

Fareham TODAY



COVID-SECURE VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

FOREWORD



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EXECUTIVE LEADER OF FAREHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL



Welcome to this special issue of Fareham Today, which details the latest consultation on the publication of our new Local Plan and explains how you can have your say. We believe everyone should have a place they can call home, which is why planning for new homes in our Borough is so important. We have a growing population so demand for new properties is increasing. The challenge is to ensure that we plan for the right kind of homes, in the right places, while protecting the distinct character of our communities and green spaces.

We have been working to create a suitable new Local Plan for Fareham, which sets out our approach to development in the Borough for the next 16 years. This year the Government has proposed further changes to its Planning Practice Guidance, which has a significant impact on the number of new homes we need to plan for. If the proposed changes go ahead without any amendments, Fareham is required to deliver a minimum of 403 new homes a year, a reduction of 22.5% on the figure of 520 that we were working towards in 2019. Our proposed approach to delivering this new number is outlined in the new Local Plan which, at this stage, is referred to as the 'Publication Plan'. Now we would like to hear what you think of that approach.

We previously consulted with you in summer 2019 on the Issues and Options for future development in Fareham, and again earlier this year on a Supplement which proposed limited additional areas for development, alongside more ways to protect our green spaces. Due to the reduced housing numbers, many of the sites proposed in earlier consultations no longer appear in the Publication Plan. The consultation we are running now is an opportunity for you to have your say before we submit this Publication version of the new Local Plan to the Government for it to be examined.

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The coronavirus pandemic means we have had to find new ways to seek your views. The usual ways of consulting with you, such as public meetings and face to face exhibitions with officers, will not be possible under the current restrictions. We have thought carefully about how to ensure everyone has an opportunity to have their say, while keeping staff and residents safe. In this special issue of Fareham Today you will find details of the various ways in which you can get involved (see pages 6-7).

THE CHANGES PROPOSED BY GOVERNMENT MEANS THE FOLLOWING SITES ARE NOT BEING PROGRESSED

Strategic Growth Area: South of Fareham

Land west of Downend Road in the Strategic Growth Area: North of Downend

Rookery Farm, Swanwick

Newgate Lane South, Peel Common

Romsey Avenue, Portchester

Pinks Hill, Wallington

Military Road, Wallington

North Wallington

Standard Way, Wallington

Please read this issue carefully and take part in the consultation. Your feedback will form an important part of how the new Local Plan develops and help to ensure our future development strategy meets everyone's needs.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The Council began this Local Plan process in 2015 when the number of new homes the Council needed to give planning permission to each year was much lower. Since then, the population in our part of Hampshire has continued to grow and the shortage of housing has become more severe.

Alongside this, in 2018, the Government announced changes to its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The way it calculated how many new homes each council had to plan for was changed – and for Fareham this meant a significant increase. As a result, we had to pause work on our new Local Plan and look again at possible sites for new homes.

In summer 2020 the Government began consulting on new changes to its methodology for calculating how many new homes areas should provide. Based on the new proposals, we would have to plan for at least 403 new homes a year. This is a decrease on the number for Fareham following the 2018 changes but still up on the original amount planned for in 2015.

Because this is such a significant change for Fareham, the Council has taken the view that it would be irresponsible to ignore it. However, the decision to plan for fewer numbers is not without risk as the Government may make further changes to its proposed methodology before it is implemented. As a result the Council will need to wait

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for the final outcome of the Government's consultation before moving on to the next stage.

Taking all of this into account, it's really important that we develop a clear and comprehensive strategy for planning in Fareham.

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

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.

We are now at the 'Publication Plan' stage (sometimes called a 'Regulation 19'). This is the final stage before the Plan is submitted to a Planning Inspector for independent examination on behalf of the Government. It is therefore important that you take this opportunity to have your say on the Plan.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE ALREADY?

Our work to develop our new Local Plan has been guided by national planning policy. We have also gathered extensive evidence, carried out technical assessments and worked with neighbouring authorities, statutory bodies and infrastructure providers.



Your views have also helped to shape the Publication Plan. Three public consultations have already taken place. In those consultations we asked for feedback on the sites being considered for new homes and employment areas, the policies to be included and the areas identified as important open spaces.

It is clear that some councils cannot meet their own housing need with the land available to them, and we are required to take a joint approach to balance the needs of the Borough with the rest of the region.

Your views have also helped to shape the Publication Plan.

All the comments we received have been considered in the preparation of this Publication Plan. You can find a summary of comments and main findings for each consultation on our website at:

www.fareham.gov.uk/PublicationPlanEvidence

WELBORNE

We have a separate Local Plan for the development of Welborne Garden Village (Local Plan Part 3: The Welborne Plan).

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 40% of the housing required in the Borough up to 2037.





WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF THIS CONSULTATION?

As mentioned earlier, this stage of the consultation is known as the Publication stage or the Regulation 19 consultation, referring to the legislation that governs plan making.

It is different from the three previous consultations (under Regulation 18) as it no longer seeks views on alternative options, but provides the opportunity to comment on specific questions or tests:



LEGAL COMPLIANCE

Does the Plan meet the legal requirements for plan making as set out by planning and environmental 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 forwarded to the Planning Inspector for consideration.

Please note that only comments that address these questions can be taken into account. For more details about the questions for this consultation, please see pages 8-9.

HAVE YOUR SAY



VIRTUAL PUBLIC EXHIBITION

- We will be running a virtual public exhibition throughout the consultation. You will be able to watch short information videos, view display boards and submit questions for a Q&A.
- We are also creating a video presentation of the Publication Plan which will illustrate some of the key aspects and explain the points on which we are seeking feedback.
- You'll find a link to an interactive map that allows you to see how the draft policies under consideration apply across the Borough.

You will be able to view all the policies together, or simply select the ones of interest to you.



LOCAL PLAN TELEPHONE HELPLINE

We recognise that not everybody is able to access the details of the Plan online. To help with this, we have a designated phone number - 01329 824601 – where you will be able to:

- Request paper copies of the survey
- Make an appointment to come into the Civic Offices to use a computer to access documents online.



6 November – 18 December

Your views are really important to us, so we have made the Publication Plan and the feedback form as accessible as possible to everyone, while adhering to Government guidelines relating to coronavirus.



VIEWING DOCUMENTS

Normally the Plan and its evidence base would be available in the Civic Offices and libraries throughout the Borough. However, the Government has changed this requirement as a result of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. This means, for this consultation, paper copies of the documents will not be available to view in the usual way.

Electronic copies of the Plan will, however, be available by pre-booked appointment in a Covid-secure environment at the Civic Offices in Fareham and you'll be able to submit any questions to the Planning team. Please call **01329 824601** between 8:45am and 5:15pm to arrange an appointment and discuss your requirements.



SUBMITTING YOUR COMMENTS

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

We have developed a form to help you respond to the consultation as there are specific questions you will need to answer. If possible, we encourage people to submit comments online.

If you cannot use the online system, a printable copy of the response form is available to download from our website or on request from the Council at the Civic Offices or by calling **01329 824601**.

Response forms can be returned by email to **consultation@fareham.gov.uk** or by post to the **Consultation Team, Fareham Borough Council, Civic Offices, Civic Way, Fareham, PO16 7AZ**.

The consultation begins on 6 November 2020 and comments must be received by us no later than midnight on 18 December 2020. Only those representations made within this set period will be taken into account by the Inspector as part of the examination.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



The Government requires us to seek comments on the following points at this stage of the consultation.

Please tell us if you think we have complied or not complied with the following requirements when developing the Publication Plan and why you think this.

1 Matters of Legal Compliance

- The Council set out its programme of work in the development of the new Local Plan in the Local Development Scheme prepared in September 2020. This document, together with the Statement of Community Involvement (which sets out our strategy for involving the local community in the preparation and revision of the Local Plan) forms the framework and timetable that we should follow.
- The Council is also required to provide a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which includes a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) when it publishes a plan. This should identify the process by which the SA has been carried out, the information used to inform the process and the outcomes of that process. SA is a tool for assessing the extent to which the plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant 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 objectively assessed 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
- **Consistent with national policy** – the Plan 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.

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The consultation response form has two parts:

Part A

PERSONAL DETAILS: THESE ARE REQUIRED AND NEED ONLY BE PROVIDED ONCE

Part B

YOUR REPRESENTATION(S)

Providing your feedback

You must state which paragraph, policy or page you are commenting on and which of the criteria (outlined on pages 8-9) you are referring to. Please provide as much detail as you can when explaining why you think the Council has or hasn't met the three criteria given.

You are required to complete a separate form for each representation you make. For example, you may wish to comment on a paragraph of text, a proposed policy and a site allocation. Each of these representations would need to be on separate Part B forms. This is so that the Inspector can view the representations on a particular chapter, policy or site together.

Participation in the examination by the Planning Inspector

Following consideration of your feedback and any amendments that are required, we will submit the Local Plan to the Government for examination. A Planning Inspector will be appointed to consider the Plan and comments from the consultation on behalf of the Secretary of State.

If you wish to take part in the hearing session(s) you must outline why you think this is necessary, in your response 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 vital that you express your wish to engage in the examination at this stage. Not doing so now may mean that you do not have the ability to be heard at the hearings. You can always change your mind later but without indicating a potential wish now, there is no way for the Inspector to know to contact you.

Privacy

It is important that the Inspector and all participants in the examination process are able to know who has given feedback on the Publication Plan.

Therefore, all feedback received, including contact details, will be passed onto the Inspector. In addition all comments will 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: 2017-2021

2017

AUTUMN 2017 - Draft Local Plan

The Council consulted on a draft Local Plan including housing and employment sites to meet identified need.

Responses from the consultation were reviewed and will be taken into account in the Publication Plan.

Changes made to the NPPF at this time resulted in the Council needing to find additional ways to meet new housing figures.

2018

SPRING/SUMMER 2019 - Issues and Options

The Council set out its key issues and options for addressing the changes in national policy.

We collated the responses from the previous consultation and used them, alongside a range of technical work, to inform the revised Development Strategy and some new policies that are required by the new NPPF.

2019

EARLY 2020 - Local Plan Supplement

We began to seek views on the revised Development Strategy, including proposed additional allocations and some new policies.

Taking into account the responses received alongside the finalised technical work, the Council developed a final draft of the new Local Plan, known as the Publication Plan, that it intends to submit to Government for examination.

2020

AUTUMN 2020 - Publication Plan

We are now seeking your views on the Publication Plan before submitting for examination. **You have until 18 December to have your say.** Your comments must relate to the soundness of the Plan, and you should also say if you would like to take part in the examination hearings and make your comments directly to the appointed Inspector.

WINTER 2020/21 (estimated)

The next stage will be to submit the Plan to the Secretary of State, provided the Government doesn't make significant changes to the methodology currently being consulted on.

2021

SPRING/SUMMER 2021 (estimated) Examination

During the examination of the submitted Local Plan, 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.

2021 - Adoption of Local Plan

The Council will adopt the Local Plan once the Government Planning Inspector has found it to be 'sound'. It is at this stage that all the policies in the new Local Plan will be used to determine planning applications.

