of the Plan in the light of the objections made and the Council's response to them, I am of the view that both the balance between the components and some elements of Proposals H.1 to H.10 need reconsideration, albeit relatively minor, if the Council's objectives for the Plan and the requirements of the strategic guidance are to be achieved. My detailed comments in respect of the Proposals and text in the Chapter and the objections thereto are set out in the section of my report following this Overview, but for now I set out my observations in three sections: (i) General housing land requirements and supply; (ii) Affordable Housing, and (iii) Housing Omission sites.

GENERAL HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPLY

- 6.0.3 RPG9 requires an annual average rate of 39,000 net additional dwellings in the South East (excluding London), of which Hampshire should contribute 6,030. This level of provision is for the period 2001 to 2006 and is subject to review before the end of the period. Paragraph 8.3 of the RPG anticipates the review will require an increase in this annual figure, but if the present figure is applied now to the whole of the Structure Plan period it would equate to 90,450 dwellings. Although RPG9 was not published in its final form until after the Structure Plan (Review), the latter anticipated a housing requirement for Hampshire, in broad accordance with the emerging regional requirement, of 94,290 dwellings between 1996 and 2011. This is split into a 'baseline' requirement of 80,290 dwellings (Structure Plan (Review) Policy H2) for the full period and a reserve provision of 14,000 (Policy H4) between 2001 and 2011.
- 6.0.4 The housing requirements of the Structure Plan (Review) for Winchester District (and therefore this Plan) are for a baseline provision of 7,295 dwellings, including 2,000 in the West of Waterlooville Major Development Area (MDA). From its monitoring exercise the Council estimates that 3,262 dwellings had been completed by April 2003, leaving an outstanding requirement of 4,033 for the remaining period to March 2011. In addition, the Structure Plan (Review) establishes a District reserve housing provision of 3,000 for the period 2001 to 2011. This is comprised of 1,000 dwellings at the West of Waterlooville MDA and 2,000 at the Winchester City (North) MDA.

- 6.0.5 The Council's strategy for the housing numbers has been criticised by the development industry on the basis that it plans only for the baseline provision, whereas it is clear from the RPG requirement that the reserve will also be required. The Council's response is that paragraph 237 of the Structure Plan (Review) states that reserve land will only be released if there is a compelling need to do so and that County-wide monitoring of the release of sites does not as yet provide evidence of such a need.
- 6.0.6 As regards the baseline provision, the essence of the criticism is one of an over reliance on capacity in the existing urban areas. However I endorse the Council's selection of Proposal H.2 settlements and regard the Council's housing supply estimates as being for the most part soundly based, albeit that the sources of such supply are inherently more unpredictable and problematic. To counter this I recommend the addition of a modest Local Reserve capacity of about 400 dwellings to be found from greenfield sites as urban extensions to 'Category A' settlements. These would be called on if the annual housing monitoring exercise indicates that they are needed. As regards the Structure Plan housing reserve, I agree with the Council that this is a different policy requirement and that the task of the Plan is only to identify the sites. The timing of any release of such land is the subject of a separate process in which both the Council and the strategic authorities play their part. I do not see it as part of this Plan's function to circumvent that process, which in any event is intended to have regard to the housing needs of a wider area than the District of Winchester.
- 6.0.7 In terms of the Plan's intention to encourage infill development in smaller settlements under Proposal H.3, I consider that this should be modified to more closely reflect current national guidance on sustainable development and less one of relying on the capacity available in existing areas of housing in rural localities that for the most part would not have been permitted under current policies. Accordingly, I have recommended a criteria-based infill policy which has a less spatially rigid pattern but will address the local housing needs of the smaller settlements in the District.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 6.0.8 The Council's stance towards affordable housing has evolved through the various Plan stages with significant modifications being proposed as Pre-Inquiry Changes and Further Proposed Changes. These were informed by two independent consultants' reports and the evidence presented to the Inquiry. In particular, it was latterly accepted by the Council that a 50% requirement in respect of the West of Waterlooville MDA was excessive and that it would potentially impede the implementation of development there. However, whilst the effect of Further Proposed Change FPC06.A was to remove references thereto it omitted to insert any alternative figure.
- 6.0.9 As it is imperative for Local Plans to provide a degree of certainty and consistency, my recommendations in this regard are aimed at providing these, whilst at the same time seeking to ensure they are not unduly onerous as that would have a negative impact not only on the provision of affordable housing, but also on the overall supply of housing generally.

HOUSING OMISSION SITES

- 6.0.10 In respect of the omission sites section of my report, there are four general points to be made. Firstly, as part of their submissions and as stated above, in a number of cases objectors argue that the Council's housing strategy is significantly flawed and will not deliver sufficient land to meet the strategic requirements of the Structure Plan Review and RPG9. In some instances the omission sites are also compared in favourable terms with the Winchester City (North) Reserve MDA. In respect of all the omission sites, the extent to which I consider that additional land needs to be identified for housing in the Plan is central to weighing the balance between the

advantages and disadvantages of residential development in any particular case. With my conclusion that there is only a need for a baseline Local Reserve provision of approximately 400 dwellings, I reject the objectors' submissions in respect of the scale of housing need and also agree with the Council that comparing the sites to the Reserve MDA is inappropriate. As the Council says, the latter is intended to meet a clear strategic objective of ensuring adequate housing provision if it is required by the strategic planning authorities to ensure that supply does not have to be provided in the form of piecemeal greenfield development outside the context of the Plan.

- 6.0.11 The second point is that several objectors argued that the Council has adopted the wrong approach to the definition of Settlement Policy Boundaries. Instead of establishing boundaries that properly delineate the extent of the existing built up area and which may or may not include sites suitable for development, the objectors argue that the Council additionally (and incorrectly) also had regard to the scope for any further development and sought to define a boundary which excluded it. Ostensibly there is at least some logic to the objectors' approach of defining a boundary which reflects the existing character of a settlement. However, I consider the practicalities are such that the Council's stance is necessary to achieve the requisite degree of certainty as to where, in principle, development would and would not be acceptable in relation to the main settlements. To argue, as the objectors do, that notwithstanding the general presumption in favour of development within built up areas in national guidance and an adopted Local Plan, the acceptability of development is further controlled by other policies and measures (for example Conservation Areas) is not in itself untrue. But in my view it does under-estimate the importance of a defined edge to the larger settlements as a firm boundary between on the one hand the much more restrictive countryside policies and on the other hand the 'presumption in favour' approach to development opportunities. And inclusion of land within the boundary with its development potential uncertain would undoubtedly be the 'thin end of the wedge' in terms of resisting the aspirations of many landowners. I also reject the allegation that the Council has an ambiguity in its approach. Paragraph 6.32 of the Plan states that *'The policy boundaries define the areas within which development is acceptable in principle, although these may not correspond to property boundaries or the fullest extent of a settlement as local people understand it'*. In my view this clearly explains the basis on which the Council has proceeded.
- 6.0.12 The third point relates to Proposal H.3. In my report I explain that I do not consider that the concept of development frontages in Proposal H.3 is an appropriate method of allocating housing development outside the Proposal H.2 policy settlement boundaries. Accordingly I recommend the deletion of the Proposal and its replacement by a new criteria-based policy. Many of the objections referred to in the Omissions Section of this report request amendments to the current Proposal H.3 frontages, but as I am recommending their deletion it is clearly inappropriate for me to respond to objections and the Council's response thereto by expressing a view on the individual merits of the sites. I therefore briefly explain my approach at the relevant point and do so repeatedly for ease of reference, as I am aware that many objectors will only wish to refer to that part of my report relating to their own objection. In rejecting requests for extensions to development frontages I record my recommendation as being that no modification should be made to the Plan. This relates to the individual objection only and therefore already takes into account that I have already recommended the deletion of Proposal H.3 and thereby all development frontages.
- 6.0.13 The final point is that this report groups the omission sites on a settlement by settlement basis and in alphabetical order. The exceptions to this is are omission sites in Crawley and New Cheriton / Hinton Marsh which, because of their absence from the Council's skeleton version of the report, appear at the end of the schedule. In those cases where I am recommending modifications to the Plan, land within extended settlement boundaries can be developed subject to the normal development control processes. However land identified as being suitable for designation as a 'Local Reserve' remains outside the boundary of the settlement that it adjoins and is

therefore subject to countryside policies. The sites can only be developed if identified as being appropriate through a process to be explained in Supplementary Planning Guidance to be published by the Council, which I envisage as being similar in principle to that used for the Strategic Reserve sites, but that in the case of the Local Reserve sites, it will relate solely to the monitoring of the District's house building performance and that Winchester District Council will be the authority solely responsible for nominating their release.

- 6.0.14 It is with these factors in mind that I make my recommendations on the text and policies of the Housing Chapter.

6.1. General Comments

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
CHAP6	878/5	Alan Foster
CHAP6	210/26	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
CHAP6	212/12	Bishops Waltham Society
CHAP6	212/1	Bishops Waltham Society
CHAP6	485/3	Clarendon House Investments
CHAP6	1434/1	Hampshire County Council
CHAP6	1434/3	Hampshire County Council
CHAP6	1434/2	Hampshire County Council
CHAP6	503/12	Linden Homes Developments
CHAP6	503/5	Linden Homes Developments
CHAP6	503/11	Linden Homes Developments
CHAP6	506/2	Mitchell Properties
CHAP6	530/3	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
CHAP6	530/10	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
CHAP6	530/9	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
CHAP6	530/4	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
CHAP6	302/2	R. L. Stubbs and Clients
CHAP6	266/3	House Builders Federation (Southern Region)

ISSUES

1. Does the Local Plan Review concentrate on issues of residential development and the nature this might take in too much detail resulting in other land-uses and their integration being only lightly covered within the Plan? Should the Plan contain greater flexibility in respect of future housing provision taking into account the reuse of surplus property? (1434/1/2/3)
2. Will the level of brownfield land identified within the Plan provide sufficient capacity during the Plan period? Does the Plan strike the right balance between avoiding greenfield development and over developing the urban areas? (212/1)
3. Will the number of dwellings identified within the Urban Capacity Study come forward during the Plan period? (212/12, 475/1, 530/3, 530/9, 302/2, 543/1, 266/3)
4. Is the Local Plan's Approach to the MDAs consistent and correct? (266/3, 503/11)
5. Should the Local Plan include appropriate text to facilitate an extension to New Alresford? (210/26)
6. Are all the H.2 and H.3 settlements identified within the Local Plan able to facilitate sustainable development? (878/5)
7. Should residential development be permitted on the edge of the existing settlements? (530/10, 485/3, 503/5, 506/2, 530/4, 530/10)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 In the overview to Chapter 6, I have briefly set out the main thrust of my analysis and conclusions in respect of the way the Plan deals with housing development. Given the very large number of objections to this chapter and the considerable degree of cross-referencing in the Plan it is inevitable that there is extensive scope for overlap in the Council's issues and thereby repetition in my report. To reduce this to the minimum requires extensive cross referencing between paragraphs. One consequence of this is that the particular points of detail made in individual objections are often dealt with in the context of the general argument relating to the most relevant issue. However objectors can be assured that I have read all the objections and given all the points raised careful consideration, even though in many instances that consideration may not be referred to individually and in some cases necessarily appears in another section of my report.

- 6.1.2 I now turn to general comments on the Housing Chapter. In the first issue, the objector is concerned that the Plan over-concentrates on issues of residential development, with other land uses and activities and their integration with each other and housing only lightly covered. However in my view the objector's concern is not justified, as the level of housing provision and the form it should take must be central to a document which has to meet the requirements of both Regional Planning Guidance and the Structure Plan (Review) at District level. Furthermore, the location and type of new housing is a key factor in the formulation of policies for the ancillary land use matters covered in other chapters of the Plan. And contrary to the objector's view, I regard those chapters as providing an adequate planning policy framework within which stakeholders are able to put forward their proposals on the basis of either individual sites or for service / facility provision.
- 6.1.3 The second point raised in this issue is one of whether the Plan provides sufficient flexibility and guidance to meet the land use and property implications of the ongoing rationalisation of the services provided by the Hampshire County Council. I recognise that the identification of valuable alternative uses for surplus sites is important to the quantitative and qualitative aspects of service delivery, but do not share the objector's view that a specific policy supporting rationalisation and the re-use of surplus County Council property is required. Proposals for the re-use of land and premises, including for housing in order to raise funding, will doubtless occur in a variety of locations in both urban and rural locations. In my judgement the policies of the Plan, including my recommended replacement of Proposals H.3 and H.4 by a new policy, will provide an adequate framework for decision-making. To include a separate and overriding policy would be inequitable and may lead to illogical and harmful decisions in relation to adjacent land uses and the environment. The flexibility sought by the objector is in any event provided insofar as the decision-maker on any particular proposal must have regard to any other material considerations in addition to the relevant policies of the Plan.
- 6.1.4 In respect of the second issue, I do not consider that there is the required degree of certainty that the level of provision of brownfield land identified within the Plan would be sufficient to fulfil the non-MDA supply requirements of the housing strategy. I set out my reasons for this conclusion under Issue 3 of Section 6.5. On the further aspect of this issue, I consider that some amendments are required to the Plan to secure the right balance between avoiding greenfield development and 'overdeveloping' the urban areas. Again I elaborate further in my conclusions on the housing strategy under Section 6.5. The third issue raises essentially the same arguments as the second and is therefore also dealt with in that part of my report.
- 6.1.5 In the fourth issue, the concern of an objector that the First Deposit Plan only identified an 'Area of Search' for the Winchester North Reserve MDA has been met by Paragraph 6.6 (RD06.03) and Proposal NC.3 (RD12.51) of the Plan, whereby a specific site has been identified on the Proposals Map. A second objector expressed the view that the designation of MDAs in the Plan should not be a 'fait accompli' but should only arise as the outcome of following the PPG3 search sequence and the criteria set out in paragraph 30 of the guidance. However I do not consider that the Plan's housing strategy need revisit the principle of the MDAs as this was undertaken in the Structure Plan (Review), with which this Plan has to be in conformity. Policies H3 and H4 of that document are specific in their requirements with both West of Waterlooville and Winchester City (North) cited as the general locations.
- 6.1.6 Issues 5 and 6 are more appropriately dealt with in the sections of my report relating to Omission sites and Proposals H.2 and H.3 respectively. In respect of Issue 7, I consider that there is some scope for residential development on the edge of existing settlements, albeit only in a reserve capacity if needed. I have dealt with this in Issue 3 of Section 6.5 and in my conclusions on the individual omission sites. The request by several objectors for an alternative strategy for residential development on the edge of settlements is dealt with in Issue 2 of Section 6.4 below. However the request by one objector for inclusion of farm buildings on the edge of settlements

within the built up area as a general principle would in my view be inappropriate, especially as Annex C of PPG3 specifically excludes agricultural land and buildings from the definition of 'previously developed land'. The Council has considered the precise alignment of the boundary of the settlements listed in Proposal H.2 and in my recommendation for a replacement Proposal H.3 there would be an opportunity for further consideration to be given to the redevelopment of individual sites in the light of the stated criteria.

- 6.1.7 Overall in respect of the general comments on the housing chapter, as I am in partial agreement with some of the objections raised, I shall make recommendations in the following paragraphs that the Council should modify some sections of text and some of the policies. However I see no need to amend paragraph 6.1.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1.8 That no modification be made to the Plan in paragraph 6.1.

6.2. Provisions for Housing Development – Strategic Requirements (paragraphs 6.2 - 6.4)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.3	253/21	Environment Agency
6.4	473/8	George Wimpey UK Ltd
6.4	287/7	Holmes and Sons
6.4	322/2	North Whiteley Consortium
6.4	474/13	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0601	386/5	Bewley Homes
RD0601	431/1	Byng's Business Development
RD0601	374/7	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0601	446/2	Linden Holdings Plc
RD0601	2290/2	Linden Homes
RD0601	2297/3	P Garber
RD0601	474/4	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0601	397/2	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
RD0602	386/6	Bewley Homes
RD0602	431/2	Byng's Business Development
RD0602	374/8	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0602	446/3	Linden Holdings Plc
RD0602	2297/5	P Garber
RD0602	474/5	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0602	397/3	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
RD0604	386/8	Bewley Homes
RD0604	431/4	Byng's Business Development
RD0604	374/10	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0604	446/5	Linden Holdings Plc
RD0604	2297/4	P Garber
RD0604	474/7	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0604	397/5	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

ISSUES

1. Should Chapter 6 include a paragraph outlining the concerns over a proliferation of septic tanks in new development? (253/21)
2. Does the desire to resist development outside the settlement boundaries contradict PPG3? Are the assumptions in Proposal H.1 over optimistic? (473/8, 474/13, 2297/3 - 5/REVDEP, 474/4 & 5REVDEP, 474/7 REVDEP)
3. Will 2000 dwellings be provided at the MDA West of Waterloooville and is this compliant with the H4 Monitoring Paper? (287/7, 386/6 REVDEP, 397/3 REVDEP, 431/2 REVDEP, 374/8 REVDEP, 446/3 REVDEP)
4. Should the location of the 'reserve' MDA provision be amended? (322/2, 386/8 REVDEP, 397/5 REVDEP, 431/4 REVDEP, 374/10 REVDEP, 446/5 REVDEP)
5. Should the Revised Deposit Local Plan update the housing completion figures to 2002 as contained within the Housing Monitoring Report 2003? (386/5 REVDEP, 374/7 REVDEP, 431/1 REVDEP, 446/2 REVDEP, 397/2 REVDEP)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.2.1 In the first issue, the objector requests an additional paragraph in the chapter to refer to concerns over a proliferation of septic tanks for sewage disposal in new developments. However I consider that Proposals DP.9 and DP.13 of the Plan provide adequate safeguards against the pollution of groundwater from this source and see no need for the additional paragraph.
- 6.2.2 In the second issue, a number of objectors express the opinion that the Council's desire to resist development beyond the boundaries of built up areas as defined in the adopted Local Plan is contrary to the advice in paragraphs 30-32 of PPG3 and the aim of creating more sustainable patterns of development that are well related to the principal urban areas of the District and accessibility to employment, services and facilities, and public transport. Furthermore it is argued that the Plan fails to implement its own strategy, as set out in paragraph 6.7. I consider that there is at least some substance in the views of the objectors but deal with the points raised in my comments on the Council's housing strategy and its delivery in my report at Issue 3 of Section 6.5 below. But insofar as these objections are concerned I see no need to recommend alterations to paragraphs 6.2 to 6.4, which in any event primarily contain factual matters.
- 6.2.3 The third and fourth issues relate to the West of Waterloooville MDA and whether the reserve MDA provisions at that location and Winchester City (North) should be relocated and / or added to. I deal with the issue of the MDAs in the section of my report on Chapter 12 but in the light of my conclusions thereat I do not regard paragraphs 6.2 to 6.4 as requiring amendment.
- 6.2.4 In the fifth issue, a number of objectors refer to the fact that paragraph 6.3 refers to housing completion figures as at 2001 which are now out of date. The Council has stated in its Response Note that 'Updating of the housing figures to reflect the most up to date position will be undertaken prior to adoption of the Review of the Local Plan in due course'. That is clearly a sensible course of action and I shall recommend accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.2.5 That the Plan be modified so that the figures in paragraphs 6.3 and 6.4 are updated with the latest information available when the Council publishes the Plan.

6.3. "Reserve" Provision (paragraphs 6.5 - 6.6)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.5	1127/1	J. R Greenleaf
6.5	877/11	Kier Land
6.6	386/12	Bewley Homes
6.6	468/26	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.6	397/7	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0603	386/7	Bewley Homes
RD0603	431/3	Byng's Business Development
RD0603	374/9	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0603	446/4	Linden Holdings Plc
RD0603	2297/6	P Garber
RD0603	474/6	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0603	397/4	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

ISSUES

1. Strongly oppose the 'reserve' MDA at Winchester City (North) (1127/1)
2. What is the mechanism for the triggering of the 'reserve' provision? Is it logical to have one of the two 'reserve' sites at West of Waterlooville (877/11, 386/12, 397/7, 468/26, 386/7/REVDEP, 397/4/REVDEP, 431/3/REVDEP, 374/9/REVDEP, 446/4/REVDEP)
3. Are Proposal H.1's assumptions over optimistic? (474/6/REVDEP)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.3.1 In the first issue the objector opposes the reserve MDA at Winchester City (North) as part of a general objection to the scale of the proposed housing growth. However the designation of the reserve MDA is required under Policy H4 of the Structure Plan (Review) and any failure of the Plan to identify a site would place it out of general conformity with strategic guidance.
- 6.3.2 Turning to the second issue, there are two points of concern. Firstly, one objector considers that the Supplementary Planning Guidance published by the County Council on the implementation of Structure Plan Policy H4 falls short in terms of the detail of the 'trigger' mechanism used for the release of the MDAs. I acknowledge there is an inherent and significant delay in a system that permits the release of reserve MDA sites in response to a shortfall in housing land supply identified in the previous year as part of the annual monitoring process. That said, I do not see further explanation, or indeed alteration, of the trigger mechanism as being appropriate in this Plan. In my view it is a matter for the strategic planning authorities, albeit in consultation with the District Council, who need to have regard to the wider land supply for the County Structure Plan area as a whole and in particular for each of its three geographic sub divisions. And as the reports and proceedings pertaining to the above are wholly within the public domain, I consider that there is adequate transparency in the trigger mechanism.
- 6.3.3 The second point of concern is that if the West of Waterlooville MDA fails to deliver 2,000 dwellings as part of the Baseline housing provision in the Plan period, it is considered illogical for one of the two reserve housing sites to also be at West of

Waterlooville. The remedy sought is for the Plan to identify one or more additional reserve sites to cater for this. However, I concur with the Council's view that moving a Reserve MDA site away from West of Waterlooville would place the Plan out of conformity with the Structure Plan and elsewhere in my report I have recommended the allocation of a number of 'Local Reserve' sites for urban extensions for implementation in the event that completion rates appear unlikely to ensure delivery of the numbers required in the Council's strategy. I have found no suitable alternative available substitute for either of the strategic reserve sites and the issues concerning the West of Waterlooville MDA and Winchester City (North) MDA are covered in greater detail in Chapter 12 of this report that deals with Proposals NC.2 and NC.3.

- 6.3.4 I deal with the third issue, whether Proposal H.1's assumptions are over optimistic, in Issue 3 at Section 6.5 below.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.3.5 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.4. The Housing Strategy (paragraph 6.7)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.7	210/11	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
6.7	386/13	Bewley Homes
6.7	220/2	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.7	468/27	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.7	1126/1	Charles Bazlinton
6.7	1434/25	Hampshire County Council
6.7	1434/26	Hampshire County Council
6.7	287/5 & 6	Holmes and Sons

ISSUES

1. Will the strategy of resisting development beyond the defined boundaries lead to a shortage in housing supply? (210/11, 1434/25, 1434/26, 287/5).
2. Should there be a new strategy for a more equitable housing distribution including development on the edge of settlements (530/10, 503/5).
3. Is the housing strategy flawed as it does not identify sites to meet the baseline requirement of the Structure Plan? (220/2, 287/6)
4. Is the development of public open space contrary to PPG3? (386/13)
5. Is the increase in housing density too great? (1126/1)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.4.1 In the Overview to this chapter I express my views on the overall strengths and weaknesses of the Council's housing strategy. Further conclusions on individual aspects of the strategy are set out in the paragraphs relating to the individual issues. However, in terms of the first of the five issues identified above as arising from paragraph 6.7, I conclude that a small number of specific sites put forward by objectors should be allocated in the Plan as Local Reserve sites for urban extensions. Accordingly I agree with the thrust of the objectors' views in this regard. My recommendations to implement this change to the strategy are set out at the relevant points in my report on this Chapter but paragraph 6.7 also requires some amendment. One objector requests the deletion of the phrase '*within the District's built up areas*' from the first bullet point of the strategy, but I share the Council's view that without this important caveat, the strategy would depart from national guidance in PPG3 and could be used to support sporadic and unsustainable development in the District. However, to reflect my views on the possible need for some urban extensions I agree with another objector's suggestion to alter the fourth bullet point,

albeit in a slightly different form to that put forward to make the amended text more readable. The alteration also needs to reflect my recommendation for a more flexible Proposal H.3 to replace the concept of defined development frontages and this will additionally require the alteration of the second bullet point.

- 6.4.2 An alternative housing strategy has been suggested on behalf of a number of objectors. The essence of the objections is that by following the Structure Plan policies in respect of MDAs and by not allocating greenfield sites, the Council's strategy fails to provide an equitable distribution of housing in the District and thereby does not make provision in settlements to meet the needs of local people. However, as I have stated in paragraph 6.0.2 above, in my view the Plan's strategy is not fundamentally flawed. Nonetheless I also consider that the strategy can be improved by including an element of flexibility through the identification of a Local Reserve and amending Proposal H.3 to make it spatially less rigid and more receptive to sustainability considerations. In my opinion the basic principles on which the strategy is based are sound. These are acceptance of the Structure Plan's framework in respect of MDAs (which the objectors' alternative strategy does not) and seeking to accommodate new growth within the capacity of existing urban areas rather than the release of greenfield sites. This is the sequential approach followed by PPG3, albeit that my recommended change to Proposal H.3 will, if the Council interprets the sustainability guidance in PPGs 3 and 13 and PPS7 correctly, result in limited development in villages where local services would benefit from it, rather than consolidating many linear and sporadic developments that have some spare capacity but do not have those services.
- 6.4.3 In summary, I do not see the need to substantially change the basis and direction of the Council's strategy. The additional flexibility that I am recommending does however go some way to meeting the concerns of the objectors. In respect of the MDAs, the alternative strategy's suggestion of the immediate release of the Winchester City (North) Reserve MDA and changing the West of Waterlooville MDA to a reserve site would result in the Plan being out of conformity with the Structure Plan. Overall, I consider that the Plan would not be improved by adopting this strategy or indeed any other strategy such as that promoted by the development industry in the form of large scale releases of greenfield land.
- 6.4.4 The third issue derives from the suggestion of objectors that paragraph 6.7 of the Plan should include the number of dwellings required. But in my view this would be superfluous as Proposal H.1 includes this information as part of the Plan's implementation of the strategy. The objection to the First Deposit Plan referred to in the fourth issue has been addressed by the inclusion in the Revised Deposit of Proposal NC.3 (RD12.51).
- 6.4.5 In the fourth issue, an objector is concerned that the reference to '*minor areas of open space laid out in association with earlier housing developments*' in the fifth element of the strategy is harmful and, indeed, contrary to the guidance in PPG3 which requires protection policies for such areas. However from the Council's Response Note I am satisfied that there is an adequate awareness of the need to maintain important areas of urban green space and that this can be achieved through Policies RT.1 and RT.2. I therefore consider that the phrase disputed by the objector should be retained to reflect the fact that, this point notwithstanding, there are undoubtedly some sites of unused and / or unsightly open areas within existing housing developments that could be used for more housing without detriment to environmental quality. A judgement can be made in individual cases where, as part of the planning application process, the Council will have a duty to consider any objections of local residents and the level of open space provision in the locality.
- 6.4.6 The final issue concerns an objector's argument that minimum net residential densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare will have the exact opposite of providing for greater housing choice and environmental enhancement as claimed in the second bullet point of paragraph 6.7. This is a perception shared by many

objectors to the Plan, notably in relation to Proposals in Chapter 3: Design and Development Principles. Clearly a balance has to be struck between achieving the efficient use of land through the higher densities advocated in PPG3, whilst at the same time ensuring that a high quality residential environment is maintained. But as the PPG makes clear, these objectives need not be mutually exclusive and from my comments elsewhere in this section of my report and consequential recommendations for alterations to the Plan's text and Proposals, it will be apparent that I am satisfied that an appropriate balance can in fact be achieved. Accordingly I do not support the objector's suggested changes to paragraph 6.7 which would not be consistent with the objectives of PPG3.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.4.7 That the Plan be modified by
- a) the amendment of the second bullet point in paragraph 6.7 deleting the words '*or development frontages of specified settlements*' and
 - b) the amendment of the fourth bullet point to read: '*resisting development beyond the defined boundaries of the built up areas, other than in the cases of the implementation of Local Reserve sites for urban extensions allocated in the Plan, the development of sites in accordance with the criteria of Proposal H.3, and approved housing 'exceptions' schemes to meet proven rural needs*'.

6.5. Provision for Housing Development (Proposal H.1)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.1	482/1	A Butler
H.1	1052/2	A. C Granger
H.1	360/4	Alfred McAlpine Developments Ltd
H.1	1343/1	B and S Mort and Love
H.1	1383/1	B Penn
H.1	1416/2	B R and E A Bull
H.1	227/5	Bewley HomesPlc and R C H Morgan-Giles
H.1	211/3	Bishops Waltham Parish Council
H.1	212/13 & 17	Bishops Waltham Society
H.1	213/1	Bovis Homes Ltd
H.1	1346/1	Brian Espiner
H.1	1329/1	C Buckingham
H.1	1405/2	C Butterworth
H.1	336/4	C. J. York
H.1	1003/1	C. R Trippe
H.1	1412/2	C. W Eames
H.1	468/29	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
H.1	220/3	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
H.1	1325/1	Carol Ifold
H.1	84/1	Channon
H.1	475/2 & 8	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
H.1	1146/1	Colten Developments Ltd
H.1	1387/6	CPRE Mid Hampshire District Group
H.1	1314/1	D Smith
H.1	1317/1	D. J. Blundell
H.1	257/2	D. T Wickham
H.1	967/4	D. W Briggs
H.1	127/1 & 2	David and Diane McLean

H.1	1318/1	David Button
H.1	1336/1	David Farley
H.1	1342/1	Desmond Vine
H.1	1350/1	E Crispin
H.1	1310/1	E Pickering
H.1	352/1	Eagle Star Estates Ltd
H.1	1312/1	Elizabeth Webb
H.1	1419/2	English
H.1	1309/1	Eric W. A Cole
H.1	995/1	G. R. E Pope
H.1	1345/1	G. R. E. Butcher
H.1	1414/2	Geoff and Liz Cox
H.1	1415/2	Geoffrey Wickes
H.1	1001/1	George Fothergill
H.1	473/13	George Wimpey UK Ltd
H.1	374/6	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
H.1	323/1	Heritage Property Holdings Ltd
H.1	471/2	Humphrey Farms Ltd
H.1	990/1	I. E. J Ferguson
H.1	1411/2	J Barnet
H.1	1145/1	J Davidson
H.1	1401/2	J P English
H.1	1320/1	J Spicer
H.1	1406/2	J. A Foreman
H.1	102/2	J. C. C. Schute
H.1	1413/2	James Cullen
H.1	1334/1	Jane Ereaud
H.1	1321/1	Janet Watts
H.1	1328/1	Jill Buckingham
H.1	1421/2	Joan Foreman
H.1	1372/1 & 2	Joanna Webb
H.1	138/1	John Hayter
H.1	989/1	John. E Gumbel
H.1	987/1	John. F Sheeran
H.1	1163/1	Jonathan Pope
H.1	1404/2	Josianne Wong
H.1	892/3	Judith Pope
H.1	1316/1	Julie Button
H.1	1349/1	K Nossiter
H.1	289/7	Kris Mitra Associates Ltd
H.1	1323/1	L K Adam
H.1	1319/1	Laura Ifold
H.1	503/1, 4 & 8	Linden Homes Developments
H.1	879/4	Littleton and Harestock Parish Council
H.1	1326/1	M A Vine
H.1	1369/1	M E Moore
H.1	1327/1	M Regan
H.1	993/1	M. G Eustace
H.1	1403/2	Margaret Raw
H.1	1324/1	Mark Luff
H.1	1402/2	Mary E Butterworth
H.1	1370/1	Maurice Keith Charrett
H.1	1313/1	Moiria Dean
H.1	1409/2	N A McPherson
H.1	1347/1	O. J Thorlow
H.1	1348/1	P A Soper
H.1	1410/2	P G Stubbs
H.1	1311/1	P J Smith
H.1	1418/2	P S and S J Early
H.1	1341/1	P Tribbick

H.1	1315/1	Peter Ifold
H.1	1330/1	Phillip Pagget
H.1	258/1	R Cowen
H.1	992/1	R Shepherd
H.1	85/1	R. A. Greenlees
H.1	302/1	R. L. Stubbs and Clients
H.1	474/8	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
H.1	235/1	Rookesbury Estate Ltd
H.1	1420/2	S J Keigher
H.1	1429/1	S J Osborne
H.1	175/9	Save Barton Farm Group
H.1	1344/1	Schroder
H.1	1158/1	Stepehn Wallis
H.1	397/6, 8, 23 & 24	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
H.1	1331/1	Tim Venters
H.1	1417/2	V J and G M Denham
H.1	1193/2	V. A Scappaticci
H.1	126/1	Walton
H.1	851/2	Weatherstone Properties
H.1	469/2	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd
H.1	472/2	William Wheatley (Wickham) Ltd

ISSUES

1. Is the Local Plan in conformity with PPG3 in that sites identified through the Urban Capacity Study are not allocated or shown on the Proposal Map, Inset Maps and Table 2? (878/6)
2. Will the reliance on two 'areas of search' bring forward the required reserve number of dwellings if necessary? / Should reference to the 'reserve' provision at Winchester City (North) be deleted? (360/4, 1416/2, 1405/2, 1003/1, 1412/2, 475/2, 1387/6, 257/2, 967/4, 352/1, 1419/2, 995/1, 1414/2, 1415/2, 1001/1, 1411/2, 1145/1, 1401/2, 1406/2, 102/2, 1413/2, 1421/2, 989/1, 987/1, 1163/1, 1404/2, 892/3, 503/8, 503/1, 879/4, 1369/1, 1403/2, 1402/2, 1370/1, 1409/2, 322/1, 1410/2, 1418/2, 258/1, 302/1, 1420/2, 1429/1, 175/9, 1158/1, 221/1, 1417/2, 397/6)
3. Is the housing strategy over-reliant on sites identified within the Urban Capacity Study and will there will be a shortfall in supply? (227/5, 213/1, 258/2, 397/24, 397/23, 336/4, 468/29, 220/3, 473/13, 234/2, 851/2, 855/2, 314/2, 845/2, 849/1, 374/6, 323/1, 471/2, 990/1, 289/7, 503/4, 474/8, 235/1, 239/1, 1193/2, 469/2, 472/2, 863/1, 1325/1, 84/1, 1314/1, 1317/1, 127/2, 1318/1, 1310/1, 1312/1, 1309/1, 1320/1, 1321/1, 1316/1, 1323/1, 1319/1, 1324/1, 1311/1, 1315/1, 992/1, 85/1, 126/1, 1052/2, 1343/1, 1346/1, 1146/1, 1349/1, 1336/1, 1342/1, 1350/1, 1345/1, 1334/1, 1347/1, 1341/1, 1344/1, 1331/1, 212/17, 1326/1, 1327/1, 1330/1, 993/1, 1329/1, 127/1, 1328/1, 1313/1, 1372/1, 1372/2, 482/1, 1383/1, 212/13, 1314/1, 1348/1, 397/8)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.5.1 In the first issue, the Council indicates that it would not be practical to depict every site identified in the UCS on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps as they number over 500 and apart from some being very small, making them difficult to show, it would also make the Plan unwieldy. In addition, as the Council indicates, the UCS served to inform the Plan making process rather than to allocate sites. It has not been possible to conduct a detailed appraisal of every site in the UCS and I regard it as an exercise to demonstrate the potential within the built-up areas rather than a formal allocation process.
- 6.5.2 Turning to the second issue, the question of whether the two 'areas of search' (amended to 'sites' in RD06.05) will bring forward the required reserve number of dwellings and the objections to the effect that the 'reserve' provision at Winchester City (North) should be deleted are more appropriately considered in my report on the objections to Chapter 12.

- 6.5.3 Issue 3 is the main criticism of the Council's housing strategy and has been expressed not only in the objections listed above but also at the Housing Numbers RTS and in the objections itemised in Issue 9 of Section 6.6; Issue 1 of both Sections 6.7 and 6.8 and Issue 2 of Section 6.9. I have taken all those objections and the Council's responses thereto into account in my conclusions in the following paragraphs. As an aside, a substantial number of objectors have used the housing figures in Proposal H1 and the references made in the text to the contribution to be made by the Urban Capacity Study in order to object to the development of individual sites. In particular, the inclusion of sites at Dyson Drive / Francis Gardens in Winchester; Morley Drive / Langton Road in Bishops Waltham and Cunningham Avenue / Ponside, Bishops Waltham have been the subject of a substantial number of objections. However the Urban Capacity Study informs the Plan but does not form part of it. Thus the fact that individual sites have been identified as being suitable for development does not form part of my remit. Nonetheless I return to this point below.
- 6.5.4 There are three main strands to criticisms of the Council's strategy in terms of housing numbers: (i) that the reserve provision should be combined with the baseline requirement in formulation of the Plan's methods of provision; (ii) that predictions for the West of Waterlooville baseline MDA are too optimistic, and (iii) that there is too great a reliance on sources within existing built up areas and that with assumptions made for those sources that are too optimistic. On the first point, many of the development interests, led by the House Builders Federation, argued in written and oral submissions to the Inquiry (and in particular at the Housing Numbers Round Table Session) that the Council's strategy is flawed because the Plan concentrates only on providing the Structure Plan Policy H2 baseline requirement of 7,295 dwellings in the period April 1996 to March 2011, whereas it should also be making active provision for the Policy H4 reserve requirement of 3000 dwellings in the District between 2001 and 2011. The objectors take the view that the Structure Plan Policy H1 requirement of 94,290 dwellings in Hampshire for the period 1996-2011 and the requirements of RPG9 make it inevitable that both the Baseline and Reserve provision will be needed. Moreover, there are concerns as to deliverability of these figures from both the MDA and non MDA sources of supply.
- 6.5.5 However I endorse the Council's view that the role of this Plan is not to release the Reserve sites; rather it is to ensure that sufficient land is identified to meet the Baseline requirement and to make additional Reserve provision for 3000 dwellings as required by Structure Plan Policy H4 through the identification of the sites (which it has done in Proposals NC.2 and NC.3). As a strategic resource, the necessity for the release of the land must logically be identified by the strategic planning authorities through the Policy H4 monitoring process having regard to the annual update of the position on housing land supply not just in Winchester but for the sub region and the County as a whole. I see no merit in the Plan effectively circumventing a process that has been established to independently monitor housing completions in the County and putting forward objective advice based on technically sound analysis as regards the progress in delivering the Structure Plan housing requirements. I have carefully considered all the arguments put forward by the development industry but from the figures before the Inquiry (and indeed the figures subsequently published in the 2005 Monitoring Report) I have not found any convincing evidence to dispute the conclusion of the strategic authorities that there is no current requirement to release the District's Reserve sites as part of this Plan even if procedurally it would be appropriate so to do.
- 6.5.6 Notwithstanding the above, I have been addressed on the timing of the release of the reserve site at Winchester City (North) as part of the objections to the Plan. I acknowledge the claimed advantages of early release, not only as a significant contribution to ensuring that the RPG requirements for the County are in fact fulfilled but also because of the social benefits accruing to the population of the City and its catchment area from the substantial numbers of affordable dwellings that would form part of the development of the MDA. But these arguments do not alter my view that it

is beyond the remit of the Plan to promote Winchester City (North) from Reserve status to an allocation.

- 6.5.7 In respect of the West of Waterlooville MDA, as a result of the objections received, the Council has reduced the estimate of the completion figure within the Plan period from 2000 to 1600 dwellings. This has been reflected in Table 7 of Topic Paper 3 in the schedule of minimum estimates and although the Council considers that the aggregate supply total will still be enough to reach its baseline target, if the figure is towards the lower rather than the higher end of the predicted range this inevitably increases the pressure on the other sources of supply to deliver. I have taken this into account in making my recommendations for adjustment to the strategy.
- 6.5.8 Turning to the main thrust of objection as regards whether there will be a shortfall in supply and in particular the role of the Urban Capacity Study as a source of provision within the overall total, representatives of the development industry argue strongly that the Council's reliance on this element to assist in meeting the outstanding Baseline requirement (as at April 2003) of 4,033 new dwellings within the Plan period is unduly optimistic. The Council's estimate of supply from this source is stated in Table 7 of Topic Paper 3 and ranges from a minimum of 1,328 (identified as the number of potential completions during the Plan period based on the completion rate of sites in 2002 – 2003) to a maximum of 1,735 (being the total estimated capacity of sites identified in the Study but remaining undeveloped). Whilst the objectors' case is that both the minimum figure and the projected range are too high, there is only limited agreement as to what is considered to be a more realistic figure. However the thrust of the objectors' case remains that when combined with doubts as to the delivery of the figures for the West of Waterlooville Baseline MDA and the other sources of additional capacity set out in paragraph 6.17, the Plan's housing strategy will fail to deliver the Structure Plan's baseline requirement for the District.
- 6.5.9 I find it difficult to endorse the criticism that the housing strategy is 'fundamentally flawed', in that the Council has followed Government guidance to prepare an Urban Capacity Study and used the findings to prioritise the redevelopment of brownfield land within the built-up areas of the District, thereby fully embracing the search sequence referred to in paragraph 30 of PPG3. The evidence put forward by the objectors is essentially that for a range of reasons associated with the development of small sites, the Council's assumption that its completion rate of 166 on UCS sites for the year 2002/2003 will not be maintained for the remainder of the Plan period. But despite these reservations, I agree with the Council's view that there is little in the way of specific and conclusive evidence that the numbers anticipated by the Study will definitely not come forward. And the fact that for the most part there is no consensus amongst representatives of the development industry as to an alternative dwelling estimate from the Study and the other sources of supply does not suggest any degree of certainty that the Council's figure is fundamentally wrong.
- 6.5.10 That said, the purpose of a strategy is to ensure that housing numbers are in fact delivered in accordance with the Structure Plan requirement and both before and during the Inquiry the importance attached by the Government to Councils in the South East (and Hampshire in particular) meeting their strategic housing targets was made very clear. Bearing these points in mind, there are two main factors, both of which have been identified by many objectors, that persuade me that, although not fundamentally flawed, the Council's housing strategy (and thereby the Plan) could be improved in respect of increasing the likelihood of fulfilling the objective of meeting the Structure Plan baseline requirement within the Plan period. These are firstly the reliance on a large number of fairly or very small sites over which the Council has little control or influence as to whether and when they actually come forward for development. Secondly, there are the environmental constraints on achieving the PPG3 range of densities on which the Council largely relies to meet its targets.
- 6.5.11 On the first point, quite apart from pointing out that as at April 2003 there were already unimplemented planning permissions for 1,253 units on sites identified in the

Urban Capacity Study, the Council argues that its methodology has resulted in only those relatively unconstrained sites (the so called 'good opportunity' sites) being identified and that the publication of the Study itself by identifying the sites considered suitable has effectively promoted their development. I accept this to the extent that many of the difficulties envisaged by objectors, for example land assembly, have already been taken into account and factored in to the site selection process. Be that as it may, the release of such sites will depend in large measure on the general economic conditions prevailing at any one time and in particular on those factors which are central to the rate of development activity, with interest rate levels and house price inflation being the most obvious examples. The completion rate of 166 in 2002/2003 which the Council projects forward as part of its justification for the anticipated take up rate on Urban Capacity Sites is itself the product of an especially favourable combination of economic circumstances for housing development and a decline in the rate of house building is perfectly possible if there is a period of market adjustment to reflect one of a number of factors, for example to allow the ratio between average incomes and dwelling prices to revert to its previous value.

- 6.5.12 On the second point, objectors refer to the environmental constraints applicable to most if not all of the Urban Capacity Sites and in particular draw attention to the fact much of Winchester City itself is a Conservation Area and that in the adopted Local Plan, Proposal EN.1 seeks to preserve the 'low density character' of areas through the preclusion of plot sub-division. In response the Council argues that it has done a considerable amount of work on this topic, including commissioning Core Document CD14.6 'Potential for Increasing Housing Densities in Winchester District' and the later organisation of seminars at which interested parties, including local amenity groups could discuss their concerns as to the potential impact of PPG3 densities on areas of character. From my response to objections to Proposals, both in this chapter and in Chapter 3, it will be evident that I am broadly supportive of the Council's view that good design can often resolve issues of potential harm to residential infilling within established residential areas. Accordingly, the retention of Proposal EN.1 or the inclusion of a similar policy, as requested by many objectors, would not be consistent with PPG3. However it is also important to accept that there will still be examples where the space about buildings in an area, often combined with the type and extent of tree cover, is so much an intrinsic part of its character that even the lower end of the PPG3 density threshold cannot be successfully achieved without harm being caused. My attention has been drawn by objectors to such areas and indeed to examples of developments that are perceived to have been harmful, and whilst it is not my role to assess individual development control decisions, I nonetheless consider that the Council must apply PPG3 density policy with some sensitivity if it is to safeguard the high quality of the District's settlements, in particular the City itself.
- 6.5.13 Taking these points into account, I consider that although there is no conclusive evidence that the sites will not come forward in the predicted numbers and assumed densities, equally there are some credible arguments as to whether they actually will at or near the Council's minimum estimates in Table 1. The strategy should therefore include an element of both diversity and flexibility if it is to be fully fit for purpose and accordingly I consider that it would be improved by the inclusion of a relatively modest element of provision in the form of urban extensions on sites suggested by the objectors (ie. omission sites). I consider that these should take the form of a 'Local Reserve' (as opposed to the strategic reserve of the Reserve MDAs) and that the decision whether to release all or some of the sites should fall to the Winchester District Council itself rather than the strategic authorities. Given that the extent to which sites identified in the Urban Capacity Study and indeed from the other sources of supply will come forward for development within the Plan period is, as the Council recognises in paragraph 12.52 of Response Note 06.02 'a matter of conjecture', I see little merit in compensating for the potential shortfall by identifying a precise target calculated on an arithmetic basis derived from a subjective appraisal of the many estimates of supply. Any such figure would, by definition, be arbitrary.

- 6.5.14 However as I consider the Council's strategy to be for the most part soundly based and more in line with Government guidance than the amendments proposed by the objectors, it is equally clear that the total should be relatively modest, and sufficient only to act as an insurance or safeguard against the possibility that the sites identified either directly within the Plan or indirectly in the Urban Capacity Study either do not come forward and / or deliver less dwellings than anticipated. The Winchester City (North) and West of Waterlooville Reserve MDAs would be inappropriate for release as a solution to the shortfall because their large scale and long lead times would not address the smaller and essentially short term deficiencies in urban capacity. Logically however the majority of this alternative provision must have only a reserve status, to be released only if and when the Urban Capacity sites do not deliver in sufficient numbers, as their unrestrained release could result in an over supply compared with the requirement. The exceptions to this are a small number of the sites that come forward on sites within the existing settlement policy boundaries as a result of recommendations that I have made on suggested modifications to the Plan.
- 6.5.15 The basis of my approach has been to recommend for allocation as a Local Reserve in the Plan those limited number of sites identified by objectors that on the evidence before me and my site inspections, in my view perform best in terms of landscape, access and sustainability considerations, with the additional requirement that they should be found in 'Category A' (ie. the most sustainable) settlements. The concept of Local Reserve sites is consistent with guidance in PPG3 because they are urban extensions that would only be called on if and when the supply of brownfield sites proves to be inadequate.
- 6.5.16 From my appraisal of the omission sites below, I am of the view that four of the sites with an approximate yield of 400 dwelling units located on the edge of Category A settlements are suitable for Local Reserve status. I consider that the addition of these sites as a Local Reserve provision, albeit as sources of supply less preferable in terms of paragraph 30 of PPG3, will assist in ensuring that the Plan's housing strategy does not result in a shortfall of provision to meet the Baseline Structure Plan requirement and will allow the Council to use some element of discretion in the appraisal of infill schemes. This would be to the effect that although PPG3 densities remain as the guideline, there would nonetheless be some scope for lower densities on sites where spaciousness is an intrinsic part of character. I also consider that the mechanism for release of the Local Reserve should be the subject of Supplementary Planning Guidance to be prepared by the Council with public consultation, but in broad terms it should follow the approach of the Guidance adopted by both the Council and the strategic authorities for the release of the Reserve sites in the Structure Plan.
- 6.5.17 The 400 dwellings amount to 10% of the Baseline requirement for the period of the Plan, although this percentage will actually be significantly higher by the time that the Plan is adopted in 2006. In considering the scale of Local Reserve provision I am mindful of other sources of supply that were not built into the Council's figures. These include my recommendation in Chapter 13 that the Proposal S.19 reserve allocation at North Whitely should not be held back; the Council's acknowledgment that the 100 dwellings referred to for the Broadway / Friarsgate redevelopment in Winchester (Table 2: RD06.10) is likely to be a significant underestimate, and finally that a further supply will be available from my recommendations to alter some settlement boundaries and to delete the Proposal RT.1 designation at St Johns Croft, Winchester. I acknowledge that my recommendation for the amendment of Proposal H.3 could result in the loss of some infill potential that the Council had relied on from the smaller settlements. However, I am content that this could in part be offset by permissions granted under the criteria based replacement policy for sustainable development outside the boundaries of Proposal H.2 settlements.
- 6.5.18 In addition to the central thrust of criticism that the Council's Urban Capacity Study published in 2001 over estimates the supply of housing sites, a number of objectors to the Plan take issue with other aspects of both the process and the report itself.

Many objections concerned the inclusion within the Study of areas of open space that were initially considered as having potential for housing development. In the light of those objections, such sites at Morley Drive/Langton Road, Bishops Waltham; Dyson Drive/Francis Gardens, Winchester and Penford's Paddock, Bishops Waltham have not been included in the subsequent Housing Monitoring Reports and the sites' potential housing contribution discounted. Conversely, other sites have been retained despite the objections to them, whilst some objectors argue that there are sites with potential that have been missed, with one objector in particular specifying very detailed criticism of the Study.

- 6.5.19 The Urban Capacity Study informs the Plan and in particular the figures provided in 'Table H.1: Sources of Housing Supply' at paragraph 6.11 (RD06.07). However it is not formally before me for amendment and although some of the objectors' criticisms are no doubt justified, I do not consider it to be so flawed as to be an unreasonable basis for the housing projections in the Plan. Furthermore the 'Local Reserve' allocations that I am recommending will provide additional flexibility. And with the annual Housing Monitoring Reports providing an ongoing qualitative assessment of the Study and with its impending review in 2006 I consider that there is an adequate degree of accountability for the Council's forecasts. One important point to make clear to those objectors who have taken issue with the identification of particular sites in the Urban Capacity Study on the grounds that they are unsuitable for development is that in my view such identification does not and should not equate with a total presumption that planning permission will be granted. If sufficient constraints emerge as part of a planning application for residential development and the public consultation thereon, the Council would be entitled to exercise its judgement and refuse permission. That said, I anticipate that as the sites' inclusion within the existing built up areas is an indication of their sustainability credentials, such refusals would be the exception rather than the rule and I anticipate that only rarely would the principle of development be precluded.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.5.20 That the Plan be modified by the inclusion of an additional policy and text identifying the following Local Reserve sites for release upon the decision of the District Council in the light of annual review of the District's housing completions.

SITE	LOCATION	ESTIMATED CAPACITY
Pitt Manor	Winchester	200 (More if Park and Ride site not developed)
Worthy Road/ Francis Gardens	Winchester	80
Little Frenchies Field	Denmead	70
Spring Gardens	New Alresford	35

6.6 The "Sequential Approach" and Urban Capacity (paragraphs 6.8 - 6.11)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.8	210/12	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
6.8	1378/1	Blaxland

6.8	213/3	Bovis Homes LTD
6.8	468/28	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.8	1387/2	CPRE Mid Hampshire District Group
6.8	374/1	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
6.8	216/1	J. S. Bloor (Newbury) Ltd and St Michaels Devt. Co. Ltd
6.9	210/13	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
6.9	287/3	Holmes and Sons
6.10	210/14 & 15	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
6.11	386/14	Bewley Homes
6.11	468/30 & 31	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.11	220/4	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.11	354/1	Hallam Land Management
6.11	287/15	Holmes and Sons
6.11	322/3	North Whiteley Consortium
6.11	397/9	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0605	386/9	Bewley Homes
RD0605	431/5	Byng's Business Development
RD0605	2309/1	Cavendish Gloucester
RD0605	833/1	Christ's Hospital School Foundation Winchester
RD0605	2301/1	Eagle Star Estates Limited
RD0605	352/1	Eagle Star Estates Ltd
RD0605	863/1	G Payne
RD0605	1001/1	George Fothergill
RD0605	374/11	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0605	1401/2	J P English
RD0605	1413/1	James Cullen
RD0605	446/6	Linden Holdings Plc
RD0605	1370/2	Maurice Keith Charrett
RD0605	2310/1	N Fraser
RD0605	2297/7	P Garber
RD0605	474/8	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0605	397/6	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
RD0605	851/2	Weatherstone Properties
RD0606	468/7	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0606	220/1	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0606	2312/17	Kingfisher Housing Association
RD0606	474/9	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0606	397/7	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
RD0607	386/11	Bewley Homes
RD0607	212/13	Bishops Waltham Society
RD0607	213/1	Bovis Homes LTD
RD0607	431/6	Byng's Business Development
RD0607	468/25	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0607	2314/1	Dan Hallett
RD0607	374/12	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0607	138/20	John Hayter
RD0607	446/7	Linden Holdings Plc
RD0607	2297/8	P Garber
RD0607	474/10	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0607	397/8	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
RD0607	266/3	House Builders Federation (Southern Region)
RD0607	851/3	Weatherstone Properties
RD0607	469/1 & 5	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd

ISSUES

1. Is the Local Plan in conformity with PPG3 in that sites identified through the Urban Capacity Study are not allocated or shown on the Proposal Map, Inset Maps and Table 2? (468/30, 468/31, 220/4)
2. Is it necessary for the Urban Capacity Study to be reviewed more frequently than once every 5 years? (468/7/REVDEP, 468/25/REVDEP, 220/1/REVDEP, 2312/17/REVDEP)
3. Should the estimated number of dwellings likely to come forward during the Plan period be updated in line within the Housing Monitoring Report? (386/11/REVDEP, 397/8/REVDEP, 431/6/REVDEP, 446/7/REVDEP)
4. Is the requirement within paragraph 6.8 to develop at between 30 – 50 dwellings per hectare too prescriptive? (374/1, 397/9)
5. Should the S.19 reserve site be deleted from Table 2 as it is not part of baseline? (138/1, 468/34, 220/7, 1431/1)
6. What is the reason for the discrepancy between Table 1 in the Revised Deposit Local Plan and the commitments and allocations recorded by the Hampshire County Council? (266/3 REVDEP)
7. Does the Local Plan Review carry over the allocated sites from the adopted Local Plan without reviewing them in accordance with PPG3? (468/28)
8. Will the reliance on 2 'areas of search' bring forward the required reserve number of dwellings if necessary? / Should reference to the 'reserve' provision at Winchester City (North) be deleted? (1001/1/REVDEP, 352/1 REVDEP, 1401/2 REVDEP, 1413/1 REVDEP, 1370/2 REVDEP, 386/9 REVDEP)
9. Is the housing strategy over reliant on sites identified within the Urban Capacity Study / will there will be a shortfall in supply? (210/12, 210/13, 210/14, 210/15, 213/3, 287/3, 287/15, 322/3, 386/14, 354/1, 397/6/REVDEP, 474/8/REVDEP, 213/1/REVDEP, 2314/1/REVDEP, 2297/8/REVDEP, 474/10/REVDEP, 469/5/REVDEP, 431/5/REVDEP, 2309/1/REVDEP, 833/1/REVDEP, 863/1/REVDEP, 374/11/REVDEP, 446/6/REVDEP, 2310/1/REVDEP, 2297/7/REVDEP, 397/7/REVDEP, 1378/1)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.6.1 In the first issue, there are two objections that the Urban Capacity Study sites should be specifically referred to in the Plan, either on the Proposals/Inset Maps or in Table 2. I recognise the merit in the objectors' view that by not allocating such sites on the Plan the Council is unable to manage their release and demonstrate a commitment to seek their development as required by PPG3. However the substance of the objector's argument is that there is too much reliance on Urban Capacity Study Sites and insufficient specific allocation of land. I have already dealt with this point but given that the sites are part of the Council's strategy (and in my view should remain so) I agree that in practical terms it is preferable to identify the sites in a comprehensive background document which can be much more easily altered as a result of the annual Housing Monitoring Reports. And leaving aside the practicalities of allocating over 500 sites, some of which only have the potential for a single dwelling, I consider that the effective presumption of development which the formal status of allocation would confer would be inappropriate prior to the planning application process whereby any constraints of development can be balanced against the advantages of additional housing provision.
- 6.6.2 In the second issue the objectors argue that the commitment RD06.06 (paragraph 6.9) to review the Urban Capacity Study every five years is inadequate and that a more frequent review, perhaps annually, is necessary. However I am satisfied that the publication of an annual Housing Monitoring Report, to be read in conjunction with the study, is an appropriate method of providing up to date information and that unless specific circumstances arise which require otherwise, a five yearly review is sufficient. Indeed I doubt that to all intents and purposes a more frequent review is even practicable, given the major undertaking it represents.
- 6.6.3 The third issue can be dealt with briefly in the same manner, as I have recommended in paragraph 6.2.5 that the most expedient course of action is to include the latest

available figures in the Plan immediately prior to its adoption, I consider the same applies to Proposal H.1 and Table 1.

- 6.6.4 In Issue 4 the objectors argue that the reference to net housing densities within the target range of 30-50 dwellings per hectare is too prescriptive and does not accord with guidance in PPG3 which does not stipulate that all areas are appropriate for such a figure. I have expressed my concerns on the impact of residential infilling in paragraph 6.5.12 above. However in the first bullet point of paragraph 6.8 of the Plan the use of the words 'within the target range' does imply some degree of flexibility and I consider this sufficient when taken in the context of my recommendation for a Local Reserve of additional housing sites which will help to ensure that abstract housing targets for the District do not unduly influence the Council's judgement in the appraisal of densities on individual infill housing schemes.
- 6.6.5 The objectors in Issue 5 consider that the S.19 site at Whiteley should be deleted from Table 2 as it is not part of the Baseline. However in the section of my report on Chapter 13 (Settlements) I recommend that this site should no longer be treated as a reserve and that development should proceed as part of the Baseline provision. This recommendation will effectively meet the objectors' points.
- 6.6.6 In the sixth issue the objector refers to a discrepancy between the figures in Table 1 of the Plan and those of the Housing Monitoring Report of 2002. However the Council has explained that estimates of the yield from sites have changed and these are documented in paragraphs 4.18 – 4.22 of Topic Paper 2: Housing Strategy. The updated figures have been included in the Housing Monitoring Report of 2003 and Table 1 will be updated accordingly in the modified version of the Local Plan Review, which I support and duly recommend below.
- 6.6.7 In the seventh issue the objector considers that the Review carries forward greenfield allocations from the previous Local Plan without the Council reviewing them in accordance with PPG3. However it is clear from paragraphs 4.18 – 4.22 of Topic Paper 2 that this has in fact been done and that because all sites except Whiteley Green have been granted planning permission, their inclusion in the Plan at Tables 1 and 2 is appropriate. Whiteley Green itself is proposed to be held back, which I have concluded is illogical and inappropriate in the section of my report on the objections to Chapter 13. In the light of this information I see no substance to this objection.
- 6.6.8 In Issue 8 I have dealt with the objections in relation to the areas of search and reserve provision of Winchester City North in the section of my report on Chapter 12. The objections in Issue 9 have been dealt with in the preceding section.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.6.9 That the Plan be modified so that the figures in Proposal H1 and Table 1 are updated with the latest information available when the Council publishes the Plan.

6.7. Policy Framework (paras 6.12 - 6.16)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.12	210/16	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
6.12	386/15	Bewley Homes
6.12	888/6	I.W.L Jones
6.12	887/4	Pam Jones
6.12	397/10	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0608	474/11	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd

ISSUE

Is the housing strategy over reliant on sites identified within the Urban Capacity Study / will there will be a shortfall in supply? (210/16, 397/10, 474/11/REVDEP, 386/15, 888/6, 887/4)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.7.1. The particular concern of these objectors is that the Plan's intention to provide for generally more intense development within the defined built-up areas, including those special character areas such as 'low density/important tree cover areas', previously subject to specific policies in the adopted Local Plan will be harmful to the character and appearance of many areas. Two of the objectors cite Sleepers Hill in Winchester as an example of such an area that would be unsuitable for more intensive development. However the Council considers that blanket protection against higher density, such as that currently offered by Proposal EN.1 in the adopted Local Plan would be incompatible with the requirements of PPG3 and that very often the use of good design can avoid potential damage to the character of a locality whilst still meeting the minimum density thresholds advocated in PPG3.
- 6.7.2. I have already dealt with this issue in the section of my report on objections to Proposal DP.3. Suffice it to say at this point that whilst I do not recommend the re-introduction of Proposal EN.1, I have already commented that the Council should adopt a more flexible approach where space about existing buildings and tree cover are so fundamental to the character of an area that a design led approach on its own would be unable to afford the necessary safeguards. However I see no need for an amendment to paragraphs 6.12 – 6.16 of the Plan as the policy framework of the Plan is in my view essentially sound.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.7.3. That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.8. Sources of Additional Urban Capacity (paragraphs 6.17 - 6.20)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.17	386/16	Bewley Homes
6.17	397/11	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
6.18	386/17	Bewley Homes
6.18	397/12	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
6.19	210/17	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
6.20	210/18	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
6.20	386/18	Bewley Homes
6.20	397/13	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0609	474/12	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd

ISSUE

Is the housing strategy over reliant on sites identified within the Urban Capacity Study / will there will be a shortfall in supply? (386/16 - 18, 397/11 - 13, 210/17 & 18, 474/12 REVDEP)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.8.1. One objector considers that as part of his doubts about the capacity of the urban areas, the reference in paragraph 6.17 to development on open spaces and car parks is inappropriate. I have previously dealt with this in paragraph 6.4.5. Several objectors require additional detail in paragraphs 6.18 – 6.20 of the Plan in relation to how the Council would assist in land assembly and how it would become involved in the stimulation of the delivery of certain development opportunities. A further objector considers that there should be more explanation of the concept of a 'Neighbourhood Plan' referred to in paragraph 6.19 as currently the text leaves a number of important questions unanswered.
- 6.8.2. In my view paragraphs 6.17 – 6.20 of the Plan need to be read in conjunction with Chapter 14 'Implementation' which for the most part provides sufficient detail to answer the queries raised. I consider that little would be gained by expanding these paragraphs but the addition of a cross reference to Chapter 14 would be helpful. Furthermore Chapter 14 should include some explanation of the form and function of 'Neighbourhood Plans', which I assume are intended to take the form of 'Supplementary Planning Guidance'.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.8.3. That the Plan be modified by the inclusion in Chapter 14 of details of 'Neighbourhood Plans' and their role in the implementation of the Plan's Proposals.

6.9 Allocated Sites (paragraphs 6.21-6.24)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.21	468/33	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.21	220/5	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.21	468/32	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.21	1434/28	Hampshire County Council
6.24	220/7	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.24	468/34	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.24	1431/1	Wickham Parish Council

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0610	386/12	Bewley Homes
RD0610	431/7	Byng's Business Development
RD0610	374/13	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0610	446/8	Linden Holdings Plc
RD0610	2297/9	P Garber
RD0610	474/13	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0610	397/9	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

ISSUES

1. Does the Local Plan Review carry over the allocated sites from the adopted Local Plan without reviewing them in accordance with PPG3? (468/33, 468/32)

2. Is the housing strategy over reliant on sites identified within the Urban Capacity Study / will there will be a shortfall in supply? (220/5, 287/1, 386/12 REVDEP, 374/13 REVDEP, 397/9 REVDEP, 431/7 REVDEP, 446/8 REVDEP, 474/13 REVDEP)
3. Should the S.19 reserve site be deleted from Table 2 as it is not part of Baseline? (468/34, 220/7, 1431/1, 1434/28)
4. Should Proposal H.5 be amended to reflect circular 6/98? (2297/9 REVDEP)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.9.1. The main points arising in respect of the first issue have been dealt with in my report at paragraph 6.6.7.
- 6.9.2. Similarly the representations in support of the objections listed in Issue 2 do not raise any substantially new points not already dealt with at paragraphs 6.5.8 to 6.5.19.
- 6.9.3 In Issue 3 there are four objections which seek the deletion of the Whiteley Green (Proposal S.19) site. However in the section of my report on Chapter 13 that deals with this site I have explained that as it falls within the settlement boundary of Whiteley, it would be illogical to delete it and I consider that it should form part of the Baseline provision.
- 6.9.4 I have dealt with the fourth issue in the paragraphs relating the other objections to Proposal H.5.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.9.5 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.10. Development in the Built-Up Areas (paragraphs 6.25 - 6.31; Proposals H.2 - H.3)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.026	889/3	J.D.M White
6.027	889/5	J.D.M White
6.029	1426/3	Corhampton and Meonstoke Parish Council
6.030	210/21	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
6.030	889/4	J.D.M White
6.031	889/6	J.D.M White
H.2	878/2	Alan Foster
H.2	360/3	Alfred McAlpine Developments Ltd
H.2	1335/1	B. P Taylor
H.2	210/19	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
H.2	1032/1	Brenda Rice
H.2	1164/3	C Robert Bradshaw
H.2	1448/4	C. Morgan and Sons
H.2	1152/2	Christopher Rice
H.2	475/4	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
H.2	1435/1	Compton Down Society
H.2	1030/1	Crawford McKinlay
H.2	1136/1	Douglas Spence
H.2	1011/1	E. P Gilliat
H.2	1434/29	Hampshire County Council
H.2	203/3	Heritage Commercial Properties
H.2	323/2	Heritage Property Holdings Ltd

H.2	243/2	Humphrey Farms Ltd
H.2	1145/2	J Davidson
H.2	1333/1	Jane Tennent Taylor
H.2	1168/4	Jean Bradshaw
H.2	1339/1	Jeremy Raggett
H.2	138/26	John Hayter
H.2	1163/2	Jonathan Pope
H.2	317/1	Julian House
H.2	244/1	K Wood
H.2	289/8	Kris Mitra Associates Ltd
H.2	923/2	Laura Clarke
H.2	1007/1	M Tombs
H.2	1157/1	M. F Walton
H.2	1031/1	Oram
H.2	533/2	P E Richards
H.2	538/1	Russell Smart
H.2	207/1	S. Elliott
H.2	1165/1	Stewart Patterson
H.2	1364/2	Robert Tutton
H.2	1360/7	RobertTutton
H.2	1373/6	T. B Foster
H.2	328/2	Twyford Parish Council
H.2	329/1	West Meon Parish Council
H.3	304/2	A. J. Sellick
H.3	878/3	Alan Foster
H.3	210/20	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
H.3	386/22	Bewley Homes
H.3	227/7	Bewley HomesPlc and R C H Morgan-Giles
H.3	211/22	Bishops Waltham Parish Council
H.3	212/18	Bishops Waltham Society
H.3	473/11	George Wimpey UK Ltd
H.3	1089/1	J. A Morse
H.3	138/29	John Hayter
H.3	289/10	Kris Mitra Associates Ltd
H.3	1080/1	Peter Stickland
H.3	474/10	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
H.3	498/1	Stephen Horn
H.3	397/15	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
H.3	469/4	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd
H.3	331/2	Winchester City Residents Association
H.3	242/1	Winchester Diocesan Board of Finance

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0611	474/14	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0612	474/15	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd

ISSUES

1. Do Proposals H.2, H.3 and H.4 provide an appropriate basis for the distribution of non MDA and allocated housing land in the District consistent with the Plan's strategy and objectives and national guidance for the promotion of sustainable patterns of development and the protection of the countryside? (889/3, 317/1, 289/8, 429/1, 451/1, 210/19, 1448/4, 1435/1, 1426/1, 1030/1, 1157/1, 1044/1, 1434/29, 323/2, 1163/2, 317/1, 289/8, 451/1, 1249/17, 1207/1, 1158/2, 1373/6, 1364/2, 923/2, 304/2, 878/3, 210/20, 210/21, 1080/1, 1089/1, 526/1, 469/4, 331/2, 242/1, 878/2, 473/11, 357/2, 358/2, 889/4, 889/5, 889/6, 1164/3, 289/10, 1011/1, 1145/2, 1426/3, 386/22, 397/15, 138/29, 138/26, 212/18, 211/22, 286/2/REVDEP, 138/29, 474/10, 227/7, 475/4, 227/7, 474/10)

2. Should the settlement of Twyford be contracted to exclude sensitive land within the conservation area? (328/4, 1044/1)
3. Should the allocated RT.4 formal recreational land between Littleton and Harestock contain any significant buildings? (1032/1, 1152/1)
4. Should former EN.1 areas be protected within the H.2 boundaries? (329/1, 1165/1)
5. Is there a conflict between Proposal H.2 and Proposal E.2 that seeks to resist the loss of employment land? (203/3)
6. Should land at Dyson Drive be included within the Urban Capacity Study? (1335/1) (1136/1) (1333/1) (1007/1) (1031/1) (1339/1)
7. Should the 'reserve' MDA at Winchester City (North) go ahead? (1152/2) (1168/4)
8. Should H.2 and H.3 Proposals apply to settlements within the AONB / proposed National Park designation? (475/4)
9. Will the policies contained within the Local Plan bring forward enough housing to meet the strategic requirement? (474/14/REVDEP) (474/15/REVDEP)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.10.1 In respect of the first issue, a number of objectors have sought to effectively include omission sites by arguing that the boundary of a Proposal H.2 settlement is inappropriately defined. I have dealt with these objections separately in my conclusions on the individual omission sites later in this section of my report.
- 6.10.2 Turning to the more general objections to Proposal H.2, I consider that the principle of a schedule of settlements which best meet the Council's sustainability criteria and where there is greatest scope for development on sites within the built-up areas as defined on the Proposals Map should be supported. This is central to the Council's housing strategy and fully in accordance with Government guidance in PPGs 3 and 13 and PPS7.
- 6.10.3 I have taken account of the objections in respect of the inclusion or exclusion of individual settlements in Proposal H.2. But I see no reason to take issue with the substance of the Council's conclusion that the application of its sustainability matrix together with an assessment of urban capacity indicates that those listed in the Proposal are the most suitable locations for a presumption in favour of residential development and redevelopment within their boundaries, provided that it accords with Proposals DP.3, DP.5, DP.10, DP.11 and other relevant proposals of the Plan. In short they are the locations where the size and form of the settlement and the range of services offered are such that they are a natural focus for most development.
- 6.10.4 I have carefully considered the individual objections as to the appropriateness of the inclusion or exclusion of particular settlements in terms of Proposal H.2. In some cases the objectors consider that a settlement should be excluded because of its semi-rural character and lack of services (for example Compton Down). On the other hand others argue that a settlement should be included because of its relatively built-up character and / or transport links (for example Crawley, Shirrell Heath and Durley). Although there are some errors in the sustainability matrix (which the Council acknowledged at the Inquiry) none were in my view of sufficient import to necessitate a change in the assessment of a settlement. Thus the conclusions arrived at in each case by an objector were inevitably based on their judgement that the Council was wrong either because of a perceived need to protect the character of an area or in support of the development of one or more sites for housing. I do not criticise that approach but overall I am satisfied that since 1998 the Council has carried out an objective exercise that has correctly identified in Proposal H.2 the settlements which (to use the description on paragraph 6.26 of the Plan) 'tend to be the larger ones, with sufficient depth and complexity of development to give them a more obviously built up character'. (The remainder of the paragraph refers to the existence of facilities, the capacity to absorb further development, and access to sustainable forms of travel). To my mind, the 30 settlements listed in the Proposal are quite clearly those in which the focus of development should take place if the Plan is to provide sustainable patterns of development. Moreover, despite the considerable detail in some of them,

I have not been convinced by any of the individual objections that the Council has made errors in its selection.

- 6.10.5 Although I support the Council's choice of settlements for inclusion in Proposal H.2 to the extent that I do not think the Plan would be improved by excluding some and including others, conversely I do have reservations in respect of Proposals H.3 and H.4, in respect of which I consider the basis on which the Council has made its decisions to be far less clear cut. In my opinion, Proposal H.2's consequential exclusion of all other settlements to either the 'development frontages' listed in Proposal H.3 or designation as countryside to be covered by Proposal H.4, is too sweeping and arbitrary an approach that cannot be justified by the inevitably subjective interpretation of the sometimes only very slight differences in the character of settlements or their performance against the sustainability criteria. In essence, although I recognise that the Council has used the same methodology as it used in choosing the Proposal H.2 settlements (which I support), I consider that there is too fine a line between the characteristics and location of the settlements chosen for Proposal H.3 and the remainder that are to form part of the designated countryside. Furthermore within the Proposal H.3 settlements there is only a marginal difference in many cases between land and buildings designated as a development frontage and the areas excluded from that designation. Overall, the Council's approach has resulted in, on the one hand, a doubtful sustainability pedigree of some of the Proposal H.3 sites, whilst on the other hand, sites (albeit significantly lower in number) where objectors have espoused at least a plausible case that development could be acceptable without harm to either the Plan's sustainability objectives or the character and appearance of the countryside.
- 6.10.6 Essentially I consider that the Council's approach in the Plan is too rigid on both a spatial basis and in terms of the scope of the policy. And whilst the former does have the advantage of greater certainty as to where development will and will not be permitted, the downside is that it would result in an essentially inequitable approach to development proposals, with preference given to the consolidation of often sporadic development in relatively unsustainable locations. I recognise that the Proposal H.3 and H.4 approach already forms part of the adopted Plan, but to my mind some of the objectors are correct when they argue that the policy promoted through Proposal H.3 does not reflect Government advice in the companion guide to PPG3: 'Tapping the Potential'. Furthermore the policy does not adequately reflect the guidance in PPS7: 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' which states that 'whilst the focus for most additional housing in rural areas should be on existing towns and identified service centres, it will also be necessary to provide some new housing to meet identified local need in other villages'. Proposal H.3 as it appears in the Plan essentially reinforces existing development patterns that in many cases have evolved from the pre-planning era, whereas any provision outside the Proposal H.2 settlements should in my judgement be concentrated much more on the balance of meeting the needs of the rural community without adversely affecting the character and appearance of the countryside.
- 6.10.7 I also have some sympathy with a number of objectors who doubt the practical workability of Proposal H.3 in particular, especially as the criteria of the policy and the text appear to send out mixed messages. Criterion (i) requires respect for the particular character of the locality; criterion (ii) seeks to avoid tandem or backland development; paragraph 6.30 refers to a target range of 30-50 dwellings per hectare; and paragraph 6.31 refers to development of more than a single house depth responding to 'traditional patterns and layouts'. Given that most opportunities would involve the development of single plots along a ribbon of development fronting a largely rural road, frequently in low density settings, I do not consider that the Plan currently conveys in any meaningful way the Council's aspirations for the form and type of development expected. There is in any event an inherent conflict between making the more effective use of previously developed land through the achievement of higher densities whilst at the same time preserving the linear 'development frontage only' character of many settlements.

- 6.10.8 On balance, and to properly reflect the guidance in PPS7, I consider that the Plan would be improved by the replacement of Proposals H.3 and H.4 with a new criteria-based policy for residential development and redevelopment of a limited scale outside Proposal H.2 settlements, the allocated sites and MDAs. I set out a suggested wording in my recommendation below together with replacement text for existing paragraphs 6.29-6.33. This text should be similar to the existing 'Development Constraints' paragraphs 6.32 and 6.33 but reflect the inclusion of the new Proposal H.3. Given the flexibility of the new policy I shall additionally recommend that the Council prepares Supplementary Planning Guidance to ensure consistency in its interpretation, especially as regards the description 'limited infill' and criterion (iii), sustainability. In this regard I have in mind the SPG citing similar criteria to those in paragraph 31 of PPG3 as being relevant considerations for the assessment of a development proposal. The SPG should also be informed by the guidance in PPS7 on the location of development in rural areas. My recommendation for a replacement policy for Proposal H.3 will result in other consequential changes to the text of the Plan, for example in the Countryside Chapter. The Council will also need to make sure that inconsistencies do not arise elsewhere in the Plan from the use of the term 'village or settlement' in the proposed replacement policy as I have used this phrase to be consistent with the advice in paragraphs 3 and 4 of PPS7 on the location of development and to differentiate them from 'local service centres', which in the context of the Plan equate to the Proposal H.2 settlements.
- 6.10.9 Issues 2, 4 and 8 have a common denominator in that they raise the potential conflict of areas envisaged for residential development with land that is subject to special protection through its designation. However I am satisfied that when the Plan is read as a whole there are sufficient safeguards to prevent harm being caused. For example, although development within the settlements in Proposal H.2 is subject to conformity with other Plan policies it also specifically states Proposals DP.3, 10 and 11, which I consider to be superfluous. My recommended replacement Proposal H.3 includes its own criteria and will additionally be the subject of Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 6.10.10 The remaining issues relate to text and proposals in the Plan considered elsewhere in my report at the sections most relevant to the subject matter. I therefore consider that the objections have been addressed

RECOMMENDATION

6.10.11 That the Plan be modified by:

- a) the deletion of reference to Proposals DP3, 10 and 11 in Proposal H2
- b) the deletion of Proposals H.3 and H.4 and paragraphs 6.29-6.33 and their replacement by a new Proposal H.3 and paragraphs 6.29 and 6.30:

Proposal H.3:

Outside the built-up areas of settlements listed in Proposal H.2, schemes for limited infill residential development will only be permitted where the proposal accords with other relevant policies of the Plan and satisfies all of the following criteria:

- (i) *the site is well related to an existing village or settlement in that at least one side would adjoin an existing residential boundary;*
- (ii) *the principle of development on the site and the scale and form of the proposal would not harm the rural character and appearance of the area and that of the existing village or settlement to which it relates;*
- (iii) *the development would be consistent with the Council's objectives for the promotion of a sustainable pattern of development of the area.*

New paragraphs 6.29 and 6.30:

6.29 Outside the defined policy boundaries of the settlements listed in Proposal H.2,

development will need to be strictly controlled to protect the countryside and to prevent intrusive development which fails to conform to the overall housing strategy described above. The policy boundaries define the areas within which development is acceptable in principle, even though these may not correspond to property boundaries or the fullest extent of a settlement as local people understand it. To permit development beyond the specified boundaries of the built-up settlements would normally release land for development which would not be acceptable according to the 'brownfield first, greenfield last' principles of the sequential approach. Areas of land that should remain undeveloped, for example because of the existence of important open areas or the significance of such areas to the setting of the settlement, are excluded from the defined policy boundaries. These areas are treated as countryside in policy terms as are villages, hamlets and areas of scattered development.

- 6.30 *Notwithstanding this strict control of residential development in the countryside, development will be permitted on 'Local Reserve' sites as extensions to Proposal H.2 settlements if considered necessary to meet the housing provision required under Proposal H.1. Other housing development that relates to existing development in the countryside or that has a need to be there is described in Proposals C.18-C.26 in Chapter 4. However Proposal H.3 also recognises that there may be some scope for limited infilling in the villages and settlements in the designated countryside outside the settlement policy boundaries of Proposal H.2. The criteria listed in Proposal H.3 will ensure that any proposal is consistent with Government guidance in PPS7: 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' in that it meets local needs but does not harm the character of the countryside or result in the formation or consolidation of unsustainable patterns of development. The Council will prepare Supplementary Planning Guidance to assist in the interpretation of the policy.*

6.11. Development Constraints (paragraphs 6.32 - 6.33; Proposal H.4)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.32	220/8	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
H.4	227/8	Bewley HomesPlc and R C H Morgan-Giles
H.4	220/9	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
H.4	473/10	George Wimpey UK Ltd
H.4	1434/30	Hampshire County Council
H.4	1434/35	Hampshire County Council
H.4	287/2	Holmes and Sons
H.4	349/8	Ian White
H.4	1249/18	P.A Warner
H.4	474/11	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
H.4	315/6	Simon Milbourne
H.4	851/4	Weatherstone Properties

ISSUES

1. Is Proposal H.4 too restrictive in not permitting development in acceptable locations? (227/8, 473/10, 1434/30, 1249/18, 315/6).
2. Should Proposal H.4 refer to exception schemes subject to Proposal H.6? (220/8, 220/9),
3. Should Proposal H.4 make provision for allocated sites? (287/2).
4. Is Proposal H.4 meaningless due to the identification of a reserve MDA at Winchester City (North)? (349/8).

5. Does the Urban Capacity Study include unsustainable settlements? (474/11)
6. Should there be more flexibility in the provision of affordable housing? (1434/35)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.11.1. The issues set out above are those identified by the Council as emerging from the objections to paragraphs 6.32 and 6.33 and Proposal H.4 as set out in the Plan. The Council has also drawn my attention to the fact that a number of objectors have submitted objections to Proposal H.4 concerning the omission of land from either Proposal H.2 policy boundaries or Proposal H.3 development frontages. I consider these as part of my report on omission sites and/or Chapter 13: Settlements.
- 6.11.2. A consequence of my recommendation to replace the existing Proposal H.3 development frontages policy with a criteria based policy for residential development outside Proposal H.2 settlements to be applied in conjunction with the policies for development in the Countryside Chapter would be the deletion of paragraphs 6.32 and 6.33 and Proposal H.4. Accordingly I shall not comment on Issues 1 to 4 above. As regards Issues 5 and 6, I have dealt with the Urban Capacity Study and affordable housing at some length in the other sections of my report.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.11.3. That the Plan be modified by the deletion of paragraphs 6.32 and 6.33 and Proposal H.4.

6.12. Affordable Housing (paragraphs 6.34 - 6.37)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.34	473/7	George Wimpey UK Ltd
6.34	474/14	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
6.35	261/35	Government Office for the South East
6.35	469/5	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd

OBJECTIONS TO PRE INQUIRY CHANGES

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
PIC0601	205/1	G Humphrey
PIC0601	138/4	John Hayter
PIC0601	204/1	K Larkin
PIC0602	475/1	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
PIC0602	138/5	John Hayter

ISSUES

1. Would the strategy of maximising affordable housing within urban capacity sites achieve sufficient affordable housing in the most sustainable locations, or would the allocation of additional housing sites assist the process? (473/7, 474/14)
2. Is it appropriate for the definition of affordable housing to be limited to subsidised housing, or should it include low cost market housing? Is the definition consistent with advice in PPG 3, Circular 6/98 and the ODPM's Good Practice Guidance? (261/35, 469/5, 138/4PIC, 204/1PIC, 205/1PIC)
3. Should the draft proposed changes to PPG 3 be taken into account in setting the thresholds for affordable housing? (138/5PIC, 475/1PIC)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.12.1 The first issue is as much to do with the Housing Strategy as with Affordable Housing, and as such is dealt with in greater detail above. Nevertheless, I consider residential development on both Urban Capacity Sites and greenfield allocations should play a part in delivering affordable housing. The matter of quantum is dealt with below.
- 6.12.2 These three paragraphs introduce the Affordable Housing section of the Plan with paragraph 6.35 providing the definition. In issue two, objections were lodged in particular, to the fact that the term "*low cost market housing*" mentioned in Circular 6/98 has been omitted from the definition. Although the Council advanced a Pre-Inquiry Change (PIC06.01) in response to various criticisms of its wording, it did not introduce that phrase and it has attracted some counter-objections. However, it is apparent that the phrase "*low cost market housing*" has been interpreted in various ways over the years. In an attempt to introduce some clarity, GOSE issued advice to the South East Regional Assembly (SEERA) that "*low cost*" does not signify any particular type of housing or tenure, but is intended to be synonymous with affordable housing. It continues by stating that the distinction made in Circular 6/98 between *subsidised* and *low-cost* points out that affordable housing can be delivered both by the use of public money (ie *subsidised*) and with the help of developer contributions. They maintain it is not meant to imply that the provision of smaller dwellings by the private sector can be claimed to be *low cost market housing* merely because they are cheaper than larger dwellings.
- 6.12.3 However, the Government's Good Practice on Local Housing Needs Assessments defines affordable housing as: *housing of an adequate standard which is cheaper than that which is generally available in the local housing market. This can comprise a combination of subsidised rented housing, subsidised low cost home ownership (LCHO) including shared ownership, and in some market situations cheap housing for sale.* It is for local authorities to define what they regard as affordable housing, having regard to the local market rents and sale prices in relation to local incomes. I consider the requirements of Policy H7 regarding the provision of a significant proportion of 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings should deliver a reasonable amount of open market housing at the lower end of the price range within the District. However, taking account of the overall high cost of dwellings in the District, I agree with the Council that open market housing is generally not capable of falling within the category of affordable dwellings, given the high entry price. Also, I agree with those objectors who felt that if the dwellings are made affordable by measures such as free or discounted land and shared equity, with some of the costs borne by the developers, that too, amounts to a subsidy (albeit private). Furthermore, the Council's consultants indicate that there is a possibility that Social Housing Grant may be made available to private developers as well as Registered Social Landlords. Therefore, I am persuaded that affordable housing in Winchester is appropriately and necessarily provided, *with subsidy* while still remaining 'tenure neutral'. I am further reinforced in my conclusion by the fact that SEERA's adopted definition (Jan 2004) incorporates *with a subsidy*.
- 6.12.4 Whilst some object to the PIC's deletion of the reference to *local* people, I am content that whilst the majority would be local, there will be a requirement to provide an element of affordable housing for those from elsewhere *eg* in the Waterlooville MDA to meet sub-regional need and also for some key workers to be able to move to the District. Accordingly, I accept the redrafted definition provided by the Change, save for the inclusion of the word *sector*, which was generally agreed to be superfluous and should thus be deleted.
- 6.12.5 Although there were no specific objections registered in respect of paragraph 6.36, it is clearly confused regarding the matter of what constitutes affordable housing. In the light of the Council's stance and preceding findings, I consider it requires modification to remove the confusion by qualifying the separate role played by lower priced market housing.

6.12.6 Turning to the third issue, the Council advanced a Pre-Inquiry Change (PIC06.02) in respect of paragraph 6.37 to refer to proposed revisions that were being considered in respect of the advice in PPG3 and Circular 6/98 whereby local authorities would be able to lower the thresholds for affordable housing provision. One objector to the Change commented that as the revisions were only draft proposals they should be given little weight, while the other considers *can be justified* should be replaced with *are justified*. While the first objector is correct in their assertion, the Change was correct at the time it was inserted and provided an insight of the way the Government was thinking, which influenced the Council's stance in this regard. No replacement of PPG3 was issued while the Inquiry was running and Circular 6/98 was not cancelled. However, it is open to the Council to revisit this text and insert the up-to-date position when the Modified Plan is published. The second objection is, in my view, pedantic and would contribute no perceptible benefit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.12.7 That the Plan be modified:

- a) in accordance with PIC06.01, but with the word *sector*, deleted.
- b) by rewording the second sentence of paragraph 6.36 to state: *In addition to subsidised housing, the Plan promotes the provision of smaller open market homes, to address an identified imbalance in the housing stock and to bring home ownership within financial reach of more households on modest incomes.*
- c) by modifying the text in accordance with PIC06.02 further updated as appropriate.

6.13. Affordable housing need (paragraphs 6.38 - 6.41)

OBJECTIONS TO PRE INQUIRY CHANGES

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
PIC0603	468/1	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
PIC0603	138/6	John Hayter
PIC0604	468/2	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
PIC0604	205/2	G Humphrey
PIC0604	138/7	John Hayter
PIC0604	204/2	K Larkin
PIC0605	210/1	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
PIC0605	373/1	Bryan Jezeph Consultancy
PIC0605	468/3	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
PIC0605	475/2	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
PIC0605	205/3	G Humphrey
PIC0605	236/1	George Wimpey Strategic Land
PIC0605	473/1	George Wimpey UK Ltd
PIC0605	234/3	Gleeson Homes
PIC0605	214/1	Grainger Trust Plc
PIC0605	214/2	Grainger Trust Plc
PIC0605	1434/3	Hampshire County Council
PIC0605	138/8	John Hayter
PIC0605	204/3	K Larkin
PIC0605	474/1	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
PIC0605	2333/1	Taylor Woodrow Developments
PIC0605	221/1	Executors of E. S. Edwards (deceased)
PIC0605	266/1	House Builders Federation (Southern Region)

ISSUES

1. Is the methodology of the 2002 Housing Needs Survey in accordance with the Government's Good Practice Guidance on Local Housing Needs Assessment, and are the conclusions correct? Should the Local Plan specify a date for the review of the 2002 Housing Needs Survey, or refer to the Good Practice Guidance? (138/6PIC, 138/7PIC, 204/2PIC, 205/2PIC, 468/1PIC, 468/2PIC)
2. Is it appropriate to set targets for affordable housing based on a proportion rather than a numerical target? (234/3PIC, 266/1PIC)
3. Whether the 40% target for affordable housing in the 2002 Housing Needs survey is soundly based and reasonable and is it appropriate to vary proportions of affordable housing in existing settlements and the MDAs? (138/8PIC, 214/1PIC, 236/1PIC, 2333/1PIC)
4. Should there be a difference in the proportion of affordable housing sought according to the type of site being developed? (373/1PIC)
5. Is the increased need for affordable housing recognised in the 2002 Survey most appropriately met by the use of lower thresholds or does it justify the release of additional housing land? (210/1PIC, 473/1PIC, 474/1PIC)
6. Is there a need for more clarity on the provision of affordable housing within the baseline and reserve MDAs? (204/3PIC, 205/3PIC, 214/1PIC, 214/2PIC, 236/1PIC, 468/3PIC)
7. Would a proportion of up to 40% affordable housing delay the provision of additional housing in the District? (221/1PIC)
8. Should the proportions and thresholds for affordable housing be subject to an economic analysis? (138/8PIC, 475/2PIC, 1434/3PIC)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.13.1 The Council advanced Pre-Inquiry Change PIC06.03 in respect of paragraphs 6.38 to update the text with the most recent (2002) Winchester Housing Needs Survey. An objector (Mr Hayter) sought to add new wording to highlight the methodology and to refer to the separate study that was carried out in respect of the Waterlooville MDA, but I agree with the Council that the former would add an inappropriate level of detail to the Plan. With regard to the latter, whilst the objector maintains the MDA was excluded from the District Housing Needs Survey, the Council indicates this is incorrect and that the separate MDA survey was to assess the sub-regional need that is to be addressed by the MDA. Although Cala Homes generally support the addition of the updated information, they also seek the inclusion of a survey review date. The Council indicated they would prefer to remain flexible about that and I am content that the text is not significantly devalued by the omission of a specific review date.
- 6.13.2 Pre-Inquiry Change PIC06.04 revises the annual (779) and total (7011) affordable housing need figures for the Plan period to 2011, in light of the updated (2002) Housing Needs Survey. The objections lodged in respect of this Change question the methodology used in the 2002 survey and/or the robustness of its findings. Nevertheless, I am generally content that the Council's consultants are experienced in the field of assessing affordable housing need and followed the Government's Good Practice Guide. The findings and recommendations are appraised below.
- 6.13.3 Cala Homes consider that with the high level of need it demonstrates for affordable housing, the release of the Winchester City (North) Reserve MDA is warranted. However, as the Council have stated, the trigger for the release of Reserve MDA sites lies with the strategic planning authorities, in the light of annual housing monitoring throughout the County and it is not within its mandate to act unilaterally in this matter.
- 6.13.4 The updated survey was able to assess the effects of the massive increase in house prices that took place in the years straddling the millennium, which have far outstripped rises in average incomes. Hence, the number of households excluded from housing generally available on the open market has increased significantly and the need for affordable housing has become more acute. Even if all the housing

proposed to be built in the District over the Plan period were to be supplied as affordable housing, it would still not meet the identified need.

- 6.13.5 It is fair to state that whilst there was some debate regarding the precise numbers, all participants in the Inquiry acknowledged the considerable need for affordable housing and also that it would be incapable of being met in full. Hence, there was no dispute with that statement of fact in para 6.40, nor with the indication there that the primary need is for rented accommodation. Accordingly, I can see no merit in analysing the detailed numbers and I am prepared to accept the Council's consultants' conclusion regarding the quantification of the need. However, agreement between the parties diverged when considering the quantum that should and could be realistically sought to be provided to address the identified need.
- 6.13.6 In issue two, paragraph 6.41 in the Deposit Plan referred to an annual target figure of 90 subsidised homes giving rise to a total of 900 over the period to 2011. Pre-Inquiry Change (PIC06.05) proposes a redraft of the paragraph to indicate that the Study recommends seeking a higher proportion of affordable housing than is currently the case, suggesting that a proportion of up to 40% affordable housing should be sought on the total of all suitable sites coming forward for planning permission over the Plan period. However, it is apparent that the Council resolved to seek the maximum number of affordable homes from new developments and set 40% as a District wide target average, varied to reflect the different needs of smaller and larger settlements and the MDA. The Change also states the Study supports the use of lower sized development thresholds. Objectors questioned the Council's decision to change from a target expressed as a number to one that is set as a proportion. However, as the Council indicates, Circular 6/98 requires Plans to identify how many affordable homes are needed throughout the Plan area, which they have done with PIC06.04. The Circular then requires Plans to set indicative targets for provision, which may be expressed either as a number or percentage. The Council maintains it would be unrealistic to set a numeric target in view of the amount of development anticipated on unallocated sites and thus they consider a percentage figure is more appropriate, which they incorporate in PIC06.05 and also delete the former numeric target in paras 6.46 and 6.51 with PIC06.07 and PIC06.11. In view of the inevitable uncertainties about which of the unallocated sites will be implemented, I consider the Council's approach of using a percentage rather than a definitive number is more appropriate.
- 6.13.7 However, in my consideration of paragraph 6.41, it strikes me that it moves into the matter of defining the quantum appropriate to address the need and I consider this aspect would sit more comfortably within the next section of the Plan: *Addressing the need*. This conclusion also applies to the remaining issues that have been identified here and I will therefore cover them in the next section. I thus consider the text of the paragraph should be amended generally in accordance with PIC06.05, to accurately express the findings of the 2002 Housing Needs Survey, referring to: *increasing the proportion sought on suitable sites up to 40%* in the third sentence after *case*, but omitting any reference to the Council's conclusion thereon as this can be referred to in the following section.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.13.8 That the Plan be modified:
- a) in accordance with PIC06.03;
 - b) in accordance with PIC06.04;
 - c) in accordance with PIC06.05 but reflecting precisely what the Study states *ie* stating in the third sentence: *increasing the proportion sought on suitable sites up to 40%*. after *case* and omitting the entire fourth sentence.

6.14. Addressing the Need (paragraphs 6.42 - 6.56, H.5)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.42	1434/31& 32	Hampshire County Council
6.42	223/1	Mrs P Edwards City of Winchester Trust
6.45	877/12	Kier Land
6.45	175/6	Save Barton Farm Group
6.48	468/36	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.48	1434/33	Hampshire County Council
6.49	1160/1	C. M and I. J Hunnius
6.49	220/10	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.49	1148/4	Incare Solutions Ltd
6.51	468/37	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.53	386/19	Bewley Homes
6.53	220/12	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.53	354/3	Hallam Land Management
6.53	877/13	Kier Land
6.53	397/19	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
6.54	1160/2	C. M and I. J Hunnius
6.54	224/8	Church Commissioners
6.54	1148/3	Incare Solutions Ltd
6.55	386/20	Bewley Homes
6.55	397/20	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
6.56	1160/3	C. M and I. J Hunnius
6.56	220/13	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.56	1148/1	Incare Solutions Ltd
H.5	360/1	Alfred McAlpine Developments Ltd
H.5	227/9	Bewley HomesPlc and R C H Morgan-Giles
H.5	211/4	Bishops Waltham Parish Council
H.5	211/5	Bishops Waltham Parish Council
H.5	213/8	Bovis Homes LTD
H.5	858/5	Braemore Investments Ltd
H.5	443/2	Bremore Developments Ltd
H.5	305/4	BT Plc
H.5	220/11	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
H.5	468/35	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
H.5	485/2	Clarendon House Investments
H.5	839/5	David Wilson Estates
H.5	490/3	DS and AB Gamblin
H.5	249/1	Emlor Homes
H.5	236/2	George Wimpey Strategic Land
H.5	473/9	George Wimpey UK Ltd
H.5	50/1	GL and PA
H.5	261/36	Government Office for the South East
H.5	214/12	Grainger Trust Plc
H.5	354/2	Hallam Land Management
H.5	294/1	I T A Jeffery
H.5	866/3	James Duke and Sons (Holdings) Limited
H.5	3/1	John Bendall
H.5	351/3	John Beveridge
H.5	138/28	John Hayter
H.5	289/12	Kris Mitra Associates Ltd
H.5	503/2 & 9	Linden Homes Developments

H.5	534/1	M, S, D, J Robbie
H.5	505/2	Mapledean Developments Ltd
H.5	296/1	McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd
H.5	506/3	Mitchell Properties
H.5	1386/5	New Alresford Town Council
H.5	452/2	NHS Estates South East
H.5	322/4	North Whiteley Consortium
H.5	530/1 & 7	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
H.5	1117/2	Philip A Turner
H.5	302/3	R. L. Stubbs and Clients
H.5	474/12	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
H.5	1430/1	Richard Mendelsohn
H.5	868/1	Robert Turley Associates
H.5	1360/1	RobertTutton
H.5	397/16	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
H.5	221/3	The Executors of E. S. Edwards (deceased)
H.5	266/4	House Builders Federation (Southern Region)
H.5	306/3	Ministry Of Defence
H.5	851/5	Weatherstone Properties
H.5	215/2	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0613	138/14	John Hayter
RD0613	474/16	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0614	261/5	Government Office for the South East
RD0614	2312/19	Kingfisher Housing Association
RD0614	474/17	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0614	2285/2	Executors of E.S Edwards (Deceased)
RD0615	468/8	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0615	2273/2	Kier Land
RD0615	474/18	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0616	386/13	Bewley Homes
RD0616	431/8	Byng's Business Development
RD0616	2289/8	Byngs Business Developments Limited
RD0616	468/26	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0616	2107/2	Grainger Trust PLC
RD0616	214/2	Grainger Trust Plc
RD0616	374/14	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0616	2312/20	Kingfisher Housing Association
RD0616	446/9	Linden Holdings Plc
RD0616	2290/11	Linden Homes
RD0616	2290/10	Linden Homes
RD0616	2297/10	P Garber
RD0616	474/19	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0616	868/1	Robert Turley Associates
RD0616	2291/15	Sharon Brentnall
RD0616	397/10	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
RD0616	138/7	John Hayter
RD0617	1434/3	Hampshire County Council
RD0617	1434/4	Hampshire County Council
RD0617	2297/11	P Garber
RD0617	474/20	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0618	386/14	Bewley Homes
RD0618	213/3	Bovis Homes Ltd
RD0618	431/9	Byng's Business Development
RD0618	2289/9	Byngs Business Developments Limited
RD0618	220/2	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0618	1434/5	Hampshire County Council

RD0618	374/15	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0618	446/10	Linden Holdings Plc
RD0618	474/21	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
RD0618	397/11	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
RD0619	213/2	Bovis Homes Ltd
RD0619	220/3	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0619	475/1	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
RD0619	475/5	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
RD0619	2299/1	Graham Moyse
RD0619	138/18	John Hayter
RD0619	2312/21	Kingfisher Housing Association
RD0619	503/1	Linden Homes Developments
RD0619	505/1	Mapledean Developments Ltd
RD0619	2300/1	Persimmon Homes
RD0619	530/1	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd

OBJECTIONS TO PRE INQUIRY CHANGES

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
PIC0606	210/2	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
PIC0606	236/2	George Wimpey Strategic Land
PIC0606	473/2	George Wimpey UK Ltd
PIC0606	474/2	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
PIC0606	138/9	John Hayter
PIC0607	210/3	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
PIC0607	205/4	G Humphrey
PIC0607	473/3	George Wimpey UK Ltd
PIC0607	138/10	John Hayter
PIC0607	204/4	K Larkin
PIC0607	474/3	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
PIC0608	210/4	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
PIC0608	205/5	G Humphrey
PIC0608	473/4	George Wimpey UK Ltd
PIC0608	138/11	John Hayter
PIC0608	204/5	K Larkin
PIC0608	474/4	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
PIC0609	210/5	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
PIC0609	205/7	G Humphrey
PIC0609	473/5	George Wimpey UK Ltd
PIC0609	138/12	John Hayter
PIC0609	204/6	K Larkin
PIC0609	474/5	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
PIC0610	210/6	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
PIC0610	205/6	G Humphrey
PIC0610	473/6	George Wimpey UK Ltd
PIC0610	204/7	K Larkin
PIC0610	474/6	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
PIC0611	210/7	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
PIC0611	475/3	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
PIC0611	205/8	G Humphrey
PIC0611	473/7	George Wimpey UK Ltd
PIC0611	138/13	John Hayter
PIC0611	204/8	K Larkin
PIC0611	474/7	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
PIC0611	221/2	Executors of E. S. Edwards (deceased)
PIC0612	210/8	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
PIC0612	475/4	Clients Southern Planning Practice
PIC0612	473/8	George Wimpey UK Ltd
PIC0612	234/4	Gleeson Homes
PIC0612	138/14	John Hayter

PIC0612	474/8	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
PIC0612	221/3	Executors of E. S. Edwards (deceased)
PIC0612	266/2	House Builders Federation (Southern Region)
PIC0613	2334/2	Mr and Mrs R Hilary

ISSUES

1. In the introduction in paragraph 6.42, which sets out the two main ways of addressing housing need, should exception schemes be permitted within or adjacent to Winchester and Whiteley, or adjacent to villages not defined through Proposals H.2 and H.3 or in the AONB or in the proposed South Downs National Park? (2334/2PIC, 1434/31, 138/10 & 14REVDEP)
2. Whether the District quantum of affordable housing has been clearly set out. (223/1, 443/2, 213/3REVDEP, 220/2REVDEP, 374/15REVDEP, 386/14REVDEP, 397/11REVDEP, 431/9REVDEP, 446/10REVDEP, 2312/20REVDEP)
3. Is it appropriate for affordable housing in the West of Waterlooville MDA to meet the affordable housing needs arising outside the Plan area? (360/1) (236/2PIC)
4. Is a 50% proportion of affordable housing appropriate in the MDA and is the text sufficiently clear regarding the surveys and detailed assessment? (851/5, 858/5, 866/3, 2285/2REVDEP, 2312/19REVDEP, 214/2REVDEP, 261/5REVDEP, 2312/20REVDEP, 138/13PIC)
5. Should there be any reference to affordable housing provision in the Reserve MDA at Winchester City (North)? (175/6, 227/9, 322/4, 877/12, 397/16, 468/35, 473/9, 474/12, 490/3, 503/2, 503/9, 506/3, 530/1, 534/1468/8REVDEP, 468/26REVDEP, 2273/2REVDEP, 204/4PIC, 205/4PIC)
6. Should the proportion of affordable housing sought vary between different settlements and the MDAs? (138/14PIC, 221/3PIC, 234/4PIC)
7. Is it appropriate to depart from the thresholds in Circular 6/98? Are the thresholds and proportions proposed appropriate and would they be viable and enable land to come forward for development to achieve this? (3/1, 50/1, 138/28, 211/5, 213/8, 214/12, 215/2, 220/10 - 220/12, 221/3, 227/9, 224/8, 236/2, 249/1, 261/36, 266/4, 289/12, 294/1, 296/1, 302/3, 305/4, 306/3, 351/3, 354/2, 354/3, 360/1, 386/19, 397/16, 397/19, 468/35 - 468/37, 473/9, 474/12, 485/2, 503/2, 503/9, 505/2, 506/3, 530/1, 530/7, 534/1, 839/5, 851/5, 858/5, 866/3, 868/1, 1148/3, 1148/4, 1160/1, 1160/2, 1360/1, 1386/5, 1434/32, 261/6REVDEP, 374/14REVDEP, 386/13REVDEP, 397/10REVDEP, 431/8REVDEP, 446/9REVDEP, 474/16REVDEP - 474/21REVDEP, 868/1REVDEP, 2297/9REVDEP, 2297/10REVDEP, 138/11PIC, 138/12PIC, 204/4PIC - 204/8PIC, 205/4PIC - 205/8PIC, 210/2PIC - 210/8PIC, 221/2PIC, 266/2PIC, 473/2PIC - 473/8PIC, 474/2PIC - 474/8PIC, 475/3PIC, 475/4PIC)
8. Should there be a more flexible approach to off-site provision of affordable housing? (138/28, 360/1, 386/20, 397/20)
9. Should the implementation of affordable housing be restricted to Registered Social Landlords? (1160/3, 1148/1)
10. Should free serviced land be made available for affordable housing together with other appropriate financial contributions in certain circumstances? (138/28, 211/5, 220/12 & 13, 221/3, 266/4, 294/1, 443/2, 877/13, 1117/2, 138/18REVDEP, 213/2REVDEP, 220/3REVDEP, 475/5REVDEP, 503/1REVDEP, 505/1REVDEP, 530/1REVDEP, 2299/1REVDEP, 2312/21REVDEP, 138/10PIC)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.14.1 Having quantified the need for affordable housing and established that it is incapable of being met in full, this section of the Plan sets out the manner in which the Council proposes to address the need. In the first issue, objectors consider para 6.42 could be further amplified. However, I accept the Council's response that it suitably describes the means by which affordable housing can be addressed through the planning system and appropriate elaboration appears elsewhere. However, whilst I agree that specific locations should not appear, I regard the reference to: *developed in the settlements* in (i) as placing undue emphasis on that particular source and as it does not account for urban extensions/ MDAs, I consider it should be deleted. I find (ii) could be suitably redefined to provide improved clarity by including the generally understood term *rural exception sites* and mention of *sustainable locations*.

- 6.14.2 Turning to the second issue, the Council seek to achieve the maximum possible provision from new developments and state that the reference to the Council's conclusion to seek the 40% District average figure mentioned in PIC06.05 was based on the advice they received from their consultants. Nonetheless, in the light of many objections, they commissioned a separate Study from different consultants to investigate the deliverability and impact of the affordable housing policies on the viability of market housing sites across the District. This (Adams Integra 2004) Report concluded that the Council's approach as proposed in the Pre-Inquiry Change would have a negative impact on housing site viability and therefore upon supply in general.
- 6.14.3 The Council thus introduced a Further Proposed Change (FPC06.01) to address objections to PIC06.05, taking account of the 2004 Report recommendations to introduce flexibility in the application of the policy and appraisal of the individual characteristics of different sites. The FPC indicates that the overall proportion should be varied to reflect differing needs of the MDAs, Winchester, other larger settlements and smaller settlements. However, the mention of increasing the proportion throughout the District to up to 40% remained. Having regard to the recommendation in the 2004 Report that thresholds and proportions should be defensible and not aimed high with a view to negotiating downwards, I am not persuaded from the evidence that a District-wide provision of 40% is acceptable or achievable. Although, by definition a target is an aspirational goal, I agree with the Council's consultants that it should be realistic and I do not regard a District-wide average of 40% as equating to the Study advice of up to 40% on suitable sites.
- 6.14.4 Whilst some sites would be capable of achieving such a high proportion of affordable dwellings, this must be balanced against those that would not. The Plan indicates that the Council has been seeking 30% provision on sites of 15 or more dwellings in the larger settlements and 5 or more dwellings in smaller settlements which they estimate as being capable of providing about 200 affordable dwellings over the remainder of the Plan period, and thereby make a small inroad into the identified need. I regard this text which is in para 6.47, to be more appropriately located immediately following para 6.43.
- 6.14.5 I consider a new paragraph should be inserted to follow that, referring to the two consultants' reports they commissioned. I further conclude that rather than indicating a District-wide total of up to 40%, it would provide more clarity and be more realistic to indicate that the intention of the Plan is to seek to increase the level of affordable housing provision from 30% on some sites that has been applied hitherto to a District-wide overall target of 35%, as mooted in the Adams Integra Report. I consider that whilst many small sites would be unable to deliver affordable housing, this would be counterbalanced by utilising higher percentage requirements on large sites, particularly in the MDAs and in Winchester. I advance some suggested wording in my recommendation below. I also find that the new paragraph proposed to be inserted by FPC06.03 could suitably be added to follow this new paragraph.
- 6.14.6 Issues three and four concern provision in the West of Waterlooville MDA. Many of the objections relate to background details that have informed the Inquiry but which would be inappropriate for inclusion in the Plan. Paragraph 6.44 specifically refers to this MDA and mentions that its intention is to serve the needs of South East Hampshire authorities (Havant, Portsmouth and East Hampshire) in addition to Winchester, as prescribed in the Structure Plan. The text cites the conclusions of a 2002 jointly sponsored study that a 50% provision of affordable housing would be justified in the MDA. The Council state their consultants (Couttie) advise that this high level of requirement would be viable having regard to the proposal that a large proportion of shared equity housing would be included in this figure and that it is a greenfield development.

- 6.14.7 Nevertheless, the site's ownership interests indicated that there are substantial infrastructure costs involved with the development and the subsidy burden for such a high proportion of affordable housing would have a negative impact upon its implementation. To an extent this has been confirmed by the Adams Integra Report which questions using a proportion as high as 50% and illustrates that the requirements of neighbouring authorities are less punitive. I also have misgivings about such a high proportion of subsidised housing on so large a site, having regard to matters such as viability, the desire to create a sustainable community and the fact that it is also intended to provide some open market housing at the lowest end of the price range. I therefore recommend the text be amended to refer to a more appropriate and realistic proportion of up to 40%. Although the Council proposed the deletion of most of this paragraph in Further Proposed Change FPC06.A, I am conscious of the specific, long known and important role the site is envisaged to have with regard to the provision of affordable dwellings within South East Hampshire and I consider some explanation of the evolution of a 40% figure of affordable housing would be appropriate here. I also consider the final sentence to be unnecessary.
- 6.14.8 Regarding the reference in issue five to the Winchester City (North) reserve MDA, the Council introduced a figure of at least 35% affordable housing provision in the Revised Deposit, but advanced a Further Proposed Change indicating it would be subject to the same provisions (40%) as the built-up area of Winchester (FPC06.02). I consider that setting the affordable quota for this locality at the same rate as Winchester city and the West of Waterlooville MDA is a sensible approach, not only to provide parity between the two MDAs, but also to recognise the considerable need for affordable housing in Winchester itself, where some of the highest house prices exist.
- 6.14.9 Accordingly, I recommend that the paragraph be modified to omit the reference to the provisions for the rest of the District, but to refer instead to requiring the provision to be up to 40% to make it comparable with the West of Waterlooville MDA. Although there were suggestions by objectors that the introduction of a further MDA at Whiteley and additional housing allocations elsewhere could also facilitate the provision of additional affordable housing, the former would be contrary to the strategic policy set out in the Structure Plan, while the latter have been separately assessed and where recommended, would be subject to the Plan's requirements in respect of affordable housing provision.
- 6.14.10 Moving to issues six and seven, the next tranche of text (paras 6.46 – 6.49) refers to the provision that will be made in the larger settlements and smaller towns and villages, including the site size thresholds to which the policy will be applied. I have previously recommended relocation of the reference to the District-wide percentage provision in para 6.47 to follow para 6.43. I also consider the text of paras 6.51 – 6.54 could be brought forward to combine with this sequence of text and suitably reworded to deal comprehensively solely with the matter of the proportion that will be expected in various parts of the District together with the site size thresholds and omitting unnecessary extraneous details and repetition.
- 6.14.11 Most of the representations are concerned with the Council's departure from the site size thresholds recommended in Circular 6/98. Therefore, following FPC06.03 and preceding the paragraphs on MDAs, it is appropriate to indicate how the Council will apply the proportions and thresholds. Having established a target of 35% provision District-wide, it would then be logical to indicate (in a similar manner to FPC06.05) that the studies support a provision up to 40% affordable housing in the built-up area of Winchester and in the MDAs as the localities where there is both greatest need and opportunities to make the highest possible provision.
- 6.14.12 The Council stated that their current policy of requiring a 30% provision on sites of 15 or more dwellings (or sites of 0.5ha+) in larger settlements and 5 or more dwellings elsewhere in the District has been successful. However, in view of the relatively low product this would generate, they conclude that this constitutes exceptional grounds

for departing further from the Government's guidance on site size thresholds in Circular 6/98. They proposed to seek 40% provision on sites of 5 or more dwellings (0.17ha+) in the larger settlements and 50% on sites of 2 or more dwellings in smaller towns and villages.

6.14.13 Whilst lowering the thresholds would be demonstrably more effective than raising the proportion, objectors considered the Council's proposed combination of the two would act as a deterrent to development and this is borne out by the Adams Integra Report, which suggests there would be real difficulties in operating these proportions and low thresholds in all but the very high value areas. Consequently they suggest reviewing/abandoning that approach. Despite the Council's stance being derived from the Government's Rural White Paper which states: *there is no reason why in small villages,.... every new market house should not be matched with an affordable home*, it is clear that this advice was tempered with the caveat: *subject to its financial viability*. The Council's suggested level of provision is unlikely to be viable across much of the District and it would also inhibit the release of open market housing, thereby being doubly counter-productive.

6.14.14 I consider it is imperative that any policy should be easy to understand and simple to administer, in addition to being capable of implementation. As the Council's current thresholds are already at or below the lowest figures recommended in Circular 6/98 and are stated to be operating effectively at the 30% proportion now applied and do not serve to act as a deterrent, I recommend that they should be continued. Hence, apart from the 40% requirement in the MDAs and for sites of 15 dwellings+ in the built-up area of Winchester, I consider there should be a District-wide proportion of 30% affordable housing on developments of 15 or more dwellings (sites of 0.5ha+) in larger settlements and on sites of 5 or more dwellings elsewhere. I consider such a range would continue the tried and tested level of on-site provision of affordable housing and potentially increase it above that currently generated, by the higher figure in the MDAs and Winchester, without acting as a deterrent to the release of market housing. In addition, I have recommended a number of Local Reserve sites should be identified as greenfield urban extensions and I propose that in respect of all these a minimum proportion of 35% affordable housing would be appropriate. Moreover, as the release of these sites will be determined by the Winchester District Council (rather than the strategic authorities) in response to annual monitoring, it will be open to them to consider whether an earlier release may be countenanced than would be the case purely in response to housing numbers, where a significantly higher proportion of affordable housing is proposed.

6.14.15 Issue eight relates to concerns by objectors about the requirement for on-site provision, but as the Council states, the indication that on-site provision will be expected as the norm, reflects the advice in PPG3 and Circular 6/98. However, I agree with the Council's consultants that a 5 dwelling threshold is the minimum that can be realistically expected to make on-site provision and that financial contributions could be sought towards off-site provision for fractional residual apportionments arising from the percentages applied to developments of 5+ dwellings. I generally agree with the re-wording of Paragraph 6.55 as proposed by FPC06.08, but in view of my recommendation not to use a threshold below 5 dwellings, the final sentence should be deleted.

6.14.16 Objectors in issue nine indicate that involvement of a Registered Social Landlord is not the only means of securing affordable housing, nor necessarily the best. I note the Circular refers to it as being an effective way of management and the Council admits other organisations may manage affordable housing and the Government's aim is to widen the pool of potential providers by including commercial developers, albeit that they will be required to meet similar criteria to RSLs. Therefore, I consider the second sentence in para 6.56 should be modified by replacing: *The best* with: *An effective*.

- 6.14.17 Further concerns about para 6.56 gives rise to issue ten, regarding the Council's indication that free serviced land will be expected to be provided together with a financial contribution. Although some development interests consider this to be too onerous and likely to inhibit housing development generally, the Council state that this is their current practice and that it was taken into consideration in the economic analysis undertaken by the Council's consultants. However, as the Council indicated that the details are negotiated by their Housing Department and some objectors highlighted alternative means of implementation, I consider it should be reworded to indicate it as one of the alternative approaches available.
- 6.14.18 Furthermore, whilst the final sentence of para 6.56 suitably refers to securing the occupancy of the housing through a Section 106 Agreement, there were concerns about the reference to retaining the affordable housing *in perpetuity* in the final clause of the policy. Despite the concern of some objectors regarding the potential loss of affordable housing, I consider that in view of the *Right to Buy*, it is inappropriate for the policy to use this terminology and I thus consider it should be deleted.
- 6.14.19 If any of the objections listed under this section appear not to have been specifically addressed, I have found they have been overtaken by alterations made to the Revised Deposit Plan, they are suitably covered elsewhere or relate to an inappropriate level of detail for the Local Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.14.20 That the Plan be modified by:

a) deleting: *developed in the settlements* in (i) of para 6.42 and rewording (ii) as follows: *(ii) by permitting small scale affordable housing schemes in sustainable locations outside defined settlement boundaries (rural exception sites)*

b) repositioning para 6.47 to follow after para 6.43.

c) inserting a new paragraph following b) as follows: The Council has had regard to the recommendation in the 2002 Housing Needs Study that they should seek up to 40% affordable housing provision on all suitable sites coming forward for planning permission during the Plan period. They have also taken account of the findings of the 2004 study on the deliverability and impact of the affordable housing proposals they were contemplating in the Draft Deposit Plan, in order to ensure there is no negative impact on housing site viability. In light of these it is therefore considered that there should be an increase in the provision of affordable housing from the 30% figure sought hitherto on some sites to an overall target provision of 35% of housing in the District as affordable housing. The proportions....(as FPC06.03).

d) deletion of the reference in paragraph 6.44 to the Council requiring 50% affordable housing and analysis of the viability of such level of provision and replacing it with a mention of the Council seeking to ensure the MDA fulfils the important role it has in this regard and to specify (notwithstanding the 50% Study finding) a provision of up to 40% of affordable housing in view of its desire not to inhibit viability and its early implementation whilst striving to create a sustainable community and a closer match with requirements in neighbouring Districts. In addition, I consider the paragraph wording could be improved by removing the duplicated mention of the MDA serving the housing needs of neighbouring local authorities and deletion of the final sentence.

e) deleting the text inserted in para 6.45 in the Revised Deposit stage (RDO06.15) and replacing it with: *The reserve MDA will be required to provide up to 40% of its housing as affordable dwellings in recognition of the considerable demand for such accommodation in the city and also to provide parity with the major greenfield urban extension site at West of Waterlooville MDA.*

f) repositioning any relevant wording in paras 6.51 – 6.54 to combine with this sequence of text, suitably reworded to deal comprehensively solely with the matter of the proportion that will be expected in various parts of the District together with the site size thresholds and omitting unnecessary extraneous details and repetition.

g) replacing Proposal H.5 with new Policy H.5 setting out the following proportions and thresholds to be applied for the provision of affordable housing: 40% requirement in the MDAs and for sites of 15 dwellings+ in the built-up area of Winchester, 35% requirement in Local Reserve sites, beyond which a District-wide proportion of 30% affordable housing on developments of 15 or more dwellings (sites of 0.5ha+) in larger settlements and on sites of 5 or more dwellings elsewhere will be applied. In addition, the cross reference to other Plan policies in the first clause and reference to *in perpetuity* in the final clause should be omitted.

h) rewording para 6.55 in accordance with FPC06.08 but omitting the final sentence.

j) replacing: *The best* with: *An effective* in the second sentence in para 6.56.

k) rewording the penultimate sentence in para 6.56 to indicate that the provision of free serviced land is one of the means employed to secure implementation of affordable housing.

6.15. Housing for Local Needs in Rural Areas (paragraphs 6.57 - 6.62, Proposal H.6)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.57	1160/4	C. M and I. J Hunnius
6.57	220/14	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.57	1148/2	Incare Solutions Ltd
6.58	220/15	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
6.59	1160/5	C. M and I. J Hunnius
6.59	1148/5	Incare Solutions Ltd
6.60	220/16	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
H.6	503/3	Linden Homes Developments
H.6	503/10	Linden Homes Developments
H.6	530/2	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
H.6	530/8	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
H.6	1117/1	Philip. A Turner
H.6	315/7	Simon Milbourne
H.6	2334/2	Mr & Mrs R Hilary

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0620	475/6	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
RD0620	2299/2	Graham Moyse
RD0620	138/15	John Hayter
RD0620	503/2	Linden Homes Developments
RD0620	2300/2	Persimmon Homes
RD0620	530/2	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
RD0620	328/1	Twyford Parish Council
RD0622	386/15	Bewley Homes
RD0622	374/16	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0622	2312/22	Kingfisher Housing Association
RD0622	2291/17	Sharon Brentnall

ISSUES

1. Is the policy sufficiently clear? (1148/2, 1148/5, 1160/4, 503/3, 503/10, 530/2, 530/8)
2. Should exception schemes be permitted for settlements over 3000 population and in settlements other than those defined in Proposals H.2 and H.3? (503/3, 503/10, 530/2, 530/8, 475/6REVDEP, 503/2REVDEP, 530/2REVDEP, 2299/2REVDEP, 2300/2REVDEP, 138/15REVDEP)
3. Whether the definition of “local” needs for exception schemes is appropriate? (220/15, 1117/1, 328/1REVDEP, 475/1REVDEP)
4. Whether the definition of small-scale is appropriate and clear? (220/16, 475/6REVDEP, 503/2REVDEP, 530/2REVDEP, 2299/2REVDEP, 2300/2REVDEP, 374/16REVDEP, 386/15REVDEP, 2312/22REVDEP)
5. Should exception schemes be permitted in Local Gaps or AONB? (315/7, 2334/2)
6. Should free land be made available for exception schemes? (220/14)
7. Should schemes be managed by registered social landlords? (1160/5)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.15.1 In the first issue, some objectors questioned whether it was clear where land would be released for housing for local needs in rural areas while others considered it would be more appropriate to allocate sites for affordable housing. However, the intention of the policy is to provide for rural exceptions sites as a small but important source of affordable housing to augment that to be provided as part of development proposals within settlements or specific allocations such as MDAs, in compliance with advice in PPG3 and Circular 6/98. Whilst it would provide greater certainty if such sites were to be allocated, that would conflict with the current advice in PPG3 and although the Council indicated that they would welcome such a change, in line with the Government's consultation paper in this regard, I agree with the Council that it is too late to incorporate such additions at this stage of the Plan process. Although some objectors considered there to be an over-reliance on exception sites, the Council indicated that they have allowed for just 200 dwellings from this source over the remainder of the Plan period.
- 6.15.2 In response to an objection in issue two that exception schemes were being related to H2 and H3 settlements in the First Deposit, the Council deleted that mention from the first clause of the policy in the Revised Deposit and inserted: *defined and other* to signify the policy is not restricted to relate solely to defined settlements. Whilst others questioned whether exception schemes should be permitted for settlements over 3000 population, the Council indicated there was no upper or lower size limit and they could envisage circumstances where even sites at Winchester might arise. To this end they advanced PIC06.13 to add a further paragraph highlighting that its applicability relates to sites adjoining small and large settlements and explains the procedure that would need to be followed in the case of Winchester. Although I am dubious that any proposal at Winchester would be capable of meeting policy criterion (i), I trust to the Council's judgement and accept the Change subject to deletion of reference to Proposal H3.
- 6.15.3 In the third issue, an objector questioned whether it is appropriate to define “local” needs for exception schemes in relation to a particular settlement or Parish, or whether the needs of the District should be considered. However, I agree with the Council that the precise purpose of this exceptions policy is to address the small scale local needs that are not capable of being addressed by Policy H5. Indeed, the policy complies with PPG3 advice that rural exception schemes should relate to a group of settlements or a parish. Whilst other objectors considered the policy should be amended to allow for the provision of housing for key workers, people with special needs or the elderly, the Council indicated that any of these categories could be the subject of an application for a rural exceptions scheme and the main consideration will be whether there is a locally generated need that cannot be catered for within existing settlements. In the circumstances, I do not consider it necessary to list every conceivable housing need that could qualify.

- 6.15.4 In response to criticism of the definition of *small-scale* in para 6.60, the Council deleted it from the Revised Deposit. They respond to objectors who argue that rural exception schemes should be related to the size of the settlement, that the revised wording incorporated in the text and policy criterion (iv) already provide for the development to be well related to the scale and character of the adjacent settlement. The Council regard the deletion of any mention of maximum size for such schemes as providing the increased flexibility that some objectors sought. Nevertheless, the wording still states: *the scheme should be small scale in relation to the size....*, which I consider to be unclear and could be beneficially altered to: *the scheme should be sympathetic to the size....* to overcome the objections.
- 6.15.5 In the fifth issue, objectors questioned whether rural exception schemes should be permitted in Local Gaps or the AONB. Whilst there is a specific final clause in the policy precluding the former, criterion (v) does not prevent such development in the AONB. PPG3 indicates that land within AONBs can be considered for affordable housing if the location is more sustainable than alternatives. Furthermore, the Council indicated that a number of rural exception schemes have already been successfully developed within the AONB. Although an objector considers schemes should be permitted in Local Gaps, the Council are adamant that they will resist such development wherever possible to retain their open function. However, as with all policies I have encountered which contain cross-references to other policies, I consider this is unnecessary repetition and should be deleted, as all proposals fall to be judged against all relevant Plan policies. I regard the addition made to criterion (iv) in the same light.
- 6.15.6 Whilst the objector in issue six considers the potential for exception schemes is limited if free land is to be made available, the Council indicate that this is not a requirement, but the land must necessarily be modestly priced if the scheme is to be viable. Indeed, in my experience, such schemes arise through the generosity of a benefactor or by land purchase at agricultural value.
- 6.15.7 Finally, on the matter of whether such schemes should be managed by registered social landlords, the Council accepts that this is not obligatory, providing there are satisfactory safeguards. I consider that instead of stating: *The best way of securing this..* in para 6.59 would be to state: *An effective way of securing this...*

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.15.8 That the Plan be modified:
- a) in accordance with PIC06.13 (omitting the reference to H3).
 - b) by rewording: *the scheme should be small scale in relation to the size....* in RD06.22 as: *the scheme should be sympathetic to the size...*
 - c) by deleting the clause added to policy criterion (iv) at Revised deposit stage and the final sentence referring to Strategic and Local Gaps.
 - d) replacing *The best way of securing this..* in para 6.59 with *An effective way of securing this...*

6.16. Influencing Dwelling Sizes and Types (paragraphs 6.67 - 6.71)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.69	468/39	Cala Homes (South) Ltd

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0623	386/16	Bewley Homes
RD0623	213/4	Bovis Homes Ltd
RD0623	373/10	Bryan Jezeph Consultancy
RD0623	468/9	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0623	220/4	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0623	475/8	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
RD0623	475/7	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
RD0623	205/1	G Humphrey
RD0623	236/1	George Wimpey Strategic Land
RD0623	2299/3	Graham Moyse
RD0623	374/17	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd
RD0623	138/13	John Hayter
RD0623	204/1	K Larkin
RD0623	2312/23	Kingfisher Housing Association
RD0623	505/2	Mapledean Developments Ltd
RD0623	2095/2	NHS Estates South East
RD0623	2088/1	Paul Butler
RD0623	2300/3	Persimmon Homes
RD0623	530/3	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
RD0623	2291/18	Sharon Brentnall
RD0623	397/12	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

OBJECTIONS TO PRE INQUIRY CHANGES

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
PIC0614	475/6	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
PIC0614	205/9	G Humphrey
PIC0614	204/9	K Larkin

ISSUES

1. Will the Proposal address the need for small dwellings of different types? (266/5, 138/3, 211/6, 236/3)
2. Is it appropriate for the Proposal to be based on the conclusions of the Housing Needs Survey or supplementary Housing Stock Analyses? (468/39, 468/40, 469/6)
3. Will the number of dwellings identified within the Urban Capacity Study come forward during the Plan period? (530/3).
4. Should there be no loss of small dwellings when sites are redeveloped? (138/3) (211/6).
5. Should a 50% proportion of small dwellings be sought on sites of 2 or more dwellings? (236/3, 266/5, 285/1, 305/5, 354/4, 469/6, 485/1, 505/1, 506/1, 534/2, 858/6, 877/10, 1249/19, 1360/3)
6. Is it appropriate to define small dwellings by applying a size limit, and how should it be defined? (138/3, 211/6, 204/1REVDEP, 205/1REVDEP, 213/4REVDEP, 220/4REVDEP, 236/1REVDEP, 374/17REVDEP, 386/16REVDEP, 397/12REVDEP, 468/9REVDEP, 475/7REVDEP, 475/8REVDEP, 505/2REVDEP, 2088/1REVDEP, 2291/18REVDEP, 2299/3REVDEP, 2300/3REVDEP, 2312/23REVDEP, 204/9PIC, 205/9PIC, 475/6PIC)
7. Is it clear whether the size limit would be applied to both one and two bed units? (475/7REVDEP, 475/8REVDEP, 505/2REVDEP, 2300/3REVDEP)
8. Should increases in the size of small dwellings be restricted, or should their enlargement be resisted altogether? (138/3, 211/6, 138/13REVDEP)
9. Should there be flexibility to extend small dwellings, to adapt to changing lifestyles? (204/1REVDEP, 205/1REVDEP, 213/4REVDEP, 220/4REVDEP, 236/1REVDEP, 373/10REVDEP, 374/17REVDEP, 386/16REVDEP, 397/12REVDEP, 468/9REVDEP, 2095/2 REVDEP, 2291/18REVDEP, 2312/23REVDEP)

10. Do the requirements of Proposal H.5 provide for sufficient variety and choice of housing, as advocated by PPG 3? (213/9, 236/3, 302/6, 373/10REVDEP)
11. Are the requirements of Proposal H.5 appropriate within an MDA? (468/39, 322/5, 468/40).
12. Should the size limit requirements of Proposal H.7 apply in the MDA(s)? (236/1REVDEP)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.16.1. In the first and second issues the objectors essentially query whether the Council's information from its Housing Needs Survey and supplementary stock analyses comprise on adequate basis for Proposal H.7 successfully seeking to influence the size and type of dwellings. However I am satisfied that it is, and note that the 2002 Supplementary Planning Guidance: 'Achieving a Better Housing Mix in New Housing Development', together with a further update of the Housing Stock Analysis in 2003, has provided a mechanism for ensuring that the evolving policy is appropriately addressing the housing needs of the District.
- 6.16.2. In the third issue I have dealt extensively with the supply of dwellings from the Urban Capacity Study earlier on my report on the objections to Chapter 6.
- 6.16.3. In the fourth issue, the objectors consider that there should be no loss of small dwellings when sites are redeveloped to avoid depletion of the existing stock. However the amendment of criterion (i) of Proposal H7 in the manner suggested could restrict the redevelopment of a site where, despite the loss of one or more small dwellings, the net increase in their provision would nonetheless be substantial.
- 6.16.4. In Issue 5 the requirement of Proposal H.7 for residential development of two or more dwellings to provide at least 50% of its accommodation in the form of small one or two bedroomed units was discussed at the Affordable Housing Round Table and is the subject of a number of written objections. The Council has pointed out that the Proposal has been operating effectively since 2000 through adopted SPG and I agree that if the established need in the District for smaller dwellings is to be significantly addressed then the policy is necessary to correct the long established bias towards larger dwellings. The threshold at which the policy applies was also the subject of objections, but whilst development of two or more dwellings is certainly low, it is clear that if higher thresholds were to be used the policy would be less effective in redressing the current imbalance. Making effective use of housing land is not just a question of numbers; it is also about ensuring that spare capacity is not wasted.
- 6.16.5. The objectors in the sixth issue are concerned that a size limit of 70sq m. for small units has been specified in the new paragraph introduced by RD 06.23. PIC 06.14 proposes to increase this to 75sq.m. If the policy is to be workable I agree with the Council that a size limit for small dwellings is preferable to a definition one or two bedrooms as clearly the effectiveness of the latter could be diminished by subsequent subdivision. The 75sq.m. limit is the figure used by Housing Associations and is adequate both for social and open market housing. Although I agree with objectors that this may be unduly restrictive in some instances, paragraph RD06.23 also has some flexibility in its use of the word 'normally' and the possible exemption for conversion schemes, whereby it would be open to developers to advance a case for departing from this limit.
- 6.16.6. In the seventh issue I am satisfied that when paragraph 6.69 and new paragraph RD06.23 are read together it is clear that the size limit applies to both one bed and two bed units.
- 6.16.7. In Issues 8 and 9, the Council's intention in RD 06.23 to bring the enlargement of small dwellings within planning control is criticised by a number of objectors, although others take the opposite view and consider that an additional criterion should be added to Proposal H.7 to reinforce the objective of controlling or preventing the enlargement of small dwellings. I accept that Proposal H.7's objective of increasing

the number of small dwellings to meet the housing needs of the District is important and equally that this element of the stock should be maintained. That said, I consider the imposition of planning conditions to control proposals for extensions and the conversion of the roof space to provide additional living space to be an unreasonable restraint on the aspirations of the occupiers whose circumstances may change such that they need more space. On the other hand, I can see no reason for not controlling the conversion of two small dwellings into one, as this would not normally be an aspiration of an occupier. It seems to me that the supply of small dwellings is more effectively controlled at the design and layout stage where the restraint on size increase is inbuilt, either because the dwellings are flats or because they are houses where extensions could justifiably be rejected because of the consequences in terms of the appearance of the area or the effect on the living conditions of adjoining occupiers. I shall therefore recommend an amendment to RD06.23 to reflect this conclusion and although contrary to the views of one objector, I see no need for any part of the paragraph to be imported into Proposal H.7.

6.16.8. As issues 10 and 11 concern the mention of Proposal H5 in connection with the Proposal H7, I deal with them in the next section (6.17)

6.16.9. In respect of Issue 12, I see no reason to treat the MDAs differently in respect of the size limits. Indeed with the large scale of development envisaged in these locations there is the opportunity for the policy to make a real difference to the profile of the District's housing stock and ensure that it more closely matches the identified needs.

RECOMMENDATION

6.16.10 That the Plan be modified:

- a) in accordance with PIC06.14
- b) by the amendment of new paragraph RD06.23 to delete the final two sentences and their replacement by 'The Local Authority may also impose conditions to prevent the conversion of two small dwellings into one'.

6.17. Achieving Higher Densities (paragraphs 6.72 - 6.74; Proposal H.7)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.7	1371/2	A Ames
H.7	227/10	Bewley HomesPlc and R C H Morgan-Giles
H.7	211/6	Bishops Waltham Parish Council
H.7	213/9	Bovis Homes LTD
H.7	858/6	Braemore Investments Ltd
H.7	305/5	BT Plc
H.7	468/40	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
H.7	485/1	Clarendon House Investments
H.7	1147/1	Colpoys Johnson
H.7	236/3	George Wimpey Strategic Land
H.7	354/4	Hallam Land Management
H.7	346/5	Iain Fleming
H.7	1131/1	J. V Martin
H.7	138/3	John Hayter
H.7	877/10	Kier Land
H.7	534/2	M, S, D, J Robbie
H.7	505/1	Mapledean Developments Ltd
H.7	506/1	Mitchell Properties
H.7	322/5	North Whiteley Consortium

H.7	97/3	P. B. Sparke
H.7	97/2	P. B. Sparke
H.7	1249/19	P.A Warner
H.7	302/6	R. L. Stubbs and Clients
H.7	302/4	R. L. Stubbs and Clients
H.7	1379/3	Richard Bayley
H.7	1360/3	Robert Tutton
H.7	1118/1	Rolf Stahel
H.7	397/17	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
H.7	285/1	The Classic Home Company
H.7	266/5	House Builders Federation (Southern Region)
H.7	469/6	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0624	138/11	John Hayter
RD0624	2312/24	Kingfisher Housing Association

ISSUES

1. Should sites in other uses be considered for housing? (346/5)
2. Do paragraphs 6.72 to 6.74 and Proposal H.7 introduce an inappropriately high density development that would threaten the character of the established residential areas of the District? (138/3, 241/6, 302/4, 236/3, 97/2, 97/3, 1118/1, 1131/1, 1147/1, 1188/2, 1371/2, 1149/1, 1149/1, 1371/2, 1379/3)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.17.1 In the first issue, although the objector suggests that other land uses should be considered for housing, the Plan already permits this unless there are good reasons why the existing uses (for example, employment) should be retained.
- 6.17.2 However the thrust of objections to paragraphs 6.72 to 6.74 and the third criterion of Proposal H.7 is the effect of higher densities and the proportion of small dwellings on established residential areas of Winchester such as Sleepers Hill, as well as other settlements in the District (for example, South Wonston). However these issues are bound up with consideration of the objections to Proposal DP.3 and indeed RD 06.24 has introduced a reference to that policy in criterion (iii) of Proposal H.7. Elsewhere in my report on the objections to Chapter 6 I have expressed some concern as to the effect of higher densities on the more spacious and well treed parts of the District's residential areas, particularly in the City of Winchester itself. Despite this, I consider that the Council's policies are correct provided that they are applied in a way that pays due regard to conserving the character and appearance of the areas concerned.
- 6.17.3 With regard to issues about linking the requirements of Proposal H.5 with Proposal H.7, I share objectors concerns that it introduces an unwarranted and unnecessary cross-reference in the policy as with criterion (iii) that was added at Revised Deposit stage. The main thrust of the policy is to ensure that half of all new housing should be provided as 1 and 2 bedroom units, to reflect the general decrease in household size and to address the present imbalance in the housing stock that has arisen from the preponderance of 3 and 4 bed houses. Indeed, it is precisely to ensure there is sufficient variety and choice of housing, as advocated by PPG 3. Hence, I propose deletion of the two cross-references.
- 6.17.4 Although some objectors questioned the applicability of the policy to the MDAs, I can see no good reason why it should not and I neither read nor heard any convincing argument to suggest otherwise.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.17.5 That the Plan be modified by the deletion from Proposal H.7 of:

- a) the words: *including any small properties provided as subsidised affordable housing in accordance with Proposal H.5* in criterion (i)
- b) criterion (iii).

6.18. Accommodation for the Elderly (paragraphs 6.77 - 6.81; Proposal H.8)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.80	1160/6	C. M and I. J Hunnius
6.80	1148/6	Incare Solutions Ltd
H.8	249/2	Emlor Homes
H.8	351/2	John Beveridge
H.8	138/4	John Hayter
H.8	296/2	McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd
H.8	397/18	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

ISSUES

1. Should the wording of Proposal H.8 be amended to relate to dwellings suitable for the elderly, rather than specifically intended for the elderly? (138/4)
2. Is criterion (i) clear in terms of access to facilities? (138/4)
3. Does criterion (ii) of the part of the Proposal dealing with residential care homes conflict with Proposal T.4? (138/4)
4. Are the Proposal's requirements for affordable housing and housing mix appropriate? (138/4) (249/2) (296/2)
5. Is paragraph 6.80 too restrictive, as residential care homes have to meet Department of Health requirements? (1148/6) (1160/6)
6. Should the Proposal allow accommodation for the elderly to extend in urban areas and in the countryside? (397/18)
7. Should the Proposal be amended to prevent the loss of sheltered and nursing accommodation? (138/4) or should it be the subject of a new Proposal? (351/2)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.18.1. In the first issue the objector seeks amendment to the wording of proposal H.8 to refer to accommodation 'intended for' rather than 'specifically designed for' the elderly. However although the amended wording is wider in its scope I consider it too imprecise for the Proposal to be meaningful. And bearing in mind that Proposal DP.4 requires all development to be accessible to all members of the community, I see no need for the suggested amendment.
- 6.18.2. In the second and third issues, the objector seeks the amendment of general criterion (i) and deletion of criterion (ii) respectively. However in (i), the addition of the phrase 'where the settlement has these facilities' would in my view unacceptably weaken the policy. As regards criterion (ii), adequate parking is essential for such a specialist use and I see no reason why this cannot be applied within the general provisions of Proposal T.4.
- 6.18.3. In the fourth issue, several objectors either query the link between Proposal H.8 and the provision of affordable housing in Proposals H.5 and H.7 or seek to introduce amendments or variations thereto in order to recognise the specific circumstances of housing for the elderly. However I am satisfied that the application of Proposal H.8 in tandem with Proposals H.5 and H.7 provides an appropriate framework for the consideration of individual proposals that may come forward. In principle there is no reason why housing for the elderly should not include an affordable element in line with the remainder of housing provision, and the dilution of this link or any element

within it would undermine the plan's underlying objective of meeting the housing needs of the District. Conversely the requirement of one objector for special needs housing to be built into Proposal H.5 would in my view introduce an unnecessary and unreasonable inflexibility in the policy and I am satisfied that this issue is already adequately addressed in paragraphs 6.75 and 6.76 of the Plan.

- 6.18.4. In the fifth issue, two objectors consider paragraph 6.80 too restrictive as residential care homes have to meet statutory requirements. However I consider that the paragraph does illustrate the necessary balance with environmental considerations and that the text is sufficiently positive and flexible.
- 6.18.5. The objector in Issue 6 considers Proposal H.8 to be too onerous and that normal development control criteria should apply. However in its Response Note the Council has explained that neither the text nor the policy is intended to preclude reasonable extensions to accommodation for the elderly and I do not consider that they would be perceived as so doing.
- 6.18.6. In the final issue, two objectors respectively consider that Proposal H.8 should be amended to prevent the loss of sheltered and nursing accommodation and that there should be a new Proposal. However I am satisfied that adequate protection exists in the form of paragraph 8.36 and Proposal SF.6 of the Plan which seeks the retention of facilities considered important to local communities.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.18.7. That no modifications be made to the Plan.

6.19. Development of Permanent Mobile Homes/Residential Caravans Sites (paragraphs 6.82 – 6.85, Proposals H.9 & H.10)

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.9	138/5	John Hayter
H.10	138/6	John Hayter
H.10	397/21	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)

ISSUES

1. Should the location of mobile homes in Proposal H.9 be restricted to H.2 settlements and should the Proposal include two new criteria, requiring 35% affordable homes, and accordance with Proposal DP.3 and other Proposals except for H.5? In addition, should additional text be added to explain how the affordable element would be assessed for a mobile home development? (138/5)
2. Should "or redevelopment", in the first paragraph of Proposal H.10, be deleted, as it may be desirable to allow redevelopment without change of use? Should criterion (ii) be deleted? (138/6)
3. Is Proposal H.10 necessary? Does it infer that, where transient/holiday uses exist, the land could be redeveloped? Does it allow for sites in low occupancy, neglected sites or sites with planning problems to be redeveloped? (397/21)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.19.1. In the first issue, the objector seeks to permit mobile homes on development frontages subject to Proposal H.3 and to make them subject to affordable housing

provision under Proposal H.5 and to design control through Proposal DP.3. However, as to the first point, I have recommended the deletion of Proposal H.3, whilst because of their relatively low cost compared to conventional housing the application of proposal H.5 would in my view be wholly inappropriate. The application of proposal DP.3 with its criteria would be unwieldy and indeed unnecessary as Proposal H.9. provides an adequate framework for the development control process to consider individual applications.

- 6.19.2. In the second issue it is considered that the term 'redevelopment' in Proposal H.10 would preclude the upgrade of mobile home sites. However I am satisfied that when read in conjunction with paragraph 6.85, the meaning of Proposal H.10 is clear. The deletion of criterion (ii) is also sought but in my opinion its exclusion would unnecessarily weaken a useful policy which rightly seeks to establish a general presumption against the loss of sites but establishes that this should not preclude the change of use or redevelopment of others that cause a problem.
- 6.19.3. In the third issue, the objector requests the deletion of Proposal H.10 which is considered to be unclear, inflexible and an obstacle to a potential source of urban capacity. I reject these arguments as in my view when read in conjunction with paragraph 6.85, the purpose of Proposal H.10 is clear and in my view necessary to prevent the loss of a valuable source of low cost housing.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.19.4. That no modifications be made to the Plan.

6.20. Omission Site - Abbots Worthy

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.3	289/11	Kris Mitra Associates Ltd

ISSUE

Whether the Proposal H.3 development frontage of Abbots Worthy should be extended to include the walled kitchen garden at Abbots Worthy House (289/11).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.20.1 Because of its proximity to facilities and services in Kings Worthy, the village of Abbots Worthy meets the criteria for inclusion within Proposal H.3 of the Plan and accordingly a number of development frontages have been identified on the Proposal Map, within which the principle of infill frontage development is acceptable. However these exclude land on the corner of Mill Lane and Alresford Road which is defined by a listed wall that forms the 'outside' boundaries to the former kitchen garden of Abbots Worthy House. The objector seeks the extension of the H.3 frontage notation to enable the development of the land within the grounds of the House. Earlier in this report I recommend the deletion of the current Proposal H.3 and its replacement with a criteria based policy which would be used to assess proposals for residential development in those parts of the District lying outside the boundaries of the Proposal H.2 settlements. I am therefore unable to assess the objection on the basis on which it was made.
- 6.20.2 That said, it is clear that a number of factors will come into play in assessing any potential for development against the criteria of the new policy. On the one hand I accept the objector's view that the proximity of the kitchen garden to the main building and its previous functional relationship to it are such that this part of the site can reasonably be defined as 'previously developed land' within the definition set out in Annex C to PPG3. On the other hand I am equally clear that the conservation area

and in particular the listed wall (both in relation to any effect on its setting and the requirements for improved vehicular access) impose substantial constraints on any development proposal. However to make any further comment would effectively prejudice the Council's consideration of any proposal under the criteria of the replacement policy.

RECOMMENDATION

6.20.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.21. Omission Sites - Bishops Waltham

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
CH04OM	473/1	George Wimpey UK Ltd
C.1	473/2	George Wimpey
C.6	473/3	George Wimpey
APP2	473/4	George Wimpey
H.1	866/1	James Duke and Sons (Holdings) Limited
H.1	11/1	Mrs Hare
H.2	866/2	James Duke and Sons (Holdings) Limited
H.2	473/12	George Wimpey UK Ltd
H.2	11/2	Mrs Hare
RT.4	11/3	Mrs Hare

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD04.02	2297/1	George Wimpey
RD04.03	2297/2	George Wimpey
RD06.10	2297/9	George Wimpey
RDA2	2297/12	George Wimpey
RDA227	2297/13	George Wimpey

ISSUES

- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Bishops Waltham should be extended to include land at Albany Farm for residential development (473/1- 4, 473/12, 2297/1 & 2/REVDEP, 2297/9/REVDEP, 297/12/REVDEP, 2297/13/REVDEP).
- Whether the housing strategy is over-reliant on sites identified within the Urban Capacity Study and whether there will be a shortfall in supply (866/1).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Bishops Waltham should be extended to include land to the west of Pondside Lane and whether the land should be allocated for either housing or a mix of housing and public open space (11/1 - 11/3).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.21.1 Bishops Waltham is a Category A settlement with a good range of facilities and is identified as one of the seven most sustainable settlements in the District. With regard to the first issue, Albany Farm lies within the countryside to the west of the settlement and the omission site comprises 4.5ha of a 9ha land holding that Wimpey have. They envisage it as being capable of accommodating about 100 dwellings on approximately 3ha, with open space and structural landscaping occupying the residual area. It was also accepted that their proposal to extend the settlement boundary would encompass the additional 0.4ha curtilage of Albany Farmhouse. The land lies south of Winchester Road from which it is screened by a mature hedgerow and an avenue of trees.

- 6.21.2 The site is within the Durley Claylands Landscape Character Area which is typified by the patchwork of small intimate fields defined by hedges, winding lanes and scattered farmsteads. The landscape strategies for this area in the published Assessment are to protect and conserve the hedgerows through appropriate management and to conserve the varied open and closed views throughout the area. The objector's proposals would involve a change in the character of the site itself and more importantly a considerable loss of the mature hedgerow and at least six of the mature oak trees along the road frontage. This would arise from the formation of a site access and off-set roundabout junction, which would also open up the site to view. Thus, despite a proposal for an extensive landscape buffer some 50m-60m wide to the southern and western boundaries, the proposal would still be in direct conflict with the landscape strategy for the locality. Although suggestions were advanced to mitigate the tree and hedgerow loss along Winchester Road by planting new oaks, retaining one tree within the proposed roundabout for a short term, replanting the hedge along a new alignment and using "no-dig" construction for footpaths, I consider the objector's proposals would result in an unacceptably damaging impact on this extremely attractive western approach to Bishops Waltham. Moreover, it would take in the region of 60 years for new oak trees to re-establish whereby the breach that would be created in the avenue would be filled.
- 6.21.3 In the second issue I have dealt with the general points relating to the Urban Capacity Study and the housing land supply earlier in this chapter. Nevertheless, with my recommendation to modify Proposal S.4 concerning Abbey Mill from an employment allocation to a mixed residential and employment allocation, I am satisfied that there is sufficient additional housing potential to cater for the housing needs of Bishops Waltham during the Plan period.
- 6.21.4 In issue three, the land west of Pondside is a triangular shaped parcel measuring about 2.07ha and abuts development on two sides and open countryside on the third. The entire parcel is allocated in the Plan for recreation use under Policy RT4 to address identified shortfalls of children's play and sports facilities in the area. It was the subject of discussions between the owner and the Council with a view to acquire and provide such facilities thereon, but acceptable terms could not be agreed and a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) was served in March 2002. Following a subsequent Inquiry, the CPO was confirmed by the Secretary of State in September 2004, for the purpose of providing recreational facilities, comprising public open space, children's play area and informal games, but only in respect of the southern part of the site measuring 0.58ha.
- 6.21.5 The site gradually rises from south to north and progressively provides a transition between the built-up area and the open countryside. There is no physical feature on the ground that denotes the northern limit of the omission site, but it coincides with the revised boundary for the Proposed South Downs National Park. The boundary is formed by connecting the extremities of residential curtilages to the east and west and to my mind it is an entirely artificial line, which pays no heed to the topography. In fact, a spur of higher land projects into the site from the open countryside and in my opinion the northern part of the site has more affinity with the open countryside and proposed National Park than to the built-up area of Bishops Waltham. Indeed, there was no dispute between the Council and the objector that if some residential development were deemed acceptable in this location, it would be better located on the lower land to the south rather than on the higher northern part. However, in view of the confirmed CPO, that option is not available and whilst the Inspector and Secretary of State found no compelling case for confirming the Order in respect of the northern portion of the objection site, the Inspector clearly accepted the desirability in land use terms of also using that for public open space. The Council remain optimistic about acquiring that additional area by negotiation and remain of the view that this land is better located to address the identified deficiency in Bishops Waltham than alternatives that have been advanced by the objector.

- 6.21.6 In light of these circumstances, I consider the site should not be designated for residential use and I am content that the RT4 designation should remain whereby recreational use may be implemented on part or all of the land. It is therefore also unnecessary to alter the settlement boundary.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.21.7 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.22. Omission Sites - Colden Common

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
C.17	956/1	Derek Veneuam
H.2	1006/1	M Farthing
H.2	1135/1	G Maggs
H.2	503/13	Linden Homes Developments

ISSUES

1. Whether land at Wardle Road, Highbridge should be excluded from the area subject to countryside policies, especially C.17 (956/1)
2. Whether land to the east of Main Road of Colden Common be should included within the Proposal H.2 policy boundary (1006/1, 1135/1).
3. Whether the settlement boundary of Colden Common should be extended to incorporate land at Dunford's Yard (503/13).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.22.1 The objector in the first issue is seeking the exclusion of a rectangular area of land off Wardle Road, Highbridge from the area subject to countryside policies in order to facilitate the building of a dwelling for members of his family. I acknowledge that there is already a terrace of houses to the north west on the same side of the road and dwellings on the opposite side of the road and that the land referred to is of only a limited extent. However Highbridge is a sporadic area of development with no facilities and services and separated from Colden Common and other settlements by open countryside. As the strategy of the Plan is to avoid unsustainable development I take the view that the further consolidation of Highbridge by additional dwellings would inappropriately increase reliance on the private car for journeys and erode the countryside in an area where, because of the existing development, it is all the more vulnerable. I cannot therefore agree with the objector's suggestion that the land should effectively be excluded from the Plan's countryside designation.
- 6.22.2 The second issue concerns two separate sites lying to the east of Main Road within the area extending southwards from Dunfords Yard to the B2177 roundabout, which the objectors seek to include within the settlement boundary. The Council indicates that this 0.7km stretch currently contains a few scattered houses, a couple of caravan sites and a nursery, which the Council regards as being typical of the forms of sporadic development that can frequently be found in the countryside.
- 6.22.3 The smaller first site comprises the curtilage of the dwelling known as The Gorse, which lies to the north of the Glen Caravan site and south of Sandy Fields Nursery and garden centre, with an area of caravan storage to its east. Having regard to the fact that the settlement boundary follows the western side of Main Road with the exception of the small enclave extending northwards from Dunford's Yard, its extension eastwards to encompass only this plot to provide just two dwellings would appear as an isolated and incongruous small pocket of permanent dwellings. Thus, from a purely practical and urban form point of view I consider it would not create either a more defensible or logical boundary. Furthermore, although the objector did

not consider it would lead to further inroads of development east of Main Road, I disagree and consider its lack of rationality and the presence of other sporadic buildings hereabouts would be seen as a precedent for others to follow. In addition, there are sufficient sites within the defined boundary to accommodate further general purpose housing in the locality.

- 6.22.4 The Council indicates that the adjacent nursery is an appropriate countryside use, as is caravan storage, while the long established static caravan site is one of three at Colden Common. The Council is seeking to retain these by Proposal H10, rather than encourage their redevelopment with permanent general housing, as they represent a significant element of low cost residential accommodation. The character and appearance of the area in the immediate vicinity of the objection site is therefore unlikely to change radically during the Plan period. I therefore conclude there is no justification for extending the settlement boundary in the illogical manner advanced by the objector.
- 6.22.5 As regards the second site, land south of The Glen Caravan Park, I consider that although put forward for a mixed housing scheme to sustain existing community facilities in the village, development would represent a substantial and harmful departure from its existing loose-knit and semi-rural character. I note that an objection relating to the land was considered at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan and that the Inspector concluded that the important relationship was to the countryside to the east rather than the existing settlement predominantly on the western side of Main Road. The Inspector stated 'the whole site is rightly and properly shown as part of the countryside and should remain so' and additionally expressed his concern as to the visually harmful 'opening up' effect of any new access. From my inspection of the site and its surroundings I see no reason to dissent from the previous Inspector's views and additionally share the Council's reservations in respect of a lack of any safeguard for the 0.93ha southern part of the site that forms a SINC.
- 6.22.6 Overall I can see little merit in amending the proposed settlement boundary for Colden Common to include these two areas of land to the east of Main Road as they would represent a harmful intrusion into the countryside. I shall recommend accordingly.
- 6.22.7 Finally, issue three concerns land at Dunford's Yard. The objector considers it is illogical for only part of the scrap yard to have been included within the defined settlement limit. It has been deemed appropriate for the settlement boundary to cross Main Road at this point to include the concentrated strip of built development comprising frontage housing, hall, disused builders yard and Dunfords Scrap Yard. Thus, I agree with the objector that there is no logic in excluding the rear part of the scrap yard, particularly as it contains structures and is an integral part of the business unit. Moreover, it is apparent that the Council is prepared to consider development in depth here rather than merely frontage development as with the ribbon of houses to the north. I therefore conclude that it should be within the settlement boundary.
- 6.22.8 In addition, the objector considers the boundary could be extended further to the east of the disused builders yard and north of the scrap yard to encompass about 0.7ha of land known as Dunfords Yard Meadow. It is apparent that an application for the demolition of the builders yard, village hall and The Copse for the erection of 26 dwellings was refused for reasons including unsatisfactory access and failure to take account of the adjoining land (ie Dunford's Yard) to provide the opportunity for a comprehensive scheme for redevelopment of the scrap yard, former parish hall and the disused builder yard. The objector suggests that by combining the sites to provide a comprehensive redevelopment of the whole, a new single junction to Main Road could be formed by diverting Boyes Lane through the site to enable the existing poor junction to be replaced. It is argued that additional land needs to be included within the settlement boundary to compensate for the area that would be lost due to the proposed new junction and road diversion.

6.22.9 I consider the comprehensive approach would clearly accord with what the Council are seeking. Also, Boyes Lane itself is narrow and lacking footways and its junction with Main Road is acknowledged to be substandard and the danger it presents has been aggravated by the Council's approval of a major sports facility served by it, despite an objection from the Highway Authority. There are no funds available from the Highway Authority to provide improvements to Boyes Lane or its junction. Moreover, land required to carry out necessary improvements to the Lane between Dunford's yard and the sports ground is outside the objector's control. Thus, whilst the objector's proposal would secure some planning gain, it would not fully address all the problems and I consider the extent of any enabling development also needs to have regard to the fact that the main body of the settlement lies west of Main Road.

6.22.10 The land that comprises Dunford's Yard Meadow forms an important buffer for Taylor's Copse, which is an area of ancient woodland to the east and designated SINC. It also provides a physical and visual open link between the woodland that lies to the rear of the housing on Main Road and Taylor's Copse and itself meets the criteria for designation as a SINC. Therefore, whilst I consider that the loss of a minor part of the meadow could be regarded as permissible under the Habitats Directive and PPG9 to secure community benefits, the loss of the entire 0.7ha area would be unacceptable. Various figures were advanced at the Inquiry to demonstrate that additional land would be needed to provide the financial viability for a comprehensive redevelopment to secure some planning gain. However, with the representations of just one of the landowning interests, I remain unconvinced as to precisely what could be achieved and the extent of the meadow that would need to be lost to attain it. In the absence of that certainty, I am unable to recommend the inclusion of any part of the 0.7ha site whereby I could have confidence that a satisfactory scheme would ensue. As I regard the only merit for considering inclusion any part of Dunford's Yard Meadow within the settlement is to secure a planning gain, I feel it could be pursued outside the purview of the Inquiry and dealt with as an exception to the Plan. In these circumstances, the only modification to the settlement boundary I recommend is the addition of the 0.18ha at the eastern end of the scrap yard.

RECOMMENDATION

6.22.11 That the Plan be modified by inclusion of the eastern end of Dunford's scrap yard within the settlement boundary.

6.23. Omission Sites - Compton Down

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	1434/47	Hampshire County Council
H.2	386/11	Bewley Homes
H.2	1053/1	Paul Murray
H.2	1435/1	Compton Down Society
H.2	515/1	Ms Onslow-Cole
H.2	482/1	Mr A Butler

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

RD0308	2278/1	Compton Down Society
RD0308	2298/1	T Long

ISSUES

1. Whether the Proposal H.2 policy boundary for Compton Down should be extended to include land to the north of Shepherds Lane and the same land allocated for 30 new dwellings (386/11).

2. Whether the Proposal H.2 policy boundary for Compton Down should be extended to include land at Southdown School (1434/47).
3. Whether the Review Plan's H.2 policy boundary for Compton Down should be extended to include land at Downside House and New Barn Farm (1053/1).
4. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Compton Down should be extended to include the rear gardens of properties fronting Shepherds Down (515/1).
5. Whether the categorisation of Compton Down as a settlement under the provisions of Proposal H.2 is justified (1435/1, 2278/1REVDEP, 2298/1REVDEP).
6. Whether land at Highdown, Cliff Way should be developed to a greater extent and at a higher density than that indicated in the Urban Capacity Study (482/1).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.23.1 The objector in the first issue proposed the extension of the settlement boundary for Compton Down to include a 6ha arable field for residential development, but this was subsequently revised to a proposal to utilise approximately 1.0ha in the south east corner of that field to accommodate 30 dwellings. Whilst the southern and eastern boundaries of the site about the rear gardens of existing dwellings, the northern and western site boundaries as now proposed would be entirely artificial and arbitrary, as they follow no existing physical feature on the ground. Whilst it is asserted that the site could be physically and visually contained by a 10m belt of new planting, that would take a considerable period of time to establish. I do not consider it would be sufficiently mature to enable the proposed development to be implemented before the end of the Plan period.
- 6.23.2 The area of Compton Down comprises a residential conclave of very low density housing that lies to the west of the motorway (M3), which separates it from the two small settlements of Southdown and Otterbourne. There are some facilities within the settlement and others within Southdown that are accessed via an overbridge or subway traversing the motorway. There are only about 100 dwellings in Compton Down and although it has been upgraded from the lowest (C) category of settlement to Category B and included in the Plan as a Proposal H.2 settlement, it is still not an area to which large scale development is to be directed. Building 30 new dwellings would represent far more housing than would be required to meet local needs and lead to a significant proportional increase in the overall size of the settlement.
- 6.23.3 The locality has the appearance of a remote group of houses in the countryside which is served by minor country roads. The arbitrary extension of the defined settlement into part of a larger field would represent an unwarranted intrusion of development in the open countryside. Furthermore, the new development would be constructed at a far higher density than anything that presently exists in the area and I consider the proposal would have an appearance and nature totally alien to the existing character of the settlement and its countryside location. Shepherds Lane itself is a narrow private road that provides vehicular access to the site. It is intended to provide passing bays within the verges, restrict the speed to 20mph, install a gateway feature in the carriageway and add road signs, all of which would alter the rural character of the lane which forms part of the Monarch's Way long distance path. Although the intention would be to construct it to adoptable standards, the highway is private now and would require agreements from third parties to implement. Having regard to the foregoing factors, I consider the proposal to extend the settlement of Compton Down is both unwarranted and undesirable.
- 6.23.4 In issue two, the County Council seek an extension of the Policy H.2 boundary so as to include land at Southdown School which has been declared as a 'site surplus to operational requirements' and the school already relocated. I note from the Council's Response Note that a planning permission was granted in January of this year for alterations to the school building to form 13 residential units under the provisions of Proposal C.21 of the adopted Local Plan (Proposal C.24 of the Local Plan Review). I acknowledge that the inclusion of the objection site within the settlement boundary for Compton Down would permit redevelopment under Proposal DP.3 of the Plan and achieve a higher density of up to 23 dwellings. But this has to be balanced against

the context of the site which has open countryside to the west and large detached dwellings in spacious grounds off Shepherds Lane to the north. On balance I am of the view that the current permission represents a reasonable balance between achieving on the one hand the effective re-use of the land and on the other maintaining the rural character of the area and the countryside setting of the village, which given the proximity of the motorway is all the more important. Conversely, inclusion within the settlement boundary to facilitate a more intensive development would be unnecessarily harmful to these considerations and the comment of the Highway Authority that road and junction improvements would be necessary reinforces my conclusion on this point.

- 6.23.5 In the third issue the objector considers that the Plan's H.2 policy boundary for Compton Down should be extended to include land at Downside House and New Barn Farm as it is considered illogical to exclude part of the garden of Downside House and New Barn Farm and its accompanying grounds. However paragraph 6.32 of the Plan explains that settlement boundaries may not correspond with property boundaries. In this instance the bend in Shepherds Lane coincides with a significant change in character bearing in mind the spacious setting of New Barn Farm and Judds Barn. The Council has in my view correctly excluded the 'blue land' referred to in the objection as development, especially at the higher densities recommended in PPG3, would be intrusive into the countryside and thereby adversely affect the attractive rural setting of the village. Furthermore the Highway Authority has made clear that development would require 'improvements' to Shepherds Lane which would also be detrimental to the character of the area (see also 6.23.3 above).
- 6.23.6 Turning to the fourth issue, the objector seeks the extension of the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Compton Down so as to include the rear gardens of properties fronting Shepherds Lane. However, as in the third issue, paragraph 6.32 of the Plan explains that curtilage boundaries are often inappropriate for such a purpose and this is a case in point because of the large rear gardens of the properties and the low density character of the area. The spaciousness of the omission sites and their surroundings form a transition to the open countryside of the farmland beyond and to realign the settlement boundary as requested could result in a pattern of development that would harm the semi-rural character of the locality.
- 6.23.7 In respect of issue five, the objectors, who include the Compton and Shawford Parish Council and the Compton Society, are concerned at the 'promotion' of Compton Down to a Proposal H.2 settlement from its earlier category C status in the preparation stages of the Plan. They consider that as a low density well treed area currently protected by Proposal EN.1 of the adopted Local Plan its inherent character of spaciousness and verdency would be threatened by a substantial level of development, particularly at PPG3 densities. I am sympathetic to the objector's concerns, as indeed I am with the concerns of objectors in respect of the areas currently covered by Proposal EN.1. However the Plan's strategy is to avoid, where at all possible, further housing development on greenfield sites and to make better use of previously developed land. Bearing that in mind, together with the fact that Compton Down is, as the Council says, a large area of established development with relatively good transport links, I consider that the settlement should be included in Proposal H.2. That said, I consider it important that in assessing individual proposals for development the Council should recognise that the design led approach does not unduly outweigh the consideration given to the character of an area where the latter is predominantly formed by its spaciousness.
- 6.23.8 In the final issue, the objector refers to the fact that the Urban Capacity Study only identifies part of the curtilage of Highdown and then only for two dwellings. He argues that densities should be in line with those advised in PPG3 and that in any event the whole of the curtilage should be developed. However the Urban Capacity Study informs the Plan rather than forms part of it. But as the property falls within the Proposal H.2 boundary for Compton Down the principle of redevelopment is not in doubt and it will be for the Council to assess whether the form, extent and density of

any particular proposal that comes forward in a planning application is appropriate. In making that assessment the Council will have regard to the guidance in PPG3, but also to individual site constraints and the effect on the character of the area. Proposals DP.3 and DP.5 will inform that decision but in my view this objection is not within my remit and does not require any modification to be made to the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

6.23.9 That no modifications be made to the Plan.

6.24. Omission Sites - Corhampton

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	497/1	Bruce Horn
H.2	1426/1	Corhampton And Meonstoke Parish Council
H.2	292/1	D. Dixon

ISSUES

1. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary should be extended to include land west of New Cottages (497/1).
2. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary should be extended to include land at Stocks Meadow (292/1).
3. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Corhampton should be extended to replace the Proposal H.3 designation for Meonstoke (1426/1).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.24.1 The land in the first issue was previously considered at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan when the Inspector was of the view that the whole of the then omission site would create an unacceptable intrusion into the countryside. However he also considered that a new boundary including the gardens of the cottages, other unused land, the access to the church car park and the car park itself would be appropriate, especially as it would coincide with the Conservation Area. This boundary has been incorporated in the adopted Local Plan but the objector now argues that the amendment made is too constrained and does not give the landowner 'the incentive to build the houses or the car park the village and the church needs'.
- 6.24.2 I saw on my visit that the site is well screened and note that in its Response Note the Council's main concern is that the improvement of the existing access or the construction of a new one would result in a loss of vegetation that would have a harmful effect on the character of the area. Having considered the arguments put forward by the objector, I am of the view that an adjustment of the settlement boundary to include the objection site would be justified so as to permit a scheme of mixed development to include housing, open space, landscaping, an improved access and car parking for the church. Landscaping would mitigate the visual effect of any new access and provided that the layout and design of a housing scheme properly recognised the constraints of this sensitive edge of village location and the open space occupied a meaningful area of at least that indicated in the objection, the development could be assimilated without any unduly noticeable impact. In addition, subject to local consultation on the content of the scheme, there would be a substantial community benefit. However, logically the settlement boundary should also extend to include Corhampton Cottage as this is the more obvious division between the village and open countryside.
- 6.24.3 The objector in the second issue seeks the re-instatement of the 1987 Local Plan settlement boundary for Corhampton so as to include Prospect Cottage and all, rather than at present just part, of the curtilage of the dwelling known as Stocks Meadow. I

agree with the Council's position that Rectory Lane is a logical and defensible boundary to Corhampton and that the inclusion of the substantial site of Prospect Cottage on its eastern side would therefore be inappropriate. Conversely however, I support the objector's view that the boundary has been drawn unnecessarily tightly around the existing dwelling at Stocks Meadow and does not reflect the circumstances on the ground. To my mind, the yard and outbuildings, which for many years have been used for domestic storage purposes, are both functionally related to, and read with, the existing dwelling rather than the open countryside. Furthermore, there would appear to be some misunderstanding in the Council's treatment of the objection as it has been interpreted as requesting the reinstatement of the entire 1987 boundary in this location so as to include land to the rear of Beacon House. The latter was rejected by the Inspector at the Inquiry into the currently adopted Local Plan. However, the objector has explained that in respect of the northern side of Stocks Lane he seeks only the inclusion of the curtilage of Stocks Meadow. Although there is a partial overlap with the objection site at the previous Inquiry, I do not consider that it was considered on the same basis as now before me.

6.24.4 I acknowledge that the yard and outbuildings at Stocks Meadow are in a somewhat elevated position compared to the existing and adjoining dwellings on the north side of Stocks Lane. Equally however, I am satisfied from my visit to the site and its surroundings, that in the especially important views southwards along the A32 it is Prospect Cottage that dominates the ridge and that an appropriate development within the Stocks Meadow curtilage would at best be completely hidden and at worst unobtrusive. For the most part this would also be the case in westward views from Stocks Lane and northward views from Rectory Lane.

6.24.5 In the third issue the Corhampton and Meonstoke Parish Council do not consider that a sound case has been made for Corhampton and Meonstoke to have separate Proposal H.2 and H.3 designations respectively as the latter contains as many facilities as the former. However the form of the settlements is different with Corhampton exhibiting development in depth and Meonstoke predominantly frontage development. I consider this justifies the different treatment but in any event I have recommended the deletion of frontage designations under Proposal H.3 and I do not think the pattern of development in Meonstoke would justify its inclusion within a Proposal H.2 boundary, even though I recognise that many residents consider that with Corhampton it forms just one village.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.24.6 That the Plan be modified to (i) extend the settlement boundary to include land west of New Cottages up to and including Corhampton Cottage so as to permit a mixed development to include housing, open space, landscaping, an improved access and car parking for the church, and (ii) to include land within the domestic curtilage of Stocks Meadow.

6.25. Omission Sites - Curdridge

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.1	855/2	Markham
H.3	855/3	Markham
H.3	461/1	R H Crane Esq
H.3	1074/1	P. U Smith
H.3	61/1	Kevan Bundell
H.3	1359/1	W. G. Hinton and Sons Ltd
H.3	1367/1	Robert Tutton
H.3	1086/1	D Wyeth
H.4	855/4	Markham

CHAP6	490/2	DS & AB Gamblin
CHAP6	490/4	DS & AB Gamblin

ISSUES

1. Whether Proposal H.3 development frontages should be extended at Tanglewood, Outlands Lane; Crossways, Botley Road; Kitnocks Farm, rear of Outlands Lane; Capers End, Capers End Lane; Little Trees, Lockhams Road; western side of Outlands Lane; land south of Kitnocks Hill (61/1, 461/1, 490/2, 855/2, 855/3, 1074/1, 1086/1, 1359/1 & 1367/1).
2. Whether land at Kitnocks Hill be allocated for affordable housing (490/4).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.25.1 Curdrige is a settlement within Proposal H.3 of the Plan and has therefore been allocated areas of development frontage considered suitable for infill housing schemes. Objections have been submitted seeking the extension of development frontages to include Tanglewood, Outlands Lane; Crossways, Botley Road; Kitnocks Farm to the rear of Outlands Lane; Capers End, Capers End Lane; Little Trees, Lockham Road; a plot east of South Winds on the southern side of A334 and the western side of Outlands Lane north eastwards from The End.
- 6.25.2 In the case of Kitnocks Farm, the objection is less one of an extension to a development frontage under Proposal H.3 and more one of a request for an allocation of the whole site. This would be an in-depth development with the majority of the land set well back from Outlands Lane. As such it would not be consistent with the development pattern of Curdrige which for the most part is one of the dwellings fronting the roads. I acknowledge that there are buildings on the site falling into disrepair, but the same could be said for thousands of farmyards throughout the country. I do not consider that it would justify the consolidation of development on a site related more to the countryside rather than the existing dwellings in Curdrige.
- 6.25.3 The remaining objections seek development frontage designation under Proposal H.3. However earlier in this chapter of my report I explain that I do not consider Proposal H.3 to be a fair and workable policy, or one based on sustainability principles. Accordingly I have recommended its deletion and replacement with a new criteria based policy. If any of the objectors wished to pursue a development proposal on any of the sites put forward, they would be able to do so by means of a planning application which would be evaluated against the criteria of the new policy. These include a requirement for development proposals to be in sustainable locations and not to result in the erosion of the rural character of an area. In making its assessment I would expect the Council to have regard to the fact that Curdrige is not so much a village as a dispersed scattering of ribbons of housing in the countryside without any discernable centre. In addition, I note there are grave concerns regarding highway safety due to poor visibility at junctions, lack of footways and cycleways and low level of public transport service generally.
- 6.25.4 In the second issue, the objector has put forward a substantial site south of Kitnocks Hill and the A334 for affordable housing. He considers the site to be well related to the settlement and argues that its development for affordable housing would meet the need in Curdrige. I have no doubt at all that there is a need for affordable housing in this settlement, as indeed there is a need throughout the District. However the Plan provides two mechanisms for its provision: as a proportion of open market housing schemes under Proposal H.5 and as an exception scheme under Proposal H.6. The objection site is presumably advanced under Proposal H.6 but with a size of almost 10ha it does not in my view represent a 'small scale' scheme as required under the policy. Certainly, if fully developed, it would be out of scale with Curdrige, contrary to criteria (iv) of the policy and as a large rectangular site the in-depth development would not be consistent with the prevailing frontage development character of the settlement. I note that in its Response Note the Council proceeds to evaluate the site against the other criteria of Proposal H.6. I agree with the conclusions reached that the site would be unsuitable in those respects but even without those considerations

it seems to me that by reason of its size and form the principle of allocating this site is one that I should unequivocally reject.

RECOMMENDATION

6.25.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.26. Omission Sites - Denmead

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.1	221/1	Executors of E. S. Edwards (deceased)
H.2	221/2	Executors of E. S. Edwards (deceased)
H.2	1360/6	RobertTutton
H.2	1368/1	Robert Tutton
H.2	289/9	Kris Mitra Associates Ltd
H.2	318/1	Martin Plummer
H.2	1009/1	Maureen Carney
H.2	300/1	Matilda Holdings Ltd
H.2	397/14	Taylor Woodrow (was Bryant Homes)
H.2	364/1	W. Dungan and Sons Ltd
H.2	530/11	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd
H.2	439/2	Paul Byng
H.2	431/2	Byng's Business Development
H.2	488/1	Misses Elliott
H.2	219/4	Bryant Homes
NC.2	1008/1	J A Carney

ISSUES

- Whether land at Bunkers Hill should be included within the defined policy boundary for Denmead (1360/6, 1368/1).
- Whether land at Parklands Business Park should be included in the H.2 settlement boundary, or, alternatively, whether the area subject to Proposal S.13 should be extended to the rear of properties in Forest Road (439/2)
- Whether land off Forest Road and Furzeley Road should be included within the defined policy boundary for Denmead (364/1)
- Whether land at Newlands Lane/Sheepwash Lane should be included within the West of Waterlooville MDA (219/4).
- Whether land south of Anmore Road should be included within the defined policy boundary for Denmead (488/1).
- Whether land north of Hambledon Road should be included within the defined policy boundary and the site be allocated for mixed-use development (431/2).
- Whether land east of Inhams Lane should be included in the defined settlement boundary of Denmead (221/1 & 2, 300/1).
- Whether land at Cherry Hill Farm and Kenners Cottage, Uplands Road, should be included in the defined settlement boundary for Denmead (289/9, 318/1).
- Whether land east of Hambledon Road should be included within the defined policy boundary (1008/1, 1009/1).
- Whether land at Kidmore Farm should be included within the defined settlement boundary for Denmead 530/11.
- Whether Little Frenchies Field should be included within the defined settlement boundary for Denmead 397/14.

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- Denmead is a settlement that has been subject to significant levels of past growth which have mainly extended it southwards from Hambledon Road and westwards to form a tenuous link with Anthill Common, which is shown to be physically linked with

Denmead by the settlement boundary via the ribbon development along Hambledon Lane/School Lane. The built form of the settlement was governed by the Denmead Local Plan 1983 and carried through to the adopted Winchester District Local Plan 1994 which have provided for some 800 dwellings and 2.8ha of employment land. The settlement boundary has not been extended in this Review as there are two housing areas still remaining to be completed (S11 & S12) and the Council consider that in view of the District-wide supply there is no need to allocate more housing land.

- 6.26.2 Turning to the sites subject to the first three issues, these are all situated south of Forest Road, which serves almost as a southern perimeter road to Denmead. The character of the area to its north is unmistakeably built-up, while to its south, with the exception of Parklands Business Park, there is generally sporadic development or agricultural land. I therefore agree with the Council that Forest Road forms a clear and robust southern limit for Denmead.
- 6.26.3 The existing development along Bunkers Hill comprises a loose scatter of dwellings and a nursery on either side of the road. Inclusion of this area within the settlement boundary would give rise to the consolidation of a finger of built development southwards from the settlement into open countryside. The only argument raised in support of the proposition is that it is conveniently sited to use bus services that run along Forest Road. I do not regard that, by itself, as justification for including either all or part of the locality within the settlement boundary.
- 6.26.4 The objection in respect of Parklands Business Park predominantly relates to utilising land there for business use and is addressed in Chapter 13. However, whilst the objector originally advanced a proposal for mixed use development in respect of 3.85ha of land lying to the south of Forest Road and west of Furzeley Road, this was changed to an entirely residential proposal with land set aside for a new roundabout, surface water balancing pond and open space.
- 6.26.5 The Council consider large scale housing need in this part of the District would be met by the West of Waterloooville MDA and that that development at this scale (100+ houses) is unnecessary and would not represent natural extension of Denmead but rather a major breach of the Forest Road boundary and a precedent for others. I agree and find that incursion of development on this site into the open countryside would be compounded by the proposal to provide access from Furzeley Road, which would necessitate removal of much of the hedgerow to provide visibility and add pressure on the road junction which is already identified by HCC in their list of high risk accident sites. The proposed extensive buffer planting shows the objector acknowledges the need for considerable mitigation and would take a considerable time to become established. Additionally, the layout would provide poor permeability with the rest of the village and the present rural character of the road would be urbanised by the provision of footpaths where none now exist. In sum, I conclude the proposal would represent an undesirable intrusion of development into the countryside that would breach the defensible limit to the built-up area that is provided by Forest Road.
- 6.26.6 Moving on to issue four, the objector seeks the inclusion of about 9.9ha of land south of Newlands Lane and east of Sheepwash Lane in connection with the West of Waterloooville MDA. It is apparent that this location is remote from both the now identified MDA and Denmead itself and is poorly related to either, being located well to the west of the MDA and south of Denmead and is served by narrow winding country lanes, which are considered unsuitable for significant additional traffic. I regard the locality as being unsuitable for inclusion within the settlement boundary of either and consider it unmistakeably forms part of the open countryside between the two, for which it has been designated as being in the Local Gap.
- 6.26.7 The next two omission sites (issues five and six), are situated adjacent to the eastern edge of the defined settlement boundary and they too are within the designated Local Gap. The former is south of Anmore Road and measures about 4.95ha, while the

latter is immediately to the north of Hambledon Road and measures 2.74ha. Both are proposed for mixed use development with the latter specifying housing, employment, open space and community use.

- 6.26.8 The larger Anmore Road site projects further into the Gap and by filling the present open area between the edge of Denmead and the small hamlet of Anmore, would compound the inroad it would make into the Gap. It is evident that there is no need to allocate more employment land within the District generally and in Denmead there is spare capacity at Parklands Business Park, whilst major employment is also planned nearby in the Waterloooville MDA. Hence, it would be likely that most, if not all of the land would result in housing use if allocated. In addition, the Anmore Road site is served by narrow winding lanes and part is identified as meeting the criteria for designation as a SINC. In combination, I find these compelling grounds for rejecting the objector's proposals in respect of that site.
- 6.26.9 Whilst the Hambledon Road site is smaller and does not project so far into the Gap, it is positioned on the main road linking Denmead and Waterloooville (B2150) and any development upon it would be viewed by anyone using that route. I thus regard the safeguarding of the Gap along Hambledon Road as being one of the pre-eminent functions of this designated Local Gap. Although the objector proposes a significant tranche of planting to screen any development from view, and argues that there would still be a gap remaining, the Gap is at its narrowest here and already contains some sporadic development. Furthermore as the development within the MDA has yet to take place up to the eastern limit of the Gap, the full visual impact cannot yet be assessed. I have supported the Local Gap policy as I consider it is imperative to preserve the separate identities of settlements and prevent their coalescence. I regard that function as especially important here, given the level of development proposed in the MDA and therefore reject the objector's proposition that the land should be allocated for development.
- 6.26.10 I now turn to issue seven, where the objectors consider that inclusion of land east of Inhams Lane, would represent an obvious rounding-off of the settlement, with Inhams Lane representing a defensible boundary. The Council indicate that the site has a long planning history, having been subject to consideration at previous Local Plan Inquiries and a major planning application and subsequent appeal. They state that as it measures about 6.3ha, it would be the largest of the omission sites at Denmead and could be capable of accommodating between 180 and 320 dwellings. The Council acknowledges that existing development abuts the north, east and southern boundaries, including the S12 allocated housing site at the south east corner. When recommending the designation of the S12 land for housing, the Inspector considered it to be a reasonable rounding-off, but found that this objection land formed part of the countryside setting of Denmead. I saw on my visit to the area that Inhams Lane is a country lane with no footpaths or street lighting and it has an unmistakably rural feel. I accept that an 'inward looking' housing development and the retention of existing trees and hedges along the western boundary could to some extent protect its character. But with the development of the site there will inevitably be pressure to 'improve' the Lane for highway safety reasons, thereby giving it a more urban character. Moreover, on the other side of the site the present urban edge along much of the omission site boundary forms a relatively soft transition between the built-up area and the countryside due to the combination of large gardens and mature planting.
- 6.26.11 I also note that much of the omission site is classed as 3A agricultural land, placing it amongst the best and most versatile, in respect of which national guidance is that its loss to development should be avoided, where lower quality land can be used in preference. I therefore concur with the view expressed by the previous LPI Inspector who concluded that using the land for housing would result in the unacceptable loss of what is a valuable national resource. As such, I consider the objector's proposal is contrary to the principles of sustainable development upon which the Plan has been based. A further constraint on the site is that part of it remains as a SINC and I have

noted the offer of the landowner to lease or gift this to the County Council in order to secure its protection for nature conservation. Nonetheless, development on the remainder of the site would inevitably place pressure on its ecological integrity and I do not consider that the suggestion outweighs this or the other drawbacks I have identified.

- 6.26.12 In issue eight, the two areas proposed for inclusion within the settlement boundary are situated on the northern side of Uplands Road at the northern extremity of the defined built-up limit of Anthill Common. Although the objection by Mr Plummer originally proposed the inclusion of the entire paddock area west of Kenners Cottage, this was subsequently reduced to the area containing the house, garden and stabling. Cherry Hill Farm occupies the area to the east and comprises an old farmhouse and complex of farm buildings to its rear. The purpose for the objectors seeking to extend the settlement boundary is clearly to permit development or redevelopment within the curtilages of these two properties. At present, they both have a character and appearance that relates more to the countryside than the built-up area, being an attractive old farmhouse with outbuildings and a large modern replacement dwelling with stables and paddocks.
- 6.26.13 If the outbuildings to the rear of Cherry Hill Farm were to be included in the settlement boundary and a residential redevelopment were to ensue, this would result in an incursion of development into the countryside, extending beyond the rear boundaries of dwellings to the east. Although the agent for Kenners Cottage showed an extension of the settlement boundary that excluded the farm buildings to the rear, they were clearly not acting for the owners of Cherry Hill Farm in promoting that. A recent application to erect a dwelling on part of the large garden area of Kenners Cottage was refused and subsequently dismissed on appeal. The Inspector concluded that the site bears a closer relationship with the open countryside to the west and north than it does to the more intensive development within the defined settlement limits to the east and south. I agree with that conclusion and consider the farmhouse and outbuilding together with the modern house with its stabling and paddock are correctly shown as being within the countryside. My decision in that regard is reinforced by the relative remoteness of this site from village facilities and I thus conclude it is inappropriate to extend the settlement boundary to encompass these properties thereby encouraging potential additional dwellings in this location. Although reference was made by an objector to an Urban Capacity Site identified by the Council nearby in Upper Crabbick Lane, I do not regard that as being comparable, as it is clearly within the built-up fabric of the settlement.
- 6.26.14 Issue nine concerns land east of Hambledon Road, Anthill Common. The defined settlement boundary encompasses the well defined strings of development along Hambledon Road, but there is a break at the point where the virtually continuous ribbon frontage development on both sides of the road ceases. There is a short break containing some sporadic development which coincides with the point where a high voltage electricity line traverses the road, then the settlement boundary recommences on the western side only where the continuity of housing returns. Although the separation between Denmead and Anthill Common is not formally protected by the designation of a Local Gap hereabouts, as arguably some coalescence has already occurred, this represents part of the last remaining break. Development on the objection sites would erode that break and introduce a ribbon of development on the eastern side of this part of Hambledon Road where the countryside character remains.
- 6.26.15 I am aware that this rural character was referred to by the last LPI Inspector who agreed with the Council that it forms an important part of the countryside setting for the settlement. I disagree with the objector's opinion that his proposal would not harm the local environment and consider the development of this 1.23ha of land with a ribbon of development at densities recommended in PPG3 would have a deleterious impact on its rural character and introduce an unsatisfactory form of urban development in an outlying area of the village. In addition, part of the site is a

designated SINC and I note that a refusal of planning permission for stabling on the land was based solely on grounds of the adverse impact it would have thereon. That decision was subsequently upheld on appeal in October 2004. I consider this catalogue of constraints militates against including the land within the settlement boundary.

- 6.26.16 I now turn to issue ten, concerning land at Kidmore Farm. This site measures approximately 7ha but the objector indicated that only the land south of Tanners Lane measuring about 4.7ha is proposed for development, which the Council envisage as capable of accommodating between 140 and 230 dwellings. A village hall and car parking area are offered as a planning gain, together with the area to the north of Tanners Lane, which is proposed for recreational use. Another option of utilising just 1ha for housing, together with 0.5ha for a village hall and car park was advanced as an alternative proposition, which I do not regard as being satisfactory as it would be piecemeal and involve an entirely arbitrary division of the southern field. The parties agree that the land is in a highly sustainable position to the east of the shopping centre. However, the Council highlight the fact that this site lies to the north of Hambledon Road, whereas most planned development in Denmead has taken place to the south, due to the consideration that was less damaging to the landscape.
- 6.26.17 Although the Council places some store on the fact that the land provides views out from the centre of Denmead to the open countryside, I do not regard that as an overriding factor. The landscape evidence confirms its present rural appearance but also that it is reasonably well contained, whereby visual impacts of the proposed development on the land would be relatively localised. Nevertheless, whilst there are some urban influences to the west and south and the eastern boundary is well treed, the views into the site from the north would be adversely affected and radically alter the rural character of Tanners Lane. I therefore conclude that the proposal would represent an intrusive extension of the built-up area into the countryside.
- 6.26.18 It was generally agreed that access to the site would need to be gained from the south, as both Kidmore lane and Tanners Lane are incapable of satisfactorily accommodating the increased traffic flows that would be generated by a development of this scale. Alternative roundabout or signalised junction designs on Hambledon Road were advanced, involving the closure or diversion of Anmore Road. Concerns were expressed by the Council regarding the potential for these to involve removal of trees and hedgerow, but whilst I accept the objector's assertions that they would strive to configure a design that would have the least damaging impact in this regard, road closure or diversion orders would require formal processes including public consultation and the outcome of these is by no means certain at this stage. Whilst there were also concerns expressed about flooding within the locality, I am satisfied that these should be capable of technical remedy.
- 6.26.19 The village hall proposal is a suggestion advanced by the objector and is it one of several locations that are under consideration by the Parish Council. I do not see this as justifying the release of the omission site, and in any event it could be considered as a proposal here on its own under Policy C5. With regard to the offer of the land north of Tanners Lane for recreational use to address acknowledged shortfalls in the area, the Council point to specific allocations they have made elsewhere in Denmead, that are more readily accessible. Although the possibility of using some of the land for employment use was also suggested, the objector acknowledged that there is sufficient land allocated for this purpose within Denmead and nearby at Waterlooville MDA. In light of the foregoing, I am not persuaded that the site should be included within the settlement boundary and allocated for residential or any other use.
- 6.26.20 Finally, I turn to the triangular shaped omission site known as Little Frenchies Field. There was no dispute between the parties that this 2.1ha site is in a sustainable location, which lies a short distance west of the centre and south of Hambledon Road, where significant development in the recent past has been deemed acceptable. Indeed, the Inspector at the 1982 Local Plan Inquiry recommended that

consideration be given to allocating Frenchies Field for residential development. In reaching that view, he highlighted its containment by Hambledon Road to the north and residential development to the remaining boundaries and he considered that it fell within the village limits. Also it was closer to village facilities than some of the sites that had been allocated at that time. However, the Council considered the contribution the site made to the setting and character of Denmead was essentially a matter of judgement on which they were entitled to differ from the Inspector and retained the countryside designation on the land.

6.26.21 Although a subsequent Local Plan Inspector agreed with the Council that the site made a contribution to the landscape setting of Denmead and the Council's stance remains unchanged at this Inquiry, development has proceeded elsewhere and I consider the views of the 1982 Inspector apply now with even greater force. Having heard the landscape evidence and viewed the site from all the local vantage points, I concur with the opinion that the site appears to be more within the settlement than part of the countryside. Moreover, whilst the Council regard the function of this site as a wedge of countryside penetrating the built-up area as paramount, I do not consider that is a matter which stands close scrutiny on either landscape or urban form grounds. In particular, the site is visually contained by development when viewed from the main vantage points and the physical separation of Denmead and Anthill Common is not readily apparent here, nor regarded as being so important to warrant a Local Gap designation. Therefore, I do not consider the landscape matter, which was identified as the principal issue by both main parties, outweighs the need to ensure a secure a distribution of deliverable housing sites that can be accommodated with suitable mitigation measures in sustainable locations.

6.26.22 I note that the site is classed as Grade 3A agricultural land, placing it amongst the best and most versatile, in respect of which national guidance is that its loss to development should be avoided, where lower quality land can be used in preference. However, the site is relatively small and the Council did not consider this to be an overriding issue. Although the matter of flooding was raised, it is apparent that the Environment Agency conceded that their Flood Map for this part of Denmead appears to be incorrect and is due for reconsideration when it is likely to be placed in the low to nil risk flood zone. The housing allocations in Denmead are largely complete and having regard to the extent of modern development, there are relatively limited infill or redevelopment opportunities. Notwithstanding the Council's strongly held view that the housing targets will be met from the existing allocations, windfalls and development on identified Urban Capacity Sites, I consider it is important that Category A settlements have sufficient sites available to ensure an adequate supply of housing to meet locally generated need. Accordingly, I consider this site to be a preferred option for identification as a Local Reserve housing site.

RECOMMENDATION

6.26.23 That the Plan be modified by the identification of the 2.1ha site at Little Frenchies Field as a Local Reserve housing allocation.

6.27. Omission Sites - Droxford

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	1422/1	R. A. Denham
H.2	368/1	P Acciarri
H.2	228/1	Fiona Agombar
H.2	228/2	Fiona Agombar
H.2	498/2	Stephen Horn
H.3	498/1	Stephen Horn

ISSUES

Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Droxford should be extended to include:

- (i) land along its northern edge (368/1)
- (ii) land off Union Lane (498/1, 498/2)
- (iii) land off South Hill (228/1, 228/2)
- (iv) land rear of the Manor House (1422/1)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.27.1 Droxford is a small village which lies to the west of the Meon Valley in the East Hampshire AONB. It is centred on its historic core based along the High Street, with more recent small scale developments to the west. The boundary is tightly defined to contain the built form of the village and to reflect the primary objective for designating AONBs, which is to conserve the natural beauty of the landscape. I note that a Village Design Statement is being prepared for issue as Supplementary Planning Guidance, but was not available to inform the Inquiry.
- 6.27.2 The first site comprises land to the rear of dwellings on North End Lane. Although it was identified as potentially being of ecological value a site survey found it to be of low interest and not worthy of SINC designation. The Council consider the site to be visually prominent in the landscape and indicate that they regard the settlement boundary to contain sufficient development potential within it to meet the likely local needs. Indeed, they refer to an application that has been submitted for the redevelopment of Townsend, North End Lane with 10 dwellings. At the Inquiry the objector referred to constraints on a number of other sites in the village that were identified on the Urban Capacity Study and I acknowledge that potential difficulties with some of these could reduce their capacity for additional housing.
- 6.27.3 However the key considerations are the characteristics of the omission site itself. Although on plan there is ostensibly a case for straightening the settlement boundary and thereby rounding it off, I do not consider that the linear form of the land lends itself to a form of development that would easily be assimilated into this part of the village, particularly with PPG3 densities juxtaposed with the low density pattern of detached houses on the northern side of the lane. The objector argues that the site is bounded on three sides by development. Technically this is correct but two of these boundaries are very limited in length and are gardens with the result that the site is perceived as only having housing development to the south. Furthermore, the recently planted hedge on the northern boundary is currently a weak feature and, as the Council says, the land is more related to the open AONB countryside to the north rather than Droxford. The objector suggests access to the site would be shared with the access to the development of the Townsend site but apart from that, the omission site, by reason of its linear form, would not form a logical extension to development on that site. I recognise that the omission site is relatively discreet as it cannot be seen from the A32 or North End Lane but, on balance, I do not consider it to be of sufficient merit for identification as a Local Reserve Site. In time, with the development of Townsend and the maturing of the northern boundary hedge the site could possibly be reconsidered, especially if some or all of the other urban capacity sites in Droxford did not come forward or provide the affordable housing needs of the local community. But at present I am not persuaded that the settlement boundary should be extended in this location as part of this Local Plan.
- 6.27.4 With regard to the second site, off Union Lane, the objector proposes to encompass the existing housing and surgery together with additional land to the west, which they regard as "rounding-off". Although the Council argue that the housing was granted as a rural exceptions scheme and is subject to occupancy conditions, I do not see that as being a reason for excluding it from the settlement boundary. The dwellings are part of the built fabric and I consider the occupancy restrictions, whether covered by conditions or a legal agreement, should be sufficiently robust to avoid any unspecified threats or consequences the Council fear. I consider that part of the omission site should therefore be included in the settlement boundary. The land to the west is part of a field and prominent to views from the countryside beyond, whereby development

upon it would be a visual intrusion into the open landscape of the AONB and visible from the long distance path, Wayfarers Way.

- 6.27.5 In respect of land off South Hill, the site was considered at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan when the Inspector formed the view that it clearly related more to the countryside rather than the built up area of Droxford. The three dwellings that are included in the objection site are separated from the southern edge of Droxford by the field that also forms part of the site and the pleasingly rural character is self evident. I therefore share the previous Inspector's opinion that inclusion within the settlement boundary would be inappropriate.
- 6.27.6 Finally, in respect of land to the rear of the Manor House, I do not share the objector's opinion that inclusion within the settlement boundary would be a reasonable alternative to the development in the grounds of the House as envisaged by the Urban Capacity Study. The effect would be for the boundary to markedly deviate from its present alignment close to the existing development on this side of the village. I agree with the Council that development on this land would have an adverse effect on the AONB, the church and the rural setting of Droxford itself. I am therefore unable to recommend the modification requested.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.27.7 That the Plan be modified by including the existing development at Union Lane within the defined settlement boundary.

6.28. Omission Sites - Durley

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	1209/3	Alan Spencer
H.2	429/1	R Houghton
H.2	451/1	M. A. Muddiman
H.3	478/1	C. Brewer
H.3	1209/2	Alan Spencer
H.3	371/1	Houghton
H.3	429/2	R Houghton
H.3	451/2	M. A. Muddiman
H.3	537/1	K Stokes
CHAP 6	479/1	J Brewer

ISSUES

- Whether the following sites should be allocated for housing development or included within a defined policy boundary under Proposal H.2:
 - Land at junction of Heathen Street, Gregory Lane & Parsonage Lane (429/1, 451/1).
 - Land to the rear of Durley Brook Road (1209/2, 1209/3).
 - Land at Durley Brook Farm (479/1).
- Whether the following sites be included within the defined development frontages of Durley and Durley Street:
 - Land at Durley Brook Cottage (478/1)
 - Land between the Hollies and Brown Heath Cottage, Gregory Lane (371/1)
 - Land between the Farmer's Home and Rose Cottage, Heathen Street (429/2)
 - Land between Little Acre and Swift Cottage, Heathen Street (451/2)
 - Land at Snakemoor Lane and Parsonage Lane (537/1)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.28.1 In the first issue, Durley is a settlement listed under Proposal H.3 whereby development frontages considered suitable for infill housing are identified on the Proposals Map. However there are four objections which argue that Durley should be included within Proposal H.2 and thereby be defined by a settlement policy boundary.

Two objectors argue that boundary should include land at the junction of Heather Street, Gregory Lane and Parsonage Lane and land at the rear of Durley Brook Road. Two further objectors put forward the case for the development of land at the rear of Durley Brook Road and at the adjoining Durley Brook Farm. However, earlier in this chapter I make it clear that I support the Council's distribution of settlements between Proposals H.2 and H.3 and from my more detailed inspection of Durley pursuant to these objections I can see no reason in this instance to alter my conclusion. Furthermore, the development of these substantial sites, even if only for a small number of dwellings, would represent an in-depth scheme inappropriate to the mainly frontage development character of the village. In my opinion Durley has a strong rural character, and although there are exceptions, the majority of its housing is in the form of frontage development. The definition of a policy boundary in the form illustrated or implied in these objections would in my view harmfully consolidate the built up nature of the settlement at the expense of its rural ambience.

- 6.28.2 In the first site in issue two, I heard at the Inquiry that the objector seeks to extend the development frontage to include the entire curtilage of Durley Brook Cottage. The recommendation of the last Local Plan Inquiry Inspector was to add the land between Lyons Cottage and Durley Brook Cottage on the northern side of the road as a development frontage. The objector maintains that the hedge along the eastern boundary of the curtilage forms the limit of the built-up area and the adjoining gap through to the countryside, although on my site visit I saw that the cottage was part of a small loosely knit group of dwellings, with no identifiable nucleus. It is also apparent that the cottage has a long road frontage and shallow plot depth, resulting in the dwelling being closer to the road than others in the area. The Council's Transport Planner identifies access as being a potential problem for any development within the curtilage, due to visibility constraints imposed by cypress trees along the frontage.
- 6.28.3 Other objectors identify four separate areas that they consider appropriate for a Proposal H.3 development frontage definition. These are (i) land between the Hollies and Brown Heath Cottage, Gregory Lane; (ii) land between the Farmer's Home Public House and Rose Cottage in Heathen Street; (iii) land between Little Acre and Swift Cottage, Heathen Street and (iv) land at Snakemoor Lane and Parsonage Lane. However as regards all these sites, as well as Durley Brook Cottage, I explain in respect of the objections to Proposal H.3 earlier in this report that in my view the policy is essentially unworkable and arbitrary and could lead to the unnecessary consideration of unsustainable development. I recommend to the Council that a criteria based policy, with the principles of sustainability at its core, would be more appropriate. As I am recommending the deletion of Proposal H.3, individual development proposals on sites in Durley can be tested against the replacement policy, albeit that my comments above that Durley is not appropriate for inclusion in Proposal H.2 reflect that the sustainability criterion of the recommended replacement policy is likely to be a significant consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.28.4 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.29. Omission Site - Hambledon

OBJECTION TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	540/1	S. Mason

ISSUE

Should the settlement boundary for Hambledon be amended to include land at Manor Farm.

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.29.1 Hambledon is a settlement defined under Proposal H.2 and therefore has a settlement policy boundary delineated around its main built up area. The objector seeks the amendment of that boundary so as to include not only the house at Manor Farm in West Street, but also the barn, yard and an adjoining field. The Council estimates the objection site to be about 1.5 ha.
- 6.29.2 On behalf of the objector it is argued that the inclusion of the land would represent a logical rounding off of the village envelope and that the additional housing would help to support local services. However with its location central to the village I regard the site as performing a key function in linking the village with the surrounding countryside and in particular a greenfield part of the AONB with the conservation area. Indeed, as the Council points out, the site is a key factor in enabling views out of the built up area into the open countryside on the one hand and in permitting the penetration of the countryside into the heart of the village on the other. Furthermore, with the additional constraint of Manor Farmhouse as a listed building I am unable to reconcile the scale of development that would be appropriate to a site of this size with the preservation of Hambledon's rural setting.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.29.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.30. Omission Sites - Hursley

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.13	264/5	IBM United Kingdom Limited
CHAP6	543/1	T & D Developments
H.2	264/1	IBM United Kingdom Limited
H.2	264/4	IBM United Kingdom Limited
H.2	305/9	BT Plc
H.2	477/1	James Ashby
E.1	264/2	IBM United Kingdom Ltd

ISSUES

1. Whether the settlement boundary be extended to include land at Southampton Lodge, Hursley (264/1, 264/2, 264/4, 264/5).
2. Whether the settlement boundary be extended to include two areas of land at Collins Lane (477/1, 543/1).
3. Whether the settlement boundary be extended to include an area of land on the south-east side of Port Lane (305/9).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.30.1 The first issue relates to an area of cleared land measuring about 1.83ha that is owned by IBM and lies immediately south of the southern entrance to their major complex at Hursley. The land formerly contained a factory used in connection with aircraft refurbishment. However, as it was recognised that this had given rise to a contamination problem that required resolution, planning permission was obtained in 1986 for the removal and replacement of soil and subsoil (following demolition of buildings) and erection of replacement general industrial / warehousing buildings. The factory was demolished and the contaminated soil removed and the surface laid with stone. The area was used temporarily for car parking, however it was not extensively used for this purpose as there is adequate parking within the main IBM complex. The legal issue of whether those works constituted implementation of the permission whereby it remains extant was discussed but not resolved at the Inquiry. The matter can be resolved outside the Local Plan Inquiry under the Lawful Use Certificate provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act.

- 6.30.2 Whilst the objector seeks to have the land designated for residential use in the Plan, the Council highlight the fact that the settlement is small and compact. It is classed as a Category B settlement where some limited development would be acceptable within the defined settlement limits. The southern limit of the village ends on the northern side of Hursley Park Road and excludes the Primary School and this site. Travelling westwards along Hursley Park Road one has the impression of moving into the countryside and the site does not appear to part of the settlement either visually or geographically. In the absence of the discussion regarding the presence of a former building on the site some 20 years ago, I do not consider this area would have fallen to be considered as an obvious natural extension of the settlement, projecting as it does into the open countryside.
- 6.30.3 The settlement boundary has been drawn tightly around the main residential core of the village, whilst the school, church and the major IBM complex have been excluded. I consider this to be an appropriate approach, particularly given that the IBM complex occupies a grade II* Listed Building set in a Historic Parkland setting. It is a strategic site for the company in global terms employing somewhere in the region of 3000 individuals. It is also apparent from the permissions granted by the Council in respect of various developments within the IBM campus that exclusion from the settlement boundary has not had an inhibiting effect on employment proposals.
- 6.30.4 Although I was advised the site is likely to be surplus to IBM's requirements, they have not marketed it to test demand for potential employment use. The Council highlighted that the village contains only around 150 dwellings and full development of the site for general housing use could give rise to a disproportionate increase, in a sensitive location that adjoins the Conservation Area and the Monarch's Way long distance path. Nevertheless, the Council indicated that proposals for affordable housing to meet local needs can be considered in locations outside the defined settlement boundary under the rural exceptions policy. In light of the above, I regard the Council's stance both regarding the lawful use of the omission site and its exclusion from the settlement boundary as being correct.
- 6.30.5 The second issue relates to two sites in separate ownerships that are situated to the east of the defined settlement boundary. The first objector seeks to extend the boundary to encompass 63 & 64 Collins Lane, incorporating the intervening area of open land, while the second seeks to include a triangular area predominantly comprising overgrown former allotments, with a further small narrow area incised into the rising land adjacent to the highway that was the site of a pair of long since demolished cottages. The two sites occupy rising land which places them in an elevated position with respect to much of the village and are separated by the narrow unmade track known as Cemetery Lane. The larger triangular site contains numerous trees and stands in a transitional location between the built-up area of the village and the cemetery. The Council regard it as part of the rural setting for the village and consider dwellings sited on this land would occupy an elevated position and result in the loss of vegetation. They also observe that as there is no clear evidence of the former dwellings on the small area adjacent to the road, it does not fall to be considered as previously developed land in PPG3 terms. I consider this part of the site is very heavily constrained as a narrow strip between the road and the steep bank to its rear. I also concur with the findings of an appeal Inspector, who in 1990 who concluded that the objection site is not well related to the existing settlement pattern. This view was endorsed by the last Local Plan Inspector in 1998. I have had regard to the extensive site history but do not regard that or the objector's criticism of the residential development potential in the village identified in the Council's UCS or the presence of the IBM complex are factors which justify extension of the settlement boundary to encompass this land.
- 6.30.6 The two existing dwellings on the other site are physically and visually removed from the main village and indeed, at the Inquiry the objector himself stated that they: "sit like odd men out". I observed that they are also visually prominent in the landscape.

The vegetation that still remains on the intervening open area serves to contain the main built-up area of the village and provides a separation between it and the two dwellings, which have the appearance of being dwellings in the countryside rather than village houses. The inclusion of the omission site within the settlement boundary would confer acceptance in principle to the erection of dwellings thereon, which would result in the loss that open elevated area which serves to confine the village to the valley and provides part of its setting and a transition between the village and the open countryside. I do not regard the potential of the site to provide either 1 bedroom flats or 3 bedroom houses to address what the objector identifies as being the greatest shortfall in the village as warranting redefinition of the settlement boundary.

- 6.30.7 In the third issue the objector seeks the extension of the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for Hursley so as to include land originally intended for the provision of a new telephone exchange on the south east side of Port Lane. I acknowledge that two of the site's boundaries adjoin the existing built up area but the north eastern and south eastern boundaries arise solely from the then defined operational need for the exchange. With that justification absent, the boundaries arbitrarily extend into open countryside and there are no physical features in the existing landscape which would thereby justify that incursion. I also agree with the Council that houses on this site would appear unduly exposed in public views from the south and east. I am therefore unable to support the suggested boundary amendment.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.30.8 That no modifications be made to the Plan.

6.31. Omission Site - Itchen Abbas

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	500/1	David Humphrey
H.2	335/6	Upper Itchen Valley Society

ISSUES

- Whether the whole of Itchen Abbas should be made a Proposal H.3 area but with sites earmarked in the Urban Capacity Study retained to try and help solve Winchester's housing needs? (335/6).
- Whether land at Itchen Abbas House should be included within the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary (500/1).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.31.1 In the first issue, the objector complains that Itchen Abbas is split between Proposals H.2 and H.3. He considers that the whole of Itchen Abbas should be a Proposal H.3 area but with the sites identified in the Urban Capacity Study retained to help solve Winchester's housing needs. However from my examination of Inset Maps 14 and my visits to the settlement, I am satisfied that the western section of Itchen Abbas clearly displays the linear form that lends itself to development frontage designation under Proposal H.3, whilst the eastern section comprises development in more depth where a presumption for infill development is appropriate. This part is not in my view suitable for frontage development only, but in any event I am recommending to the Council that Proposal H.3 be replaced by a new policy that would permit infill development outside of the Proposal H.2 settlement boundaries if it met a number of criteria. In the case of Itchen Abbas I consider that the Proposal H.2 boundary should remain but that the western section be designated as countryside, albeit with the new policy in place.

- 6.31.2 In the second issue the objector seeks the amendment of the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary to include the whole of the curtilage of Itchen Abbas House rather than just the dwelling itself. However the inclusion of these very extensive grounds would substantially extend the settlement eastwards into an area of countryside and with the large number of dwellings that would result there would be a significant and adverse effect on both the character of Itchen Abbas and its setting. I can see no justification for such a radical modification to the boundary which in any event would be contrary to the Council's practice in this Plan of not including the whole of curtilages where they display different characteristics to the existing built-up area.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.31.3 That no modifications be made to the Plan.

6.32. Omission Sites - Kings Worthy

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
C.3	469/1	Westbury Homes (Holdings)
H.1	234/2	Gleeson Homes
H.1	469/11	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd
H.2	238/1	J Lywood
H.2	243/1	Humphrey Farms Ltd
H.2	469/12	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd
H.2	225/2	Anchor Developers
H.2	225/3	Anchor Developers
H.2	234/4	Gleeson Homes
H.2	238/1	K Lywood
H.2	243/2	Humphrey Farms
H.2	469/12	Westbury Homes (Holding)
H.3	469/4	Westbury Homes (Holdings)
H.3	469/10	Westbury Homes (Holdings)
H.3	469/14	Westbury Homes (Holdings)
H.4	234/5	Gleeson Homes
RT.3	469/8	Westbury Homes (Holding)
S.15	225/4	Anchor Properties
S.15	81/2	C J Webb
S.15	469/14	Westbury Homes (Holdings)
NC.3	469/13	Westbury Homes (Holdings)

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Representation Number	NAME
RD09.06	469/3	Westbury Homes (Holdings)
RD09.06	469/6	Westbury Homes (Holdings)

ISSUES

- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Kings Worthy should be extended to include land at Hookpit Farm Lane and whether it should be allocated for mixed housing and open space use (234/2).
- Should the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Kings Worthy should be extended to include land at London Road / Basingstoke Road and Proposal S.15 and paragraphs 13.53/13.55 amended to allocate the site for housing (225/2 – 225/4).

3. Whether land north-east and south west of Lovedon Lane should be allocated for mixed use development and whether text should be added to paragraph 13.53 to suggest how mixed use development could be achieved in a sustainable manner (469/10, 469/11, 469/14).
4. Whether the old railway line from Winchester Junction to Alresford and Kings Worthy should be kept for future public transport use, not just as a footpath (81/2).
5. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Kings Worthy should be extended to include land at Headbourne Worthy House fronting Springvale Road and Bedfield Lane (238/1).
6. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Kings Worthy should be extended to include land at North Winchester Farm off Stoke Charity Road (243/1) and whether a separate policy should be provided to allow for the development of brownfield sites in the countryside (243/2).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.32.1 The objector in the first issue seeks the extension of the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for Kings Worthy so as to include land at Hookpit Farm Lane. In addition, an allocation is sought for mixed housing and open space use. The site extends to almost 9ha and about 3.5ha is allocated by Proposal RT.4 of the Plan for public open space use. As part of their submission the objectors have appraised Kings Worthy in terms of its sustainability and otherwise general suitability for additional housing and analysed the development potential of the site. This is supported by two schematic layouts which show 84-87 dwellings on the least sensitive western part of the site, with public open space on the remainder.
- 6.32.2 As is the case with many of the omission sites in this Plan, this particular site has been the subject of previous local plan objections, including at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan. The Inspector considered that the elevated nature of the site exposed it to view and made it unsuitable for development on environmental and landscape grounds. From my inspection of the site and its surroundings pursuant to the current objection I agree with this view and given that I have identified only a limited need for additional housing land to serve as a reserve in the event of an under-delivery from the Council's identified sources, this site has to compete with other omission sites for a supportive recommendation. The objector argues that the implementation of proposed public open space under Proposal RT.4 of the Plan in association with the development of the western portion is a significant factor in favour of development. I agree that this would facilitate such provision but it seems to me that this should only carry very limited weight if the principle of residential development on the site cannot be supported on its individual merits. Taking the Highway Authority's reservations as to the adequacy of the local road network as well as the landscape and environmental constraints into account, I am drawn to the firm conclusion that I am unable to offer such support. I note that reference has been made in the objection to the possibility of an affordable housing 'exception' scheme under Proposal H.6, but by definition this has no relevance to the site's inclusion within the Kings Worthy settlement policy boundary under Proposal H.2.
- 6.32.3 In the second issue the objectors seek the extension of the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Kings Worthy so as to include a site of about 4.85ha adjoining London Road and the A33 (Basingstoke Road). Illustrative layouts prepared for the objectors show 80-90 dwellings amongst the trees on the western portion of the site with the existing meadow extending north eastwards to the site boundary at Hinton House Drive to be retained as open space. The site was considered by the Inspector at the Inquiry into objections to the adopted Local Plan. He concluded that the objection site should continue to be the subject of the Countryside proposals of this Local Plan to preserve the setting of this side of the settlement and thus preserve the separation between Kings Worthy and the hamlet of Abbots Worthy to the south east. I note that because the current objection does not envisage residential development on the meadow, the objectors consider that the Local Gap to Abbots Worthy would be maintained.

- 6.32.4 However, although it is correct that more of a gap would be maintained than if all of the site were to be developed, the fact remains that development of the western part of the site would still physically diminish that gap to a fairly nominal distance at the A33/B3047 junction. And given the site's prominence I do not consider that even 'discrete' residential development amongst the trees on the western part of the site would remain unseen from surrounding vantage points, in particular the A33. The tree loss would inevitably be substantial and it is my belief that development of even part of this site would be perceived as an encroachment of Kings Worthy towards Abbots Worthy at the expense of the Local Gap. The setting of the Conservation Area would be adversely affected and essentially I consider that the considerations applying to this omission site are similar to those to the proposal on land to the south west of Lovedon Lane (see below). In terms of Highway Authority's concerns and those of the Transportation Study re-submitted by the objectors, I do not have the Council's detailed views on that study but even if the capacity and safety of the local road network were to be considered adequate, this does not alter my view that, for the reasons I have outlined, the omission site is not appropriate for development.
- 6.32.5 In the third issue which relates to land adjoining Lovedon Lane, the objection site comprises 14.5ha and is split into two parcels: 6.82ha south west of Lovedon Lane and 7.68ha to the north east. The objection site is designated under Proposal C.3 in the Plan as a Local Gap between Kings Worthy and Abbots Worthy to which countryside policies apply. The objector seeks modifications to the Plan to secure a baseline or reserve allocation of housing on the south west parcel and public open space on the north east. The settlement policy boundary should also be amended to include the south west parcel within the urban area if the site is allocated as a baseline allocation and whether allocated as baseline or reserve it is estimated that the site could provide between 150 and 200 dwellings.
- 6.32.6 The objector is critical of the Council's housing strategy and bases part of the case for this site on the grounds of an alleged inadequacy in the Plan's housing land supply and unsuitability of the Winchester City (North) Reserve MDA. I have dealt with this elsewhere in the Plan including the introductory paragraph to the Omissions Section. But insofar as I consider that a fairly modest baseline Local Reserve provision on greenfield sites is needed to cater for the possibility that sites within the built up areas do not deliver the required housing numbers, an allocation on the objection site is in theory capable of contributing to the potential shortfall. That said, my assessment of the suitability of the land south west of Lovedon Lane for development is in part conditioned by the fact that a large number of other omission sites have been put forward by objectors and that this particular site must therefore not only be demonstrably suitable for residential development on its individual merits, it must also be more appropriate for development than many of the competing sites.
- 6.32.7 At the Inquiry, evidence was submitted relating to a range of issues affecting the objection site, including the sustainability of the location, other transport issues, the benefits of the related provision of affordable housing and public open space and the absence of various technical constraints. I have carefully considered all of these matters but do not regard them either individually or collectively as being favourably determinative to the allocation of a reserve housing site south west of the Lane. In particular as regards sustainability, Kings Worthy's status as a Category A 'foremost' settlement and fifth in the Council's sustainability matrix does not preclude consideration being given to an additional housing allocation if considered necessary. In contrast however there are two issues, albeit closely related, which in my view indicate that housing in this location would be unsuitable and that the proposed allocation would not therefore represent an improvement to the Plan. The factors I consider to be crucial and which clearly outweigh any other aspects supportive of development are the issues of the Plan's designation of the Local Gap between Kings Worthy and Abbots Worthy and of landscape.
- 6.32.8 Dealing firstly with the Local Gap, the objector argues that a Local Gap is not justified between Kings Worthy and Abbots Worthy, but that in any event development in

accordance with the Concept Masterplan produced at the Inquiry would provide an appropriate degree of visual separation. On both counts I consider the objector to be wrong. Firstly in respect of the justification, although I agree with the objector's view that Policy G3 of the Structure Plan Review clearly indicates that development requirements are a pre-requisite to decisions on the boundaries of Local Gaps, I also differ in that, as I have already explained, the need for the development of additional greenfield land in the Winchester area is relatively modest with many alternative locations suggested as omission sites and a total potential for housing numbers far higher than that required. But it is in respect of the existing settlement pattern that I conclude the Council has a particularly strong argument through its application of the criteria used in CDs 11.24 and 11.32 as the basis of its methodology for the assessment of the potential for Local Gaps. In my judgement the Council are correct to regard Kings Worthy and Abbots Worthy (and indeed Headbourne Worthy) as separate settlements with an individual and distinctive character and this does not necessarily conflict with the often used collective description as 'the Worthies', inter-dependence for facilities and location within the same Parish. The important point is that despite the small gap between them, Kings Worthy and Abbots Worthy are perceived as being quite separate with a definite sense of leaving one settlement and having to cross the A33 and a swathe of countryside before arrival at the other. I regard this actual and perceived separation as being important to maintain, not just because of the intrinsic quality of the rural landscape (which I refer to in more detail below), but also because it is crucial to the setting of the Abbots Worthy Conservation Area.

- 6.32.9 The objector argues that the inclusion of a linear area of 1.8ha of landscaping and open space adjoining the A33 within the south west parcel, as illustrated in the Concept Masterplan, would preserve the perception of a 'Vale' and create a long term, defensible edge to Kings Worthy. It would also provide a landscape buffer between the proposed housing, the A33 and the Abbots Worthy as well as providing a link between Abbots Worthy, the south western parcel and the proposed area of public open space to the north east. Leaving aside the Council's doubts as to whether such an area could be legitimately required, I can appreciate the rationale of that approach and if development were to go ahead it does have merit. But in my judgement the fundamental point is that the residential development of any of the south west parcel and its consequential narrowing of the existing Local Gap would be harmful as it changes the character of the area from one of a rural landscape separating two settlements to that of a single settlement with an amenity open space that would be perceived as part of an urban area.
- 6.32.10 A Local Gap is an important concept in the separation of settlements in its own right but in the case of the objection site I consider that landscape considerations strongly support the Council's case. Again, insofar as the objector's case rests on a comparison with the Winchester City (North) MDA in terms of landscape impact, reference should be made to that section of my report. As regards the landscape analysis of 'Lovedon Vale' in its own right the objector considers that (i) long views to the site from the north would not be affected by development of the omission site whilst middle distance views south of the old railway line could be contained or enhanced by good landscape design; (ii) landscaping along the western side of the A33 would provide an improved tree-lined approach into Winchester via The Worthies and this would both maintain the separate identity of Abbots Worthy and enhance the setting of the conservation area; (iii) the A33 combined with the landscaped area would ensure that Abbots Worthy and Kings Worthy could never physically coalesce thereby rendering the Local Gap designation as unnecessary, and (iv) in any event Local Gap requirements would be fulfilled by the proposed landscaped area west of the A33 and the road itself. However, of these arguments, I am only able to support the objector's case that long views from the north would not be affected.
- 6.32.11 The constraints on development of the omission site are evident firstly in the planning policy framework, provided generally by Policy E6 of the Structure Plan Review and for Winchester by Proposal C.6 of the Plan, which seeks to protect the rural character

of the District. This is complemented by Section 8 of Appendix 2 to the Plan, which in its key characteristics and landscape / built form strategies draws from a landscape pedigree of the area that is readily apparent from the descriptive analysis in the 'Winchester District Landscape Character Assessment', 'The Hampshire Landscape: A Strategy for the Future' and 'Winchester City and its Setting'. I agree with the Council that the key landscape aspects that emerge for the land in the vicinity of Lovedon Lane are the openness of its Downland topography and the rural character, reinforced by its agricultural use and relatively remote feel. To my mind, all of these attributes would be at best substantially diminished and at worst lost with the development of the omission site. And when the effect on the Local Gap is also taken into account I do not consider that the positive outcomes claimed by the objector and summarised in the above paragraph would materialise. In short, because of the significantly adverse effect on the Local Gap and the landscape of the area I am unable to support the allocation of land to the southwest of Lovedon Lane for housing. Furthermore, as I have already indicated above, I regard my conclusion on this aspect as being of sufficient importance to override all the other considerations raised.

- 6.32.12 The same objector has additionally proposed an area of public open space on the parcel of land to the north east of Lovedon Lane as being more appropriately sited for existing local residents than the land identified under Proposal RT.4 at Hookpit Farm Lane and as complementary in terms of use and access to the residential proposal to the south west. To the extent that the open space is put forward as part of a comprehensive approach, as indicated in the objector's Concept Masterplan, my rejection of the housing element is a substantive reason for a parallel rejection of the open space, as without the addition of 150 dwellings the need for formal playing fields and / or a cricket pitch is significantly reduced. But quite apart from this I share the Council's view that the location of the land would be relatively remote from the main element of need, namely children's play provision of 1.7ha (rising to 2.4ha when the development potential for the area as identified in the Plan is realised). Whereas existing children's play facilities at Eversley Park are accessible to residents of the southern parts of Kings Worthy and Abbots Worthy, the RT.4 land at Hookpit Farm Lane is closer to the area north of the disused railway where there is an identified shortfall in this type of open space. Moreover, I have already made clear my view on the importance of maintaining the rural landscape of the Lovedon Vale and with or without the housing to the south west, an area of managed amenity land would appear suburban compared to its currently rural character with an agricultural use.
- 6.32.13 In respect of issue four, I have dealt with the future of the old railway line in my report on objections to Chapter 13 - Settlements.
- 6.32.14 In respect of issue five, the objector seeks the extension of the settlement policy boundary for Kings Worthy to include land at Headbourne Worthy House (a retirement village) and the Dower House (a nursing home) which together form an 'island' of land to the south of the A34 and fronting Springvale Road and Bedfield Lane. At present, the land forms an amenity area for the two complexes. A second objection, albeit not duly made, relates to a staff car park for the Dower House in the northern corner of the site and adjoining Springvale Road and the A34. In the objector's view the settlement policy boundary should follow the alignment of Springvale Road and Bedfield Lane as they represent a more logical distinction between the built up area and countryside, all the more so because Bedfield Lane has been used to delineate the northern boundary of the Gap between Winchester and Kings Worthy.
- 6.32.15 In my opinion, although a case can be made for the settlement boundary to follow Bedfield Lane and Springvale Road on the basis that these roads divide the much more built up grounds of Headbourne Worthy House from open countryside, I nonetheless support the retention of the boundary line as shown on the Proposals Map. I do so because, as I have already explained in the introductory paragraphs to the Omission sites, I support the Council's view that the settlement boundary should

normally be drawn tightly to the existing built form so as to exclude land which, if developed, could adversely affect the setting of the settlement. I therefore consider it important that the amenity land fronting Bedfield Lane and Springvale Road, which gives Headbourne Worthy House and its ancillary retirement complex an essentially rural ambience, has the additional protection of countryside policies. The interface between 'town and country' is not necessarily as clear cut as 'rural' on one side of the road and 'urban' on the other. In my view the objection site is an example of how roads close to the edge of a settlement can retain a rural feel with a set back in the siting of buildings in order to enhance their setting and that of the adjoining built-up area. In this case the importance of the setting is underlined by a 1980 legal agreement to keep the land undeveloped, albeit that this is shortly to expire.

- 6.32.16 On the other hand, the smaller car park site to the north does not make the same contribution in amenity terms and I agree with the objector that the settlement boundary should be amended to include it within Kings Worthy. Although the objection was not duly made, the Council indicated at the Inquiry that they would have no objection to me using my discretion and considering the objection. Accordingly I have done so and will recommend this minor amendment to the Proposals Map.
- 6.32.17 In respect of the first part of the sixth issue, the objection site comprises the southern part of the group of buildings at North Winchester Farm together with some adjoining residential properties. The objector argues that this cluster of development (which excludes a range of modern poultry houses still in use immediately to the north) forms part of the built up area of Kings Worthy. He accepts that the objection site is separated from the main body of the village by the railway line but nonetheless considers that it forms part of the settlement and that it is illogical to apply countryside policies. However to my mind, although the railway line is in cutting at this point, it forms a clear and logical boundary to Kings Worthy. This is especially so because the northern end of the settlement tapers to the apex of a triangle to the south of the railway line, thereby decreasing the ratio of urban area to open countryside. Also, the separateness of the objection site is given added emphasis by the narrow and tortuous form of stake Charity Road over the railway bridge. Accordingly I can see little if any merit in extending the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Kingsworthy to include the objection site.
- 6.32.18 The second strand to the objection is that the Plan should include a policy that would allow for the redevelopment of brownfield sites in the countryside in certain clearly defined circumstances. In support of this argument the objector suggested a form of wording for the policy which would permit development of residential, employment, tourism or local facilities on brownfield sites outside settlement policy boundaries subject to a number of criteria. It was further argued that in its definition of previously developed land, PPG3 (Annex C) refers only to the exclusion of agricultural buildings that are currently in use.
- 6.32.19 I can see that the inclusion of the reference to current uses in the second paragraph allows that interpretation but conversely the first paragraph states that 'previously developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings).....' (my emphasis). And in the absence of any judicial authority to the contrary I am minded to support the Council's view that the intention of the guidance is to exclude agricultural buildings from the definition. Be that as it may, and taking into account the policies in other Local Plans cited by the objector, I do not consider that the Plan would be improved by the inclusion of the suggested policy. The countryside policies of the Plan already allow a range of uses for brownfield sites in the countryside including Proposal C.23 which allows conversions to residential use in the case of buildings of high quality worthy of retention. However the thrust of the countryside policies is to resist residential development, including conversions, to protect the appearance and integrity of the District's predominantly rural character and in my view the new policy suggested by

the objector would undermine that important objective which remains a mainstay of national guidance in PPS7.

RECOMMENDATION

6.32.20 That the Plan be modified by the amendment of the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Kings Worthy to include the car park in Springvale Road.

6.33. Omission Sites - Littleton

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
6.21	287/1	Holmes and Sons
H.2	220/6	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
H.2	496/1	Holmes and Sons
H.2	359/2	R Hammond
H.2	369/1	Hayes
H.2	430/1	A Morris
H.3	359/1	R Hammond
H.3	369/2	Hayes

ISSUES

1. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for Littleton should be extended to include land to the east and west of Main Road and whether that land should be allocated for residential development (220/6).
2. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for Littleton should be extended to include land to the north-west and south-east of South Drive and whether that land be allocated for residential development (496/1, 430/1, 287/1).
3. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for Littleton should be extended to include land to the west of Main Road and whether all, or part, of that land should be allocated for residential development of between 80 and 160 new dwellings (359/2, 369/1).
4. Whether Proposal H.3 should include the definition of new development frontages to the west of Main Road, Littleton to allow residential development to take place to the north-west of Rozelle Close (359/1, 369/2).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.33.1 In the first issue the objector seeks the extension of the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Littleton to include a substantial area of land on both sides of Main Road to the north of the village. The extension would thereby include the Conservation Area centred on the original village as well as the land between this and the defined settlement boundary drawn tightly around the northern perimeter of the existing village.
- 6.33.2 However I can find little to commend this suggestion as to endorse it would effectively say that there would be no harm in the coalescence of the comparatively loose-knit settlement pattern of the old village with the more modern and denser development to the south. Indeed I take the opposite view, as I consider that by its inclusion within a Proposal H.2 boundary with a view to the development of a substantial area of housing, it would be difficult to control development to at least preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, whilst the latter's setting would certainly be adversely affected. The importance of the gap between the old and newer parts of the village is recognised in the Littleton Village Design Statement, whilst from my visit to the area I can only agree with the observations of the Council that new accesses to land either side of Main Road would inevitably result in a substantial loss of trees.

- 6.33.3 In the second issue, two objectors seek inclusion of separate but adjoining parcels of land for inclusion within the settlement policy boundary for Littleton. One of the parcels has a nursery use and the objector argues that because of their quasi-urban character, including buildings and hardstandings, nurseries tend to be an important supply of building land. Be that as it may, I consider that this site, and the adjoining parcel at South Drive would extend the built up area of Littleton into the countryside in a somewhat contrived and awkward way. There can be no question of “rounding off” in these cases and the lack of a logical and defensible western boundary to the sites would, to my mind, increase the intrusion into the predominately open landscape. I also share the Highway Authority’s concern as to the unsuitability of South Drive to cope with additional traffic and the inadequacy of its junction with Main Road.
- 6.33.4 In Issues 3 and 4 objections in respect of five sites on land to the west of Main Road Littleton were presented to the Inquiry on behalf of two ownerships. The sites are :
- (i) An area of 8ha extending from a frontage to Main Road westwards to adjoin a substantial length of Littleton Lane and beyond and considered suitable for 250-300 dwellings.
 - (ii) An area of 1.5ha with a frontage to Main Road and lying between the curtilages of 48 Main Road and Larch Cottage (45-50 dwellings).
 - (iii) The Main Road frontage of site (ii) considered suitable for 5 dwellings.
 - (iv) A further area of 1.5ha with a frontage to Main Road between the curtilages of Hillside House to the north and Larch Cottage to the south, and as with (ii) above considered suitable for 45-50 dwellings, and
 - (v) The Main Road frontage of site (iv) and as with the similar site (iii), also considered suitable for 5 dwellings.
- 6.33.5 In terms of the modifications requested to the Plan, sites (i), (ii) and (iv) would require the extension of the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Littleton, whereas sites (iii) and (v) seek development frontages under Proposal H.3. However as regards the latter policy I have recommended its deletion and replacement with a criteria-based policy that would enable evaluation of any particular site outside Proposal H.2 settlement boundaries in the light of a number of key factors, including sustainability and the effect on the countryside. In the light of this recommendation I consider it would be inappropriate for me to express a view on the merits for housing development of the two smaller Main Road frontage sites.
- 6.33.6 Turning to the larger sites occupying all or parts of the objectors’ ownership between Main road and Littleton Lane, the 8ha site would represent a major extension of Littleton into open countryside well beyond the present western extent of the settlement. The smaller sites have greater merit as their western extent would broadly align with the boundary of Littleton. However they too would intrude into countryside which, although attractive, forms part of an open landscape with a lack of natural screening that would permit views of the new development from public vantage points over 2km to the north east. Furthermore there is little doubt in my mind that development of these sites would have an adverse effect on the Littleton Conservation Area. The Village Design Statement recognises the importance of the gap between the original village and the more modern part of the settlement and quite apart from the physical encroachment towards the Conservation Area, the effect of breaking through the line of mature trees and hedgerow on the western side of Main Road would further emphasise the erosion of the countryside between the older and newer parts of the settlement. I acknowledge that, as explained in the landscape evidence, the existing tree belt would be reinforced by a tree protection zone, but this would not disguise the change in the character of the area from rural to urban.
- 6.33.7 I have taken account of all the other matters raised for the objectors, including the sustainability arguments that additional houses would help to support local services. But overall I am firmly of the view that it would not be appropriate to extend the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary to include any of the sites proposed.

RECOMMENDATION

6.33.8 That no modifications be made to the Plan.

6.34. Omission Sites - Lower Upham

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.3	494/1	Executors of O St C Gibbings
H.3	291/1	R Annels
H.3	291/2	R Annels

ISSUES

1. Whether the Proposal H.3 development frontage should be extended to include additional land in Lower Upham (494/1).
2. Whether the Proposal H.3 development frontage should be extended to include additional land in Upham (291/1, 291/2, 467/1).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.34.1 The objectors in these issues seek the extension of the Proposal H.3 development frontage. Firstly in Lower Upham the objector seeks two frontage designations in Alma Lane, one in Winchester Road and one opposite existing frontage designations at the Sciviers Lane/Winchester Road junction. Secondly in Upham, one objector cites land within the curtilage of Bank Cottage and extending to include a pair of semi-detached dwellings adjoining Oak Close, whilst two objections refer to extending the Plan's existing development frontage designation to include land at Newlyn Farm. I have considered the arguments in favour of the additional designations and the Council's response thereto. However, as I have recommended the deletion of development frontages and their replacement by a new Proposal H.3 which would require the assessment of any particular proposal against a number of criteria, I consider it would be inappropriate to reach a conclusion on the merits of the respective arguments.

RECOMMENDATION

6.34.2 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.35. Omission Sites - Micheldever

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	1249/17	P.A Warner
H.3	464/1	J. E. Critchley
CHAP6	475/1	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
H.2	538/1	R Smart
H.2	1153/1	W Finch
H.2	1438/1	C Finch

ISSUE

Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Micheldever should be extended (1249/17, 464/1, 475/1, 538/1, 1153/1, 1438/1).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.35.1 Micheldever is a village categorised under Proposal H.2 of the Plan as being suitable for the delineation of a settlement policy boundary. Accordingly Map 13 of the Plan shows such a boundary and four sites have been suggested by objectors as being appropriate extensions thereto as part of their arguments in support of the extensions. In addition, several objectors criticise the Council's strategy for housing allocation. However I have dealt with the generality of these in my report on other parts of the Plan and confine my comments below to site-specific points.
- 6.35.2 Firstly an objector cites land east of Winchester Road as being a logical extension to the village with definable boundaries and which would not set a precedent. I agree that, ostensibly at least, the tree belt and adjoining bridleway would comprise a clear, boundary to the settlement. That said, and as the Council points out, development would reduce the penetration of the countryside to the heart of the village and change the settlement pattern to a more nucleated form. The cricket ground is a recreational facility and although it is not specifically annotated on the Proposals Map under Proposal RT.2 because it lies outside the settlement boundary, it is protected by criterion (ii) thereof and its contribution to the setting of the village is also highlighted in the Micheldever Village Design Statement. The Highway Authority indicated that the probable loss of the treed bank south of the public house to create the required visibility would cause further harm to the environmental quality of this area. In short, following my visit to the site and its surroundings, I can find no reason to disagree with the conclusion of the Inspector at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan that the site's inclusion in the settlement 'would introduce an unacceptably intrusive element into what is an attractive rural approach to the village from the south'.
- 6.35.3 The second site requested for inclusion within an extended settlement boundary is an area of land fronting Church Street. However contrary to the assertions of the objector, in no sense do I consider that development on this land would create a logical "rounding off" to development along the Church Street frontage. Even if I were to discount the risk of flooding, development of the site would represent an awkward incursion into the countryside along the valley of the River Dever which I consider to be important not only in itself as a landscape feature but also because it separates Micheldever and Northbrook.
- 6.35.4 Land to the west of Church Street has also been put forward, albeit with a subsequent notification to withdraw the objection on land other than 'Parcel A', the site of a former chicken farm which it is considered could accommodate one or two bungalows or up to four houses. I agree with the objector that Parcel A is of a different character to the now withdrawn Parcels B and C. However the former chicken shed now has only a benign effect on the appearance of the area and the retention of the site's openness is important to offset the substantial bulk of Westbrook Farmhouse. In my view even the addition of just two dwellings would create a more intensive urban character, easily seen from both footpaths in the open countryside to the west.
- 6.35.5 The final objection concerns the exclusion of 'Waterside Cottages area' from the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary. However in my view there is little to be said in support of this suggestion. The cottages are separated from the main area of Micheldever by the River Dever and to extend the settlement boundary across the valley to include this enclave of existing development within the open countryside would to my mind be illogical. Further development would erode the gap between Micheldever and Northbrook and harmfully affect the setting of both. The objectors refer to housing needs mentioned in the Village Design Statement, but I can see no reason why such provision would necessitate further development on this sensitive site as there are clearly more logical locations for 'exception sites' that actually adjoin the existing settlement boundary.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.35.6 That no modifications be made to the Plan.

6.36. Omission Sites - New Alresford

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	1130/1	A. J Marshall
H.2	1158/2	Stephen Wallis
H.1	239/1	Trustees Of The Tichborne Estate
H.2	850/1	Mountheed Limited
H.2	1012/1	Ian Starforth Hill
H.2	1386/8	New Alresford Town Council
H.4	210/22	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
H.2	1047/1	J Cope
H.2	1048/1	L. F Cook
H.2	1049/1	S Cope
H.2	1050/1	Debbie Middleton
H.2	1051/1	H. N Woodham
CHP12	210/25	Berkeley Strategic Land Limited
RT.1	949/1	B. K. Purkiss
RT.4	227/13	Bewley Homes plc & R Morgan - Giles

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD06.07	2314/1	Berkeley Community Villages
RDM203	2026/1	Alan Cleeve
RDM203	2017/1	Andrew Cook
RDM203	2016/1	Andrew Cook
RDM203	2099/1	Anne Hanson
RDM203	2001/1	Anne Moreau
RDM203	2052/1	Audrey Chalk
RDM203	2074/1	B Cope
RDM203	2033/1	Ben Shepherd
RDM203	2065/1	C I Cook
RDM203	2045/1	Catherine Evans
RDM203	2064/1	Clive Richard Bunting
RDM203	2032/1	D M Binfield
RDM203	2058/1	Dale Cleeve
RDM203	2038/1	Daph Willett
RDM203	1050/1	Debbie Middleton
RDM203	2072/1	E Evans
RDM203	2049/1	Fran Walker
RDM203	2042/1	G D Easton
RDM203	1051/1	H. N Woodham
RDM203	2066/1	J A Joly
RDM203	2031/1	J Cope
RDM203	1047/1	J Cope
RDM203	2039/1	J Fairburn
RDM203	2050/1	J Ramsey
RDM203	2043/1	J Rogers
RDM203	2069/1	J W Swain
RDM203	2025/1	J Woodham
RDM203	2030/1	Jane Cleeve
RDM203	2041/1	John Curtis
RDM203	2057/1	John Felstead
RDM203	2061/1	Judy Ann Smith

RDM203	2029/1	Julie Cleeve
RDM203	2075/1	K E Brown
RDM203	2024/1	Kevin Bloodworth
RDM203	2054/1	L Barron
RDM203	1048/1	L. F Cook
RDM203	2040/1	Louise Felstead
RDM203	2022/1	M A Hall
RDM203	2046/1	M L Bagshaw
RDM203	2068/1	M T Swain
RDM203	2076/1	M Titmus
RDM203	2055/1	N Hall
RDM203	2036/1	P Shepherd
RDM203	2063/1	Patricia Bunting
RDM203	2035/1	Paul Shepherd
RDM203	2051/1	PJ Chalk
RDM203	2078/1	R A Mortimore
RDM203	2053/1	R G Davies
RDM203	2077/1	R Hiskett
RDM203	2044/1	Ray Curtis
RDM203	2037/1	Roy Willett
RDM203	1049/1	S Cope
RDM203	2073/1	S P Evans
RDM203	2023/1	S P Matthews
RDM203	2034/1	S W Shepherd
RDM203	2056/1	Sarah Lindon
RDM203	2028/1	Scott Cleeve
RDM203	2047/1	Sharon McEwan
RDM203	2062/1	Sue Brown
RDM203	2059/1	Sue Prior
RDM203	2021/1	T G Hall
RDM203	2067/1	V M Felstead
RDM203	2060/1	V R Prior
RDM203	2070/1	W A Swain
RDM203	2002/1	W.L Moreau
RDM203	2027/1	Zena Cleeve
RDM203	1050/1	Debbie Middleton

ISSUES

- Whether land at the former railway cutting, New Alresford, should be identified in the Urban Capacity Study or identified as an important open area (Proposal RT1) (1047/1, 1048/1, 1049/1, 1050/1, 1051/1, 2026/1, 2017/1, 2016/1, 2099/1, 2001/1, 2052/1, 2074/1, 2033/1, 2065/1, 2045/1, 2064/1, 2032/1, 2058/1, 2038/1, 1050/1, 2072/1, 2049/1, 2042/1, 1051/1, 2066/1, 2031/1, 1047/1, 2039/1, 2050/1, 2043/1, 2069/1, 2025/1, 2030/1, 2041/1, 2057/1, 2061/1, 2029/1, 2075/1, 2024/1, 2054/1, 1048/1, 2040/1, 2022/1, 2046/1, 2068/1, 2076/1, 2055/1, 2036/1, 2063/1, 2035/1, 2051/1, 2078/1, 2053/1, 2077/1, 2044/1, 2077/1, 1049/1, 2073/1, 2023/1, 2034/1, 2056/1, 2028/1, 2047/1, 2062/1, 2059/1, 2021/1, 2067/1, 2060/1, 2070/1, 2002/1, 2027/1)
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for New Alresford should be extended to include land east of Sun Lane for housing (210/22, 210/25, 2314/1)
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for New Alresford be extended to provide some further housing opportunities.(227/6), (1130/1), (1158/2).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for New Alresford should be extended to include land at Spring Gardens for housing (239/1).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for New Alresford should be extended to include land at Arlebury Park (850/1).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for New Alresford should be extended to include land at Ladywell House (1012/1).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for New Alresford should be extended to include land at Watercress Meadows (1386/8).
- Whether the area in New Alresford subject to Proposal RT.4 is appropriate (227/13).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.36.1 The first issue concerns the disused railway cutting that extends between New Farm Road and Bridge Road. The Council have designated it in the Plan as an open area with an important amenity value, with protection afforded under Proposal RT.1. Whilst there is a measure of public support for such action, there is also opposition from the landowners and other members of the public, who regard it as a potential site for housing.
- 6.36.2 The area has an extensive planning history and forms part of a more extensive linear area that has been put to alternative uses since the closure of the railway between Alresford and Winchester. The former bridge where Bridge Road crossed the line has been demolished and the cutting filled so that the road now traverses it at grade. The cutting eastwards has been filled and used for a small residential development (albeit outside the settlement boundary) and an extension of adjacent playing fields. Westwards, the first part of the cutting was filled and a pair of houses erected thereon with an access alongside them to the remainder of the cutting, which comprises this omission site. The land is now largely left untended and thus an extensive scrub and self seeded tree growth has established since the 1970's when it was sold by BR. I observed it is also extensively used for dumping domestic rubbish by adjoining owners whose gardens abut either side and also by pedestrians using the bridge at the western end. Neither the Council nor the owners intend to make the land available for public use and the only amenity derived can be said to be from the trees and wildlife it supports.
- 6.36.3 There is no major public vantage point of the land except from the bridge crossing the cutting on New Farm Road and the only significant trees that can be seen over roofs of housing in the adjacent roads are generally those sited at the top of the cutting. The site is subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). However, its ability to be enforced was challenged by objectors and the Council conceded it is of questionable effectiveness and that few if any of the individual trees would warrant protection if the Council reconsidered the site under the District-wide review of TPOs they have commenced. It was also evident from my visit that some of the trees growing on the very steep cutting slope were unstable. The area has some ecological value as indeed do most suburban gardens, but my perception of the area as a wildlife habitat is that it is unexceptional and that there appeared to be potential for vermin and consequential Public Health problems. An ecological appraisal by Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre has confirmed that it does not have potential to warrant SINC designation.
- 6.36.4 My conclusion is that whilst the trees along the cutting have a softening effect upon the adjacent dwellings, the area is clearly in need of urgent management and it comprises an area of unused and overgrown land within the settlement framework. However, I do not agree that the designation of land under RT1 will provide any means of bringing that land into productive use, particularly as the Council do not intend to acquire it for open space and there is no incentive for the owners to clear and manage the land, given the fly-tipping that occurs. I therefore agree with the objectors that part of the land could be utilised more effectively for residential use whilst retaining the significant trees at the top of the embankment. However, in view of the various difficulties the site presents for development, not least being the extensive vegetation, site levels and restricted access, I am not persuaded that these can all be easily resolved to guarantee that some residential development could proceed here within the lifetime of the Plan. As that is a prerequisite to allocating land for development in a Local Plan I am thus unwilling to do so.
- 6.36.5 Although some objectors suggested the UCS should be amended to show this land as a potential housing site, that is a document that informs the Local Plan process and it is outside the purview of the Inquiry to make recommendations in respect thereof. However, in view of the site's shortcomings, I can understand the Council not regarding it as a good prospect for immediate development in the UCS. Nevertheless, I agree with objectors who consider that unused land within the

confines of the defined built-up settlement boundary should be utilised for housing in preference to greenfield sites. Hence, in light of the above, I propose to recommend the deletion of the RT.1 designation as the land does not obviously comprise any useful amenity purpose here. Constraints that would be imposed by that policy will thus be removed, whereby the site will be capable of being considered as a suitable location in which further development is acceptable in principle. This will enable the owners to attempt to address the site problems and if successfully achieved, to bring the land into use as a windfall housing site while at the same time safeguarding some of the trees that provide a degree of amenity for adjoining residents.

- 6.36.6 Turning to the second issue, the omission site that the Berkeley group seek to add as a housing allocation comprises part of Langton's Farm and is situated east of Sun Lane at the eastern extremity of the settlement. The objection originally related to an area measuring about 13ha, which the Council feared could give rise to between 350-500 dwellings. Consequently, it was revised at the Inquiry to relate to a proposal utilising about half that area only, to provide about 200 dwellings at 35 dwellings per hectare, with some structural landscaping to contain it. The site is part of a large field that envelops a small cluster of existing development comprising some older houses and a courtyard development that replaced some former farm buildings. The land lies immediately south of the railway cutting of the Watercress Line that is now used by steam trains. The land rises generally southwards to a ridge approximating to the point where an overhead line traverses the field. There is no existing physical boundary to denote the southern limit of the site.
- 6.36.7 The Council regards the area as being an important area of open countryside that forms part of the landscape setting for New Alresford. Moreover, Sun Lane not only forms a defensible limit to the built-up area, but it is also the route of the Wayfarers Walk long distance footpath. Despite the degree of containment that the objector contends would be provided by the local topography, there is no doubt in my mind that measures to mitigate the sizeable residential development they propose here would take a considerable time to become adequately established. I conclude there would be a raw edge of development facing the attractive countryside at the southern limit, while the impact of the development upon views from the west and north would be magnified by the site levels, whereby it would appear as a succession of roofs ascending the slope.
- 6.36.8 The objector asserts that the UCS sites are small and would generate few if any new affordable dwellings, whereas with a development of the size they propose a significant element of affordable housing could be provided in the settlement to address concerns expressed by some residents that their children have to move away from Alresford and that key workers are unable to afford housing there. However, I do not regard that potential benefit, on its own, warrants the release of such a large new housing site.
- 6.36.9 Although there was no dispute that the site is relatively near to the town centre, the Sun Lane road bridge over the railway cutting is narrow and lacks footpaths. The road beyond the railway is also narrow, lacking footpaths and is extensively used by the occupiers of the terraced housing there for parking their cars, thereby restricting its effective width still further. Its junction with the B3047 has severely restricted visibility due to vegetation and a high wall at Langton House where the ability to remedy its shortcomings would be restricted by its inclusion within the designated Conservation Area. Whilst the objector sought to indicate that access to the town centre could be achieved by alternative routes, those too required highway improvements and there was insufficient detail to assess whether these could be satisfactorily achieved. Moreover, it would add to traffic passing through an existing residential area and the suggestion of diverting pedestrians from the narrow northern section of Sun Lane through the churchyard would not be attractive for all potential users. I thus conclude that the landscape and access issues detract from the suitability of this site for a major housing allocation, notwithstanding its proximity to

the town centre. I therefore do not support the objector's proposal that the site should be allocated for residential use either as a baseline or as a reserve housing site.

- 6.36.10 In the third issue, a number of objectors seek a general flexibility in the Proposal H.2 policy settlement boundary for New Alresford in order to prevent excessive infilling within the defined area of the settlement which, it is considered, will have an adverse effect on the environment. However, as the Council points out, because there is no set target or requirement for new housing in New Alresford it does not follow that extending the defined boundary to create more housing sites would necessarily relieve the 'pressure' for more development. Government Policy is to make the more effective use of existing housing land through an increase in density and the policies of the Plan must clearly be in accordance with that approach. Proposal DP.3 of the Plan sets out the criteria for development and many of the objectors' concerns in terms of the environmental effects of new development would be addressed by ensuring that proposals meet the requirements of that policy.
- 6.36.11 In respect of issue four, the objection site is a linear field of about 1.24ha lying between the A31 by-pass (in cutting at this point) and Spring Gardens, which forms the settlement policy boundary on the southern edge of New Alresford. The eastern boundary comprises the Jacklyns Lane (B3046) bridge, whilst to the west is a terrace of four dwellings known as Vernal Cottages, accessed from a track off Spring Gardens. The site was considered at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan when the Inspector concluded that the settlement boundary should not be changed as the small areas of land between it and the by-pass were of 'considerable importance to the setting of New Alresford'. Although the objector accepts that in this instance the boundary has been properly drawn, he considers that there is justification for up to 35 dwellings as an urban extension and cites three important changes of circumstances since the Inspector drew his conclusions at the last Inquiry. These are (i) the requirement for additional housing land above that identified in the Plan (with particular arguments for allocation at New Alresford); (ii) the change in the policy context represented by the publication in 2000 of both the revised PPG3 and the Structure Plan Review and (iii) the change in the visual relationship between the site and the surrounding countryside as a result of the growth in vegetation along the site's southern and western boundaries during the past nine years.
- 6.36.12 I have discussed the first two points extensively elsewhere in my report and have concluded that there is a case for the identification of a limited number of greenfield sites as a baseline Local Reserve provision in the event that the Council's expectations for the housing yield within the built-up areas do not materialise. The objection site can therefore be considered in this context and I accept that New Alresford is a sustainable community. Even though the site is in a peripheral location I see no objection on this ground insofar as it relates to accessibility. Thus the main issue is whether the previous Inspector's view remains valid in the light of the objector's case that in conjunction with the by-pass the now more mature vegetation forms a robust and defensible boundary within which the town can be contained. Also, that development of the site would not be harmful having regard to the Council's landscape character assessment of the area and would thereby be in accordance with Proposal C.6 and Appendix 2 of the Plan.
- 6.36.13 Firstly, I agree with the objector's case to the extent that the construction of the by-pass and the increased screening has meant that the site no longer has much in common with the land to the south, which comprises 'open, undulating arable farmland with blocks of woodland and established hedgerows'. Secondly, although the land does to some extent read as part of the countryside when looking west from the junction of Spring Gardens and Jacklyns Lane, it is nonetheless separated from the wider landscape of the Itchen Valley. The hedgerow and track with the built form of the pumping station and Vernal Cottages on the western boundary give a degree of visual containment which is completed on the other boundaries by the bypass and its maturing landscape, Jacklyns Lane and the existing housing on the northern side of Spring Gardens. I also accept that, were the site to be developed, a contribution of

approximately 13 affordable units to the stock of social housing in New Alresford is a significant advantage to be weighed against any harm to the landscape that does occur from altering the settlement boundary. Provided the screening from the bypass is maintained and indeed reinforced and that the siting and height of buildings is controlled to prevent any development being seen from the road, I consider on balance that the site could be developed without undue harm. For the reasons I have already explained I do not consider that there is a case for the land to be released immediately, but I am of the view that it could serve as a useful addition to the 'Local Reserve' to be called on if and when needed.

6.36.14 In issue five, Arlebury Park House and its grounds is considered by one objector to warrant inclusion within an extended settlement boundary for New Alresford as it is considered that the site's appearance has changed significantly from that of a large country house with associated outbuildings to a 'medium sized housing estate'. However as I saw on my visit, the great majority of those dwellings are conversions of existing buildings including 11 in the main house. The parkland setting has been preserved and with it the essentially rural character of the original grounds. Bearing in mind that the main building area is divorced from and indeed stands over 400m from the settlement boundary, the only consequence of now including the site would be to create the potential for further housing development that would change the character from rural to urban. To my mind this would be harmful to the setting of New Alresford in the approach from open countryside to the west.

6.36.15 In issue six, the objector requests an amendment to the northern boundary of the settlement to include Ladywell House. The objector's point is that its exclusion is illogical given that a number of other properties in Ladywell Lane lie within the boundary. In his view the stream on the northern boundary of Ladywell House provides the natural boundary between town and country. The Council's argument is essentially that the site appears as part of the countryside rather than the built-up area and is of a different character to the development to the east and south. An arguable case can be put forward that, bearing in mind the northward extent of the houses in Mill Hill, the stream would be a logical boundary. However, having inspected the site and its surroundings from a number of vantage points I am not persuaded on balance, that development within the grounds of Ladywell House could be carried out without harm being caused both to the Conservation Area and the setting of the town when seen from the countryside to the north. Accordingly I do not think that the suggested boundary amendment would be justified.

6.36.16 In the seventh issue, the Alresford Town Council argues that the 'exception site' development for affordable housing at Watercress Meadows should now be included within the settlement boundary. Ostensibly there is some logic in this approach as the houses are now part of the physical fabric and built form of the area, in contrast to the open countryside to the west. However, the Council fear that if the boundary is extended at this point there is a danger that it could lead to pressure for subsequent similar adjustments in an area where it is well defined and long established. On balance I am content that the countryside policies would provide sufficient safeguard for further unwarranted extensions of the settlement hereabouts and therefore, I agree that this site should be included within the settlement boundary.

6.36.17 Issue eight has been included at this point in the Council's skeleton report, despite relating to RT4. The primary purpose for seeking the reallocation of the extension to Arlebury Park recreation ground is to promote part of the land involved for housing at the next Review of this Plan. There is no dispute that additional recreation land is required to address a recognised deficiency, but there is a difference of opinion between the parties as to precisely what facilities should be provided. Consequently the objector proposes deletion of the RT4 allocation and replacing it with an alternative area to the north that is almost treble the size. Whereas the Council seek to provide a children's play area and improve the present soccer and cricket pitches, the objector and Town Council wish to make provision for the successful rugby club there also. Whilst the Council would have no objection to a larger area being

provided, they consider it would exceed the required need they have identified and they question whether it would therefore be capable of being implemented.

6.36.18 It is apparent that the objector and the landowner would oppose the acquisition of the designated land for recreational use and the question of compulsory acquisition would therefore need to be considered. In addition, the objector indicated that they would like to explore in the future the possibility of achieving a comprehensive proposal including some housing development, whereby the need for compulsory acquisition may not arise and indeed there was potential for land being assigned for recreational use free of charge. As no details of such a proposal were before me I can thus only have regard to issue of whether the RT4 allocation is appropriate.

6.36.19 The land allocated in the Plan measures 1.6ha and forms part of a relatively level field that is directly adjoins the western side of the recreation ground, existing pavilion building and car park. There is an extant planning permission to extend the existing pavilion building by 40% including the provision of changing facilities, upon which I was advised a start was imminent. The objector's alternative 4.4ha site slopes into the valley bottom and is remote from the pavilion and car park. It is evident that some considerable engineering works of cut and fill would thus be required to provide a level playing field area, making it more costly to implement. The Town Council are intending to install floodlighting of pitches and the introduction of such on the objector's suggested site would lead to an extension of light pollution into an area remote from the built-up area. Whilst my preference is therefore to retain the present allocated site, it is of insufficient size to accommodate a rugby pitch. Moreover, the residual area of the field that would remain beyond the allocated area is unlikely to be capable of any viable use. In the circumstances, I am not persuaded that the alternative RT4 allocation advanced by the objector should be pursued, but that the allocated RT4 site should be extended by about 50% to encompass the entire field.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.36.20 That the Plan be modified by:

- a) deleting the RT1 designation from the length of disused railway cutting that extends between New Farm Road and Bridge Road.
- b) extending the allocated RT4 site by about 50% northwards to encompass the entire field.
- c) including Land at Spring Gardens as a 'Local Reserve' housing site.
- d) including the affordable housing development at Watercress Meadows within the settlement boundary.

6.37. Omission Sites - Newtown

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.3	466/1	Robin Doney Esq
H.3	1072/1	Jane Mary Paskins

ISSUES

1. Whether the Proposal H.3 development frontage should be extended to include land at Newtown Garage, Church Road (466/1).
2. Whether the Proposal H.3 development frontage should be extended to include land fronting Hundred Acres Road (1072/1).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.37.1 There are two objections as to the current extent of the Proposal H.3 development frontages in Newtown. Firstly an extension to the designation is sought so as to include land at Newtown Garage in Church Road. Although I note that a planning application for 10 dwellings on the whole site has been refused by the Council, the objector makes it clear that the objection site is limited only to an extension of the existing linear frontage development. Secondly, an objector seeks a new Proposal H.3 development frontage along Hundred Acres Road to the south west of the village.
- 6.37.2 However earlier in my report I make it clear that I regard the Proposal H.3 development frontage policy as an unsatisfactory basis for the evaluation of infill proposals and have accordingly recommended its replacement by a criteria based policy which would be the basis for any individual infill development proposal that might come forward.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.37.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.38. Omission Sites - North Boarhunt

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.3	1071/1	A. M Light
H.3	1363/1	Robert Tutton
H.3	1162/1	Andy Rogers

ISSUE

Whether the Proposal H.3 development frontage should be extended to include additional land for residential development in North Boarhunt (1071/1, 1363/1, 1162/1).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.38.1 North Boarhunt is the subject of several designations of development frontage under Proposal H.3 and the objectors argue separately for the further designation of three further areas. These are at the southern end of Trampers Lane, land on the northern side of Southwick Road, and land to the south of Bere Farm Lane. However earlier in this report I explain why I consider the concept of development frontage designations to be unsatisfactory. I also recommend to the Council that the designations should be deleted by replacing Proposal H.3 with a new criteria based policy which would permit housing if it met both the objectives of the Plan and national guidance in respect of safeguarding the countryside and ensuring sustainable development. Bearing this in mind, it would be inappropriate for me to comment further on objections to a policy that I consider should be deleted. However the opportunity would remain for any development potential of the objection sites to be tested against the new policy through the planning application process.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.38.2 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.39. Omission Sites - Old Alresford

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	845/1	M25 Group
H.1	845/2	M25 Group

ISSUES

1. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Old Alresford should be extended to include the Southdowns Housing Estate (845/1).
2. Whether the settlement boundary for Old Alresford should be extended to include land between Southdowns Lodge and Southdowns (845/2).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.39.1 In the first issue, the objectors argue that it is 'misconceived and inappropriate' to exclude the Southdowns Housing Estate from the settlement policy boundary for Old Alresford. In particular it is argued that the site's appearance has changed markedly since designation of the boundary in the adopted Local Plan due to the development of 14 dwellings in place of the former Children's Nursing Home. I acknowledge that those changes have taken place but the site nonetheless remains separate from the village and surrounded by fields. Because of its detachment from the existing settlement it cannot in my view be reasonably perceived as an 'integral part' of Old Alresford.
- 6.39.2 As regards the second issue, irrespective of the outcome of the objection in the above paragraph, the objector argues that the settlement boundary should be extended to include land between Southdowns and Southdowns Lodge. However it seems to me that development of this open and elevated area would, as the Council says, be intrusive in the countryside and harmful to the setting of Old Alresford. Bearing in mind the size of the site, its development in conjunction with the existing houses at Southdown would represent a substantial wedge of housing somewhat at odds with the more limited frontage development in this part of Basingstoke Road. I have taken account of the argument that further development would have advantages in terms of affordable housing and sustaining local facilities. But again I concur with the Council's view that the limited provision of facilities that exists within Old Alresford is not such that further housing provision in this location would meet the Plan's strategy for sustainable development.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.39.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.40. Omission Sites - Otterbourne

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	216/2	J. S. Bloor (Newbury) Ltd & St Michaels Devt. Co. Ltd
H.2	216/3	J. S. Bloor (Newbury) Ltd & St Michaels Devt. Co. Ltd
H.3	462/1	Don Lee
H.3	526/1	The Purbury Group
CHAP 7	415/2	St Michaels Development Co.

ISSUES

1. Whether the settlement boundary for Otterbourne should be extended to include land to the south of Poles Lane and west of Main Road (216/2), (216/3)

2. Whether land at Park Lane and Boyatt Lane Otterbourne Hill should be defined as a Proposal H.3 development frontage (462/1), (526/1)
3. Whether land to the west of Poles Lane/northwest of the M3 should be allocated for employment use (415/2).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.40.1 In the first issue, the objector seeks the extension of the settlement boundary to include land to the south of Poles Lane and west of Main Road, Otterbourne. The site extends from Main Road along the valley of the Otterbourne stream to form a boundary with the eastern side of the M3, whilst to the south is existing development at Coles Mede / Cranbourne Drive. Although the site has a total area in excess of 5ha, the objection promotes housing development on 0.9ha (or 1.36ha including the access road) on its northern part. The estimated capacity is within the range of 30-40 dwellings and whilst the objector suggests that the entire site be brought within the settlement policy boundary, it is additionally proposed that the area outside the land suggested for housing and the access be designated under Proposal RT1, which with other policies in the Plan would protect it from development.
- 6.40.2 Development proposals in the vicinity of the objection site were last considered at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan with a scheme of about 40 dwellings on two parcels of land of 0.8ha and 1.1ha respectively on either side of the stream. In connection with the current objection the objector has reappraised the landscape character area and concluded that with development confined to the north east field the concern of the previous Inquiry Inspector would be addressed, as there would not be any significant narrowing of the wedge of countryside considered important for the setting and character of Otterbourne.
- 6.40.3 With the sustainability of the site in terms of access to local facilities and public transport not an issue between the parties, my recommendation in this case essentially depends on whether I consider the countryside setting of Otterbourne would be compromised by the suggested housing allocation and the inclusion of the whole site within the settlement boundary, albeit with a Proposal RT1 designation. Dealing with the last point first, from my inspection of the area I agree with the previous Inspector's finding that the objection site brings the countryside 'right into this village', especially as in addition to the visual attributes the landform is that of the valley to the Otterbourne stream which remains open as far east as the bridge formed by Main Road. In my view the Council's point that this feature enables the countryside to penetrate to the heart of the village and gives it a rural character is especially valid. I also reject the objector's assertions that the site relates to and reads with the built development to the north, east and south and that it can therefore be distinguished from the open land extending to the south between the M3 and Cranbourne Drive. I similarly refute the argument that the area of 'countryside proper' in the vicinity of the objection site commences on the west side of the motorway. I acknowledge that if I had considered those assertions to be essentially correct, the objector's approach of extending the settlement boundary to include the objection site would be logical. On that basis there would also be more justification in designating the area under Proposal RT1. However, as I am firmly of the view that the characteristics of the site are such that it is perceived as an unspoilt wedge of countryside providing a clearly recognisable and defensible boundary to the adjacent built up area, thereby reinforcing the rural character of Otterbourne, I can see no merit in the removal of the protection that the countryside policies of the Plan already provide. As the Council says, the site's retention as countryside outside the Proposal H2 boundary for Otterbourne is the most appropriate policy designation and provides a clear and robust basis for resisting development pressure.
- 6.40.4 Turning to the suggested housing allocation on the north east part of the site, it is essentially axiomatic from the reasons expressed for my view that the site as a whole should not be included within the settlement policy boundary, that this particular part of the site should not be favourably considered for a housing allocation. This judgement is in part informed by my conclusion on the Council's main housing

strategy that there is not a general need to find more housing land and that only a limited local reserve of such land needs to be identified to cater for the possibility that the actual land supply does not fulfil the Council's expectations. For sustainability reasons I have identified those sites in the 'Category A' settlements, which do not include Otterbourne. However notwithstanding this point I do not consider that the individual merits of this site are such as for it to be considered favourably for a housing allocation. I acknowledge that the land is bounded by existing residential development on three sides, but paradoxically this serves to reinforce the importance of the site as part of the larger entity of land in providing the countryside setting to Otterbourne. Furthermore, in terms of landscape quality I can see no discernible difference between the contribution of the omission site and the southern section of the larger area. Quite apart from the outlook from adjoining dwellings, the visual impact of residential development would be evident to all the users of the public footpath along the western and southern boundaries of the larger site. I have considered all the other matters raised at the Inquiry, but on balance I do not consider that the omission site should be considered in the context of this Plan as being appropriate for development.

- 6.40.5 In issue two, Otterbourne Hill is a locality that is identified in the adopted Local Plan as being subject to the development frontage policy. However in the Review Plan, this has been deleted and the area is designated as countryside. This small enclave of housing is not so much a settlement in its own right but rather an extension of the residential area it abuts which is in the administrative area of Eastleigh Borough Council. However whilst there are some facilities that are reasonably accessible and the locality is incorporated in the Hampshire County Council's Eastleigh to Winchester cycle route, the area of Otterbourne Hill has a predominantly rural character. Boyatts Lane has development on one side only, Park Lane is mostly unmetalled and Chapel Lane is extremely narrow. Despite the fact it may functionally relate to the urban area of Eastleigh that adjoins it to the south, I agree that it is more appropriate to make it subject to a countryside designation rather than ascribe it a main built-up area boundary.
- 6.40.6 With regard to the particular objection by Mr Lee who seeks the inclusion of his property "Glen House" within a development designation, it is clear that this fronts onto Grange Drive, which leads off Park Lane near the District boundary. Although the nearby housing within Eastleigh Borough is within a defined settlement boundary in their Local Plan, I note this was excluded from the development frontage notation on the adopted Plan. Having regard to its location, where it forms a projection into the countryside, I regard it as having more affinity with the countryside than the main built-up area. Hence, I consider it is appropriate that it remains within the countryside designation.
- 6.40.7 Although the Perbury group consider the development frontage boundary should be extended along Boyatt Lane as far as Penarth House, I consider the character of this locality has more affinity with the countryside than the built-up area. The issue of inclusion within a Proposal H.3 development frontage does not arise as following my evaluation of the Proposal I have concluded that, because of weaknesses in the basis on which the policy has been formulated and doubts as to its practical application and fairness, the concept of designated development frontages for infill development should be replaced by a criteria based policy. Key amongst the considerations that would be addressed in considering any development proposal against the criteria is the sustainability of its location. Thus any evidence on sustainability could be used to support a planning application for infill development within the frontages put forward by the objectors. But given my conclusion that the Plan would be improved by the deletion of development frontages, it would be inappropriate to respond further to these objections in this report.
- 6.40.8 In the third issue I have dealt with the matter of whether land to the west of Poles Lane/northwest of the M3 should be allocated for employment use in my report on objections to the Employment Chapter.

RECOMMENDATION

6.40.9 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.41. Omission Sites - Owslebury

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.3	501/1	James Judd
H.3	542/1	G Tull

ISSUES

1. Whether land at Whaddon Lane/ Water Lane should be allocated for mixed uses (542/1).
2. Whether the coverage of Proposal H.3 development frontages at Owslebury should be extended to include an additional site at Longwood Road (501/1)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.41.1 In the first issue, a site of about 2.7ha known as the Ship Field, bounded by Whaddon and Water Lanes is considered by the objector to be appropriate for mixed uses, with the potential to provide some housing and employment opportunities for Owslebury. The village is a settlement listed within Proposal H.3 and from my visit to the area and appraisal of the Council's process of settlement categorisation I have no reason to consider that it should have been placed within Proposal H.2. However under the current drafting of the Plan this would preclude the principle of the site's development as it would not be confined to a designated development frontage. Furthermore the replacement policy that I have recommended for Proposal H.3 does not envisage sites of this scale. This is because, in terms of the overall housing strategy of the Plan, in respect of which I have identified a requirement for only a very limited Local Reserve capacity in the event that identified sites do not come forward, I do not consider the site to be appropriately located. In suggesting 'mixed use', the objector does not give a figure for the extent of housing land, but clearly it would be substantial. Having regard to the principles of sustainable development embodied both in the Plan and national guidance, I am of the view that settlements falling outside proposal H.2 would normally be a low priority for the allocation of housing other than sites representing modest infill. Furthermore, in this particular case, I perceive a further disadvantage of development, as from my visit to Owslebury I am of the opinion that the Highway Authority's reservations as to the unsuitability of the local access roads to cater for additional traffic are wholly justified.
- 6.41.2 The objector in the second issue argues that a cluster of about ten properties on the Longwood Road, from 'Homelands' to 'The Old Tin Barn', should be given development frontage status under Proposal H.3. Although physically separate from the village it is considered that the social and historical links with Owslebury, together with the need for consistency with other dispersed groups of properties in other settlements that are given an infill notation, justify inclusion within the policy. However as I have recommended the deletion of Proposal H.3 from the Plan it would be inappropriate for me to support additional development frontages. Any subsequent development proposal that comes forward should be evaluated against the criteria of the replacement policy.

RECOMMENDATION

6.41.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.42. Omission Sites - Shawford

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.1	858/2	Braemore Investments Ltd
H.3	858/3	Braemore Investments Ltd
H.4	858/4	Braemore Investments Ltd

ISSUE

Whether the H.3 development frontage for Shawford should be extended (858/2 & 3)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.42.1 As a settlement falling within Proposal H.3 of the Plan, Shawford has a number of defined 'development frontages' in which residential development or redevelopment will be permitted subject to a number of criteria. The objectors argue that the Bridge Hotel and its associated buildings and land are an integral part of the settlement area of Shawford and urban in character. The Council has excluded the site on the basis that it is relatively open and that the hotel grounds contribute to the countryside setting of the village.
- 6.42.2 Earlier in this report I recommend the deletion of the current Proposal H.3 and its replacement by a criteria based policy for the assessment of individual proposals within the countryside. I have no doubt that the points raised in both the objection and the Council's response will be material to the appraisal of a scheme for housing at the Bridge Hotel under the new policy. In the interim it would be inappropriate for me to reach a conclusion in respect of inclusion within a development frontage when my recommendation is that the latter should be deleted from the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.42.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.43. Omission Sites - Shedfield

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	363/1	J Martin
H.3	1364/1	Robert Tutton (for Mr A Batten)
CHPT 13	533/1	PE Richards

ISSUE

Whether the Proposal H.3 frontage development area for Shedfield should be replaced with a policy boundary that includes a greater area for development (533/1, 363/1) and whether it should be extended (1364/1).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.43.1 There are three objections in respect of this issue concerning two areas of land: (i) land at and adjoining Culverlands Bungalow, and (ii) at Upper Church Road. In respect of the former, one of the objectors argues that 3.36ha of land east of Culverlands Bungalow should be allocated for appropriate mixed use development whilst a second objector seeks the allocation of 0.3 ha at the Bungalow itself for housing. In both cases it is the definition of Shedfield as a Proposal H.2 settlement

with a settlement policy boundary including the objection sites that is effectively sought. However to my mind the 'promotion' of the village to a Proposal H.2 settlement would be inappropriate as it does not have the level of facilities or transport links to be a sustainable location. In site-specific terms I accept the Council's analysis that the development of the 3.36ha site would represent an in-depth development largely uncharacteristic of Shedfield and would intrude into the countryside. The 0.3ha site would be more discreet but is rural in character and separate from the consolidated areas of frontage which the Council has defined in Proposal H.3. As regards the larger site, I also note that the Highway Authority raised concerns as to highway safety, which from my visit to the area appear well grounded.

- 6.43.2 In the case of Upper Church Road, the objector seeks the extension of the defined development frontage along its south side so as to include Corner Cottage. Earlier in this report I have recommended the deletion of the current Proposal H.3 and its replacement by a criteria based policy. Whether any particular proposal would comply with those criteria would be a matter for the Council's judgement but the support for the Council's position by the Inspector in his report on the current adopted Local Plan would clearly be a material consideration.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.43.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.44. Omission Sites - Shirrell Heath

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.3	246/1	R. Phillips
H.3	247/1	P Taylor
H.3	453/1	R. W Titheridge
H.3	1078/1	M.G Hooper
H.3	1075/1	A.J Lowther
H.3	1076/1	Victor Wheeler
H.3	1365/1	Robert Tutton (Mr and Mrs Gussman)
H.3	1366/1	Robert Tutton (A Shawyer)
H.2	454/1	Mrs Dunn
H.2	1360/7	R Tutton

ISSUES

1. Whether the Proposal H.3 development frontages for Shirrell Heath should be extended to include additional land for housing (246/1, 247/1, 453/1, 1078/1, 1365/1, 1366/1, 1075/1, 1076/1)
2. Whether Shirrell Heath should be given a Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary and whether land at the former Shirrell Heath Farm should be designated for a mixed development, including a new village centre (454/1, 1360/7).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.44.1 In the first issue, there are four instances in which objectors cite Proposal H.2 as the relevant policy in their promotion of land for residential development. However in two of these cases I am satisfied that it is the current designation in the Plan of Proposal H.3 that would preclude the principle of developing the land concerned. These sites are the curtilages of Highdown and Wynters Croft, Twynhams Hill and join sites claimed for inclusion in Proposal H.3 at the northern end of the High Street; Nightingale Cottage on the eastern side of the High Street at its southern end; the curtilage of Fernleigh in the High Street, land fronting Smiths Lane and land south of Daysh's Farm in Hospital Road. However as I have explained earlier in my report, I

do not consider that the development frontage concept within Proposal H.3 to be a satisfactory method of identifying small housing sites outside the Proposal H.2 settlements. In many cases the boundaries are arbitrary and the policy itself appears to be confused. I also have doubts whether many of the development frontages are in sustainable locations. Instead I have recommended a replacement Proposal H.3 with a criteria based policy for assessing individual development proposals. Hence, if owners of any of the sites in Shirrell Heath that have been put forward for inclusion in the Plan wish to promote development on their land they would be able to proceed by means of a planning application, which will then be assessed under the new policy.

6.44.2 In the second issue, two objections relate to Proposal H.2 with in one case a specific settlement policy boundary being suggested, as it is considered that the opportunity should be taken to consolidate the settlement and enhance its identity. However earlier in my report I explain that whilst the assessment of the relative sustainability levels of different settlements is not an exact science, with valid points made and discrepancies in the Council's assessment highlighted, I have no disagreement with the thrust of the Council's reasoning. Moreover in settlements such as Shirrell Heath, where an argument for either a Proposal H.2 or Proposal H.3 status could reasonably be made, the fact that the Council have in my view identified broadly sufficient housing is a further factor to dissuade me from altering the policy status.

6.44.3 A second objection promotes the development of a substantial site at the former Shirrell Heath Farm to create a new village centre for the settlement. In addition to housing, mention is made of the possibility of a local shop, village hall, a surgery and public open space. Attractive though such a concept might be in an essentially linear settlement with no 'heart', because Shirrell Heath is not a Proposal H.2 settlement in the Plan (and in my view should not become one), development of this scale would be inappropriate. Under the replacement Proposal H.3 that I am recommending, infill development would be permitted only if it met a number of criteria. The proposal put forward in this objection would not in my view be infill; rather it would represent a major departure from the restraint of development in the more rural and less sustainable settlements such as Shirrell Heath.

RECOMMENDATION

6.44.4 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.45. Omission Sites - Soberton

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.3	495/1	T Hoff
H.3	498/3	Stephen Horn

ISSUE

Whether the Proposal H.3 frontage development area for Soberton should be extended (495/1, 498/3).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.45.1 Proposal H.3 of the Plan defines Soberton as a settlement in which residential development or redevelopment will be permitted within defined development frontages. There are two objections relating to the Plan's exclusion from those frontages: along the eastern side of Station Road and at Webbs Green, albeit that the proposal for the latter includes land behind the existing line of houses. However earlier in this report I have recommended the deletion of the current Proposal H.3 and its replacement by a criteria based policy. Accordingly it would be inappropriate for me to make a recommendation on the merits of including land within the ambit of a

policy that I do not consider to be appropriate for the reasons that I have set out. Any particular development proposal that comes forward can be assessed against the criteria of the replacement policy.

RECOMMENDATION

6.45.2 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.46. Omission Sites - Soberton Heath

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.3	455/1	M Lilly
H.3	1372/3	Joanna Webb
H.3	1073/1	Mapledean Developments Ltd

ISSUES

1. Whether the Plan's Proposal H.3 development frontages for Soberton Heath should be extended to include additional land at Heath Road and Forester Road (455/1, 1073/1).
2. Whether the Plan's categorisation of Soberton Heath should be amended to provide a Proposal H.2 policy boundary around the settlement, in place of the H.3 development frontages which the Plan proposes (1372/3).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.46.1 In the first issue, objections have been put forward to promote the extension of the Plan's Proposal H.3 frontages at Soberton Heath to include land on the south side of Forester Road and south west of 'Glenwood' in Heath Road. However I have explained earlier in my report, that as I am recommending the deletion of the current Proposal H.3, it would be inappropriate to use it as the basis for the assessment of individual objections. Any particular development proposal can be assessed through the appraisal of a planning application in the light of the criteria identified in the suggested replacement policy.

6.46.2 In the second issue, the objection relates to the promotion of an in depth development on a rectangular area of land to the rear of three houses in Heath Road. In order to facilitate this it is argued that Soberton Heath should be subject to a Proposal H.2 policy boundary. I note the objector's claim that the site is similar in character to 'good opportunity' sites identified in other settlements in the Urban Capacity Study. However I am satisfied that the Council's categorisation of the settlement as between Proposals H.2, H.3 and the countryside is not significantly flawed, as both the linear pattern of development and the relatively poor accessibility both suggest that a formal settlement boundary would be unjustified and unworkable, with significant harm being caused contrary to the Plan's objectives.

RECOMMENDATION

6.46.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.47. Omission Site - South Wonston

OBJECTION TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	530/5	Persimmon House South Coast Ltd

ISSUE

Should the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for South Wonston be extended (530/5).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.47.1 The objector in this case seeks the extension of the Policy H.2 settlement boundary so as to include a rectangular area of land of about 2.25ha off Goldfinch Way and adjoining the north east boundary of South Wonston. In support of the objection it is argued that the site is bounded on two sides by existing development and is well screened from the surrounding area by tall trees and hedgerows. However I can find little in favour of additional housing on the site, as outside the existing boundary at the end of Goldfinch Way there is a distinct change to a rural character with only scattered buildings that are well screened and generally subservient to the rural landscape. To my mind this would be an illogical extension largely unrelated to the existing built up area. Furthermore its development would make it difficult to justify resisting future adjustments to the boundary to include both land to the west and south which with their existing dwellings would have at least as strong if not stronger case for housing allocation than a wholly greenfield site.
- 6.47.2 Although the objector indicates that the development would provide for some smaller and affordable dwellings to meet local needs, the Council indicated that this would form the minority with the majority being open market housing. I agree with the Council that the provision of affordable housing here does not form a satisfactory rationale for releasing a substantial greenfield site in this locality, especially as such housing could be provided under Policy H6 and the site would represent an incursion into the countryside on an elevated ridge line.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.47.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.48. Omission Sites - Sparsholt

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.1	849/1	P Hunt
H.2	237/1	P Meitner
H.2	240/1	Trustees of the D Martineau Will Trust
H.2	1124/1	K. R Wood
H.2	245/1	K Gottlieb
H.2	244/1	K Wood

ISSUE

Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for Sparsholt should be amended to include five separate sites identified by objectors: Land North of Locks Lane; Land South of Locks Lane; Moor Court Farm; Sparsholt Manor; land at Church Farm.

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.48.1 The village of Sparsholt is defined in the Plan as falling within Proposal H.2, whereby in principle land within the settlement boundary is considered suitable for housing. The Sparsholt Conservation Area covers most of the area within the boundary, together with some of the surrounding countryside considered important to the setting of the village, whilst a Village Design Statement (VDS) prepared by residents was adopted by the Council in 1999 as Supplementary Planning Guidance. In the Plan, the Council seeks to maintain the settlement boundary defined in the adopted Plan without any amendments and as a result there are a number of separate objections that seek adjustment to the boundary to include various areas of land within it.

- 6.48.2 At the Inquiry session to hear objections to the proposed boundary excluding three of these areas, land at Moor Court Farm, Church Farm and north of Locks Lane, it was argued that the Council has adopted the wrong approach to the definition of Settlement Policy Boundaries. Instead of establishing boundaries that properly delineate the extent of the existing built up area and which may or may not include sites suitable for development, the objectors argue that the Council had additionally (and incorrectly) also had regard to the scope for any further development and simply sought to define a boundary which excluded it. However as I explain in the overview to this chapter, I reject this argument.
- 6.48.3 I accept that ostensibly there is at least some logic to the objector's approach of defining a boundary which reflects the existing character of a settlement but, that said, I consider the practicalities are such that the Council's stance is necessary to achieve the requisite degree of certainty as to where, in principle, development would and would not be acceptable on the periphery of larger settlements. To argue, as the objector does, that notwithstanding the general presumption in favour of development within built up areas in national guidance and the adopted Local Plan, the acceptability of development is further controlled by other policies and measures (for example Conservation Areas) is not in itself untrue. However, in my view it does underestimate the importance of a defined edge to the larger settlements as a firm boundary between on the one hand the much more restrictive countryside policies and on the other the far more permissive and generally criteria based approach to development opportunities. Inclusion of land within the boundary with its development potential uncertain would undoubtedly be the 'thin end of the wedge' in terms of resisting the aspirations of many landowners.
- 6.48.4 I also reject the allegation that the Council has an ambiguity in its approach. Paragraph 6.32 of the Plan states that *'The policy boundaries define the areas within which development is acceptable in principle, although these may not correspond to property boundaries or the fullest extent of a settlement as local people understand it'*. In my view this clearly explains the basis on which the Council has proceeded. It will be self evident from my report that I take a different view in respect of the Proposal H.3 settlements put forward in the Plan. I have given my reasons for that approach in my assessment of the objections to that policy.
- 6.48.5 Having supported the Council's position on policy boundaries, it is axiomatic that I should also assess the areas of land suggested for inclusion within the boundary of Sparsholt on the basis of whether or not they would be suitable for development. At the Inquiry, I also heard the case for the inclusion of land to the north of Locks Lane within the settlement boundary and this was supported by a further written representation. The site comprises two dwellings, Locks Lane House and The Maples, set in large grounds and the objector argues firstly that such houses are characteristic of Sparsholt and secondly that there is no gap or sense of separation from the currently defined boundary to the south west. However despite sharing that boundary for a short distance the majority of the site is bounded by open and undeveloped land in the form of the paddocks to the south, the village cricket pitch to the east and open countryside to the north. Locks Lane itself is no more than a bridleway, with no vehicular access from the east and has a rural ambience from its enclosure by trees and hedges. If I were to recommend the objection site's inclusion within the settlement boundary it would form an illogical protrusion into the surrounding countryside rather than any sensible consolidation of the existing settlement. I can therefore see little merit in the objector's case for the site's inclusion within the village envelope.
- 6.48.6 The second site is a wedge of land of about 3ha lying to the south of Locks Lane up to the boundary with Home Lane. In support of the objections an illustrative layout was submitted, showing 12 dwellings served by two private drives from Home Lane and Locks Lane on the western side of the site separated by a 'millennium village

green' from two houses on the eastern side accessed from Locks Lane. The site at present comprises paddocks with hedge boundaries containing mature trees.

- 6.48.7 In support of the omission site the objection points to existing housing in Church Lane, the north side of Home Lane and at Watley House as establishing its context. However although I saw those properties on my visit to the site I find it difficult to disagree with the Council's conclusion that the logical boundary to the village is Home Lane. Notwithstanding that the cricket ground and three properties (The Maples, Locks Lane House and Watley Farm) do lie to the north of Locks Lane and, therefore, the site, I do not consider that they form a cohesive framework at the northern edge of the village that would justify residential infilling on the paddocks. Whilst the objection site is not open countryside in the sense of the open fields to the north of the properties in Locks Lane, its strongly rural character forms an important part of the setting for Sparsholt and thereby an integral part of the Conservation Area. I am aware that the latter seeks to guide change rather than prevent it, but in this instance I agree with the Inspector at the Inquiry into the currently adopted Local Plan when he concluded firstly that 'Home Lane forms a clear and definable boundary between the more densely developed part of the village and the sporadic development to the north' and secondly that 'to include the objection site within the Policy boundary would confer a presumption in favour of development which would be detrimental to the rural character of the village'. Overall I therefore conclude that there should be no amendments to the Plan to include this site as part of the defined envelope of Sparsholt.
- 6.48.8 In the case of land at Moor Court Farm, I consider that there is a clear difference in character between the two sides of Moor Court Lane. To the south, within the existing policy boundary, are a number of dwellings, whereas to the north is agricultural land and open countryside. In my opinion the farm buildings and Moor Court Farmhouse, to the extent that it can be seen beyond the screening, read as part of that countryside, whilst the copse to the east additionally separates the farm from the policy boundary. I also note that although within the Conservation Area, the farm is outside the boundary of the village envelope as shown in the VDS. In short, I can find no reason to differ from the conclusion of the Inspector in the Inquiry for the adopted Local Plan who observed that 'this site is more related to the countryside beyond the village than to the built up area of the settlement itself'.
- 6.48.9 In the case of Sparsholt Manor, the owner considers the Manor is an integral part of the village's built fabric and is home to the annual village fete and should thus be included within the boundary. He argues that as one approaches the village from the east, some cottages and the Plough PH are encountered on the right while the Manor is on the left. The Council indicate that whilst the Manor and its grounds are within the designated Conservation Area, it is screened from the village road by trees except where it may be clearly viewed along the entrance drive. They maintain that this effectively serves to separate it from the main built-up form of the village and assert that with its scale, Lutyens style design and landscaped grounds it has more resemblance to a country mansion than a village house.
- 6.48.10 I have no doubt that everyone in the village views the building as being within the settlement, but the purpose for defining settlement boundaries is to depict those areas where development proposals would be acceptable in principle. The clear decision that the Council has taken in respect of this village is to recognise that with its limited size and facilities, further development should be very strictly controlled. Hence, the settlement boundary has been tightly defined to encompass the main village core and where there are peripheral dwellings set in extensive grounds such as is the case with the Manor, they have been excluded as having an appearance that has more affinity with the countryside than the main built-up area. I agree with this approach, which has been adopted here and in other settlements which reflects the transition which frequently occurs at the edge of settlements and accords with the Plan's philosophy of directing development to the most sustainable locations.

- 6.48.11 Although the Manor was within the village envelope in the 1987 Winchester Area Local Plan, it was excluded from the current (1998) adopted District-wide Plan together with three houses north of Home Lane. Whilst it was argued that the change was made without any particular transparency, clearly there has been a significant change in Planning Guidance since 1987 to encourage optimal use of previously developed land, which necessitates close scrutiny of those areas that should be so identified. The re-inclusion of the Manor and its curtilage extending to about 2 hectares could potentially lead to considerable development pressures, which would be inappropriate for a modestly sized village.
- 6.48.12 Whilst the objector maintains that the purpose behind the objection is not to promote the site for development, they nevertheless questioned whether all the sites identified in the Urban Capacity Study would be implemented. Also ownership of the building could change in the future and the structure is not a Listed Building. I am further satisfied that the present policy regime, which would continue to apply to the site, has not served to unreasonably restrict limited appropriate development as is witnessed by the permissions granted by the Council for the conversion of stables to staff cottages and the erection of a new pool house. If the settlement boundary were to be extended to follow the Conservation Area boundary, incorporating all the houses in extensive grounds that encompass the village core, it would virtually double its present geographical extent. I therefore conclude that exclusion of Sparsholt Manor from the settlement boundary is appropriate.
- 6.48.13 Turning finally to Church Farm, the objector considers that the suggested extension to the settlement policy boundary comprises four distinct elements: Church Farm itself and adjoining cottages; a group of 15 affordable housing units known as Bostock Close; the school playing field, and a small paddock located between the playing field and the access lane to Church Farm. In his view, although built as an 'exception site' outside the settlement boundary, Bostock Close now forms part of the built up area and it would be illogical for countryside policies to apply to it, whilst the inclusion within the policy boundary would have no effect on the tenure restrictions. I agree that as a matter of practicality, once built, exception sites should normally be included within the policy boundary. Furthermore, Church Farm Cottages are no longer occupied by farm workers and I consider that with the redundant farm buildings and Bostock Close they do comprise a consolidated group of buildings which form a well defined edge to the built up area, separate and distinguishable from the landscape setting to Sparsholt of the more open countryside to the east and south. In agreeing with the objector's suggested amendment to the settlement boundary in this case, and therefore that there is some scope for development within it, I am also mindful that the VDS identifies the school playing field as an important open area and that the land lies within the Conservation Area. Both factors would be key considerations in the consideration of any development proposals within the amended boundary.
- 6.48.14 To the extent that my recommendation in respect of land at Church Farm increases the development potential within Sparsholt above that identified in the Urban Capacity Study, I have noted the Council's point that because of its relatively remote location and low level of service provision the village does not perform particularly well in relation to sustainability considerations. That said, small scale development does have the potential to further support the viability of the existing facilities in the settlement, including the village shop and school. On balance, I therefore see no material conflict with the sustainability principles of the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.48.15 That the Plan be modified by the amendment of the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary to include land at Church Farm as identified in the objection and the existing housing development at Bostock Close.

6.49. Omission Site - Stoke Charity

OBJECTION TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.3	5/1	T Finn-Kelcey

ISSUE

Whether the Proposal H.3 the development frontage for Stoke Charity should be extended westwards between Kirby's Cottage and Wells Cottage.

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.49.1 The single issue in this case is whether the Proposal H.3 development frontage should be extended westwards from Kirby's Cottage up to and including Wells Cottage. I have noted the arguments of the objector that as the last in a row of houses, Wells Cottage is clearly identifiable as an integral part of Stoke Charity. Conversely the Council points to its separation from the main cluster by the floodplain. However as earlier in my report I have recommended the deletion of the Proposal H.3 development frontages and their replacement by a criteria based policy, it would be inappropriate for me to make a recommendation in this case. Any infill development proposal could be considered in the light of the new policy.

RECOMMENDATION

6.49.2 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.50. Omission Site – Sutton Scotney

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	206/8	Compass Roadside Ltd

ISSUE

Whether land adjacent to the Sutton Scotney trunk road service area (TRSA) should be included in the defined Proposal H.2 policy settlement boundary for Sutton Scotney.

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.50.1 In this issue the objector seeks the inclusion of land adjacent to the Sutton Scotney TRSA within the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for the village. From the content of the objection letter of 26 November 2001, I consider that notwithstanding an accompanying plan showing four separate areas surrounding the TRSA, the duly made objection relates to the south eastern 'Area 2' with boundaries to the service area, the A30 and the A34.

6.50.2 The objector argues that because the site lies between the settlement boundary and the TRSA its development would not prejudice the countryside. I take the opposite view and consider that the separation of the TRSA from Sutton Scotney by this belt of open land (which the Council estimates to be about 4ha) is particularly important. The TRSA is necessarily located in the countryside and has no physical or functional relationship with the built up area. To my mind, because the TRSA is, in effect, 'built up', the retention of the gap is essential to reinforce the distinction between the two. The erosion of this area of separation would comprise a creeping form of urbanisation

and establish a principle which, if adopted would lend to the loss of a substantial tract of countryside outside the current logical and definable settlement boundary.

RECOMMENDATION

6.50.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.51. Omission Sites - Swanmore

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
C.3	360/2	Wimpey Homes
H.1	360/4	Wimpey Homes
H.2	483/1	M. K Carr
H.2	360/3	Wimpey Homes
CHPT13	483/2	M. K Carr
H.2	1192/1	Paul Cordery
H.2	1362/1	Mr & Mrs M West
H.5	360/1	Wimpey Homes

ISSUES

1. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary should be extended to include land at The Lakes, allocated for housing development and removed from the Local Gap designation (360/1-4)
2. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary be extended to include land south east of Hampton Hill / rear of properties fronting Church Road; Michaelmas House, Church Lane; and off Buckets Farm Close / east of Vicarage Lane (483/1 & 2, 1192/1, 1362/1)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.51.1 The objector in the first issue questions the level of housing provision throughout the District, the means of achieving this level and the approach to affordable housing. These are topics dealt with elsewhere in my report on the objections to the Housing Chapter. The area subject to the objection formerly comprised the entire open area between the southern limit of development and the unmade track known as The Lakes extending to about 11ha, but this was subsequently reduced to approximately 5ha at the eastern end. The objector suggests the site is capable of providing between 120 – 150 dwellings and a 60 bed nursing home.
- 6.51.2 Swanmore is a large village some 13 miles from the City of Winchester and immediately south east of Bishops Waltham. The village is included in the schedule of settlements subject to Proposal H.2 and accordingly is defined by a settlement policy boundary. The boundary has not been altered from that shown in the current adopted Local Plan. The village is not a category A settlement, but it is accepted as being at the upper end of Category B, having regard to the broad range of facilities it enjoys for its size. The site forms part of the designated Local Gap separating Swanmore from Waltham Chase and Shirrell Heath to the south west. Although it was argued that the physical separation would be retained even if the settlement boundary were to be extended to encompass the omission site, the same would be true for the remainder of the larger area that formerly comprised the objection site. Whilst the site is some 1.2km from Shirrell Heath, representing the upper end of the limit considered necessary to fulfil the Gap functions, there would be no logic in removing the Gap designation from this site in isolation while retaining it on the remaining land to the west. The proposal would breach the existing defensible boundary to development at the field edge and make a significant inroad into the open countryside of a scale that I regard as being excessive to meet the settlement's

local needs. Moreover, the proposed access into the site from Gravel Hill would necessitate removal of most of the mature hedgerow along that road frontage, thereby opening up the site to view. I consider that in combination, the scale of built development and its high visibility would have an undesirable urbanising impact on the outskirts of the settlement that would unacceptably erode the present rural appearance. Although the objector argues this would be a low price to pay, I disagree, having regard to the fact that the settlement is one where only limited development to serve local needs is considered to be acceptable.

- 6.51.3 I have accepted the Council's stance of encouraging development in the most sustainable locations and restricting development to local needs requirements elsewhere. Although it was further asserted that the settlement has an untidy edge hereabouts, this omission site has a more distinct boundary and rural character and appearance than other areas at the urban fringe and I do not regard this proposal as being a logical rounding-off of the built-up area. Furthermore, the suggested mitigation measures of extensive peripheral planting to screen the site from external views would take a considerable period of time to become effective.

- 6.51.4 Whilst it was also stated by the objector that the identified UCS sites within the settlement boundary would be unlikely to generate affordable housing to meet local needs, it is open to the providers of such housing to advance proposals in respect of rural exception sites for consideration by the Council. The same argument would apply to the provision of nursing home facilities to meet any local shortfall that cannot be met within the built-up confines of the settlement.

- 6.51.5 In the second issue, objections to the Plan have identified three suggested amendments to the policy boundary which would permit additional housing. The largest of the sites is land south east of Hampton Hill and to the rear of properties fronting Church Road. The objector considers that the site is well related to the existing village and could be developed for housing without harm to the character and appearance both of the settlement itself and the surrounding countryside. However I saw on my visit to Swanmore that this site is of substantial size and close to the village centre. As such it is identified in the Swanmore Village Design Statement as part of the 'green corridor' that runs north from the village centre.

- 6.51.6 I find it difficult to disagree with the Council's view that having regard to the site's size and location, its development would be harmful to the setting of the village. I also consider that the reservations of the Highway Authority in terms of the difficulty of providing adequate access and visibility requirements without the loss of established hedgerows and trees reinforces the argument that the site should be retained as open countryside rather than included within the settlement boundary.

- 6.51.7 A more modest omission site is suggested in the form of part of the garden of Michaelmas House in Church Lane. I agree with the objector that with its western boundary to a dwelling and a pub car park and the well established mature boundary screening, the garden reads as part of the settlement rather than the countryside beyond. Even though settlement boundaries in the Plan do not necessarily follow property boundaries I consider that an amendment in this case to include the remaining area of garden within the settlement would have no discernible effect on the setting of the village or the more immediate surroundings. That said, any development potential would still be subject to constraints of access and tree loss.

- 6.51.8 The final omission site concerns land off Buckets Farm Close and to the east of Vicarage Lane. The relatively recent development in the Close itself appears to be an 'in-depth' development but in fact extends only a limited distance more to the north west than the curtilages of frontage properties in Vicarage Lane. The extent of development in Church Road to the south west is for the most part also limited to dwellings fronting the road. Bearing this character in mind, and with the objection site visually part of the open countryside to the north, I consider that the introduction of a 'second tier' of effectively backland development in this location would harm the

setting of Swanmore to the detriment of its rural character. In forming this view I have noted that the objection site forms part of a 'green corridor' identified in the Swanmore Village Design Statement and that the Inspector in the report on the current adopted Local Plan was also of the opinion that the site read as countryside and that development would not fit in with the pattern of development. I acknowledge that the north western boundary of the site is to the primary school but as this is well screened and is for the most part in the form of playing fields, I am not of the view that it is particularly helpful to the objector's case.

RECOMMENDATION

6.51.9 That the Plan be modified to amend the settlement boundary for Swanmore to include the remaining garden area of Michaelmas House.

6.52. Omission Sites - Twyford

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
DP.11	1358/1	Dr M R W Evans
H.2	255/1	S Strange
H.2	257/1	D. T Wickham
H.2	1033/1	Twyford Parish Hall
H.2	303/2	Twyford School
H.2	328/2	Twyford Parish Council
H.2	328/4	Twyford Parish Council
H.2	471/1	Humphrey Farms Ltd
H.2	1010/1	John O'Sullivan
H.2	1044/1	D. A Matthews
H.2	1193/1	V. A Scappaticci
13.1	328/1	Twyford Parish Council

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

RDM38.1	328/4	Twyford Parish Council
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ISSUES

- Whether land at Northfields Farm should be included in the H.2 boundary for Twyford (471/1)
- Whether land at Northfields Farm should be the subject of a Settlement Proposal to include the requirement for a Master Plan allocating the objection site for mixed development including substantial housing provision (328/1 & 3)
- Whether the settlement boundary should be extended eastwards to include land off the High Street, in the vicinity of the surgery and village hall (257/1, 328/2, 1033/1, 1358/1, 328/4 REVDEP).
- Whether the settlement boundary should be extended to include land at Twyford School and Mallards Close (303/2, 1010/1).
- Whether the settlement boundary should be extended to include rear gardens of Manor Farm Green and land to the rear of Manor Farm Green (255/1)
- Whether the settlement boundary should be extended to include land to the north of Hare Lane (1193/1)
- Whether the plan should exclude any development on any part of any field that makes up Twyford Water Meadows (1044/1)
- Whether the Conservation Area and South Downs National Park should be excluded from the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary (328/4) and whether the map in the Urban Capacity Study should be revised (328/4 REVDEP).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.52.1 The objections in the first two issues concern land to the north of the settlement that is occupied by Northfields Farm. There is a long planning history associated with the site, which contains an extensive range of substantial buildings mainly relating to former egg production and packing and an extant feed mill. The Council has recently granted permission for the conversion of some of the redundant former agricultural buildings to light industrial, office, warehouse and storage / distribution with ancillary sales uses. In addition, a rural exceptions housing scheme of 6 dwellings has been approved in respect of an area at the western side of the site adjoining the settlement boundary and was under construction at the time of my site inspection.
- 6.52.2 It is evident that operation of the feed mill gives rise to some unpleasant odours and also noise from the operation of the plant and the lorry traffic it generates, which have been the source of complaints from local residents. The owners have indicated that the mill could be relocated if there were to be enabling development to fund such a proposition. A tripartite working group comprising representatives of the City and Parish Councils and the landowners has been established to consider the problems and opportunities, with a view to producing a Masterplan to guide future uses and potential development on the site. There has also been an additional suggestion of serving the site by a new road from the B3335 to the north of the settlement.
- 6.52.3 The objectors broadly propose either an extension of the settlement boundary to encompass an area of about 1.36ha including the feed mill or alternatively the formulation of an "S" policy to deal comprehensively with the entire 8.65ha holding, including significant open areas where no buildings presently exist. The Council consider the existing policy framework for dealing with extant buildings in the countryside provides an adequate and appropriate vehicle for control as evidenced by the permissions granted for the re-utilisation of the former chicken houses and associated buildings. They consider the level of proposed housing (70-100 dwellings) and employment development suggested as enabling development to fund the relocation of the feed mill is inappropriate in view of the size of the settlement and its prominent countryside location. I agree, having regard to the fact that Tyford is not a Category A settlement to which the main new development proposals should be targeted and there is no requirement for significant new employment allocations within the District or in this particular location. Furthermore, it is within the boundary of the proposed South Downs National Park and despite the absence of any formal landscape appraisal, I saw it occupies an elevated position which is widely visible. The suggested new road to serve the complex would traverse open farmland to the north and have a junction with the B3335 at a bend. Whilst no detailed junction designs were advanced, it would have the potential to create highway hazards or require extensive removal of hedgerow to create visibility splays or a roundabout.
- 6.52.4 Despite some concerns arising from the operation of the existing feed mill, it is a long established enterprise in a countryside location and it is within the powers of the Council to regulate it under Environmental Health legislation. On balance, I do not regard the suggested level of redevelopment required to secure its removal is either warranted or justifiable on planning grounds and I consider it would have a wholly disproportionate impact upon the settlement itself and the appearance of the surrounding countryside. In addition, whilst it was argued that with such a scale of residential development some much needed affordable housing could be included, it is apparent that some rural exceptions affordable housing has already been constructed here and I can see no reason why similar proposals cannot proceed, without the need to release a major tranche of open market housing and employment.
- 6.52.5 In view of the foregoing and the permissions granted for changes of use of the former egg production buildings, I therefore conclude that neither of the suggestions advanced by the objectors should be incorporated in the Plan and I agree with the Council that the existing planning policies for dealing with re-use or redevelopment of rural buildings provide sufficient scope for considering any additional potential future appropriate use(s) that may be proposed on this site. The Council also indicated they

are supportive of the production of a Masterplan to guide the future uses on this site. I consider it imperative that such a plan should also have regard to the outcome of the recent Inquiry into the designation of the proposed South Downs National Park, bearing in mind the purpose for such decision together with the weight that would carry in development control terms and the highest status of protection that would be conferred by its confirmation.

- 6.52.6 In issue three, the objectors all seek various sized extensions of the settlement boundary east of High Street in the vicinity of the village hall and surgery, the largest of which subsumes all the others and extends to Hazeley Road, where the objector maintains more housing would provide support for village services and combines with others who consider that the additional land would enable expansion of the doctors surgery, village hall and car parking. Much of the land forms part of a large agricultural field which the Council regard as forming an attractive setting for the village when approaching from the east along Hazeley Road, while the section fronting High Street is in the designated Conservation Area. This view was supported by the Inspector at the last Local Plan Inquiry, who regarded the benefits of improved car parking and new planting would be outweighed even by a modest development of three dwellings here, which he found would be intrusive and adversely affect the setting and character of this part of Twyford. I have seen no evidence of any material change in circumstances that leads me to depart from that previous conclusion.
- 6.52.7 I agree with the Council that extension of the settlement boundary would not automatically secure the hoped for community benefits. Furthermore, the Council indicates that increasing car parking in this area would necessitate improvement of visibility splays with ensuing considerable loss to roadside vegetation, thereby further harming the appearance and character of the Conservation Area. Moreover, development of essential facilities and services in the countryside to serve local communities may be exceptionally permitted under the aegis of Policy C5 as was the surgery extension itself, along with the car park. The Parish Council request that the settlement boundary should be adjusted to include the surgery extension and car park, and although the Council says that the current boundary reflects the fact that these were permitted as extensions, I agree that this small adjustment would recognise the position on the ground with no implication that a further boundary adjustment might be allowed.
- 6.52.8 Issue four concerns the request by Twyford School to include the entire school grounds and the adjoining Mallards Close within the settlement boundary. However, as the Council indicates, the area proposed for inclusion contains playing fields and other open areas, with buildings occupying a relatively small proportion of the site. The purpose of defining a settlement boundary is not to incorporate all buildings which are perceived as forming part of the village, but rather to identify the built-up core within which further built development would be acceptable in principle. Hence, the inclusion of extensive open areas would have the potential of providing stimulus for further development. In this instance, Twyford has a good range of facilities for a settlement of its size, but it is not a Category A settlement to which the main focus of new development is to be centred and the Council consider there are adequate sites identified in the Urban Capacity Study to cater for local and nearby rural needs. Also, I note that the inclusion of a smaller area at the time of the last Local Plan Inquiry did not find favour with then Inspector due to the contribution it makes to the character of the locality and also the Conservation Area. I find no strong grounds for including that area within the settlement.
- 6.52.9 With regard to the smaller area comprising the house and garden at Mallards Close, this has been advanced by the owner to recognise the extant permission that exists to extend the property and to provide the opportunity to further extend or demolish it and redevelop the site. The site is predominantly open, with the school grounds to its west and open countryside to its south. Redevelopment of this site in isolation would be incongruous in terms of the built form of the settlement and unwarranted and likely to be injurious to the setting of the village.

- 6.52.10 Turning to issue five, it is apparent that the settlement boundary has been drawn tightly to the buildings in Manor Farm Green deliberately to coincide with the Conservation Area boundary and reflect the former extent of the group of farm buildings that were included in the village envelope at the last Local Plan Inquiry. Thus the ensuing residential conversion and redevelopment is contained within the settlement boundary, but the southerly dwellings have since extended their rear gardens beyond the defined village limit following the acquisition of adjoining farmland. I agree with the Council that inclusion of these long rear gardens and the additional farmland beyond would provide for an unwarranted and illogical linear southerly extension of the built form of the village into a hitherto open area with a predominantly rural appearance.
- 6.52.11 With regard to issue six, the objector seeks the inclusion of an area extending to some 9.69ha lying east of B3335 and north of Hare Lane. As the Council indicates, a site of this size could generate a level of development of between 300-500 dwellings that would be wholly disproportionate to a settlement of this size. Moreover, it is not contiguous with the existing defined settlement boundary and would therefore lead to the formation of an unsatisfactory detached area of development and represent an unwarranted encroachment into the countryside south of the village. I note that a proposal to include an area north of this site within the settlement boundary was rejected at the last Local Plan Inquiry where the Inspector found that the site related more to the countryside than to the built-up area to the north. With the detachment of this objection site, that epithet applies with even greater force. The Council also consider development of the scale envisaged would additionally exacerbate traffic problems currently experienced on the B3335. Consequently, I do not find in favour of the objector.
- 6.52.12 In issue seven, the objector strongly objects to any development in the water meadows between Churchfield Estate and the River Itchen due to its natural beauty and susceptibility to flooding. However as these are outside the settlement boundary and not subject to any development proposals, no modifications are necessary.
- 6.52.13 Finally, the Parish Council has suggested that the Conservation Area and areas lying within the proposed National Park boundary should be excluded from the provisions of Policy H2. However, as the Council indicates, the Conservation Area, in common with those in many other villages, forms the core of the built-up area and hence it would be totally inappropriate to exclude it from the settlement boundary. Also, there are Plan policies that specifically deal with protection of Conservation Areas. I agree and also consider there are sufficiently strong legislative controls within designated Conservation Areas to ensure their character or appearance are maintained or enhanced. With regard to the proposed National Park, the decision on its designation has yet to be made, but in any event it would not be unusual for a settlement to fall within its boundary if that proposal were to be confirmed. Subsequently, it would be a matter for any future National Park Authority to assess the application of Local Plan policies within the area under its control and the need for any new policies.
- 6.52.14 On the second part of the Parish Council's objection, Inset Map 38a has already been altered in the Revised Deposit to accommodate minor changes to delete three small open areas along the western side to prevent development pressure being applied to them and include a pair of houses in Northfields that had been erroneously omitted. The Urban Capacity Study (UCS) does not form part of the Local Plan but it did serve to inform its preparation. Hence, whilst reservations are expressed by the objector in connection with specific sites, it is outside the remit of my Report to recommend revisions to plans in the UCS. Nonetheless the Council have indicated their intention to revise UCS where appropriate as part of the annual Housing Monitoring Report.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.52.15 That the Plan be modified by adjusting the settlement boundary for Twyford to include the Doctor's surgery and car park.

6.53. Omission Sites – Waltham Chase

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
C.3	1361/1	D Warren
H.1	839/2	David Wilson Estates
H.2	293/2	S & S Diesels
H.2	839/3	David Wilson Estates
H.2	217/1	Laing Homes Ltd and J. S. Bloor (Newbury) Ltd
H.2	315/8	Simon Milbourne
H.2	248/1	P Pearson
H.2	492/1	W. C Gent
H.2	503/6	Linden Homes Developments
H.2	207/1	S. Elliott
H.3	492/2	W. C Gent
H.3	1361/2	D Warren
H.3	1444/1	Michael Buckler
H.4	839/4	David Wilson Estates
CHPT13	293/3	S & S Diesels

ISSUES

- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Waltham Chase should be extended to include land at S & S Diesels north of Lower Chase Road and fronting Main Road B2177 (293/2 & /3).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Waltham Chase should be extended to include land at Jhansi Farm and should it be allocated for housing (839/2, & /3).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Waltham Chase should be extended to include land south of Ludwells Farm to the north of Lower Chase Road (315/8).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Waltham Chase should be extended to include land at Oaklands Farm to the north of Lower Chase Road (248/1).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Waltham Chase should be extended to include land at Pages Paddock, Clewers Hill / north of Curdridge Lane (492/1 & /2).
- Whether land at Forest Road (north side) should be included within the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary, excluded from the Local Gap and be allocated for housing development (217/1).
- Whether land adjacent to Chase View, Clewers Hill should be included within a Proposal H.3 development frontage (1444/1).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for Waltham Chase should be extended to include land at Sandy Lane and the land allocated for 70-80 dwellings (503/6, 503/7).
- Whether land at Clewers Hill, Waltham Chase, should be designated as a Proposal H.3 frontage and excluded from the Bishops Waltham - Swanmore - Waltham Chase - Shedfield - Shirrell Heath Local Gap (1361/1).
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for Waltham Chase should be extended to include the property 'Northcroft' (207/1).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.53.1 In the first issue, the objector argues that the S and S Diesels site should be included within the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for Waltham Chase. I recognise that the site has been intensively developed for employment use but to my mind this is outweighed by the fact that it is on the northern side of Lower Chase Road, which forms a firm, logical and defensible boundary to the northern edge of Waltham Chase. As regards the objection to the site's inclusion within the Local Gap, I consider that despite its use for employment it does form part of an area comprising countryside rather than the built-up area on the opposite side of Lower Chase Road.

In this respect I agree with the conclusion of the Inspector in his report on the adopted Local Plan that the site does form an important part of the Local Gap and that this status has not and would not prejudice the employment use.

- 6.53.2 In the second issue, the objectors consider that 1.7 ha of land at Jhansi Farm in Clewers Lane should be included within the settlement boundary and allocated for housing. The land forms part of a triangle of land bounded by Winchester Road, Clewers Lane and Clewers Hill. Even though the site itself is defined by existing trees I am firmly of the view that Clewers Lane and Lower Chase Road form the logical northern boundary of Waltham Chase. The objection site is wholly different in character from the residential area to the south and reads as part of the countryside despite the presence of a range of buildings. The comments of the Highway Authority in terms of inadequate visibility at the Clewers Lane / Clewers Hill junction and poor safety record of the junction of Clewers Lane with the B2177 have been responded to in some detail by the objectors' highway consultants. I accept that these matters are capable of a solution but neither this nor the sustainability credentials of the site persuade me that in a situation where only a limited amount of greenfield land may be required as a Local Reserve, the extension of the northern boundary of Waltham Chase would be justified.
- 6.53.3 In the third and fourth issues, two further areas of land to the north east of the existing settlement boundary have been put forward as potential housing sites. These are land south of Ludwells Farm and land at Oaklands Farm. My reservations expressed in the paragraphs above regarding the release of land to the north of Lower Chase Road apply equally to these sites. However in addition, the sites now identified are quite separate from the built up area and to that extent are substantially weaker candidates for inclusion within the settlement boundary. Their development would physically and visually diminish the Local Gap between Waltham Chase and the surrounding settlements and would effectively link with the existing development along Lower Chase Road to the east to form a continuous line of development encroaching into the rural area to the north east of the settlement. The loss of rural character would be compounded by the removal of hedgerows and highway improvements to secure a satisfactory access and pedestrian safety. In short, I can find little to commend these sites for inclusion within the settlement boundary.
- 6.53.4 In issue five, an objector promotes the alternatives of the inclusion 0.65 ha of land at Pages Paddock at the junction of Curdridge Lane and Clewers Hill within the settlement boundary under Proposal H.2, or the inclusion of a larger strip of land comprising the properties of 'Inklea', 'Hammonds Cottage' and 'Cobwebs Cottage' within a development frontage designation under Proposal H.3. In the first alternative, the site is on the rural side of Clewers Hill which separates it from the much more urban character of the area to the east. I consider that any development would represent a noticeable incursion into the countryside and agree with the Inspector who considered a similar objection at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan that the site is not well related to the existing pattern of development. As regards frontage development along Curdridge Lane under Proposal H.3, I have explained elsewhere in this report that I do not consider that this policy should be retained in the Plan. But in any event I agree with the Council's view that housing on the site either in depth or along a frontage would be inappropriately intrusive into the countryside which, despite the established and more recent development of Clay Hill Farm, continues to form the rural setting for the western part of Waltham Chase.
- 6.53.5 In the sixth issue, the objectors argue that land adjoining the north side of Forest Road should be excluded from the Local Gap, included within the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary and allocated for housing development. The land is approximately 4.25ha in extent and was the subject of a similar objection to the currently adopted Local Plan. In his report on the objection the Inspector commented that despite the site being bounded on its eastern side by a small enclosure of existing dwellings it nonetheless physically and visually forms part of the countryside and Local Gap between Waltham Chase and Swanmore. Development of the site

would bring the two settlements that are already close and inter-visible unacceptably closer. From my inspection of the site and its surroundings in connection with the current objection I can find no reason to disagree with the previous Inspector's conclusion that the site is wholly unsuitable for development as an extension to the existing settlement.

- 6.53.6 In the seventh issue the objector considers that land adjacent to Chase View, Clewers Hill should be included within a development frontage designation under Proposal H.3. However I have recommended the deletion of that policy and its substitution with a criteria-based policy against which the merits of individual proposals can be assessed. Accordingly I do not consider it appropriate to comment on this objection as it seeks to introduce a concept which I consider unsuitable as a basis for the allocation of additional housing land.
- 6.53.7 In respect of issue eight, the site comprises two distinct parts, separated by an access track from Sandy Lane that serves three dwellings situated within the defined settlement boundary. The largest area to the south of the track comprises open grassed paddocks used for keeping horses, while the area to the north of the track contains a house and complex of farm buildings. The objector argues that the tightly drawn boundary provides little scope for new housing and the 10 identified UCS sites in the settlement, which the Council regard as having a potential capacity of up to 15 dwellings, is optimistic and would be unlikely to yield any affordable dwellings or significantly address the over-representation of larger dwellings in this locality. The Council indicated that Waltham Chase is regarded as being at the lower end of Group B settlements where development should be limited to serve local needs or help secure a more mixed and balanced community. They also consider the UCS provision could be augmented by housing on the proposed mixed use allocation at Rosehill Garage and further unidentified windfall sites. The indicative 60-70 dwelling numbers advanced by the objector for this site would exceed the maximum level that I would consider appropriate for the settlement. Moreover, the figure is based on the constraints imposed by the highway network rather than the size of the site and would be below the minimum recommended density advocated by PPG3.
- 6.53.8 In order to counter this and to address the Council's concern that development on the land would be unduly visually prominent in the landscape due to its elevated position, the objector proposes to leave a broad open swathe extending from Sandy Lane to the south eastern corner to ensure development would not be noticeable on the skyline. Apart from the wider potential harmful landscape impact, it is apparent that an access into the site from Sandy Lane would result in the removal of a considerable length of a hedgerow along the lane, thereby dramatically transforming its character. In view of these findings, I conclude that the allocation of this omission site for the scale of residential use proposed would result in an unwarrantedly large scale development for the settlement and an inefficient utilisation of land. In addition, it would cause harm to the immediate and wider landscape in the locality. I therefore do not support the objector's proposal.
- 6.53.9 In Issue 9, the objection relates to the same stretch of road as in Issue 7, but I heard a more wide ranging argument at the Inquiry on behalf of the owners of Seven Oaks that not only should the land on this road frontage be designated under Proposal H.3, but additionally it should be excluded from the Local Gap. On the first point, my recommendation to delete that policy will permit any development proposal to be assessed against the criteria of its replacement. As a development proposal would come forward by means of a planning application, the particular circumstances of each location, for example in this case the presence of the redundant and unsightly Stokes Yard as part of the frontage, would be a material consideration. However, as regards the Local Gap, it is always ostensibly plausible that the development of a particular site would not impinge on or threaten the Gap. But the logical option is clearly for the boundary of the Gap to coincide with the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary (in this case for Waltham Chase) rather than physical enclaves of development or sporadic settlement patterns within the countryside. I am therefore

unable to accept the thrust of the objector's argument in respect of the land on this side of Clewers Hill.

6.53.10 Finally in respect of issue ten, the objector argues that the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary should be extended to include 'Northcroft' at the corner of Bull Lane and Sandy Lane. However I agree with the Council that the determining factor is that this property fronts onto and therefore relates to Sandy Lane, with its sporadic development and more rural character, rather than Bull Lane which is clearly more urban in character. Accordingly I am of the view that the drawing of the settlement boundary to exclude Northcroft is the more logical approach.

RECOMMENDATION

6.53.11 That no modifications be made to the Plan.

6.54. Omission Sites – West Meon

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	305/7	BT Plc
H.2	1382/1	Godfrey Rhimes

ISSUE

Should the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for West Meon be extended.

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.54.1 Two objectors seek extension of the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary for West Meon so as to permit additional residential development. Firstly the site of the BT telephone exchange to the east of Church Lane is put forward as being well related to the settlement framework and is associated with the built up area rather than the countryside. However this is a backland site positioned close to Listed Buildings on the Church Lane frontage. However sensitively developed, I consider that housing on this site would be intrusive and out of character with its surroundings. There are additional constraints in terms of potential flooding, the status of the River Meon as a SINC and poor visibility at the point of access on to the A32. I therefore find no reason to disagree with the view of the Inspector at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan who also rejected the site as being unsuitable for inclusion within the settlement boundary.

6.54.2 The second site is the rear garden for Hill View, off Church Lane and the objector has drawn attention to the fact that the front garden has been included as a site within the Urban Capacity Study. However I saw on my visit that because this site has countryside on two sides and is away from the road, it would not be a particularly logical extension to the settlement boundary. The use of the existing track immediately to the west of Hill View would compound the intrusion into the countryside and, on balance, I consider that the Council's judgement is sound and that the boundary should not be amended.

RECOMMENDATION

6.54.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.55. Omission Sites - Whiteley

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	361/1	International Group Ltd
H.3	458/1	Gwen Colman
6.21	1434/28	HCC Estates Practice
S.19	1434/43	HCC Estates Practice
H.1	322/1	North Whiteley Consortium
H.1	314/2	Grove Farms
Para 6.4	322/2	North Whiteley Consortium
Para 6.8	213/3	Bovis Homes
Para 6.11	322/3	North Whiteley Consortium
H.5	322/4	North Whiteley Consortium
H.7	322/5	North Whiteley Consortium
NC.3	322/7	North Whiteley Consortium
Para 13.85	322/8	North Whiteley Consortium
Para 13.67	322/9	North Whiteley Consortium
T.12	213/6	Bovis Homes
T.12	314/1	Grove Farms
T.12	322/6	North Whiteley Consortium

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD06.07	213/1/REVDEP	Bovis Homes

ISSUES

- Whether the allocated greenfield site at Whiteley Green (Proposal S.19) should be held back during the Plan period in favour of development on previously developed land and whether there is an error in its defined extent on the Proposals Map (1434/28 & 43/DEPOS)
- Whether the Reserve allocation of 2000 dwellings at Winchester City (North) should be deleted from the Local Plan Review and replaced with reference to an MDA at 'North Whiteley'?(322/1 - 322/9), (213/3), (213/5), (213/6), (314/1), (314/2), (213/1/REVDEP)
- Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement policy boundary for Whiteley should be extended to the east to include land south of Hazel Coppice (361/1)
- Whether a Proposal H.3 development frontage should be designated along Springles Lane, Whiteley (458/1)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.55.1 The site referred to in issue one measures 2.9ha and is allocated for open space use and residential development in the adopted Local Plan as part of a wider area at Whiteley allocated for development in that Plan. Much of the 99ha earmarked for housing has now been developed and this greenfield site (now S.19) together with 9.5ha at Whiteley Farm (S.18) are the only significant housing allocations that remain undeveloped. However, whilst no constraint is imposed on the larger S.18 site, it is now proposed in this Review Plan to hold back development on S.19 in favour of those sites within the built-up areas (see paragraph 6.24 and paragraph 13.71 accompanying Proposal S.19).
- 6.55.2 It is apparent that new housing development abuts the site to the north, east and west, with its southern boundary defined by a local road, with the M27 beyond it. From my inspection of the site and its surroundings, I regard the land as being an undeveloped area within the built confines of the settlement of Whiteley rather than

being an urban extension. The Council concedes the site is within the settlement boundary and that it would not be appropriate to “unallocate” the land, but they wish to hold the release of this land to promote the utilisation of brownfield land first. The Council justify their stance on the basis of the sequential approach advocated in PPG3 for site selection and have singled it out for this treatment as it does not have the benefit of an extant planning permission. However, this is the only greenfield allocation that is proposed to be treated thus.

- 6.55.3 It is apparent that it is one of the final sites remaining to be developed within the former Whiteley MDA to complete that community, and its deferral would also delay the provision of an area of public open space at Whiteley Green that is intended to serve some of the houses that are now built and occupied. There is a lack of logic in the Council's approach as it seems to me perverse that they are prepared to defer the completion of the largely implemented MDA at Whiteley, whilst at the same time placing no obstacles in the way of the immediate commencement of major greenfield development at West of Waterloo MDA. Accordingly, I consider the site should remain allocated as a baseline housing site and for open space and I recommend deletion of the text that would prevent its immediate development.
- 6.55.4 With regard to the ancillary point in the first issue, there is a small triangle of undeveloped land that lies to the west of the S.19 site, which has become detached from the main site by the intervening development that has taken place at Gibson Way. The Council state that as this small triangle of land would be incapable of accommodating more than 10 dwellings it would not be appropriate to make it a specific allocation. Nevertheless, the objector will be reassured by the Council's further indication that they had not intended to place the same embargo on this site as they had on S.19 and that there is nothing to prevent planning permission being immediately pursued. In these circumstances, I consider no modification of the Plan is required to address the objector's concerns.
- 6.55.5 The objectors in issue two seek to replace the Reserve MDA allocation at Winchester City (North) with a new MDA at North Whiteley. The objections are predicated on the perception that the Council has overestimated its future housing supply from Urban Capacity Sites and the delivery of affordable housing. These matters are addressed elsewhere in my Report.
- 6.55.6 However, as the Council correctly indicates, the locality was one of several strategic development options considered by the County Council, but was not selected for inclusion in the County Structure Plan (Review) by the strategic planning authorities. Following the Panel Report into the Examination In Public, the strategic authorities evaluated the potential strategic MDA sites in the County and found that North Whiteley did not perform sufficiently well to warrant its inclusion. Hence, the replacement of the Winchester City (North) MDA Reserve allocation with a North Whiteley MDA would be in conflict with strategic policy and take the Local Plan out of conformity with the approved Structure Plan. Although the objectors argue such an allocation would facilitate the completion of Whiteley Way, I note that the Council indicates this potential benefit was taken into account by the strategic authorities when considering the site, but nevertheless found it not to be sufficient justification for promoting major development in this location. In view of this point of principle, I find none of the other arguments advanced in support of this site to be persuasive and therefore make no recommendations to modify the Plan in this regard.
- 6.55.7 In issue three, the objector seeks to extend the settlement boundary of Whiteley across Whiteley Lane to encompass an area of land measuring about 0.65ha that lies south of Hazel Coppice and north of the dwelling known as Lodge Green. To its east there is a development (Skylark Meadows) of 30 exceptionally large houses set in substantial plots that were originally approved as enabling development for the Fareham Woods Golf Course. Whiteley Lane forms the eastern limit of the settlement boundary of Whiteley and the area to its east, including the omission site is designated as Strategic Gap.

- 6.55.8 It is apparent that the site has an extensive planning history, amounting to 6 refused planning applications for residential development ranging from 1 to 5 dwellings between 1990 and 1999, two of which resulted in appeals that were subsequently dismissed. Despite this, I was advised that the land in question was severed from the curtilage of Lodge Green in 2000. From my site visit, I saw the character of Whiteley Lane is that of a narrow country lane which converts to a bridleway a short distance north of the site. Hazel Coppice is a nature conservation area owned by the Forestry Commission. Notwithstanding the presence of the Skylark Meadows development, I perceive the character of the Strategic Gap in this locality as an area of countryside containing sporadic mixed development rather than unbroken farmland. Consequently, I find the low density development fringing the golf course conforms more to the character of the Gap than it does to the built-up area to the west.
- 6.55.9 Although it was indicated by the objector that the site is overgrown, subject to fly tipping and that a mobile home on the land was vandalised, I would submit that this would probably not have been the case if it had remained as part of the curtilage of Lodge Green. Whilst the objector concedes the site is of a size capable of accommodating about 10-15 dwellings, they are seeking only 1 or 2 houses on the land to provide a density commensurate with the adjacent Skylark Meadows. Nonetheless, if I were to recommend inclusion of the site within the settlement boundary, any ensuing housing proposal would need to have regard to the advice in PPG3 concerning density. However, I do not consider an extension of the boundary to encompass this land would be logical, as I regard Whiteley Lane to be a strong and defensible boundary for the main built-up area of Whiteley. Furthermore, if I were to recommend extension of the settlement boundary more widely to also encompass the housing in Skylark Meadows, this would confer acceptability for further residential infill and redevelopment within that area and potentially result in a serious inroad of housing into the Strategic Gap. Accordingly, despite the objector's assertion that the land is incapable of agricultural use, I conclude no modification is appropriate to address the objection.
- 6.55.10 Finally, in issue four, the objector argued in favour of a Proposal H.3 development frontage along Springles Lane so as to provide policy support for the residential development of a garden/ paddock adjacent to "Hillcrest". I have carefully considered the arguments that were raised at the Inquiry and have noted the proximity of Springles Lane to the facilities in Whiteley village and the employment centres at Whiteley and Segensworth. However, elsewhere in this report I have recommended the deletion of the existing Proposal H.3 and its replacement by a new criteria based policy for residential development outside the boundaries of the Proposal H.2 settlements. Hence, it would be inappropriate for me to conclude on the suitability of Springles Lane for infill development. Any specific development proposal in locations such as this will be capable of being assessed by the Council against the criteria of that new policy.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.55.11 That the Plan be modified by the deletion of paragraphs 6.24 & 13.71.

6.56. Omission Sites - Wickham

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	235/2	Rookesbury Estate Ltd
H.2	443/1	Bremore Developments Ltd
H.2	472/3	William Wheatley (Wickham) Ltd
H.3	358/1	B. W. Clifton

H.3	358/2	B. W. Clifton
H.3	357/1	E Gamblin
H.3	357/2	E Gamblin
H.3	1360/5	RobertTutton
H.3	972/2	E Fitzgerald

ISSUES

1. Whether the settlement boundary of Wickham should be extended to include land at Winchester Road (235/2).
2. Whether the settlement boundary of Wickham should be extended to include land at William Wheatley's and the Hide-away (443/1) (472/3).
3. Whether land at Forest Lane should be defined as a Proposal H.3 development frontage (358/1, 358/2).
4. Whether land at Titchfield Lane and two sites at Southwick Road should be defined as a Proposal H.3 development frontage (357/1) (357/2) (1360/5) (972/2)

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.56.1 The site in the first issue comprises an area of 2.37ha, located adjacent to the north western boundary of the settlement. Although the objector originally indicated it was capable of accommodating a minimum of 70 dwellings, this has subsequently been revised to 50 dwellings on 1.66ha with the residue for open space. The premise underlying the objection is that the Council will need to allocate additional residential sites to achieve the requisite level of house building necessary to meet the Baseline requirement. There was no dispute that Wickham is a higher order settlement with a good range of facilities, where further development within the boundary limits is acceptable in principle. The objector's proposal would represent an urban extension onto a greenfield site.
- 6.56.2 While I have recommended the allocation of some additional housing sites within the District, I share the Council's concerns regarding this proposal. Firstly, whilst the objectors argue that they will provide an area of open space in excess of that required for just 50 dwellings, the Council indicate they would not be able to insist on such and although there is a deficiency of Open Space in Wickham, the shortfall is in respect of sports pitches, for which this sloping site is unsuited. Consequently, the Council envisage the site could potentially accommodate between 70-120 dwellings, if it were allocated. Moreover, they point to a potential supply of 43 dwellings from the UCS, which together with windfall provision they regard as adequate for a town of this size for the duration of the Plan. Although the Council highlighted the reference in the Village Design Statement to preserving the important landscape views around Wickham, neither side advanced any landscape evidence for me to assess. Although I observed the proposal would extend the settlement into the surrounding countryside and onto higher land, it appeared to be relatively well contained by the topography and existing trees. However, the alternative vehicular access provision into the site from Winchester Road mooted by the objector would both involve the loss of trees/hedgerow and alter the pleasant rural character which this tree lined northern approach to the settlement now has. The northerly access would, in my view, lead to pressure for further development within the additional land it would encompass, while the southern access would involve incision of the sloped bank opening up the site to view from Winchester Road. On balance therefore, I do not find the case for the allocation of this site persuasive.
- 6.56.3 On issue two, the objectors seek modification to the settlement policy boundary to include the undeveloped curtilage to the south west of 'The Hide-away' and a strip of land along the southern side of the Wheatley's site. As regards the latter, the Council accepted that this hard surfaced storage area is an integral part of the commercial site and that it should be included within the Policy boundary (RD MAS 44.01). In respect of The Hide-away the Plan makes it clear that, where appropriate, settlement policy boundaries will not necessarily follow the curtilage of individual properties. In this instance I agree with the Council's view that this part of the curtilage is perceived as countryside rather than part of the built-up area and if I were to agree to this

objection there would be no justification for also excluding the long gardens on the opposite side of the River Meon. The Meon Valley is clearly important to the setting of Wickham and there are additional constraints on development in the form of the floodplain and proximity to the river itself which has been designated as a SINC. I therefore see no justification for the amendment sought.

6.56.4 Issues 3 and 4 concern Proposal H.3 frontage designations and can be considered together. Issue 3 seeks designation of two sites that are positioned either side of a property known as Park View, which is one of a loose-knit group of just seven dwellings in Forest Lane situated in the countryside about 1.6km from Wickham. In the fourth issue, a development frontage designation is sought in Titchfield Lane and on two separate sites at Southwick Road, Wickham to the east of the village. The first relates to a group of about eight dwellings just east of the Southwick Road / Hundred Acres Road junction about 2km from the centre of Wickham. The second comprises a group of about a dozen properties between 'Meadows End' and 'Rectory Bungalow' including the former Pines Service Station about 500m beyond the settlement boundary.

6.56.5 However earlier in this report I have explained that I consider the current wording of Proposal H.3 to be unsatisfactory and that in my view the Plan would be improved by a criteria based policy. And although I have carefully considered the arguments raised in the objections including those of accessibility/ sustainability it would therefore be inappropriate for me to make individual recommendations on sites suggested for a development frontage designation. In respect of Titchfield Lane, a related objection seeks an amendment to Proposal H.3 to provide a general policy for frontage development similar to that in the adopted Fareham Borough Local Plan. Although this has the advantage of flexibility and could thereby avoid some of the inconsistencies that might arise in this Plan if Proposal H.3 is retained in its current form, sustainability is fundamental to the decision on any new housing development outside the Proposal H.2 settlements. I shall therefore recommend the replacement policy for Proposal H.3 already referred to rather than the Fareham Borough Local Plan Review Policy drawn to my attention in this objection.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.56.6 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.57. Omission Sites – Winchester

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.1	878/6	Alan Foster
H.2	474/9	Redrow Homes (Southern) Ltd
H.2	305/8	BT Plc
H.3	355/5	Welch
H.2	355/4	Welch
H.1	863/1	G Payne
H.2	851/3	Weatherstone Properties
RT.1	833/1	Christ's Hospital School Foundation
H.2	1137/1	R W Short
H.1-H.3	523/2	Winchester Growers
Chpt 13	475/7	Clients of Southern Planning Practice
E.1	863/2	G Payne

OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD06.05	863/1	G Payne

RD0605	851/2	Weatherstone Properties
RD0607	851/3	Weatherstone Properties
RD07.01	863/2	G Payne

ISSUES

1. Whether land at Bereweeke Way, Winchester, should be allocated for residential use or protected for its amenity and recreational value (833/1).
2. Whether land west of Harestock Road, Winchester should be included within the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary of Winchester (355/4).
3. Whether land fronting Harestock Road be defined as a Proposal H.3 development frontage (355/5).
4. Whether land fronting Harestock Road, Winchester should be included within the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary of Winchester (305/8).
5. Whether land to the north of Harestock Road, Winchester should be included within the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary of Winchester (1137/1).
6. Whether sites over 0.5ha should be identified on Proposals Map as housing allocations including land south of Quarry Road that is within the settlement boundary of Winchester (878/6).
7. Whether land at Winnall Down Farm be allocated for mixed commercial and residential use (523/2).
8. Whether land at Texas Drive, Olivers Battery should be included within the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary of Winchester and allocated for housing and public open space (851/3).
9. Whether there should be a policy for rationalising existing uses and utilising the accessibility of land at Morn Hill for employment, redevelopment of old uses and landscape improvement (475/7).
10. Whether the Proposal H.2 settlement boundary of Winchester should be extended to incorporate land at Pitt Manor (863/1, 863/2, 863/1/REVDEP 863/2/REVDEP)
11. Whether land at Worthy Road / Francis Gardens, Winchester should be included within the settlement boundary of Winchester (474/9).

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.57.1 **In the first issue**, the Bereweeke Way omission site is a very small part of a wider mainly open area lying between Bereweeke Way and Bereweeke Road that is comprised predominantly of land currently or formerly used as playing fields, which is protected in the Revised Deposit Plan for its amenity and recreation value by Policies RT1 and RT2. However, this larger open area is visually divided by a centrally sited pavilion and dwelling. The eastern part is the detached playing field for Peter Symonds' College, while the western portion (Westgate playing field) had been subject to use for temporary school buildings for St Bede's School between 2000 and 2003 following a severe flooding incident at their premises in central Winchester. Subsequently, in 2004 planning permission was granted for the erection of an Early Learning Centre on the land and building has commenced, resulting in the loss of that area as a playing field. The site (as amended by the objectors at the Inquiry) has a frontage of about 44m to Bereweeke Way and a depth of about 20m and lies adjacent to the northern boundary of the Early Learning Centre site.

6.57.2 The site is an unused strip of land and although the Council maintains it should be retained in its open state for recreational purposes, it appears that it has never been used for recreation. Indeed, from the objector's evidence it is stated to have been unused and largely overgrown following the cessation of its use to grow vegetables in the WW2 "Dig for Victory" campaign. In these circumstances I do not agree with the Council that the land is important open space, but rather, it appears to me to be just the type of under-used/unused site within built-up areas that PPG3 is aimed at, to provide land for residential use. In light of the development of the Early Learning Centre to its south, visually, the land will not remain part of a large open area, but will appear as a narrow strip between the proposed new school and a residential road. Accordingly, I consider the original purpose for protecting the land as a visually open area will no longer be valid and I regard it to be unsuitable for any significant recreational use in conjunction with the Peter Symonds' playing field due to its size

and location. Hence, I conclude that the site is both appropriate and suitable for residential development. However, due to its small size it would not be appropriate to make it a formal residential allocation. However, it occurs to me that it could usefully provide key workers housing for those employed in education.

- 6.57.3 **In respect of Issues 2 and 3**, at the Inquiry I heard a joint submission on behalf of the same objector in respect of two areas of land on the north western side of Harestock Road: Site 1, an area of 2.8ha with a frontage of 250m along Harestock Road from the Down House to the junction with Kennel Lane, and Site 2 which has an area of 0.9ha and a frontage of 90m to Harestock Road between the Down House to the north and Laburnum Cottage to the south. Despite their proximity to one another, the objector describes the sites as being quite different in character and situation, although the Plan allocates both as part of the Local Gap between Winchester and Littleton under Proposal C.3 and as being suitable for recreation / open space facilities under proposal RT.4. I deal with the latter in my report on the objections to Chapter 9.
- 6.57.4 Turning firstly to the larger and more northerly Site 1, the objector argues that within the area of 2.8ha, some 1.1ha would be suitable for development which could provide between 33 and 55 dwellings on the south eastern part of the land, albeit set back from the Harestock Road frontage to allow the existing vegetation to be retained and reinforced. The north western area would be retained for open space and woodland. My consideration of the suitability of the site for housing raises issues of sustainability, the effect on the Local Gap, the landscape character of the area and vehicular access. On the first issue, sustainability, I can see no significant objection on this ground insofar as it relates to accessibility, as the site is in the edge of the Harestock area of the city. Although inconveniently located on the 'wrong' side of the Harestock Road there is a bus route to the city centre adjacent to the site and a range of facilities within an acceptable walking and cycling distance.
- 6.57.5 In respect of the Local Gap, the effect of residential development of land north west of Harestock Road on the separation of Winchester and Littleton was considered by the Inspector at the Inquiry into the adopted Local Plan as part of his assessment of the then designated Strategic Gap where the conclusion was that there was no justification for the allocation of the site for housing purposes. The Inspector saw Harestock Road as the logical boundary to the Gap as it contained the more intensively built up area to the south east. Although I have taken the objector's views into account, I find it difficult to disagree with this judgement. I do not consider that the change from a designation of a Strategic to a Local Gap makes any significant difference in terms of the need to separate Winchester from Littleton and from the Down House to the junction of Harestock Road and Kennel Lane the land is perceived as rural rather than urban. I acknowledge that in the event of development the tree screen would for the most part remain, but during the winter months there would be views into the site, whilst the creation of a new access, both in itself and in any 'opening up' of the site that resulted, would undoubtedly decrease its rural character. Furthermore development would significantly diminish the extent of the Local Gap and because of its position on a ridge would be visible, especially in the approach from Kennel Lane during the winter months. In short, because of the effect on the Local Gap and the effect on the rural landscape and character of the area I am unable to support the redefinition of the urban area to include Site 1 and its allocation for housing. The alternative of designating the land as a Policy H3 frontage development does not arise because of my recommendation for the deletion of that proposal and its replacement with a criteria based policy.
- 6.57.6 Turning to Site 2, I agree at least in part with the objector's view that with the exception of sustainability considerations this is different in character and situation from Site 1. Quite apart from its smaller size, the land is for the most part bounded by Harestock Road to the east, existing residential curtilages to the north and south and in part to the west. The remainder of the western boundary, to agricultural land, is well screened by a belt of evergreen trees. That said, the site is within the

designated Local Gap and it is only the presence of the screening and the Down House to the north, with its very large garden, that gives the site a perception of being an enclave within a residential area rather than part of the countryside. The Council has pointed out that the previous Inspector considered that the low density and unobtrusive nature of the existing development justified its retention within a Gap. Although, unlike Site 1, development would not in my view diminish the perception of the separation of Winchester from Littleton and the arguments are more finely balanced, I feel unable to recommend that the site should be excluded from the Local Gap designation in order to permit a housing allocation. Any such allocation would leave the Down House itself vulnerable to an extension of the development with a cumulative effect on the predominantly rural character. As an alternative, the objector has suggested use as a nursing home and if developed as a single large building in extensive grounds this would be more in keeping with the existing character of the area and, in particular, echo the appearance of the Down House. However it is not the function of the Local Plan Inquiry to determine individual development proposals and if this were to be put forward as a development proposal the Council would need to assess it in respect of all the relevant policies of the Plan and any other material considerations.

6.57.7 At the Inquiry, I heard evidence in respect of transport and access in respect of both Sites 1 and 2. With the provision of more detail, access to each site appears capable of being provided, although I have commented above on the harmful landscape impact that would result from an access to Site 1. The Council have also expressed concern as to the existing road safety problem with the Harestock Road / Andover Road junction, which in their view would be exacerbated by development on either or both of Sites 1 and 2. With funds from the development of the sites it is possible that this junction could be improved to an acceptable standard and with its lower capacity the smaller Site 2 is likely to be less constrained by road safety concerns. In summary, although transport and access considerations need to be borne in mind, I do not consider that in themselves they preclude the development of either site. However, this does not outweigh my conclusion that neither of the objection sites should be allocated for housing.

6.57.8 **In Issues 4 and 5**, two further objections have been made in respect of overlapping parcels of land on the north side of Harestock Road at its junction with Andover Road North. The first site is the Harestock Road telephone exchange together with a group of houses between No. 10 Harestock Road and Andover Road North, which the objectors consider should be included within the settlement policy boundary for Winchester. The second objection seeks the further extension of the boundary to the north west to include the garden of No. 10 to the boundary of the St John Moore Barracks and then north eastwards to form a 61m frontage to Andover Road North. However I agree with the Inspector's view in his report on the adopted Local Plan that Harestock Road is a more logical boundary to Winchester and I endorse the Council's current position that because of their loose knit feel and treed context, the consolidation and intensification of these buildings would have a harmful effect on both the countryside and the designated Local Gap. In respect of the second objection it is argued that development of the Winchester City (North) Reserve MDA would effectively support the case for inclusion of the land within the settlement policy boundary. However I see no logic to this suggestion as with the differences in their site size and the nature of supporting arguments there can be no reasonable basis of comparison between the two cases.

6.57.9 **In issue 6**, the objector considers that sites such as land south of Quarry Road, Winchester which measure over 0.5ha should be shown on the Proposals Map. To an extent this is a refinement of the objection made by others that all sites identified through the UCS should be shown on the Proposals Map. Whilst I agree with the Council that it would be impractical to show all such sites due to their considerable number and frequent small size, I have some sympathy with the objector in this case who considers sites of 0.5ha and above should be identified. Whilst the Council regards this to be an arbitrary figure, they point out that in terms of UCS sites it would

represent just 29 of the more than 1500 that were identified. Therefore, to my mind, it would be a reasonable size of site that would warrant being shown on the Proposals Map and it would not be an unduly mammoth operation.

6.57.10 However, it is important to differentiate between sites identified in the UCS and those that are formal Plan allocations. It is evident that the Council's UCS exercise did not extend to detailed site appraisals and approaches to owners to determine whether they are all capable of being implemented. In the case of the Quarry Road site, which comprises the rear gardens of several properties, I have no evidence to suggest that all the individual owners are in agreement to enable the land to be assembled, access provided and development to proceed. As Plan Proposals should not be included unless there is a degree of certainty that they will be implemented during the Plan period, I agree with the Council that the UCS sites should not be depicted on the Proposals Map as a matter of course.

6.57.11 **In Issue 7**, the objector argues that land at Winall Down Farm should be allocated for mixed commercial and residential use. However notwithstanding its planning history, including a lawful use for a hostel to house workers, the site is physically separate from the built up area and falls within open countryside. I acknowledge that the buildings are now used for storage uses rather than for the processing of locally grown and imported bulbs – the original business and purpose for the erection of the buildings. The use of the hostel has also been formalised through a planning permission. However, this demonstrates that the Council's interpretation of countryside policies has been sufficiently flexible and pragmatic to allow the continued economic use of the premises. To now formally allocate the site for mixed commercial and residential use would in my view introduce a potential intensity of use wholly inappropriate to a site with a rural location and poor access. Indeed, quite apart from breaching the objectives of the Plan, such an allocation would, as the Council points out, be contrary to national guidance in PPGs 3 and 13 and PPS7.

6.57.12 **In Issue 8**, the objection site in this instance extends to 18.5ha of land adjoining the south eastern side of the Olivers Battery development. The objectors envisage a mixed development of approximately 160 dwellings (including affordable housing) and 3.4ha of public open space together with other benefits on a site they consider to be sustainable because of its close proximity to existing facilities and services in Olivers Battery and its accessibility to Winchester. One of the principle arguments advanced in favour of the site is that the allocation would be a logical extension to Olivers Battery and does not need to form part of the Local Gap between Winchester and Compton designated under Proposal C.3 of the Plan.

6.57.13 However on visiting the site and its surroundings I am firmly of the opinion that there is little or no justification for the extension of Winchester at a point where the settlement already extends its south western boundary well beyond the A3090 into the surrounding countryside. The issue has already been rehearsed with a similar objection to the adopted Local Plan when the Inspector concluded in his Inquiry report that 'The built up edge of Olivers Battery is, in my opinion, the proper and logical line for the H.1 Policy Boundary in this area'. I can find no reason, including new evidence since the last Inquiry, to dissent from this view. Not only would the urban form of the city be extended somewhat illogically, but also (and contrary to the objector's assertion) the Local Gap would be physically and visually diminished to a harmful extent. The site is undoubtedly prominent and as in the case of the existing development at Olivers Battery, development would be highly visible from a number of locations including Compton to the south. I have noted the benefits offered in respect of the Yew Hill Butterfly Reserve and the preservation of the Tumulus but, as the Council says, these do not justify the release of land which in my judgement is particularly important to the setting of Winchester from its southern and western approaches.

6.57.14 **In Issue 9**, the objector argues that the new uses permitted on land at Morn Hill should be the basis of a policy for rationalising existing uses and utilising the

accessibility of the site for employment, redevelopment of old uses and landscape improvement. In the absence of further information the Council has assumed that the objection seeks a new policy in the Settlements Chapter of the Plan in respect of the land. The site accommodates a range of uses and in its Response Note the Council has explained that although some development (for example dwellings and a caravan site) is long established or in conformity with the countryside policies of the adopted and previous Plans, other uses (including the INTECH site) have been permitted on an exception basis to facilitate the removal of an unsightly scrap yard. As the site lies within the countryside, adjoining the AONB and falling within the area of the proposed South Downs National Park, I consider that any new policy that would intensify development on the site would be inappropriate. The site is surrounded by farming land and an attractive rural landscape. Hence, as it exists as an enclave of sporadic development within the rural area, I am not of the view that the existing uses form any rational basis for further substantial development outside the parameters of what might reasonably be permitted with the countryside policies of the Plan.

6.57.15 **In Issue 10**, land at Pitt Manor comprises a site of approximately 12.9ha on the south western edge of Winchester. To the north east and south east are Kilham Lane and Romsey Road respectively, beyond which lie built-up areas of the city, whilst to the south west and north west the site is bounded by agricultural land and open countryside. At the Inquiry the objector sought to advance an alternative proposal to the original objection with the deletion of the element of employment provision within a mixed use scheme and its replacement by a site for a Park and Ride facility. The objector has prepared an alternative Masterplan to accommodate the Park and Ride and additionally to avoid development in the north west corner of the site, which following an ecological survey by the Council would appear to have a potential status as a SINC. As the Council is prepared to accept the Park and Ride scheme as part of the 'duly made objection', I shall deal with the objection on this basis.

6.57.16 The objector is critical of the Council's housing strategy and bases part of the case for this site on the grounds of an alleged inadequacy in the Plan's housing land supply and unsuitability of the Winchester City (North) Reserve MDA. I have dealt with my general approach to this aspect in the section of the chapter overview relating to the Omissions Section. Insofar as I consider that a fairly modest baseline Local Reserve provision on greenfield sites is needed to cater for the possibility that sites within the built up areas and the West of Waterlooville MDA do not deliver the required housing numbers, an allocation on the objection site is capable of contributing about 200 dwellings towards the potential shortfall.

6.57.17 The objector and the Council have agreed a Statement of Common Ground which was produced at the Inquiry. In addition to rehearsing the relevant planning policies, this established that the site had no significant infrastructure constraints, the site is not part of a flood plain, and neither the site itself nor adjoining land is designated as a conservation area. There is no specific information in respect of archaeological sites or features, although given that the wider area is known to be rich in archaeological remains, a desk top study is recommended in order to assess the archaeological potential of the area in connection with any future development proposal. In terms of the current land use, the majority of the site is managed grassland and meadowland categorised as Grade 3a agricultural land and therefore of the 'best and most versatile quality'. Finally, the planning history of the site comprises a 1994 refusal of a retail store and associated facilities and infrastructure on the grounds of an adverse impact on the setting of Winchester, an absence of overriding need and the potential for traffic congestion.

6.57.18 Against this factual background, I heard evidence at the Inquiry in respect of sustainability, landscape, the effect on the highway network and, in the objector's view, the benefits of the park and ride facility. Dealing with the last point first, the park and ride scheme has been suggested on 1ha of the site as part of the overall package rather than an independent proposal pursuant to Proposal W.3. The latter is amplified by paragraph 11.33 of the Plan with its reference to the identification in the

Local Transport Plan of the need for a site to the north of the town to serve traffic from the A34 and Andover to the north. I acknowledge that the suggested site is a possible location for a park and ride scheme and one that because of existing mature tree cover along the Romsey Road frontage could be assimilated into the landscape rather better than some of the other possible locations. But that point aside, together with the obvious point that the site adjoins an arterial route serving the city (in the form of Romsey Road), I do not consider that the advantages of the scheme have been sufficiently demonstrated for me to conclude that this location should be preferred to other possible sites. As the Council says, further work is required to determine whether the location would attract traffic from the M3 corridor, to address the effect of already existing traffic congestion, and to explore whether Romsey Road has the potential to provide the priority needed for the buses connecting the facility to the city centre. In any event, I do not consider that this 'benefit' of the package should effectively 'lead' any conclusion in respect of the designation of a greenfield site for residential development which should be decided on its own merits.

6.57.19 In respect of those merits, I accept that as an urban extension to the largest settlement in the District and adjoining one of the main transport corridors into the city, Pitt Manor is a sustainable site insofar as accessibility is concerned. There is already an established bus service and a range of facilities, including shops and schools, within the acceptable walking distances indicated in PPG13 and IHT guidelines. Pedestrian crossing facilities in Romsey Road would however need to be improved to provide a safe access to some of these facilities.

6.57.20 As regards landscape and urban form, the site falls within an Area of Special Landscape Quality in the adopted Local Plan but although that designation has been discontinued in the Review it is nonetheless indicative of the attractive countryside at the edge of this part of Winchester. Certainly, I disagree with the objector's analysis that the land displays characteristics of urban fringe. That said, the site is especially well screened on all sides and a residential development could in my view take place without undue harm to the wider landscape. Although there would inevitably be some loss of trees from the access to the site in Romsey Road, I see no reason why this mature vegetation, which is important to the western entrance to the city and to its setting, should not largely continue to perform the function that it does now. I have taken account of the effect on longer distance views from the vantage points cited by the Council, including the South Winchester Golf Course and the right of way between Sarum Road and Romsey Road. In both cases the development would be visible and there would be a perception of the edge of the city having encroached into the countryside, albeit seen at some distance from those locations. However, this is inevitable to some degree with any greenfield development on the edge of an existing urban area and the issue is whether or not the harm that would occur is acceptable when weighed in the balance with the social and economic advantages of further housing provision. In terms of urban form, Pitt Manor does not form part of a Local Gap, and although a substantial site, its development would not have wider repercussions in terms of the mainly rural setting of Winchester or any actual or perceived coalescence with Olivers Battery and other parts of the city, or indeed surrounding villages.

6.57.21 In terms of the effect on the local highway network it was clear from the evidence to the Inquiry that the Council had raised some legitimate concerns in relation to the objector's Transport Assessment, particularly as regards the use of 1991 census data when 2001 data is available and the reliability of the modelling exercise given the assumptions made and the approach adopted. Specific problems of capacity at the Battery Hill junction in the morning peak were identified but without solutions put forward. Clearly therefore further analysis of the impact of the development on the local road network, including junctions that already have capacity problems, will be necessary. Bearing in mind that there is a further opportunity to examine these issues before any commitment is made to development and that funding for off-site improvements might reasonably be anticipated in connection with a development of

200 or more dwellings, I do not at this stage see the highway issue as an overriding constraint.

- 6.57.22 Overall, although for the reasons that I outline in respect of the objections to the housing strategy I see no immediate need for the residential development of the site, I consider that it is suitable to be included in the Plan as a Local Reserve in the event that the Council's forecasts for housing completions within the existing urban area and at the West of Waterlooville MDA prove to be over-optimistic. I shall recommend accordingly. If and when the site does come forward there may be sufficient information to also make a decision on the park and ride facility. However if this were to be located elsewhere, I consider the logical course of action would be to use the site to reinforce the existing tree belt along the Romsey Road frontage whilst at the same time earmarking additional land to increase the dwelling capacity of the site.
- 6.57.23 **Finally in Issue 11**, the objection relates to land at Worthy Road / Francis Gardens. In addition to promoting the merits of the site for a housing allocation in the Plan, the objector is critical of the Council's housing strategy and bases part of the case for development on the grounds of an alleged inadequacy in the Plan's housing land supply and unsuitability of the Winchester City (North) Reserve MDA. I have dealt with the housing strategy in my report on the main part of Chapter 6, and the MDA comparison in the chapter overview. However to the extent that further land may be required as a Local Reserve, the western part of the 4.5ha objection site that has been suggested for housing has an estimated capacity of 80 dwellings and could provide a worthwhile contribution to the capacity required.
- 6.57.24 The location of the site on the north eastern edge of the city boundary with easy access to bus routes to and from the centre and an existing cycle route along the Worthy Road frontage gives it an advantage over many other omission sites in terms of accessibility, not just to a range of urban facilities but also to the large number of employment premises in St Bartholomew's Ward. Thus insofar as accessibility forms part of a sustainable approach to development, the objection site performs well. I also acknowledge that, because the southern boundary of that part of the site envisaged for housing adjoins Francis Gardens and the extent of development northwards would extend no further than the existing housing west of Worthy Road, there is a credible argument that extension of the settlement policy boundary at this point would comprise a logical 'rounding off' in terms of Winchester's urban form.
- 6.57.25 In terms of vehicular access, I take the view that as a carriageway of 5.5m with lighting and two 2m footways, Francis Gardens would have a volume of traffic well within the guidelines in Design Bulletin 32. I have noted the caution of the previous Local Plan Inspector in this regard but see no unacceptable effects in terms of either residential amenity or highway safety. However if the excess of cul-de-sac length above the Hampshire County Council standard necessitated an emergency access onto Worthy Road through the existing flint boundary wall, as seemed likely from the evidence submitted, I consider it essential that any scheme should be designed to minimise the loss of visual amenity and the adverse effect on the rural landscape. The actual need for such an access would have to be weighed in the balance of considerations in respect of any particular proposal.
- 6.57.26 Turning now to the site's edge of countryside location and function as part of the Local Gap designated to prevent the coalescence of Winchester and the Worthys, in particular Headbourne Worthy, the previous Inspector's conclusion in respect of the contribution of the site to the Strategic Gap between Winchester and Kings Worthy was that the Gap was an essential part of the strategy of the Local Plan and that the land should remain open. However in the current objection the objectors argue that there have been a number of material changes in circumstances since it was last considered. These include references to changes in the Local Plan strategy, housing need and the application of PPG3 of 2000. I have dealt with these matters elsewhere in my report but suffice it to say that whilst I do not entirely agree with the objector's analysis, it is in any event the site specific merits that are the determining issue.

6.57.27 The evidence on landscape submitted to the Inquiry was closely allied to the concept of the Gap and the respective positions of the objectors and the Council on that issue. I have no criticisms of much of the objector's technical landscape information or the context it provides for the Master Plan. I consider the latter has accurately assessed the site's opportunities and constraints and accommodates development within the existing landscape framework as well as any scheme reasonably could. Taking those points into account and the fact that there is no inter-visibility between the site and Headbourne Worthy, I am of the view that although the mature trees and flint wall along the Worthy Road boundary give the locality a rural parkland feel, a discreet development as indicated in the objector's illustrative plans could avoid any undue harm to the passer by's perception of these aspects when leaving or entering the city. The harm would be greater if development were to include a vehicular access from Worthy Road rather than Francis Gardens, but as I indicate above, this should only take the form of an emergency access and only then if essential. The view from the Kings Way footpath along the Itchen Valley would also be affected but I attach less priority to this consequence of the development because of the ample opportunity for landscape screening on the eastern part of the site and the much lower number of 'visual receptors' compared with Worthy Road.

6.57.28 I have noted the concerns of the existing occupiers of Francis Gardens and adjoining roads in respect of the development of the site. However, if the Local Reserve is in fact implemented I see no reason why, with the safeguards that would be introduced in a specific proposal in a planning application and the imposition of conditions in any permission, there would be any materially adverse effect on residential amenities. Taking this and all other matters into consideration I conclude, on balance, that the objection site merits inclusion as a Local Reserve site that could be developed if the need arises, under my recommended new policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.57.28 That the Plan be modified by

- a) deleting the RT1/RT2 designation from the Bereweeke Way omission site and
- b) including land at Pitt Manor and at Worthy Road / Francis Gardens as Local Reserve sites.

ADDENDUM

6.58. Omission Site - Crawley

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	289/8	Kris Mitra Associates

ISSUE

Whether Crawley should be allocated a settlement policy boundary under Proposal H.2, which would include land at Manor Lodge.

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.58.1 Crawley is a village that is subject to the countryside policies of the Plan in that it is neither designated under Policy H.2 as a settlement nor under Proposal H.3 as being suitable for designated frontage development. Although the adopted Local Plan defines the village as a settlement, the Council has undertaken a fundamental review of the existing classifications as part of its sustainability appraisal of the District and as I explain in my report on the main part of Chapter 6, I have seen no evidence to

persuade me to add to or subtract from the list of Proposal H.2 settlements in the Review Plan. In my view Crawley in particular has neither the scale nor the facilities to warrant inclusion within that list.

- 6.58.2 To the extent that infill development might be permitted in the countryside I have recommended that the Proposal H.3 development frontages be replaced with a new criteria-based policy. If the objectors wish to test the omission site at Manor Lodge against that policy, they would be able to do so with a planning application. However, on the evidence before me I do not consider that I should recommend to the Council that Crawley be afforded Proposal H.2 status with a defined boundary, irrespective of the merits or otherwise of land at Manor Lodge for residential development.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.58.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

6.59. Omission Site - New Cheriton/ Hinton Marsh

OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
H.2	317/1	Julian House

ISSUE

Whether New Cheriton and Hinton Marsh should be allocated a settlement policy boundary under Proposal H.2 which would include land adjoining Elm Cottage in Kilmeston Lane.

INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.59.1 New Cheriton and Hinton Marsh were identified in the adopted Local Plan as a Proposal H.1 settlement and accordingly delineated by a settlement boundary. As part of the process of categorisation of all the settlements within the District in preparation of the Review Plan, New Cheriton/Hinton Marsh scored poorly with no Key Facilities and come below the threshold for inclusion in Proposal H.2. The objection seeks the restoration of the settlement boundary in order to establish a presumption in favour of the residential development of a 0.28ha site adjoining Elm Cottage in Kilmeston Lane.
- 6.59.2 At the Inquiry the objector argued that notwithstanding its very limited facilities the settlement had very good linkages to Cheriton and that its sustainability credentials were further enhanced by its relative proximity (about 4 miles) to New Alresford and bus services thereto as well as Winchester and Petersfield. Cheriton itself has a shop, post office and primary school. In contrast, the Council argued that the poor level of facilities in New Cheriton/Hinton Marsh had been recently made worse with the loss of a petrol station/garage to residential development. In any event there had to be a 'cut off' point at some level and to reduce this to the level needed for New Cheriton to qualify for Proposal H.2 (or even H.3) status 'would result in many more settlements being included, all of which have a minimal level of services'.
- 6.59.3 From my visit to the area and my appraisal of the overall housing strategy I consider that the Council is correct in placing New Cheriton/Hinton Marsh within the orbit of countryside policies rather than as an H.2 settlement in the Plan. That said, my recommendation to replace Proposal H.3 with a new criteria based policy permits flexibility for development on suitable sites outside Proposal H.2 settlements. The part of the objection relating to land adjoining Elm Cottage in Kilmeston Lane was not regarded by the Council as having been duly made but I note that planning permission for six dwellings was granted on appeal on 17 March 2005. That decision

was made against the background of existing policy in the adopted Plan but it could equally have been made in the context of the Proposal H.3 that I am recommending to the Council. Bearing that flexibility in mind I see no justification for defining New Cheriton/Hinton Marsh as a Proposal H.2 settlement.

RECOMMENDATION

6.59.4 That no modification be made to the Plan.