



**Buriton Parish Council**  
**c/o S D Holden**  
**Mulberry 38 Chase Road**  
**Lindford**  
**Bordon**  
**Hampshire**  
**GU35 0RG**

**24<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

**Dear Mr Banks**

**SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK - LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION**  
**MATTERS 10 and 11 – Sites and Settlements**  
**(for Thursday 6 December, 2pm)**

Buriton Parish Council feels very strongly about these matters: both the location of sites for new houses and the boundaries of settlements.

The Parish Council has taken a very close interest in how the settlements and buildings in the parish sit in the landscape over many years – producing our first Village Design Statement as long ago as January 2000.

Further work subsequently produced a detailed Local Landscape Character Assessment along with an updated Village Design Statement in 2008.

Most recently these documents have been brought together (with a particular focus on a landscape led approach) in another update of the Buriton Village Design Statement, adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the South Downs National Park Authority in August 2017.

The Parish Council is not suggesting that its detailed work at a local level should over-ride a prospective Local Plan as we realise that Village Design Statements and Local Landscape Character Assessments should complement and supplement Local Plans.

But we hope that our detailed work will help ‘inform’ the Inspector about any extra sites for houses or changes to the proposed Settlement Policy Boundary that he is being invited to consider.

Amongst the many detailed findings from our Landscape and Design work are those that explain that:

- the village nestles naturally in the landscape with virtually all the buildings being hidden from views
- the edges of the settlements are generally very attractive and any proposed changes on the fringes would need very careful consideration
- open spaces and sunken lanes provide a great deal of local character which should not be adversely affected.

Housing Sites

The village of Buriton is due to receive an allocation of 8-10 dwellings in the Local Plan (SD62) and the Parish Council is content with this proposal subject to the following comments: the site is an edge-of-village location where the current housing layout presents a relatively ‘hard edge’ to the surrounding countryside. If housing is to be developed here then the opportunity must be grasped to obtain a soft, landscaped edge so as to provide an attractive approach from the west as well as an acceptable transition to the existing houses further east.

In addition, also in this Policy, it would be useful to add a requirement for the provision of a new footway / cycleway from the proposed site to the Greenway Lane railway bridge. This could be provided along the northern and eastern

side of Greenway Lane – but just inside the agricultural fields (which are in the same ownership as the proposed development site) so that pedestrians and cyclists could be safely segregated from the busy traffic on this main access route into / out of the village. With a significant proportion of the new houses on this site likely to be affordable homes and with the likelihood that the local bus service will be axed before the end of the plan period in 2033, the Parish Council can foresee the need for more people to be able to walk or cycle safely all the way along Greenway Lane to and from the main bus service at the Greenway Lane roundabout. With cooperation from the landowner and with CIL funding it should be possible to introduce this important safety and quality of life feature which may also help to minimise extra journeys by private car. A safe and segregated pedestrian and cycle route would also be useful for visitors to this attractive village in the National Park and may help to bring more business to our local pubs.

The Parish Council is aware that a developer is keen to develop another site on the edge of the village (at Kiln Lane) and we have already made a number of comments about issues relating to this site throughout the plan-making process – including those submitted at Pre-Submission Draft Consultation stage in October/November 2017. We trust that the Inspector has received all that material and will take it into account.

### Settlement Policy Boundary

(wrt Representation 233)

The Parish Council is aware of the sound and consistent methodology that has been applied by the National Park Authority when drawing Settlement Policy Boundaries throughout the South Downs and we can fully appreciate how this has been designed to reflect the primary purposes of all National Parks, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of each area.

Buriton Parish Council strongly supports the proposed Settlement Policy Boundary as it is felt that it will help to conserve and enhance many of the important local characteristics identified in our Landscape and Design work. In particular, the detailed alignment of the proposed Boundary:

- supports the protection of the important ‘green fingers’ of open space which extend into the heart of the village
- helps retain views into / out of / within the Conservation Area
- helps to conserve the character of land at the settlement edge and at the entrances to the settlement and
- seeks to retain valuable open spaces between some dwellings which help to tell the story of the evolution and character of the settlement pattern.

With there being no particular need in National Parks to try to squeeze in extra housing and spoil the landscape, it is felt that the Inspector is unlikely to want to change the proposed, carefully-drawn Settlement Policy Boundary for Buriton in any way.

The Parish Council notes that one of the locations where the Inspector is being pressed to amend the Settlement Policy Boundary is a site which has been refused 3 times by the Local Planning Authority on landscape and other grounds – and on Appeal by a Planning Inspector as recently as May 2018 (APP/Y9507/W/17/3191038). This site relates to land at Bones Lane (Representation 233 by Southern Planning Practice).

The Parish Council feels that the Appeal Inspector’s reasons for dismissing the appeal illustrate that the South Downs Planning Authority has got the Settlement Policy Boundary absolutely right – and that this site should not now be located within the Settlement Boundary as part of the Local Plan.

There are some sensitive topographical issues relating to this site and, amongst other points in the Appeal Decision, the Inspector said that:

- the site “contributes a spacious and attractive, generally open, setting ... and a ‘soft’ transition between the main built form of the village and the immediate countryside”

- “the over-riding character of the vicinity is rural, and this is emphasised on entering the site, from where fields and trees are apparent, including the Links Open Green Space beyond which also forms part of the Buriton Conservation Area.”
- the site “in this relatively prominent position contributes significantly to the appearance of the Conservation Area”
- there are other parts of the Decision which also make similar points and it is concluded that the siting would be “detrimental to the generally open and rural character and appearance...”

In effect, the Appeal Inspector (after very careful consideration and including a site visit etc) is supporting this detailed part of the Buriton Settlement Policy Boundary which the South Downs National Park Authority is proposing in the Local Plan.

The Parish Council feels that it is proper and appropriate that a National Park Authority takes an extra special interest in how Settlement Policy Boundaries are drawn – on a landscape-led basis – and the approach adopted here appears to be completely sound.

In a Conservation Area, in a National Park with its landscape-led Statutory Purposes, the Parish Council trusts that the Inspector will agree with this assessment and approve the Settlement Policy Boundary for Buriton exactly as proposed by the National Park Authority.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Holden', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Stephen Holden  
Clerk to Buriton Parish Council.