

Fareham TODAY

**DEADLINE
30 JULY**

HAVE YOUR SAY ON OUR STRATEGY FOR
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN FAREHAM

FOREWORD



BY COUNCILLOR SEÁN WOODWARD,
EXECUTIVE LEADER OF FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL



Welcome to this special issue of Fareham Today, which details the progress we are making in developing a new Local Plan for the Borough and explains how you can have your say.

At the end of 2020 we consulted on our proposed Publication Plan which set out how we planned to meet the Government's target for new homes required across Fareham, while protecting our green spaces and the character of our communities, and I'd like to thank all those who took the time to comment on those proposals. **However, as you will see, the required number of new houses has now changed again!**

It is the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and not the Council that determines how many new houses must be built each year. The NPPF contains a formula that all local authorities across the country must use to calculate the number of houses required for their area. The calculation is made using a combination of housing need figures from 2014, local wages and local house prices.

In 2020 the Government consulted on further changes to the NPPF which included using data from 2018 rather than data from 2014 to identify housing need. This would have been the third change to the NPPF in three years. It was welcomed by this Council, as the 2018 data reduced the number of homes required for Fareham from 520 to 403 a year – a drop of almost 23%.

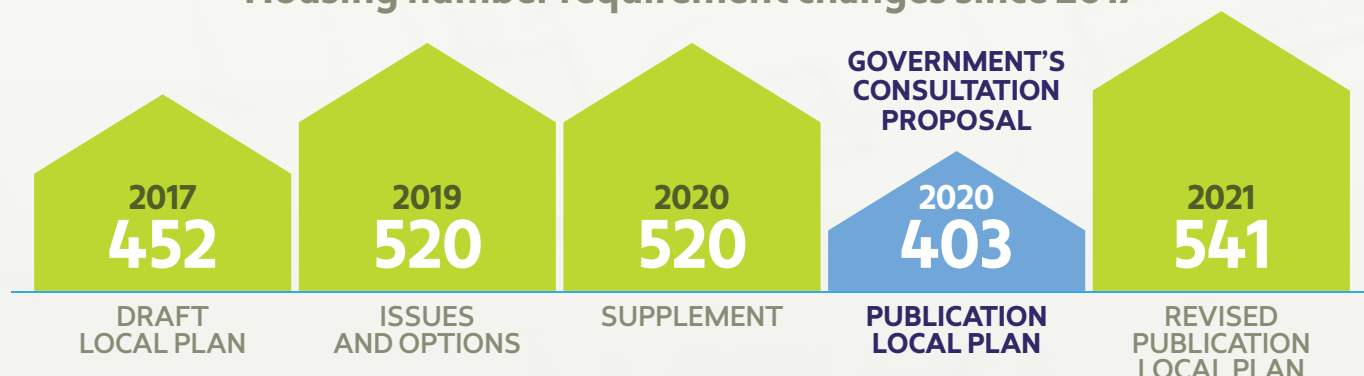
Unfortunately, the Government rowed back on this long overdue change and has now reverted to using the older, 2014 data. As a result, the Government housing demand on Fareham has increased once again, this time exacerbated because the difference

between wages and house prices has risen further, to 541 new houses each year.

We have worked hard to try to find the best way to deliver these additional houses without compromising the distinct characteristics of the Borough. Part of the proposed approach is for a significant number of new homes in Fareham town centre, which would in turn help to support our high street. And as Welborne moves towards delivery it will clearly play a critical role in meeting our housing requirements going forward through the new Local Plan and well beyond.

You'll find details of the proposed new sites for development in this issue of Fareham Today. However, you'll find significantly more detail in the Local Plan section of the Council's website. I would urge you to take the time to look at the proposals carefully, as this is the final opportunity to have your say before the new, Revised Publication Plan is submitted to the Government for examination.

Housing number requirement changes since 2017



WHERE ARE WE NOW?

FAREHAM HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS

2014
PROJECTIONS

50,729
2021

56,538
2037

2018
PROJECTIONS

50,058
2021

53,606
2037

Figures provided by Office for National Statistics

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Since the Council began this Local Plan process in 2015, the number of houses the Government requires us to build each year has changed numerous times – resulting in a significant increase.

This is largely due to changes made by Government to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) three years ago. The changes included a new formula to calculate how many houses each council has to plan for resulting in an increase to Fareham's requirement. As a result, in 2017 we had to look again at our draft Local Plan to find possible new sites for more houses.

Fast forward to summer 2020, the Government consulted on further change to the formula which would have used updated data from 2018 rather than 2014 to identify housing need. This decision would have been good news for Fareham as, if implemented, our requirement would have fallen considerably to 403 new homes a year.

In winter 2020 however the Government did an about turn and Fareham now has to plan for at least 541 new houses a year rather than the 403 we consulted on for our proposed Publication Plan at the end of last year. This means, once more, we have had to find new sites for development. You'll find the details on pages 6-11.

Growing need for new employment sites

In addition to the housing requirement, new evidence has also emerged around future employment needs revealing a need to find more sites for jobs. This is good news for Fareham as it will give more people an opportunity to find work locally and is also a sign

that people continue to want to live and work in the Borough, which is great news for our local economy.

As a result of the changes to housing and employment requirements, and some revisions informed by the previous consultation on our proposed Publication Plan in 2020 the Council is now consulting on a Revised Publication Plan.

What is the purpose of a Local Plan?

In summary, the Local Plan will, when adopted:

Provide the strategy for the use of land and buildings up to 2037;

Set out where new homes, employment areas and services such as shops and community facilities should be;

Detail how historic and natural environments should be conserved and enhanced;

Guide decisions on planning applications.

Once approved, together with the Welborne Plan it will provide a development blueprint for the Borough.

Last chance to have your say

It is important to have your say on this Revised Publication Plan as the next step is for it to be submitted to a Planning Inspector for independent examination on behalf of the Government.

THE STORY SO FAR

Our work to develop our new Local Plan is guided by national planning policy which is often referred to as the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework). It involves a huge amount of detailed work that we use to inform our approach. For example, we gather extensive evidence and carry out technical assessments. We also work with neighbouring authorities, statutory bodies and infrastructure providers to help understand how we can best work together to both meet our needs, and help towards understanding those of our neighbours.



The needs of our neighbours are really important as a major part of plan-making specified in the NPPF is the 'Duty to Cooperate'. This element requires local authorities to work together to meet the needs of a region rather than just looking at their own housing requirements. Throughout our discussions with some of our neighbours, it has become clear that some councils cannot meet their own housing need with the land available to them. We must take this into account when working on our own Local Plan by balancing the needs of the Borough with the rest of the region. If we don't show that we have tried to help our neighbours our proposed Revised Publication Plan may not be signed off when submitted for inspection.

More than 200 sites in the countryside were put forward for consideration by developers amounting to around 10,000 homes in total. More than 80% were discounted as unsuitable.

Your views, which have been submitted across four public consultations, have also helped to shape the Plan. In those consultations we asked for feedback on the sites being considered for new homes and employment areas, the policies to be included, including our approach to protecting and enhancing the historic and natural environments, and the areas identified as important open spaces.

All the comments we received in your responses have been considered in the preparation of this Revised Publication Plan. You'll find a summary of these on our website in the Statement of Consultation, together with our main findings at:

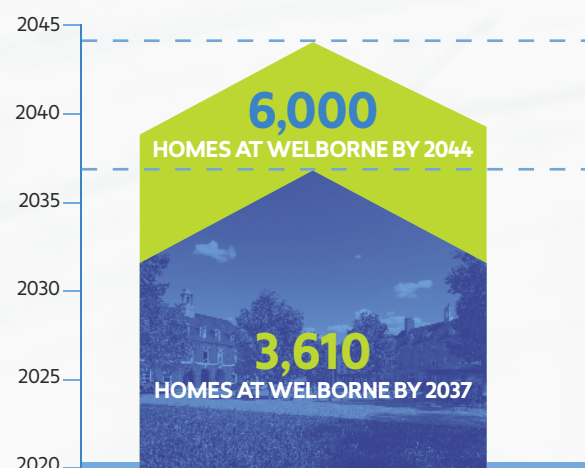
www.fareham.gov.uk/PublicationPlanEvidence

WELBORNE

We have a separate plan for the development of Welborne Garden Village. This development will see 6,000 new homes with district and local centres for shops, community facilities and schools. The development also includes major improvements to Junction 10 of the M27 (so it can be used by traffic going both ways), health facilities, green spaces and employment areas.

Welborne Garden Village alone should deliver at least 34% of the housing required in the Borough by 2037.

HOMES PLANNED FOR WELBORNE



WHAT ARE WE CONSULTING ON THIS TIME?



If you have already taken part in a consultation about the Local Plan you may be wondering why we are seeking your views again.

As stated earlier, the numbers of new houses required for the Borough and the need for new employment sites have both changed since we consulted you in late 2020. We are now asking for your views on how we propose to respond to those changes.

As with the Publication Plan in late 2020, this is a very specific consultation which only invites comment on three specific questions or tests. As a reminder, we would ask that you focus your responses on the suggested changes.



LEGAL COMPLIANCE

Does the Plan meet the legal requirements for plan making as set out by planning laws?



SOUNDNESS

Has the Plan been positively prepared? Is it justified, effective, and consistent with national policy?



DUTY TO COOPERATE

Has the Council engaged and worked effectively with neighbouring authorities and statutory bodies?

All responses to these questions will be submitted, together with the Revised Publication Plan, to a Planning Inspector for independent examination on behalf of the Government.

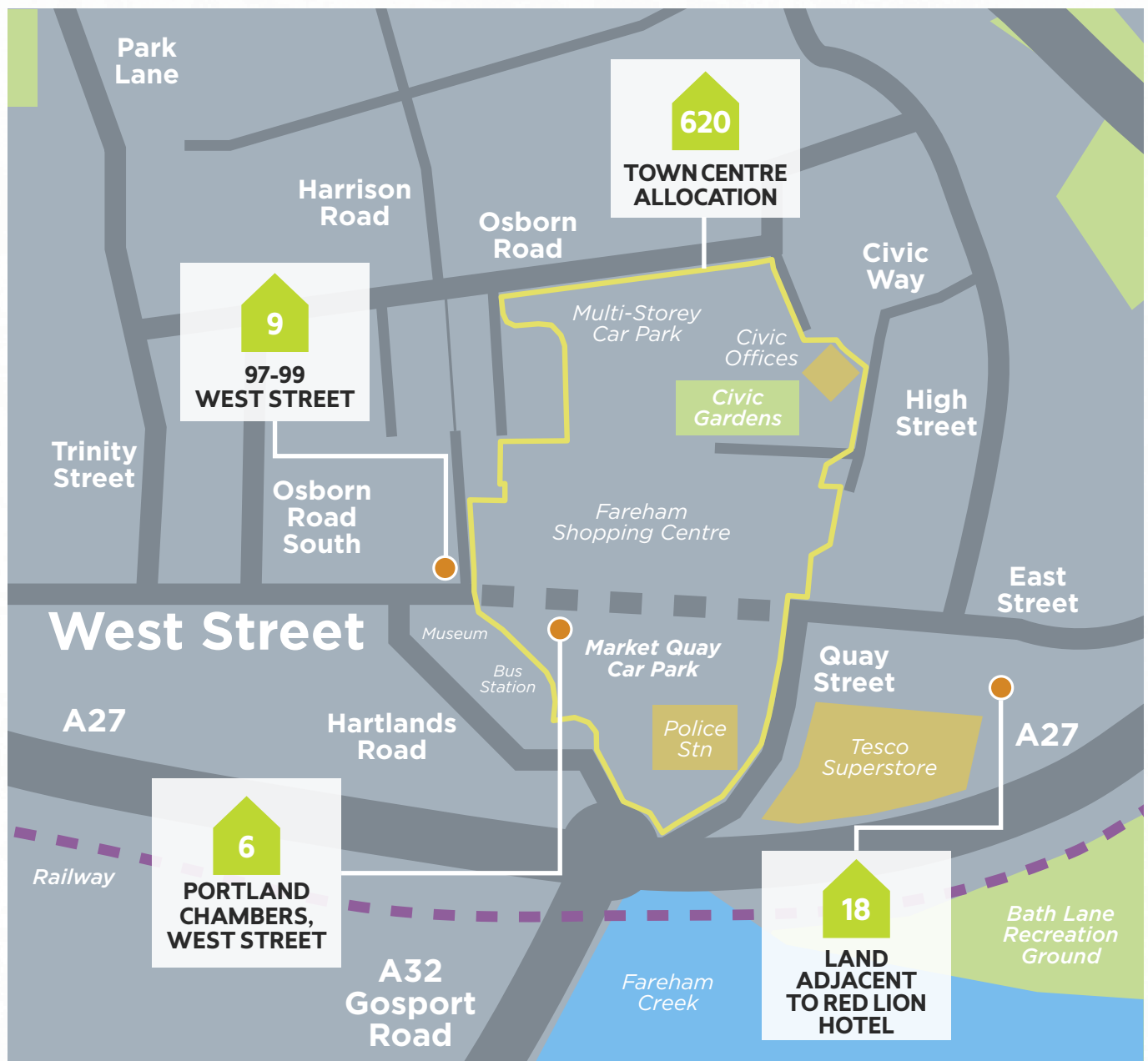
For more details about the questions for this consultation, please see page 12.

TOWN CENTRE LIVING

Space for 655 more new homes in Fareham Town Centre

Consistent with many others across the country, our town centre faces huge challenges, both from the economic downturn and from changing shopping habits.

As outlined in our town centre vision back in 2017, we think a good way to counter this is to bring more residents into the town centre. If we include the sites identified in last year's Publication Plan, we have now identified space for more than 900 homes in Fareham's town centre.



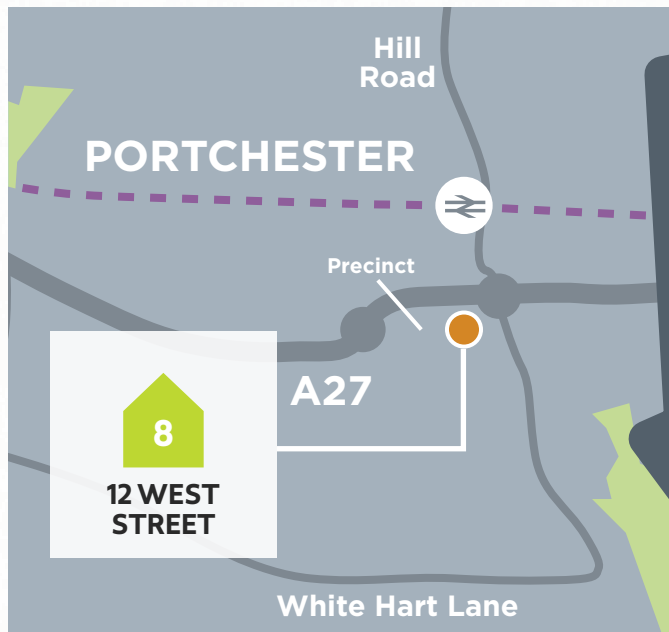
Whilst we are continuing our support for local businesses through our 'Shop Local' campaign, we believe that a mixed-use development approach, that combines retail and leisure facilities with housing, could help to create a vibrant community providing around 655 additional homes to help meet the needs of the Borough's growing population, whilst providing local retail and leisure businesses with potential customers right on their doorstep.

Building on the Council's vision set out in "Planning the Future of Fareham Town Centre" in 2017, the Revised Publication Plan proposes the allocation of a broad location of housing growth within the heart of the town centre of approximately 620 homes, new retail and leisure provisions as well as significant improvements to the public spaces. We have also added three more sites providing a further 35 homes.

URBAN LIVING

Around 40 homes in Portchester, Park Gate and Titchfield

We've also looked further afield to maximise development opportunities in other built-up areas where new residents can benefit from existing road networks, shops and services.



MAKING FAREHAM FUTURE PROOF

While the Council has to meet its housing requirement as set out in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), it is the 'how' and 'where' that is really important. Whatever decisions we make must be evidence-based so that they are clear and stand up to scrutiny.



As part of our work in producing the Revised Publication Plan, we have looked at the role that 'Strategic Gap' designations play in the context of an increased housing requirement and how the function of a Strategic Gap can be maintained whilst helping to meet the new housing requirement.

There are two strategic gaps in Fareham, namely the Meon gap and the Fareham/Stubbington strategic gap, and

their purpose is to separate settlements and maintain the characteristics of our towns, villages and urban areas.

Given the higher housing requirement we now have to meet, we are proposing some development within the Fareham/Stubbington strategic gap where we feel development can be accommodated without compromising the important role this strategic gap plays.

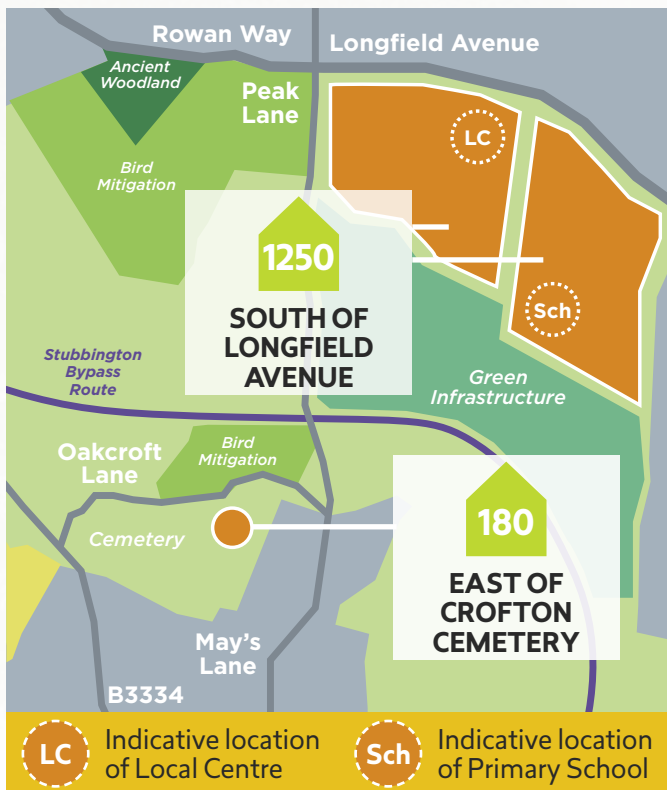
EDGE OF TOWN LIVING

Consistent with our development strategy and the ideals of good growth, the first place we have looked for new sites is within town centres and existing urban areas.

So far we have identified spaces for around 650 more houses in and around the town centre; however more houses are still needed. The Council considers the next

best alternative to be building on the edge of existing settlements across a small number of clusters.

Although this type of new development will never be popular (unless you are one of the many seeking a new home), larger sites typically bring with them community benefits such as shops, schools and sports pitches. Our approach means both new residents and those living in the local area get to enjoy them.



Land south of Longfield Avenue

By working with the developers to develop a masterplan for the land south of Longfield Avenue the Council will be able to go some way towards meeting its housing requirement with 1250 homes. Any development would need to maximise the location so that future residents would benefit from living near a beautiful countryside location whilst being part of a sustainable community.

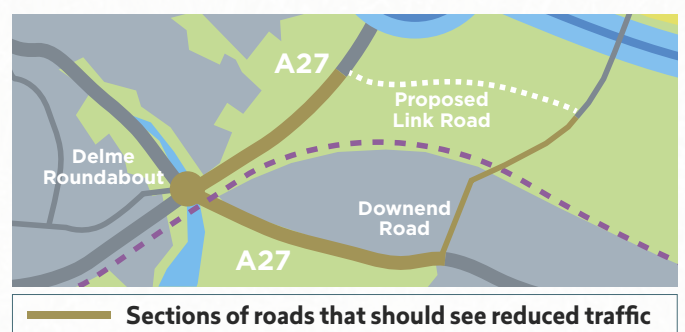


Land to the north-west of Portchester

In 2017 the Council proposed land to the east of Downend Road for 350 homes. A large area to the north-west of Portchester, known as land west of Downend Road, has also been promoted for development, along with proposed improvements to the local road network.

Traffic modelling has been undertaken for a proposed new road infrastructure to support this development.

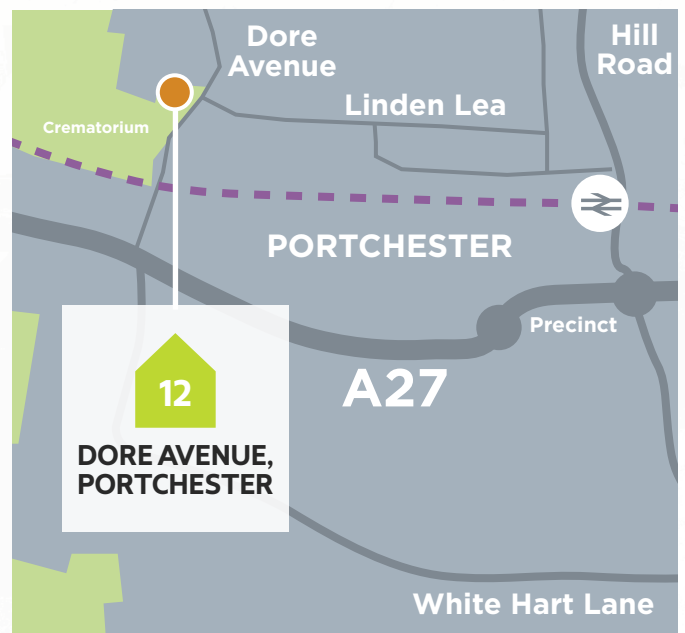
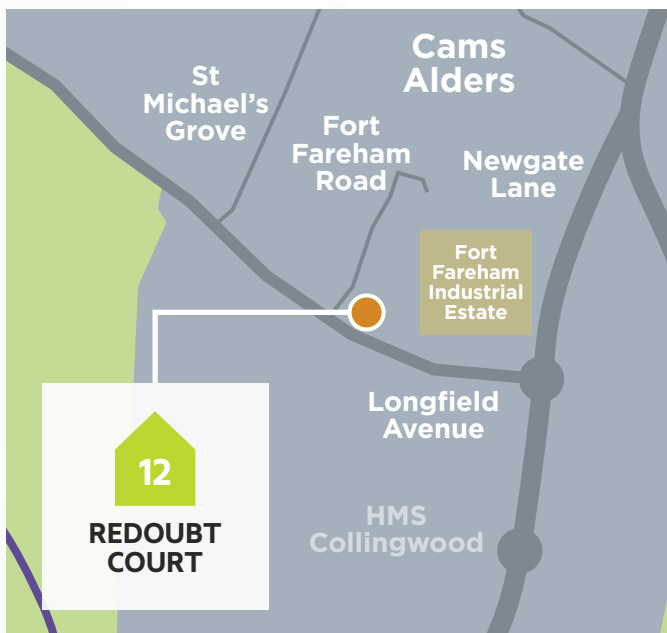
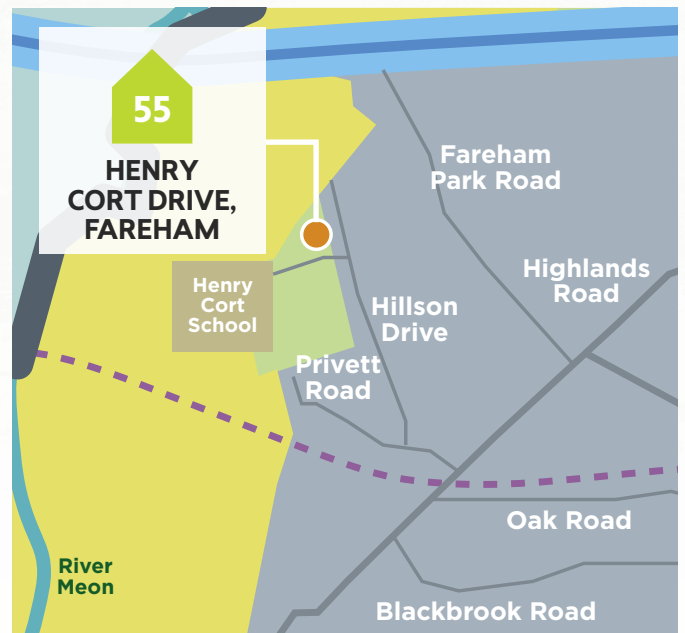
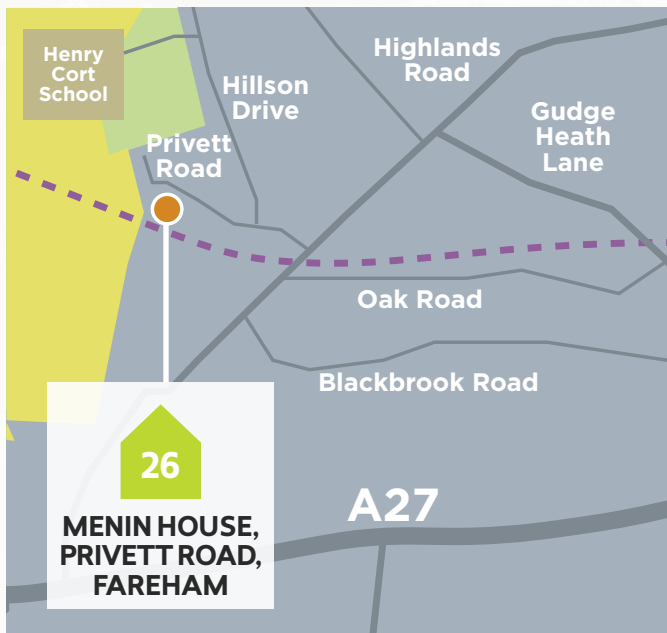
Results, which have been independently audited, show that current traffic levels and waiting times would actually reduce as a result of traffic being redistributed locally.



BUILDING ON COUNCIL OWNED LAND

Affordable homes for local people

Providing affordable homes in places where we know they are needed is a major priority for the Council. Residents tell us they want to be able to stay near their existing community and networks, for example where their children are already in school or close to a workplace.



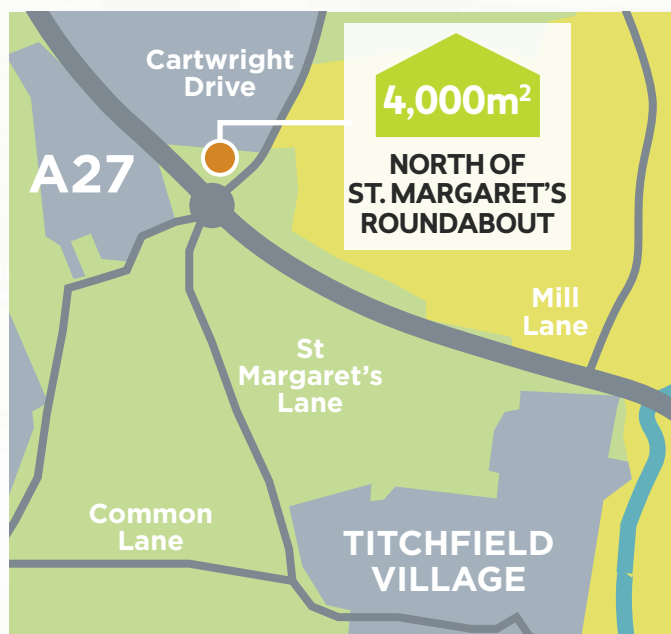
Some of the sites detailed will be redeveloped with all homes being replaced. However we'll take the opportunity to extend sites where possible so that extra homes can be built to help meet Fareham's local housing need.

The numbers shown above are approximate and for additional homes on each site. These are all new sites proposed in the Revised Publication Plan.

LAND FOR EMPLOYMENT SPACE

Four new sites for jobs

Supporting employment prospects in and around the Borough is more important than ever as we look to support economic recovery in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Four additional locations are proposed in the Revised Publication Plan to provide a variety of office, industrial and warehousing/logistics employment space. They'll provide much needed flexibility in the market whilst supporting

economic recovery, creating opportunities for thousands of new jobs. We have chosen these sites as they are located in areas which benefit from good transport links and are close to existing settlements.

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK



This consultation is asking for your views on the changes we have made in this Revised Publication Plan. All of the comments made on the Publication Plan in late 2020 still count, however, we are now asking for your comments on our additional proposals. We are required to ask you about these areas by the Government under what's known as the Regulation 19 consultation phase on the following three points:

1. Matters of Legal Compliance

- The Council has set out its revised programme of work in the development of the new Local Plan in the Local Development Scheme prepared in June 2021.
- This document, along with the Statement of Community Involvement (which sets out our strategy for involving the local community in the preparation and revision of the new Local Plan) forms the framework and timetable that we should follow.
- The Council is also required to provide a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report when it publishes a plan. This should show how the SA has been carried out, the information we used as part of the process and what the outcomes were. An SA is a tool for assessing how the plan, when judged against other reasonable options, will help to achieve our environmental, economic and social objectives.
- The new Local Plan should comply with all other relevant requirements of the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* and the *Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012*, as amended.



2. The Tests of Soundness

Plans are sound if they are:

- **Positively prepared** – the Plan seeks to meet the housing and employment needs of the area, and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need is accommodated where it is practical to do so, and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- **Justified** – the Plan provides an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;

...the Plan enables the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.

- **Effective** – the Plan is deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by any statements of common ground; and
- **The Plan is consistent with national policy** – meaning it enables the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.



3. Complies with the Duty to Cooperate

As part of the plan preparation process, we are required to engage with neighbouring authorities and certain other bodies on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. We must provide evidence of how we have complied with that duty.

If you do not think that the Council has complied with the Duty to Cooperate you must provide evidence of this in your feedback.

As part of the plan preparation process, we are required to engage with neighbouring authorities and certain other bodies...



HAVE YOUR SAY!

Your views are important to us, so we have made the Plan and the feedback form as accessible as possible.

Public exhibitions

We hope to run a number of public meetings and public exhibitions subject to Covid-19 restrictions. All dates of meetings and exhibitions will be listed on our website and social media pages.



However, we will also be hosting virtual exhibitions on our website. These will include:

Display boards and short films to illustrate the key aspects of the plan and explain the points on which we are seeking feedback;

A facility to ask planning experts questions about different aspects of the Plan.

Submitting your comments

Comments on the Revised Publication Plan must be made in writing. Representations must relate only to matters of legal compliance, the 'tests of soundness' and compliance with the Duty to Cooperate.

The consultation response form has two parts:

A

Personal details: these are required and need only be provided once

B

Your Representation(s)

Each representation you make requires a separate sheet stating which paragraph, policy or policies map you are commenting on and to which of the three criteria you are referring. For example, if you wish to comment on a paragraph of text, a proposed policy and a site allocation, each of these representations need to be on separate Part B forms so that the Inspector can view the representations on a particular chapter, policy or site together.

The consultation begins on Friday 18 June 2021 and comments must be received by us no later than midnight on Friday 30 July 2021.

The representations made within this period will be submitted to a Planning Inspector for independent examination on behalf of the Secretary of State.

If you wish to take part in the hearing session(s) it is vital that you outline why you think this is necessary, in your representations at this time. The Inspector will decide the most appropriate procedure to hear from members of the public who would like to participate in hearing(s). This may be in writing, or they may invite you to attend and speak at the hearing sessions. It is your choice whether you want to attend these hearings, but you must indicate your interest at this stage.



THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS TO HAVE YOUR SAY:



Online: you can find our online response form on our website at www.fareham.gov.uk/localplanconsultation. A printable version is also available to download.



email: you can email a request for a printed response form at: localplanconsultation@fareham.gov.uk



Phone: for anyone not able to access details of the Plan online, we have a designated phone number - **01329 824601** – where you can make appointments to look at documents, request paper copies of the survey, hear information about the consultation, the process and how to respond.



Post: completed forms can be sent to the email address above, or to the Planning Strategy Team, Fareham Borough Council, Civic Offices, Civic Way, Fareham, PO16 7AZ.



Paper Surveys: subject to Covid restrictions, these will also be available from libraries at Fareham, Gosport, Locks Heath, Portchester and Stubbington, and from the Civic Offices.

Privacy: all feedback, including contact details, will be passed onto the Inspector and participants in the examination process so they know who has given feedback on the plan. All comments will also be made public on our website, including the names of those who submitted them. All other personal information will remain confidential. Personal Data will be managed in line with the Council's Privacy Statement which can be found on our website.

TIMELINE : 2017-2022

2017

Autumn 2017- early 2020

A Draft Local Plan was produced and consulted on. However, changes made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) just after, led to the Council having to prepare an Issues and Options consultation and a supplement to the Draft Local Plan to demonstrate how the increased new housing figures were going to be met.

Autumn 2020

Taking into account the responses from the previous consultations, alongside finalised technical work, the Council developed a final draft of the new Local Plan, known as the Publication Plan. The Plan was produced on the back of further proposed changes to the NPPF on calculating housing need resulting in a lower housing requirement at that time.

2018

2019

2020

SPRING 2021

Unfortunately, the Government decided against pressing ahead with its proposed changes to calculating housing need. Fareham's housing requirement has subsequently gone back up. New employment evidence has also meant the Council had to review existing employment allocations and identify additional sites to meet the new requirements.

We collated the responses from the previous consultation and used them alongside additional technical work to propose revisions to the Publication Plan.

2021

AUTUMN 2021

Submission of the Plan to the Secretary of State, preparing for examination.

2022

SUMMER 2021 - current

We are now seeking your views on the Revised Publication Plan before submitting it for examination. You have until 30th July to have your say. Your comments must relate to the soundness of the Plan. You should say if you would like to take part in the examination hearings and make your comments directly to the Inspector.

Autumn - Winter 2022 (estimated) - Adoption

The Council will adopt the Local Plan once the Government Planning Inspector has found it to be 'sound'. At this point, all the policies in the new Local Plan will be used to decide planning applications.

Winter 2021 - Spring 2022 (estimated) - Examination

During the examination, the Planning Inspector may invite further comments either in writing through 'matters and issues' or in person at the hearings. The Council will receive a report detailing the Inspector's findings.



For more information visit www.fareham.gov.uk/localplanconsultation