

South Downs National Park Examination

Matter 7 - Landscape, Design and Special Qualities

Issues may include:

- a. the balance of the Landscape-led and Ecosystem approaches with the wider purpose of planning,*
- b. the level of landscape protection in terms of 'conserve and enhance',*
- c. the limiting provisions of Policy SD31 for extensions to existing dwellings*

In support of TPC's objection to this proposal, we have the following additional points to make:

1. TPC's objection is to the omission of any designated areas of Green Infrastructure; to make this policy sound it should identify the strategic areas of Green Infrastructure
2. The Itchen river and its valley should be identified as Green Infrastructure.
3. The identification of the entire length of the Itchen valley as Green Infrastructure is wholly in accord with SD 45 policy which TPC support.
4. The SD 45 policy is strategic so needs to give a lead on the identification of specific areas. While Neighbourhood plans can identify green infrastructure, this could not be strategic .
5. The importance of the Itchen Valley as an integral part of the National Park has been recognised from the outset as justifying its inclusion within the National Park. The NP now includes a substantial length of the Itchen...approx 25 km, significantly greater than in any other Local Plan Area. The extent of the Itchen within the NP is significant and the status of the NP naturally makes it the lead Authority in safe guarding the river and its valley.
6. The status of the Itchen in environmental terms with its complex of SSIs and SAC designation extends beyond the National Park. The historical significance in terms both of landscape and listed structures, Historic Parks and the City of Winchester, including Conservation areas for Winchester, Twyford and other Itchen villages all support its significance.
7. The recreational usage is intense covering walking, running, cycling, swimming, and fishing. All this combines to support the proposal to highlight its significance and the need for planning policies to protect and guide development.

I attach the conclusions of the Inspector who reported on the designation of the National Park boundaries in 2005 to include the Itchen against objections to the contrary.

The Landscape Character Assessment Winchester CC with Hants CC; March 2003 provides ample landscape evidence to identify the appropriate character area see sections 4.09 and 4.13 , both with detailed maps. The boundaries of the green space should be the sides of the valley floor.