

**EN/B : House sizes Policy HN1****Introduction: TNP Policy HN1 and comments made on Pre-Submission Draft**

TNP includes a policy limiting the size of new houses by floor area in Policy HN1.

SDNPA does not object to TNP's inclusion of a limit on the size of houses but say that there should be more justification.

Pegasus on behalf of VORTAL say that the house sizes policy should either be deleted or further justified.

Pro Vision on behalf of Humphreys says the policy should be deleted.

**Existing Policies on house sizes.**

The size of houses is an established element in national planning policy; the Government's Nationally Described Space Standards set detailed minimum sizes for new dwellings. Maximum sizes are not set by Government but are set in local plans for various purposes. SDLP includes a definition of a small house as 120 m sq or less and applies this to policies SD 34 and 35. SDLP also prescribes a precise mix of dwellings by numbers of bedrooms; this is also the limit of a medium sized house.

Westminster City Council includes in its adopted local plan a limit of 200 square metres for any new dwelling.

In their new local plan, New Forest District Council propose a limit of 100 square metres for any new house. The local plan examiner heard evidence on this point and has supported it in his report. Final modifications (but not to this policy) have now been made to the Plan which is likely to be adopted shortly.

**Comments on above**

In each case where maximum sizes are proposed, the objectives of the Planning Authority is to maintain/ increase the supply of small houses to ensure affordability in areas where there is shortage of suitable houses and where house prices are above those of surrounding areas and are not affordable on local wages. Twyford and the South Downs NP share these characteristics as does Winchester. In SDLP there is an additional objective which is to prevent landscape impact. Local character would be another possible argument.

Both the SDLPA and TNP include objectives and propose policies designed to counterbalance market forces. The SDLP policy requires a mix of new dwellings heavily weighted to 1, 2, and 3 bedrooms; this is also in line with Winchester City Council's Local Plan. However SDLP does not impose a size limit. Experience in Twyford has shown that 3 bedroom houses can be as large as 350 square metres which clearly makes them unaffordable. An upper limit is the only way in which excessive size can be controlled, just as the application of minimum standards prevent dwellings which are too small.

The New Forest inspector accepted the logic of imposing a maximum size in the rather similar circumstances of the New Forest National Park. He further accepted that any maximum size would be to some extent arbitrary, and endorsed it on that basis.

**Twyford's evidence base**

The Twyford Housing Needs Study carried out by Action Hampshire in 2015 reviewed both the detailed evidence from the Census of 2011 and other sources of information including Winchester's

Housing Needs Study and house price data from the local area. It also carried out a parish wide survey with every household circulated. The study concluded that Twyford does indeed have housing needs, that the prices of houses are well above those of the surrounding area (including Winchester); that there is a shortage of particular types of houses for existing residents whose housing requirements were changing.

The HNS gives four categories of housing which residents consider to be most needed in the parish:

- affordable housing for local people
- housing for older people downsizing
- housing for first time buyers
- housing for families

Respondents to the survey give the following reasons for wanting to move:

- house too large
- house too small
- house in need of improvement or repair
- rental or mortgage costs too large .

From this it is clear that there are multiple demands for houses of different types within the village. The census information from the housing stock shows that:

- Twyford has more large houses than the average for both Winchester District and Hampshire
- Twyford has 10% more houses with 6 rooms or more than in Hampshire generally (5% more than in Winchester).
- Twyford is correspondingly underprovided with small houses in particular one, two and three bed roomed houses.

### **Developments since 2011**

In the last 10 years or so, there have been more smaller houses built in Twyford notably at Northfields. However, four and five bed houses and higher value ones have also increased over the last 10 years at Dunfords Acre, in Bournefields and at the former Hazeley farm buildings. In the same period many houses in the parish have been substantially enlarged both by extension and redevelopment. As a result it appears likely that there will now be more larger houses as a proportion of the total housing stock.

Twyford's house prices also continue to command a premium as a result of multiple factors, recently reinforced by the desire of Londoners to live in the country, following Corona virus.

### **What size to set?**

The TNP Pre-Sub Plan sets the size of dwellings at 80, 100, 120 and 140 for one, two, three and four bed houses respectively. (internal measurements ). These floor areas are all above the nationally prescribed minimum standards but not by the same proportion. We now propose to set the TNP limit at 20% above the National Minimum Standard to allow for the varying housing needs in Twyford, which marry in with the SDLP's housing mix requirements. The limits would then be 80, 100, 120 and 150 sq m.

These figures are now used in Policy HN1.