



SOUTH WONSTON PARISH COUNCIL'S DETAILED REVIEW AND RESPONSE TO WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHELAA)

Introduction

The village ridge, by the first millennium BC was dotted with farming settlements and divided into little fields. Occupation continued into the Roman period, 43 – 409 AD. The Roman road from Cirencester to Winchester, now the A272, forms the western boundary of the Parish.

There are two ancient track-ways, the Alresford Drove and Ox Drovers, which follow the orientation of the chalk ridge. They are classified as restricted byways. Currently, there are approximately 3,000 residents who live in 880 dwellings.

Settlement Pattern

The Parish of South Wonston has two main areas of housing, the village proper (the settlement boundary) and separated by open fields to the South, the military accommodation area at Worthy Down.

The main village's settlement boundary is within a long rectangle following east-west orientation of the chalk ridge and bounded by the ancient drove roads. The village is surrounded by open downland, broken up into arable and grazing fields.

As part of the development of Winchester City Council's Local Plan process South Wonston Parish Council have been informed by the Strategic Planning Team that an allocation of some 50 houses will be required in the Parish by 2039 to meet the Local Plan allocation.

During 2020, developers and landowners submitted expressions of interest who would be willing to offer their land for development.

These sites have been noted on the SHELAA documents and there are five sites that have been put forward within the South Wonston Parish boundary, outside the settlement boundary, therefore all are greenfield sites.

At this time there has only been a limited review by the Strategic Planning Team to review the nominated sites in terms of their viability for development.

South Wonston Parish Council initially had been given an unreasonable time scale to respond to the Strategic Planning, i.e. the end of April 2022. An extension of time has been awarded to the end of May 2022.

Whilst the extension is welcomed the Parish Council have still found it a challenge to respond.

Executive Summary

South Wonston Parish Council and the residents have been reviewing the potential locations from which the following points have been identified in respect to the proposed sites:-

Whilst road access to all the sites bar SW07 currently exists, it is via the restricted road system or by restricted byways / unmade roads and therefore are not suitable to cater for the increased expected high volume of traffic density.

- The site on Drove Links would access onto Alresford Drove and in the past Hampshire County Council Highways have refused to allow increased traffic out onto the Drove thus blocking the Drove Links site from being developed.
- There is also no access from within the existing village road network to access this site.
- Any increase in development will severely increase the traffic density on the already congested exit of Downs Road to Christmas Hill.
- There are potential issues with school capacity as the South Wonston school does not only serve South Wonston but also all the surrounding villages and Worthy Down.
- Similarly South Wonston and all the surrounding villages are served by the Gratton surgery. Any increase in housing numbers will directly impact the ability to access doctors which are already stretched.
- The imposition of any increase in housing will have a direct and negative impact on the desire to reduce the carbon footprint of the village and the District due to its location, limited services and facilities, employment and limited public transport.
- The current woeful and expensive public transport network will rule out most using the bus for access to Winchester and wider areas. Hence the car will be the major transport of choice.
- There is very little employment within the village and so either the majority of the new house owners will be travelling out of the village

every day or be retired and hence potentially increasing the pressure on the available health care.

- The open land around the existing settlement boundary is rich in wildlife and any development will have a direct detrimental impact on all species. There are also protected species known to be in the vicinity.
- All existing Utilities i.e water, sewerage, broad band, power, public transport etc, whilst being the responsibility of the utility companies, are greatly overstretched at the present time. Any further demands on the existing system will simply exacerbate the existing issues.
- To cater for any new development there would need to be an extensive investment and an upgrade to all services.

Climate Emergency

- Winchester City Council has declared a Climate Emergency and are committed to reducing the carbon footprint of the District. Any development in South Wonston will therefore be in complete contravention of this policy. Winchester City Council is committed to becoming a carbon neutral local authority by 2024 and is aiming for the wider district to be carbon neutral by 2030.
 - Refer to **figure 1 on Page 4** which clearly indicates that South Wonston and Sutton Scotney are already highlighted that they have the highest carbon footprint in the District. We are already aware that the high levels of pollution, as a result of the amount of traffic traversing in and out of the village, is of immediate concern to residents and has a serious impact on the environment.
 - Any new development of additional housing in South Wonston would contravene Winchester city Council's climate change reduction strategies.

Settlement Hierarchy

- South Wonston Parish Council also calls into question the facility scoring methodology. This system is completely flawed and inaccurate. (It is noted that the online version is incorrect). For instance, using the following examples detailed on the scoring and ranking table:-

Convenience Store – Winchester scores 2 : South Wonston scores 2
Winchester has many convenience shops, South Wonston has 1.

Post Office – Winchester scores 2 : South Wonston scores 2.
Winchester has several post office facilities, South Wonston has 1.

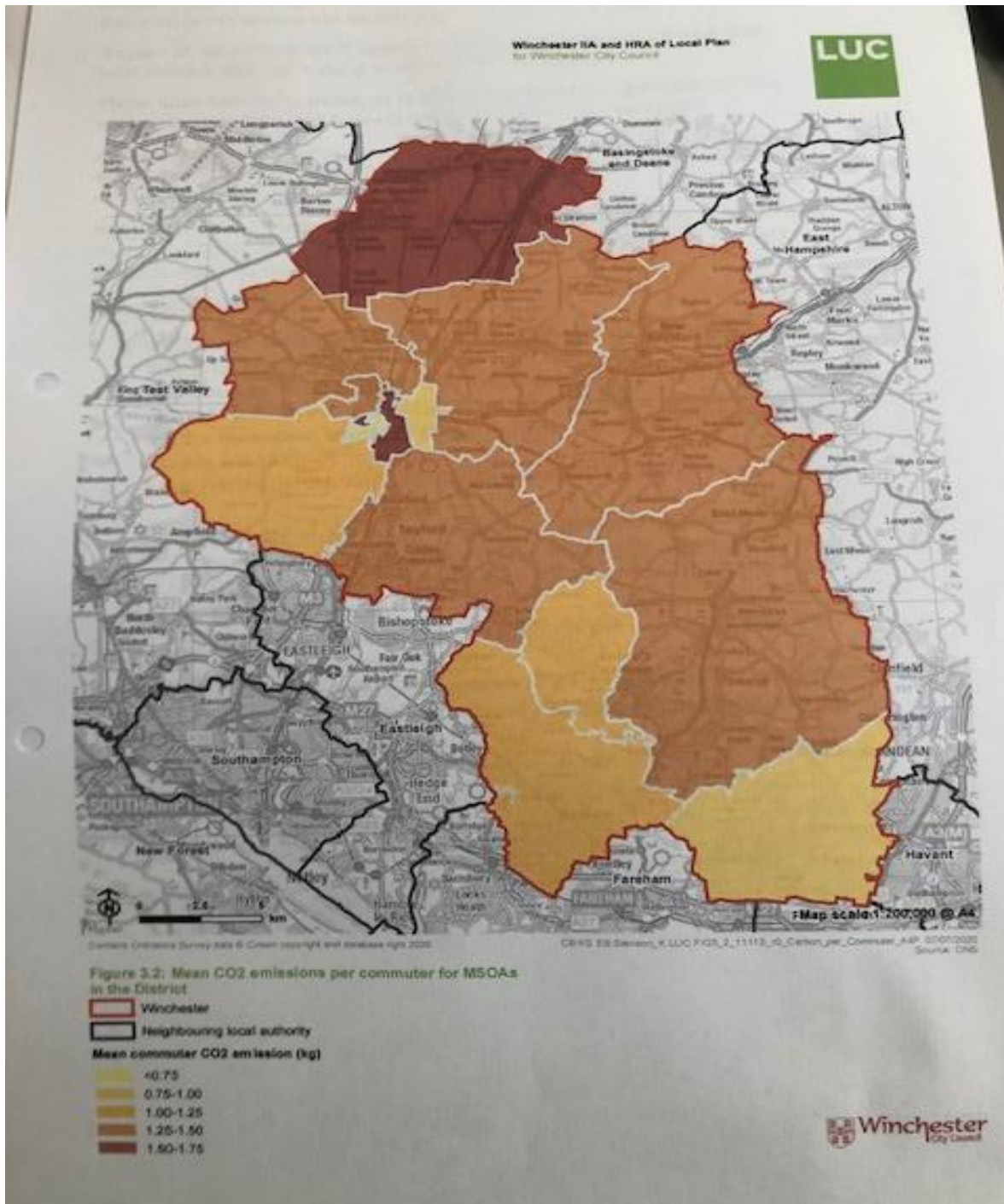
Bus Service – Winchester scores 3 : South Wonston scores 3.
Winchester offers a wealth of bus routes and services, South Wonston has 1 bus which runs hourly in the week, very limited service on Saturday and no service on Sunday and is expensive.



Phosphates and Nitrates

- We believe that South Wonston is affected by the concerns regarding water quality as our sewage system runs to the Water Treatment plant off the Andover Road and then into the Itchen. Any such pollution is likely to be a critical factor in considering the merits of the village as a location for more development.

Figure 1 - Mean CO2 emissions per commuter for MSOAs



Detailed review of the proposed SHELAA sites

SW01 (Potential 183 houses)

SW01 Potential (This land area equates to approximately an additional 25% of the village footprint)

- **Access.** Any development of this size would create a serious increase in the morning and evening density of traffic using Downs Road and would increase the potential situations of the junction to Christmas Hill and the village depending on the development access.

SW01

Currently there is no public road access to this site, the approach being along what currently is classed as a restricted byway

Access from the site if allowed to be towards the East would undoubtedly also seriously affect the traffic density using Alresford Drove which already has issues with the single carriageway at the entrance of the village.

West Hill Road North is also not capable of the potential to carry the traffic derived for a possible 183 houses.

A development of this scale could generate a significant increase in vehicle movements in a day through the village. **There should be no direct access into the village road network from any such development.**

- **Utilities.** The village water supply is serviced from the Water tower which already creates pressure issues in hot summers. It is considered that there is insufficient capacity to cater for a new development of this size and would seriously compromise the existing village. In addition currently the southern water sewerage system has serious capacity issues with now frequent problems and blockages requiring lorry movements down Lower Road to either over pump or to attempt to clear the issues. It is considered that the current sewerage network is insufficient to cater for a new development of the potential size that SW01 could generate
- **Boundaries.** This large area falls outside the current settlement boundary and is completely out of scale in context with the village. It is a greenfield site.
- **Transport.** As noted above the public transport system that the village has is not effective both in frequency and cost (£6.50 return to Winchester). This will mean that the majority of the new houses will

be using personal transport thus increasing the density of cars entering and leaving via Downs Road and Alresford Drive. This could also create more issues in the area of the school on Downs Road. There is no provision in the Winchester mobility plans to assist or increase the access to public transport or to cap costs so that the alternative is a viable alternative.

SW07 (Potential 41 houses)

This section of land lies on the corner of West Hill Road North and Alresford Drive.

- **Access.** Access for the possible 41 new homes could mean a significant increase in daily vehicle movements onto West Hill Road North and Alresford Drive neither of which currently are considered to not have additional capacity nor with the restriction that exist on the Alresford Drive.
- **Utilities.** The village water supply is serviced from the Water tower which already creates pressure issues in hot summers. It is considered that there is insufficient capacity to cater for a new development of this size and would seriously compromise the existing village. In addition currently the southern water sewerage system has serious capacity issues with now frequent problems and blockages requiring lorry movements down Lower Road to either over pump or to attempt to clear the issues. It is considered that the current sewerage network is insufficient to cater for a new development of the potential size that SW07 could generate.
- **Boundaries.** Area falls outside the current village boundary and is a greenfield site.
- **Transport.** As noted above the public transport system that the village has is not effective both in frequency and cost (£6.50 return to Winchester). This will mean that the majority of the new houses will be using personal transport thus increasing the density of cars entering and leaving via Downs Road and Alresford Drive. This could also create more issues in the area of the school on Downs Road. There is no provision in the Winchester mobility plans to assist or increase the access to public transport or to cap costs so that the alternative is a viable alternative.

SW02 (Potential 64 houses)

This plot is only accessible onto the unmade Drove Links Road

- **Access.** As noted this area of land is only accessible onto Drove Links Road which is an unsurfaced road. This exits on to Alresford Drove and we understand that Highways are not responsive to allowing a high density of vehicles to access / exit onto the Drove due to its capacity. This proposed development could again lead to a significant increase in vehicle movements a day moving along Downs's road.
- **Utilities / Boundaries.** The village water supply is serviced from the Water tower which already creates pressure issues in hot summers. It is considered that there is insufficient capacity to cater for a new development of this size and would seriously compromise the existing village. In addition currently the southern water sewerage system has serious capacity issues with now frequent problems and blockages requiring lorry movements down Lower Road to either over pump or to attempt to clear the issues. It is considered that the current sewerage network is insufficient to cater for a new development of the potential size that SW02 could generate. It is a Greenfield site.
- **Transport.** In regard to transport links this area is even less well served by public transport.

SW03 (3 houses)

Not considered to have any significant impact on the village considering the volume of building / infilling that is currently in hand. In addition, planning permission has already been refused on two previous occasions.

SW05 This site lies to the extreme West edge of the Parish and has no direct connection with the village and its amenities the current planning permission for the site requires the user to return the site at the completion of the planning approval back to agricultural land, and therefore is not a brown field site. See the WCC website for planning history of this site above. In 2004 permission for site to continue to 2016 with condition to restore to agriculture ref 03/02825/HCNM In 2016 application to extend operational life of site to 2036. Ref 16/02508/HCM.

General comments relating to all the local sites that are adjacent to the settlement boundary:

Capability of the village school to cater for the potential increase in child intake, currently the school cannot accommodate any potential intake. The school serves adjoining parishes and will not only be adversely affected by extra housing in South Wonston but also by the housing proposals in the surrounding villages in the South Wonston catchment area and Worthy Down.



The local infrastructure of roads to cater for the school influx as this as mentioned serves the adjacent parishes.

The ability of the only Doctors surgery in Sutton Scotney to cater again for the potential influx of some 100 to 120 homes in excess of an additional 240 patients ignoring children, as well as parking at the surgery. The existing surgery is currently running near capacity and has a shortage of Doctors which results in the satellite surgery in South Wonston not operational to serve the community.

- There is little inherent available employment in the local village boundary and so any expansion in housing will simply increase the density of traffic through the only main access along Downs Road and the restricted road junction onto Christmas Hill and increase pollution levels.

The Alresford Drove access is very limited and is already struggling with the traffic density currently using it. The restricted single carriageway section only exacerbates the problems.

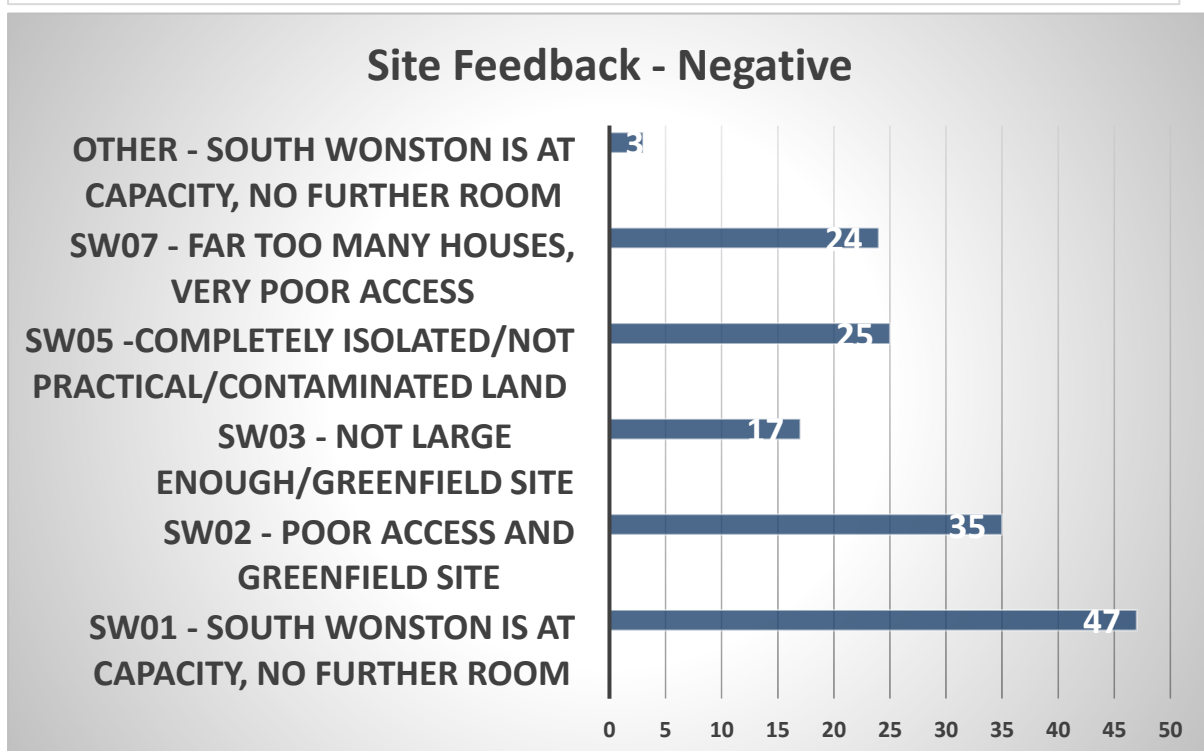
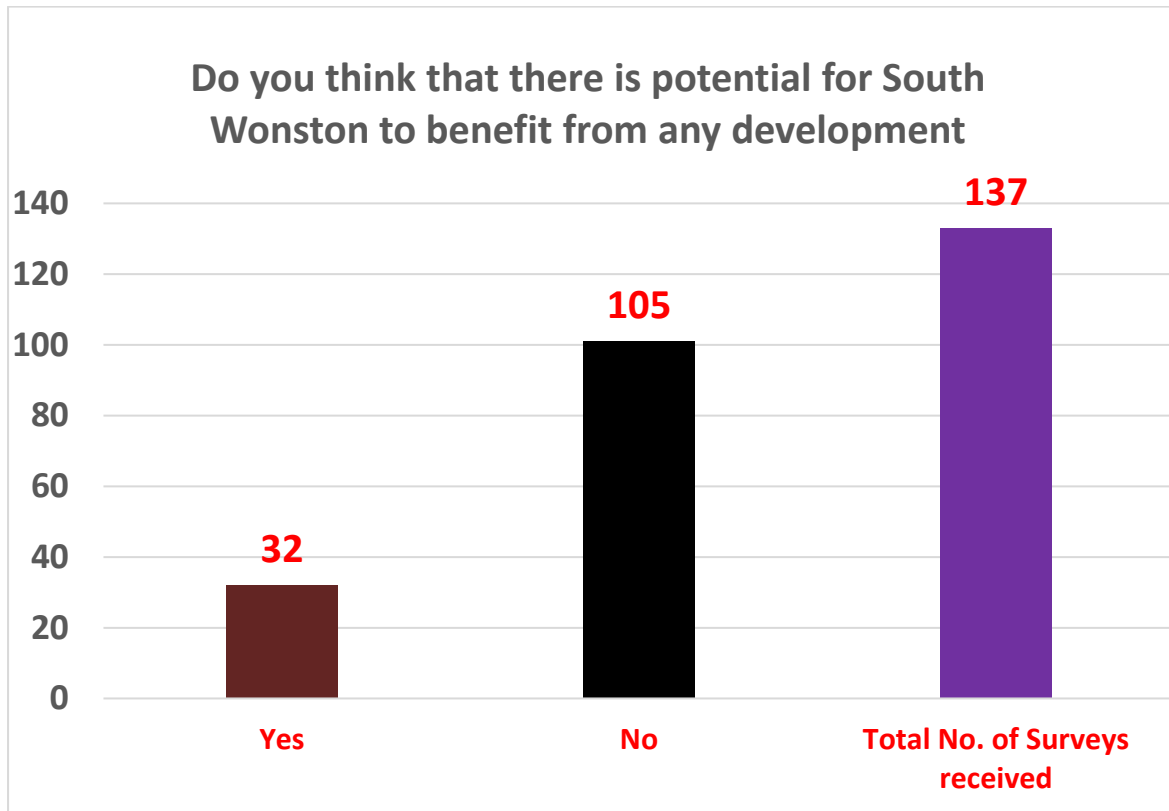
- In respect to the environment any increase in numbers will impact on the desire to reduce the carbon footprint of the village. As noted there is no significant employment in the village settlement and so the majority of any new residents will be commuting. The woeful public transport serving the settlement means this will nearly all be by personal transport i.e. increases in air pollutants.

Refer to figure 1/Climate Emergency.

- In respect to houses being built on SW01 this field is known to have bats using the northern border of the field travelling up and down the hedgerows, and putting in housing will directly impact their roost runs. These are a protected species and so are the Bat runs. We have a few bat recordings, and two different bats have been noted, one is the long eared bat which is quite a lot bigger than the common pipistrelle
- Also this has the potential to increase light pollution that this would generate in the village, which is in an area of dark sky. Any new homes being built will no doubt have street lighting, which will have an impact on the dark skies which the village values and enjoys.
- Foxes, rabbits, field mice and voles can be found in the area of SW01 and in around the edges of the current settlement boundary. Developing the land would be a significant loss of habitat for many creatures. The field vole and its habitats and Bat runs flight paths are also protected.



Resident Engagement – Results of recent survey measurements and general comments.



General Comments

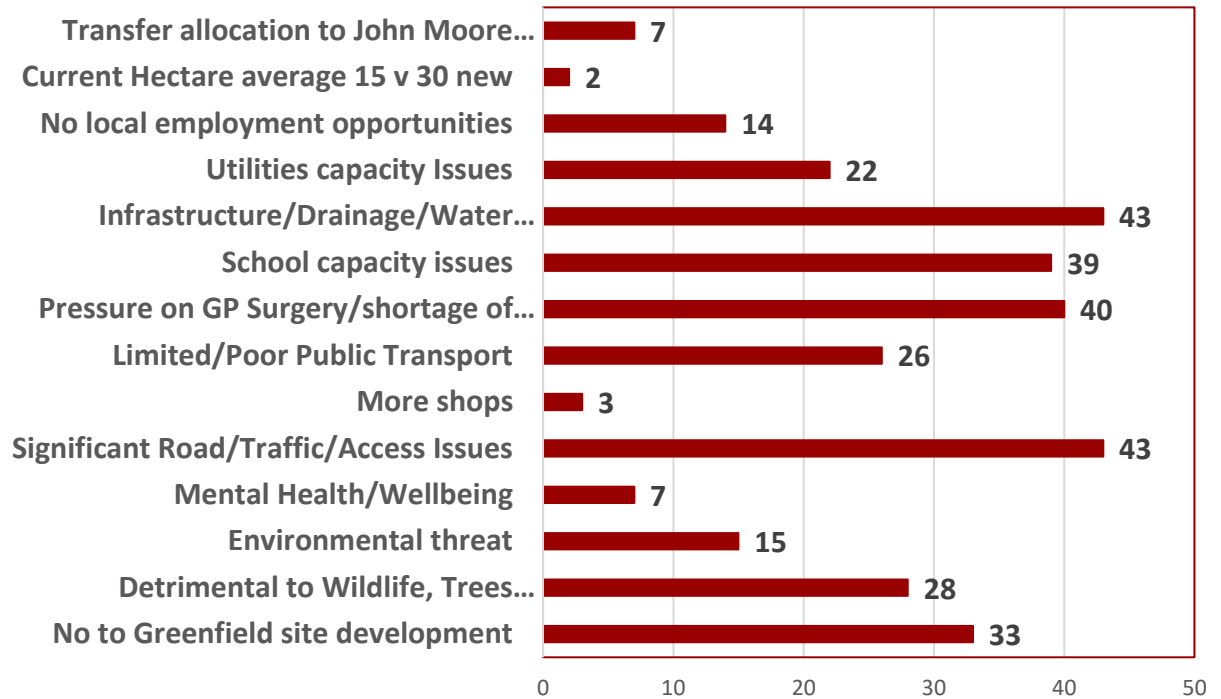


Figure 2 SHELAA sites



Summary

South Wonston Parish Council have now had time to review the proposed sites and do not consider that any of the nominated SHELAA sites are suitable for the expansion of the village.

- South Wonston Parish Council require better justification of the allocation of the numbers as we consider the allocation system to be flawed.
- The process followed to-date by Winchester City Council has been cumbersome and poorly managed with only token engagement with the necessary stakeholders. A continual lack of transparency, visibility, realistic timelines and planning policy has created a negative perception amongst residents across the parish.
- The current infrastructure is strained and is unable to take on new development without a major uplift in water supply / sewerage provision, bus service and road quality.
- Current health provision cannot cope with the current demands from both South Wonston and the surrounding villages
- Currently the local schools have no available additional space
- SW05 is in fact not a brown field site, refer to the planning permission granted for this site.
- We would suggest that to comply with the Climate Emergency that Winchester City Council have declared. Any expansion of housing needs to be in a location that has better public transport / local access. Suggest moving Henry Beaufort onto the ATR site and then develop the old site for housing. All within easy non private car access to the city and the transport hubs.
- Take note of the increases in pollution, limit vehicle movements in an area that is already designated to have high levels of pollution. South Wonston currently is without detailed air quality monitoring capabilities, restricting actions from being taken to reduce levels of pollution.
- Revise the facility scoring methodology to reflect, a real, meaningful picture of services and utilities in each area.
- South Wonston Parish Council therefore, given the constraints, concerns that have been noted in our submission do not agree that any development take place on the nominated SHELAA sites.