

Footpaths and CIL

A reminder that the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is money paid by developers when carrying out work in Hook Heath; because we have a Neighbourhood Plan, we get 25% of the sum paid.

So some good news. The contractor SCC use to work on footpaths had a gap in his diary and the work to improve footpath 104 has been completed. (this footpath runs from the junction of Pond Road and Mile Path to Hook Heath Road near Gorse Hill)

The work on footpath 102 (this footpath runs from Pond Road around the car park to the location of the pedestrian bridge) will probably be carried out in October when the contractor will be able to use some space in the Golf Club carpark for storing materials.

Network Rail have confirmed that plans are now in place to replace the St. John's footbridge in December of this year, with the new footbridge being opened in January 2025.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

As announced in the press there is a new draft of the NPPF issued for comment. You can find it here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>

together with an explanation of what the government is trying to achieve. It can be difficult to work out the real impact but we can be certain that the target number of new dwellings in Woking will be much higher. That will presumably lead to another review of the green belt to find places to build. In the meantime, we are going to carry on with reviewing our Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood Plan

Those who commented on the Vision and Objectives were supportive of retaining the current wording so the next step is to look at the Policies. There is a lot of background information in the current Plan which will need to be checked but in practice it seems that planning officers only take note of policies. I've included the actual policies below and you may find something you would like to see changed. However, more likely is that you have been annoyed by a planning decision which you wish had been decided

differently – either for or against the proposal. Even if you can't think of a policy change which would have achieved what you want, please let us know of decisions that you wish had been different and we'll see if we can think of a policy to cover it. There is a risk that we will need to adjust policies to comply with the new version of the NPPF when issued but we'll deal with that when it happens.

You can send your comments to chairman@hhra.co.uk by October 10th.

The Policies

Built Environment

Policy BE1 Design of New Developments

In order to maintain or enhance the character of the Area, all developments should

- a) be designed to a high quality and closely reflect the existing rhythm, proportion, materials, height, scale, bulk, massing and storey heights of nearby buildings. Where possible, plot sizes should be similar to those adjacent and in other cases within the mid-range for Arcadian Developments (5-10 dph). Regard should be paid to guidance contained within the associated 2014 Character Study;
- b) ensure that the specific context of the site and the wider character of the street scene are fully taken into account in relation to scale, appearance and materials; and
- c) maintain residential privacy and the character of the Area by
 - i. preserving existing grassed verges, front boundary hedges and tree screens;
 - ii. retaining mature or important trees, groups of trees or woodland on site, and replacing any removed trees of recognised importance with trees of a similar potential size and species;
 - iii. not removing boundary treatment which is important to the character and appearance of the Area;
 - iv. installing solar panels (where appropriate) in such a way that they do not have a negative impact on the character of properties or on the Arcadian street scene; and
 - v. featuring a ratio of building footprint to plot area similar to that of buildings in the surrounding area.

Planning decisions will take into account the failure to preserve, or likely damage to, trees, hedges, and green verges which make a significant contribution to the character of the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Area. New developments should make adequate provision for the planting and growth to maturity of trees and hedging (which may be used to screen fencing or railings) to maintain local character.

Where subdivision of an existing house is proposed the external character of the existing building must be respected and preserved.

Development decisions should take account of the important contribution that locally listed buildings make to the character of Hook Heath.

Policy BE2 Off-road parking

Development proposals must provide adequate parking on-plot and are not permitted to rely on on-street parking.

Minimum on-plot parking for residential properties in Hook Heath is defined as:

1 bedroom property	1 car space
2 - 3 bedroom property	2 car spaces
4+ bedroom property	3 car spaces

All proposals must demonstrate that development will not result in on-road parking to the detriment of highway safety or adverse impact on the character of the area.

Policy BE3 Older and Disabled People

Proposals that result in the loss of existing specialist accommodation for the elderly and disabled will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that there is insufficient demand for that type of accommodation. To achieve this it will be necessary for an independent assessment to demonstrate that the premises are unviable in their current business use, or for the premises to be marketed actively for 12 months without a sale at reasonable value.

Open Spaces

Policy OS1 Amenity Value

Development within Hook Heath should retain all aspects of, and wherever possible enhance, the Amenity Value provided by the Open Spaces. Proposals for development must contain adequate detail and justification to demonstrate how this will be achieved.

Development on land within the plan area should preserve and not significantly detract from the following important views from all locations that are freely accessible to members of the general public within the Neighbourhood Plan area:

- Views from south of Hook Heath Road up the escarpment;
- Views from the Hook Heath Escarpment of the North Downs and Guildford Cathedral;
- Views from Hook Heath Road and Pond Road onto adjoining Woking Golf Course land;
- Views of highway green verges and adjacent hedgerows

Policy OS2 Local Green Spaces

Local Green Spaces are particularly special to Hook Heath. They will be protected from development. No development will take place unless very

special circumstances, that clearly outweigh any harm arising, can be demonstrated.

All the Local Green Spaces in the Neighbourhood Plan have emerged through discussion. They are all within the community they serve and are widely recognised for their particular and demonstrably special importance, within an area renowned for its attractive character and appearance. All four Local Green Spaces are local in character and none comprises an extensive tract of land. The areas listed below, and shown on Map J, are designated as Local Green Spaces.

1. The triangle on Wych Hill
2. The three triangular pieces of land at the junction of Hook Heath Road, Pond Road and Holly Bank Road
3. The triangle at the junction of Green Lanes with Hook Hill Lane
4. The verges on the South Side of Hook Heath Avenue

The use of Local Green Spaces for 'street furniture' should be minimised

Local Infrastructure

Policy LI1 Through Traffic and Road Safety

In order to limit the amount of through traffic in what is a residential area, no new roads connecting the Neighbourhood Area with adjoining areas will be permitted unless it is clearly demonstrated through a Transport Assessment that the proposal will not severely adversely affect highway safety or residential amenity.

The Neighbourhood Plan can be found here

<https://www.woking2027.info/neighbourhoodplanning/hookheathneighbourhoodplan/hhnpfinal>

and also on the HHNF website

<https://www.hhra.co.uk/hookheathforum/index.htm>

Petitions

There are two active petitions in Hook Heath, both associated with speeding.

[Speed bumps on Hollybank Road](#) on the Surrey County Council website

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/traffic-calming-WHR-Blackbridge> on the iPetitions website

There is also a problem with speeding at the western end of Hook Heath Road where there have been a couple of incidents recently. We discussed traffic calming with Forum members when drawing up the Neighbourhood Plan and there were arguments for and against. As a consequence, the committee has not been able to take a specific stance on the subject.

Local Planning Applications in the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Area

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

PLAN/2024/0216 Erection of a single storey rear extension and conversion of garage to habitable accommodation (amended plans and description) at Manydown, Holly Bank Road.

PLAN/2024/0360 Proposed in-ground swimming pool and plant room at Links House, Golf Club Road.

One application reported in the last Update has been rejected.

PLAN/2024/0387 Erection of a single storey rear extension to existing annexe at Hook Heath Lodge, Hook Heath Avenue.

Rejected as it has not been demonstrated that the proposed extension would genuinely be ancillary to the main dwelling.

One application reported in the last Update continues to be pending.

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

One new planning application has been approved.

PLAN/2024/0395 Erection of front and rear roof dormers to accommodate loft conversion along with fenestration alterations at Lansbury, Hook Heath Road.

There are five new planning applications which are currently undecided.

PLAN/2024/0561 Erection of a two storey rear extension at Penwood Lodge, Pond Road.

PLAN/2024/0585 Erection of a two storey side and rear extension following demolition of existing greenhouse at The Corner House, Fernhill Lane.

PLAN/2024/0618 Erection of a rear conservatory at 10, Orchard Mains.

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/2024/0645 Erection of a single storey front extension with 4no roof lights at Roebucks, Holly Bank Road.

Certificates of Proposed Lawful Development

PLAN/2024/0552 Prior notification for a single storey rear extension to extend a maximum depth of 8m, maximum height of 2.6m and a maximum height of eaves of 2.4m at Linksyde, Hook Heath Road.

Rejected as the proposal would require extensive work to level the land for the extension.

PLAN/2024/0554 Certificate of Proposed Lawful Development for single storey side extensions, rear dormer window and insertion of two front rooflights. Proposed detached garage at Linksyde, Hook Heath Road.

This is pending.

The rate of submission of planning applications has increased in the last couple of months but is still below the historical level.

Annual General Meeting

This is a reminder that we are required by our constitution to hold an AGM. The Forum's officers: David Dare, vice chairman; Heather Mustard, secretary; Gerald Griffiths, treasurer; and myself offer ourselves for re-election. The HHNF AGM will be held with the HHRA AGM on Monday 7th October at Woking Golf Club, Pond Road. Doors will open at 19.00 for a 19.30 start.

Many thanks for your interest and support

Sincerely,

Mike Cooke, Chairman

On behalf of the Hook Heath Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee