



Twyford Parish Council

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Winchester District Local Plan – Part 1 Joint Core Strategy Examination

Responses to inspectors questions by Twyford Parish Council

Day 6 – WEDNESDAY 7th NOVEMBER 2012

MARKET TOWNS AND RURAL AREAS – Policies MTRA 1 -5, issue 8

Introduction

Twyford Parish lies at the extreme western part of the South Downs National Park. It is an ancient village which still sits within its recognisable boundaries and exhibits and contains historic and ecology assets of national and international importance. It is an active and varied village community and forms part of the setting of Winchester. It has a population of about 1500 and an exceptional range of jobs which more than balance those economically active and an exceptional range of facilities. It is accessible to rail, motorway, airport, population centres by foot, cycle and bus add to its accessibility. Its house prices are significantly higher than many of its neighbours. It's nearest large centre is Winchester (2 miles) and many people commute elsewhere to work. About 100 houses and major employment grown have been permitted in the last 10 years, mostly as departures from policy.

It is adversely affected by levels of traffic on B3335 which is bound to grow, and motorway and aircraft noise.

The comments which follow relate to Twyford but are also relevant to other villages, within the South Downs National Park.

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ENVIROMENTAL POLICIES CP15-20

v) Settlement gaps

Winchester is protected by a ring of gaps on its Southern, Western and Northern edges. For some reason which has never been clear, the gaps between Twyford and Winchester, Twyford and Shawford and Twyford and Colden Common have never been included. These are of equivalent importance to the other Winchester gaps, and is more important than between Otterbourne and South Down.

The inclusion of the land within the gaps of imposes a policy under CP18 which appears significantly more restrictive of that within CP19 for the South Downs National Park.

The gaps policies would therefore strengthen the control of development between Twyford and its surround settlements to a greater degree of that imposed by either CP19 or the MTRA suite of policies. It would help protect the identity of Twyford. Alternatively it may be considered contrary to NPPF and South East Plan that the policy CP19 together with MRTA 1-5 allows more development than within the designated gaps, even those in the PUSH growth area and in the marginally land between Otterbourne and South Downs).

vi) **Are policies CP19 & 20 likely to provide effective protection for the SDNP, whilst allowing some limited, suitable and appropriate development to continue?**

i) **Are the policies consistent with the NPPF?**

Twyford's main case is to why CP19 is not adequate as the sole policy for the protection of SDNP are given in the detailed comments on MRTA 1 – 5 and under issue 8 which are attached. The SDNP policy towards the end of the plan, appear to occupy the position of subsidiary importance. Its proper place would be as DS2 to show the importance, attributed to SDNP by NPPF paragraph 1.13 and by legislation.

The Legal position is a follows:-

A statutory duty on all “relevant authorities” is imposed by a number of Acts including National Parks Act 1949, s.11a, and Environment Act 1995 s.62. This imposes duties on any authority making decision which may affect the National Park to have regard to the statutory purposes. The purposes and duties are set out in DEFRA circular March 2010 (English National Parks and Broads) and in the DEFRA guidance note Duties on Relevant Authorities to have regard for the purposes of National Parks, ANOB's and the Broads 2005. The guidance note stresses in paragraph 5 that the duties apply to any decisions and activities an authority may take affecting land. This includes decisions on planning authorities. As paragraph 6 makes clear, it applies outside the boundary of the National Park, if there is an impact. Paragraph 9 indicates DEFRA's expectation of all relevant authorities. The first of these is that they should consider “undertaking and making publically available an assessment of the impact on National Parks”.

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Other similar suggestions are made, the purpose being that the authority should be able to demonstrate compliance if challenged “for instance at any public inquiry” Para 10.

Despite my best endeavours I have not been able to discover any assessment either by Winchester or SDNP which submits those policies and proposals of WJCS to the necessary assessment.

Whether or not the statutory duty is judged to have been satisfied, CP19 policy in its present form appears only as a weak appendage brought into the plan at a late stage, when the bulk of the technical work had been done. It will not provide the National park with its proper level of consideration or assessment.

Chris Corcoran

For and on behalf of Twyford Parish Council