

FACE-IT COMMENTS ON THE HART DISTRICT COUNCIL PRESS RELEASE ON THE DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

' The Face-It Group very much welcomes this constructive and positive Press Release from Hart District Council. The Press Release recognises and takes account of the strong and determined inputs from our members and local residents and outlines an encouraging way forward, which excludes the previously proposed development on Grove Farm. During a full meeting of our group, we will now be recommending that we support the Local Plan, so long as the draft is agreed in its current form in the full meeting of the district council on 25 October.

We will continue to monitor the progress of the Local Plan very closely and our members will be ready to make contributions during the Public Consultation and the Examination in Public in due course. From the outset, we have been asking for our views to be taken into account. We have never opposed the need for essential development but have sought to ensure that we do not have more than our fair share of the necessary development. We will continue to make this case and to press for the retention of the separate identities and rural settings of local communities, with essential development which is appropriate to their needs.

Our infrastructure is already under pressure, especially our local schools, in which places are increasingly hard to find, and our roads, station parking, leisure and health facilities are also under pressure. We will continue to monitor the emerging Core Strategy and to campaign for the improvements in infrastructure that are long overdue, to make the existing development sustainable and capable of coping with the growth identified in the draft Local Plan.

When our campaign began we were told that changes would not be possible but we are now very pleased to see that Hart District Council really has listened and that local opinion and democracy can still influence decisions. This, however, is only the first phase in the process and there will be many further challenges to address before the Local Plan is finally adopted, not least of these will be continuing pressures from developers.'