

Pre-Examination Position Statement - SDNP Local Plan

The Spatial Strategy and Strategic Policy SD26: Supply of Homes

Land south of The Causeway Petersfield

The SDNPA has failed properly to respond to the question of the shortfall in the provision of housing, instead it has fudged the matter by trying to retro-fit the figures for the period to 2028 to the extended local plan end-date of 2033.

Petersfield is ranked second out of the 166 settlements in terms of the services and facilities available and yet the South Downs Local Plan proposes no further allocations in Petersfield, It is my view that unless the figures are properly calculated to provide the dwelling numbers that are required to meet the need for new homes in Petersfield for the full plan period the plan must by definition be unsound.

In this context, the sites at Petersfield identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) should be revisited and allocations should be made at the most suitable and least constrained sites in Petersfield to meet the Park wide housing figure up to 2033 in the most sustainable manner and in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Numerous studies have identified a demographic ‘time-bomb’ relating to the disproportionate number of elderly people that will have particular, if not special, housing needs in the near future (ref: ONS Subnational Population Projections for England). It is clear that the Plan should make particular provision for this growing demographic. This should be both in its general housing provision and in providing both a robust policy framework and specific provision for the special type of housing and care provision that the vulnerable elderly require, both now and in the future.

Planning for such housing requires more than just broad site allocation across the Plan area. A variety of sites should be available. Dense flatted schemes in busy town centres are not, and should not, be the only solution. Some should be located where they have an element of tranquillity, whilst being reasonably close to the services that are needed (shops, surgeries, community hubs, etc.).

The land south of the Causeway (EA072) in Petersfield is on the edge of the town with good access to services and can be developed either as a low-rise special needs housing scheme or a specialist care home. The LVIA that has been submitted to SDNP demonstrates that for a two storey care home there will be no discernible wider landscape impact. Clearly, if the site were developed for a low rise or bungalow format, as is popular with older people and as suggested by a specialist provider for this site, there would be even less landscape impact.