

**RULE 6 STATEMENT OF CASE**

**By**

**TITCHFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM (TNF)**

**APPEAL REFERENCE APP/A1720/W/18/3199119**

**LAND EAST OF POSBROOK LANE, TITCHFIELD, FAREHAM**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Titchfield Neighbourhood Forum was set up in January 2016 by a group of 25 residents to produce a Neighbourhood Plan as a result of identifying a number of issues affecting the Community.

In March 2017 the Forum was recognised by Fareham Borough Council (FBC) as a legal entity. The Forum then produced a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) which is currently in a draft format (DNP), (see DNP forwarded with this statement). The Plan has been through most of the Statutory stages, it is anticipated that at the time of this appeal hearing the Plan will be at the final examination stage. An update of the current status of the Plan will be provided at the time of the Inquiry.

### **1. Relevance of Emerging Neighbourhood Plan to the Planning Process**

For all Plans the **National Policy Framework** says:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given). (NPPF Annex 1 – para 216)

**National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) says:**

An emerging neighbourhood plan may be a material consideration. ....Factors to consider include the stage of preparation of the plan and the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies ...Decision makers should respect evidence of local support prior to referendum when seeking to apply weight to an emerging neighbourhood plan. ....It is for the decision maker in each case to determine what a material consideration is and what weight to give it'. (NPPG Neighbourhood Planning para 07).

## **2. Statement of Common Ground**

The Forum has been approached regarding the Statement of Common Ground by FBC. At the present time this is not available. The acceptance or otherwise will be confirmed at the hearing.

## **3. The Case for Titchfield Neighbourhood Forum (TNF)**

3.1. The Neighbourhood Forum put forward a letter of objection to the original application and is aware of the other letters of objection and representations made at the time to the FBC. It wishes the grounds stated in the original letter of objection to be taken into account by the Inspector. The Forum supports the grounds put forward by other objectors at the time.

3.2. During the preparation of the DNP, the Government commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment on behalf of the Forum. This was undertaken by AECOM. The relevant extracts of this Assessment appear on pages 28 and 29 of the DNP. After taking into account dwellings completed or under construction at the time of the Assessment the AECOM report proposed that 153 dwellings were required by 2034, this equates approximately to 10 dwellings a year. The development proposed by the appellants would almost completely satisfy this requirement in 'one fell swoop'. This completely ignores the gradual evolution of the village into its present form and will completely change its character.

3.3. The DNP acknowledges that in the FBC draft plan there is a proposal to allocate a site at Southampton Road, Titchfield Common which is just outside the NP area but is within the Titchfield Ward Boundary. This site is allocated (H3) in the emerging local plan and is for 400 new homes mostly smaller 2/3-bedroom homes with a significant amount of Social Housing. The Forum believes this site, although not within the Forum area will contribute to the local housing need.

3.4. The TNF during the consultation process with the local community established that there was a preference for smaller dwellings, 1, 2 or 3-bedroom houses on smaller sites, (see TNP page 29 and Policies H1, H2 and H3). The consultation process included open meetings, one of which was specific to housing. The support for the Housing Policies proposed for the NP was almost unanimous.

3.5. The DNP supports the Strategic Gap that surrounds Titchfield and the Urban Area Boundary. (See page 17). There is a proposal however to extend the Urban Area Boundary (see Objective H1 and Policy UAB 1, page 31), due to the existing Urban Area Boundary not being truly representative of the Urban Area of the village. This may also create limited development opportunities within the Urban Area Boundary. The appeal site is outside this Boundary.

3.6. During the production of the NP there has been a wide consultation process within the community which is continuing. This has built up a feeling of involvement in the planning process with associated expectations that the “local voice “should be heard.

#### **4. Relevance of DNP Policies to the Appeal**

The DNP does not formally propose any sites for development but supports smaller infill, preferably Brownfield sites. These should not be within the Strategic Gap nor outside the Urban Area Boundary (including the proposed extension). The consultation process with the Community strongly supported the Strategic Gap and in taking this into account it was considered that there were no current suitable sites for development apart from one, Titchfield Motors in East Street, Titchfield where development proposals were put forward for this Brownfield site during the preparation of the DNP.

No specific reference to the Strategic Gap is made within the policies as the plan supports the existing Local Plan policy in this respect. The following policies which support the objectives of the DNP, pages 31 and 32 are relevant:

**Policy UAB1- Urban Area Boundary.** This relates to the extension of the Boundary, to maintain the integrity of the Boundary

**Policy H1 – Windfall Development.** This policy proposes smaller infill development (up to 10 units) within the Urban Area Boundary.

**Policy H2 – Affordable Housing.** This policy supports the need for the provision of affordable housing where appropriate. The need for this policy was one of the principal matters raised during the community consultation process.

**Policy H3-Local Needs.** This policy acknowledges the results of the Community consultation where a need for smaller dwellings was identified.

**Policy H4 – Quality, Design and Local Character.** This policy addresses a number of issues regarding the design of new development particularly relating to visual impact and respecting the character of the village.

**Brownfield Sites.** Brownfield sites will be supported for development over Greenfield sites. The DNP supports the Core Policy CS6 in the LP relating to the reuse of previously developed land.

## 5. Summary

The TNF requests that the appeal should be refused on the grounds that the proposed development conflicts with the policies and objectives within the DNP. These have been formed as a result of an extensive Community consultation process which the Forum believes is very important and should be recognised in determining the appeal.

