

**Introduction**

Publication of this Update coincides with the publication of the Residents' Association Newsletter. To avoid duplication, I'm going to limit myself to planning issues.

**Local Government reorganisation**

At the end of last year, the Government published an English devolution white paper, announcing proposals for local government reorganisation. Surrey local Councils and Surrey County Council have been hard at work on proposals for what this might look like. At present there seems to be a majority of local councils in favour of three unitary authorities but SCC have a preference for two. I think it likely that two will save more money even if it means that councils are remote from the people they serve. Consultations are ongoing and I've already received five e-mails with questionnaires.

It's not clear what happens to Woking's debt if a unitary authority is formed,

From a Neighbourhood Forum perspective, the key question is what happens to planning policies. Woking Borough Council have reviewed their current plan and found that it complies with the NPPF, at least until 2028. They have also issued a programme showing the steps needed to develop a new Core Strategy on this timescale. If the plan is now to produce a new Core Strategy for the new unitary authority, then more work will be needed and if it is being done against a backdrop of reorganisation and job losses, it seems very unlikely it will be ready on time.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

As we pointed out in the last issue there are a lot of changes coming and the impact of the local government reorganisation on site allocations will be significant but is unknown. However, it seems reasonable to assume that the areas covered by the new unitary authorities will be given their own housing targets.

**Neighbourhood Plan**

We had a meeting with Jill Peet, the Planning Policy Manager at Woking Borough Council. It was a constructive discussion at the end of which we decided not to attempt a change of the Neighbourhood Plan – partly because there were no pressing issues and partly, we did not want to get into a debate as to how the new NPPF should be interpreted. We reviewed the

Neighbourhood Plan earlier this year and it still complies with the legislation. Apparently, Neighbourhood Plans do not expire so it will continue in force for several years yet. We have sent Jill the papers for redesignation of the Forum (required every 5 years).

According to the Spring Statement from Rachel Reeves, the Office for Budget Responsibility had reviewed the NPPF changes and found that there will be a “material, additional, and durable impact on housebuilding, property transactions, and potential output, and a modest impact on house prices”.

The OBR document says net additions to UK housing stock are now forecast to be 1.3 million by 2029-30. It said that the increase in housing driven by NPPF reform is down to “requirements for local authorities to release land”. Two questions remain – are there sufficient construction workers in the UK to build the extra new houses, and, do potential house owners have sufficient money to buy them, especially in the context of higher school fees and increases in taxes due to fiscal drag (and in the last week worries about US fiscal policy)?

### **Local Planning Applications in the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Area**

My feeling is that the rate of planning applications is virtually back up to the pre-Covid numbers. There are some poorly thought-out applications which have been rejected but I have also heard that it can be difficult to get sensible proposals approved if they do not completely comply with the guidance.

Seven applications reported in the last Update have been approved by the Council.

**PLAN/2024/0621** Erection of two storey front, side and rear extensions, single storey front extension, roof extensions and alterations, rear raised terrace, driveway alterations and external alterations including alterations to external materials and fenestration at Kantara, Hook Heath Road.

**PLAN/2024/0666** Erection of a two-storey front extension, hip to gable roof extension and rear dormer at Saketha, Golf Club Road.

**PLAN/2024/0799** Erection of a rear outbuilding at Links House, Golf Club Road.

**PLAN/2024/0816** Replacement of all existing roof tiles with slate tiles and installation of 4No front and 5No side solar panels at Cranford, Pond Road.

**PLAN/2024/0868** Erection of a detached garage and rear outbuilding at Vermont, Holly Bank Road.

**PLAN/2024/0895** Conversion of existing garage to habitable accommodation and erection of a single storey front/side extension with 2x rooflights over at Roebucks, Holly Bank Road.

**PLAN/2024/0908** Erection of a single storey front extension and conversion of garage into habitable accommodation at 17 Orchard Mains.

Three applications reported in the last Update have been rejected.

**PLAN/2024/0399** Erection of a single storey rear extension following demolition of the existing conservatory at Padua, Hook Heath Road.

No arboricultural information was submitted despite being requested.

**PLAN/2024/0653** Erection of a part two-storey, part single-storey side and rear extension, rear balcony, alterations to external materials and changes to fenestration at Oak Trees, Comeragh Close.

The planning officer found that the proposal would result in a house which fails to respect the character of the existing dwelling and would not make a positive contribution to the street scene and surrounding area.

Additionally, the proposal also failed to demonstrate how nearby trees would be protected during construction.

**PLAN/2024/0758** Erection of a front car port at West Hurstgate, Hook Heath Road.

The planning officer found that the proposed car port, by reason of its roof design and building materials would fail to appear in keeping with the design of the host dwelling. It had also not been demonstrated that the proposed development could be positioned in its proposed location on site without resulting in the partial or full loss of prominent mature landscaping and planting

Two applications reported in the last Update continue to be pending.

**PLAN/2024/0632** Retrospective application for a single storey side extension. (Amended plans) at Gainford, Hook Heath Road.

This proposal would have required arboricultural information so it is not clear what WBC will do.

**PLAN/2024/0764** Erection of a detached garage with accommodation above and external staircase following demolition of existing garage at Danescross, Pond Road.

One new planning application has been approved.

**PLAN/2025/0066** Erection of single storey side extension and minor alterations to existing swimming pool building. Tree works to two oak trees to crown raise by 4 metres from ground level at Lansbury, Hook Heath Road.

There are eight new planning applications which are currently undecided.

**PLAN/2024/0934** Erection of a single storey side and rear extension following demolition of existing garage. Formation of new vehicular access and creation of hardstanding at Tanahkita, Ridge Close.

**PLAN/2024/0935** Erection of a part two storey and part single storey side and rear extension following demolition of existing garage at Tanahkita, Ridge Close.

**PLAN/2025/0036** Erection of a single storey and part first floor side and rear extension. Alterations to external materials and fenestration at 8 Fernhill Close.

**PLAN/2025/0051** Erection of a single storey front and first floor side and rear extension with rooms in the roofspace, formation of front and rear dormer windows and conversion of garage into habitable accommodation. Erection of a front porch canopy and mono pitched roof to front elevation. Alterations to fenestration and external materials at 2, Hurst Close.

**PLAN/2025/0097** Erection of a single storey front and side extension, conversion of garage into habitable accommodation and alterations to fenestration at 9, Orchard Mains.

**PLAN/2025/0111** Erection of a two-storey front and side extension with increased ridge height and portico. Erection of a single storey rear extension and creation of pitched roof over existing garage at Paget House, The Drive.

**PLAN/2025/0153** New side facing Velux window, internal alterations and alterations to fenestration at Brittoncot, Holly Bank Road.

**PLAN/2025/0214** Erection of a single storey side (north-east elevation) extension, fenestration alterations and porch canopy at Home Green, Golf Club Road.

Prior notifications

**PLAN/2024/0939** Prior notification for the proposed enlargement of one storey dwellinghouse by construction of an additional storey with a proposed ridge height of 8.50m (Part 1, Class AA) at Linksyde, Hook Heath Road.

This was rejected because:

In the absence of existing and proposed sections taken through the dwellinghouse, the developer had provided insufficient information.

The proposal would result in an additional storey being constructed other than on the principal part of the dwellinghouse.

The proposal would result in a dominant form of development that would result in an oppressive sense of enclosure and overbearing effect on the outlook of occupiers of adjacent Taroon.

The bulk and scale of the proposed additional storey would result in a cramped and contrived relationship between the extended host dwellinghouse and the adjacent dwellinghouse of Taroon.

**PLAN/2025/0086** Prior notification for a single storey rear extension to extend a maximum depth of 7.7m, maximum height of 4m and a maximum height of eaves of 3m at Bernisdale, Hook Heath Road.

Approved

Certificates of Proposed Lawful Development (all pending)

**PLAN/2025/0098** Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development for a single storey rear extension and covered side car port. Alterations to fenestration at Trees, Hook Heath Avenue.

**PLAN/2025/0177** Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development for replacement windows at Manydown, Holly Bank Road.

**PLAN/2025/0198** Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development for a single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory. Addition of 2No side dormer windows and changes to fenestration. Amendments to fenestration under Class A. Roof extensions under Class B. Replacement of roof finishes under Class C at Bernisdale, Hook Heath Road.

Many thanks for your interest and support

Sincerely,

Mike Cooke, Chairman

On behalf of the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee