

**Winchester District Local Plan Part 1/
Joint core Strategy Examination**

**Written Statement from City of Winchester Trust
Represented by Richard Baker**

Representation ref. No. 3082

**Day 6 Wednesday 7 November 2012
Environment Policy CP20**

1. Our representation is that Policy CP20 is not likely to provide effective protection for the heritage and landscape setting of Winchester. The Local Plan as part of its development strategy should contain a policy to designate a Green Belt around the north, west and south sides of Winchester.
2. The City of Winchester Trust (CWT) submitted a representation on the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 on 9 March 2012. This stated, 'The CWT contend that the Plan is unsound, in that whilst acknowledging the importance of the Setting, it does not define the setting, or propose adequate policies to protect the setting'.

The Setting refers to 'Winchester and its Setting'. The CWT together with the Hampshire Gardens Trust, produced a study under that title in 2011, and this was submitted as part of our evidence in March 2012.

3. Version 1 of the Local Plan Part 1, published on 4 September 2012, makes statements in paras. 2.8, 2.10, 2.18, 3.4, 3.6, 3.11, 3.15, 3.33, 7.52, 7.53, 7.54, and Policies WT1, WT2, CP18 and CP20, that demonstrate an appreciation of the importance of Winchester Town and its landscape setting.
4. At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 14). One of the three dimensions to sustainable development is an environmental role; contributing to protecting and enhancing our national, built and historic environment (para 7).
5. Policy CP20 states that 'The Local Planning Authority will support new development which recognises, protects and enhances the District's distinctive landscape and heritage assets and their settings'.
The trust contend that new development will not protect and enhance the setting of Winchester. To the contrary new development would be detrimental to the setting of Winchester, an historic city that has evolved in the valley of the River Itchen and the surrounding chalk downland since the Iron Age over a period of 2,260 years.

6. Version 1 does not define the landscape setting of Winchester as part of its development strategy. Policies in the Plan override the importance of the landscape setting and demonstrate the detrimental impact that new development, proposed and approved can have on the landscape setting of the city.

Policy WT2 – Strategic Housing Allocation – North Winchester, known as Barton Farm, states that ‘the masterplan should reflect the location of the site and minimise its impact on the setting of Winchester and local landscape. The allocation of land for this development, para 3.15, has been outweighed by the single ownership, rather than the recognition that the development should not extend north of the 65m ridge line that runs east to west across the site.

The Secretary of State in his decision notice on Barton Farm dated 2 October 2012 (para 27), ‘considers that the proposal would be detrimental to the historic integrity of Winchester, He considers that the appeal scheme does not comply with LP Policy W1 which seeks to protect and enhance the special and historic character of Winchester and its landscape setting’.

He also concluded (para 40), ‘that the scheme would give rise to some adverse visual impacts and that this adds weight to the conflict with with LP policy W1’.

Overall (para 41) the Secretary of State, ‘concludes that the factors which weigh in favour of the proposed development clearly outweigh its shortcomings’.

Policy WT3 – Opportunity site for Bushfield Camp – para 3.42 recognises the significance of the topography of the site and its visibility from a wide area and importance to the setting of the City as a whole and particularly to St Cross, but allocates the site as an ‘Opportunity Site’.

Pitt Manor Farm, a site on the western side of Winchester, was granted permission on appeal in January 2012, for 200 houses. Policies regarding the contribution of this site to the western setting of Winchester proved to be inadequate.

7. The National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012 in para.80, states that Green Belts have five purposes. All of these purposes are entirely applicable to the setting and character of the historic City of Winchester.

The designation of a Green Belt to the north, west and south sides of Winchester would complement the South Downs National Park to the east.

A Green Belt, with its inner and outer boundaries, would provide a clear definition for the historic and landscape setting of Winchester, reinforce Policy CP18 for the four settlement gaps around Winchester and the Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Sites of Importance of Nature

Conservation and maintain the compact quality of the city and its special relationship with the chalk downland countryside.
A representation by CWT, supporting this designation was made in July 2012.

8. This representation of the Trust is for the development strategy to recognise, define and protect the landscape setting of Winchester not just for this plan period 2011 - 2031 , but for future plan periods.

The appeal decisions at Pitt Manor Farm and Barton Farm, proposal WT3 for Bushfield Camp, the support for new development in CP20 do not support Policy WT1 'to ensure that the Town retains its well-treed character, attractive green setting, its well defined urban edge, and access to open space and adjoining countryside'.

9. The Trust proposes that to make good the omission in the Plan to recognise, define and protect the historic and landscape setting of the City of Winchester, that the Inspector recommends in his report that a Policy to designate a Green Belt around the north, west and south sides of the City be included in the Plan.

RB 9 October 2012