

Representation made by Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL) to Winchester City Council on the Schedule of Modifications to the Local Plan Part 1: Joint Core Strategy Pre-Submission Document

DSTL submitted a representation to Winchester City Council on the Pre-submission Local Plan Part 1: Joint Core Strategy back in February 2012. At this time, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had not been published by the coalition Government.

The NPPF includes has a presumption in favour of sustainable development and states that “Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change”. The NPPF also states that 12 core planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. One of the 12 principles is to “encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has not been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value”.

Our previous representation recommended a number of changes to *Policy MTRA5 – Major Commercial and Educational Establishments in the Countryside* to ensure that Winchester CC gives due consideration to establishments in the countryside that are currently vacant or become vacant over the plan period.

This issue was documented in the Council’s ‘Statement of Representations Made and Key Issues Raised – June 2012’.

DSTL currently operates two establishments in the Winchester countryside at Portsdown West and Portsdown Main. The former is currently occupied and the latter is currently vacant. Strictly speaking Policy MTRA5 provides support to those sites, such as Portsdown West which are currently operational, but stays silent on how sites are to be treated where they become redundant and available in part or in whole, such as Portsdown Main.

The Schedule of Modifications published by Winchester CC does not seek to change the wording of Policy MTRA5, and therefore, in our opinion, it does not address the issue of how vacant site are to be considered in policy terms.

In accordance with the NPPF’s requirement for the Local Plan to be flexible and adapt to change, we would continue to argue that changes to the wording of Policy MTRA5 are needed on the issue of redundant establishments.

Yours faithfully

Martin Bradford
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DSTL