

# CHAPTER 9: RECREATION AND TOURISM

## 9.1. General Comments

### OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
CHAPT9	261/58	Government Office for the South East

#### ISSUE

Does the Plan reflect advice in paragraph 16 of PPG 17, on the need for policies to reflect existing provision and to be based on a local needs assessment?

#### INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1.1 See under Proposal RT3.

#### RECOMMENDATION

N/A

## 9.2. Protecting Important Open Areas (paragraphs 9.3 - 9.6)

### OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
09.3	1434/37	Hampshire County Council

#### ISSUE

Should the Plan proposals be applied more flexibly in relation to school sites?

#### INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

9.2.1 Although the County Council consider they should be given greater flexibility to develop their school sites in view of their unique position, I do not regard them to be any different than any other major land owner and development proposals should be regarded on their individual merits, irrespective of land ownership.

#### RECOMMENDATION

9.2.2 That no modification be made to the Plan.

## 9.3. Protecting Important Open Areas (paragraphs 9.7 - 9.11, Proposals RT.1 & 2)

### OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RT.1	949/1	B. K. Purkiss
RT.1	227/11	Bewley Homes Plc and R C H Morgan-Giles

RT.1	211/11	Bishops Waltham Parish Council
RT.1	1378/2	Blaxland
RT.1	468/47	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RT.1	833/1	Christes Hospital School Foundation Winchester
RT.1	884/2	E. J Wells
RT.1	836/1	Fraser
RT.1	261/60	Government Office for The South East
RT.1	1432/5	Hampshire County Council
RT.1	1434/48	Hampshire County Council
RT.1	1432/6	Hampshire County Council
RT.1	1386/2	New Alresford Town Council
RT.1	1169/1	Peter Symonds College
RT.1	316/1	Sun Hill Infant School
RT.1	306/8	Ministry Of Defence
RT.2	1170/1	A.J Whitear
RT.2	1173/1	Amanda Lee
RT.2	227/12	Bewley HomesPlc And R C H Morgan-Giles
RT.2	468/48	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RT.2	261/62	Government Office For The South East
RT.2	1432/7	Hampshire County Council
RT.2	1434/49	Hampshire County Council
RT.2	1172/1	R. G Kirby
RT.2	175/5	Save Barton Farm Group
RT.2	306/9	Ministry Of Defence
RT.2	1171/1	Trevor Saville

## OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0902	227/1	Bewley HomesPlc And R C H Morgan-Giles
RD0902	1434/7	Hampshire County Council
RD0902	2326/1	R E Park
RD0902	266/4	The House Builders Federation (Southern Region)
RD0905	386/17	Bewley Homes
RD0905	374/18	Hawthorne Kamm Ltd

## ISSUES

1. Will the Council's residential strategy result in the loss of important amenity areas? (227/11)
2. Should Proposals RT.1 and RT.2 be applied more flexibly in relation to school sites and an exception made to these policies for Local Education Authorities? (1432/6 & 7, 1434/7/REVDEP)
3. Should RT.1 and RT.2 be more positive in relation to the relocation of existing recreational facilities? (468/47 & 48)
4. Does the Plan accord with advice in PPG12 Annex A and PPG17, and does the reference to "may be permitted" in the policies, give enough certainty and provide a sound basis for considering planning applications? (261/60, 261/62, 266/4/REVDEP)
5. What is the status of the Open Space Strategy? (227/1/REVDEP, 266/4/REVDEP)
6. Should RT.2 designations include allotments? (2326/1/REVDEP)
7. Is the New Proposal for Smaller Important Open Spaces (RD09.05) appropriate? (374/18/REVDEP, 386/17/REVDEP)
8. Should land at various sites within Winchester be designated as Important Amenity Space (RT.1) and/or Important Recreational Space (RT.2)? (306/8, 833/1, 836/1, 884/2, 1169/1, 1378/2, 1434/48, 175/5, 306/9, 1170/1, 1171/1, 1172/1, 1173/1, 1182/1, 1434/49, 2310/1/REVDEP)
9. Should land at various sites within New Alresford be designated as Important Amenity Space (RT.1) and/or Important Recreational Space (RT.2)? (227/12, 316/1, 949/1, 1386/2)
10. Should land at Denmead Junior School be designated as Important Amenity Space (RT.1)? (1432/5)

11. Should land at various sites within Bishop's Waltham be designated as Important Amenity Space (RT.1) and/or Important Recreational Space (RT.2)? (211/11)

## INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.3.1 In the first issue, the objector is concerned that the strategy of using Urban Capacity sites for residential development could result in an unacceptable loss of important amenity areas for residents. However, the Council maintains that the sites identified in the UCS took account of any open space value that the land had and that they followed the methodology recommended in the Good Practice Guide as is set out in their Topic Paper 3. Nevertheless, they conducted a re-evaluation of the sites for the Revised Deposit stage, which resulted in some alterations to ensure retention of those areas regarded as important open spaces. Moreover, a further policy and text (RD09.04 & 09.05) was added to cover smaller important areas of open space. I am therefore satisfied that the Council has had regard to the amenity importance of each identified UCS site. In addition the Council makes an annual audit of all recreational areas and intends to extend this to incorporate a comprehensive review of all open areas in the District.
- 9.3.2 In issue two, the County Council indicate they are undertaking a programme of rationalising and improving school premises, whereby they consider they should be identified as a special case in the implementation of these policies. They argue that some school sites are larger in area than is required to meet recreational requirements specified in DfFES guidelines, and parts of some school premises do not contribute to wider amenity as they are unseen from public vantage points. However, notwithstanding these factors and their statutory obligations, I do not regard the LEA as having any sufficiently different status from any other large land and/or property owner in this regard. Accordingly, I consider it is entirely appropriate that any proposals in respect of school premises should be assessed on their merits against the provisions of these and other Plan policies rather than merely upon the educational considerations.
- 9.3.3 Although the objector in issue three considers there is insufficient flexibility to permit existing open space to be relocated thereby releasing it for development, the Council correctly indicates that the main purpose of the policies is to safeguard existing open space that is considered to have important amenity value. Thus, the presumption must be against the loss of such areas to development. Nevertheless, as the Council also points out, there could be scope for exceptions to be made and this is alluded to in para 9.11.
- 9.3.4 Issue four comprises two main parts and whilst the objection regarding certainty in the use of the expression *may be permitted* has been addressed in the Revised Deposit amendments to RT.1, the offending phrase remains in RT.2. I therefore propose that it be modified there in a similar manner. With regard to the remaining part of the issue, objectors question whether the Plan fully illustrates sites protected because of their particular value to the community. The Council have found it would be impractical to show all the areas of amenity space outside settlements on the Proposals Map and consequently they have added further wording to the policy (RT.2) indicating that they are shown on the Winchester District Open Space Strategy.
- 9.3.5 However, reference to that source has been questioned in issue five. It is apparent that this document is a background paper to the Local Plan and does not have the status of Supplementary Planning Guidance. It is not appropriate for a Plan policy to cite SPG within the body of a policy and even less satisfactory to refer to a document that has not been subject to public consultation. I therefore propose that it be deleted. However, as the additional areas outside settlements will also be subject to countryside policies, I consider adequate protection is already afforded. Hence, I consider the policy should be rephrased to apply only to those recreational areas shown on the Proposals Map.

- 9.3.6 Turning to issue six, the Council indicates that allotments are covered in Chapter 8 – Town Centres, Shopping and Facilities as one of the list of facilities that may help to meet needs of local communities. Although I find the assignment of the matter of allotments to this topic somewhat unusual, I am satisfied the Plan provides for the safeguarding of existing allotments and the provision of new ones under Proposals SF.5 and SF.6. As I note the Council intends to conduct an assessment of existing allotment provision and need as part of an open space audit required by PPG17, they may consider whether it might be more appropriate to include specific mention of them in this Chapter where, in my opinion, they would sit more comfortably compared to Chapter 8 where they are linked with facilities such as libraries, places of worship and other community facilities. As no timetable for the study has been given to me I feel unable to make a formal recommendation in this regard.
- 9.3.7 Issue seven concerns the additional policy inserted at Revised Deposit stage to address the topic of important small areas of open space. In particular they question the reference to such areas *having been well used.... over a period of time*. The Council indicate the intent is to demonstrate that it is used rather than disused and/or unkempt and feel unable to specify a period of time. However, it strikes me that time is irrelevant and I consider that rather than setting out two criteria the policy would be improved by combining them with the opening sentence. I recommend accordingly. Whilst I accept the Council's assertion that it is impractical to show every small parcel of open space on the Proposals Map, it strikes me that in the absence of any clear definition of what size threshold they have used, the policy lacks transparency. Thus, I consider the Council should prescribe a size threshold at which any area of open space is either subject to the new policy or alternatively shown on the Proposals Map and covered by RT1 and RT2. Furthermore, the final clause of the new policy is solely a cross-reference to other Plan policies and as such represents unnecessary duplication and should be deleted.
- 9.3.8 Issue eight concerns the following sites in Winchester: Winchester City (North) MDA; St John's Croft; Dyson Drive; Nursery Gardens; Erskine Road; Kingsgate Park; Winton House and Bereweek Way. In the case of Barton Farm, the objector's point is that if the reserve Winchester (North) MDA is implemented, it would result in the loss of farmland that is an amenity enjoyed by users of the footpaths that cross it. However, I view the objection as an adjunct to the opposition in principle to the proposal that is covered in detail in Chapter 12. The land is not public open space and the objector's case would apply to any farmland situated at the edge of Winchester that is crossed by footpaths.
- 9.3.9 In the case of St John's Croft, this objection is effectively a submission in favour of a housing omission site, but as the prerequisite of any development is the removal of the RT.1 status and was the approach adopted at the Inquiry, I deal with the issues here. The site measures 0.49ha and adjoins St John's Croft, a listed building situated a short distance east of the city centre. The site is designated on the Proposals Map under RT.1 as an open area with an important amenity value to be protected from development. It is clear from the Plan that it is 'visual' amenity that the policy seeks to protect as opposed to areas which provide 'recreational' amenity protected under RT.2. In the Council's view, the site provides an important open link between the children's play area to the north and the public open space of Joyce Gardens to the south, which in turn links to the parkland of St Giles Hill. In its elevated position the tree cover on site is considered important in views from a range of locations within the city, whilst the field behind the trees is considered important to the setting of the listed building.
- 9.3.10 The objector cites an absence of public access in favour of the deletion of the RT. 1 status, but I agree with the Council that having regard to the guidance in PPG17 this is not critical. However I support the objector's case in that it is the mature boundary trees that are the main determinant of the site's value as a visual amenity. The Council's references to the site's 'open nature', 'rural character' and 'an absence of built development' are all well and good, but I agree with the objector's opinion that

the public perception of these qualities is extremely limited. Within the site behind the boundary trees there is a pocket of land that has only a limited intrinsic visual merit; essentially it is the tree cover when seen externally from both short and long range views that makes the site a visual amenity. The trees along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site, together with those to the south adjoining Magdalen Hill undoubtedly form a significant contribution to the verdant backdrop of the city centre. However, provided they are retained, and indeed supplemented to reinforce screening during the winter months, I consider that the site is appropriate for residential development and that this would not materially reduce its contribution to the townscape of this part of the city. Certainly I do not see the site as an important 'link' with other spaces in the way the Council describes, as without public access or even views into the site, its function is limited to providing a small part of the mature tree cover that is so characteristic of Winchester.

- 9.3.11 As part of the evidence to the Inquiry the objector submitted an illustrative scheme of public open space and 15-20 dwellings. Although it is not within my remit to comment on detailed proposals that may come forward, I am nonetheless satisfied that this indicates the site could provide an attractive residential development, whilst protecting the setting of St John's Croft and retaining the trees which contribute to the visual amenity of St Giles Hill. Provided any scheme is handled sensitively, I do not consider that there need be any conflict with the criteria of Proposal DP.5, which include important public views and skyline features, slopes, trees and hedgerows, and open areas important to the townscape. I am aware of the Council's concerns as to the effect of a vehicular access into the site in terms of tree loss, but the objector has pointed out that this would probably involve just one tree. In any event, there is a statutory requirement to take account of the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in the details of any scheme, including the layout and design of the access. Having regard to the above, and taking into account that development would make a useful contribution to the housing stock in a highly sustainable location, I propose the deletion of RT.1 insofar as it affects this site.
- 9.3.12 Although land at Dyson Drive was identified as a potential UCS site and excluded as an open space designation in the Deposit Plan, upon reconsideration, the Council has included it as an RT.1/RT.2 designation in the Revised Deposit, which addresses the objection. The land at Nursery Gardens was also identified as a UCS site, and it too has been reassessed and found to be an important open space. However, the Council argue it is too small to identify as an RT.1/RT.2 site and is therefore covered by the new policy relating to small sites. I accept that response as broadly addressing the objection, and consider the question of whether the site should be depicted on the Proposals Map will depend on the threshold size I have recommended the Council to define (9.3.7 above).
- 9.3.13 The objector in the Erskine Road site considers the land to have no important amenity or recreation value, but as the Council points out, the area which the objector seeks to exclude from the designation forms part of a larger parcel that is used as informal open space. In view of the acknowledged shortfall of recreational open space in Winchester, I can find no substance in the objector's case to persuade me that the land should not remain subject to RT.1/RT.2 safeguarding. The objector at Kingsgate Park seeks to remove the western portion fronting St Cross Road from designation, to provide an opportunity for development at the College. However, as the Council indicates, it forms an important visual break that was recognised as such by the last Local Plan Inspector. It is also an integral part of the wider playing field. I therefore agree with the Council that the RT.1/ RT.2 designation should remain. With regard to Winton House, the Council removed the RT.1/RT.2 designation from the car park to the east of the building at Revised Deposit stage, but retained it in respect of the rest. Whilst I am satisfied that the well treed site is an important visual amenity, I am unaware of any recreational use taking place on the land. If there is none, it would be inappropriate to retain the RT.2 designation on the site.

- 9.3.14 Whilst the Council considers the designation on the Early Years Centre site should remain as it was granted as an exception and has not yet been built, it is apparent that the building is now substantially constructed and I consider it should be removed from the designation. I have addressed the matter of the small strip of land between the approved Early Years Centre and Bereweke Way in the Housing Chapter as a housing omission site, where I conclude that it can be removed from the RT.1/RT.2 designation without significant detriment and used for housing. However, I find the main body of the Peter Symonds College playing field is an important open area that should remain protected by the policies.
- 9.3.15 Issue nine concerns sites in New Alresford: Arlebury Park; Sun Hill School; the Churchyard and the former railway cutting. Arlebury Park is not designated under these policies as it lies outside the settlement boundary (however see RT.4 below). Although the Governors of Sun Hill School sought the inclusion of the recreation area in the north east corner of their site in the designation, the Council explains that in the case of schools, the RT.2 designation has only been applied to areas of playing fields, pitches and courts. Thus as the land in question is not used for these purposes, it has been excluded. However as I consider the land to have some visual amenity value, and I accept that the Council needs to have a consistent approach regarding land in recreational use at schools, I can see no reason why the land should not be designated under RT.1. With regard to the churchyard, as the Council views its inclusion within a designated Conservation Area as affording sufficient protection, it was removed entirely from the RT.1 designation at Revised Deposit stage. I consider this to be an appropriate approach.
- 9.3.16 With regard to the disused railway cutting, the Council added a RT.1 designation at Revised Deposit stage as they regarded it as of value as an open amenity area, in response to public pressure. However this led to objections from the owners of the section east of New Farm Road and others. I have dealt with this in the Housing Chapter as an Omission site, where I conclude 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 are generally those sited at the top of the cutting projecting above roofs of housing in the adjacent roads. Hence, in view of this and the absence of public access, in my opinion it is of no greater open amenity value than a collection of enclosed rear gardens. It was evident from my visit that some of the trees growing on the very steep cutting slope were unstable and the Council conceded 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. 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 an ecological appraisal by Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre has confirmed that it does not have potential to warrant SINC designation. Whilst trees along the top of the cutting provide some private amenity for occupiers of the adjacent dwellings, the area is clearly in need of urgent management and to my mind, it comprises an area of unused and overgrown land within the settlement framework. I do not therefore agree that the land has significant open amenity value that warrants its designation under RT.1. Moreover, such designation will not provide any means of bringing that land into productive use, particularly as the Council do not intend to acquire it for open space and they have no suggestions for any alternative beneficial use. Also, there is little incentive for the owners to clear and manage the land, given this and the level of fly-tipping that currently occurs. Accordingly, I recommend deletion of the RT.1 designation in respect of the section of disused railway east of New Farm Road.
- 9.3.17 Issue ten concerns land at the southern end of Denmead Junior School playing field, which the County Council do not regard as warranting designation under RT.1 as it is not visible from any surrounding vantage point. Although the Council accepts it is not visible in the public domain, they maintain that it acts as a green lung which makes a contribution to the health and well-being of the population. As the land is not a publicly visible open amenity area, I consider it is inappropriately designated under RT.1, but note it is designated RT.2 in recognition of its role as a playing field and

contribution that makes to health and well-being. Whilst the objector questions the applicability of RT.2 to school playing fields, as they are not open to the general public, they do represent an amenity used by a section of the population and I consider they thus warrant the designation, in a similar way to private sports clubs that are not open to the general public.

- 9.3.18 Issue eleven concerns sites in Bishops Waltham: Langton Road/Morley Drive and Penfolds Paddock, which were identified in the UCS as good opportunity potential housing sites. Having re-assessed these two sites, the Council now accepts that they should be retained as open spaces, particularly in view of the acknowledged shortfall in Bishops Waltham. In view of their small size, the Council regards them as being inappropriate for designation under RT.1/RT.2 and indicated they would be covered by the new policy concerning smaller important open spaces. I am satisfied that this suitably addresses the objections.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.3.19 That the Plan be modified by:
- deleting section (ii) from RT.2 and rephrasing the policy solely to apply to those areas identified on the Proposals Map.
  - replacing *may* with *will only* in the first sentence of the final clause of RT.2
  - rewording the new policy to read: *Built development will not be permitted on important small areas of informal open space within housing developments where they are in active use, well maintained and contribute substantially to the appearance of the surrounding area.*
  - defining the size threshold of important small areas of open space that are not shown on the Proposals Map, but which are covered by the new policy.
  - deleting the RT.1 designation from Land adjoining St John's Croft;
  - deleting the RT.2 designation from the Winton House site if there is no recreational use.
  - deleting the RT.1/RT.2 designation from the western side of the area between Berewecke Road and Berewecke Way.
  - adding a RT.1 designation to the open land in the northeast corner of Sun Hill School.
  - deleting the RT.1 designation from the section of disused railway east of New Farm Road, New Alresford.
  - deleting the RT.1 designation from Denmead Junior School.

## 9.4. The Recreational Space Standard (paragraphs 9.12 - 9.22, Proposal RT.3)

### OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
09.13	468/50	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
09.14	468/51	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
09.15	468/52	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
09.16	468/53	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
09.17	468/54	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
09.18	468/55	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
09.19	468/56	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
09.20	468/57	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
09.21	468/58	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
09.22	468/59	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RT.3	211/12	Bishops Waltham Parish Council
RT.3	212/21	Bishops Waltham Society
RT.3	468/49	Cala Homes (South) Ltd

RT.3	468/60	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RT.3	261/59	Government Office for the South East
RT.3	1174/1	R. B Backhouse
RT.3	469/8	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd

## OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0906	468/14	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RD0906	469/6	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd
RD0906	469/3	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd

## OBJECTIONS TO PRE INQUIRY CHANGES

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
PIC0901	212/10	Bishops Waltham Society

### ISSUES

1. Does the Plan reflect PPG17 advice and is it satisfactory to refer to ongoing assessment work that may result in a possible revised standard? (261/59, 468/14REVDEP)
2. Should new paragraph RD09.06 be amended to refer to available land to meet identified deficiencies, and should additional land, such as that at Lovedon Lane, Kings Worthy, be allocated in the policy for this purpose? (469/8, 469/3REVDEP, 469/6REVDEP)
3. Is the requirement for 2.8 hectares of open space per 1000 population justified? (468/49 - 468/60, 468/5)
4. Will the increased amount of children's play space, required by the changes proposed to the minimum requirements for recreational space, necessitate changes to the Open Space Strategy and the deletion of sites from the Urban Capacity Study? (212/10PIC)
5. Should open spaces provided on-site through the operation of Proposal RT.3 and the Open Space Funding System, or through earlier arrangements, be identified in the Open Space Strategy and protected by RT.1 / RT.2 designations in the Local Plan? (211/12, 212/21)
6. Should open space contributions be required for conversions from commercial to residential use, in the centre of Winchester, when it is the Council's policy to encourage housing in the town centre? 1174/1
7. Is it clear how Proposal RT.3 and the Open Space Strategy would apply to provision in an MDA, and particularly Winchester City (North)? 468/49 - 468/60, 468/5)

### INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.4.1 PPG17 advises that local planning authorities should adopt policies that reflect existing provision and that are based on an assessment of local needs. It is evident that the Council are undertaking annual reviews of provision with their Open Space Strategy, which identifies existing provision and also recreational deficiencies in quantitative and qualitative terms. The Council's Topic Paper 5 explains the minor changes proposed to the standards to reflect a slight alteration to the 2001 National Playing Fields Association standards, which they have advanced as a Change (PIC09.01) to table 5. However, the text introduced at the Revised Deposit stage includes mention of the possibility of further changes being made to the standards in the light of an on-going District-wide audit. I consider this to be unsatisfactory as it fails to provide the certainty that Local Plans should convey. Accordingly, I recommend the deletion of the final sentence of RD09.06.
- 9.4.2 Although the objector in issue two considers that land should be identified in the Plan to address identified shortfalls, the Council confirms that it has indeed made some allocations, but also indicates that in some cases, it has not been possible to identify suitable sites and would rely on negotiations with developers to secure the land and facilities. In some instances the Open Space Strategy outlines improvements that are



necessary in each parish to upgrade provision, which does not always require additional land to be provided, but rather expenditure on facilities. In the case of Kings Worthy, the Council consider they have made provision through designations under Proposal RT.4. On the matter of contributions, that were also queried by this objector, I am satisfied that requirements would have to meet the Circular 1/97 guidance.

- 9.4.3 The objector in the third issue questions the standard of 2.8ha per 1000 population, as they regard it as being justified by neither the 1992 Playing Fields Assessment nor the Open Space Strategy. However, the Council point out that the former was a limited study and based on the methodology then recommended by Sport England, while the latter is not produced to justify the general standard, but rather to identify specific requirements relating to children's play and sports grounds. The Council's standard slightly exceeds the NPFA standard as it includes an element for general informal use as is set out in para 9.14, which I regard as acceptable.
- 9.4.4 In the fourth issue, the objector questions whether the Change, by increasing the recreational space requirement, would mean that the estimated yield from UCS sites would reduce. However, as the Council indicates the UCS is a technical document to provide an indication of potential development within the built-up areas of the District. The UCS does not allocate the sites and it should be noted that the total recreational space requirement in Table 5 is unaltered by the Change, but it appears merely to address an arithmetical error that had been introduced. I therefore support the Change in the interest of accuracy.
- 9.4.5 Issue five the objectors are concerned that open space provision secured in association with development proposals should be protected from development and not be lost through being identified as having development potential through the UCS. I am satisfied the objectors' concerns are addressed by the alteration made to the Revised Deposit Plan (RD09.07) to indicate that land provided under this policy will be identified in the Open Space Strategy. However, their comment has highlighted the fact that the Strategy is inappropriately referred to in the body of the policy and I consider it should be deleted.
- 9.4.6 Issue six raises the question of whether the requirement should be applied in relation to residential conversions in Winchester. As the Council indicates, such development would give rise to new residents who will make demands on recreational open space and I agree with them that it would be entirely appropriate for these to make financial contributions towards suitable off-site provision where, as is often the case in central Winchester, adequate provision cannot be made on-site.
- 9.4.7 Finally, although issue seven relates to the Winchester (North) MDA, as the Council points out, any development proposal would be required to provide the necessary ancillary infrastructure, including recreational space.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.4.8 That the Plan be modified:
- a) by the deletion of the final sentence of RD09.06.
  - b) in accordance with PIC09.01
  - c) by deleting the final part of the policy which states: *and the principles of the Winchester Open Spaces Strategy*.

## 9.5. Improvements in Recreational Provision (paragraphs 9.23 - 9.28, Proposals RT.4, RT.5, RT.6)

### OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
09.24	348/3	C. Sealey
09.24	1370/3	Maurice Keith Charrett
RT.4	1388/1	Amanda Sutton
RT.4	227/13	Bewley HomesPlc And R C H Morgan-Giles
RT.4	922/2	C Herridge
RT.4	1448/2	C. Morgan And Sons
RT.4	468/61	Cala Homes (South) Ltd
RT.4	176/7	Chris Slattery
RT.4	1181/1	D Poupart
RT.4	1180/1	E. E Boothby
RT.4	205/4	G Humphrey
RT.4	1176/1	G. A Walsh
RT.4	1001/2	George Fothergill
RT.4	234/3	Gleeson Homes
RT.4	1179/1	H. A Berry
RT.4	204/4	K Larkin
RT.4	923/3	Laura Clarke
RT.4	1178/1	Lloyd Brunt
RT.4	11/3	Mrs Hare
RT.4	970/2	N. C Goulding
RT.4	1177/1	Peggy Hay
RT.4	1175/1	Ronald W Smith
RT.4	235/3	Rookesbury Estate Ltd
RT.4	175/3	Save Barton Farm Group
RT.4	355/3	Welch

### ISSUES

Should land be identified for recreational provision under RT4 in the Plan at the following locations?:

1. North of Stockbridge Road/west of Harestock Road, Winchester. (355/3, 922/2, 970/2, 1001/2, 1152/1, 1175/1, 1176/1, 1177/1, 1178/1, 1179/1, 1180/1, 1181/1, 1388/1)
2. North and west of Courtenay Road, Winchester (175/3, 176/7, 204/4, 205/4, 348/3, 468/61, 923/3)
3. Bushfield Camp, Winchester (1370/3)
4. Pondside Lane, Bishop's Waltham (11/3)
5. South-east of Hookpit Farm Lane, Kings Worthy (234/3)
6. West of Arlebury Park, New Alresford (227/13)
7. North of Solomon's Lane, Waltham Chase (1448/2)
8. East of Mill Lane, Wickham (235/3)

### INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.5.1 The objectors to the Stockbridge Road / Harestock Road site consider it is unsuitable for recreational use for a variety of reasons and seek its deletion as a RT.4 designation and that all or part of the area should become a Local Gap. The Council state that it is one of three sites identified at the edge of the city to address not only the current shortfall but also future demand and is within the designated Local Gap.

The site is intended to cater for the northern and western parts of the urban area. Given the shortfall in Winchester, the likely future requirements, the absence of any superior alternative and the acceptability of such use within Local Gaps, I can see no justification for deleting the allocation in its totality. I also note there is a measure of support for the Proposal. The Council had accepted that an area immediately adjacent to Harestock Stud should be deleted, as the RT.4 designation had not covered other properties in the vicinity: a barn and its surroundings at Little Harestock Farm: Crabwood Cottage, and The Down House in Harestock Road. The Council had therefore proposed an amendment to the Proposals Map (Inset Map RD.45a) but this was not undertaken and Plan still shows the area as being included. A Further Proposed Change (FPC Map.C) is proposed to rectify this omission. Although the Council has no intention to compulsorily purchase the land, the RT.4 designation is regarded as a long term proposal to fulfil the Plan's recreational strategy.

- 9.5.2 However at the Inquiry it became clear that notwithstanding the FPC, the use of the remaining land at Harestock Stud was essential to the continued operation of the business. The Stud is a well established veterinary physiotherapy practice with an international reputation and treats horses from all over the country. The paddocks are needed to give the horses exercise and physiotherapy as part of their recovery. I accept the objector's view that the RT.4 designation would effectively cast a blight on the business and that even in the long term its acquisition to create recreational open space is highly unlikely. I shall therefore recommend the removal of the RT.4 designation from Harestock Stud.
- 9.5.3 The remainder of the triangular area between Kennel Lane, Littleton Road and Harestock Road covered by the designation is the subject of a separate objection. The land rises from the boundary with Harestock Stud to a more level area adjoining Harestock Road on either side of The Down House and which was put forward by the objectors for housing development under Proposals H.2 and H.3. The land is used as an agricultural smallholding known as Little Harestock Farm. With my recommendation to delete Harestock Stud from Proposal RT.4 the potential of this remaining land is diminished. This is due to a combination of its smaller size, the nature of the topography which militates against formal playing field provision, and the proximity to the busy Harestock Road where the siting of children's play facilities would be inappropriate. The Council indicated at the Inquiry that notwithstanding these points the land could still be used for informal recreation, for example as a small country park. However bearing in mind the constraints to which I have referred, the exclusion of the Harestock Stud for the reasons explained and the fact that there is a further substantial area of RT.4 designated land already in the Council's ownership beyond Littleton Road, I shall recommend the deletion of the Proposal insofar as it affects the triangular area between Littleton Road, Kennel Lane and Harestock Road.
- 9.5.4 The objectors in respect of the land at Courtenay Road, Winchester are concerned about potentially negative impacts that the RT4 designation could have on the character of the area, having regard to its countryside and Local Gap designations. The Council indicates that the area is envisaged to accommodate open recreational uses, with minimal buildings and hard surfacing, which they consider to be entirely appropriate in such settings. The topography of part of the site would make it unsuitable for pitches and therefore it is likely to be used for informal recreation, while concerns about traffic implications could be satisfactorily addressed at development control stage. I have therefore found no matters raised by the objectors which would warrant deleting the designation.
- 9.5.5 The objector in issue three is concerned that the allocation at Bushfield Camp, Winchester will lead to urbanisation of the area due to lighting and the erection of buildings. However, the Council indicates that the land was allocated for recreational use in the adopted Local Plan and this has been carried forward to the Review (Proposal W2). It is specifically identified for open sports use, which the Council regards as indicating the area is unsuitable for indoor sports facilities. Moreover, as

the area involved forms only part of Bushfield Camp and is of low to moderate visibility, any sports facilities are considered likely to have minimal visual impact. The locality also lies within a Local Gap which further reinforces the Council's ability to strictly control the nature of any development. I am therefore satisfied the Plan requires no modification to address the objection. I have also dealt with these and similar matters in more detail in my report on the objections to Chapter 11.

- 9.5.6 In issue four, Pondside Lane, Bishop's Waltham is a triangular shaped parcel measuring about 2.07ha that abuts development on two sides and open countryside on the third side. 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. 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 using that too for public open space.
- 9.5.7 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. However, as it is evident that the Council will proceed with the purchase of the CPO land and remain optimistic about acquiring the additional area beyond it by negotiation and are of the view that this land is better located to address the identified deficiency in Bishops Waltham than alternatives advanced by the objector, I am content that the RT4 designation should be retained on all of the land.
- 9.5.8 The fifth issue relates to land south-east of Hookpit Farm Lane, Kings Worthy, where the objection is an adjunct to the promotion of the site for residential development, which I address at para 6.32.1 of my Report. I do not support the objector's proposal and I note this open space designation is intended to address an existing shortfall of children's play facilities and sports provision in Kings Worthy and particularly for the northern and western parts of the settlement. The Council also refers to negotiations between the objector and the Parish Council concerning the possible acquisition of the land for recreational purposes, possibly in association with the provision of some rural exception affordable housing. However, that does not lead me to recommend any modification to the Plan.
- 9.5.9 In issue six, the objection to the RT.4 designation on land west of Arlebury Park, New Alresford was included in the Council's skeleton report under the Housing Omissions section and is addressed in my report at para 6.36.17 *et seq.* The land allocated in the Plan measures 1.6ha and forms part of a relatively level field that 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.
- 9.5.10 The objector proposes an alternative 4.4ha site to the north, which slopes into the valley bottom and is more 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 for which there was an identified need. As the residual area of the field that would remain beyond the allocated area is unlikely to be capable of any viable use and as I am not persuaded that the alternative RT.4 allocation advanced by the objector should be pursued, I recommend that the allocated RT.4 site should be retained and extended northwards by about 50% to encompass the entire field.

9.5.11 Issue seven concerns the land east of St John's School and north of Solomon's Lane, Waltham Chase. The objector cites the traffic congestion associated with the school use and considers the land should be utilised for a school car park. Although I saw the traffic problems associated with the "school run" the Council maintains this should be pursued independently of the Local Plan. Whilst they indicate that there may well be the potential to provide a limited parking facility in association with the recreational facility on the site, they indicated that there is an identified need for 1.4ha of sports provision and 0.9ha of children's play space in the Parish. Although I sympathise with the objector's concern, and would advocate the course suggested by the Council, I do not see any grounds for varying the RT4 allocation.

9.5.12 In the final issue the objector proposes that all of Wickham's recreational needs could be accommodated in one large recreation ground by extending the RT4 allocation on the land east of Mill Lane, Wickham. However, the Council indicates this has been discussed by local residents and the Parish Council, but their preference is to retain the current allocation to provide a smaller facility serving the northern part of the settlement and for retention of the existing recreation ground. In the circumstances, I see no justification for modifying the allocation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

9.5.10 That the Plan be modified by:

- a) deleting the RT.4 designation on land between Harestock Road, Kennel Lane and Littleton Road and
- b) extending the RT.4 designation on land west of Arlebury Park at New Alresford northwards to encompass the remainder of the field so that its northern limit coincides with the existing field boundary.

## 9.6. Formal Recreation (paragraphs 9.30 - 9.31, Proposal RT.7)

### OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RT.7	176/8	Chris Slattery
RT.7	333/6	Winchester Landscape Alliance

### ISSUES

1. Should Proposal RT.7 be amended to require consultation with local residents to determine local need? (333/6)
2. Would Proposal RT.7 result in unacceptable loss of valuable farmland? (176/8).

### INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

9.6.1 In the first issue the objector suggests adding a further criterion requiring the proposal to satisfy a local need agreed by residents and their representatives. However, it is evident that large scale proposals are required to demonstrate a need and it is highly

unlikely that any proposition would be advanced if there were no demonstrable need. Moreover, and as the Council indicates, planning proposals are advertised to allow members of the public and other organisations to comment on individual proposals. Accordingly, I consider the suggested criterion is unnecessary. Nevertheless, I consider the second part of criterion (i) is superfluous and should be deleted.

- 9.6.2 In the second issue, not all land at the edge of settlements is necessarily valuable farmland and the landscape character of such areas need not be unduly blighted by recreational uses. Indeed, whilst it would involve a change in appearance, it is generally accepted that land in designated Gaps and at the edge of settlements is suitable for recreational uses, particularly where the open character is retained.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 9.6.3 That the Plan be modified by deletion of the words following *area* in criterion (i).

# 9.7. Recreational Routes (paragraphs 9.32 - 9.33, Proposal RT.8)

## OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RT.8	1426/2	Corhampton and Meonstoke Parish Council

## ISSUES

1. Should the Proposal include the word “rationalisation”?
2. Should an additional criterion be added to Proposal RT.8 to require development not to detract from the extent, integrity, ease of use or rural character of a rural right of way?
3. Should a new policy be added to protect the character of the South Downs Way National Trail?
4. Should additional supporting text be added, referring to the CROW Act and the duty of Highway Agencies to produce Rights of Way Improvement Plans?

## INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.7.1 The policy and text has attracted support from Ramblers Association - Winchester Group, East Hampshire AONB Office, Hampshire County Council, and Winchester Landscape Alliance. The Council indicates that the word *rationalisation* was deleted as it was not considered to be universally applicable and that *improvement* suitably encompasses that aim. I agree. The remaining issues have been addressed by alterations incorporated in the Revised Deposit (RD09.12 & 13). Nevertheless, whilst not the subject of any objection, as the final sentence of the policy merely makes a cross-reference to other policies I regard it to be unnecessary duplication and recommend it be deleted.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.7.2 That the Plan be modified by deletion of the final sentence of the policy.

## 9.8. Equestrian Development (paragraphs 9.35 - 9.37, Proposal RT.10)

### OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RT.10	481/1	D Brosnan
RT.10	365/1	E. Emery
RT.10	502/2	I King

### ISSUE

Should Proposal RT.10 be worded more positively to accord with Government advice?

### INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS

9.8.1 The objectors consider the wording is not sufficiently positive to reflect Government policy concerning rural diversification and the rural economy. The Council added mention of equestrian training areas at Revised Deposit stage and a further criterion to ensure they would not have an adverse effect on the landscape. Rather than being unduly restrictive, it is evident that the policy is worded permissively and I consider it broadly reflects guidance in PPS7. I therefore find no need to recommend any modification to the Plan.

### RECOMMENDATION

9.8.2 That no modification be made to the Plan.

## 9.9. Golf-Related Development (paragraphs 9.38 - 9.42, Proposal RT.11)

### OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RT.11	370/2	South Winchester Golf Club

### OBJECTIONS TO REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN

Proposal/ Paragraph	Rep Number	NAME
RD0916	2283/10	East Hampshire AONB Office

### ISSUES

1. Should the policy be altered to permit development of additional leisure facilities within existing golf courses, where they can be satisfactorily accommodated in the landscape? (370/2)
2. Should paragraph 9.38 be amended to clarify that golf-related development is unlikely to be appropriate in the proposed South Downs National Park? (2283/10REVDEP)

## **INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.9.1 As the Council indicates with regard to the first issue, this policy relates to the development of new golf courses and golf related development. Although the objector seeks to have a clause related to additional facilities at existing golf courses, I consider they are provided for in the policy provided they meet the criteria. I do not see any need for a modification in this regard.
- 9.9.2 In the second issue, the objector considers that the statement in para 9.38 that golf courses are unlikely to be appropriate in the AONB is equally true of the Proposed National Park and they seek the addition of a reference thereto. The Council points out that there has been no change between the first Deposit and the revised Deposit in this regard but they nevertheless state it is premature to refer to the National Park. I consider it would be inappropriate for the local Plan to attempt to specify policies that may prevail if and when the National Park designation is confirmed.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.9.3 That no modification be made to the Plan.

# **9.10. Indoor Leisure Uses - Provision of Leisure and Entertainment Buildings (paragraphs 9.47 - 9.51, Proposal RT.13)**

## **OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN**

<b>Proposal/ Paragraph</b>	<b>Rep Number</b>	<b>NAME</b>
RT.13	203/4	Heritage Commercial Properties
RT.13	372/1	Roger Hartley

## **ISSUES**

1. Is Proposal RT.13 consistent with Government guidance in PPGs 6 and 17, and the sequential approach to be followed? 203/4
2. Is Proposal RT.13 sufficient to provide for improvements in indoor sports provision in the Plan area, and should the Proposal for an indoor leisure facility at Bishops Waltham (Proposal S.8 of the adopted Plan) be carried forward into the Local Plan Review? 372/1

## **INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.10.1 The objector in the first issue considers the policy is unclear as to where facilities such as fitness centres would be permitted and they regard it as less effective than Proposal W.20 of the adopted Plan. However, the policy is closely linked with Proposal SF1 and reflects the sequential approach recommended in Government guidance. Preference is given to sites in town and village centres, while sites elsewhere would be considered taking account of need, accessibility and impact. I do not regard the terms of the policy in the adopted Plan referred to by the objector, as providing any greater clarity or guidance.
- 9.10.2 With regard to the second issue, I have addressed the objector's point under section 13.4 of my Report, where I conclude there is no likelihood of an leisure facility being implemented on the objector's land, in view of the scheme that is being implemented at Swanmore School. Consequently I do not recommend the reinstatement of the adopted Plan's S.8 allocation in this Review. It is apparent that the text of para 9.50 requires updating with regard the position at Swanmore School.



## **RECOMMENDATION**

9.10.4 That the Plan be modified by updating the text of paragraph 9.50.

## **9.11. Tourism - Facilities for Visitors in the Settlements (paragraphs 9.53, Proposal RT.14)**

### **OBJECTIONS TO DEPOSIT PLAN**

<b>Proposal/ Paragraph</b>	<b>Rep Number</b>	<b>NAME</b>
RT.14	203/5	Heritage Commercial Properties
RT.14	1036/6	Twyford Residents' Association

### **ISSUES**

- 1 Should there be a policy giving specific guidance on suitable locations in Winchester for the development of facilities and accommodation for visitors? 203/5
- 2 Should Northfields Farm, Twyford, be allocated for recreation/tourism/leisure use? 1036/6

### **INSPECTOR'S CONSIDERATION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.11.1 In the first issue, the objector cites the reference in para 11.83 of the adopted Local Plan to guest accommodation being provided where it is related to radial routes such as Easton Lane, Winnall. However, the Council have introduced a criteria based policy, which to my mind broadens the scope of the facilities that may be provided and the locations where they may be permitted.
- 9.11.2 The objectors in the second issue refer to a specific site at the northern edge of the settlement where a former egg producing and packing station use has ceased operation leaving large buildings vacant. I am aware that the Council has approved alternative commercial uses in respect of the farm and the objectors consider leisure/recreational uses would be preferable, possibly incorporating a visitor centre for the South Downs National Park. I agree that such uses could be appropriate, but of course the specific suggestion is premature pending the decision on whether the designation is confirmed. I do not regard this as being the appropriate policy relating to such facilities, as it relates to improvement or development within settlements. However, it strikes me that Proposal RT.15, to which there has been no objection, already covers the change of use/conversion of buildings in the countryside to leisure and tourism use.
- 9.11.3 Finally, although not the subject of any objections, I regard the third policy criterion as superfluous and consider it should be deleted.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.11.4 That the plan be modified by deletion of policy criterion (iii).