

Planning for Wokingham Borough

Before the election I was asked about my attitude to the possible construction of more homes in Grazeley when Wokingham next needs to find new areas for development after completing the four large areas currently underway.

I said I would want to know what investment would be needed in schools, surgeries, roads and other public facilities and how these would be paid for. I would also want some reassurance that making a plan around one main development for the next plan period would not leave us vulnerable to landowners and developers persuading Planning Inspectors to grant them additional planning permission elsewhere in the Borough. The Council may wish to concentrate the growth in one major new settlement but needs to know this will not be overturned.

I have been in discussions with Councillors and Ministers about these issues since the election. This post is to confirm that so far I have not seen details on how either of these two matters would be resolved, so I am still pressing for more information. There is no great urgency, as there are still many planning permissions outstanding for the current plan period, where the Council has identified where it wishes the new homes to go. I remain open minded over how many homes could be accommodated in our area in the next plan period, and where they might best be delivered. I am very conscious of the strains placed on all our infrastructure by the pace of building under the current plan.

I will be supporting the Council on appeal where developers are trying to secure permissions outside the approved places under the current plan and where the Council asks for my assistance.