



Representation No 52081 Bryan Jezeff Consultancy

Day 5 Tuesday 19th July 2016

Wickham Policies WK1-3 – Specifically the Definition of the Settlement Boundary

The Inspector has asked the following questions:

- i) Are the policies and proposals for growth and change in this area appropriate and justified, including in relation to the NPPF/PPG, and in terms of environmental, economic and social impacts?
- ii) Are they clear and deliverable, including in respect of associated infrastructure requirements?

The definition of the Settlement Boundary is not 'clear' and requires adjustment to make the Plan sound. Map 23 of Wickham fails to include in the settlement boundary the extent of the built up area of Wickham.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The need for a review of the established settlement boundaries was acknowledged at the Examination of the Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy. This was required to accommodate the development requirements of LPP1. See paragraph 110 of the Inspector's Report "Report to Winchester City Council and South Downs National Park Authority" 11th February 2013.

1.2 At the LPP1 Examination the Inspector recognised individual land allocations and site specific issues as being matters for LPP2. He stated in his final report:- "This includes the review of all MTRA2 settlement and gap boundaries taking account of the above, as part of a plan led approach, in accord with the NPPF". Wickham is an MTRA 2 settlement and is therefore included. Now is the appropriate time to ensure the boundary is correctly defined until 2031.

1.3 It is this issue which is addressed and which relates to the Inspector's second question.

2.0 Settlement Boundary Review 2014

2.1 Winchester City Council published the 'Settlement Boundary Review' in 2014 as part of the work on the Winchester District Local Plan Part 2. The documentation sets out an

explanation and justification of the determination of the review of the settlement boundaries. The primary objective of the review is to accommodate new development allocations. However, the purposes of defining a settlement boundary is set out in the Review paper and it provides as an example:-

- Creating an edge to existing development thereby encouraging consolidation
- Helping to separate communities and therefore to retain their individual identities
- Defining the logical boundary between area with different features and purposes.

2.2 The document also recognises other reasons for reviewing boundaries. These include allowing for the release of small sites and rounding off of boundaries to allow for modest expansion.

2.3 At paragraph 26 the Review acknowledges that some buildings such as schools, churches, community halls and health services relates more closely to the local community than to the surrounding countryside. At paragraph 27 the Review suggests “school playing fields... could be included within a revised boundary or remain outside as green undeveloped spaces.”

2.4 It is evident that a degree of interpretation may be made depending upon the circumstances of the developments and the village in question.

3.0 **The Settlement Boundary in Wickham (Mill Lane)**

3.1 In the case of Wickham, a change is sought in the delineation of the settlement boundary in the vicinity of Mill Lane.

- A new urban edge to the existing development would consolidate the built form
- There is no separate community at Mill Lane which requires retention of its identity
- The current boundary is not logically drawn.

3.2 The currently defined boundary excludes a significant area of built development. These developments have taken place over a number of years and amount to an expansion of the village. The growth of the village in this northern quarter has been the most logical area to facilitate the necessary development of the settlement.

3.3 The village expansion has provided a new community centre, a new doctor’s surgery/health centre and some affordable housing. These developments all relate to the village and not to the surrounding countryside. The doctor’s surgery and the community centre are very much part of the village being facilities usually found within the urban area. Indeed, they are located just a few minutes’ walk from the heart of the village.

3.3 It is interesting to note that whilst affordable housing on exceptions sites may be excluded from the defined village envelope that affordable housing inside the village must be

treated differently. Affordable housing within developments should be “provided on site, indiscernible from and well integrated with market housing” see Policy CP3 Affordable Housing Provision on Market Led Housing sites. The different treatment of such affordable housing is something of an anomaly.

- 3.4 The school is located between the defined urban boundary and the community centre, health facilities and affordable housing. It is noted above that schools playing fields may be inside or outside the settlement boundary. In this instance as a minimum the school buildings, which have been on site many years, should be within the urban area.
- 3.4 The health centre and the community centre are now well established facilities within the village and there is no suggestion that they are features of the countryside. They should also be considered as part of the village.
- 3.5 The Settlement Boundary Review states at paragraph 30 that ‘Settlement boundaries need to be logical and easy to identify on the ground where possible.’ In the case of Wickham, the exclusion of development off Mill Lane is far from logical. It is not obvious to the public why these developments are within the defined countryside.

4.0 **Change Sought**

- 4.1 The settlement boundary requires expansion to include development which are essential to the village and part of the settlement of Wickham as it stands today.
- 4.2 The boundary should include the school buildings (and possibly the playing fields), the doctor’s surgery /health centre, the community centre and the new housing. This would provide a logical boundary which would provide a clear definition between the urban and rural uses. It would be a defensible boundary which would not compromise the provisions of the Plan. It would reflect the true extent of the village of Wickham in the 21st century. Without such change the Plan is not sound in respect of the provisions for the village of Wickham