

The Chichester Society (Mr Richard Childs)

Matters 5 & 7: Housing Supply and Strategic Development Locations

Representor reference number 686166

## **Introduction**

The Chichester Society believes there are viable alternative sites for housing development within Chichester and nearby which can replace the two large greenfield 'Strategic Development Locations' to the east and west of the city. The information source which informs this view is the District Council's annual housing development sites survey – the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The latest edition was published in May 2014 after the closing date for consultation on the pre-submission version of the Local Plan, and so this is the first opportunity that the Chichester Society has had to provide analysis of the latest edition of the SHLAA in relation to the Local Plan.

The 2014 SHLAA identifies a much larger number of potential development sites in and around Chichester than were identified in the 2013 edition. This may be due to an increased number of responses to the District Council by land owners and developers in response to the Council's 'call for sites' in early 2014. Moreover the 2014 edition provides more comprehensive information than the previous year because each listed site is assessed against three criteria to indicate whether it is

- Available
- Suitable
- Achievable.

Taken together these three criteria indicate whether development is a practical proposition and, if so, in what phase of the draft Local Plan.

Examples of sites meeting all three criteria within the Plan are:

- Portfield Football Club, Church Road 80 homes
- Bartholomews Ltd, Bognor Road 51 homes
- The Tannery, Westgate 28 homes

Examples of newly available sites included in the 2014 SHLAA but where development is problematic for all or part are:

- Post Office Sorting Office Number of homes is not defined
- Chi Bus Garage Number of homes is not defined

- Westhampnett, W of March School 3.09 hectares - 124 homes
- Westhampnett, Claypit Lane 0.76 hectares – 30 homes
- Westhampnett, land W of Rolls Royce 2.85 hectares – 91 homes
- Tangmere, south east 49.73 hectares

In March 2014 the Planning Minister issued a statement clarifying the process for finding future housing development land. Henceforth Local Plans can be regarded as 'sound' and therefore fit for purpose if the following apply:

- Councils identify a 10 year housing supply (rather than 15 years)
- Sites in 'brownfield' locations should be brought into use
- 'Windfall' sites available through the market can be included
- Student housing, sheltered housing for older people and vacant dwellings can also be included.

A cursory survey of the 2014 SHLAA would suggest, amongst others, the following possibilities.

### **Shopwyke Lakes SDL (Policy 16)**

The 2014 SHLAA includes two new sites immediately south of Shopwyke Lakes which were not included within the 2013 SHLAA:

CC0821B Portfield depot 1.62 ha 2024-9 65 homes

CC0821C UMA House, Shopwyke Road 2024-9 20 homes

This would increase the Shopwyke Lakes SDL provision from 500 homes to 585.

### **Westhampnett SDL (Policy 17)**

The Chichester Society remains opposed to this SDL. The two sites identified in the Concept Statement for housing development (viz: land between Madgwick Lane and Stane street (350 homes) and land east of Winterbourne Road (150 homes) would be unacceptable on landscape grounds and would sit as detached housing estates not integrated with either Westhampnett or Chichester. Both would have failed to meet the former FAD criteria.

However, the 2014 SHLAA has identified several sites within Westhampnett either adjacent or close to the SPA which could accommodate some 350 homes. In addition, surplus National Health Authority land north of St Richards Hospital has also appeared in the 2014

SHLAA which could replace the 150 homes allocation east of Winterbourne Road.

### **Tangmere SDL (Policy 18)**

The 2014 SHLAA indicates a large site, TG1207, SE of Tangmere, of 49.73 ha, which although available is not suitable or achievable for housing development for the sole reason that it is allocated as a Horticultural Development Area (HDA), lying immediately west of the existing Tangmere HDA.

This site had also been included in the 2013 SHLAA. Whilst the Chichester Society recognises the need to provide for future horticultural land in the east-west corridor close to the A27, it is surely inappropriate for further horticultural development to be located adjacent to this part of Tangmere.

Coincidentally the 2014 SHLAA 'Call for Sites' has introduced a 46 hectare site located to the north of the Runcton HDA and immediately south of the A259 close to the Bognor Road A27/A259 roundabout. (ref:NMRC 1440.) This site appears in Table 1 (Sites rejected for Housing Use) because although the site is available for development *it has no potential for housing as it is poorly related to the built-up area of Chichester City, but further work would be needed to assess its potential for employment.*

The Society suggests that it be reallocated as an HDA and that the Tangmere site be rescheduled as suitable, available and achievable for housing use.

### **Conclusion**

The SHLAA 2014 edition indicates the potential for further housing development land which was ignored in the 2013 edition. However, it would seem that the number of homes achievable cannot match the 1,600 dwellings proposed for Whitehouse Farm. But it is worth noting that the 50 hectare brown-field site at Tangmere – currently zoned for horticulture – compares with the 32 hectares at Shopwyke Lakes, for which 500 dwellings are planned. On this basis the capacity of the Tangmere brown-field site may be sufficient for approaching 1,000 homes.

We recognise that our views are those of a civic society and that we cannot match the expertise and knowledge of a well-resourced local planning authority. Throughout this protracted process of drawing up a

Local Plan for Chichester District, the Society has consistently opposed the development of SDLs on greenfield land to the NE and W of the city. We do however recognise the need to identify adequate land for housing development. It is inevitable that any if not most of the objections to the draft LP are reactive and against the use of greenfield land, but we wish to be proactive and to emphasise that there is an alternative scenario, a 'Plan B'.

The most sustainable development for housing in the E-W corridor would be within the city's SPA itself. There are many instances of land being made available over the past few years where brownfield sites have been developed for housing, e.g. Roussillon Barracks, Covers, Rowes and Shippams where previous uses have all moved to more suitable locations, so freeing up brownfield land for sustainable housing development.

There remain various 'non conforming uses' which do not require cramped sites embedded within the urban fabric, e.g. Kwik Fit in St Pancras/The Hornet, which could be relocated to an industrial location and so enabling housing development in its stead. Moreover there are a number of vacant and under-used sites within the Quarry Lane industrial area which might offer an opportunity for housing development.

As the City's civic society for over 40 years, we wish to work in partnership with the Council rather than in confrontation. Sites of varied size and location can enable small housebuilders to provide tailor-made developments to meet local needs (and so provide local employment) as opposed to volume builders whose designs and layouts are frequently alien to local character.

The Chichester Society believes that with more imagination CDC can offer an alternative 'Plan B' if it wishes to be genuinely sustainable.