

## **CONCLUSIONS ON HOUSING ALLOCATIONS**

### **Objections**

As set out in previous sections of this Report with regard to the named settlements and various policies.

### **Latest Proposed Change**

As set out in Document CD11/12 Tables H1 and H2.

### **Main Issue**

The identification of baseline and reserve sites and the appropriate ranking of the latter.

### **Inspector’s Reasoning and Conclusions**

5.8.1 Further to my recommendations at Chapter 5.3 of this Report, I consider that the following sites should be identified for baseline housing provision. The number of dwellings indicated is indicative and in any eventual scheme will depend upon such development control criteria as suitable access, design and appearance. Subject to those considerations, the Council should seek to achieve a full and efficient use of land. I suspect that in some cases the number of dwellings shown below will prove to be a conservative estimate. For the most part they accord with the Council’s minimum expectations. The prospect of more dwellings being provided on some of these sites, however, implies more confidence in achieving Structure Plan requirements.

TABLE H1

#### **BASELINE SITES**

<b>Alton</b>	Former Lord Mayor Treloar Hospital	150
	Chandos Lodge	150
<b>East Meon</b>	Land at Village Hall	20
<b>Four Marks</b>	South of Winchester Road	150
<b>Holybourne</b>	Depot	15
<b>Liphook</b>	Former King George’s Hospital site	150
<b>Petersfield</b>	North of Station Road	12
<b>Whitehill/Bordon</b>	Hogmoor Road	40
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>		<b><u>687</u></b>

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- 5.8.2 I explain below the importance that I attach to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In general, I regard an attack upon part of it as an assault upon the whole. I note here, however, that only 4.66% of the dwellings on these baseline sites would be in it. And residential development on one of the 2 sites concerned, at East Meon, was nearing completion during the course of the inquiry. The Latest Proposed Change to Table H1 in Document CD11/12 shows that development would take place in the AONB at East Meon (20 dwellings), Liss Forest (25) and Petersfield Pennsfield (90). This would be 19.29% of the 700 dwellings.
- 5.8.3 In addition to my recommendations concerning the allocation of land for Reserve Sites, I am asked to advise the Council on their ranking. Despite many representations to the contrary, there is no guarantee that these sites will be required. Sufficient and suitably located alternative land, hopefully previously-developed, may be found in Portsmouth, Southampton and/or Bordon/Whitehill, and may be available for development early enough during the relevant development plan period. Hence the urgent need for all parties to proceed speedily with the Masterplan for Bordon/Whitehill and its environs.
- 5.8.4 Even if reserve land must be brought forward, there is no way of gauging its required extent. If, for example, only a limited quantity was required in East Hampshire, there would be little point in bringing forward a large site or sites. In other words, the number of dwellings required on Reserve Sites would be a consideration in determining the number, size and order of sites that should be developed. Various constraints may be discovered on some of these Reserve Sites that might take some time to resolve, and any such delay might be good reason for considering sites of a lower ranking. My recommended ranking should therefore be appreciated in a context of considerable uncertainty.
- 5.8.5 None of my recommended Reserve Sites is previously-developed land in its entirety. Some Omission Sites do include some land of this status but, as I explain, they perform too poorly when assessed against the criteria set out in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 3 paragraph 31. My general approach to the ranking of these sites is based upon a comparative assessment against those criteria, and with special reference to what I regard as the very important local circumstance of the AONB.
- 5.8.6 There is little to choose between the Reserve Sites in terms of existing and potential infrastructure. There is no evidence to suggest that there would be insurmountable or any other serious problems in the provision of water and sewerage, other utilities and social infrastructure. Much the same applies to the ability to build communities. Each scheme could presumably include a suitable amount of affordable housing and serve to sustain appropriate local services and facilities, although I accept that such sustenance would increase with greater numbers of dwellings.
- 5.8.7 The main differences between these Reserve Sites concerns their location and accessibility to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car and the potential for improving such accessibility, and environmental constraints. Of major importance with regard to the latter is the high scenic quality of the countryside in so much of East Hampshire, with about 40% of it within AONBs. The fact that the Reserve Sites at Petersfield are for the most part within reasonable walking distance of one of the best ranges of services in the District but are also within an AONB, presents a major dilemma. Important criteria pull in different directions.

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- 5.8.8 I place a good deal of importance upon natural beauty as an environmental constraint. Indeed, as well as treating it as a constraint to development, I see it as a vital part of the District's heritage. Designation as AONB does not preclude development, but if it is to have any clout there must be very good reasons to allocate land within it. The way in which appreciated countryside of great beauty surrounds Petersfield and in some instances sweeps in almost to its centre, is a fundamental part of the character and appearance of this delightful historic market town. Public footpaths assist in the public's appreciation of it. It is a matter of judgement, but I value these local circumstances so much that I accord them even more importance than proximity to services and facilities. I therefore put the Petersfield Reserve Sites towards the end of the list, and I very much hope that they will never be developed.
- 5.8.9 A similar consideration applies to Alton, a small town of great charm and character. The landscape and topography of its immediate surroundings have been important constraints in its development, and those attributes are of no less significance now. It is essentially for those reasons that I recommend against the allocation of substantial amounts of land on the outskirts of the town for residential and other development. The attractive valley sides and the delightful rural approaches to Alton should be protected from these prominent intrusions.
- 5.8.10 Land at Silent Garden, Liphook is outside the AONB. Part of it is previously-developed. These considerations, as well as its location within convenient walking distance of the good range of services in the village centre, persuade me that it should come first in the ranking order.
- 5.8.11 Green Lane, Clanfield is just outside the AONB but is close to a reasonable range of facilities in the village centre. There is a good bus service to Portsmouth and other centres. It does not have a railway station, but in view of the small proportion of people in East Hampshire who travel to work by train, I do not regard that as a crucial disadvantage. The Council places this Reserve Site at the head of its list in Table H2, partly and rightly due to its potential to provide community facilities. Subject to my conclusion above about Silent Garden, I am not persuaded that the SDDP would be made better by any other ranking. It should come second.
- 5.8.12 The modest extent of the land at Oaklands House, Rowlands Castle, as well as its relative unobtrusiveness and its reasonable closeness to village services and facilities are important considerations. It is outside the AONB. I recommend that it be ranked next.
- 5.8.13 I turn now to the land north of Brislands Lane, Four Marks. I describe its location, accessibility and other attributes elsewhere, and conclude here that it does not accord with certain criteria in paragraph 31 as much as do Silent Garden and Green Lane. This is mainly because of its modest range of facilities, coupled with poorer accessibility by public transport to a large city, be it London or Portsmouth. Another important consideration is that it is outside the AONB. It should come fourth.
- 5.8.14 There is little to choose between the 2 Reserve Sites at Horndean. Neither are in the AONB. Owing to its smaller size and because it is closer to a good range of services and would provide a needed doctor's surgery, the land at Havant Road should precede the site north of James Copse Close. Respectively they should come fifth and sixth.
- 5.8.15 Liss is in the AONB and this is a substantial constraint that places it low in my list. The modest size of the site at Inwood Road, its sense of enclosure, the likely limited impact

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of development and convenient walking distance to services persuades me that this land should come next, seventh, in the ranking order.

- 5.8.16 The proximity to services and facilities of the Reserve Sites at Petersfield varies, as I have explained. None are too far from the town centre, however, to preclude their development. Of greater importance is their impact upon the AONB. Generally, development on the larger sites would have the greater impact, if only as a result of actual presence. Owing to its modest size and location more within the built up area, the Larcombe Road site should be the first to be developed. The well-enclosed and modest-sized Pennsfield should follow. I rank them eighth and ninth respectively.
- 5.8.17 The Omission Site south-east of The Causeway and between The Causeway and the Broadway Park mobile home site is further from the town centre than is the Council's allocation at Causeway Farm. It is smaller and its development should not cause such a substantial and damaging impact upon the rural setting of Petersfield as would be the case at Causeway Farm whose open attractive character can be so much appreciated from public footpaths. A scheme of 90 or so dwellings should be considerably less harmful in this protected landscape than one of about 275 at Causeway Farm. Hence my recommended ranking, tenth. Causeway Farm should come eleventh.
- 5.8.18 Liphook has taken a good deal of development during the last decade or so, and the Council considers that Lowsley Farm should be last in the order of ranking. Its location outside the AONB might suggest development before the Reserve Sites at Liss and Petersfield, but I agree with the Council that this village needs time to come to terms with the scale of recent residential schemes. That would be especially so as a result of my recommendation in respect of the former King George's Hospital site and in the event of Silent Garden being redeveloped. I place it last in my order.
- 5.8.19 Of the 1405 dwellings on the Reserve Sites, 590 (42%) would be in the AONB. The Council's proposals as set out in Document CD11/12 would result in the development of Reserve Sites in the AONB at Liss Cumbers (45 dwellings), Petersfield Causeway Farm (275) and Liss Hawksmead (30), or 25.36%. My recommendations result in a regrettably higher percentage, but it must be seen in the context of a considerably lower percentage than the Council envisages with regard to the baseline sites whose development is more certain.
- 5.8.20 In view of other considerations and especially accessibility, I see no alternative to my recommended percentage. Hopefully the low position of my recommended reserve sites in the order of ranking and the other opportunities that may come forward for development on more suitable land elsewhere will give them a greater chance of survival in their present open state.

5.8.21 I rank my recommended Reserve Sites as follows:

TABLE H2

**RESERVE SITES**

1)	<b>Liphook</b>	Silent Garden	110
2)	<b>Clanfield</b>	Green Lane	275
3)	<b>Rowlands Castle</b>	Oaklands House	40
4)	<b>Four Marks</b>	North of Brislands Lane	90
5)	<b>Horndean</b>	Havant Road	60
6)		Land north of James Copse Close	85
7)	<b>Liss</b>	Inwood Road	25
8)	<b>Petersfield</b>	Larcombe Road	100
9)		Pennsfield	90
10)		South East of The Causeway	100
11)		Causeway Farm	275
12)	<b>Liphook</b>	Lowsley Farm	155
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>			<b><u>1405</u></b>

5.8.22 To the baseline and reserve allocations of 687 and 1395 respectively should be added the various components of housing supply that I endorse in Section 5.1 of this Chapter. This results in the following table.

Dwellings built 1996-2003	2,120
Outstanding Large Site permissions	917
Small Windfall Site Allowance	880
Large Windfall Site Allowance	780
Chase Road Lindford	155
Baseline Allocations	687
Reserve Sites	1,395
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>6,934</u></b>

5.8.23 During the course of the Inquiry the Council was considering an application for planning permission for a scheme at Chase Road for significantly more dwellings than the 155 indicated. This is a significant consideration. It implies that there will be pressure to develop the allocated baseline and reserve sites at higher densities, and hence for more dwellings, than originally envisaged. This, together with the concomitant conservative nature of many of my estimates and the inexact nature of Structure Plan requirements that I discuss in Section 5.1 of this Chapter, convinces me that the above estimated total is realistic and acceptable.

5.8.24 This total generally accords with the provisions of the Structure Plan and is within the restricted tolerance of 100 dwellings to which the Hampshire County Council referred at the Round Table Session on Housing Supply. It is well within the 5% tolerance of accordance with the Structure Plan requirements to which the District Council referred at that Session. It represents an annual building rate from April 2003 until the end of the Plan period of nearly 600 dwellings.

5.8.25 Another relevant matter is the possibility of previously-developed land at Whitehill/Bordon being made available for residential development. This could be at the Louisberg Barracks and/or elsewhere. I make no actual allowance for it in my calculations, but the prospect of its contributing to the District's housing requirements up to and beyond the end of the plan period should not be disregarded. Hopefully, it would ease the pressure for development on greenfield land.

**Recommendation**

5.8.26 I recommend that the SDDP be modified by the inclusion of the above Tables H1 and H2.