

Winchester District Local Plan Examination 2025

Matters, Issues and Questions

Hearing Statement from City of Winchester Trust  
(Reference Number BHLF-AQTS-326P-4)

April 2025

Matter 12 High quality, well designed places and living well

**Strategic Policy D1** High quality, well designed and inclusive

places The City of Winchester Trust's response to Question 6

Question 6 states: Should the policy and supporting text set out the requirement of good design to enhance community cohesion?

The Trust's response to the consultation on the regulation 19 draft stated that the policy requires the creation of a sense of community within a development. There is support for this in several sections of the 2023 edition of the NPPF. (See the social objective of sustainable development paragraph 8; promoting healthy and safe communities, paragraph 96; promoting sustainable transport paragraph 108; achieving well-designed and beautiful places paragraphs 131-141)

The lack of a feeling of community that large housing estates have is caused in large part by the needs of cars and their requirements for so much land for roads and parking. These requirements lead to ribbon development which prevents the creation of strong community led design layouts. The policy contains paragraphs encouraging active travel but it should also require the subordination of the needs of cars to the needs of sustainable travel options and discourage lay outs that give priority to car movement.

Other elements which add to a sense of community are: the use of materials which are sympathetic to the local area; the inclusion of landmark buildings or features that aid navigation throughout an estate; the use of landscaping to enhance the attractions of the overall estate.

A major gain from the subordination of the needs of car movement is the opportunity to achieve higher densities, providing more housing in a development as well as increasing a sense of community.

**Strategic Policy D2** Design Principles for Winchester Town The City of Winchester

Trust's response to Question 3

Question 3 states: Should the policy for the purposes of soundness, provide a commitment to produce a spatial plan for Winchester Town, including a movement strategy and urban design framework to assess proposals on opportunity and other sites to ensure a co-ordinated approach.

This question echoes the points made in the Trust's representation on this policy in the Regulation 19 draft plan and so we are strongly in favour of the inclusion of a commitment

for a spatial plan for Winchester Town for the reasons given in the representation and summarised in the question.

There is support for a spatial plan of the sort we propose in the December 2023 NPPF both in the Plan Making section in paragraph 16 which sets out the principles that should guide the production of plans and also in the section on non- strategic policies section in paragraphs 28-30.

The Evidence Base (See the sections: High Quality Well Designed Places and Living Well and Sustainable Transport and Active Travel) contains several documents showing a lot of good work has been done over the years that are relevant to the production of a spatial plan and there are others produced by Hampshire County Council that are not included in the Evidence Base. The Trust's representation referred to some of these. Too little of significance has been delivered so far after so much work has been expended.

Most recently in March 2025 the City Council has agreed a Development Delivery Plan for the Central Regeneration Area. This contains a well considered section about movement, including bus routes and stops. But the document acknowledges that more work needs to be done to agree how buses are to operate beyond the area of the two development sites. For example, there is no consideration at present of connections to the Station Approach area.

Aspirations for movement and urban design now need to be secured through the local plan period. The Trust's representation suggests some wording for a policy to be included in the Local Plan. Whatever wording is used the main components to be addressed are: linkages to public facilities and open spaces including parks; existing and potential development sites; design guidelines; adopting the principles of the 15 minutes city concept; contain funding proposals; a prioritised action plan for improvements.

By including a requirement for a spatial plan it should be possible to simplify and reduce the number of paragraphs and the many matters referred to in this policy.

The forthcoming reorganisation of local government in Hampshire is an opportunity to deliver a spatial plan for Winchester town. There is a strong case for the creation of a Winchester Town council to address the Town's needs within the wider responsibilities of a unitary authority. Such a body is ideally suited to take forward a spatial plan for the town if the requirement is included in this Local Plan.