

Oct 19th 2016 p.10

Under siege: Developers' plans to build over Hart

Lack of Local Plan is attracting a rush of housing proposals

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WITH no Local Plan in place despite many years of trying, Hart District Council is now potentially facing a massive development onslaught.

Hardly a week goes by without a developer proposing speculative plans for more homes across the district.

The first major housing bid was the controversial Winchfield new town plan proposed by Barratts in late 2014.

The developer claimed its Winchfield Garden Community Vision could deliver 4,000 to 5,000 new homes in the form of 'garden

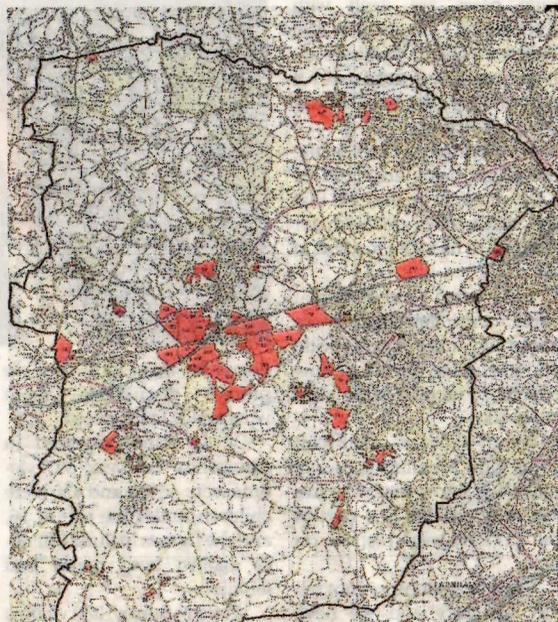
neighbourhoods' over a 15 to 20-year period.

But Winchfield Parish Council chairman Andrew Renshaw fumed at the time: "I have read every word of the 'vision' which is 32 pages of the ultimate mindless ecodrivél. Every sentence is a nonsense."

And Winchfield Action Group (WAG) warned one huge conurbation of 'Hartley Winchook' would be created if the proposal ever went ahead.

There is also a bid to build up to 1,500 homes between Fleet and Farnborough.

St Edward Homes, part of the Berkeley Group, wants to build the new mini-town at the former Pyestock site,



Under threat: A map of Hart district showing where developers have suggested homes could be built.

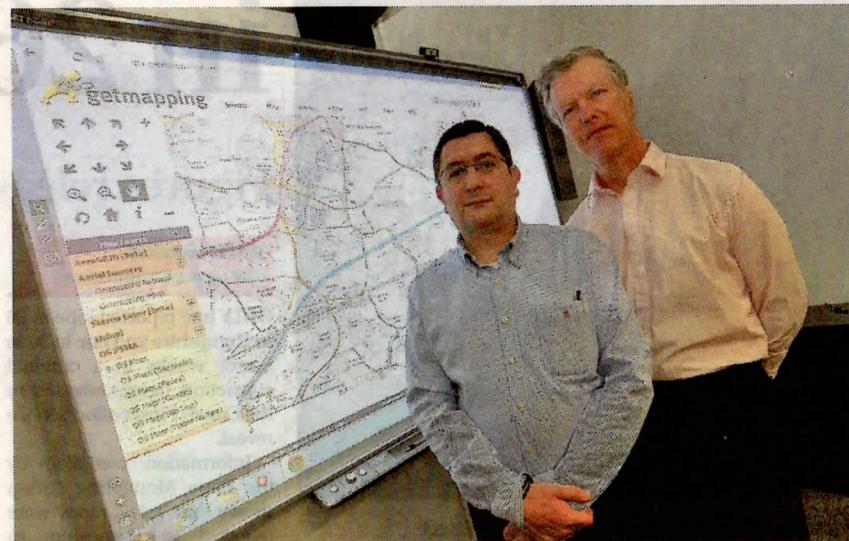
which it has now renamed Hartland Village.

The developer has already submitted initial proposals for a potential residential development on the 135-acre site.

In July Wates Developments revealed an illustrative masterplan for its proposed Elvetham Chase residential scheme to the north of the town.

The developer said it will be 'a contemporary neighbourhood firmly rooted in its heritage, ecology and landscape setting, providing a tranquil community for residents and visitors alike.'

It is proposing to build up to 700 new homes (including 280 'affordable' units) on the 59 hectare (146 acre) site, which is to the west of the current Elvetham Heath



David Turver, left, from We Heart Hart and Tristram Carey of Winchfield Action Group with a map of Hart district and the areas under threat of development.

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estate and around a mile from Fleet town centre.

And just last week, plans were revealed to build a 1,500-home 'Rye Common new village' on land between Odiham and Crondall.

Plans build 150 homes on land to the east of Moulsham Lane in Yateley, known locally as the Urnfield site, were recently approved on appeal despite more than 700 people signing a petition against the proposal, while a bid to build 121 homes in Marsh Lane, Eversley, have been withdrawn on appeal while the developer studies recent appeal decisions.

Meanwhile, campaigners are still waiting to see if developer Berkeley will appeal against a decision to throw out plans for 423 homes on

fields at Grove Farm and Netherhouse Copse, between Fleet and Crookham Village.

David Turver of the We Heart Hart campaign group said it does not make for good reading.

"The delay to the Local Plan and the recent appeal decision about Moulsham Lane, which criticised the age of Hart's saved policies, mean that Hart is running a real risk of not being able adequately to defend itself against the forthcoming planning applications at Netherhouse Moor, Pale Lane, Murrell Green and now Rye Common," he said.

"The draft Local Plan will not now be published for consultation until the New Year, and there is some question over whether the new

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), which should reduce our housing requirement compared to the previous SHMA, will be published before then.

"This leads to a significant risk that central Government will take over the plan making process and force a Local Plan on to Hart."

Hart District Council leader Stephen Parker said: "The best defence against inappropriate development is a robust Local Plan based on robust evidence. The worst is a plan which fails legal examination because the evidence base lacks robustness.

"For that reason I will not present a plan until I can be satisfied that the evidence supporting it will stand up to examination."



St Edward Homes' has plans for a new town at the former Pyestock site.