

Response to MM3 Policy ALH1

This modification increases the allocation of new homes in existing settlement within the borough from the period from 2013 to 2032, Farnham from 2,330 to 2,780, no increase to Dunsfold and confirms that the numbers are minimum

- Farnham is not unwilling to take further development. It is a town of aspiration and ambition.
- The Farnham Neighbourhood Plan was positively-prepared
- It was the understanding of the need for further housing and employment that prompted the town to develop its own plan, as soon as the Localism Act came into being in 2011.
- The Farnham Neighbourhood Plan was originally following the same timetable as the Waverley Local Plan.
- The Local Plan was delayed but the Neighbourhood Plan had already completed its consultation.
- The town actively sought sites for development.
- There was no limit proposed on housing numbers.
- The Plan was a true community effort over four years, involving local societies, the Chamber of Commerce, Residents' Associations, neighbouring parishes and individuals.
- The Neighbourhood Plan was created to make sure that development was plan-led in our town. The team worked closely with Waverley throughout the process.
- The criteria for selection of sites were based on national guidance and evidence from Natural England, the Surrey Wildlife Trust and Waverley Borough Council.
- These criteria and the methodology were challenged by developers during the examination in public of the Neighbourhood Plan and in the High Court. On both occasions the criteria were judged to be fair and robust.
- All sites, which fulfilled the criteria, were included in the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan.
- All sites were visited by the Farnham neighbourhood planning team and the criteria were rigorously applied to every site in the current Land Availability Assessment
- The Plan actively seeks and supports development on all brown-field sites within the town.
- Everybody involved with the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan understands the need for plan-led development and for a sound Local Plan to be in place. Support for the Local Plan was expressed at every workshop and meeting.
- It is possible to have a sound Local Plan, while retaining respect for a made Neighbourhood Plan. Other boroughs have done this by making all figures minimum and not allocating sites in areas where there is a made Neighbourhood Plan.
- The Neighbourhood Plan examiner would not sanction the site allocations in the plan without further reassurance on SANG. There is currently no provision in the pipeline, to deliver the additional 450 homes allocated.
- Support for the Plan at referendum was overwhelming at 88% with a turnout of 38%
- The decision not to uplift the number at Dunsfold Park is political.

- The original consultation on four scenarios in October 2014 resulted in overwhelming support (80%) for 3,400 homes at Dunsfold Park and fewer green-field releases around Farnham and Cranleigh.
- The Dunsfold Park team confirmed to the Inspector that it could deliver upwards of 3,000 homes before 2032 but Waverley did not increase its allocation by a single dwelling.
- Dunsfold Park is the site most likely to deliver the homes within the life of the Local Plan. Everything is in place and it is well-known that the applicant intends to put in a larger application as soon as the Secretary of State has made his decision on the existing called in application for 1,800 homes.
- The spatial strategy has been accepted as sound. The fairer way to distribute the increased housing numbers would be an uplift of around 150/160 at each of the main settlements, 400 at Dunsfold Park and 300 in the villages.
- Waverley can distribute the increased allocation in any way it chooses. A flat-rate uplift across the borough would have been a much fairer way to distribute the numbers and retain the spatial strategy.
- Farnham is being asked to take more housing than the borough's largest brown-field site, despite the fact that the roads around the town are the most congested in the borough and there are air quality issues within the town centre and beyond.
- In Waverley's own transport evidence relating to Farnham it was stated that existing areas of congestion and delay will remain and be exacerbated by the development of 2,330 homes as proposed. It also stated that the town will not be benefitting from any proposed local or strategic mitigation schemes.
- Air quality is a growing problem in the town. The most recent figures were not released, despite pressure from local groups. It has now been stated that the data from January 2016 to September 2017 are wrong and that Waverley has demanded an urgent review of its current arrangements. It is possible that the harm in our town has been understated.
- Development in neighbouring boroughs will put pressure on all the town's network and services. There are currently around 30,000 homes intended to be built within six miles of the Farnham boundary with no significant improvements to the road system proposed.
- The associations and societies, which were instrumental in the production of the Plan, remain active in the monitoring of its success.
- It was Waverley's deliberate decision to render the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan out of date.
- There was no consultation whatsoever with towns and parishes on the distribution of the increased housing numbers demanded by the Local Plan Inspector.
- As a result of Waverley's declaration, developers have written to the Secretary of State, to inform him of the borough's decision and to ask that the three outstanding appeals with him are allowed.
- In addition to these three appeals on Land at Waverley Lane, Land to the rear of Bindon House, Monkton Lane and Land at Lower Weybourne Lane, three other sites, Folly Hill, Farnham Park hotel and Green Lane Farm are now extremely vulnerable.
- All these six sites were not included in the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan, as they did not fulfil the criteria set by the Neighbourhood Planning team.