



## **Neighbourhood Planning Front runners scheme July 2011 round**

### Application for grant by Winchester City Council

1. Winchester City Council (WCC) is preparing its LDF Core Strategy taking into account recent announcements made by Government and the intentions highlighted in the Localism Bill. To reflect the localism agenda, in 2010 the Council created a new consultation tool 'Blueprint' to enable its many communities to undertake a locally focussed debate about their future needs and aspirations - <http://www.community-blueprint.co.uk/>. Blueprint has been acknowledged as an innovative and community-focussed process and has featured in localism events promoted by the Planning Advisory Service, National Planning Forum and others. Responses to Blueprint were well structured and often represented a cross-community view.
2. The Council considered the Blueprint comments and in conjunction with updated technical evidence has created a response to reflect local views. These are presented in its Core Strategy document 'Plans for Places..after Blueprint'. [www.winchester.gov.uk/plans4places](http://www.winchester.gov.uk/plans4places), which is subject to consultation between 27 June – 8 August 2011.
3. Plans for Places sets out a development strategy for the District, including the amount of new homes to be provided. The District has a large rural area, with a variety of communities ranging from traditional market towns of a few thousand population to small hamlets of a few dwellings originally serving the agricultural industry. Following a re-examination of the sustainability considerations of rural settlements taking into account the findings of the Taylor Report 2009 and the responses to Blueprint, the Council has revised its rural development strategy.
4. This has highlighted the role of the market towns and locally important service centres as being capable of accommodating new development to address local housing and employment needs and supporting the retention of local services. Plans for Places proposes that the market towns provide 400-500 new homes each, with the smaller service centres providing 150-250 houses each over the 20 year plan period.
5. One of the locally important service centres in the District participated actively in Blueprint and produced a very detailed response following discussions with local residents, young people, community groups and developers, they also prepared and analysed a detailed questionnaire.

This community - Denmead has now approached the Council with a request to follow-up the Blueprint exercise by preparing a Neighbourhood Plan (their Blueprint submission can be viewed via the following web link ; <http://documents.winchester.gov.uk/docs/blueprint/20146.pdf> ).

6. Denmead agrees with the emerging development strategy expressed in Plans for Places, to build between 150 -250 new homes. They recognise and wish to retain their role as a larger settlement offering a range of community services and facilities and they wish to lead the process of identifying sites for future development. This is supported by their Blueprint response which recognises the need for more affordable homes and housing for its ageing population, together with the provision of small start up units for employment purposes. The need for provision of open space has been acknowledged by the PC and Winchester and the opportunities for this to be delivered need further investigation.
7. The PC understands the complexities of ensuring a balance between local opinion and technical data and is prepared to undertake full local consultation to engage with all residents and the business community. Denmead PC discussed at its June 22 Planning Committee the concept of approaching Winchester to be submitted as a front runner ([http://www.denmeadparishcouncil.co.uk/view\\_minutes.php?mid=444](http://www.denmeadparishcouncil.co.uk/view_minutes.php?mid=444)).
8. Following subsequent discussions with the Parish Council it is obvious that they have thought about both the process involved in preparing a NP and the outcomes they wish to achieve, which are set out in the attached letter of support from the Parish Council.
9. A plan of the Parish is attached – the NP would exclude that part of the parish in the South Downs National Park and that within the West of Waterlooville Major Development Area which already has planning permission for 2000 new homes. Its focus will be the settlement of Denmead and its surrounding environment.
10. The Parish Council are aware of the need to both identify sites in the right location, taking into account sustainability and environmental considerations, and to ensure that they are deliverable. To this extent they have commenced an examination of the sites submitted to the Council as part of its SHLAA and have initiated discussions with local land owners.
11. Winchester City Council considers this project would be viable with appropriate support but recognises that the local community will need much help to develop the NP. The City Council is not in a position to provide the level of technical advice and support that would be required and this bid is to fund the support needed to enable Denmead to proceed with a NP, building on the local support and encouragement it received to Blueprint. This may remove the necessity of preparing a Site Allocations DPD to include Denmead, potentially saving

Winchester City Council resources in the longer term. If successful, this type of NP could be rolled out to other rural settlements within Winchester District and may provide a model for wider application. The grant would go towards more specific technical evidence and assistance to support the allocation of sites and to undertake full community engagement, sustainability appraisal and subsequent publication of documents for consultation.

12. Winchester City Council understands its role and commitment to support Denmead with its preparation of a NP, including the requirement to appoint a suitably qualified person to undertake an examination and to resource a referendum prior to formal adoption. The timing of this proposal allows for the formulation of the NP to follow the stages of the emerging Core Strategy and to utilise as necessary parts of the Council's LDF evidence base, to ensure compliance. This timescale will also allow for the Localism Bill to come into force and any subsequent amendments in relation to the preparation of NPs to be taken into account.

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