



SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

Beeson House, 26 Lintot Square,
Fairbank Road, Southwater,
West Sussex RH13 9LA

07/04/2021

SOUTHWATER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN PRESS NOTICE - FACT CHECK

Regulation 5 of The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 places a restriction on the publication of material by the Parish Council relating to the neighbourhood plan. This regulation does however confirm that the Parish council can publish factual information where the sole purpose of the publication is to refute or correct any inaccuracy in material published by a person other than the relevant council. The Parish Council will monitor statements made about the plan in the run up to the referendum on 6th May 2021 and publish a 'Fact Check' where it is considered appropriate to do so.

Statement Published

Keep Southwater Green published the following on their Facebook page at 07:55 on 7 April 2021:

'Local residents may now be aware that a referendum of Southwater Parish voters is to held on 6 May requesting that they approve the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan. Voters should be aware that if they do vote "Yes" they will not only approve the Plan's Policy SP2, which proposes to allow 420 (mainly executive-style?) homes to be built on Great House Farmland, but be seen by HDC planners as implicitly approving the Local Plan Review proposal for 800 more on what is left. No mention of this is of course made on either the relevant HDC or SPC websites, and the extent of what Policy SP2 proposes is only evident at page 41 of the referendum Plan. (Please see the KSG website for further details).'

Statement Fact Check

Policy SNP2.2 of the proposed Southwater Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for 422 - 450 new residential units. This is split into a minimum of 350 new dwellings (Use Class C3) and a minimum of 72 units falling in Use Class C2 – this is generally a care home or similar facility and was included in the neighbourhood plan to try and ensure local people do not have to move away from the village to find suitable care accommodation in old age. SNP2.2(g) makes it clear that the 350 new dwellings must be provided *'in accordance with the latest evidence on the required housing mix'*, this is currently set out in the Horsham Market Housing Mix Report (2016) and Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing SPD (2017). This would deliver in the region of 25 x 1 bed homes, 182 x 2 bed homes, 123 x 3 bed homes and 25 x 4+ bed homes. The statement that Policy SNP2.2 will *'allow 420 (mainly executive-style?) homes'* is therefore factually incorrect.

It is also worth noting that the allocation made by SNP2.2 proposes more than just the provision of new homes. For example, it requires a minimum of 8 hectares of public open space to be provided which

represents around 36% of the allocated area. To see the full list of requirements please look at the document which can be found at <https://bit.ly/3g1WnZh>.

The statement goes on to assert that voting yes will *'be seen by HDC planners as implicitly approving the Local Plan Review proposal for 800 more on what is left'* of the area of land to the west of Southwater. At this time, the emerging Local Plan has not been published and it is not known whether Horsham District Council will look to make further allocations in the Parish through this document.

For the avoidance of doubt, the neighbourhood plan does not covertly, or overtly, support further development west of Southwater than what is included in SNP2.2. Policy SNP1.3 states that *'The unique and separate identities of Southwater Village, Christ's Hospital and Tower Hill will be maintained. To this end development must not individually or cumulatively result in the coalescence of these settlements with each other or Horsham Town.'* Development such as that mentioned in the published statement would therefore likely be considered contrary to the neighbourhood plan. Should the neighbourhood plan receive a yes vote at referendum, it would not be seen *'by HDC planners as implicitly approving the Local Plan Review proposal for 800 more'*, and the published statement is factually incorrect in this regard.

The published statement is correct in stating that *'No mention of this is of course made on either the relevant HDC or SPC websites'*. No mention is made on these websites as it would be factually incorrect to do so.

More information

For more information about the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan and the upcoming referendum please visit the <https://southwater.joomla.com/> where the plan and Information Statement (which contains all the information about the referendum) can be found.

If you would like to contact the Parish Council about the upcoming referendum you can:

Write to us at	Beeson House, Lintot Square, Fairbank Avenue, Southwater RH13
Phone us on	01403 733202
Email us at	clerk@southwater-pc.gov.uk

Please remember that the Parish Council are bound by law to not comment on any of the issues raised by the question to be asked in the referendum or put any arguments for or against a particular answer to the referendum. Any information published/shared must either be required by law¹ or be to refute or correct any inaccuracy in material published by others².

¹ Please see <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2031/regulation/4/made>

² Please see <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2031/regulation/5/made>