



Report to Parishes September



Local Plan

Preparation of the new Winchester District Local Plan (excluding the area with the South Downs National Park) has been delayed due to consultation documents on new requirements recently issued by the government.

On 6th August ministers put forward a proposal to change the formula that decides how many houses will be built in Winchester District. An 'Issues and Options' paper prepared before the consultation paper was issued used an estimate of 688 new houses a year. The formula in the consultation document would require Winchester District to increase that to 1,036 a year over 10 years - an extra 3,482 houses.

The government's consultation website is at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system>

The City Council will be holding a briefing session for parish councils later this month. This will refer to the potential impact of a range of proposals including the definition of affordable housing and options for its provision.

The government's consultation period ends on 1st October

Any increase in the number of houses we have to plan for will inevitably impact our communities, landscape and infrastructure.

The Government has also put out a white paper on their proposed changes to the planning system. It is a little hard to summarise all this into a few sentences. In essence it increases permitted development rights so long as new developments fit in with the local plan. If a development is to be located in designated areas of growth, then it will be automatically given outline planning permission. Local objections will only be allowed for the detailed design, concerning perhaps the colour of roof tiles. Therefore, the only way for communities to have any control over development in their locality is to have very robust and well-argued village/town design statements and local plans, produced by or developed with the full involvement of the community.

Whether of course this white paper does anything to address the problem of developer's reluctance to flood the market with new houses. (A slight knowledge of market economics would suggest the resulting drop in house prices would not be in their interest.) The problem of the short supply of local government planning staff and their rapid turn-over is a cause of delay which is not addressed. The British public, particularly in attractive parts of the country (such as Winchester) fight skilfully and determinately against development, a characteristic which is not going to disappear.

Southampton Airport's proposed runway extension and additional car parking

Winchester City Council recently responded to a further consultation exercise about proposals by the airport owner to increase car parking capacity by 600 spaces and extend the airport runway by 164 metres. Whilst the airport is regarded as an asset to the local economy these are outweighed by the adverse impacts. The council therefore maintained its earlier objection on the following grounds: predicted flights will increase by 45% by 2037, having a material adverse effect on residents from likely levels of noise; and carbon emissions would be significantly increased and are not adequately mitigated, therefore having a detrimental climate impact.

COVID-19 Update

For those who may be unaware, River Park Leisure Centre reopened on 1st September. Advance booking of activities is required, either online or via the Everyone Active app. Users must arrive already changed and are reminded not to attend if they have any COVID-19 symptoms or are otherwise required to self-isolate.



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Further information to keep residents and businesses up to date is published on the WCC website:

<https://www.winchester.gov.uk/covid19>

The City Council continues to liaise with officers from Hampshire County Council, which acts as the lead authority, but has also been making its own preparations for the safe provision of the services for which is responsible in the context of potential local spikes. Some services, however, such as pest control continue to be affected by the transfer of resource to other priorities.

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County Councillor report for Parishes September 2020

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The 'It's Ok 'helpline will continue until March, operating from 9.30 to 4.30pm, 5 days a week. Calls are triaged. Anyone who is concerned about their situation- or that of a neighbour or friend is invited to call. Help includes prescriptions, meals on wheels, dementia concerns, family hunger, and tackling anxiety with practical support going out for the first time after lockdown. Call 0333 370 4000

Library Hours consultations have now closed. We expect to see the resulting cuts in hours: no evening hours or Sunday opening at Winchester, hours limited to 3 sessions (16 hours total) in Alresford. This is disappointing- students of all ages use evening hours to study.

Flooding: Flash flooding on Thursday 30th brought 35 mm of rain in 25 minutes (according to HCC) Please report any blocked drains or road cleaning requirements through www.hants.gov.uk: go to roads and transport, then road defects, then report flooding. You can upload photos too.

The floods arrived so fast and so unexpectedly, no one authority could have reacted in time but one idea has been suggested by the emergency team: you can keep a 'growbag' near your door. When the rains start pouring, use it to divert water away from your door or air bricks. It's not ideal, but a good start, and may hold the fort in a flash flood.

New bus routes from 1st September: Added stops on the 'free' Tesco bus from Sutton Scotney, Stoke Charity and Wonston and Kings Worthy, a renewed call-and-go taxi service for East Stratton, and a new 95 bus route on a Monday and Thursday for East Stratton, Micheldever, Wonston and Worthys areas are now in operation. These are being trialled for six months to see how they go. I will add details into the relevant Parish Magazines and put on my website.

Road repairs have been promised in the Worthys; namely Springvale Road and Lovedon Lane. We still do not have anything promised for the path at Bishops Sutton, or the Weir.

Schools are going back- hopefully most children will want to go back. The County inclusion team are acting to help in cases of difficulty. A letter to anxious parents is being sent to allay fears.

There are **two planning applications being run by HCC** that are relevant this month.

- 20/01188/HCS at Christmas Hill- importation and storage of road planings to create recycled aggregate, sited east of the A34 on the old motocross site (officially closed but still receiving comment)
- 20/01765/HCS: development of an inert waste facility between the A272 and the A34 (closing 18 Sept 2020)

There are **two Government consultations:**

- *Planning for the Future*, deadline 29th October 2020. Within this on page 23 of the paper, it states the Govt wants to increase housebuilding to 300,000 homes a year (currently permission given for 187500 a year).
- *Changes to the Current Planning System*, deadline 1st October 2020, details of which are hidden deep in the other paper show how they intend to do this with proposals that if agreed, will result in 1000 homes a year for Winchester district.

I urge your council (even if in the SDNP, which also has to comply) to look carefully and respond to these consultations. The proposals, which if agreed, makes the decision to build >1000 homes a year in this district; a decision taken out of the locally democratically elected Council's hands, and will have an enormous influence on housing here.