



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT

NORTH OF FAREHAM AREA ACTION PLAN: CONSULTATION

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers: Steve Opacic, Tel: 01962 848 101, Email: sopacic@winchester.gov.uk

Zoë James, Tel: 01962 848 420, Email: zjames@winchester.gov.uk

Committee Administrator: Nancy Graham, Tel: 01962 848 235, Email: ngraham@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

This draft decision notice sets out the recommended response to Fareham Borough Council's (FBC) consultation on the North of Fareham Strategic Development Area Action Plan Options 2012. The consultation closes on 31 July 2012. The consultation document can be viewed at:

<http://www.fareham.gov.uk/council/departments/planning/ldf/sda.aspx>

FBC has provided 4 main masterplanning options, plus further options on the location on the new district centre, secondary school, housing densities, energy, water and further variations. They also ask for comments on the first stage of a Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Officers have the following key concerns which are reflected in the comments that it is recommended be submitted to Fareham Borough Council:

1. the consultation only gives options for different development locations and does not look at options for 'Place Making', by providing visions for creating different types of communities within the site.

2. the consultation looks at options for different uses on the area of land within Winchester District identified in the Fareham Borough Core Strategy and the Winchester Submission Local Plan Part 1 as 'gap', but does not consider options on the 'Fareham gap'. Options to develop in the 'Knowle gap' would be contrary to the submitted Local Plan Part 1 policy SH4.
3. a number of options consider locating significant employment provisions around Junction 11 of the M27 separated from the main area of development. It considered that these options are less sustainable as the main employment areas are less integrated with the new community and less accessible than alternative options where employment is more dispersed within the main development area.
4. the proposed average housing density is low (35-38dph), which may represent an underuse of land.
5. there are potential environmental and landscape impacts in the northern part of SDA.

DECISION

1. That the Council responds to the consultation with the comments set out at Appendix 1 using the form provided by Fareham, but highlights the concerns summarised above.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

1. Background

The principle of a Strategic Development Area North of Fareham has been established through the adopted Fareham Borough Council Core Strategy Policy CS13 and Policy SH4 in the submitted Winchester District Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy. The Masterplanning Options consultation will inform the development of the Area Action Plan which will establish the details for the Strategic Development Area.

Each masterplanning option has development up to the Winchester Boundary. The Options range from housing numbers from 5,400 up to 7,250 (density average 35-38dph) and all options propose a significant area of employment land, sites for schools and District/local centres and green infrastructure.

A vision for the new community has been set and the principles for the development are set out in Fareham's Core Strategy Policy CS13. These include creating a well integrated, diverse community, with accessible employment opportunities and a network of a range of green infrastructure and recreational facilities. The SDA will have high levels of self containment, which will complement and support Fareham town centre and adjoining settlements. In addition, both Fareham and Winchester Core Strategies have recognised the importance of green buffers to prevent coalescence with Knowle, Wickham, Funtley and Fareham.

Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 (as submitted) Policy SH4 sets out Winchester's approach to the SDA. SH4 states:

The City Council will cooperate with Fareham Borough Council to help develop a Strategic Development Area of between 6,500 - 7,500 dwellings together with supporting uses, centred immediately to the north of Fareham.

Land within Winchester District (as shown on the plan below) will form part of the open areas, required by the South East Plan, to ensure separation between the SDA and the existing settlements of Knowle and Wickham. The open and undeveloped rural character of this land will be retained through the application of Policy CP18 Gaps.

This policy aims to assist the implementation of the Strategic Development Area and Fareham Borough Council is currently preparing an Area Action Plan.

2. Masterplanning Options – Housing, Employment, Transport

The table below summarises the options being considered through this consultation.

Table 1: Summary of Masterplanning options

	Dwellings (av.35-38dph)	Employment (sqm)	Summary
Masterplanning option 1	6,650 – 7,250	80,500 - 87,700	Most of employment located at J.11 of the M27. Significant improvements at both junctions 10 and 11 and new link road from the A32 to J11.
Masterplanning option 2	6,650 – 7,250	80,500 - 87,700	Same as Option 1, but with no new link road from the A32 to J11.
Masterplanning option 3	6,300 – 6,850	76,200 - 82,850	No development at J11.
Masterplanning option 4	5,400 – 5,900	65,300 - 71,400	No development East of A32

Issues for Winchester:

The 4 masterplanning options would all have a similar impact on the communities in Winchester District with a development of up to 7,250 dwellings plus employment and infrastructure developed within Fareham District up to the Winchester boundary and separated from the Winchester communities by a gap within Winchester District.

The Options consultation asks questions about the location of development and facilities and identifies the main advantages and disadvantages to each Option. Work has been done on setting out the character of different areas in the SDA in the [introductory text](#) and all the Options are based on the character areas defined. However, these are not being consulted on and it is suggested that the Options should be led by Placemaking, describing the visions and options for different forms and types of community.

Options 1 and 2 have a large proportion of employment land concentrated at J11, separated from the main development. It is considered that these options are less sustainable as the main employment areas are less integrated with the new community and less accessible than alternative options where employment is more dispersed within the main development area.

There are additional disadvantages that haven't been picked up relating to landscape issues. There is a potential environmental and landscape impact of development in the northernmost part of SDA area with all four options for the following reasons:

Options 1-4 all include a significant area of new housing on the visually prominent ridgeline in the northernmost part of the SDA area (between Fiddlers Green woodland and Blakes Copse). This differs to the earlier draft masterplanning options (URS/Scott Wilson Strategic Masterplan Report of October 2010) which included this area in their larger 'indicative area of search for green infrastructure'; no housing was proposed in this location.

The City Council has undertaken a landscape appraisal for the SDA area which describes the importance of the ridgelines within the landscape as a natural, physical containment for the SDA and which provides key character features which should be retained and enhanced within the placemaking process. This assessment is available on our website at: <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/evidence-base/site-assessments/fareham-sda/>

There are potential adverse visual impacts and weakened lack of containment created by new housing on the treed ridgeline for both Winchester and Fareham districts. There is also a potential impact of proximity of housing on special landscape character and associated landscape and heritage features within Winchester District, namely ancient woodland areas of Fiddlers Green and Birchfrith Copse, part of which are also designated SINCs. Also Blakes Copse as an ancient woodland and SINC in Fareham district. NB The northernmost area in the SDA is identified as 'an area of special landscape character' in the Fareham SDA Capacity Analysis Constraints Map.

All development in Option 4 is contained west of the A32. This would result in the provision of less employment land as part of the SDA. The SDA is based on the premise that there is a requirement for sufficient employment space to achieve a realistic level of self-containment, but also to contribute to the delivery of sub-regional economic objectives. Therefore although the proportion of employment to housing is the same as other options, the overall provision of employment in this option is lower and may not meet sub-regional economic objectives.

Therefore it is recommended that there should be further development and testing of Option 3, as the preferred option. This may include considering whether development to the East of the A32 could be better integrated if a primary school were included in this area, or alternatively more of the employment provision.

Transport Options

As set out in a previous response from WCC to an Emerging Transport Strategy (PHD313), it is difficult to comment on the assumptions made without access to detailed transport modelling and assessment work. This work is needed to understand how the different transport options would cope with the additional demand from the SDA and how this could affect Winchester District. As the Masterplanning process continues there will be a need to carefully assess the chosen patterns of development and how its impacts in transport terms can be best accommodated.

Option 1 offers the opportunity to 'divert' the A32 to the East to meet the M27 at Junction 11, (an 'all' moves junction) rather than the current Junction 10 (which has East bound access only). Whilst offering better Strategic road access, this would also have the effect of removing the 'A32' from the development and allowing the site to be better integrated both within itself and to the existing Fareham town centre; in any case, any development east of the A32 is likely to require some sort of link road from the A32. A link road to J11 would therefore be supported if included in the other Options, as it would give flexibility if upgrading J10 proved impracticable or unviable to deliver.

Out of the transport options, it appears that Option 1, whilst it is the largest development, offers most scope to enable the delivery of the most comprehensive package of transport improvements. However, on balance there are other issues raised in this response which mean that Option 1 is a less favourable Option for other reasons.

The masterplanning principle of high levels of 'self-containment' is supported. This means that most trips are kept within the SDA, supported by good public transport, cycling and walking links to access nearby services and facilities. Options 1 and 2 have a large proportion of employment land concentrated at J11, separated from the main development and are therefore less self – contained and for these reasons are less favourable options.

One of the identified transport improvements is the extension of the BRT (Bus Rapid Transit). This would be a valuable scheme improving not just access for the

development site - but to the wider area. The Options should also include better BRT access for Knowle residents, including consideration of a future Knowle halt. The development of smarter choice initiatives such as car clubs or local bus service enhancements through the masterplanning process are also encouraged along with improvements to pedestrian and cycle links between settlements, for instance, between Wickham, Knowle and the SDA.

The options all show only one 'main road' accessing the development, using the access road to Knowle. Whilst there are likely to be several secondary access points, it is important that the development is not over-reliant on a single main access.

3. Masterplanning further variations

Table 2: Summary of further options to free up additional development land

Masterplanning further variations	
1.	smaller central park (allow an extra 50 dwellings).
2.	using Knowle Buffer for some development (allow an extra 300 dwellings) or school playing fields.
3.	reducing buffer around Funtley to 50m (150 additional homes)
4.	reducing employment floorspace (increase in housing land)
5.	increasing average housing density to 40 dwellings per hectare (allow an extra 700-850 dwellings).

Issues for Winchester:

Variation (1) suggests the reduction of the central park area to allow for additional housing. Changes to the central park area would not directly affect land within the City Council's area. However, it is important that the SDA as a whole includes adequate types and amounts of green infrastructure including open space to serve the SDA and this should guide any discussions on the reduction of this central green space. The same principle should be applied to the consideration of reducing the size of the buffer between Funtley and the development **Variation (3)**.

Variation (2) suggests development of 300 homes could be placed within the Knowle buffer area within Winchester District, which would still allow for a 150m buffer strip. Alternatively it suggests the land could be used as school playing fields. This option conflicts with Fareham's Core Strategy as well as policy SH4 within the Submitted Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 and would not therefore be a sound basis for the AAP.

The City Council's emerging Local Plan Part 1 requires that the 'Knowle buffer' should be kept free of any development and that gaps are maintained between the

SDA, Wickham and Knowle. This is underpinned by policy SH4, the supporting text of which states:

'some natural green infrastructure [could be accommodated] on land, within Winchester District, provided it does not include buildings and maintains the open and rural character of the land and enables its long-term management to be secured. The overriding requirement is to retain the open rural nature of this land and to prevent changes which would urbanise its undeveloped character¹.'

This means that any housing or formal open spaces such as school playing fields would not be appropriate uses for the 'Knowle gap'. Such uses should be provided within the development area to serve the development. In addition, the masterplanning for the New Community North of Fareham should ensure that adequate open space is provided to meet the needs of the new development in terms of:

- *allotments/ orchards*
- *children's play areas*
- *youth/ teenager facilities*
- *informal recreation*
- *natural greenspace*
- *parks, sports and recreation grounds*

Building 300 homes in the Knowle buffer and/or using this land for playing fields would also be considered harmful to the special landscape qualities of the area and the setting of Knowle settlement for reasons set out in the WCC Landscape Appraisal (<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/evidence-base/site-assessments/fareham-sda/>). Retention of a 150m buffer would not overcome these concerns.

The WCC landscape appraisal of the SDA area highlights the role of the fields alongside Knowle in creating the informal parkland setting for Knowle. The suggested alternate uses on this area could have a detrimental impact on the features which create this character and local distinctiveness. This area should also provide a natural buffer and strengthen green corridors, helping to maintain and enhance its landscape sensitivity and its biodiversity value. This variation should therefore not be explored further.

The existing boundary vegetation to Knowle Buffer is in itself vulnerable to development pressures on the Fareham side and for this reason would require a suitable landscape buffer as part of the development. In order for this to be provided and to avoid creating a hard urban edge, consideration should be given to including some green infrastructure and lower housing densities within the new community where it adjoins the gap.

Variation (4) would require the reduction of the amount of employment land available. The SDA is based on the premise that there is a requirement for sufficient

¹ Fareham SDA Site Assessments WCC - 2009

employment space to achieve a realistic level of self-containment, and to contribute to the delivery of sub-regional economic objectives. Reducing the overall employment land would therefore weaken the role of the SDA in contributing to sub-regional economic objective. Therefore this variation should not be explored further.

Variation (5) suggests raising the average housing density to 40 dwellings per hectare. A well-designed community could take higher housing densities in some locations which would not negatively affect the character of the area. Therefore this option is worth exploring further through the masterplanning process.

Further variations

While WCC understand the sensitivity of the Fareham Common gap, given the other further options under consideration, options for the Fareham Gap should also be considered at this stage. Alternatively, if it is a major constraint to development, this should be explained and the masterplanning process should justify why this area has not been considered for different uses.

A further variation could include Option 3 with a link road to J11. There may be scope for some low key uses related to the SDA to be located close to such a link road, provided they were non-intrusive. For example, for the delivery of Gypsy and Traveller sites which may be required as a result of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment being carried out to identify the accommodation needs in the area.

4. Location of other Infrastructure – District Centre, Secondary School and options for Energy Provision and Water Recycling

Table 3: Options for Location of other Infrastructure – District Centre, Secondary School and options for Energy Provision and Water Recycling

new district centre options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. close to A32 2. corner of Knowle Road and A32 3. Knowle Road (more central) 4. centrally located
secondary school options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. East of Funtley 2. East of A32
energy options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Site Wide Energy Generation 2. Individual Building Energy Generation 3. Energy Efficiency
water options	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rainwater Harvesting 2. Grey Water Recycling 3. Black Water Recycling

New district centre Options

Evidence for the Fareham Core Strategy suggests that the new district centre could 'accommodate a large anchor food store with about 3,000 sq.m net convenience

goods and a range of supporting shops and services of not more than 6,000 sq.m gross.'

The Masterplan does not address the more fundamental point of what the role of the SDA is and whether it is seeking to provide a new town/village centre, or a series of centres to serve an area of suburban development. The location of the centre will depend upon what sort of centre is being sought. Facilities should be located close to each other to encourage combined trips and in a central location which is within walking distance of the new and existing neighbouring communities at Knowle and Funtley to reduce additional trips. If a large food store is proposed, this should be as an integral part of a town/village centre, not as a freestanding, car-based store. Options 3 and 4 would therefore seem to be the preferred locations.

Secondary School Options

A Secondary School is needed to serve the new community of the SDA. Facilities should be located close to each other to encourage combined trips and a central location which is within walking distance of the new and existing neighbouring communities at Knowle and Funtley to reduce additional trips. Option 1 is therefore the preferred location, as it is more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists from within the development and, unlike Option 2, would not be separated from the majority of the development by the A32. A more central location would also make it easier for the facilities to be used by other services, integrating it further into the community.

Energy

A district-wide system that provides heat and power for the whole development would provide the best returns in terms of carbon reduction in the longer term. The planning of a new development on such a scale as proposed provides a rare opportunity to develop such a scheme with the infrastructure planned from the start and delivered in a phased manner.

Biomass CHP would be preferred if suitably located and materials could be sustainably and economically sourced. Biomass development would assist in the promotion of the green economy and in the development of supply chains in this area, which could have benefits to the wider South Hampshire urban sub-region. Gas CHP could be developed first with the potential to convert to biomass when feasible.

Consideration should be given to how the costs of developing the scheme can be apportioned to overcome concerns that developers will be unduly burdened by the initial start-up costs. Further consideration should also be given to securing a choice of energy supplier to residents if possible.

Water options

Reducing water usage by installing water efficient fittings is a key way of using water more sustainably. However, once the development is completed, water-efficient fixtures can be replaced by homeowners. Therefore different options to re-use water should be explored. Other authorities may be better placed to respond on the best

option suitable for the site and type of development; however, Black Water Recycling may not be a viable option to proceed with due to the high cost to saving ratio.

5. First Stage of a Green Infrastructure Strategy

Landscape

The areas of Special Landscape Character (as identified on the FBC 2009 constraints map) along the northern ridgeline and northern area need to be picked up to a greater degree in the emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy.

It is difficult to assess whether the emerging strategy reflects the existing landscape character of the site and surrounding area based on the information provided and the large scale of the map. Important but small scale GI features such as existing field hedgerows and specimen trees need to be identified at the strategic level as well as topography linked in with drainage/SuD's potential.

The emerging strategy identifies three main habitat corridors across the site which includes a strategic woodland habitat corridor along the northern edge of the SDA. This woodland corridor forms the distinctive treed skyline feature on the district boundary and provides an important cross boundary GI link between two river corridors. Masterplan options for the SDA show proposed new houses on this ridgeline (refer response to Q1a-4a earlier) with planted corridors to support GI. However, earlier draft masterplanning options showed this area as indicative green infrastructure rather than housing and it is considered that this area is more suitable for strengthening green infrastructure and enhancing landscape character which would both benefit the new community and help to reinforce the gap with Wickham.

While the vision for the SDA is for an integrated community within a highly self-contained development, there are opportunities to link with wider green infrastructure by locating green infrastructure so as to expand and reinforce gaps between existing settlements and in particular to maintain and enhance the woodland 'strategic habitat corridor' to the north of the SDA.

WCC support the cycling and walking improvements and links to the North of the SDA to benefit the communities of Knowle and Wickham and believe there is greater potential for improvements to both pedestrian, cycle and GI network in the wider area to link Knowle, Wickham and the SDA. For example improved links with disused railway line and Meon river corridor to the west of the SDA in Winchester district; also to improve sparse footpath network in the Forest of Bere area to the north. There is also potential for strengthening existing hedgerows with veteran oaks as GI links especially around Knowle buffer and alongside existing footpaths.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

None directly as a result of this consultation.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

The consultation with Members resulted in comments suggesting a need to strengthen the protection of gaps, seeking green infrastructure/lower density housing adjoining them and commenting on the access arrangements. The Portfolio Holder has agreed to incorporate changes to achieve this.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

n/a

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

n/a

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

n/a

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision: 27.07.12

Councillor Robert Humby – Portfolio Holder for Planning and Enforcement

APPENDIX 1

PROPOSED RESPONSE TO NORTH OF FAREHAM AREA ACTION PLAN: CONSULTATION



New Community North of Fareham

Options Consultation (2nd - 31st July 2012)

After reviewing the exhibition boards or the printed consultation document, we would encourage you to make your comments on the Options Consultation online by completing the survey at www.fareham.gov.uk/consultation. However, you can also let us know your views using the spaces below and returning this form by email, post, fax or handing it in at the Council's main reception at the Civic Offices in Fareham or at our public exhibitions during July. Thank you.

Please tell us your postcode (This will only be used for mapping responses)

Q1a: Have we identified the main advantages and disadvantages for Option 1?

Yes No

Comments:

See response to Qu 8.

Q1b: Have we identified the main advantages and disadvantages for Transport Option 1?

Yes No

Comments:

See also response to Qu 8.

It is difficult to comment on the assumptions made without access to detailed transport modelling and assessment work. This work is needed to understand how the different transport options would cope with the additional demand from the SDA and how this could affect Winchester District. As the Masterplanning process continues there will be a need to carefully assess the chosen patterns of development and how its impacts in transport terms can be best accommodated.

Option 1 offers the opportunity to 'divert' the A32 to the East to meet the M27 at Junction 11, (an 'all' moves junction) rather than the current Junction 10 (which has East bound access only). Whilst offering better Strategic road access, this would also have the effect of removing the 'A32' from the development and allowing the site to be better integrated both within itself and to the existing Fareham town centre; in any case, any development east of the A32 is likely to require some sort of link road from the A32. A link road to J11 would therefore be supported if included in the other Options, as it would give flexibility if upgrading J10 proved impracticable or unviable to deliver.

Out of the transport options, it appears that Option 1, whilst it is the largest development, offers most scope to enable the delivery of the most comprehensive package of transport improvements. However, on balance there are other issues raised in this response which mean that Option 1 is a less favourable Option for other reasons.

The masterplanning principle of high levels of 'self-containment' is supported. This means that most trips are kept within the SDA, supported by good public transport, cycling and walking links to access nearby services and facilities. Options 1 and 2 have a large proportion of employment land concentrated at J11, separated from the main development and are therefore less self – contained and for these reasons are less favourable options.

One of the identified transport improvements is the extension of the BRT (Bus Rapid Transit). This would be a valuable scheme improving not just access for the development site - but to the wider area. The Options should also include better BRT access for Knowle residents, including consideration of a future Knowle halt. The development of smarter choice initiatives such as car clubs or local bus service enhancements through the masterplanning process are also encouraged along with improvements to pedestrian and cycle links between settlements, for instance, between Wickham, Knowle and the SDA.

The options all show only one 'main road' accessing the development, using the access road to Knowle. Whilst there are likely to be several secondary access points, it is important that the development is not over-reliant on a single main access.

Q2a: Have we identified the main advantages and disadvantages for Option 2?

Yes No

Comments:

See response to Qu 1a and 8.

Q2b: Have we identified the main advantages and disadvantages for Transport Option 2?

Yes No

Comments:

See response to Qu 1b and 8.

Q3a: Have we identified the main advantages and disadvantages for Option 3?

Yes No

Comments:

See response to Qu 8.

Q3b: Have we identified the main advantages and disadvantages for Transport Option 3?

Yes No

Comments:

See response to Qu 1b and 8.

Q4a: Have we identified the main advantages and disadvantages for Option 4?

Yes No

Comments:

The smaller scale of the development may mean that the low overall provision of employment may not meet sub-regional economic objectives. Also, see response to Qu 8.

Q4b: Have we identified the main advantages and disadvantages for Transport Option 4?

Yes No

Comments:

See response to Qu 1b and 8.

Q5: Which of the four options do you prefer for the new district centre and why?

Location 1; Location 2; Location 3 or Location 4

Your reasons:

The location of the centre will depend upon what sort of centre is being sought. Facilities should be located close to each other to encourage combined trips and in a central location which is within walking distance of the new and existing neighbouring communities at Knowle and Funtley to reduce additional trips. If a large food store is proposed, this should be as an integral part of a town/village centre, not as a free standing, car based store. Options 3 and 4 would therefore seem to be the preferred locations.

Q6: Which of the two options do you prefer for the secondary school and why?

Location 1 or Location 2

Your reasons:

Facilities should be located close to each other to encourage combined trips and a central location which is within walking distance of the new and existing neighbouring communities at Knowle and Funtley to reduce additional trips. Option 1 is therefore the preferred location, as it is more accessible for pedestrians and cyclists from within the development and, unlike Option 2, would not be separated from the majority of the development by the A32. A more central location would also make it easier for the facilities to be used by other services, integrating it further into the community.

Q7: Should the Council give further consideration to any of these five variations for the first draft of the Area Action Plan?

1. Smaller central park; 2. Using some of the Knowle buffer; 3. Smaller Funtley buffer; 4. Less employment floor space; 5. More homes per hectare; or None

Your reasons:

Variation (1) suggests the reduction of the central park area to allow for additional housing. Changes to the central park area would not directly affect land within the City Councils area. However, it is important that the SDA as a whole includes adequate types and amounts of green infrastructure including open space to serve the SDA and this should guide any discussions on the reduction of this central green space. The same principle should be applied to the consideration of reducing the size of the buffer between Funtley and the development **Variation (3)**.

Variation (2) suggests development of 300 homes could be placed within the Knowle buffer area within Winchester District, which would still allow for a 150m buffer strip. Alternatively it suggests the land could be used as school playing fields. This option conflicts with Fareham's Core Strategy as well as policy SH4 within the Submitted Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 and would not therefore be a sound basis for the AAP.

The City Council's emerging Local Plan Part 1 requires that the 'Knowle buffer' should be kept free of any development and that gaps are maintained between the SDA, Wickham and Knowle. This is underpinned by policy SH4, the supporting text of which states:

'some natural green infrastructure [could be accommodated] on land, within Winchester District, provided it does not include buildings and maintains the open and rural character of

the land and enables its long-term management to be secured. The overriding requirement is to retain the open rural nature of this land and to prevent changes which would urbanise its undeveloped character.'

This means that any housing or formal open spaces such as school playing fields would not be appropriate uses for the 'Knowle gap'. Such uses should be provided within the development area to serve the development.

In addition, the masterplanning for the New Community North of Fareham should ensure that adequate open space is provided to meet the needs of the new development in terms of:-

- allotments/ orchards
- children's play areas
- youth/ teenager facilities
- informal recreation
- natural greenspace
- parks, sports and recreation grounds

Building 300 homes in the Knowle buffer and/or using this land for playing fields would also be considered harmful to the special landscape qualities of the area and the setting of Knowle settlement for reasons set out in the WCC Landscape Appraisal (<http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/evidence-base/site-assessments/fareham-sda/>). Retention of a 150m buffer would not overcome these concerns.

The WCC landscape appraisal of the SDA area highlights the role of the fields alongside Knowle in creating the informal parkland setting for Knowle. The suggested alternate uses on this area could have a detrimental impact on the features which create this character and local distinctiveness. This area should also provide a natural buffer and strengthen green corridors, helping to maintain and enhance its landscape sensitivity and its biodiversity value. This variation should therefore not be explored further.

The existing boundary vegetation to Knowle Buffer is in itself vulnerable to development pressures on the Fareham side and for this reason would require a suitable landscape buffer as part of the development. In order for this to be provided and to avoid creating a hard urban edge, consideration should be given to including some green infrastructure and lower housing densities within the new community where it adjoins the gap.

Winchester City Council strongly oppose the consideration of alternative uses on the Knowle gap which do not accord with policy SH4 of the submitted Winchester Local Plan Part 1

Variation (4) would require the reduction of the amount of employment land available. The SDA is based on the premise that there is a requirement for sufficient employment space to achieve a realistic level of self-containment, and to contribute to the delivery of sub-regional economic objectives. Reducing the overall employment land would therefore weaken the role of the SDA in contributing to sub-regional economic objective. Therefore this variation should not be explored further.

Variation (5) suggests raising the average housing density to 40 dwellings per hectare. A well designed community could take higher housing densities in some locations which would not negatively affect the character of the area. Therefore this option is worth exploring further through the masterplanning process.

Q8: Which of the masterplanning options would you like to see developed and why?

Option 1; Option 2; Option 3 or Option 4

Your reasons:

The Options consultation asks questions about the location of development and facilities and identifies the main advantages and disadvantages to each Option. Work has been done on setting out the character of different areas in the SDA in the introductory text and all the Options are based on the character areas defined. However, these are not being consulted on and it is suggested that the Options should be led by Placemaking, describing the visions and options for different forms and types of community. (Qus 1-4).

Options 1 and 2 have a large proportion of employment land concentrated at J11, separated from the main development. It considered that these options are less sustainable as the main employment areas are less integrated with the new community and less accessible than alternative options where employment is more dispersed within the main development area. The masterplanning principle of high levels of 'self-containment' is supported for the transport options. Options 1 and 2 are less self – contained and are therefore less favourable options.

There are additional disadvantages that have not been picked up relating to landscape issues. There is a potential environmental and landscape impact of development in the northernmost part of SDA area with all four options for the following reasons:

Options 1-4 all include a significant area of new housing on the visually prominent ridgeline in the northernmost part of the SDA area (between Fiddlers Green woodland and Blakes Copse). This differs to the earlier draft masterplanning options (URS/Scott Wilson Strategic Masterplan Report of October 2010) which included this area in their larger 'indicative area of search for green infrastructure'; no housing was proposed in this location.

The City Council has undertaken a landscape appraisal for the SDA area which describes the importance of the ridgelines within the landscape as a natural, physical containment for the SDA and which provides key character features which should be retained and enhanced within the placemaking process. This assessment is available on our website at: <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/evidence-base/site-assessments/fareham-sda/>

There are potential adverse visual impacts and weakened lack of containment created by new housing on the treed ridgeline for both Winchester and Fareham districts. There is also a potential impact of proximity of housing on special landscape character and associated landscape and heritage features within Winchester District, namely ancient woodland areas of Fiddlers Green and Birchfrith Copse, part of which are also designated SINC. Also Blakes Copse as an ancient woodland and SINC in Fareham district. NB The northernmost area in the SDA is identified as 'an area of special landscape character' in the Fareham SDA Capacity Analysis Constraints Map.

All development in Option 4 is contained west of the A32. This would result in the provision of less employment land as part of the SDA. The SDA is based on the premise that there is a requirement for sufficient employment space to achieve a realistic level of self-containment, but also to contribute to the delivery of sub-regional economic objectives. Therefore although the proportion of employment to housing is the same as other options,

the overall provision of employment in this option is lower and may not meet sub-regional economic objectives.

Therefore it is recommended that there should be further development and testing of Option 3, as the preferred option. This may include considering whether development to the East of the A32 could be better integrated if a primary school were included in this area, or alternatively more of the employment provision.

The Options should include better BRT access for Knowle residents, including consideration of a future Knowle halt. WCC would also encourage the development of smarter choice initiatives such as car clubs or local bus service enhancements through the masterplanning process.

Q9: Are there any other options or variations for the new community that you think the Council should consider?

While WCC understand the sensitivity of the Fareham Common gap, given the other further options under consideration, options for the Fareham Gap should also be considered at this stage. Alternatively, if it is a major constraint to development, this should be explained and the masterplanning process should justify why this area has not been considered for different uses.

A further variation could include Option 3 with a link road to J11. There may be scope for some low key uses related to the SDA to be located close to such a link road, provided they were non-intrusive. For example, for the delivery of Gypsy and Traveller sites which may be required as a result of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment being carried out to identify the accommodation needs in the area.

Q10: Does the emerging strategy reflect the existing landscape character of the site and surrounding area?

The areas of Special Landscape Character (as identified on the FBC 2009 constraints map) along the northern ridgeline and northern area need to be picked up to a greater degree in the emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy.

It is difficult to assess whether the emerging strategy reflects the existing landscape character of the site and surrounding area based on the information provided and the large scale of the map. Important but small scale GI features such as existing field hedgerows and specimen trees need to be identified at the strategic level as well as topography linked in with drainage/SuD's potential.

The emerging strategy identifies three main habitat corridors across the site which includes a strategic woodland habitat corridor along the northern edge of the SDA. This woodland corridor forms the distinctive treed skyline feature on the district boundary and provides an important cross boundary GI link between two river corridors. Masterplan options for the SDA show proposed new houses on this ridgeline (refer response to Q1a-4a earlier) with planted corridors to support GI. However, earlier draft masterplanning options showed this area as indicative green infrastructure rather than housing and it is considered that this area is more suitable for strengthening green infrastructure and enhancing landscape character which would both benefit the new community and help to reinforce the gap with Wickham.

While the vision for the SDA is for an integrated community within a highly self-contained

development, there are opportunities to link with wider green infrastructure by locating green infrastructure so as to expand and reinforce gaps between existing settlements and in particular to maintain and enhance the woodland 'strategic habitat corridor' to the north of the SDA.

WCC support the cycling and walking improvements and links to the North of the SDA to benefit the communities of Knowle and Wickham and believe there is greater potential for improvements to both pedestrian, cycle and the GI network in the wider area to link Knowle, Wickham and the SDA. For example improved links with disused railway line and Meon river corridor to the west of the SDA in Winchester district; also to improve sparse footpath network in the Forest of Bere area to the north. There is also potential for strengthening existing hedgerows with veteran oaks as GI links especially around Knowle buffer and alongside existing footpaths.

Q11: Which of the energy options would you like to see developed further and why?

1. Site wide energy; 2. Individual building energy; or 3. Energy efficiency

Comments:

A district-wide system that provides heat and power for the whole development would provide the best returns in terms of carbon reduction in the longer term. The planning of a new development on such a scale as proposed provides a rare opportunity to develop such a scheme with the infrastructure planned from the start and delivered in a phased manner.

Biomass CHP would be preferred if suitably located and materials could be sustainably and economically sourced. Biomass development would assist in the promotion of the green economy and in the development of supply chains in this area, which could have benefits to the wider South Hampshire urban sub-region. Gas CHP could be developed first with the potential to convert to biomass when feasible.

Consideration should be given to how the costs of developing the scheme can be apportioned to overcome concerns that developers will be unduly burdened by the initial start-up costs. Further consideration should also be given to securing a choice of energy supplier to residents if possible.

Q12. Which of these three options for saving and re-using water would you prefer to see at the new community?

Rainwater harvesting; Grey water recycling or Black water recycling

Comments:

Reducing water usage by installing water efficient fittings is a key way of using water more sustainably. However, once the development is completed, water efficient fixtures can be replaced by homeowners. Therefore different options to re-use water should be explored. Other authorities may be better placed to respond on the best option suitable for the site and type of development, however, Black Water Recycling may not be a viable option to proceed with due to the high cost to saving ratio.