

Developers' share will cover only fraction of total cost

A GREENFIELD site could be needed to build 10,000 homes north of Fareham.

But this strategic development area (SDA) will not be started before 2016 as the government is unlikely to adopt the South East Plan before 2007.

It means the 3,729 new homes over the next 20 years in existing Fareham communities will be less than 50% of what the borough has suffered over the past 10 years.

However, Councillor Woodward said: "If economic growth reaches its target of 3.5% per year by 2016, the SDA need could even be diminished."

Every 1,000 new homes produce £10m in developers' contributions. It sounds a lot, but a secondary school costs £25m and two primary schools £7.5m each, so half the contributions would be spent before a doctors' surgery or road is built or a sewer laid.

He added: "Clearly, without external funding new development is unsustainable."

"The only sanction a planning authority has is to refuse to allocate the land, but this could always be overturned on appeal to...you've guessed it – John Prescott!"

Fareham hands Prescott a £3 billion shopping list



Pulling no punches: Seán Woodward spells out Fareham's demands to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Tory leader tells him: 'No more Whiteleys without the cash first'

FAREHAM will not accept any of the 80,000 new homes earmarked for South Hampshire unless the Labour Government coughs up £3bn towards the infrastructure.

This was the no-nonsense message Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott took back to Whitehall after listening to a presentation by Council Executive Leader Seán Woodward in Fareham in December.

"What is clear is that we cannot have any more Whiteleys where insufficient developers' contributions are available to provide the required infrastructure and the next 20 years are spent trying to catch up with council taxpayers funding the shortfalls.

"Government must put its money where its mouth is or we cannot accept extra housebuild-

ing," he told Mr Prescott.

It was revealed that up to 10,000 houses are planned on an as yet unidentified site north of the M27 and the borough would also have to find room for 3,729 more in existing communities over the next 20 years.

Councillor Woodward, chairman of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), said the £3bn shopping list included infrastructure to make up the current deficit of which anyone travelling to work in rush hour was well aware, as well as likely needs over the next 20 years.

He said: "The requirement is not only for new roads, but also includes public transport, schools, medical care, water supplies, waste treatment and affordable housing.

"I pointed out to Mr Prescott that

South East England produces a net £18bn for the Treasury every year, so we are not after new money – just to keep some of what we are already generating."

He said there was a real need to regenerate Portsmouth and Southampton and to improve the economies of those cities, but they could not continue as a dumping ground for new housing without enough government investment.

Commenting on the meeting, Councillor Woodward said: "It was very positive but, of course, the proof will be when the necessary infrastructure funding arrives and not before."

Afterwards, he met South Hampshire's MPs and called on them to support PUSH's demands in Westminster.

"They have the list of the area's requirements and requested further meetings on the issue before the government completes its 2007 spending review."



WARD NEWS BRIEFS

Grant Aid

Grants are available from the County Council for voluntary and community groups who have projects which promote well being for older people.

Projects may include events, activities, or new approaches, and could include for example gardening, leisure/exercise or healthy eating.

Open forum

Wallington Village Association is holding another open forum for residents.

It offers them the chance to question and express their views to councillors, police and representatives from other services.

Wallington Village Hall is the venue on Wednesday, February 6 at 7.30pm.

Patience please

Complaints about poor street lighting in Paxton Road and problems with parking and uneven pavements in the part known as the avenue are being investigated.

Councillor Trevor Howard said a survey was under way and asked residents to be patient.

Special needs grant

The Kids' Centre for children with special needs will receive £2000 for its South Downs Thursday Club to help young people with learning or physical difficulties to become more independent.

Greetings

Councillor Ray Ellis wishes all residents a happy New Year.

Where have all the flower beds gone...?



GONE to rubble every one and, contrary to words in the well-known ballad, with not a long time passing!

Problems in the Beaconsfield Road area have been almost eliminated by removal of the flower beds where large numbers of youngsters gathered, upsetting residents with noise, litter

and yobbish behaviour.

Councillor Dennis Steadman said the area had been levelled and resurfaced and was looking much better.

"It is not yet finished as a capping will be put on the tops of the walls making them uncomfortable to sit on and very difficult to perform wheeling.



"The project was started a short time ago and when completed will have been done in record time

"I thank Hampshire County and Fareham Borough Councils in unison with other agencies including the Police for the great assistance they gave to me to secure its success," he said.

A year on and hostel is now part of community

WHAT an amazing difference a year can make.

When word got around that it was planned to open a hostel at 101 Gosport Road, concerned residents turned out in force to protest.

"I was one of its most vociferous opponents," said Councillor Dennis Steadman.

But all that has changed and today Dennis admits: "I now feel privileged to be part of a success story."

How did opinions change in 12 months?

A steering committee was set up by Dennis, two residents, the police, Fareham Council and managers of Two Saints Housing to ensure locals had a chance to voice their fears after the project opened.

"During the year the hostel has been open I am delighted to report that there have been hardly any problems to cause concern to local people.

"In fact, residents tell me 'we never seem to hear of any problems from the hostel and doesn't the building look nice, much better than the old pub!'" said Dennis.

He was heartened to hear that a local businessman met a young man from the hostel and gave him a full-time job.

"He's now living independently and happy to be contributing to the community, but he stressed it would not have been

possible had he not been able to access the hostel in his time of need..

"I am assured this is not an isolated case and by no means an exception."

"It is appropriate to share this with readers who have tempered their initial fears to the point that project managers say they have much support from the community."

The steering committee, which meets regularly, now comprises just Dennis and hostel manager Dave Joyce.

Added Dennis: I am greatly indebted to Dave Joyce for his friendly and open attitude during the initial period and subsequently.

Trevor makes a moat point to aid newts



Trevor Howard: Asks for public support.

VOLUNTEERS have cleaned rubbish from Fareham Woods near Fort Fareham after Councillor Trevor Howard asked the council for help.

Rangers are looking to thin the trees and clean the Fort Fareham moat, hopefully with help from the private sector.

Councillor Howard says it is important to get clear water into the moat to help newts living there to breed.

Residents said the moat was dangerous and complained about the filthy state of the woods and fort, which they want repaired or pulled down.

Councillor Howard appealed to the public to report anybody fly tipping, riding motor bikes or starting fires there.



Success story: The hostel in Gosport Road.

Health bosses' U-turn brings ray of hope to childless couples

HEALTH bosses have been forced into a U-turn over free fertility treatment for childless couples.

It happened after County Councillor Ray Ellis took up the case of a Fareham resident who was not offered free treatment by the Strategic Health Authority.

Dr Ellis, chairman of Hampshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, said:

"This has resulted in a change of policy by NHS bodies throughout Hampshire, who are developing new rules to allow free 'one cycle' fertility treatment (IVF) for couples who cannot conceive.

"This is a complete U-turn by health bosses, who previously had a blanket ban on IVF throughout the area, which made our area the only one in the country where not a single health trust

provided IVF."

He was concerned that access to free IVF depended on where you lived and emphasised this with the SHA.

He added: "This is a good example of how health scrutiny is improving health provision for our residents."

The committee is also investigating temporary closure of Blackbrook and Grange maternity units, decreasing number of beds for elderly patients, diabetic treatment, out-of-hours treatment, emergency service provision, development of a local community hospital, mental health provision and availability of prescription drugs.

D-Day will be in February on proposals for maternity provision in our area and the joint HOSC for HCC/Portsmouth will meet on March 1 to decide whether to refer the item to the Secretary of State for Health.

Rural affairs role for Ray

RAY ELLIS has been elected as a member of the Local Government Association (LGA) Policy Group for Rural Affairs.



Elected: Ray Ellis

He also represents Hampshire County Council on the LGA Rural Commission.

"It is proposed to open up the whole of England's coastline to walkers as part of the strategy to save the natural environment.

"If you have any concerns about the countryside please let me know," he said.

County Councillor Ellis has also been elected to the Southeast England Employers' Executive Committee, which deals with employment, salaries and conditions for local government officers.

Watchdog bodies send Hampshire revelling in a galaxy of stars

THEY'RE seeing stars at County Hall, Winchester.

Hampshire County Council has just received top rating for one of its social services and another from the Audit Commission.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection awarded Hampshire 'Three Star' status.

During 2004/5 the service served most children very well and the trend is towards further improvement, the report stated.

Adult services were considered to serve adults well, with promising capacity for improvement.

Hampshire County Council has a policy to ensure young people and vulnerable adults receive the very best of care and education and this has been recognised by the report.

Unfortunately, the funding received from Central Government to deliver these services is not sufficient.

"We need a fair deal for our people to give them the support they need in education

and care, without putting unfair burdens on local taxpayers," said Councillor Ray Ellis.

HCC is one of 29 local authorities that received a maximum 'Four Star' rating from the Audit Commission.

"This year's audit was carried out under tougher criteria, but HCC remains at the top in terms of performance and value for money, emphasising the high quality of staff and the members' understanding of the needs of the communities which we serve," he added.

FAREHAM SOUTH & EAST CONSERVATIVES

We are very active with social and political events and membership drives. If you would like further details, to join us, or to help in any way such as distribution of *In Touch* newsletters in your road, please contact your ward councillors.

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Your man in Westminster



By
Mark Hoban
MP for Fareham

DAVID Cameron's election as Leader of the Conservative Party is a turning point.

He has been very clear that if we are to be a party that reflects the aspirations of the whole country, then we need to talk about the long term challenges facing Britain today and have answers to them. These include economic competitiveness, globalisation and poverty, and improvements to our public services.

They affect each of us differently. Our economy must remain strong in the face of threats from India and China if we are to fund our schools and hospitals properly.

Young people need to know there will be jobs for them in the future, but we can only do this by preparing for the economic challenges of the 21st century.

We can only afford adequate pensions if we have a prosperous and thriving economy. It is in everyone's interests to ensure we improve the competitiveness of the economy to maintain and improve living standards and quality of public services.

It is a sign of the importance of these challenges and the reinvigoration of the Party under David that people such as Bob Geldof are willing to help us develop the policies to tackle these challenges.

David's agenda looks to build a modern, compassionate Conservative Party. I know from talking to people across the constituency that this has struck a chord. It is an exciting time to be a Conservative.

Elections of party leaders bring reshuffles and changes of responsibilities. Having been the Conservative school spokesman for two years, I have been promoted to the Treasury team. It is a role I have always been keen to do having worked in business and as one of the handful of MPs who is a Chartered Accountant. My appointment coincides with a series of visits to local employers, which will deepen my understanding of issues they face.

I wish you and your family a happy and healthy 2006.

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'We like the good life in Fareham' say residents



Beautiful borough: A striking aerial view of the River Hamble with the Air Traffic Control complex in the foreground and (right) the lovely setting of Holly Hill Woodland Park.

FAREHAM is a safe, prosperous and attractive place to live and work, according to most residents.

A recent borough survey shows 91% of people are happy to live here and 88% are satisfied with the way the Conservative Council runs things.

The only real gripe locals have is that after dark only 23% feel safe in the town and district shopping centres and 46% in their neighbourhoods, against 90% outside in daytime.

The consultation is a key part of decision-making as it informs the Council of residents' views on important issues such as building developments, public toilets, environmental health, safety regulation and enforcement, community safety and personal health.

The survey also shows 92% are happy with waste collections and 68% with litter clearance, while 88% are satisfied with the overall quality of the environment.

A higher number think general cleanliness and condition of public toilets has improved since 2004.

As a result of the Market Quay redevelopment,

86% are happy with the range of shopping and 75% with leisure and social activities in the town centre – both percentages showing a material increase.

Residents rank the statement 'the Council should strike a balance between increasing charges to service users and small increases in council tax' as their preferred choice, with 'council tax should be increased to provide better services' as the least preferred option.

Conservative Councillor Seán Woodward, Executive Leader of Fareham Borough Council, says:

"This survey gives residents the opportunity to share with us their views about life in the Borough and to ensure our services continue to meet the needs of the local community.

"I am pleased to note from the survey results that a high percentage of our residents are satisfied with the Council's overall services.

"We will continue to work hard to ensure we maintain an excellent service for residents."

The survey will be analysed by officers and any lessons learnt will be included in service plans for 2006/07.

Tories are aiming at very low council tax rise

Fareham Borough Council is considering a council tax rise for 2006/2007 of just 1.9%.

This is consistent with low rises in the Borough Council's share of the tax which has been set over the last 7 years of Conservative administration.

It means the level will remain the lowest in Hampshire and among the lowest in the country, despite Fareham receiving one of the smallest levels of government

grant of any authority.

There will, as always, be no reductions in the important services we provide to our residents.

It has also been possible to freeze pay and display parking charges in the town centre for a further year and to not charge on Sundays, evenings, Bank Holidays, for disabled residents or outside the town centre.

Now that pay-on-foot has been introduced in the multi storey car parks and in

Market Quay, shoppers need only to pay for the period they stay and do not need to rush back to their cars.

Council Executive Leader Councillor Seán Woodward said: "I am very proud to be again recommending such a low council tax increase of just a few pennies per week while being able to maintain and enhance the important services we provide."

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