

CHILHAM PARISH COUNCIL

SUBJECT: ASHFORD LOCAL PLAN – SITE SUBMISSION CONSULTATION

REPORT FROM CLLR ROY LINCOLN

BACKGROUND:

Chilham Parish Council (CPC) held an Open Exhibition on 15th July 2014 in order to give parishioners the opportunity to meet with officers from Ashford Borough Council (ABC) and discuss the ten sites put forward for consideration by local landowners.

Prior to the event the parish council arranged for distribution of a questionnaire to all properties in the parish. Further copies were made available at Chilham post office. The questionnaire sought views on each of the ten sites submitted and also an overall view on the principle of housing development in the parish. Returned questionnaires could be deposited in a sealed box at the exhibition or alternatively at Chilham post office.

The returned questionnaires were recorded and analysed at an Extraordinary meeting of the parish council on 24th July 2014. The overall process was overseen by two independent parishioners.

ANALYSIS:

There were 161 valid responses and the outcome from these can be summarised as follows:-

I support housing development:-	For	%	Against	%	Don't Know	%	Total
Q1-in the parish of Chilham in principle	76	49.7%	62	40.5%	15	9.8%	153
Q2-at Land between Cobbs Hill and Long Hill, Old Wives Lees	40	25.3%	97	61.4%	21	13.3%	158
Q3-at Land at Harvest House, Branch Road	48	32.4%	86	58.1%	14	9.5%	148
Q4-at Ashford Road Service, Station, Ashford Road	87	56.9%	52	34.0%	14	9.2%	153
Q5-at Land at Mulberry Hill (2 sites)	22	14.5%	106	69.7%	24	15.8%	152
Q6-at Noveis, Canterbury Road	78	51.3%	56	36.8%	18	11.8%	152
Q7-at The Avenue Field, Bagham Road	43	27.9%	95	61.7%	16	10.4%	154
Q8-at Land between Bagham Road, Arden Grange & Recreation Ground	47	30.5%	83	53.9%	24	15.6%	154
Q9- at Land at 1-5 The Oast House, Old Wives Lees	46	29.5%	80	51.3%	30	19.2%	156
Q10-at Land between Long Hill and Hawkins' Rough at Old Wives Lees	16	10.3%	123	78.8%	17	10.9%	156
Q11-at Land adjacent Tollgate Cottage, Maidstone Road, Chilham	36	23.7%	96	63.2%	20	13.2%	152

It can be seen from the above analysis that only 2 submissions gained overall support in favour of inclusion in the ABC draft plan (ie site 4 – Ashford Road Service Station and site 6 – Noveis, Canterbury Road). The conclusion to be drawn here is that whilst 49.7% of responders agreed with the principle of some housing development in the parish, support is clearly with very small developments.

The most unpopular proposal with parishioners was that submitted in respect of land between Long Hill and Hawkins Rough. This gained only 16 votes in favour, representing just 10.3% of submitted responses. Indeed, apart from the two supported submissions, no other submission managed to achieve a one in three vote in support of the submission.

On balance, the view expressed in the parish of Chilham is very much against any further medium to large scale development in the next fifteen years. This is understandable given

the developments which have occurred over the past twenty years and the one about to start at the Old Sawmills site.

Many parishioners took the opportunity to submit comments with their questionnaires and these will be forwarded to ABC for their analysis and consideration.

PROPOSAL:

That the parish council supports the outcome of the consultation process which is strongly against housing development on eight of the ten sites submitted.

This outcome, supported by the background and analysis set out above, should be notified to ABC on behalf of the community together with a recommendation that it is recognised when the local authority constructs its draft plan.