

Hart's housing options consultation: You need to respond. Here's how.



Hart District Council is asking residents where to build up to 5,000 new homes. If we say/do nothing, Crookham Village will be swamped.

This is a summary from your Parish Council, to help you understand how to respond to the consultation, especially questions 4, 5 and 6.

Hart's Housing Options Consultation

This District needs an up-to-date Local Plan as soon as possible, to defend against inappropriate development. As a step towards this, Hart has opened a public consultation on where to build new housing and we urge all residents to respond. It is a complex subject and the questions require some understanding, so this is a summary.

The consultation documents, site option maps and **online questionnaire** are all at this web page: www.hart.gov.uk/local-plan-consultation
You must respond by Friday 15 January 2016.

Background to this new consultation

This is a follow-up to last year's consultation to select general housing strategies to meet the requirement for so many new homes. It suggested a possible new settlement as one solution, but not where it could be located.

We now know that Hart still has to find sites for about 2,000-5,000 new homes. With this knowledge and as a result of previous responses, Hart have opened this more detailed consultation, now suggesting the Winchfield area for a possible new settlement, but also suggesting alternative strategies for housing locations, either instead of, or alongside a new settlement.

It states that it could take up to 10 years for a new settlement to start delivering homes, so if chosen, other locations will still need to be released for housing in the meantime.

The truth about brownfield sites

The consultation does not cover development on brownfield sites (e.g. empty office blocks), because

these are and will always be given priority anyway, even though (as few realise) brownfield sites are exempt from infrastructure contributions.

Brownfield sites for about 450 homes are currently offered by landowners and included in Hart's plan. Unfortunately it is not possible to count sites that are not for sale, or force owners of potential brownfield sites to put them forward for development – although if they do, they will be given priority.

About the questions and options

There are 6 questions in the housing consultation, plus separate questions about the Vision and Priorities for the Local Plan.

You need to complete the 'multiple choice' type questions 4 and 5, ranking each option as your 1st, 2nd or 3rd choice. However, no other questions are mandatory – and you can write or email, if the online form doesn't suit you.

Questions 1 & 2 are about the needs of specialist groups and sites for homes for certain purposes, such as affordable and starter homes, custom or self-build homes, specialist homes for older people, and sites for the travelling community. This is an opportunity to give your views on how to house these groups and suggest any suitable sites.

Settlement hierarchy

Question 3 asks whether you agree with the 'Settlement Hierarchy', which arranges Hart's towns and villages in tiers of similar sizes. See <http://tinyurl.com/nbaxcp8>

The purpose of this question is to allow you to comment on the allocation of settlements to tiers, not on the definition of the tiers themselves.

Fleet (including Church Crookham, Zebon Copse and Elvetham Heath) is the only Tier 1 Main Urban Area in Hart. Hook, Blackwater & Hawley and Yateley are defined as being Tier 2.

Crookham Village parish is in tier 4, **but also** next to Fleet/Church Crookham conurbation in tier 1.

The big Questions

As Hart still has to find sites for between about 2,000 and possibly up to 5,000 new homes, **Questions 4 and 5 are key.** There are three 'Approaches' to development and Question 4 asks you to rank them 1st, 2nd and 3rd in order of preference.

Approach 1: Disperse development throughout towns and villages:

Blackwater, Church Crookham, Crookham Village (177 inc Cross Farm), Crondall, Dogmersfield, Eversley, Ewshot, Fleet/Elvetham Heath, Hartley Wintney, Hook, Rotherwick & Yateley.
None in Winchfield. (Capacity around **2,000**)

Approach 2: Strategic Urban Extensions focused on two main settlements:

1,250 near Fleet (800 at Pale Lane Farm near Elvetham Heath, 450 at Grove Farm Crookham Village / West of Fleet); and 730 near Hook. (Capacity around **2,000**)

Approach 3: Focus growth on a new settlement at Winchfield (up to **5,000**).

This consultation is looking for the most-favoured and least-favoured strategy or combination. So you cannot exclude

Approaches 1 or 2, which could mean in combination around 2,000 more homes for Crookham Village, Church Crookham and west of Fleet (including Grove Farm).

The Church Crookham and Crookham Village areas have already absorbed significant housing numbers, with sites like QEB, Watery Lane, Tudgey's Nursery/Knight Close and Edenbrook forming part of the 4,000 houses already given permission. Hart now needs to decide where to put the other 2,000 - 5,000

We have great sympathy with Winchfield being the possible site of a new settlement and we do not underestimate the effect of such a large new settlement nearby.

In an ideal world, no major housing would be required on any greenfield sites. But without a new settlement, Fleet, Crookham, Crookham Village and Hook will be swamped with almost every site built – around 3,000 houses with just token infrastructure contributions from each planning application.

We believe that a new settlement is the only way to keep the pressure reasonable and to contribute realistic sums for proper infrastructure improvements.

Q4. Of the 3 possible approaches that could deliver new homes in Hart, which one should we prioritise to deliver the majority of our housing needs? *

Please rank your choice in order of preference (1 = most preferred to 3 = least preferred).

Approach 1 - Disperse development throughout the following towns and villages: Blackwater and Hawley, Crondall, Eversley, Ewshot, Fleet, Elvetham, Church Crookham, Hartley Wintney, Hook, Rotherwick and Yateley.

Approach 2 - Strategic Urban Extensions at main settlements: West of Hook, Pale Lane Farm adjacent to Elvetham Heath, and west of Fleet.

Approach 3 - A new settlement at Winchfield

Please provide any further comments on this below.

1	2	3
<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For Question 4, we suggest that the above combination will give Crookham Village the best chance.

Ranking your Answers – examples

If you think 'west Fleet' (Grove Farm north of Crookham Village) is the worst solution for major expansion in this plan period, then you should rank Approach 2: Strategic Urban Extensions as your 3rd choice.

If you believe that Hart's scattered settlements are not the answer either, then you should rank Approach 1: Dispersed development as your 2nd choice. This leaves Approach 3: New settlement at Winchfield as your 1st choice.

Combination approaches

Question 5 asks you which *combination* of approaches you would prefer, should more than one approach be necessary. This is inevitable, as no single option will meet housing needs in the required time-frame.

The combinations are called Approaches 4 to 7. If you would like to minimise further development in Fleet, Crookham and Hook, the logical order of preferences for these combinations is as follows:

Approach 4: Combine 1+2

(Dispersal with 2 Urban Extensions) Rank 4th

Approach 5: Combine 2+3

(Urban Extensions and Winchfield) Rank 2nd

Approach 6: Combine 1+3

(Dispersal and Winchfield) Rank 1st

Approach 7: Combine 1+2+3 (Dispersal, Urban Extensions and Winchfield) Rank 3rd

Q5. If we need to combine approaches, which combinations do you prefer? *

Please rank your choice in order of preference (1 = most preferred to 4 = least preferred).

	1	2	3	4
Approach 4 - Combine approaches 1 and 2: Disperse development throughout towns and villages across the district and Strategic urban extensions at main settlements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Approach 5 - Combine approaches 2 and 3: Strategic urban extensions at main settlements and A new settlement at Winchfield	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Approach 6 - Combine approaches 3 and 1: A new settlement at Winchfield and disperse development throughout the towns and villages across the district	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Approach 7 - Combine all 3 approaches: Disperse development throughout towns and villages across the district, Strategic urban extensions at main settlements and A new settlement at Winchfield	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide any further comments on this below.

For Question 5, we suggest that the above combination will give Crookham Village the best chance.

You may again add free format comments in the response field below the ranking options.

For example, you may wish to comment that Crookham needs time to absorb and understand the impact of the large number of already approved houses and should not have any more in the near future; that the recent major application at Grove Farm was recently rejected due to issues of coalescence, and that Cross Farm would impact the Village Conservation Areas.

This makes it unsuitable to rely on a Strategic Urban Extension at Fleet to provide homes in the short term while a new settlement is not ready to provide them.

The next question gives you the opportunity to say what you think about specific sites in any of the 'Dispersal Strategy' towns and villages, including Crookham Village.

Individual sites (relevant to Approach 1: Dispersal only)

Question 6 asks you to rank specific housing sites in any settlement you choose, although in Crookham Village there is currently only one major site, at Cross Farm (this could change).

We strongly suggest you look at the sites in Ewshot Parish and Church Crookham where there are development sites around Redfields Garden Centre. There will be some weighting given to how close you live to the sites you mention. The site locations are shown in the separate "New Homes Sites" document available as part of the consultation.

Residents should take their own view on the ranking of individual sites. You might think there is a danger in ranking the sites because you are forced to give a preference rating to all sites in a list, even ones you believe are

totally unsuitable for development. Think of it this way: Not ranking a site is like abstaining, whereas giving it your lowest score actually drags its score down.

We are not able to express our ranking preference for the Winchfield sites, because they are all being treated as part of Approach 3: New settlement and not to be developed piecemeal as part of the dispersal strategy.

Draft Local Plan vision and priorities consultation

It is not possible to submit answers on the housing options without also responding to the Draft Local Plan vision and priorities consultation. The relevant document is much shorter than the housing options (just 5 pages) and there are 3 relatively simple questions. We will leave you to take your own view on the vision and priorities.

As this new consultation takes place outside of the 'Hart News' free council newspaper publishing cycle, Hart have sent a letter to every previous respondent and a leaflet to every household notifying them of the consultation. It contains links to the online information and how else to obtain the documents and respond if you cannot review and respond online.

A final word

Unfortunately those acting to avoid a new settlement at Winchfield are forcing it onto Fleet, Crookham, Crookham Village and Hook instead.

It would be wonderful if Hart could meet its housing targets without any major greenfield development. But it cannot – and without your input, this parish will be in line for unprecedented expansion.

So what should you do now?

1. Get every member of your household to respond to the Hart consultation.

The closing date is Friday 15 January. It could make a huge difference to your surroundings and future quality of life, so use this opportunity.

www.hart.gov.uk/local-plan-consultation

2. Engage with the Crookham Village Neighbourhood Plan – volunteer to help or provide input through surveys. With your support, we can create a Neighbourhood Plan to control development in Crookham Village. Info at www.plan4crookham.org/



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