



Appeal Decision

Hearing held on 5 August 2014

Site visit made on 5 August 2014

by Chris Hoult BA(Hons) BPhil MRTPI MIQ

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 20 August 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2830/A/14/2215479

Land north of Towcester Road, Greens Norton, Northamptonshire

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Richard Selby against the decision of South Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref S/2013/1089/OUT, dated 21 August 2013, was refused by notice dated 17 October 2013.
 - The development proposed is residential development of 9 dwellings, estate road and associated works (outline).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. The application is outline with all matters reserved for consideration at a later date. I deal with the appeal on that basis.
3. The appeal was initially pursued under the Written Representations (WR) procedure but was changed to the Hearing procedure following an internal file review carried out by the Planning Inspectorate, in the light of a likely dispute between the parties regarding the Council's housing land supply (HLS). In dealing with the appeal, I take into account all statements submitted for the initial WR appeal and supplementary statements submitted under the Hearing procedure. In the Council's case, this includes, as an attachment, its Housing Land Availability Study dated April 2014, which incorporates an updated account of the position on HLS within the District¹. In a further supplementary statement, the appellant was able to respond to this new evidence.
4. By way of a further update, although effectively in response to the appellant's querying some of the assumptions underpinning its HLS figure, the Council submitted a further bundle of new evidence in the lead-in to the Hearing, in the form of attachments to a "factual statement". I sought clarification of its relevance and requested that it be discussed with the appellant, while undertaking to allow time for the appellant to consider and respond to it, including adjourning the Hearing if necessary. Since the evidence in effect gives an up-to-date account of the HLS position in the light of the appellant's queries, and is relevant to the main issue I identify, I was in principle content to accept it, subject to these provisos.

¹ See Table 6 on p29.

5. At the Hearing, the Council produced a summary statement explaining the relevance of the various attachments and said that they had been discussed with the appellant. The appellant said that he was in a position to respond without the need for any delays or adjournments. On that basis, I take this evidence into account in my decision. I was provided with hard copies of the attachments at the Hearing and I list them as documents put in at the Hearing.
6. In a parallel development, the Council sought the postponement of the Hearing or, alternatively, my decision, given the imminence of the publication of the Inspector's Report to the Council following the examination into the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS)², in March 2014. The approach to "objectively assessed housing needs" adopted by the Council in its case for this appeal, following various judgments of the Courts (in South Northamptonshire and elsewhere), underpins the JCS, the HLA Study and its position on HLS. I saw no compelling reason to accede to this request and gave my reasons in a letter to the parties and also at the Hearing.
7. The parties accepted my reasoning, subject to the proviso that, should the Inspector's Report be in the public domain prior to the decision being issued, it would be a significant new material consideration which would plainly need to be taken into account. I am content to deal with the appeal on that basis.
8. Reason for refusal no. 4 refers to harm to protected species and their habitats and is based on the Council's view that the ecological survey of the site accompanying the application is out-of-date. The appellant submitted an updated appraisal, confirming an earlier view that the proposal is likely to have very little impact on wildlife or habitats. Accordingly, the Council withdrew this reason for refusal and I do not deal with it in dealing with the appeal.
9. The parties were agreed that there was no need to continue the discussion on site by way of an accompanied visit. I therefore closed the Hearing at the Council offices.

Background and main issues

10. The case for the proposal is founded almost exclusively on the contribution that the dwellings would make to addressing a perceived shortfall in HLS in the District. The Council raises an objection in principle, in so far as the proposal would represent development outside the settlement boundary and therefore in the open countryside, which it considers detrimental to the area's character and appearance. It characterises the proposal as representing an unsustainable pattern of development, as an extension to the village, in conflict with its spatial vision for the area. Underpinning its reason for refusal on this ground is its view, held at the time, that it could demonstrate a 5-year HLS.
11. Although sustainability considerations and effects on the character and appearance of the area can be seen as two separate main issues, there is a considerable degree of overlap between them in so far as I consider that, at their core, they relate to effects on the pattern of development. The Council has other objections in relation to the latter but I consider I can deal with them under the heading of "other issues" bearing in mind that this is an outline proposal. I deal with the Council's two remaining reasons for refusal, relating to biodiversity impacts and the layout of the site, under the same heading.

² This is a Core Strategy for the wider West Northamptonshire area produced by the Council along with two neighbouring authorities, Daventry District Council and Northampton Borough Council.

12. With this in mind, I consider that there is a single main issue, which is whether the proposal represents sustainable development, having regard to national and local planning policies, the existing pattern of development in the village and the current supply of housing land in the District.

Reasons

Main issue

National planning policy context

13. Paragraph 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. The proposal is a relatively minor one but with potentially important implications for the village, as I shall explain. While the new housing proposed could undoubtedly fulfil a social role in so far as it would provide a supply of housing to meet the needs of present and future generations, no claims for it are made as regards meeting specific local housing needs. I consider that the environmental role is most pertinent to this appeal, in so far as the proposal might contribute to or impact upon protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment in the village.
14. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For a housing proposal such as this, it needs to be read in conjunction with paragraph 47, which seeks a significant boost in the supply of housing, and paragraph 49, which indicates that relevant policies for the supply of housing are not up-to-date if the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites. For purposes of paragraph 14, where relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, considered against the policies of the NPPF as a whole.

Local planning policy context

15. The starting point for considerations is a series of three High Court challenges made by the Council to Inspectors' appeal decisions allowing housing development in March and July 2013³. Judgments were handed down in December 2013 and February 2014, so they therefore post-date the Council's decision on this proposal. All three challenges were dismissed.
16. I do not need to go into them in detail, other than to note that a number of points arise which, at the Hearing, the Council said it had taken into account in its approach to HLS. The key ones relate to, firstly, the need to apply a 20% buffer to estimated housing need for purposes of identifying sites capable of providing 5 years' HLS. This is in line with guidance in paragraph 47 of the NPPF where there is a record of persistent under-delivery of housing. Secondly, in dealing with residual shortfalls in HLS in plan-making, these should be addressed within the first 5 years of the plan period, wherever possible, given the stated aim of the NPPF to boost significantly the supply of housing nationally. The latter requirement is now written into the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), published in March 2014⁴.

³ *South Northamptonshire Council v SSCLG and Robert Plummer* [2013] EWHC 4377 (Admin); *South Northamptonshire Council v SSCLG and Barwood Homes Limited* [2014] EWHC 570 (Admin); and *South Northamptonshire Council v SSCLG and Barwood Land and Estates Limited* [2014] EWHC 573 (Admin)

⁴ See paragraph ref. ID 3-035-20140306

17. Around the time these decisions were being issued, a further development relevant to this appeal took place, relating to the basis on which housing needs were estimated for purposes of establishing the position on HLS. The Council had based their estimates on figures in the East Midlands Regional Plan, the Regional Spatial Strategy for the area (RSS). At the time of the issue of the Bugbrooke appeal decision in February 2013 (the first to be challenged),⁵ it remained the most recent component of the development plan and the Inspector accorded it significant weight, notwithstanding the then-known intention of the Government to abolish it. At that point, the JCS was at an early stage in the adoption process.
18. In the subsequent Kings Sutton appeal decision, issued in June 2013 (and also challenged),⁶ the Inspector records that the RSS had been abolished and that the Submission Draft of the JCS had been examined, in April 2013. However, and in the light of other Court judgments, the Inspector had requested that the authorities undertake a fresh assessment of the objectively assessed needs for new housing in the area over the plan period and beyond. The upshot of this, as is reported in the HLA Study, is that the Council resolved to adopt objectively assessed housing needs based on work by the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research (CCHPR)⁷ as a basis for its housing estimates. These were discussed at a further examination of the JCS held in March 2014. It is the outcome of this examination which is awaited by the Council.
19. Nonetheless, the HLA Study has taken forward the OAN figures, on the basis that they represent objectively assessed needs, are compliant with the NPPF and the PPG and are based on the most up-to-date national projections, for purposes of carrying out an assessment of HLS. This is what it does in Table 6 of the Study, to a 2014 base date, incorporating a 20% buffer and loading residual shortfall on to the period 2014-2019. It concludes that 6.26 years' HLS can be demonstrated. This figure is challenged by the appellant and the bulk of the discussion at the Hearing revolved around whether a 5-year HLS can be demonstrated, having regard to the most up-to-date evidence on delivery in relation to specific sites, mainly as listed in Appendix 1 to the Study.
20. If the Council can demonstrate a 5-year HLS, the balance to be struck between harm and benefits, which would otherwise be as set out in paragraph 14 of the NPPF, changes considerably. Moreover, much of the appellant's justification for the proposal, that there is a pressing need for new housing to address HLS within the District, would fall away. I shall return to HLS but, for now, it is necessary to establish whether harm would arise in relation to this issue.

Pattern of development

21. Greens Norton is a medium-sized village located roughly 1-2 miles north of the A43 Towcester by-pass and reached via country lanes. It has a moderate range of services and facilities. The site is to the north of Towcester Road, the closest approach from the A43, as it swings south-west towards the village core. It passes outlying housing estates on its south side and sporadic built development on its northern side, consisting mainly of community facilities – a medical centre, community hall and playground – interspersed with playing fields and open land, before reaching the church and its churchyard. The

⁵ Appeal Ref. APP/Z2830/A/12/2189257 – South of Peace Hill and adjacent to The Leys, Bugbrooke, Northampton

⁶ Appeal Ref. APP/Z2830/A/13/2194278 – Land north of Hampton Drive, Kings Sutton, Northamptonshire

⁷ Paper entitled "Objectively Assessed Housing Needs" (abbreviated to "OAN" in the HLA Study)

Council explained at the Hearing that the settlement boundary largely runs along Towcester Road. Housing on Calvert Road provides a defined eastern edge to the built-up area, softened by the allotments to its east.

22. There is a decidedly more open and spacious feel to the north of the road, which comprises land beyond the settlement boundary and therefore in the open countryside. The various community buildings are of modest height and mass and, in the case of the medical centre, although it has a large expanse of parking, that is considerably softened by hedgerows to its boundaries which have matured and provide strong visual containment. I accept that the same can be said about the frontage of the appeal site to the road. It comprises land used as paddocks, as does the open land to its north and east, which extends a considerable distance northwards to a complex of buildings in mixed residential and commercial uses at Littleworth.
23. In alleging harm to this pattern of development, the Council relies on saved policies of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan relating to development outside settlement boundaries. However, the plan dates from 1997 and is clearly out-of-date, even if the spatial vision outlined in Policy G2 – of focusing development on the larger towns and in the vicinity of Northampton – appears to align broadly with its current spatial strategy. Restraint on development in villages and the open countryside in this policy will plainly need to be reviewed in the light of up-to-date housing needs. Similar considerations apply to the more detailed constraints on residential development in the open countryside set out in Policy H6 and the wider-ranging constraints in Policy EV2. Accordingly, only limited weight can be afforded to these policies.
24. The Council also relies on its Interim Rural Housing Planning Policy (IRHPP). This was adopted in 2009 for development control purposes and is not therefore part of the development plan. It sought to provide for the release of land for housing in the rural villages on a managed, if arbitrary, basis, given that, at that time, the Council could not demonstrate a 5-year HLS. In its officers' report on the application (on which it largely relies in its statement for the WR appeal), the Council explains the rationale and application of the policy in some detail. However, the weight which could be accorded to it, in the decisions which were challenged, was on the whole considered to be limited, a view which was not overturned in the subsequent High Court judgments.
25. In any event, the agenda has moved on, as I explain below. For these reasons, I attach limited weight to the IRHPP in so far as it acts to impose a ceiling on future housing development in the village and can be relied upon as a basis for refusing planning permission in the case of this proposal. At the Hearing, the Council accepted that, while a current policy document (in the sense that its adoption has not been formally rescinded), it was unlikely to be a material consideration carrying great weight.
26. In spite of this, I consider that the proposal would depart from a clear pattern to development in the village and could set an unfortunate precedent for further housing development. At present, there is little in the way of residential development to the north of either of the main approaches to/from the village, from the east, along Towcester Road, or the west, along Blakesley Hill. To that extent, both roads presently serve to provide a defined edge to the village, with modern housing development extending beyond the village

core to the south of these roads. This includes the new Mill Lane housing development, now largely complete.

27. New housing on any significant scale to the north of Towcester Road would depart from this pattern to an extent which would erode the clear break from the built-up area to predominantly open land that presently exists and that the road, in so far as it serves as a boundary to development, maintains. I attach little weight to the appellant's argument that the housing to the south of the road is of undistinguished character, which the proposal could improve upon. That is often the pattern where outlying housing estates, built to a conventional modern layout, extend from a historic village core. My concern is more about the physical presence of new housing on land which, despite having some built development, nevertheless reads as part of the open countryside.
28. Moreover, there is nothing, in terms of its appearance or landscape character, to distinguish the appeal site from the land to the north stretching as far as Littleworth, whose buildings are plainly visible from Towcester Road. In terms of the principle of development, therefore, if it were to be accepted to the north of the road in this case, it would be difficult to reject further development on the basis of its effect on the character and appearance of that area. The limited range of facilities in the village may act as a brake on major residential development but that was not explored in any detail at the Hearing. It is a factor which the appellant said he acknowledged in seeking a reduced number of dwellings compared with previous applications for the site, in 2009 and 2011. However, elsewhere, he argues that, as the 7th most sustainable village in the Council's hierarchy, it would be a sustainable location for new housing.
29. I therefore consider that the provisions of paragraph 21b of the PPG⁸ are relevant in so far as, aside from its effect on the pattern of development in the village, the proposal raises some prematurity concerns. I accept that it is a relatively minor scheme. However, the principle that it would establish, allied to the potential for further extensions towards Littleworth, is such that there is a real risk that it could undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale and location of new development in the village. Such decisions relate to the distribution of new housing across the District, including the rural villages, based on a range of considerations under the broad heading of sustainability, which will inevitably follow the impending adoption of the JCS.
30. Having therefore identified harm which I consider would arise to the pattern of development, it is necessary for me to balance it against the benefits arising, which are largely bound up with HLS. In order to reach a conclusion on this issue, I need to assess the position in the light of the appellant's concerns regarding the Council's updated evidence.

Position on HLS

31. The appeal was lodged at a time when the Council's position on HLS was uncertain, immediately following the judgments on the Kings Sutton and Silverstone challenges. However, I have described developments since then and, plainly, the Council has sought to establish a sound approach to HLS in the light of the provisions of the NPPF and PPG, and lessons learned. At the Hearing, I acknowledged that any conclusions as to HLS, in that they are underpinned by reliance on the OAN figures, must be treated with a degree of

⁸ Paragraph ID 21b-14-20140306

- caution. The appellant questions whether, in so far as they are untested, the Council can say that the figures are NPPF and PPG compliant.
32. My attention is drawn by the Council to a recent appeal decision⁹ in which the Inspector, based on the evidence before him, considered the CCHPR to be an independent and well-respected organisation. I accept that he was dealing with a different authority in Northamptonshire with its own evidence base. However, there are strong parallels with the evidence before me and it is encouraging that he took the view that, while it is not a new plan or policy, and could be altered following examination, it appeared to be cogent, robust and up-to-date and was an objective assessment of housing needs. I am also encouraged by the fact that, in contrast to the previous housing need figures, based on the RSS, the Inspector conducting the examination in March 2014 has not sought an early and fundamental review of the Council's OAN figures.
33. On the available evidence, I therefore consider that I can accept the OAN figures as representing a reliable basis on which to establish the up-to-date position on HLS. It appears to be the best evidence available to me at the present time. At the Hearing, the appellant did not seek to seriously challenge the Council's use of the figures, beyond the proviso to which I have referred.
34. I raised with the Council how a residual shortfall of 616 houses in 2012, which emerged from the Silverstone High Court judgment¹⁰, compares with the figure of 52 houses deriving from the OAN, which was used for purposes of estimating HLS at a base date of 2014. The Council's explanation, that it effectively represented a re-basing of the former RSS figures, themselves influenced by growth policies in relation to Milton Keynes and the South Midlands, was not challenged by the appellant.
35. I also raised the urban/rural split in the housing delivery trajectory referred to in paragraphs 5.30 and 5.31 of the HLA Study and whether it is indicative of separate 5-year HLS targets for each area. The Council explained that it represents its expected split of urban/rural housing delivery, over the next 5 years and over the plan period to 2029, based on maintaining a District-wide 5-year HLS. It is plain from these paragraphs that rural villages, including those not considered under the IRHPP (which applies only to the more "sustainable" villages), will play their part in housing delivery over the JCS plan period. This is in spite of an urban focus to major new development. To that extent, the agenda has moved on and it is clear that work needs to progress on the Settlements and Development Policies DPD with all due speed, to flesh out these projections, following the adoption of the JCS.
36. I am satisfied therefore that the wider assumptions underpinning the Council's 5-year HLS estimate can, for the present, be relied upon. Based on the inclusion of a 20% buffer and the loading of residual shortfalls to the period 2014-2019, a supply requirement of 2,324 houses results. Those sites with planning permission deliverable over this period, split between major and minor urban and rural sites, totals 1,835. The methodology for estimating contributions from windfall sites and lapsed dwellings is not challenged by the appellant and yields a further 275 dwellings, leaving a shortfall of 214 dwellings. On the Council's estimates, this is more than met by an estimated

⁹ Ref. APP/L2820/A/13/2204628 – Land to rear of 18 & 20 Glebe Avenue, Broughton, Kettering

¹⁰ See paragraph 36

- total of 898 dwellings from allocated or emerging sites considered deliverable over the next 5 years.
37. The appellant challenges the Council's assumptions on deliverability, primarily with regard to allocated or emerging sites but also with regard to two of the major urban sites with planning permission. His alternative scenario assumes 658 dwellings (as opposed to the Council's 900) deliverable in relation to the latter and 184 dwellings (as opposed to the Council's 898) from the former. This disputed evidence rendered it necessary, at the Hearing, to consider the position at a number of sites, to which the Council's further update refers.
38. I deal firstly with allocations and emerging sites, considered in detail in Figure 1 of the appellant's supplementary statement. The Council confirmed that the Brackley Sawmills and Towcester Road, Old Stratford sites have now been granted planning permission, the former with completed obligations under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended. The developers confirm that the site can be built-out by 2019, which is given for all 139 houses listed under two headings referring to this site in the HLA Study¹¹. Regarding the Towcester Sustainable Urban Extension site ("Towcester South"), the developer has confirmed a build-out of 250 houses to 2019, in line with the Council's estimate. The Council also indicated that, for the Towcester South (Wood Burcote Croft) and Yardley Hastings sites, a completed s106 obligation is expected any time now.
39. Of the major urban sites with planning permission, the appellant draws attention to the sites at Turweston Road, Brackley and Springfields, Towcester (the latter the site of the Council's offices). Regarding the former, the Council disputes his view regarding possible access problems. My attention is drawn to the Committee Report for the application and to Condition 8 of the planning permission. From my reading of the former, the proposed access appears to be acceptable in principle. The Council explained that the condition is framed to allow for alternative timings for neighbouring development but that that would not stop housing from proceeding independently of that scheme.
40. In the case of Springfields, the Council is pursuing development of an alternative office site at Moat Lane in the centre of Towcester, as part of a regeneration project for the town. Both sites are in its ownership and planning permission has been granted with a completed s106 obligation. A Council internal document¹² confirms a completion date for the relocated office accommodation of 2 March 2015, which, it says, would allow four years for the development of the Springfields site. As it is enabling development linked to the regeneration scheme and office relocation, the Council argues that it is reasonable to conclude that housing development will proceed without delay and be built-out by 2019.
41. In response to this additional evidence, the appellant draws my attention to remaining uncertainties over delivery and to the fact that delivery of the Towcester South scheme is weighted towards the end of the 5-year period. Aside from that, there was no real challenge, on the facts, to the Council's account of progress on delivery.

¹¹ See Appendix 1.

¹² See Place Programme Status and Programme Summary Information for Moat Lane regeneration scheme.

42. In the light of the available evidence on deliverability, and the subsequent discussion at the Hearing, I acknowledge the appellant's comments regarding the need for caution. However, I consider it reasonable to include the whole of the contributions from the two Brackley Sawmills sites, Towcester Road, Old Stratford, Towcester South, Turweston Road, Brackley and Springfields sites projected for the period to 2019. They appear, on the evidence, to be deliverable. This would restore the contribution from major urban sites to 900, to which a further 514 houses can be added under the "allocations/emerging sites" heading to add to the 164 identified by the appellant, making a total of 678 houses under that heading.
43. If these figures are fed back into Table 6, a deliverable 5-year supply of 2,788 houses results, set against a supply requirement of 2,324. This in turn results in a figure of more or less exactly 6.00 years' HLS.

Conclusions

44. I conclude that the Council can demonstrate 5 years' HLS, even if the restraint policies it cites in relation to this issue, based on the adopted 1997 local plan and the IRHPP, are, to all intents and purposes, out-of-date. The proposal would erode the currently well-defined break between the built-up area of the village and the open land to the north. While it would, to a limited extent, fulfil a social role in providing a supply of housing, it would fail to fulfil the environmental role envisaged of sustainable development in the NPPF. No claims are made for it as regards benefits in terms of improvements to the landscape or enhancement to biodiversity. It would, however, fail to contribute to, and would have a harmful impact on, protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment of the village, for the reasons I have given.
45. Those benefits that derive from the contribution to HLS must clearly be tempered by the absence of a pressing need, on the available evidence, for the additional housing. I accept the view put forward by the appellant at the Hearing that, on any casual observation, opportunities to extend the village, other than on land north of Towcester Road, are likely to be limited. However, I agree with the Council's view that the future scale and location of new housing in the village is a matter for further consideration in the context of its Settlements and Development Policies DPD following adoption of the JCS. The proposal would unnecessarily and unreasonably pre-empt that process and, in the circumstances of the site, set an unwelcome precedent for possible future housing development extending northwards and eastwards towards Littleworth.
46. Having therefore had regard to national and emerging local planning policy, the pattern of development in the village and the current supply of housing land in the District, and for the reasons given, I conclude that the proposal does not represent sustainable development.

Other issues

47. I deal with these briefly. The Council is concerned about the cumulative visual impact of the proposal viewed in conjunction with the Mill Lane development to the south of the village. Glimpsed views across fields are available of the latter from the section of Towcester Road north of the A43, before it turns to approach the village, but it would be viewed in conjunction with the proposed housing only to a limited extent. It should be borne in mind that the proposal is in outline. A landscaping condition could require a strong landscaped

frontage to the road, building on the current (admittedly overgrown) hedgerow, together with similarly strong boundary treatments to the east and north, to provide visual containment to housing. There is no reason why such treatments should not also provide a soft edge to housing development. These would be matters for resolution at the reserved matters stage.

48. Similar considerations apply with regard to biodiversity. The proposal does not promote enhancement to biodiversity as a benefit. However, the site appears to have little conservation value, so I see no evidence for the Council's view that the proposal would harm the amenities of the local community on that account. With regard to the wording of the Council's refusal reason, I have already dealt with visual amenity considerations. The site cannot be said to be distinctive in terms of its appearance, for all that it is open countryside. However, a condition could require that any landscaping be carried out with a view to making provision for wildlife habitats and other enhancements, and such a condition was discussed at the Hearing. That would similarly be for resolution at the reserved matters stage.
49. As for the Council's concerns about whether the site would be developed to its full potential, I consider that these are to a large extent overtaken by the reservations I express on the main issue about the potential for future development to the north and east. Clearly, what is required is a properly planned approach to the development of this land, which can also take into account density, housing need and appropriate infrastructure contributions.
50. On all these counts, any weight I attach to any harm arising must be limited and add little to the weight I attach to the harm I identify on the main issue. That does not, however, amount to weight in favour of the proposal and it does not persuade me to alter my conclusions on that issue.

Conclusions

51. Since the Council can demonstrate a 5-year HLS, relevant policies for the supply of housing can be considered up-to-date. I accept that these are not the adopted and other policies on which it initially sought to rely in refusing planning permission. However, the agenda has now moved on. They are bound up with its emerging spatial vision for the District and approach to HLS set out in the JCS and the HLA Study. Accordingly, the test in paragraph 14 of the NPPF does not apply. The benefits which have been identified cannot outweigh the harm that I have found on the main issue. For these reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C M Hoult

INSPECTOR

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT:

Mr T Haselwood BSc(Hons) MA Appellant's Agent

FOR THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:

Mr A D'Arcy BA(Hons) MRTPI Lead Officer, Planning Policy, Strategic Policy Department, South Northamptonshire Council

Mr S Bennett BSc MRTPI Principal Planning Officer, Planning Department, South Northamptonshire Council

DOCUMENTS PUT IN AT THE HEARING

1	Copy of Supporting Statement for application put in by the Council
2	Copies of policies H5 and EV24 of South Northamptonshire Local Plan put in by the Council
3	Internal consultation response from Environmental Protection on application put in by the Council
4	Summary statement on updated position on housing land supply put in by the Council
5	Correspondence regarding build-out rates, 2014-2019 – Brackley Sawmills and Towcester Road, Old Stratford put in by the Council
6	Correspondence regarding build-out rates, 2014-2019 – Catch Yard Farm, Silverstone, put in by the Council
7	Correspondence regarding build-out rates, 2014-2019 – Towcester Sustainable Urban Extension, put in by the Council
8	Correspondence regarding build-out rates, 2014-2019 – Former Chaplins Haulage Yard, Stratford Road, Roade put in by the Council
9	Decision Notice and Committee Report – residential development of up to 350 dwellings, south of Turweston Road, Brackley – put in by the Council
10	Internal Council document on progress on Moat Lane, Towcester regeneration project put in by the Council
11	Planning Inspectorate "Examining Local Plans Procedural Practice" (December 2013) put in by the Council