



# WINCHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

[www.winchfield-pc.org.uk](http://www.winchfield-pc.org.uk)

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30 August 2019

Mr Ranil Jayawardena MP  
House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

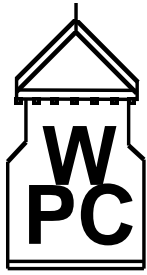
Dear Mr Jayawardena,

Thank you for your letter dated 20 August 2019 which has been most helpful in enabling us to understand your position with regard to the Shapley Heath Garden Village (SHGV) bid.

We appreciate that it is HDC's role to decide local planning policy, and it is not a matter you can directly influence. In this respect, we were pleased to note that you are aware of the 'bias' that has been (and continues to be) shown by the Liberal Democrat/Community Campaign Hart coalition towards the Shapley Heath new settlement proposal. We trust that we can rely on your ongoing support in applying pressure on HDC to ensure that all options for long term growth in Hart (beyond the plan period) are robustly tested in a fair and impartial manner.

That said, we remain extremely concerned that the controlling administration will, encouraged by the funding from HM Government, now proceed with a local plan review that (once again) predetermines SHGV as the most appropriate strategy in the long term, over other growth options. Furthermore, for the reasons set out in our letter to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government, it will do so having unfairly received the funding. In summary, these reasons include:

- The bid falsely presents the proposal as a discrete new settlement, rather than a transformational development to existing settlements (Winchfield & Murrell Green). As such it fails to meet the prerequisites required in the Garden Village assessment criteria for a transformational development bid;
- It promotes housing delivery beyond identified needs at the expense of achieving sustainable development;
- It will not meet the criterion for development to be on predominantly brownfield sites (which we note that you strongly favour);
- The bid is not locally led, as demonstrated by the significant concern it has generated in Winchfield and across our fellow Parishes;



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- There is a lack of evidence to demonstrate that the proposal is deliverable and sustainable, as confirmed by the Inspector's findings on the submitted Plan;
- The bid assumed that the Local Plan, containing a new settlement Area of Search, would be found sound and adopted in 2019. This is no longer the case.

Our letter to the Secretary of State has the formal support of seven Parish Councils, with two others expected to follow. We are all deeply concerned by recent announcements from CCH which reveal that it will, encouraged by the government funding, push on with its proposal for SHGV. In doing so CCH is ignoring local opinion and localism principles but also irresponsibly overlooking the Inspector's independent assessment and clear guidance to impartially assess reasonable alternatives. The disastrous outcome for the area would result in the coalescence of Fleet with Hartley Wintney, Hook and Odiham destroying the "green lung" of Hart.

The response which we have received today from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (enclosed) unfortunately does not do anything to address the issues we have raised in our letter over the validity of the bid, nor does it provide any comfort that there is an expectation on the part of HM Government that a new settlement growth option for Hart is impartially assessed alongside all other options as part of the Local Plan review process.

On behalf of the named Parish Councils, we request a meeting with you to discuss our concerns and to ask you to assist us in engaging with the Secretary of State to ensure the critical issues we have raised are fully recognised and addressed. Time is of the essence before more public money (the £150,000 of government funding and £850,000, already budgeted, of HDC taxpayers' funds) is spent progressing with a project which has already been proven at the Examination to be neither necessary nor deliverable. As you rightly say in your letter, we all want to see a plan that has respected the objectively assessed housing requirement and promotes a brownfield first agenda in line with the NPPF.

As our MP for this beautiful and largely rural area we appreciate and share your stated passion for North East Hampshire. We look forward to meeting with you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

Meyrick Williams

Vice-Chairman Winchfield Parish Council

Enc. MHCLG letter to WPC dated 23 August 2019

CC. Cllr Dr Anne Crampton

Parish Councils of: Hartley Wintney, Dogmersfield, Odiham, Eversley, Crondall, Greywell, South Warnborough, Long Sutton & Well





Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

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Our Ref: 4392654  
Your Ref:

Date: 23 August 2019

Dear Meyrick,

Thank you for your letter, dated 8 August, to Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP regarding Shapley Heath Garden village. Your letter has been passed to me for a response as it falls within my policy responsibilities.

Let me start by thanking you for your interest and role in the locally-led planning process.

We haven't built enough homes in this country for far too long and to deliver the homes the country needs the government has an ambition to deliver 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s.

The government is clear that this should be a country that works for everyone and this means building more of the right homes, in the right places, and ensuring the housing market works for everybody.

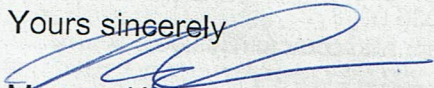
Well-planned, well-designed, locally-led garden communities can play a vital role in helping meet this country's housing need well into the future, through providing a stable pipeline of homes. These will be places that people are happy to call home, with the potential to become vibrant, thriving communities where people can live and work for generations to come.

I note that the inspector stated "I consider that it would not be unsound for the Plan to retain the Council's aspirations to plan for long-term needs beyond the Plan period, which could include the delivery of a new settlement. But, the Plan should clearly state that this, as a growth option, would need to be fully considered and evidenced in a future (potentially early or immediate) review of the Plan or a subsequent DPD."



Building a garden community is by nature ambitious and long term and the funding awarded to Hart District Council will enable the authority to carry out the necessary work and planning for development, where the right infrastructure is provided at the right time, and which delivers a high-quality new community that stands out from the ordinary, and satisfies the planning process.

Yours sincerely



Masum Ali  
Policy Official