

South Winchester Golf Course – Potential Development

Email to Adrian Fox, Strategic Planning Manager at Winchester City Council (WCC), on 26 November 2024, copied to all 3 WCC Cllrs, and Adrian's response on the same day:

There have been a number of sitings of surveying taking place around the South Winchester Golf Course (SWGC) recently and I have been asked to seek your comments on the following:

1. Please would you confirm that SWGC is NOT included in the current Local Plan.

Answer: This is correct - the site is not included in the Reg 19 Local Plan that we have submitted to PINS for examination. The site promoters will, like many other agents be promoting their site through the LP examination process.

2. Assuming the new Local Plan is accepted by the Inspector, would a development on the scale of the golf course be considered at future reviews during the life of the new Local Plan?

Answer: The Leader of the city council has made it very clear that we would need to start a review of the Local Plan straight away after the adoption of this Local Plan. In accordance with planning/HRA legislation 'All reasonable alternatives' would need to be assessed. We are waiting for the NPPF to be published (it is anticipated that this will be published before Christmas) when we will know the level of housing requirement that we will be expected to meet. If the figure remains similar to the proposed changes that were included in the NPPF, the challenge of meeting these housing requirements in our district and for our neighbours should not be underestimated.

3. Assuming the new Local Plan is approved by the Inspector, if a planning application was to be submitted, are you confident that the Council will be able to resist a planning application regarding the South Winchester Golf Course?

Answer: We cannot stop developers from submitting a planning application at any stage of the LP making process. Whilst I cannot pre-determine the outcome of a planning application that has not been submitted, we do currently have a 5 year Housing Land Supply and any planning application would be assessed against the policies and proposals in the currently adopted Local Plan and any other material planning considerations.

You will be aware that the government is taking a keen interest in planning applications that involve housing development - there was a recent planning application at Swale BC that was due to be refused planning permission that the government has called in (it is fully accepted that the scale was different but it does highlight the spotlight is on housing)

<https://www.ftbchambers.co.uk/news/news-view/angela-rayner-calls-in-swale-borough-council-planning-application>