

Regulation 18– Consultation response from John Darker on behalf of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group February 2024

Sherfield on Loddon Parish Council welcomes the publication of the updated Local Plan and this consultation; however, it is astonished to note that its 37 acres of Village Green is not included in the list of important green space.

Introduction. KEY OBJECTIVES

Sherfield on Loddon Parish council welcomes the proposed adoption of the following key objectives in the formulation of the plan—Namely;

1) Mitigating and adapting to Climate Change.

If the Borough really intends to implement this, it will be essential to require all new housing to incorporate solar panels, heat pumps (thus no micro bore plumbing) **and electric vehicle charging points.**

2) Water Quality.

The River Loddon is known to be disastrously polluted from sewerage and runoff. New housing must not be allowed to continue to accelerate the decline of this important chalk river. The local water company must be required to clean up the Loddon and Developers must not be allowed to get away with shifting all the responsibility and cost onto water companies. The Borough must insist that all local sewerage works are upgraded and have sufficient capacity to meet demand before new housing is permitted. (promises to do something by 2027 are not acceptable)

3) Sustainable and infrastructure rich communities.

Too many current developments are unsustainable and lack essential facilities; thus, residents must have cars to access shopping centres, surgeries and schools. The provision of accessible Greenspace and play areas along with allotments (and burial grounds) is ignored.

Additionally, too many recently built houses report sewerage backflow and lack of parking provision.

There is a clear need for a stronger emphasis on communications i.e.–footpaths, cycle ways and above all PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

Sustainability must be meaningful as a principle not just a vague promise.

4) Community Facilities

To date these have been largely ignored or provided late.

The Borough must take a broader view in terms of provision –i.e. not just shops or small and unviable community centres., but surgeries, large allotment sites, burial grounds, school provision from early to secondary and PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

Housing need.

Sherfield Parish Council is still concerned that the figure for the number of proposed

houses is too great given the over provision in recent years and the lack of proper infrastructure provision.

In the recent debate on housing numbers (February 2024)–the minister for housing stated that“ the standard method (for calculation) is an advisory starting point not a mandatory target– local authorities can use their own approach where exceptional circumstances exist.”

Sherfield on Loddon Parish Council believes that residents are tired of the constant high level of development and want less housing and more attention to the provision of infrastructure.

Neighbourhood Planning.

Sherfield on Loddon Parish Council is pleased to note the renewed emphasis on LANDSCAPE, STRATEGIC GAPS and limits to housing in the Countryside.

Sherfield on Loddon Parish Council would ask for consideration of the following.

- a) The inclusion of the views of Bullsdown Camp (Also ancient site) in the list of valued landscapes which was noted by the inspector in the Goddards Lane development enquiry in 2016.
- b) Remove the suggestion for any permitted development in Strategic gaps since too many such developments involving small numbers of houses can soon lead to extensive development in a rural area as witness the spate of permissions in Wildmoor which is now producing ribbon development and destroying the rural environment and wildlife provision.
- c) Also enhance the limitations on the provision of four net dwellings in the countryside again to prevent too many small developments linking and effectively destroying the countryside.
- d) Greater emphasis on forcing Hampshire Highways to accept that the A33 is already overloaded and prone to gridlocking whenever there is a problem.
- e) It really is time to recognise that Chineham Railway station will not happen until or if the line is electrified. The strategic need to allow space for container traffic on this line trumps all.