

PARISH COUNCIL HOUSING NUMBERS SURVEY 2012

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

What is the purpose of this housing consultation?

A key aspect of the Government's new approach to planning outlined in the Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the intention that local communities should play a much stronger role in plan making. The NPPF is clear that plan making should be a positive and proactive process that helps to protect and enhance aspects of community life that are highly valued, whilst taking a problem solving approach to identifying opportunities to accommodate growth and development.

Chichester District Council is therefore seeking the views of Parish Councils on how many new homes should be planned in each parish over the next 15 or so years. This consultation will inform our current work in preparing the Local Plan.

How is new housing being planned for?

The Council is currently preparing a Core Strategy and Development Management Policies document which will form the main part of the new Local Plan. The Core Strategy will set the framework for all new development in the District (excluding the National Park) over the period to 2029, including specifying the overall numbers and broad distribution of housing to be built. It will also set out development requirements for affordable housing (including rural 'exception sites') and specialist housing (e.g sheltered housing).

How much new housing will be needed?

Allowing for existing planning permissions, we estimate that new sites for around 4,200 extra homes will need to be provided over the Plan period. These figures are based on the District housing target set in the current Regional Strategy (the South East Plan). Although the Government has indicated that it intends to revoke Regional Strategies, there is currently no timetable for this, therefore we are legally obliged to plan for the South East Plan housing targets. However, it should be noted that evidence from recent studies¹ independently commissioned by the Council have indicated that a broadly similar level of housing is likely to be required over the Plan period. Therefore, the South East Plan housing target provides a realistic starting point for planning housing provision in the Local Plan.

¹ Chichester District Local Housing Requirements Study (report by DTZ, July 2011); Coastal West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (report by G.L Hearn, forthcoming).

How will the Local Plan provide for the new housing?

The Core Strategy will provide for new housing in two ways.

- By identifying a small number of strategic locations to be developed for large scale housing, accompanied by other development such as employment and community facilities; and
- By setting out the broad distribution of housing on smaller sites to be provided in each parish. This will take the form of an indicative range of housing numbers for each separate parish – which is what we are consulting you on in this consultation. However, the Core Strategy will not identify specific sites or locations for this smaller scale housing.

How will the small scale housing sites be identified?

Those Parish Councils wishing to prepare Neighbourhood Plans will have the option of identifying suitable sites for housing in their plans. However, to be in conformity with the Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans must provide sufficient sites to meet the housing numbers set out in the Core Strategy.

In parishes not covered by a neighbourhood plan, the District Council will work closely with the parish council and local community to identify suitable housing sites. These sites will be identified in a Site Allocations Plan which the Council will prepare following adoption of the Core Strategy.

What about strategic housing sites?

In addition to the indicative housing numbers for each parish, the Core Strategy will also identify a number of strategic locations suitable for large scale mixed-use development. It is envisaged that strategic sites will deliver the majority of new housing required over the Plan period, with the smaller parish housing sites making up the remainder. The Council has previously undertaken public consultation² on possible strategic locations on the edge of Chichester City and at Tangmere. We are continuing work to evaluate these sites and will involve the relevant parish councils in separate discussion and consultation concerning these sites.

How have the housing numbers for each parish been derived?

The proposed range of housing numbers for each parish is based on a wide range of different factors such as parish population, housing needs, and availability of local facilities, accessibility and public transport. It also takes account of known development constraints and the likely availability of sites (drawing on the Housing Land Availability Assessment published in 2010 which is currently being updated). Some relevant data is included in the Key Facts sheet for your parish which is included with this consultation.

² Focus on Strategic Growth Options (January 2010) and Housing Numbers and Locations (August 2011)

How do the parish housing numbers relate to overall housing requirements?

The housing requirements calculations and suggested parish housing numbers are set out in a separate table included with this consultation.

Do the parish numbers include unidentified (windfall) sites that may come forward?

Our estimate of future housing requirements across the Plan area already makes allowance for housing likely to come forward on small windfall sites of less than 6 dwellings. So these small sites would not count towards the parish housing figures. However, any larger schemes of 6 or more dwellings which may come forward through planning applications would count towards the proposed parish housing targets. This would include any new sites that come forward before the Local Plan is adopted in response to the District Council's Facilitating Appropriate Development (FAD) Interim Statement.

What account has been taken of infrastructure and facilities?

The Council is fully aware that planning for new housing across the Plan area depends on the capacity of infrastructure and facilities, ranging from roads and wastewater to schools, shops and play areas. In many areas, delivery of new housing will need to be planned in conjunction with infrastructure improvements. In its work on the Local Plan, the Council has already consulted extensively with the key infrastructure providers such as West Sussex County Council and the water companies. We have also undertaken studies to assess existing infrastructure capacity and future requirements. This work is continuing with important studies on transport and open space requirements currently ongoing.

Where housing schemes directly require improvements to local infrastructure, the Council will expect the developer to provide or fund these through planning conditions and Section 106 agreements linked to the planning permission. More general improvements to community facilities (e.g schools, community halls and open space) may be funded by pooling development contributions through the new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Some large infrastructure improvements (e.g expansion of wastewater facilities and major road schemes) will require public funding. The Council is preparing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will identify and cost all the key infrastructure improvements required for the Local Plan.

Will further Local Plan work alter the parish housing figures being proposed in this consultation?

As indicated above, the Council's work to prepare the Local Plan is not yet complete. We will need to take into account any significant issues emerging from further evidence studies or consultation with key stakeholders, which includes the Parish Councils. The parish housing figures proposed in this consultation should therefore be regarded as provisional.

Having said this, the Council has already undertaken considerable background work on local housing requirements, development constraints and infrastructure requirements. Therefore, subject to any new evidence, we are confident that the figures suggested in this consultation are justifiable.

The Council will be undertaking full public consultation on the draft Local Plan Core Strategy and Development Management Policies in early 2013. This will include the parish housing figures and all the other proposed housing policies in the Plan.