

Well, that's it – the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Forum (HHNF) has achieved its primary aim of establishing a Neighbourhood Plan. The referendum on 8th October resulted in resounding support for all the effort that had gone into producing the Plan and all the supporting documents. With a 39% turnout and 95% vote for 'yes', the six policies in the Plan now have to be applied by Woking Borough Council (WBC) when determining planning applications.

So what next?

The Residents' Association Committee and the Neighbourhood Forum Committee have spent some time discussing this. The Forum has an initial life of five years. During the remaining three years it was decided that there are three issues that are the responsibility of the Forum. These are

- (a) Monitoring planning applications. Here the focus will very much be on whether planning applications comply with the Plan policies. It will be more of a technical review than that carried out by the Residents' Association who will continue to respond to the wishes of members as they have in the past.

While the Forum Committee will keep track of applications using the Council website, we have also asked that the HHNF be added to the list of bodies that are formally advised of developments in Hook Heath.

- (b) Monitoring progress with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Forum will be the first point of contact for WBC when it consults on how to spend funds arising from the CIL on developments within the Neighbourhood Area. In the absence of a parish council, a neighbourhood forum is cited as the most suitable body for such contact.

- (c) Projects. The HHNF also has a role in ensuring that a number of topics not directly related to planning consents, but listed as Projects within the Plan document, be taken forward. These range from prevailing on satellite navigation providers to revise some of their directions to clarifying rights of way.

What is the Community Infrastructure Levy?

The CIL tariff came into effect on 1st April 2015. It is a charge by WBC on the 'gross internal floor space' of the proposed development. However, some developments are exempted, including minor development and residential extensions of less than 100 sq m of net internal floor space (unless comprising one or more dwellings), new affordable housing, development for charitable purposes, self-build housing and residential annexes. Clearly we are not expecting that many developments in Hook Heath will be liable for CIL as most planning applications are for small residential extensions.

Areas with a neighbourhood plan receive 25% of any Community Infrastructure Levy arising from developments in their area compared to areas without a neighbourhood plan which receive 15%. In our case (without a parish council) the money is retained by the Borough Council but they have to consult with the HHNF on how it should be spent.

Since the implementation of the Plan there has not been a development in Hook Heath that has resulted in the payment of CIL.

What happens when the five-year life of the Forum is up?

We don't know. What we do know is that planning law is unlikely to stay the same and that Hook Heath is better off with a Forum than without one.

Do we need both a Forum and a Residents' Association?

The answer to this is an unambiguous 'YES'. The Forum has a limited remit but is formally constituted to be the relevant body to deal with issues that fall within its responsibilities. The Residents' Association has a broader scope and will continue to do the things it has done in the past. We believe that effective co-ordination between the two bodies will be achieved as all the Forum Management Committee members are also members of the Residents' Association Committee.

Development Management Policies DPD

WBC has drafted a Development Management Policies DPD (Development Plan Document), which contains detailed policies on various issues such as design and access, noise, advertisements and shop fronts, specific leisure developments, residential extensions and tree protection. The main purpose of the DPD is to provide detailed policies to help determine day to day planning applications. The policies of the DPD supplement the Core Strategy; they do not cover issues where principles for development are fully addressed by national or Core Strategy policies.

The Neighbourhood Forum submitted comments on the draft DPD, the most important of which was that the DPD did not adequately reference Neighbourhood Plans!

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

A large number of the trees in Hook Heath are subject to TPOs. WBC has recently prosecuted a project manager and his appointed subcontractor for causing damage to two trees in contravention of a 1964 Tree Protection Order at a private residential property in Hook Heath. Both were fined. More details are available on the Council website:

<http://www.woking.gov.uk/news?item=000056BCA30B.C0A801BA.00006B8B.0007>.

Proposed changes to the planning process

The Government wants to simplify and speed up the planning system and has just launched a consultation on the implementation of planning changes. Details can be found on the gov.uk website:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/501239/Planning_consultation.pdf.

Other items of general interest

Great Clear Up in honour of the Queens 90th Birthday

A clear up session is being organised by Councillor Graham Cundy on Saturday 5th March. If interested, meet at 2.00 pm in St. Johns Lye Car Park. Equipment will be provided as usual and a 4.00 pm finish is anticipated. This is a national event being held over the 4th to 6th March. More information on this event nationally can be found at:

<http://www.thebigtidyup.org/clean-for-the-queen-for-her-majesty-s-90th-birthday/2549/2/8/1308/36>.

Surrey Half Marathon

Everyone should have received a leaflet on the Surrey half marathon which is being held on Sunday 13th March. Remember that there will be road closures to the south of Hook Heath.

Planning applications

Since the Forum is monitoring planning applications we thought it might be interesting for residents if a list were included in the updates. It is not the intention of the Forum Management Committee to comment on all applications, but only on those where there is a clash with Plan policies.

Since the AGM there have been 13 applications or revised applications (excluding trees and minor developments).

PLAN/2015/1064

Redevelopment of former Woodbank Care Home to provide a total of 51 retirement living with care units (Use Class C2) in a mix of 1 and 2 bedrooms (50% 2 bedrooms) together with residents' facilities and associated vehicle/pedestrian access, parking and landscaping.

Woodbank Holly Bank Road Woking Surrey GU22 0JP

Modified plans submitted following intervention by the HHRA and HHNF; still no demonstration of compliance with policy BE2 on off-road parking

PLAN/2015/1219

Erection of 6-bedroom dwelling and detached pool building following demolition of existing dwelling.

Pippins 4 Mount Close Hook Heath Woking Surrey GU22 0PZ

PLAN/2015/1326

Proposed two storey front extension.

Scote Howe Cottage Hook Heath Road Woking Surrey GU22 0LF

PLAN/2015/1345 (planning permission refused)

Proposed first floor side extension.

Penwood Lodge Pond Road Woking Surrey GU22 0JT

PLAN/2015/1346

Erection of single storey dwelling with accommodation in the roof space, new vehicular access to Holly Bank Road and associated works on land adjacent to Haere Mai.

Haere Mai Mile Path Woking Surrey GU22 0JL

Not in compliance with policy BE1 on plot sizes

PLAN/2015/1356

Proposed two storey side and front additions, garage addition. New steeper pitched roof throughout, new rendered walls throughout. New black aluminium windows.

Oaklea House Comeragh Close Woking Surrey GU22 0LZ

PLAN/2015/1416

Proposed erection of a two storey building containing 4x self-contained flats (2x 2-bed and 2x 1-bed) following demolition of existing two storey building at No.2 Pine View

containing retail unit and self-contained flat and demolition of garage to rear of No.1 Pine View and provision of associated parking, landscaping and bin and cycle storage.
1&2 Pine View Wych Hill Woking Surrey GU22 0HZ

This is just outside the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Area; the main issue appears to be that the number of parking spaces is less than that normally required by WBC

PLAN/2015/1436

Proposed erection of a two bay oak framed carport.
The Fairway Fairway Close Woking Surrey GU22 0LT

PLAN/2016/0019

Proposed single storey side extension and garage conversion.
3 Copper Beech Close Woking Surrey GU22 0QA

PLAN/2016/0051

Proposed erection of a two storey side extension and rear conservatory following the demolition of existing conservatory.
Hollands 1 Penwood End Woking Surrey GU22 0JU

PLAN/2016/0057

Erection of a two storey side extension and front porch and erection of a rear facing dormer roof extension to facilitate a loft conversion.
Highcroft The Drive Woking Surrey GU22 0JS

Reapplication following previously granted planning permission (2012)

PLAN/2016/0078

Proposed detached garage.
Penwood Lodge Pond Road Woking Surrey GU22 0JT

PLAN/2016/0126

Proposed conversion of existing detached double garage with space in the roof into habitable accommodation and insertion of 6 roof lights and fenestration alterations to the rear.
Rowans Golf Club Road Woking Surrey GU22 0LU

The next update is scheduled for May. In the meantime, you can keep up to date with developments by looking at the HHRA and HHNF websites: (<http://www.hhra.co.uk/> and <http://www.hhra.co.uk/hookheathforum/>).

Many thanks for your interest and support.

Sincerely,

Mike Cooke, Chairman

On behalf of the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee