

Hart District Council (HDC) has launched a survey (see <https://hartgarden.community>) which will run **until Monday 5th July** inviting your views on the characteristics of a Garden Village 'in the Winchfield and Murrell Green area'. The survey is billed as the first of several consultation opportunities.

Let us start on a positive note and recognise that it gives us the opportunity to express our views on a number of issues that will shape our lives, and those of our children, in the years ahead, with the increasing focus on climate change. These include Community & Wellbeing, Homes & Heritage, Sustainable Transport, Green Spaces and Future Proofing. This feedback in itself will be valuable to us as the Parish Council when addressing these issues within the Parish too. However, dealing with the survey as presented by HDC, we are told that:

'The council is testing a development of up to 5,000 homes. This survey, together with future consultations, will help to establish a vision and objectives for the project. This does not commit Hart District Council to build a garden community or establish that permission will be granted for development.'

We continue to welcome the opportunity to learn more about what makes a vibrant community and have engaged with the various working parties (stakeholder thematic groups to use HDC's terminology) with an open mind. Nonetheless we remain strongly opposed to a development of this size in this place, which is just not justified by any planning criteria, and was rejected by the Planning Inspector reviewing HDC's Local Plan who said:

"There is little evidence to demonstrate that a site can actually be delivered in terms of infrastructure, viability and landownership within the identified Area of Search."

Together with a number of neighbouring Parish Councils we have already raised concerns about the way in which the consultation process is being carried out and the construct of this questionnaire to no avail. It is difficult not to conclude that the 'Public Consultation' is pure rhetoric. It is symptomatic that nowhere does the survey specifically ask if you support the development, so the best way to refute it would appear to be under the 'Other' tab where available, and to challenge this unwanted development.

Chris Farrance Chairman
Diana Harvey Chairman Planning

Note: There are a number of helpful information sites you might like to look at:

Hartley Wintney: <https://www.hartleywintney-pc.gov.uk/>

Winchfield Parish Council: <http://www.winchfield-pc.org.uk>

We Heart Hart: <http://wehearhart.co.uk/>

Hart District Council: <https://www.hart.gov.uk/the-council/news/shapley-heath-garden-community-survey-and-website>