

**Draft Report on Odiham and North
Warnborough Affordable Housing
Consultation Event
11th July 2018**

**Proposal for 12 new affordable homes
for local people on land adjacent to
Rough's Cottage, North Warnborough.**

Odiham Parish Council

August 2018



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Introduction and Background

The Odiham and North Warnborough affordable housing consultation event took place at North Warnborough Village Hall, on Wednesday 11th July 2018. It was organised by Odiham Parish Council, in partnership with members of the Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) which includes Hart District Council, Hampshire County Council, Hastoe Group and the Rural Housing Enablers (RHEs) based at Action Hampshire.

The purpose of the event was:

- a) To promote an affordable housing scheme for local people in Odiham and North Warnborough on a site adjacent to Rough's Cottage, North Warnborough.
- b) To provide an opportunity for local people to obtain information about registering for affordable rented and shared ownership properties.
- c) To provide the community with an opportunity to view and comment on the proposals.
- d) To provide information about the work of HARAH, the schemes we have built and the people we have housed.

The aim of HARAH is to increase the supply of affordable houses for local people in the rural villages of Hampshire. Since 2005 the HARAH, the partnership has provided 490 new affordable homes in 49 villages across Hampshire.

In recent years house prices have increased rapidly, particularly in rural areas. This has resulted in many local people being unable to afford to buy or rent a home in the village or rural town they grew up in or work in, and as a result have had to leave to find cheaper, suitable accommodation elsewhere.

House prices in Odiham parish

- Average house prices within the local ward in July 2018 were approximately £485,000. This is approximately 12 times the average annual income.
- To afford a house at this price a household would need on average, a 10% deposit of £48,500 and an income of over £124,000, based on a mortgage of 3.5 times the household income.

Odiham Parish Council and HARAH would like to provide some much needed affordable homes in the parish, to ensure that local people can stay within the area.

Affordable Housing Need in Odiham Parish

Hart District Council's housing register has identified 33 local households in need of affordable rented housing in the parish. In addition 14 applicants have registered for shared ownership with the Help to Buy South housing register.

The Parish Council has been working with the Rural Housing Enabler and Hart District Council for a number of years to identify suitable land for an "Exception Site", where a small scheme of homes could be developed.

Exception sites can only be developed for residential use as an exception to planning policy. Under the rules the homes must be affordable, they must be provided for local people and they must remain so in perpetuity. Rural exception sites are usually adjacent to but outside of the village settlement and seek to accord with planning policy, striking a balance with regard to distance from amenities and impact to the wider area with the need to provide homes for local people.

Exception Site Planning Policy

The following planning policy sets out the criteria by which the planning department would determine whether or not the development is acceptable and could be allowed.

Hart's Saved Local Plan Policy - Affordable Housing - RUR 22 Affordable Housing

RUR 22 HOUSING

DEVELOPMENT WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO RURAL VILLAGES MAY, IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, BE PERMITTED TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS IF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MET:

- (i) The local planning authority must be satisfied that there is a proven need for affordable housing for local people in the immediate vicinity;
- (ii) Development should be of an appropriate size so as not to have an overbearing impact on the settlement or the countryside. A maximum of approximately hectares (1 acre) should normally be developed on the site;
- (iii) The site must normally be immediately adjacent to a defined settlement boundary, or form a logical extension to the existing settlement;
- (iv) The development should not have an adverse effect on the surrounding open countryside;
- (v) Materials and design are appropriate to the character of the surrounding area.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 on housing recognises that the community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration, which can be addressed within local plans and through development control. The best way of ensuring that affordable housing will be maintained is by involving a housing association, but in some cases schemes may be promoted in partnership with private developers.

In rural areas where there is little scope for providing such housing in association with larger developments, and where there is a local need, PPG3 allows for the provision of affordable housing within or adjacent to existing villages, on sites that would not otherwise be permitted for housing.

This policy will normally only apply to sites immediately adjacent to rural settlements defined in this plan. In some exceptional cases however, such schemes may be appropriate adjacent to rural hamlets which do not have settlement boundaries due to their small size, if there is a demonstrated local need.

A Housing Needs Survey, commissioned by the Council in 1994, has revealed a significant need for affordable social housing in the District, endorsed by the Council's Housing Strategy. Hart District Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006: Saved Policies

These findings were confirmed in the 1998 Housing Needs Survey. The local planning authority wishes to ensure that people who are on relatively low incomes and cannot access the owner occupied sector of the housing market have the opportunity to continue to live and work in the District.

The applicant must express willingness to enter into a Section 106 Agreement, the purpose of which will include:

- a) Agreement to nominate a body (normally a housing association or housing trust) to manage the occupancy and maintenance of the dwellings;
- b) Agreement that occupancy shall be restricted and remain available to those who meet the criteria for local need as defined above.

The local planning authority is concerned to prevent houses approved under RUR 22 from ever coming onto the open market. The body nominated to manage such properties will be expected to retain adequate controls over the property to prevent "staircasing".

Emerging Local Plan ‘Strategy and Sites 2016-2032’

Hart District Council has produced a new Local Plan ‘Strategy and Sites 2016-32’ which incorporates a new Rural Exception Site policy H3. Once this policy is adopted it will supersede the saved policy above RUR 22.

Policy H3 Rural Exception Sites

We will seek to meet local affordable housing needs in rural areas by encouraging affordable housing schemes that meet a local need on suitable sites outside settlement boundaries. We will work closely with parish councils and local communities to progress these schemes. In circumstances where agreement cannot be reached, we will consider the use of compulsory purchase powers to procure any land necessary for ‘exception’ development.

Small-scale developments of affordable housing on land adjoining or closely related to villages will be supported provided:

- a) they would address a proven local need for affordable housing;
- b) the affordable housing is available in perpetuity for those with a local connection;
- c) they include a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures that are informed by a discussion and agreement with the Council, including considerations of the current evidence of housing needs for the settlement;
- d) the development is in keeping with the character and size of the settlement. An element of market housing will be supported where at least 70% of the total number of proposed dwellings would be affordable housing solely for subsidised rent.

Hart Local Plan Strategy and Sites 2016-2032 Proposed Submission Version

The development of rural exception sites will help to create sustainable, mixed communities. It will complement the overall supply of new homes in the District, making additional provision in the rural areas, but only where there is a proven local need for affordable housing.

Evidence of need should be drawn from the Council’s Housing Register and from surveys of local residents within the Parish.

Applicants will be required to enter into a planning obligation to ensure that all affordable housing remains available for those with a local connection in perpetuity.

Policy H3 allows for a proportion (not more than 30%) of market housing to come forward on rural exception sites if it helps to deliver the rest of the development as being for affordable subsidised rent. This is to incentivise the delivery of such sites.

The size of an exception site will depend on the level of need and site-specific considerations, but, as a general rule are envisaged to be up to 20 dwellings.

Rural exception sites should be well related to an existing settlement, for example in terms of impact on landscape, heritage assets, and the setting of the settlement. The development should also be well designed to be in keeping with the character of the settlement.

The Development Site

The site adjacent to Rough's Cottage, North Warnborough has been chosen as a result of the support for a Rural Exception Site in the Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan 2014-32.

A number of sites were considered but only the landowner of the site adjacent to Rough's Cottage was prepared to make the site available to purchase at a rural exception site land value, in order for the site to be developed in accordance with the above Rural Exception Site Policy, RUR 22 Housing.

The proposed indicative sketch layout was displayed at the event to show people what might be possible and to provide a useful starting point for discussion.

A proposed sketch layout shown at the event is provided in Appendix 3.

The proposals are yet to be considered by the Hart District Council Planning Department. It is very likely that the proposal will be subject to change as a more detailed design is formed. Part of the next stage of the pre-planning process will be to agree a defined site boundary, size and position.

A further consultation event will be organised by Hastoe Group once more detailed proposals have been drawn up, prior to a planning application being submitted.

Definitions

What is affordable housing?

Affordable housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households.

Rural affordable housing is housing which is provided in rural parishes for local people who would not otherwise be able to find an affordable place to live locally through the general housing market.

Affordable rented housing is usually owned by a Registered Housing Provider and rented at a weekly rent that is below market rents, usually below 80% of market rent.

Intermediate housing is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans) and other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

Shared Ownership is the name for a part-buy, part-rent option. Shared ownership is an opportunity for those on modest incomes to get on the property ladder. The purchaser will buy a share of the equity of the property and the housing association retains the remaining share. Most housing associations charge an affordable rent on the unsold share.

Typically a share may be between 25%- 75%. All shared ownership units on this scheme will be retained for local people. Residents will only be able to purchase up to 80% of the property as the homes must remain available for future shared ownership purchasers locally.

Who is eligible for the housing?

Rented Housing

Priority for the rented homes will go to those with a housing need and a local connection to Odiham and North Warnborough parish. They must also be registered with Hart District Council's Housing Register.

Shared Ownership

Those interested in shared ownership must register with 'Help to Buy South'. To be eligible for shared ownership, a household must be unable to afford a home suited to their needs on the open market. Their income and savings must be sufficient to be able to afford the property. Priority will go to those with a local connection to the parish as set out below.

Local Connection - includes, currently living in the parish; working in the parish; lived in the parish previously and have close family still living in the parish; providing support to or being supported by a family member living in the parish.

Community Consultation Event

A public community consultation event, inviting comments on the proposal for 12 affordable homes for local people on land adjacent to Rough's Cottage, North Warnborough took place at North Warnborough Village Hall on Wednesday 11th July 2018, between 3.30pm and 7.00pm.

A flyer advertising the event and inviting people to attend was produced. Flyers were distributed by hand to homes closest to the scheme. The Parish Council advertised the event on its notice boards, website and Facebook pages. Flyers were also placed in the local post office, library, health centre and nursery, café's in Odiham and the farm shop at Lodge Farm, as well as distributed around homes in the White Water Estate and Recreation Road areas.

The display boards at the event provided an introduction to the work of Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) and an explanation of the work that had been undertaken by HARAH and Odiham Parish Council. Site plans showing a possible layout option for the site was displayed, together with information about registering for affordable housing and the current housing need in the Parish. Information on Hart District Council's Exception Site Policy RUR 22 was also on display, as were photographs of completed HARAH rural affordable housing schemes.

Comment sheets were provided for visitors to record their views on the suitability of the proposed site and the sketch proposal.

Representatives from the Parish Council, Hart District Council's Housing Department and Hastoe Group were in attendance, along with the Architect and the Rural Housing Enabler, all of whom were available to answer questions.

A list of attendance was recorded and attendees were asked to provide their address or postcode. Of those providing this information the overwhelming majority were from Odiham and North Warnborough parish area with a number of residents living within close proximity of the proposed site.

Response to the event

There was a steady flow of visitors to the exhibition. 33 people were recorded on the attendance list although not everyone signed in. Overall the attendance is estimated to have been in the region of 40 people.

Comments were either posted in the comment box at the event or sent to the Rural Housing Enabler over the following weeks. The closing date for responses was 25th July 2018.

21 responses were received in total and all have been taken into consideration and included in this report.

HARAH would like to thank all those who attended and those who provided comments; this has provided us with valuable feedback. We appreciate the fact that many residents have spent a lot of time completing the forms/responding to the proposals.

A copy of the flyer inviting local residents to the event and the comment sheet are attached at Appendix 1 and 2.

Anecdotal comments from Officers attending the event

The consultation event in general was well received. Parishioners were interested in the proposals and keen to ask questions and engage in discussion. There were a number of key themes that emerged from discussions during the consultation event.

- People were generally supportive of the principle of delivering affordable housing for local people in the Parish. Many stated that there was a need for this type of housing which provides homes for local people.
- A number of people expressed interest in the homes and mentioned the number of years they had been registered and their local connection status to Odiham parish.
- Others wanted to know how they could register for a property.
- One positive comment was made by a lady interested in a 2 bed shared ownership property that the costs were lower than she currently paid in a 2 bed privately rented property in Odiham.
- There were questions on local connection, tenure split and eligibility criteria.
- People asked about the next stages for the proposal and how they would know whether a pre-planning application and full planning application had been made.
- There was concern regarding the sustainability of the site and its distance to local facilities
- One attendee felt the event should have been publicised more widely.
- Two attendees raised concern that the site had too many homes proposed.
- Other issues raised included problems with the existing drainage system in the area and whether this system would struggle with the additional homes planned.

- A number of concerns were raised about whether the proposed scheme might add to the existing parking problems along Bartley Heath Road, caused by cars using the pub or visiting the pottery and heavy vehicles parking on the road overnight to access the Lodge Farm and its farm shop.
- A number of people raised concerns on pedestrian safety. The busy main road does not have a pedestrian crossing and people raised concern about how children would get to school without the use of a car.
- Traffic concerns were expressed especially the poor visibility at the junction

Written Comments

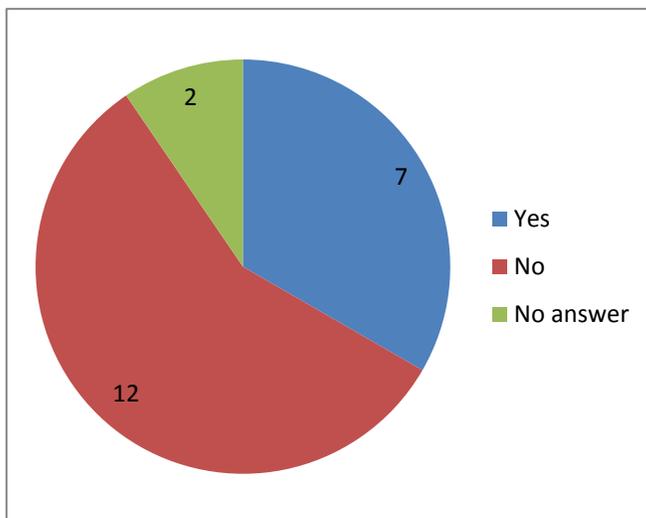
21 comment sheets were returned. These comments have been paraphrased and summarised below. The number assigned next to a particular issue illustrates the number of people who made similar comments. People made both singular and multiple comments. There was no uniform way of commenting and not all questions were answered.

The following tables and graphs set out the results of the survey.

Respondents were first asked,

Do you think that this site is suitable for an affordable housing development for local people?

Yes	7
No	12
No answer	2



Respondents were then given the opportunity to comment on the site and proposals. A broad range of comments were received.

Some of the comments relate to the site, however respondents also used this opportunity to comment about the project in more general terms, as well as existing traffic/amenity issues.

The comments received have been paraphrased and grouped by subject area. A summary of the type of comments and their frequency is set out below.

Suitability of the site

The site is too far from amenities	3
The site is well located for amenities	1
The area is overcrowded	1
Planning have already rejected the site	2
The site is not well related to Odiham	2
The site is not suitable	1
Poor access for alternatives to the car	3
Concern regarding noise levels	3
Concern regarding air pollution from the road	2

Layout and design

Noise from the main road needs consideration	1
Layout seems good with plenty of open space	1
Size and shape is too small for the number of houses	1
Flats to have communal gardens not individual with washing line etc.	1
Need small play area as no parks near by	1

Highways/Traffic

The roundabout is very busy/dangerous/existing farm traffic	3
More development will increase traffic problems	3
Very busy roads	3
No pedestrian crossing/difficult for pedestrians	5
Traffic safety needs to be considered/lower speed/traffic lights	2

Ecology/landscape/heritage

Incompatible with local plan leads to the loss of land which contributes to the character of the area	1
Rare birds nest Fire Crests - scheme will impact on breeding	2

Impact to neighbours

Concern regarding impact to existing amenities i.e. plumbing and internet which are poor	1
No/low impact to neighbours due to good access points/barrier screening	2

The homes

Concern regarding ensuring homes are in a good state of repair	1
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Site access

Access would create Conflict with existing traffic	2
Access too close to roundabout/traffic from roundabout	3

Parking

Concern regarding existing level of parking	3
Adequate parking is required for the development	2
Concern regarding retaining enough parking for adjacent businesses	1

Other

Concern regarding drainage issues	3
The area is already fully developed	1
The architects sketch is confusing	1
Affordable homes will devalue existing homes	1
Proposal conflicts with previous planning decision	1
Planning permission is being sought for other homes in the area	1
The proposal will result in a significant increase in the number of homes	1

Questions relating to the sketch proposal.

Respondents were then given the opportunity to comment on the sketch which was provided.

Respondents were asked to comment on what they liked, their concerns and any changes that they would like to suggest. There was also the opportunity to provide any other comments.

The tables below show a summary of the type of comments and their frequency. Please note that these tables combine the comments received for all four questions and that not all questions were answered.

Comments about the scheme – positive

Nothing	4
Well-spaced/not overdeveloped	3
Well thought out	1
Homes for local people	1
Energy efficient design	1
Private	1

Suggested changes

Not affordable homes/homes for 2nd time buyers	1
Design should be appropriate for the conservation area	1
Should be less homes	2
Need a crossing at the roundabout	1
Need to address drainage issues	1
None	1

Do not develop	1
Need more homes	1

Comments about the scheme – concerns

Noise from the road	4
None	1
Site previously turned down by planning	1
Crossing the road	1
Parking	1
Highway safety/very busy roads/increase in traffic	3
Too far from amenities/transport/the village	3
Concern regarding drainage	3
Not a good gateway to the conservation area	1
Unsuitable site	2
Impact to existing amenities, Doctors, schools etc.	1

General Comments

Would like to see more housing like this in villages in Hampshire	1
Would like assurances that issues would be addressed if this site were to be developed	1
Older people need affordable housing as well, not just younger people	1
Majority object to development	1
If I were housed here I would be able to keep an eye on my parents	1

Housing need

Respondents were asked if they or a family member are in housing need in the Odiham and North Warnborough area and have a local connection to Odiham Parish.

8 respondents noted that they or a family member were in housing need and have a strong local connection to the parish.

5 noted that they were already registered with Hart District Council's housing register for affordable rented housing and 1 noted that they were registered with Help to Buy South for shared ownership and affordable homebuy products.

Many of the others not registered provided contact details and will be contacted by Hart District Council Housing Department in order to facilitate registering.

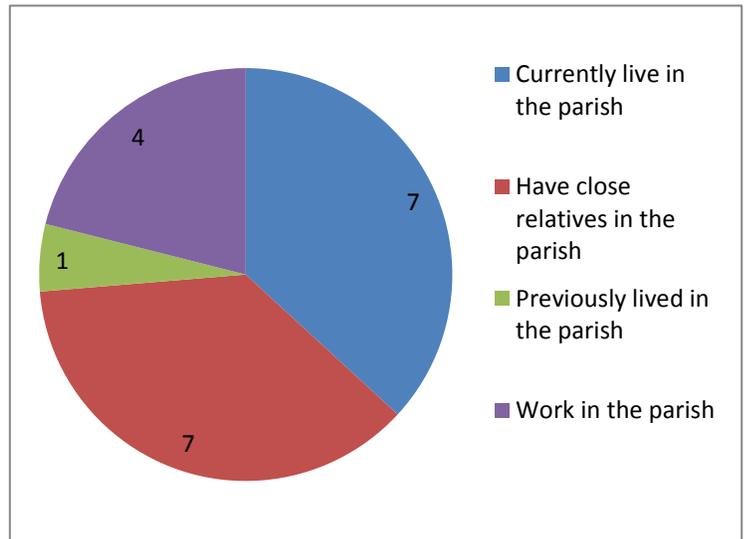
Are you or a family member in need of affordable housing in Odiham Parish?



What is your local connection to the parish?

Respondents were able to select more than one answer. All 8 respondents answered this question.

Currently live in the parish	7
Have close relatives in the parish	7
Previously lived in the parish	1
Work in the parish	4
No answer	0



Conclusion

The exhibition was attended by approximately 40 people and 21 people chose to provide written comments either at the event or later by post.

The purpose of the event was to promote an affordable housing scheme for local people in Odiham and North Warnborough and to provide information to members of the community as to why the proposed development is needed. It was also an opportunity for people to make comments on the scheme and for HARAHA and the Parish Council to understand any concerns residents may have in relation to the development of the proposed site. In addition the event provided an opportunity for local people who require this type of housing to find out more, including how to register. It also provided an opportunity for us to display information about the work of HARAHA, the schemes we have built and the people we have housed.

A number of people both at the event and those providing comments were positive about the design and layout of the scheme and also the general principle of providing an affordable housing scheme for local people in Odiham Parish. In addition a number of people expressed interest in applying for the homes.

A number of residents however raised concerns regarding the proposal both in terms of the number of homes proposed and the suitability of the site in terms of its distance away from local amenities. Concern was raised regarding traffic and highway safety for residents both as pedestrians and car users, as was the impact of noise levels from the road and air pollution. A number of people who lived close to the site expressed concern that the proposed development may exacerbate existing drainage problems in the area.

At the time of the consultation event there were 33 local households registered on Hart District Council's housing register for a rented property and 14 households registered for shared ownership on the Help to Buy South register.

8 respondents noted that they or a family member are in housing need. 5 are currently registered on one or other of the housing registers, the other respondents interested in the homes stated they intended to register. Information regarding how to register was also provided at the event.

The fact the scheme would provide much needed affordable homes for local people was greeted positively and several respondents commented on this, a number of respondents also felt that more homes were needed.

There were a number of positive comments regarding the sketch design and layouts, including that the scheme was well spaced and not over developed, the barrier

screening between the scheme and its neighbours, the access and the energy efficient design were seen as positive.

A number of respondents suggested some changes which included consideration for the conservation area in the design as well as insuring the scheme had adequate parking spaces. The provision of small play area was also suggested.

A number of comments were made regarding the specifics of the scheme and it is clear that the information captured by the event and the associated comments need to be carefully considered and the scheme proposals that will be drawn up following this consultation will take these in to account where possible and appropriate.

It is accepted that Odiham local housing need cannot realistically be met through the existing affordable housing stock in the village and the only way to address this need is to build further housing specifically for local people. Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing (HARAH) believes that the most suitable site to provide this housing is the site being proposed.

In conclusion, the consultation event was useful in promoting a rural exception site affordable housing scheme for local people in the Odiham and North Warnborough parish area. It gave the local community an opportunity to find out more about the draft proposals for the site and it gave Odiham Parish Council and HARAH officers an opportunity to obtain the views of the local community in respect of the potential proposal. This information needs to be considered in more detail and will aid discussions leading to the drawing up of a formal proposal prior to the submission of a planning application by Hastoe Group. The Parish Council are asked to support this site as the preferred site to provide a rural exception site affordable housing scheme for local people of Odiham Parish.

Recommendation

It is recommended that:

1. The Parish Council consider this report, accept its findings and work with HARAH in developing an affordable housing scheme for local people in the parish.
2. The Parish Council accept the principle that more affordable housing is needed in the Parish based on the housing need findings of this report and the existing registers.
3. The Parish Council agree that the site adjacent to Rough's Cottage, North Warnborough is the preferred site to deliver these homes, with the exact location, numbers and mix to be discussed and agreed with the Parish Council before a full planning application is made.

Appendix 1 - Flyer
Appendix 2 - Comment sheet
Appendix 3 - Sketch 1

(Separate documents)