

Lodge Hill, Chattenden

Stage Four Public Consultation – Exhibitions

Feedback Analysis

Prepared by PPS Group

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1.0 Introduction

From the outset of the community engagement programme, Land Securities has been committed to providing the local community and interested groups with the opportunity to play a role in the evolution of the Lodge Hill masterplan. It was also deemed important that people could evidence the value of the contribution that they made. Therefore, all feedback received from the public to date has been collated and the reports have been made available on the Lodge Hill website (www.lodgehill.info).

In 2009 Land Securities held a series of public events to engage with the community regarding proposed development at Lodge Hill, Chattenden, in advance of the company's submission to Medway Council's Core Strategy preparations.

Public exhibitions in April 2009 were attended by 597 people from across Medway and 206 feedback forms were submitted by the public for analysis. In July 2009, these exhibitions were followed by workshop sessions to consider the issues highlighted in the feedback in more depth. 113 people attended three-hour workshop sessions, which covered the topics of Community, Environment and Movement. The 2009 programme of public consultation culminated in a series of public exhibitions held in November of that year, attended by 260 people who submitted 44 feedback forms.

The purpose of the November 2009 exhibitions was to gauge whether the emerging proposals for Lodge Hill had adequately responded to the concerns highlighted by the public in the previous consultation events. The results showed that overall, the number of anti-development comments (either general or in relation to Lodge Hill specifically) had decreased by 98%. Furthermore, a number of issues had been minimised as concerns had been addressed through the Lodge Hill masterplan.

In 2010, the Lodge Hill masterplan continued to evolve as the consultant team started to formulate the extensive proposals required for a planning application of this scale. It was felt that over the course of the year the proposals had moved on sufficiently to warrant a further public consultation, to provide interested parties with an update on the team's current thinking as more detailed information was forthcoming.

In November 2010, a further 21 hours of public exhibitions were held across the Hoo Peninsula. Like all previous exhibitions, daytime, evening and weekend slots were provided to make it as convenient as possible for people to attend. Representatives from Medway Council also attended these events, holding a separate yet complementary consultation regarding its Pre-Publication Draft Core Strategy, which identified Lodge Hill as forming part of the Council's strategy for accommodating new housing and other facilities.

The exhibitions were held as follow:

Wednesday 17th November 2010

Venue: The Lodge, Lodge Hill Lane, Chattenden, Kent ME3 8NE
Time: 12pm
Stakeholder preview session

Venue: Wainscott Primary School, Wainscott Road, Wainscott, Rochester, Kent ME2 4JY*
Time: 5pm to 8pm
*This session was cut short due to a power cut across the local area

Thursday 18th November 2010

Venue: High Halstow Village Hall, High Halstow, Rochester, Kent ME3 8TW
Time: 11am to 2pm

Venue: Hundred of Hoo Secondary School, Main Road, Hoo St Werburgh, Kent ME3 9HH
Time: 5pm to 8pm

Friday 19th November 2010

Venue: Cliffe Woods Community Centre, 7-9 Tennyson Avenue, Cliffe Woods, Kent ME3 8JF
Time: 11am to 2pm

Venue: Chattenden Community Centre, Swinton Avenue, Chattenden ME3 8PH
Time: 4pm to 7pm

Saturday 20th November 2010

Venue: The Lodge, Lodge Hill Lane, Chattenden, Kent ME3 8NE
Time: 11am to 3pm

The events were publicised in a variety of different mediums:

- 612 personalised letters of invitation were issued to the Lodge Hill stakeholder database, which is comprised of members of the public who have attended previous Lodge Hill consultation events or who have registered an interest in the development, along with stakeholders such as Parish Councils, Medway Council (Officers and Members), Medway Renaissance, statutory consultees and other interest groups.
- Eight quarter-page adverts were placed in the Medway Messenger (Monday and Friday editions), Medway Adscene (free paper), Medway Extra (free paper) and the Medway News w/c 8th and w/c 15th November 2010. These papers have a combined weekly circulation of 192,738 households.
- A press release was issued to all local media on the 12th November 2010 and coverage appeared in the Medway Messenger on the 15th November.
- The dates of the public exhibitions were circulated to all Parish Councils, for inclusion in their parish newsletters and/or parish websites.
- A4 and A3 colour posted were enclosed within the invitation letters to Parish Councils, Chattenden Community Centre, places of worship, Chattenden Primary School, Deangate Ridge Sports Complex, the Hundred of Hoo School and the Medway Regeneration Ambassadors.

184 people attended the exhibitions in November 2010, broken down as follows at each of the venues:

Wainscott Primary School	5 attendees (session cut short due to a local power cut)
High Halstow Village Hall	21 attendees
Hundred of Hoo School	29 attendees
Cliffe Woods Community Centre	25 attendees
Chattenden Community Centre	34 attendees
The Lodge	70 attendees

In addition, a lunchtime stakeholder preview event was held at The Lodge from midday on 17th November 2010 and this was attended by 20 people.

In total, **204** people visited the public exhibition. The exhibition materials were also published online for people to view at their leisure. Feedback forms were available to complete online or download from the Lodge Hill website and return by post.

28 feedback forms were received by the deadline date of the 11th December 2010 – either returned at the events or returned by post. Although the option was provided for people to complete the feedback online, this was not used by any respondents. 28 feedback forms represent a 14% response rate from the 204 attendees to the exhibition.

2.0 Analysis of Engagement Figures

In November 2009, we identified that both the number of attendees to the events and the response rate for the completion of feedback forms was lower than the first public exhibitions held in April of that year. We have seen a similar pattern a year later, with attendance figures and response rates for the November 2010 public consultation events decreasing slightly further.

In 'Community Engagement – some lessons from the New Deal for Communities Programme', published in September 2008 by Communities and Local Government (CLG), the author states that "it is evident that even where people have been involved, their interest can wane once their immediate problem has been resolved."

This reinforces the belief that a core audience of representatives have self selected their participation in the Lodge Hill public consultation. The team staffing the consultation events in November 2010 also felt that the majority of people attending the public exhibitions came out of interest to view the progress of the development and ask questions of the team, rather than to express strong views.

	Number of Attendees	Feedback Forms Received	Response Rates
Public Exhibitions – April 2009	597	212	36%
Public Exhibitions – November 2009	260	44	17%
Public Exhibitions - November 2010	204	28	14%

Comparison of Attendance Figures and Response Rates

61% of those who completed a feedback form during this round of public consultation have engaged in previous consultation events (17 of the 28 feedback forms). This is split between those who maintain a general interest in the development of the scheme, and those who have issues they feel are yet to be resolved. The table below sets out the difference between the two. Where there are issues still to be addressed, we have set out how this is being achieved – in some cases this involves ongoing dialogue with specific groups.

Previous Consultation Participants

Organisation / Individual	Issue (November 2010)	How Addressing?
Royal Engineers Angling Club	Access to and continued fishing within the ponds at Lodge Hill.	Land Securities subsequently met with the group on a one

		to one basis in February 2011 and a letter of intention has been issued, confirming Land Securities' commitment to enable them to continue fishing.
Federation of Small Businesses	Pleased to see allocation for employment space. Interested in partaking in discussions regarding employment space strategy.	Ongoing meetings with this group.
Resident, Main Road, Hoo	Satisfactory comments about greenspace and the number of new homes proposed. Concerns over road infrastructure.	Transport strategy still in development.
Resident, Marsh Crescent, High Halstow	Importance of retaining employment on the Peninsula; requested restricted access on Dux Court Road; praise for the consultation	Employment and transport strategies still in development.
Resident, Waterloo Road, Gillingham (and Medway Regeneration Ambassador)	Praise for the scheme.	
Peninsula Youth for Christ	Praise for the type of new homes, community facilities and proposed bus service. Recognition that the transport strategy is "moving in the right direction".	
Peninsula Rock Representative	Praise for the greenspace strategy, new homes ("impressive"), employment creation and new facilities. Keen for new facilities to be created for Chattenden within an early development phase.	The phasing plan for the development has not yet been finalized. However, the team is conscious that a new community provision of some form should be made

		available for Chattenden residents as early as possible.
Peninsula Rock Representative	Praise for the greenspace strategy, incorporation of heritage and housing plans. Minor questions raised over building heights, employment opportunities and transport strategy.	Ongoing meetings with this group.
Medway Countryside Forum (MCF)	Unacceptable development on nightingale breeding sites. Ineffective mitigation measures. Proposed development on ALLIs and Public Open Space. Too many homes proposed.	Land Securities is working closely with Medway Council, Natural England and other relevant bodies to ensure that fauna and flora are protected in the appropriate way. The company is fully committed to Natural England's Green Infrastructure Initiative. Housing numbers in line with Medway Council policy. Ongoing meetings are taking place with the MCF.
Diocese of Rochester	Looking forward to further discussions on places of worship. Question raised over the transport strategy.	Ongoing meetings with this group.
Resident, Church Street, Rochester	Housing density too high; little examples of employment generation other than low skilled jobs; belief that community facilities will be the last thing to be created; concerns over road infrastructure; overcrowding of Medway Maritime Hospital.	Average housing density at Lodge Hill is 40dph. This is lower than average. Employment strategy still in development, but will provide a range of jobs across all skill levels. Community facilities will be developed as required. Transport strategy still in development.

Resident, Main Road, Hoo	Praise for the greenspace strategy, heritage aspects, new homes, employment space and new facilities (particularly provision for a secondary school). Concern over emerging transport solution and suggestions made.	Transport strategy still in development.
Resident, Hawthorn Road, Strood	Question over percentage of affordable housing (no figures provided); little employment opportunities; no retention of Public Rights of Way or protection of wildlife; detached and semi-detached homes will be unaffordable for Medway residents.	Amount of affordable housing will be in line with Medway's policies; employment opportunities will be created; all Public Rights of Way have been retained; ongoing engagement with Natural England.
Resident, Broadwood Road, Chattenden	Praise for inclusion of heritage elements, but unable to see any employment opportunities. Transport strategy concerns - solution will be out of date by the time it is finished; buses turning right at the top of Four Elms Hill; Dux Court Road access arrangements.	Job creation is part of the Lodge Hill masterplan, however, employment strategy is still in development. Transport strategy also still in development.
Resident, Castle Street, Upnor	Concern over transport strategy – potential rat running through Upnor.	Transport strategy still in development.

Dickens Country Protection Society	Concerns over treatment of nightingale habitat. Request a reduction in housing numbers. Unsure about access onto Four Elms Hill, as feel it would cause “gridlock”.	Land Securities is working closely with Medway Council, Natural England and other relevant bodies to ensure that fauna and flora are protected in the appropriate way. Housing numbers in line with Medway Council policy. Transport strategy still in development.
Resident, Goddington Road, Strood	Recommend density changes – place low density properties and employment space near the entrance roads and high density nearer to the woodlands.	

New Consultation Participants

The Lodge Hill stakeholder database of those who have registered an interest in the project continues to grow through the ongoing community engagement activities that the Lodge Hill team is undertaking. For example, in October 2010 the first Lodge Hill newsletter was published and distributed to 1,750 households in Chattenden and surrounding villages. In addition, from June 2010 to December 2010, the Lodge Hill team led a six month education programme to engage with 200 secondary school pupils across seven Medway schools.

These ongoing engagement activities continue to generate interest in the proposals. 39% of those who took part in this consultation event (11 of the 28 feedback forms) had not previously completed a feedback form. They may have attended earlier events and/or conversed with the consultant team, but we would not have a record of this unless they filled out a form.

Within the feedback received from this group, issues were raised which have already been addressed through the masterplan evolution (provision of equestrian facilities, retirement bungalows for example), while other issues raised are in line with those detailed by previous consultees (employment creation and transport strategy). Some simply completed their contact details on the feedback form to be kept updated on the progress of the development or to praise the information presented to them.

Summary

It is evident that the main and ongoing issues of interest are the proposed Lodge Hill transport strategy, along with secondary issues of employment creation and wildlife protection. Section 4.0 considers the responses provided on the feedback forms in more detail.

3.0 Analysis Methodology

In order to maintain consistency, the feedback received in these latest exhibitions has been analysed using the same approach as that implemented for the Stages One and Three Public Consultation – Exhibitions Feedback Analysis.

As in previous consultations, the majority of questions posed were ‘open’ questions with no pre-determined answers and a broad range of views, comments, assertions and, in some cases ‘questions’ in response, were provided. To ensure that all comments are accounted for, every written comment received was analysed and key points identified as ‘references’. For example:

Q3 New Homes – Please use this section to leave any comments regarding the new homes that are proposed at Lodge Hill:

“The variety of housing seems good. One concern is height of buildings i.e. can high rise be seen outside of the bowl?”

Resident, Chattenden

This response would be recorded as two references and all responses were then themed to identify any patterns occurring. For this particular question, the two reference categories were; 1) positive and 2) further information requested or questions. A percentage was then calculated in terms of the relative frequency of themed responses to each question. All percentages have been calculated to two decimal places and then rounded to the nearest number.

It is important to note that some of the comments detailed are outside of the consultant team’s or the development’s remit to address. However, all comments have been considered within the statistics.

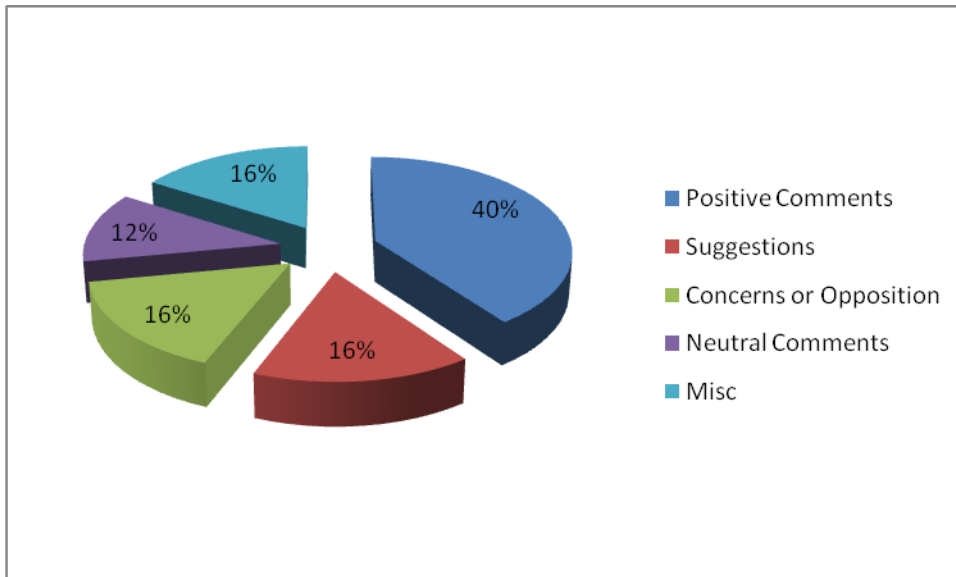
The relatively low feedback form response rate of 28 returned forms should be borne in mind when assessing this information. The number of people answering questions on the feedback form is as low as 10 individuals for some questions. However, this should not diminish the importance paid to the feedback received.

4.0 Analysis of Feedback

Question One – Greenspace

Please use this section to leave any comments about the landscaping and wildlife aspects of Lodge Hill:

20 respondents answered this question and their responses were themed into five categories: positive comments, neutral comments, concerns or comments in opposition to the proposals, suggestions, and miscellaneous comments. By the nature of such an open ended question, the responses were varied even though few in number.



Positive Comments (40%)

Sample comments include:

“Looks like the preservation of green spaces and incorporating wildlife has been thought about thoroughly.”
Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

"It is of paramount importance to preserve the 'green lungs' of the area. There appears on the maps plenty of areas and it is not necessary for the public to have access to all areas."

Resident, Binnacle Road

Respondents also commented that the buffer zones proposed would be beneficial to protect wildlife and that the 'countryside' feel had been retained.

Neutral Comments (12%)

Sample comments include:

"It would be better if you could leave it as it is, beautiful countryside. Trying to be positive though what your [sic] doing looks good."

Resident, Cooling Street

One respondent also wanted to highlight the importance of green space.

Concerns or Opposition (16%)

Sample comments include:

"Current intended development is unacceptable to our forum. This site is nationally important for nightingales, a declining UK species which resonates with the British people. Current plans would destroy some 50% of this species' breeding sites. This should not be permitted by our Council. Regrettably, the mitigation measures will not work, not least as breeding sites will be built on and new sites will be needed for those, never mind other indirectly affected sites."

Medway Countryside Forum

"The areas of buffer zones to property outside of the plan is severely reduced to those included in the plan i.e. Berry Court Wood."

Bridgewood Fields Archery Club

Other respondents felt that the plans were problematic because they were using land not yet allocated for development and were concerned that drug addicts might use the proposed bird hides.

Suggestions (16%)

Sample comments include:

"I would like to see more facilities for equestrian access and hacking routes. Very worried that existing footpath will be closed to horse riders gaining access to Lodge Hill here - at present they open but if

landowners object to creation of new access points/links to site horse riders could be excluded. How will these links be achieved and where are they? Not clear on maps.”

Resident, Symonds Road

Further responses suggested that development must be sensitive to all current wildlife and that a small number of expensive houses could be built in the woods, as this would avoid further development in these areas.

Miscellaneous (16%)

Sample comments include:

“I struggle to see how you can call Lodge Hill brownfield, it is greenfield, IMO.”

Resident, Address Not Supplied

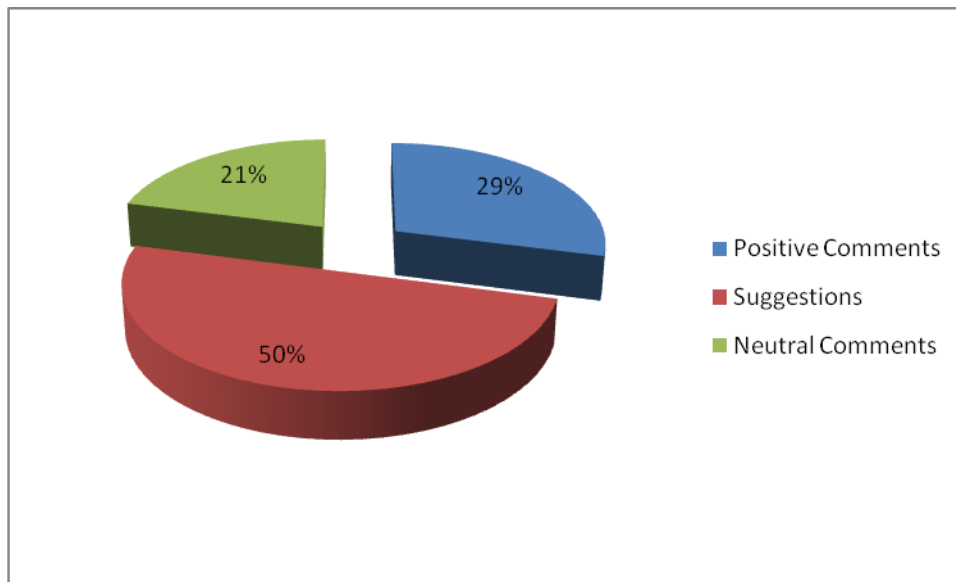
In addition, one respondent wanted to know how the space for the allotments will be calculated and another stated that SSSI areas are protected by law anyway. A further respondent discussed the future of the fishing lakes at Lodge Hill.

Question Two – Heritage

Please use this section to leave any comments concerning the military heritage and how this has been incorporated into the Lodge Hill proposals:

10 respondents answered this question and their responses were either positive, neutral or gave a variety of suggestions on how Lodge Hill’s military heritage could be further incorporated in the proposals.

The responses within the categories are set out in more detail below:



Positive Comments (29%)

Sample comments include:

“This is important to our heritage and the area and it appears to have been thought about.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

“It is exciting to see good incorporation of the industrial heritage within the plans.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

Neutral Comments (21%)

Sample comments include:

“Any and all 'heritage' buildings should be retained and secured against degradation.”

Resident, Marsh Crescent

One respondent had not noticed that any military heritage had been kept while another hoped that any military ordnance had been cleared from the site.

Suggestions (50%)

Sample comments include:

“More could be made about its naval connections, particularly during First World War and about the employees who lived in South, Central & North Terraces for many years.”

Resident, Main Road

“There is a Phantom jet at Lodge Hill. It would be cool to do it up and put on display!”

Resident, Cooling Street

“Could one of the magazines on Upchat Road be used as a youth centre??”

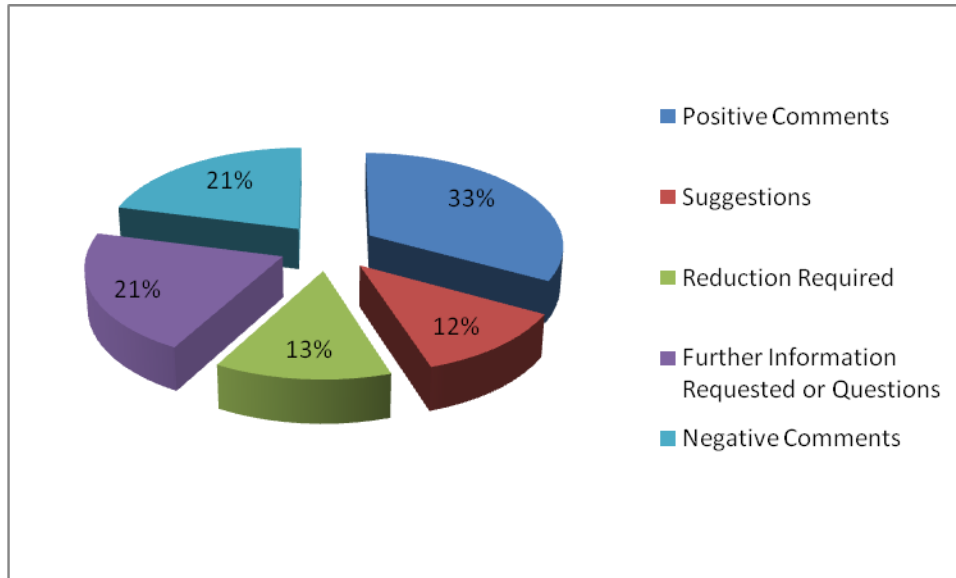
Resident, Broadwood Road

One respondent suggested that themed houses in keeping with the heritage of the site should be constructed. A further suggestion was made about the retention of the railway line for enthusiasts and the reuse of military buildings providing they are screened by trees.

Question Three – New Homes

Please use this section to leave any comments regarding the new homes that are proposed at Lodge Hill:

18 respondents answered this question and their responses could be categorised into seven categories: positive comments, negative comments, suggestions, requests for a reduction in the number of new homes, along with questions or requests for further information.



Positive Comments (33%)

Sample comments include:

“Agree with the proposed rebalancing of detached and semi-detached houses within the Borough. This is an opportunity to raise the standard of housing in the Borough.”

Resident, Marsh Crescent

“Unfortunately we still need more homes for our ever growing population.”

Resident, Waterloo Road

“The plans are impressive and it was good to speak to the representatives who produced a lot of detail.”

Resident, King Arthurs Drive

There were also some positive comments about the reduction in numbers from the original plan of 5,000 homes, along with praise for the provision of family homes.

Negative Comments (21%)

Sample comments include:

“Slums of the future at the densities proposed.”

Resident, Church Street

“Detached homes are less efficient and less sustainable than terraced or semis.”

Resident, no address given

“With the increase in numbers especially the youngsters little has been included to keep them 'out of trouble'.”

Bridgewoods Field Archery Club

There were also a comment stating that the Zero Carbon home standard should be a target and not an aspiration, along with a concern regarding traffic and parking.

Suggestions (13%)

A few respondents chose to make suggestions regarding the new homes at Lodge Hill. One respondent commented that the retirement housing was not positioned in the most appropriate place, as residents should have more access to natural open space, and another respondent felt that there should be at least 3 parking spaces per house so that the roads were not congested by parked cars.

Other comments include:

“My only comment regarding homes is that there is a shortage of bungalows in this area. I know many people like me who have been in Cliffe Woods since the 70s and will be looking for a bungalow to retire in. I'm not sure about the 20% apartments - I certainly wouldn't live in one although I do need to downsize. So some bungalows please.”

Resident, Eaglefield Crescent

Requests for Reduction in Number of New Homes (13%)

There were three comments requesting a reduction in the number of new homes proposed. Of these two were concerned with transport issues arising from the number of new homes and one did not want to see encroachment onto an ALLI/POS site.

Sample comments include:

"Too many people will be living there. 'Moderate' density is too high - it should be lower. I would be happier about the scheme if it was a quarter of the proposed size."

Resident, Symonds Road

Questions or Further Information Requested (21%)

The following comments were made:

"One concern is height of buildings i.e. can high rise be seen outside of the bowl?"

Resident, Broadwood Road

"Low cost housing - what %age and will it be mixed in with other housing?"

Resident, Address Not Supplied

"Where is the sewerage treatment plant if the site is self-contained?"

Resident, Address Not Supplied

"With 4,500 to 5,000 homes planned, there are no figures as yet on what percentage will be affordable, social housing."

Resident, Hawthorne Road

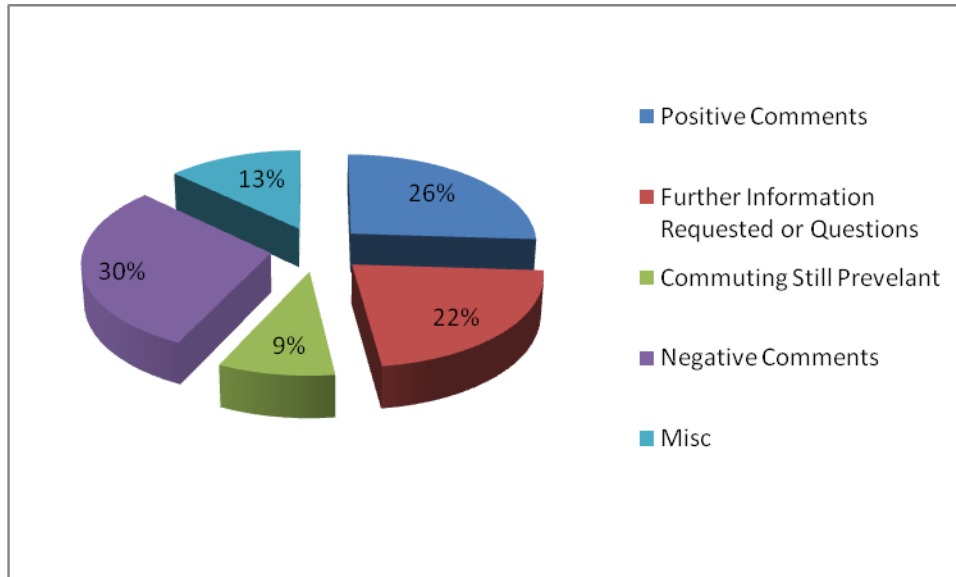
"I am not impressed by what I have seen so far but I understand that this part of the development has not been finalised."

Resident, Broadwood Road

Question Four – Working

Please use this section to leave any comments about the employment opportunities which Lodge Hill will create:

18 respondents answered this question and the responses provided were categorised into five areas: positive comments, negative comments, commuting comments, questions or requests for further information and a variety of other comments which were categorised as miscellaneous.



Positive Comments (26%)

Sample comments include:

“Very pleased to see the allocation for employment space and thinking about local jobs.”

Federation of Small Businesses

“Obviously this will take many years to develop and therefore provide long term employment in construction and associated industries.”

Resident, Waterloo Road

“It is always difficult to predict the success of future job opportunities, but the plans appear sensible.”

Resident, King Arthur’s Drive

Other comments mentioned the importance of tourism and that further employment opportunities would be generated once the shops opened. One comment simply expressed a positive sentiment about the plans for employment.

Negative Comments (30%)

Most of the comments within this section were sceptical that the site would be able to generate employment. One comment noted the high unemployment already in the area.

Sample comments include:

“Can’t see much examples of employment except for hotels/schools - mostly unskilled low paid jobs (as a teacher I do not want to work where I live, preferring a private life!)”

Resident, Church Street

“It is basically a residential scheme with little industrial and commerce.”

Bridgewoods Field Archery Club

“Unable to see any real employment in the area - it will just be another out of town dormitory.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

Commuting Still Prevalent (9%)

Sample comments include:

“How do you prevent residents from working outside the area? Existing residents of the peninsula tend to work off the peninsula whilst those who do work here commute in. There is little evidence of change!”

Resident, Marsh Crescent

There was an additional sceptical comment that residents would live and work at Lodge Hill.

Questions or Further Information Requested (3%)

Sample comments include:

“Would welcome opportunity to sit down with key people and have further input from local members of FSB and other small businesses and provide more detailed ideas.”

Federation of Small Businesses

“Developing sustainable business within Lodge Hill will be challenging. Will there be small scale opportunities? Opportunities for home working? Will art/craft type workshops be available?”

Resident, Broadwood Road

“Will there be a leisure centre with swimming pool. It would create some jobs.”

Resident, Eaglefield Crescent

There were also comments asking why two hotels were required and whether any light industrial units would be provided.

Miscellaneous (13%)

The following comments were made:

“Would be interested in work opportunities both self build and for my family in labour, training or other ways.”

Resident, Dux Court Road

“Pleased that jobs will be created but long term damage to countryside is such a shame.”

Resident, Symonds Road

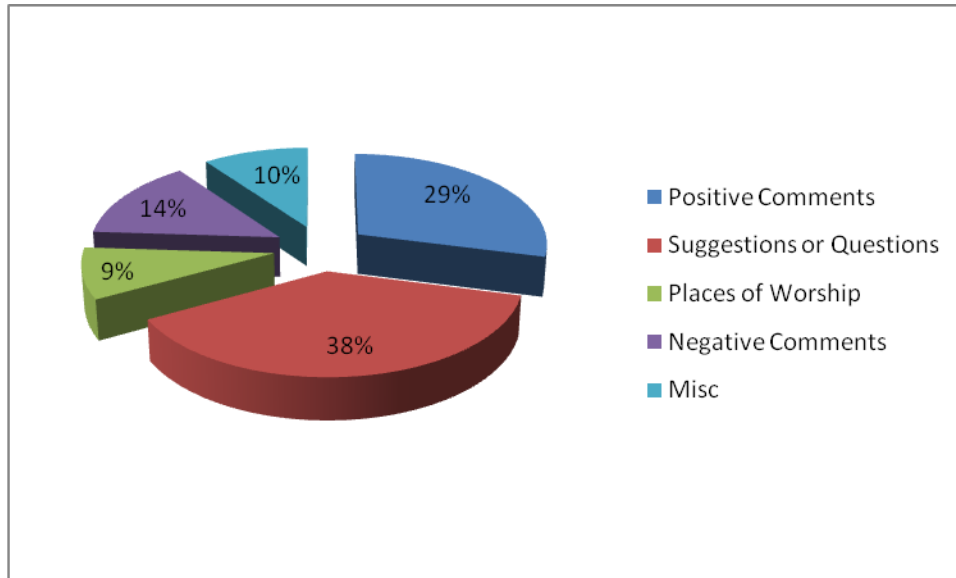
“[The] Lodge Hill centre for business and employment should be where the low density buildings[are] to allow more general access and better parking facilities. The employment for construction, engineering and design would be good for so many years, then the actual internal employment should allow for more office space decreasing the amount of home buildings.”

Resident, Goddington Road

Question Five – New Facilities

Please use this section to leave any comments about the new facilities proposed within the Lodge Hill masterplan, such as schools, retirement village, health facilities etc:

16 respondents answered this question. Their responses fitted into five areas: positive comments, negative comments, requests for a place of worship, suggestions or questions, and other comments which were categorised as miscellaneous.



Positive Comments (29%)

Sample comments include:

"I am glad that the latest proposals include a secondary school (as we strongly suggested at the workshops). This is a must, and will dramatically reduce the road traffic in the surrounding areas of Hoo. Secondly Hoo school (Hundred of Hoo Academy) is full and would not be able to accept the vast influx from Lodge Hill anyway."

Resident, Main Road

"Thanks for putting in a doctors surgery and some shops in Chattenden."

Resident, Concord Avenue

"It was good to see that the plan incorporates new facilities both for the new communities as well as the existing one in Chattenden."

Resident, King Arthur's Drive

Other comments stated that the community provision appeared to be adequate, providing it did not detract from existing local facilities. There was also praise for the inclusion of a youth centre.

Negative Comments (14%)

Sample comments include:

“These are needed now and have been sadly lacking on the Hoo Peninsula for years so I would be very surprised if you manage to achieve all of these.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

Other comments questioned whether the community facilities would be built until the existing facilities were unable to cope with the added demands on them and whether retirement homes were appropriate for a growth-based development.

Places of Worship (10%)

“As leader of The Rock - a Baptist church meeting in Chattenden Community Centre, we are interested in talking with folk about a faith centre/multi-facility unit which could become part of the hub of the community.”

Peninsula Rock

“Looking forward to further discussions on plans for worship centre together with the Diocese of Rochester and Land Securities.”

Diocese of Rochester

Suggestions or Questions (37%)

“What size supermarket is being planned?”

Resident, Broadwood Road

“When Cliffe Woods was built we needed 1x 2 form entry school for 1000 houses (currently 1.5 entry). Possibly more than two needed. Doctors surgeries can be built as required but my biggest concern is Medway Hospital. It simply cannot cope with any more admissions. A hospital is needed at the Peninsula to relieve the pressure that is currently there.”

Resident, Eaglefield Crescent

“What evening entertainment facilities are there?”

Resident, Address Not Supplied

"Is a hotel needed??"

Resident, Symonds Road

In addition, the assertion was made that health and school facilities should be provided early on in the development phases.

Miscellaneous (10%)

The following comments were made:

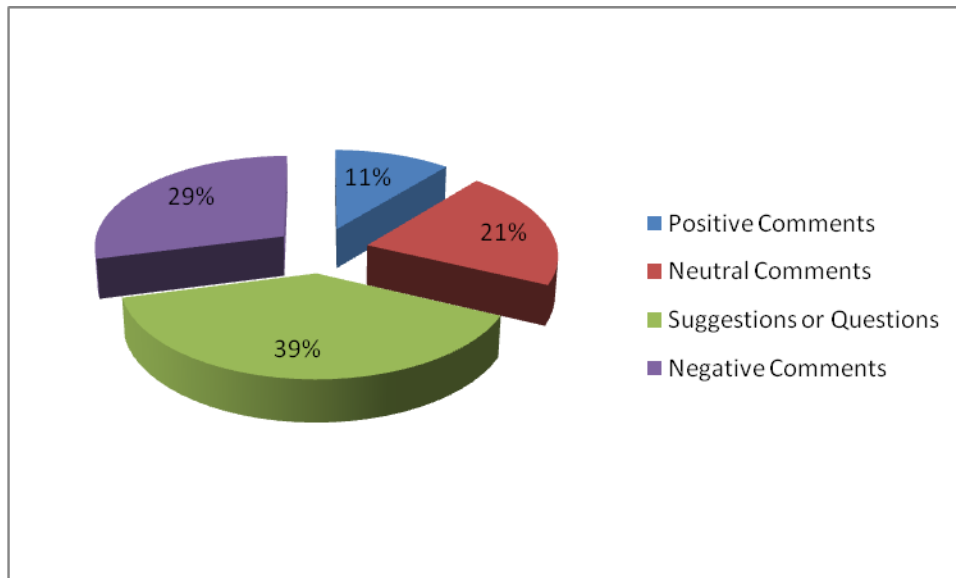
"I think here we should be inventive and try and think outside the 'box' for ideas and not give the public what they want or think they want."

Resident, Waterloo Road

Question Six – Transport Strategy

Please use this section to leave any comments about the emerging transport strategy for Lodge Hill and the objectives to keep road users moving; provide local facilities within the development to avoid unnecessary journeys; and to create a desirable public transport system:

There were 21 respondents who answered this question and their responses fitted into four areas: positive comments, neutral comments, negative comments and general suggestions or questions.



Positive Comments (11%)

Two respondents felt that the proposed improvements to the road system would be able to handle the likely increase in traffic.

Sample comments include:

“Better bus service - woop woop!!! The 4Elms roundabout will be a nightmare. I think your plans for it are moving in the right direction.”

Peninsula Youth for Christ

Neutral Comments (21%)

One comment was made about the construction costs of updating the Sanspareil roundabout now being the responsibility of Sainsbury's. Further comments were concerned about access to the site. One

comment noted that a tram system was not possible but hoped that talks would enable an alternative transport solution to be devised.

Sample comments include:

“Obviously this is of paramount importance and the road/rail? Infrastructure has to go in first. Public transport links have to be excellent with car parking kept to a minimum.”

Resident, King Arthur’s Drive

“Of course the roads are already busy especially the roundabout at the bottom of Four Elms Hill. Surely more than one access road to this new town will be needed. Not sure how it will be achieved but the Medway Towns are often grid-locked especially at peak times. No matter how nice this town is people will still need to access it.”

Resident, Eaglefield Crescent

Negative Comments (29%)

Within this category, comments were concerned that the improved road network would not be able to handle the increased volumes of traffic produced by the proposals. One comment suggested that a further reduction in housing numbers would alleviate this problem while another was concerned about traffic noise. There was also a comment that the Grain to Gravesend railway line should be used for transport.

Sample comments include:

“The recent developments in Upnor mean that considerable number of students attend Hoo schools and closure of the slip road on Four Elms Hill will mean a long diversion via the Tunnel roundabout. The proposal to now add a further link on to the roundabout at the junction of the Grain Road and Main Road Hoo will add considerably to the already long delays for the 10000+ residents at peak periods 8am-9am and lead to further traffic thru the adjoining estate.”

Resident, Main Road

“Concern regarding the use of Dux Court Road as an exit for the proposal. Having seen the proximity of the school concerns about noise and student safety on Dux Court Road.”

Resident, Dux Court Road

“The transport strategy is of greatest concern to me. The potential to 'rat run' through Upnor will not be prevented as the proposal on the display is not going ahead due to intervention by MOD. The fact that a new design will not be considered until after development commences is unacceptable to us local residents already facing increased local traffic thru the village due to lower upnor developments and now the new Sainsbury at White Wall Creek.”

Resident, Castle Street

Suggestions or Questions (39%)

The following comments were made:

“Ideas on improving the traffic congestion to/from Medway City Estate welcomed. Can co-ordinate our inputs to Medway Council on this.”

Federation of Small Businesses

“Dux Court Road - section from Deangate to High Halstow to be of restricted access. Provide park and ride for 'outlying' villages for easy access to bus and train facilities.”

Resident, Marsh Crescent

“Is there any news about using the railway line?”

Resident, Broadwood Road

“Concerned about only one road in/out to Lodge Hill... can this really be enough for the number of cars expected...?”

Resident, Parsonage Lane

“Why is the existing railway not being used? Will the local bus service add late evening buses? How many car parking spaces per home/dwelling will there be?”

Resident, Address Not Supplied

A further comment suggested that the proposed extra lane along Bells Lane in Hoo should be an acceleration lane in order to relieve a potential bottleneck at the proposed entrance to the site. Another respondent questioned whether it is the Council's intention to let the current roads fall into disrepair awaiting for new development. There were further comments about how to make public transport more desirable.

Question Seven – General

Please use this section to leave any general comments regarding the Lodge Hill proposals:

19 respondents left general comments which have been broadly categorised below:

- General Negative Comments

“Our forum has not objected to a development here. But the grabbing of ALLI and POS land is unjustified. There will be much opposition also to the destruction of some 50% of nightingale breeding sites. Our Council should not allow this. So-called mitigation measures do not compensate for such destruction for a sharply declining UK species. It is odd, also, that MOD seems to condone this damage when it has such a good record in conservation. Please rectify this error, for the sake of your reputation.”

Medway Countryside Forum

“The decision to prefer detached and semi-detached houses means most will be unaffordable by Medway residents.”

Resident, Hawthorne Road

“Please, please, please don’t do it! You’re going to ruin a lovely piece of our green and pleasant land. You need to redefine what brownfield is. Sorry to be a bit of a N.I.M.B.Y but I think you’ve got this wrong.”

Resident, Cooling Street

- Traffic Related Concerns

“Even with the road improvements the A228/A289 is not going to cope with an extra 5 to 10,000 people (and that’s a conservative estimate for 5,000 houses).”

Resident, Church Street

“I am amazed and disgusted regarding the plan to allow buses to turn right at the top of Four Elms Hill. This is madness and will not work and only cause more problems, hold-ups etc. I am also dismayed at the proposals for Dux Court Road.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

- Employment Concerns

“I feel the idea that the Lodge Hill community will remain in situ, is far fetched, people will want to travel outside their area and no doubt some new residents will already be commuting to London and elsewhere. Let’s hope the commercial space will be utilized. There are a lot of empty units in the Medway area at present.”

Resident, Forge Lane

- General Positive Comments

"You're doing a good job! Thanks for keeping us in the loop!"

Resident, Broadwood Road

"The consultation process has had a clear (positive) effect on the proposals. Trust this will continue - keeping the impact on existing settlements and facilities to a minimum. Benefits to the peninsular are not necessarily improved access and further expansion of villages and work places."

Resident, Marsh Crescent

"On balance the plans thus far seem adequate for a difficult but not impossible subject. Land Securities and their associates have always given due consideration to all the subjects raised and I hope they will come to fruition. I certainly cannot think of anything that has not been covered. I wish everyone concerned good luck with the plans and proposals."

Resident, Waterloo Road

5.0 Summary

In April 2009, 12 key issues to be taken into consideration in the Lodge Hill masterplan were identified from the public feedback. These were:

- Road Infrastructure (congestion)
- Road Safety (on the A228 and Four Elms Hill)
- Site Access
- Provision of Health Facilities
- Provision of Education Facilities
- Concern Regarding Development
- Open Space Amenity
- Protection of Views
- Protection of Woodland
- Protection of Environment
- Provision of Leisure Amenity
- Retail Provision

As the masterplan for Lodge Hill started to come together, these 12 key considerations were revisited in November 2009 to assess their status and see what issues had been minimised, what requests had been delivered upon and to identify remaining concerns. It was clear that the perception of some issues had changed, others had diminished through the masterplan formation, yet some were still apparent. Now, 18 months into the pre-application public consultation for Lodge Hill, the following core issues remain apparent from the public feedback:

- Road Infrastructure and Site Access

The feedback to date has identified cynicism of the emerging transport strategy for Lodge Hill. In addition, a high number of questions are still being posed, which would indicate that enough information isn't being provided to the public or that they are questioning the overall strategy. The specific concerns appear to be the access and egress off the A228 and the use of Four Elms Roundabout. There also appears to be an emerging concern regarding the secondary access off Dux Court Road and the impact this may have on the existing roundabout at Bells Lane. More detailed road plans were exhibited to the public in the November exhibitions, showing the proposed changes to Four Elms Roundabout and the proposed widening of Four Elms Hill. These plans have been prepared by the Lodge Hill transport consultants (working in conjunction with Medway Council and the Highways Agency) to meet the demands placed upon the road network by existing growth and new development. It must be recognised that the transport strategy is still in development. Nevertheless, these issues need to be addressed.

- Protection of Environment

Specific concerns have been raised by local interest groups and residents regarding the existing nightingale habitat and the general protection of wildlife. These concerns are being addressed in tandem with Natural England and other statutory bodies.

In addition, a new issue has arisen:

- Employment Creation

Unsurprisingly given the current economic climate, there appears to be an increased public focus on the employment opportunities generated by Lodge Hill. As well as aiming to provide employment opportunities in the short term, the Lodge Hill masterplan has to maintain the flexibility to be responsive to changing employment conditions in the long term, such as the likely increase in home working and rise of new industries. There appears to be a public perception that Lodge Hill will only provide service sector jobs (hotel staff, retail staff etc). These are obvious employment generators, but Lodge Hill also aims to attract higher value skilled industries to Medway. It is clear that people need reassurance of the Lodge Hill employment offer and it needs to be communicated in a better manner.

7.0 Conclusions

Again, we would like to thank all participants who have taken part in the Lodge Hill consultation since its official start in April 2009. Many people will be aware of the coalition Government's Localism Bill, which extols the virtues of decentralisation and strives to place local people in the driving seat to determine the future of their local area. The Lodge Hill pre-application public consultation is a case in point of this.

It can be surmised that involvement in the Lodge Hill public consultation continues to be an appealing activity for members of the public who take an interest in their community. Equally, it has been an integral part of the Lodge Hill masterplanning process. Over the course of 18 months we have seen public perceptions change and possible issues diminish. It is a welcomed outcome to see a positive response to the current Lodge Hill proposals. However, that is not to say that all issues have been comprehensively addressed. Further work is required on specific areas, especially the transport network, as Land Securities works towards a planning submission for Lodge Hill.