

Jonathan Brown

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03 June 2021

Feedback to CDC Regulation 16 Consultation on Southbourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan Review

To whom it may concern,

I am a Southbourne Parish Councillor, Chichester District Councillor for the Ward of Southbourne and currently Chair the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. These thoughts and observations are however personal comments rather than made as representative of any organisation.

I was a member of the group that produced Southbourne Parish's current (made) Neighbourhood Plan (dated 2015) and have been involved with the review of it since the beginning. I have therefore seen the huge amount of work effort that has been put in by the Steering Group, on behalf of the local community, and with considerable input from the local community. The Steering Group has sought the thoughts and feedback of as wide a cross section of the community as possible, throughout the process and despite the difficulties imposed upon everyone by the pandemic and lockdown.

We could see that the failure of Chichester District Council to review its Local Plan by 2020 would leave Southbourne vulnerable to unplanned development on a massive scale. The allocation by the District Council of 1250 dwellings to Southbourne Parish is huge: it will double the size of the village. We were therefore very keen to masterplan growth rather than see it haphazardly foisted upon us through a series of speculative planning applications in the absence of a demonstrable Five Year Housing Land Supply on the part of CDC. At no stage since CDC began work on its review of the Local Plan has there been any indication that Southbourne's allocation would be increased beyond 1250 or decreased below it. We therefore felt comfortable to proceed with a Plan for this number, confident that in the unlikely event we are required to conduct an early review of it, this will be a relatively simple task. Certainly none of the work we have done over the last several years will go to waste.

Those working on the Review of course share the concerns of the community about the current lack of infrastructure provision, particularly waste water and the capacity of the roads, but there have been no objections from Southern Water or the WSCC Highways to our Plan. We lament that the national guidance on conducting traffic surveys seems unable to take into account local circumstances, such as the fact that Southbourne's Stein Road 'rush hour' coincides with school start and end times rather than the traditional work day, but we hope that we can lay the groundwork for a road bridge to, in due course, resolve congestion. While there is as yet insufficient evidence to require a road bridge over the railway line, we expect that the need for one will become increasingly apparent over time so we will 'future-proof' the masterplan to ensure that when one is needed, it can be delivered.

Over the last few years awareness has grown of the growing climate emergency and the inadequacy of our current planning system in responding to it. It is clear however, from announcements and consultation papers, that the government is rushing to address this. The Committee for Climate Change's 6th Carbon Budget requires that all new housing be zero carbon in the near future. Through the Neighbourhood Plan we have tried to ensure that we will comply with this new framework and to incentivise developers to work with us to deliver homes that are genuinely sustainable. We hope that the examiner will understand and support what we are trying to achieve and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with them.

All of this is the context for me to say that I fully support the Neighbourhood Plan and look forward to being able to present it in full to the public for referendum. I imagine it is not every day that local communities proactively plan to deliver such a large quantum of new housing on greenfield sites and I hope that the community's efforts will be noted and supported.

I support all of the Plan's policies, but would like to draw particular attention to:

- SB2 and the requirement that development be according to a masterplan drawn up in close consultation with the community;
- SB13 and our commitment to achieving a green and blue infrastructure network that will relieve pressure on the coast and improve the area's biodiversity;
- SB20 and our incentivising of all development "to be 'zero carbon ready by design' to minimise the amount of energy needed to heat and cool buildings through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping." We know that there is a very substantial performance gap between much modern building and the standards that are 'required'. We want to eliminate this gap for development in Southbourne, and will work with developers to enable them to do so.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Brown