



Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan Examination.

**Statement by Horsham District Council on Behalf of
Storrington, Sullington Parish and Washington Parish and
the South Downs National Park Authority in response to
the Further Initial Comments of the Independent Examiner.**

Question 9.

31 August 2018

1.0 Introduction

‘In policy 1, does the plan proposed presumption in favour of up to 5 houses outside the BUAB apply to land in the South Downs National Park? How does the plan define “infill development” and does the QB consider the “extension of existing buildings” to constitute “infilling”?’

- 1.1 Storrington and Sullington Parish Council, Washington Parish Council, Horsham District Council and the South Downs National Park have had the opportunity to meet and discuss this response. In light of this meeting, a response has been prepared by Horsham District Council on behalf of the qualifying body who have agreed this response.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Horsham is a district area of which approximately 18% falls within the South Downs National Park. This means that statutory planning responsibilities within the district are geographically split along the National Park boundary. The emerging South Downs Local Plan (SDLP) will supersede the Core Strategy and General Development Control Policies 2007 when adopted. At the time of writing the SDLP is at Examination.
- 2.2 Regarding the status of ‘infill’ within the national park, Policy CP5 of the Core Strategy 2005 directs development to land within defined built-up area boundaries in the first instance. This includes the settlements of Storrington, Sullington and Washington. Strategic Policy SD25: Development Strategy of the emerging South Downs Local Plan Submission Draft (2018) states that the principle of development will be supported within villages with identified Settlement Boundaries which includes the village of Washington as defined on the Policies Map and subject to certain criteria being met.
- 2.3 It follows the principle of infilling is acceptable within settlement boundaries. It is however recognised that development will sometimes take place outside BUABs. At the current time, development outside the settlement boundary will need to be considered in the context of the Horsham District Council Development Control Policies (in particular DC23 – sustainable farm diversification, DC27 – Essential rural worker dwellings and DC 28 – House extensions, replacement dwellings and ancillary accommodation). Part 2 of SD25 in the emerging South Downs Local Plan Submission Draft (2018) sets out the exceptional circumstances required for development outside settlements boundaries to be acceptable. The South Downs Local Plan Pre-Submission draft (Sept 2017) can be found [here](#) and accompanying Schedule of Changes to the Pre-Submission Local Plan can be found [here](#).

3.0 Infill development

3.1 In light of the policy background set out above, it is recognised that the approach proposed in the NDP of allowing infill development of up to 5 houses outside of the settlement boundary in the South Downs National Park will conflict with the emerging South Downs Local Plan policy requirements of SD25. As a result, it could cause harm to the special qualities of the National Park by allowing inappropriate development in the countryside that does not meet National Park purposes as well as affecting the ability of the community to deliver affordable housing through Rural Exception sites. Suggested clarification of the policy wording is set out below to take account of this for consideration by the Examiner.

3.2 Outside the South Downs National Park area, it is acknowledged that the existing policy background does not provide a specific definition of the scale of infill development that may be acceptable outside built up area boundaries. This scale of development in the Neighbourhood Plan area as a whole has however been selected for the following reasons:

- 1) The scale of development is in accordance with the minimum yield threshold for land to be included in a SHLAA assessment used by Horsham district Council, which has used a threshold of 6 dwellings for their most recent assessment.
- 2) This scale of development is broadly in accordance with the recent updates to class Q permitted developments which allows for the conversion up to five (small scale) units.

3.3 Overall, the scope for infill development outside built-up area boundaries is likely to be low, but within Washington Parish there is a small area of development around Montpelier Gardens which could be considered to form small 'unclassified settlements' as defined in Policy 3 of the Horsham District Planning Framework. These are very small with either no or very limited community and public services. Given the limitation of development potential within Washington village, (which is located in the South Downs National Park), there may be some scope for some limited infill growth to support the vitality and viability of local communities in the future. It is considered the policy would therefore provide this flexibility should such an opportunity arise in the future. Isolated development in the open countryside will not be supported.

3.4 It is agreed that the extension to existing dwellings outside built-up areas may not meet the definition of infill development. Updated wording to clarify the intention of the Qualifying body is set out below for the consideration of the Examiner.

4.0 Proposed Modification

4.1 In response to the Examiner's question, set out above a number of clarifications to Policy 1 are proposed by the Qualifying Body for the consideration by the Examiner as set out below. (Deletions are shown as ~~strikethrough~~ and proposed additions as underlined text).

Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parishes

The Neighbourhood Plan defines the Built-up Area Boundaries of Storrington, Sullington and Washington, as shown on the Policies Map. Development proposals located inside the boundaries will be supported where appropriate, especially if they will result in the beneficial reuse of previously developed land, provided they accord with the other provisions of the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan, and the Development Plans for Horsham District and the South Downs National Park.

Development proposals ~~for infilling~~ outside the Built-up Areas ~~of Washington~~ will be supported provided these accord with the provisions of the Horsham District Planning Framework, the South Downs Local Plan and the Storrington, Sullington and Washington Neighbourhood Plan. Such proposals include:

- 1) Site at Old London Road (Vineyards) Washington. Allocated in policy 2;***
- 2) Infill developments of up to 5 dwellings within and around Montpelier Gardens within Washington Parish, outside the South Downs National Park; and***
- 3) Extensions to existing buildings.***

Development proposals outside of these ~~boundaries~~ definitions will be required to conform to Development Plan policies in respect of the management of development in the countryside.