

<b>FOI REF:</b>	16568
<b>RESPONSE SENT:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> February 2026

## Request

Please provide the following information held by the Council:

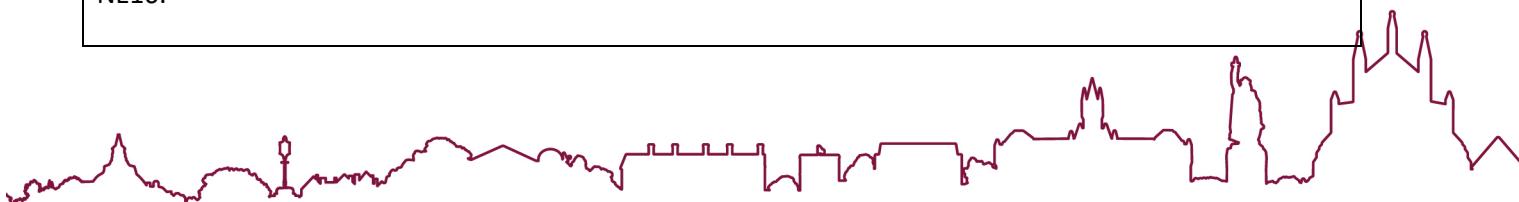
### 1. Justification for the "Developable Area" Boundary (Policy W5)

During the Local Plan Examination Hearing (Matter 16), Council officers stated verbally that the definition of the approximately 20-hectare developable area was informed by the historic military footprint.

- a) Please provide the specific technical report, ecological constraints plan, or "Reasonable Alternatives" assessment that justifies the exact 20-hectare boundary. Specifically, does the Council hold any evidence that assesses this boundary against the current Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) boundary to justify inclusion of the SINC within the allocation? [No information held](#).
- b) Please provide the specific Ecological Impact Assessment or internal briefing note used to determine that the historic hardstandings (which are now designated priority habitats/SINC) are suitable for removal or development based on their historic use. [No information held](#).
- c) Please provide a copy of the official recording, transcript, or the Council's internal notes/minutes for the Matter 16 Hearing, specifically the session covering Policy W5 and the definition of the developable area, documenting the admission regarding the military footprint. [All of the Local Plan hearing sessions are recorded](#) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lv5AeQOD7go&t=1164s> along with the City Council's responses to the Inspector's MIQ's on the Winchester Town site allocations <https://www.localplan.winchester.gov.uk/assets/inline/2359/Winchester-City-Council-Matter-6.pdf> There are no other internal notes/minutes of meetings relating to the question above.

### 2. Nutrient Neutrality Credits & Deliverability (Policy NE16)

Regarding the Council's "Nutrient Neutrality Topic Paper" and the proposed Main Modifications to Policy NE16:



- a) Please provide the current "balance sheet" or ledger showing the exact number of nitrogen and phosphorus mitigation credits currently generated, verified, and available for allocation specifically from Council-owned Package Treatment Plant (PTP) upgrades.

The performance of the nitrogen and phosphorous credits are available on the WCC website [Housing Performance - Winchester City Council](#)

- b) Please provide copies of any risk registers, internal briefing notes, or correspondence (dated January 2024 to present) regarding the viability, delays, cost overruns, or potential credit-yield reduction of the PTP upgrade schemes identified in the Nutrient Neutrality Topic Paper.

Please see [CAB3470 HRA Nutrient Mitigation Proposal.pdf](#) for a link to the Cabinet Report 'Housing Revenue Account Nutrient Mitigation Proposal' from July 2024. This report sought approval, subject to individual business cases, to the upgrade of a further four of WCC's own WwTWs (known as Phase II in the report). The two WWTW plants already upgraded by the HRA (Phase I in the report) are performing well and the Council are in the process of selling credits from these schemes to the market. The feasibility for the Phase II sites is underway; this feasibility work will inform the business cases / viability for these upgrades. Officers are not aware of a delay, cost overrun or potential credit-yield reduction relating to Phase II of the HRA nutrient mitigation project. This is a publicly accessible report setting out the implications and risks associated with these Phase II upgrades.

- c) Please provide copies of any correspondence between WCC and Natural England or the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) regarding the use of "statutory upgrades" (TAL standards) or water company upgrades to offset new development in the Plan period.

This is copy of a letter that was sent to all Chief Planning Officers [Nutrient neutrality and habitats regulations assessment update](#)

### **3. South Downs National Park & Landscape Impact (Policy W5)**

Regarding the allocation of Bushfield Camp and the concerns raised by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA):

- a) Please provide copies of all correspondence (emails, meeting minutes, and memos) between Winchester City Council planning officers and the SDNPA regarding Policy W5, the "Concept Masterplan," or the site's landscape sensitivity, dated from June 2023 to present.

The concept masterplan was considered by Cabinet on 21st June 2023 – report available to view here: [CAB3378 Bushfield Camp Masterplan.pdf](#)

Public comments including those from the South Downs National Park to the planning application are available on the electronic case file from the following link: [23/02507/OUT | Outline planning application with all matters reserved apart from access, for the demolition of all existing structures on site and redevelopment to provide a phased employment led mixed use scheme... | Bushfield Camp Badger Farm Road Winchester Hampshire](#)

**b)** Specifically, please provide any internal records or file notes documenting how the Council considered or adjudicated the SDNPA's specific objection that the development has the "*real potential to be harmful*" to views from St Catherine's Hill.

**At the Reg 18 LP stage the SDNPA representation in relation to Bushfield Camp stated:**

This extensive site plays an important role in the setting of the SDNP and is located on the rising side of the western slope of the Itchen Valley. More specifically, the site provides an immediate setting and backdrop for St Cross Hospital and the Itchen Valley Floor, and is part of the wider setting of Winchester as a settlement on the river enclosed by steep sided downland. These views are experienced from St Catherine's Hill, a well visited and historic location within the SDNP. Indeed, the view from St Catherine's Hill is one of the key views identified in the "South Downs National Park: View Characterisation and Analysis (2015)". The previous land use does not have any detrimental impacts on these views; however, the proposed quantum and type of development on this site has real potential to be harmful to the setting of the SDNP. More specifically, this relates to harm to; diverse inspirational landscapes and breath-taking views; well conserved historical features and rich cultural heritage; and distinctive towns and villages.

However, in recognition that the site is already allocated in the Adopted Winchester Local Plan for mixed-use development, it is requested that, in order to reduce the potential level of harm, the required master plan is landscape-led to ensure high quality design and the retention of large areas of open space. In addition, a ZTV analysis could identify parts of the site that are not visible from St Catherine's Hill (although this may only identify limited areas) for development. It may be necessary to develop and agree a Design Code as part of the master planning exercise. The SDNPA is committed to working with WCC to bring this site forward in a way that respects the setting of the National Park and its nationally designated landscape.

**WCC Officers response to this representation:**

It is fully recognised that due to the sensitive nature of the site the redevelopment of the site will need to be carefully designed and the involvement of the SDNPA in the masterplanning process is welcomed. Recommended Response: No change.

**At the Reg 19 stage the SDNPA stated:**

Policy W5 – Bushfield Camp (p331-336) The site is in the setting of the SDNP and is an existing strategic allocation in the Winchester Local Plan Part 1 (Joint Core Strategy), under Policy WT3. The principle of development has been established and Policy W5 proposes to carry forward the allocation into the Winchester Local Plan 2040. In comparing the policy wording and supporting text of the adopted and proposed policies, the policy has been updated and strengthened. In terms of the final master-planning and detailed matters of development, this will be addressed through the planning application process. As part of this, the SDNPA is committed to working with WCC to bring this strategic site forward in a way which avoids or minimises any potential adverse impacts of the SDNP as per NPPF Paragraph 182

**4. Air Quality and Traffic Data (Habitats Regulations Assessment)**

**a)** Please provide copies of the correspondence transmitting the specific traffic data and congestion modelling inputs to Natural England for the purpose of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

Details of the traffic data data, which comes from the Strategic Transport Assessment that was agreed by both Highway Authorities, is included in the Air Quality Assessment/HRA:

This document includes all the traffic data that informed the Air Quality Assessment and was agreed by Natural England [Winchester Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment](#) This was confirmed in the [Updated SoCG with Natural England](#).

**b)** Please provide any response from Natural England confirming whether they did, or did not, technically validate these traffic flow assumptions (specifically the premise regarding congestion improving air quality).

<https://www.localplan.winchester.gov.uk/assets/inline/1197/ED04-Natural-England-Withdrawal-of-Objection-January-25.pdf> This letter withdraws Natural Englands representation and confirms that they agree with the information that was included in the Air Quality Assessment / Updated HRA.

## 5. Viability and the Allocation Size

**a)** Please provide any correspondence, meeting notes, or viability appraisals where the financial viability of the scheme was discussed in relation to the size of the developable area (20 hectares).

No information held.

**b)** Does the Council hold any information suggesting that a smaller allocation (e.g., one that excludes the SINC) would render the scheme unviable?

No information held.

I would prefer to receive this information electronically.

Please find our responses to each question in **BLUE**