

Lodge Hill, Chattenden

Stage One Public Consultation - Exhibitions

Feedback Analysis

Prepared by Trimedia

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1.0	Introduction	

A series of exhibitions in April 2009 formed the first stage of Land Securities public consultation regarding proposed development at Lodge Hill, Chattenden.

The six exhibition venues were selected as they were accessible for residents close to and on the Hoo Peninsula, and they had availability for hire w/c 20th and 27th April. In total 20 hours of public exhibitions were organised over five days, encompassing daytime, evening and weekend slots, along with a two hour stakeholder preview of the exhibition.

The exhibitions were held as follows:

Thursday 23rd April 2009

Venue: The Lodge, Lodge Hill Lane, Chattenden, Rochester, Kent, ME3 8NE
Time: 1pm to 3pm – Stakeholder preview of the exhibition
4pm to 7pm – Public exhibition

Friday 24th April 2009

Venue: The Main Hall, Hundred of Hoo School, Main Road, Hoo St Werburgh, Rochester, Kent ME3 9HH
Time: 5pm to 8pm – Public exhibition

Saturday 25th April 2009

Venue: Chattenden Community Centre, Swinton Avenue, Chattenden, Rochester, Kent ME3 8PH
Time : 10am to 3pm – Public exhibition

Monday 27th April 2009

Venue 1: All Saints Parish Hall, Church Green, Frindsbury, Kent ME2 3HE
Time: 10am to 1pm – Public exhibition

Venue 2: High Halstow Memorial Hall, The Street, High Halstow, Rochester, Kent ME3 8SG
Time: 4pm to 7pm – Public exhibition

Tuesday 28th April 2009

Venue: Stoke Village Hall, Mallard Way, Lower Stoke, Rochester, Kent ME3 9ST
Time: 4pm to 7pm – Public exhibition

In order to maximise attendance, the events were publicised locally:

- Over 10,000 letters of invitation were issued to all households within the Strood Rural and Peninsula wards. The household information was obtained from Medway Council's Electoral Register.
- Approximately 240 letters of invitation were issued to key and statutory stakeholders, for example Parish Council representatives, Medway Council officers and members, Medway Renaissance, Natural England, the Highways Agency, English Heritage etc.
- 10 quarter-page adverts were placed in the Medway Messenger, Medway Adscene (free paper), Medway Extra (free paper) and the Medway News w/c 13th April and w/c 20th April. An advert was also placed in the Net, a free newsletter distributed to 30,000 households on the Hoo Peninsula, Strood, Cuxton and Snodland.
- A press release was issued to all local media. Advance publicity of the exhibitions was achieved in the Medway Messenger Community Pages (10th April), Medway News (23rd April) and the Medway Messenger (15th and 24th April). Journalists also attended the stakeholder preview event and coverage subsequently appeared in the Medway Messenger on the 27th April and Medway News on the 30th April. Steve Neal, Senior Development Manager for Land Securities, was interviewed on BBC Radio Kent and KMFM and these news reports were broadcast on the 23rd April.
- The dates of the public exhibitions were submitted to the free village newsletters which are distributed around the Hoo Peninsula. Coverage appeared in the Cuxton Noticeboard, Village Voices, Grain Village News and Peninsula Times.
- Posters were distributed to all Peninsula Parish Councils, for display on relevant noticeboards around the area. Posters were also sent to Chattenden Community Centre, places of worship, Chattenden Primary School, Deangate Ridge Sports Complex, The Hundred of Hoo Sports Centre and the Medway Regeneration Ambassadors.

In total, 597 people attended the public exhibitions, broken down as follows at each of the venues:

The Lodge (23 rd April)	125 attendees
Hundred of Hoo Secondary School (24 th April)	105 attendees
Chattenden Community Centre (25 th April)	110 attendees
All Saints Parish Hall (27 th April)	126 attendees
High Halstow Memorial Hall (27 th April)	92 attendees
Stoke Village Hall (28 th April)	39 attendees

206 feedback forms were received by the deadline date of the 12th May 2009, two weeks after the last exhibition. The feedback forms were returned at the events, completed online, or posted to Trimedia. 206 feedback forms represent a 35% response rate from attendees to the exhibitions.

10 letters were also received from members of the Parish of Frindsbury with Upnor and Chattenden, requesting a centre for Christian worship within the development.

Six feedback forms were received after the deadline date. The statistics outlined in this document are generated from the feedback forms returned to Trimedia before the deadline, but we will continue to take account of all comments received.

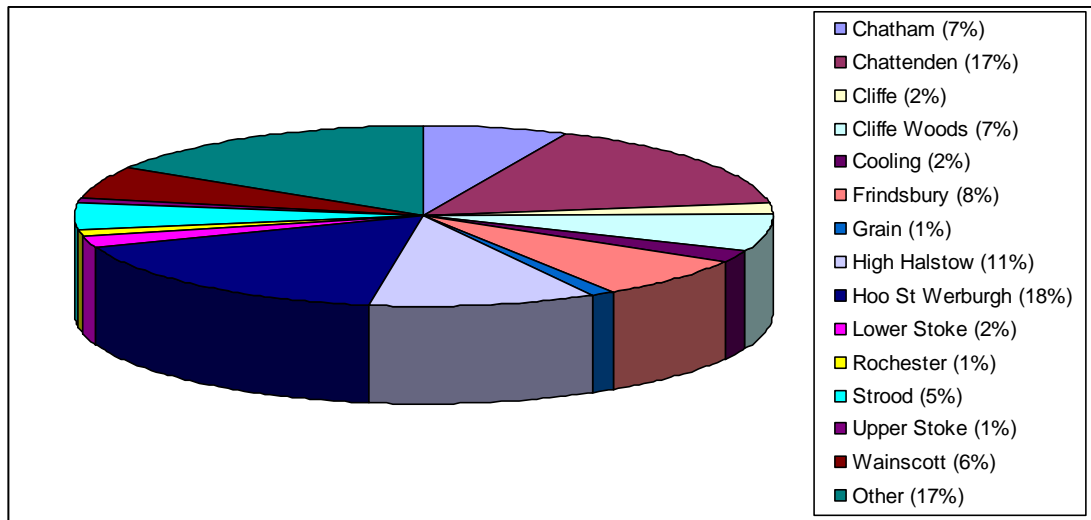
2.0 Analysis Methodology

The purpose of this first stage of public consultation was to generate an understanding of issues affecting the local community and to gauge concerns and aspirations regarding potential development at Lodge Hill, as well as to start shaping a masterplan for the development by identifying the type of facilities the community believes are required. Hence, the majority of the feedback form questions were 'open' questions to enable respondents to complete the sections as they saw fit, with less emphasis on tick-box questions.

This open nature of the questions generated a variety of different views, comments and assertions. To ensure that all comments are accounted for, every question response was analysed and key points identified as 'references'. For example, Q9: How do you think development at Lodge Hill could improve the travel situation? The response "better link roads and public transport" would be recorded as two individual references. The references were then themed in order to identify any patterns occurring, and a percentage was 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.

The open questions elicited many comments and there was a high response rate to most questions. Some comments are outside of the consultant teams' and the development's remit to address. However, all comments have been considered within the statistics.

3.0 Location of Respondents

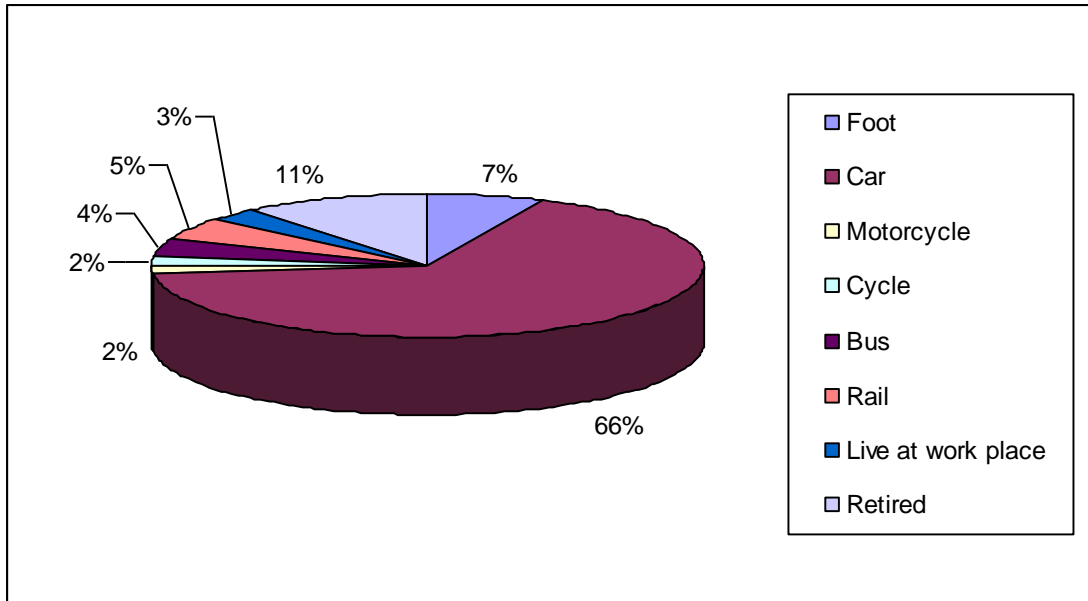


199 respondents indicated where they live on the feedback form. Of these, 18% were from Hoo St Werburgh (18%), followed by Chattenden (17%) and High Halstow (11%). Other locations given included Upnor (Lower and Upper), Gillingham, Allhallows, St Mary Hoo, Bexley, Rainham, London and Higham.

4.0 Analysis of Feedback

Q1: How do you usually travel to work/to your studies? Please tick the appropriate method:

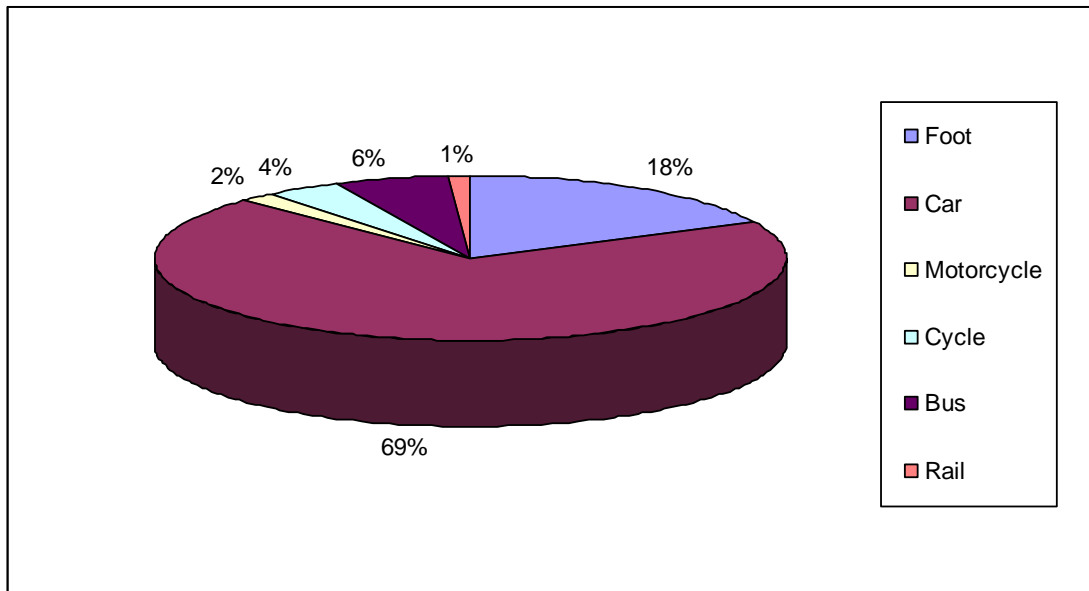
Of the 190 respondents who answered this question, the majority (66%) of respondents travel to work or to their studies by car, followed by 7% who travel on foot. 11% of respondents indicated that they are retired.



Q2: How do you usually travel locally for non-work journeys? Please tick the appropriate method:

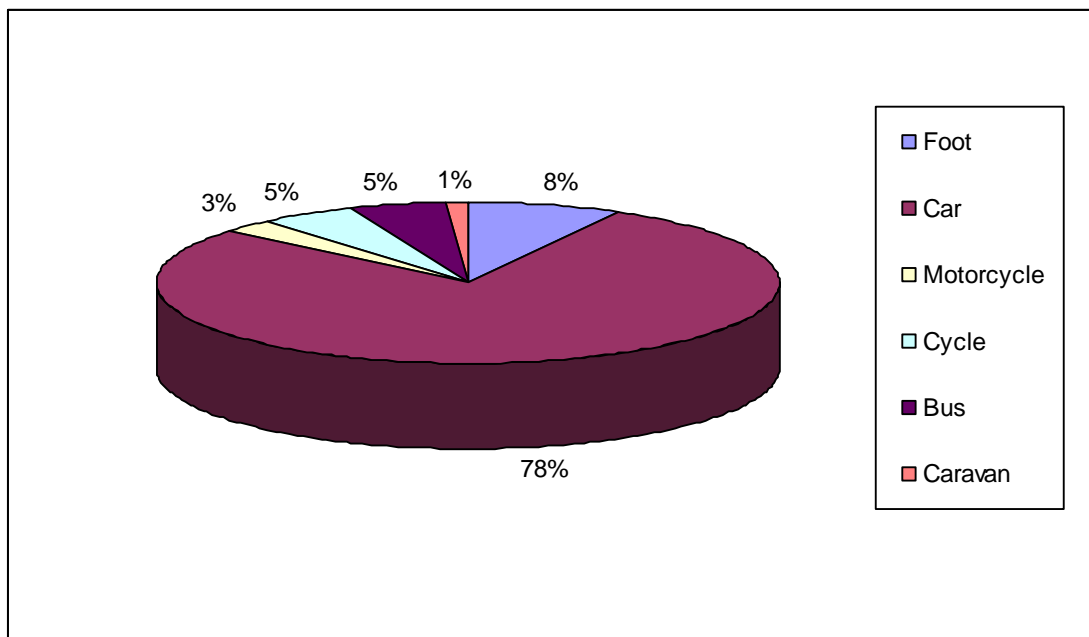
Shopping (197 respondents)

The majority of respondents (69%) travel locally to shops by car. However, 18% are accessing retail facilities on foot (which may demonstrate use of a local convenience-style shop or the farm shops on the Peninsula) and 6% are travelling by bus.



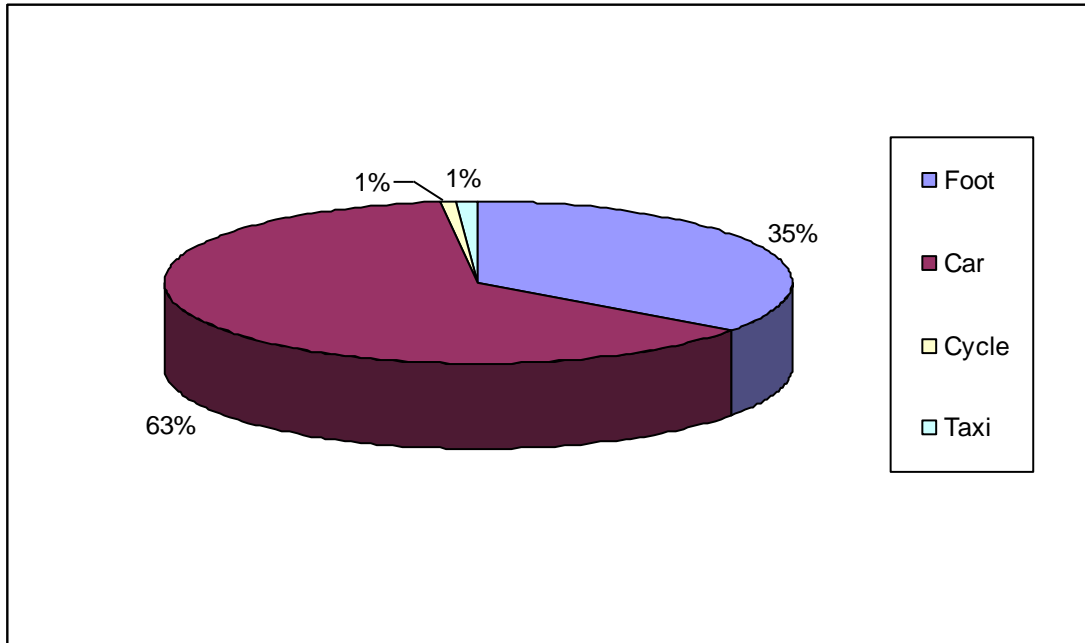
Leisure (198 respondents)

Again, there is an overwhelming reliance on the car for leisure purposes (78%). None of the respondents indicated that they travel by rail for leisure purposes.



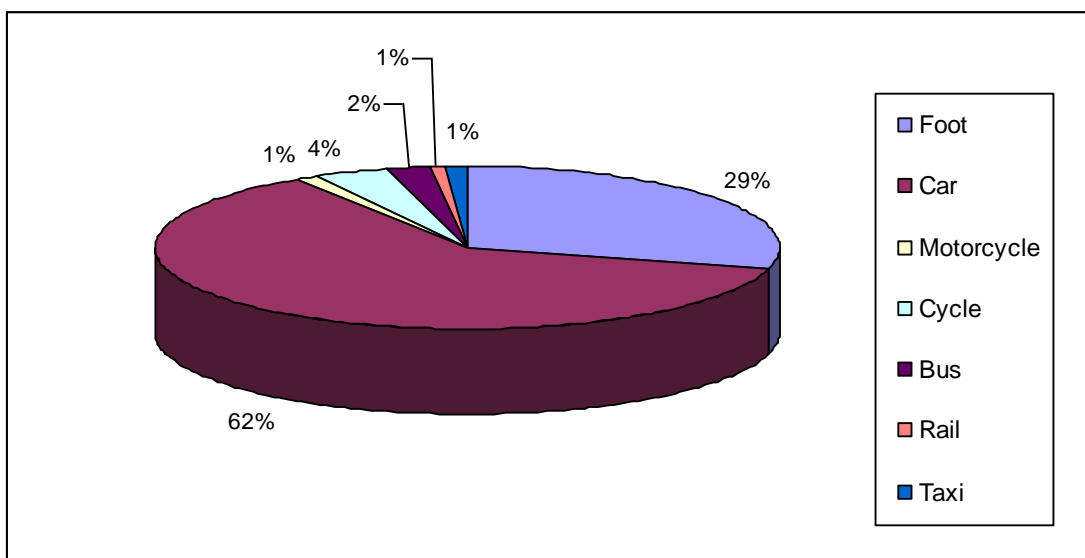
Attending Place of Worship (140 respondents)

This question generated a lower response rate than the other destinations in this section, but the reliance on the car still appears to be key (63%). Nonetheless, 35% of respondents are visiting a Place of Worship on foot, which would indicate that their destination is local to them.



Meeting with Friends (197 respondents)

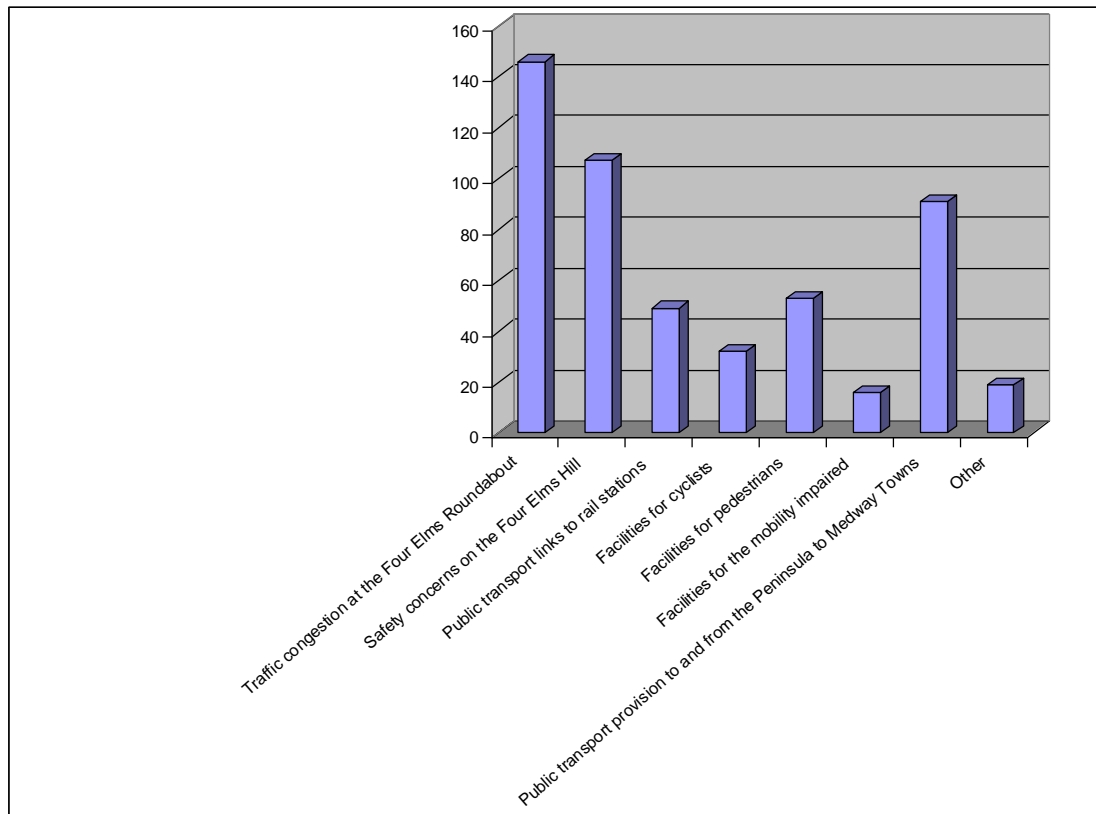
How people travel to meet with friends depends on the location of their acquaintances, but it is clear that use of the car (62%) remains key for respondents, coupled with a significant percentage (29%) of people who are meeting with friends locally by foot.



Q3: Please tick three of the issues from the list below that most affect your local travel:

From 189 respondents, the three most frequently cited issues are:

- 1) Traffic congestion at the Four Elms roundabout (146 references)
- 2) Public transport provision (140 references)*
- 3) Safety concerns on Four Elms Hill (107 references)

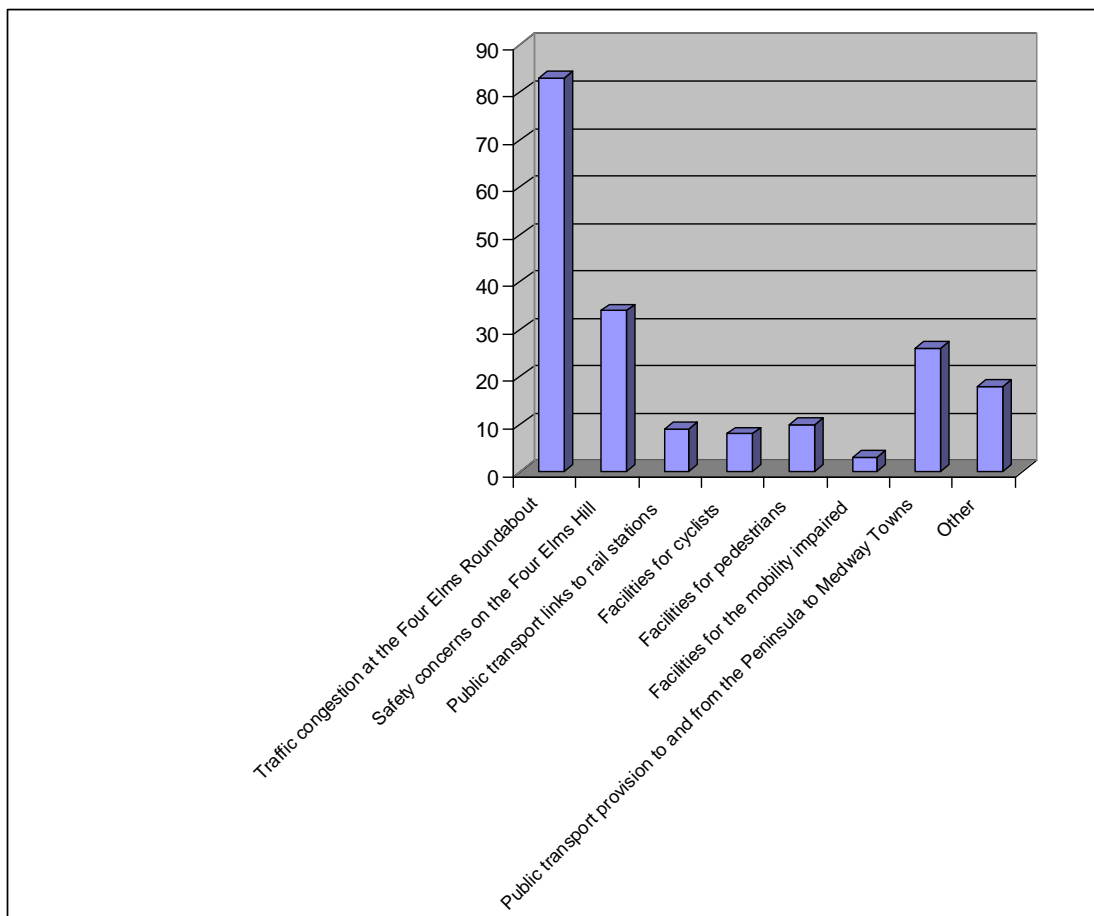


*N.B this figure is an amalgamation of the two public transport related tick box options of 'public transport links to rail stations' (49) and 'public transport provision to and from the Hoo Peninsula to the Medway Towns' (91)

Q4: If you could chose one of the above to be given priority for improvement, which one would it be:

From 183 respondents, the priorities chosen for improvement are in line with the key issues which affect everyday travel identified in Q3:

- 1) Traffic congestion at the Four Elms roundabout (83 references)
- 2) Public transport provision (35 references)*
- 3) Safety concerns on Four Elms Hill (34 references)



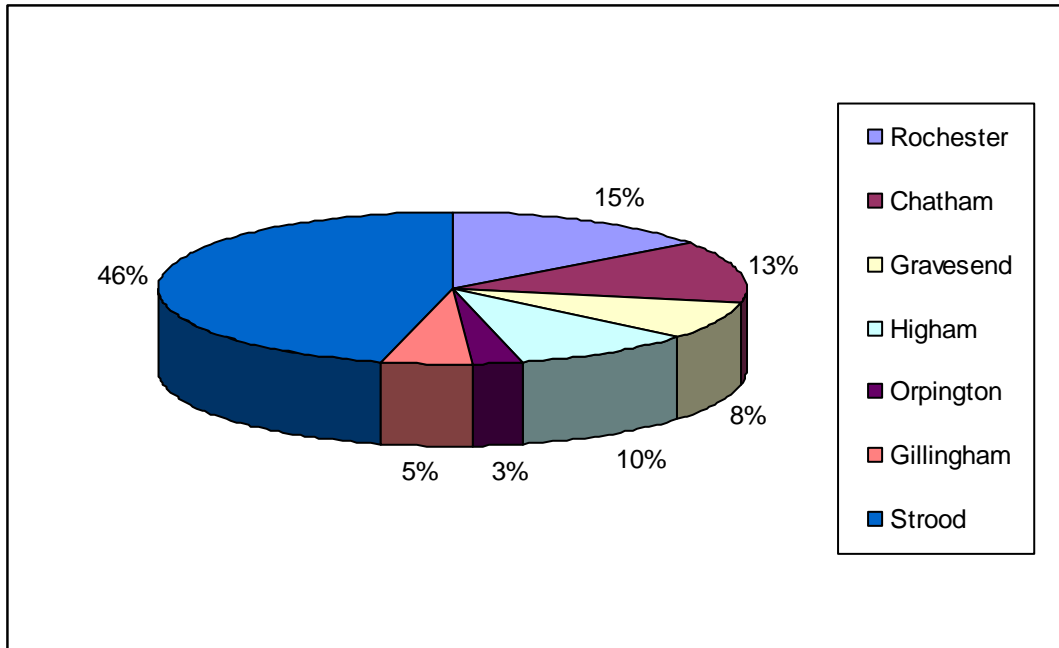
*N.B this section is an amalgamation of the two public transport related tick box options of 'public transport links to rail stations' (9) and 'public transport provision to and from the Hoo Peninsula to the Medway Towns' (26)

Q5: Do you commute by train to London (or stations near London)?

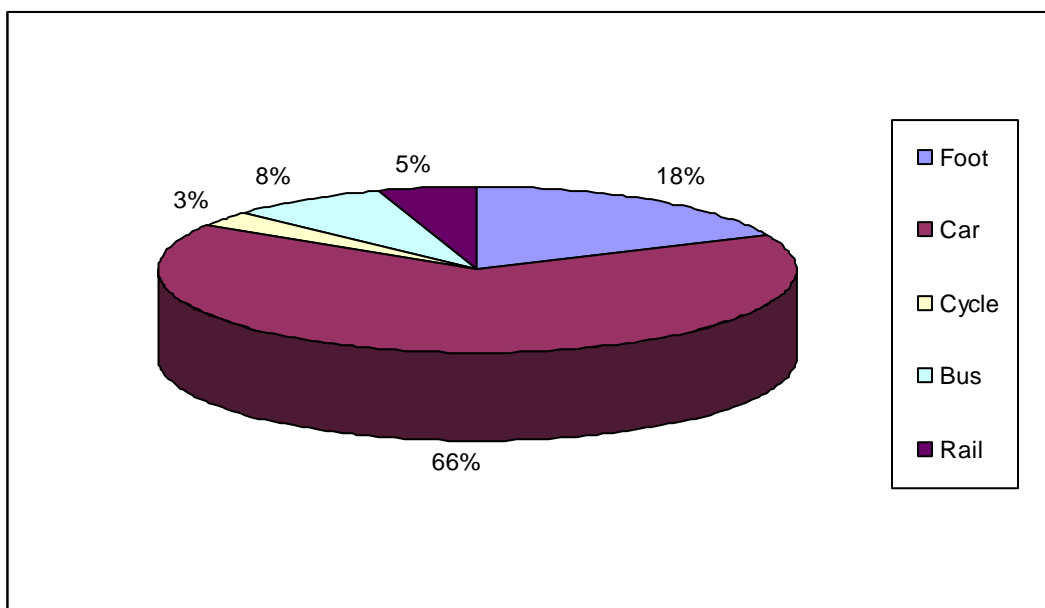
80% of the 175 respondents do not commute by train to London (or stations near London) and only 20% do.

Q5a: If yes, which station do you commute from?

From those travelling by train to London, it would the largest percentage (46%) commute from Strood, followed by Rochester (15%) and Chatham (13%).



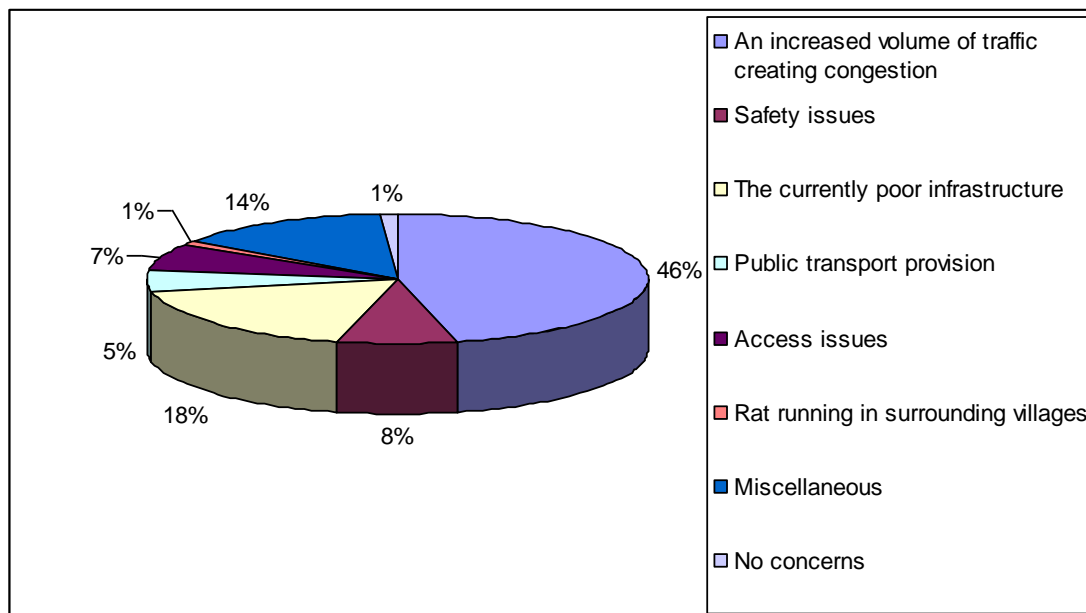
Q5b: How do you travel to the station?



The majority of commuters are reaching the station by car (66%), with 18% walking to the station and 8% travelling by bus.

Q6: What is your main travel concern about a new development at Lodge Hill?

In total, 282 references were made by 185 respondents on a variety of topics, ranging from increased volume of traffic through to access to the new development and increased pollution levels. The key concerns emanating from the feedback are grouped into eight categories.



An increased volume of traffic creating congestion (46%)

46% of the comments received in response to this question focused on the increased volume of traffic which would be created as a result of approximately 5,000 new households. In most cases, this was a comment made about congestion and volume of traffic generally in the local area, however, some respondents highlighted specific examples which they believed would be made worse; Four Elms roundabout; Four Elms hill; the A289; the A228 and traffic within Strood and Rochester, as well as increased journey times in reaching those areas. There is also a belief that there is not enough capacity for the number of cars which will be on the road.

The currently poor infrastructure (18%)

Comments focused on the current road infrastructure, asserting that it was 'poor' or 'inadequate' for current needs. Responses were focused on the Peninsula area and specifically referenced the A228 (the only entry and exit to and from the Peninsula) and the A289 Wainscott Bypass.

Safety issues (8%)

Responses in this category fell within two camps; either increased road traffic would lead to more accidents, or the current speed of traffic combined with additional cars would increase the number of accidents. The responses appear to indicate children are the main priority and that consideration should be given to road safety measures around schools.

“Increased traffic leading to safety concerns. For many years people seem to use main roads as race tracks.”

Resident, Waterloo Road

Access (7%)

Unsurprisingly, credence was given to the likely access points to the new development. Dux Court Road was identified as a possible access avenue and the possibility of this generated a mixed response:

“Dux Court Road is too narrow for level of traffic.”

Resident, Thames Avenue

“Avoid access to new development from Dux Court Road. Concern over High Halstow village becoming a rat run for new development owners coming out of the Grain Peninsula.”

Resident, The Street

“A link to A228 via Dux Court would give additional access to the Peninsula from A289.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

As well as immediate access points to the development, there was also concern that the development traffic would need to use Four Elms Hill / the A228, which has been identified by respondents as being congested.

Public transport provision (5%)

5% of the comments regarding travel concern related to poor public transport provision for the area and a perceived fear that this will be exacerbated as a result of the development.

Rat running in surrounding villages (1%)

1% of comments believed that the development may create additional rat running through villages. A specific example of Higham Road in Wainscott was given:

“Traffic stand still will be caused in Hollywood Lane again. Higham Road, Wainscott will be an increased rat run.”

Resident, Higham Road

No concerns (1%)

1% of the comments made stated that the respondent did not have any concerns regarding movement.

Miscellaneous (14%)

A broad range of comments were generated, some of which were related to movement and some general comments respondents wished to make about the scheme.

“Loss of countryside, increase in traffic and pressure on local services i.e. schools, hospitals, doctors, water supply. The Peninsula railway should be used for passenger transport.”

Resident, Pankhurst Road

“There is a need to improve doctors, schools, roads and rail links.”

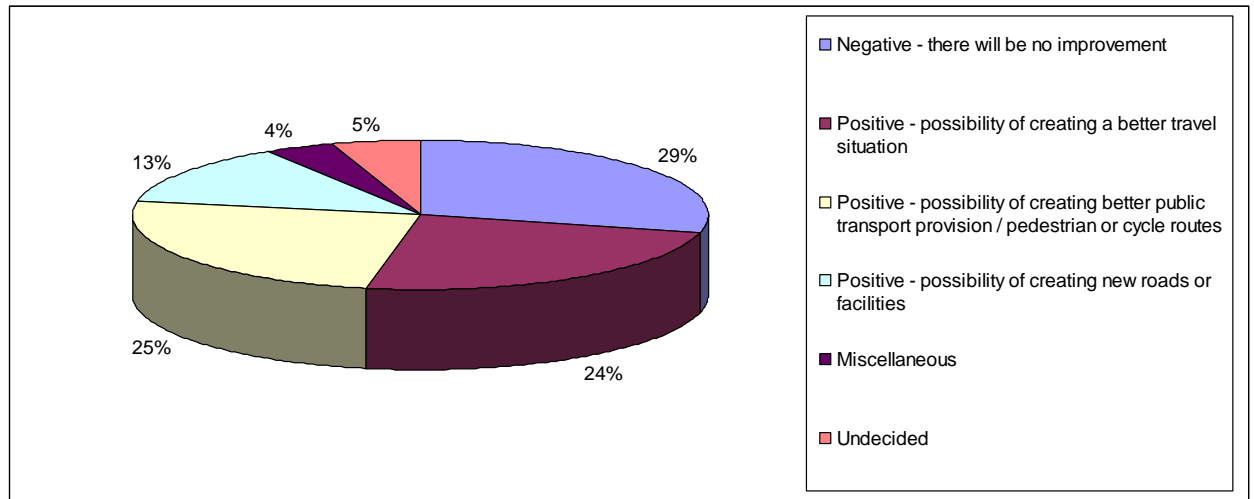
Resident, Tennyson Avenue

“Water pressure, traffic, lack of police presence. Increase in gangs of youths looking for mischief.”

Parish Councillor, Hoo St Werburgh

Q7: How do you think development at Lodge Hill could improve the travel situation?

191 respondents answered this question, generating 207 references on different topics, ranging from negative comments asserting that development at Lodge Hill would add to the problem, through to suggestions for positive measures which could be introduced, such as underpasses, new link roads and tram connections.



Negative – there will be no improvement (29%)

Of the negative references in response to this question, many categorically state that they do not believe that development at Lodge Hill could improve the situation and in essence, they believe that it would add to the problem.

“Lodge Hill will not improve the travel situation. It will mean more cars on the road.”

Resident, Chattenden

“It can only make things worse.”

Resident, Prospect Avenue

“It will make it worse.”

Resident, Christmas Lane

“Any development at Lodge Hill can only make travel to the Peninsula worse.”

Resident, Bells Lane

Positive – possibility of creating a better travel situation (24%)

24% of comments relate to the possibility of creating a better travel situation for the area as a result of development at Lodge Hill. The main belief was that it could improve the roads and there was also a particular interest in possible improvements to Four Elms roundabout:

“Better roads, more local facilities and buses.”

Resident, Woodside Green

The roads around Chattenden and surrounding area need to be improved. There needs to be a commuter bus service to local stations – this should be considered because of the new bullet trains being brought into service from Strood in December.”

Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

“Major re-think on roads/ facilities for existing residents.”

Resident, Frindsbury

“Improve road links and better public transport, safe cycle routes and pedestrian routes. “

Resident, Coe’s Green

“Improve roads and public transport. “

Resident, Hoo St Werburgh

“Major Rethink of access to Four Elms roundabout.”

Resident, Greenfinches

Positive – possibility of creating better public transport provision, pedestrian or cycle routes (25%)

The possibility of introducing better public transport provision, predominately buses, across the Peninsula and linking with key towns and railway stations, was seen as one of the key benefits of development at Lodge Hill. In some cases, it was recognised that this would help people avoid using their cars to travel in the local area.

“By managing the significant increase of cars etc, so there is adequate roads/parking and alternative methods.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

“By creating better bus transport and more to all over the Medway towns.”

Resident, Tilly Close

“Improved public transport links extended to the rest of the Peninsula.”

Resident, Stoke

Positive – possibility of creating new roads or facilities (13%)

Many respondents chose to make comments identifying how Lodge Hill could improve the travel situation on a tangible basis, i.e. by suggesting key roads for improvement and providing solutions. Example suggestions include a new link road to the A289, to take pressure off the A228.

Comments were also received stating that a new railway station for the site should be considered. This is consistent with a number of anecdotal references to the consultation staff

at the exhibitions regarding the possibility of re-opening the old railway line to the north of the site:

“By providing a reason to upgrade the roads and improve public transport including the re-opening of the railway line to Grain to passenger service.”

Resident, Shepherds Gate

“Major rethink of access to Four Elms roundabout. Revive rail travel to Hoo Peninsula, with new station at Sharnal Street.”

Resident, Greenfinches

“Slip roads on to A228 at Elms roundabout and into Medway tunnel are required.”

Resident, Main Road

Miscellaneous comments (4%)

A small percentage of responses could not be classed into specific themes and therefore were allocated into a miscellaneous section. These included:

“Better policing.”

Resident, Main Road

Undecided (5%)

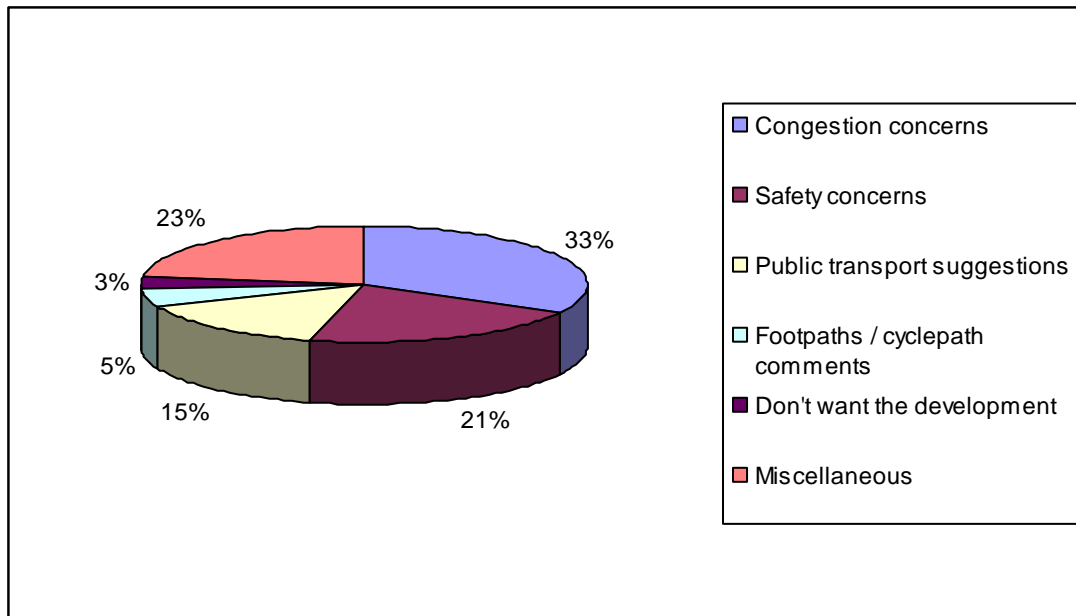
5% of the respondents were unsure as to how Lodge Hill could improve the travel situation:

“Don’t know.”

Resident, Goldsworth Drive

Q8: If you have any further comments about movement, or wish to expand on the answers given, please detail them here:

86 respondents completed this section, generating one of the lowest response rates. The comments made in this section were grouped into five key themes.



Congestion concerns (33%)

Many of the congestion concerns given in response to this general Movement question reiterated the comments given in Question 6, i.e. the pressure on Four Elms roundabout and traffic congestion in the Medway area.

Safety concerns (21%)

The safety concerns appeared to focus on two issues; the large amount of HGVs using the Peninsula roads and the danger that this, along with traffic generally, poses to children. There was a strong call for a footbridge over Four Elms hill (the A228 Ratcliffe Highway).

“A footbridge to be built over Four Elms Road, as main walking route to Hundred of Hoo School. Too many children have been killed and ran over due to red light jumpers.”

Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

“Traffic volume at Four Elms Hill roundabout. Children attending Hoo secondary school already dice with death crossing the A228. Hundreds possibly thousands more will need to cross the dual carriageway.”

Resident, Hoo Common

“There are too many lorries passing our home now- even more would be disastrous especially at high speeds!”

Resident, Main Road

Public transport suggestions (15%)

Respondents called for better public transport provision, i.e. a better bus service (Fastrack was identified as one possible solution), a new park and ride facility and for consideration to be given to reopening the old railway line to the north of the site.

“Public transport to be a user-friendly, that is reliable, affordable, accessible, integrated with all other sustainable modes and environmentally friendly.....Buses should be given priority over private motorised traffic through the provision of bus lanes and other measures.”

Member, Medway Green Party

Footpath / cyclepath comments (5%)

Comments were made in this section regarding the need for more cycle tracks and better footpaths in the area.

Don't want the development (3%)

There is a level of concern about the scale of the proposed development and 3% of comments asserted that the site should be left as it is.

Miscellaneous (23%)

Alongside the key themes, there is also a relatively large miscellaneous grouping, indicating the broad nature of responses to this question. A sample of the comments made have been detailed below:

“Schools are over crowded and police cannot cope in the rural area.”

Resident, Marshland View

“An absolute minimum of four car parking spaces per household must be provided plus some additional parking for trade vehicles.”

Resident, Christmas Lane

“Damage to landscape, environment and character of Hoo Peninsula and pollution and noise due to increased number of cars.”

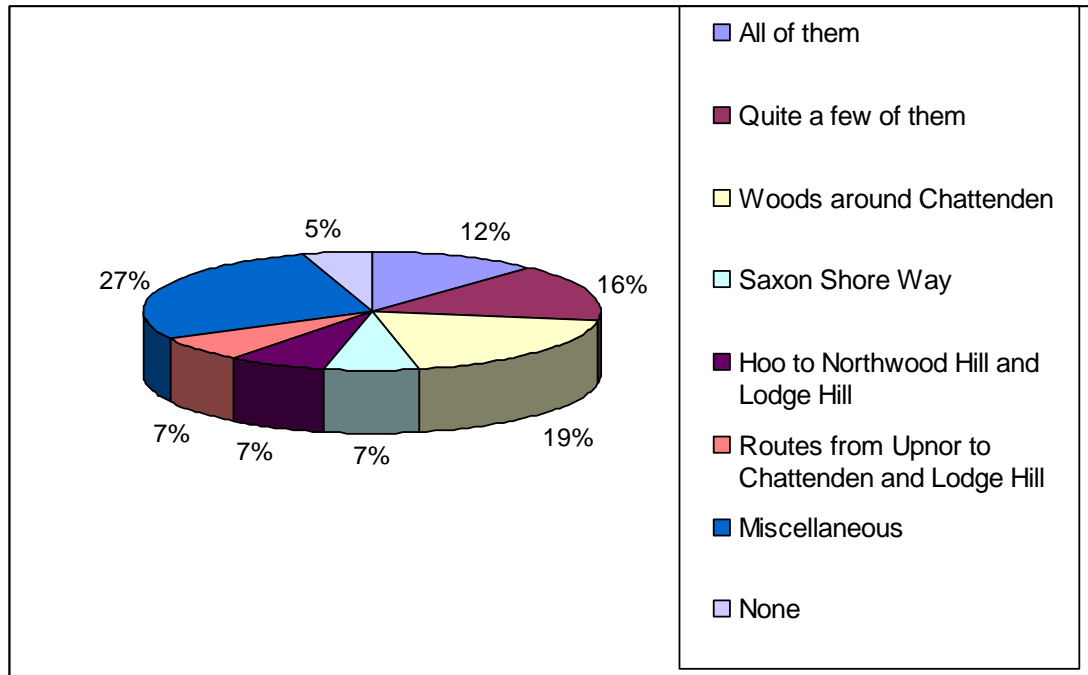
Resident, Bells Lane

“Development of car clubs (the shared use of cars by local residents), where this will effectively reduce the number of car journeys that may otherwise be made or the number of cars parked in the locality, to promote the sharing of cars and journeys.”

Member, Medway Green Party

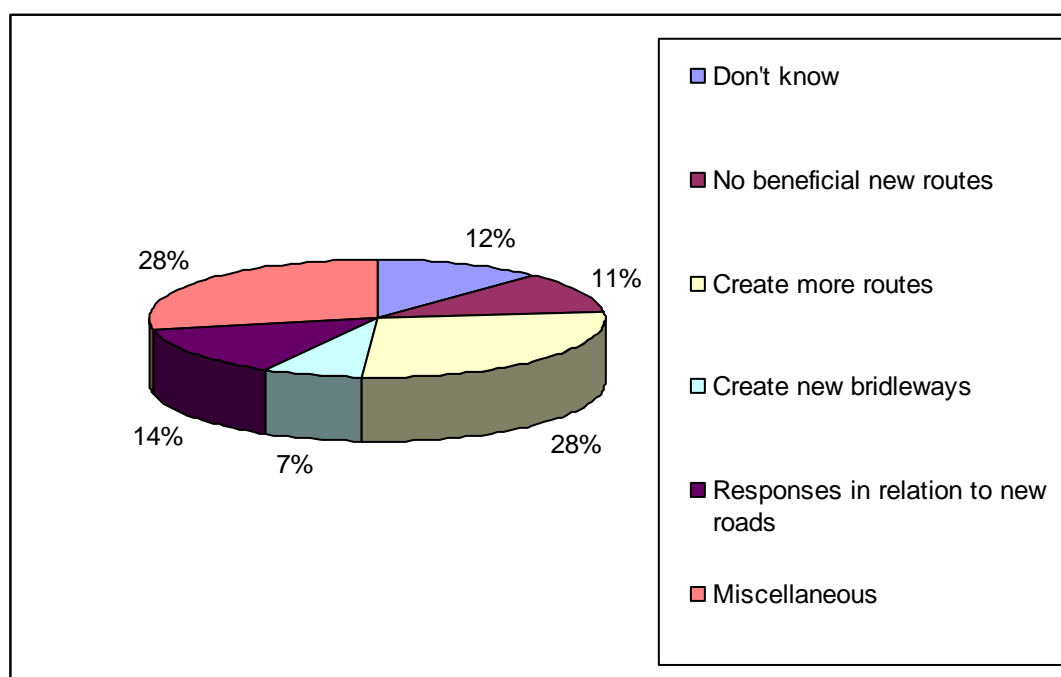
Q9: What footpaths / cycle paths / bridleways do you use on the Hoo Peninsula?

153 respondents completed this section. Their references were difficult to categorise, as people have different names for the routes they are taking. However, it is evident from the graph below that the use of footpath, cycle paths and bridleways is relatively high, with many comments made in relation to the use of these within the woodland around Chattenden (19% of references made).



Q10: Are there any new routes you think might be beneficial?

Again, due to the open nature of this question the references from 107 respondents were mixed; for example, 14% of the comments were in relation to new road routes which would be beneficial, either indicating a misunderstanding of the question or the prime concern of those completing a feedback form.



28% of comments showed a desire to create more footpaths and cycle ways, reinforcing the feedback received to Q9 that the use of these facilities in the local area is relatively high.

“Footpaths from Chattenden to Upnor. There are currently few footpaths. New safe paths would be helpful.”

Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

“Yes, the need to join up routes to increase the path available to all users.”

Resident, Nelson Road

“A lot more cycle paths, where children especially can cycle. Paths at the moment do not join up with one another. There needs to be a continuous path for cyclists on a route.”

Resident, Main Road

At the public exhibitions, a number of comments were received from equestrian enthusiasts regarding the lack of useable bridleways around Chattenden and to the north of the site. These verbal comments are reflected in the feedback with 7% of comments stating that new bridleways should be created.

“Yes, link Bridleways and provide more bridleways though the site, linking up with Bridleways near Hoo.”

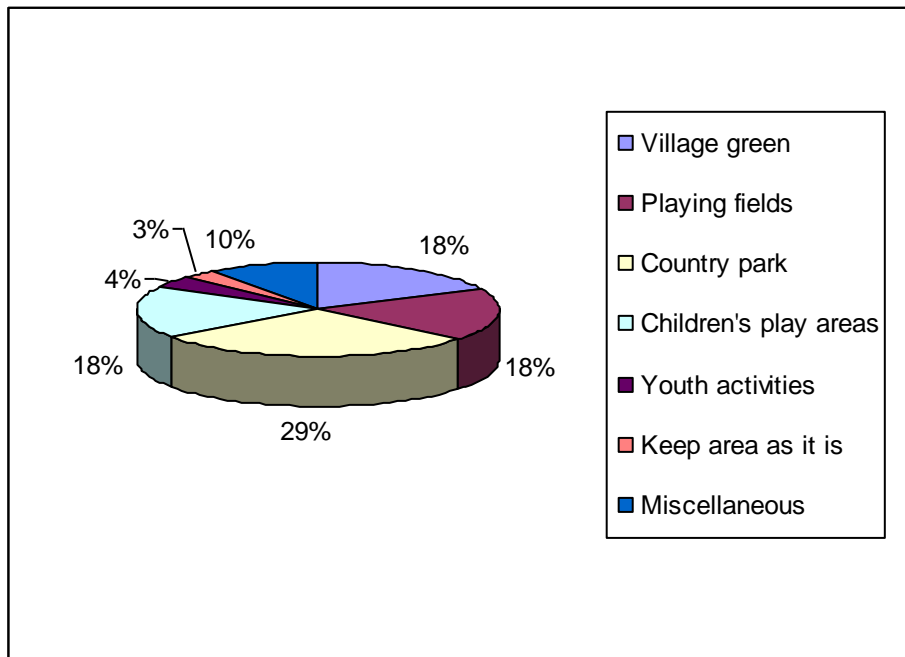
Resident, Cagney Close

“New footpaths to link up some of the PROWs, new bridleways & new circular path.”*

Medway Local Access Forum

*Public Rights of Way

Q11: What type of public open space do you think could be provided at Lodge Hill?



As is evident from the above table, showing the views of 179 respondents, there is a strong desire (29% of comments) for the open space element at Lodge Hill to become a country park. This was followed by a desire for a village green (18%), playing fields (18%) and children’s play areas (18%). Youth activities accounted for 4% of the comments made and suggestions included a skate park, football pitch, cricket pitch, ball court and teenage shelters.

“A family country park for all to access along with playing fields and activities for the youth.”
Resident, Tilly Close

“County parks, playing fields, children’s play areas and a skateboard area.”
Resident, Frindsbury Hill

“There should be a county park for the whole community in this area, which could include children’s playing area.”
Resident, Frindsbury

“Country parks. Suitable age related, maintained children’s play areas and playing fields.”
Resident, Elmwood Road

“County Parks incorporating some playing fields.”

Resident, Lower Upnor

3% of comments related to leaving the area as it currently is:

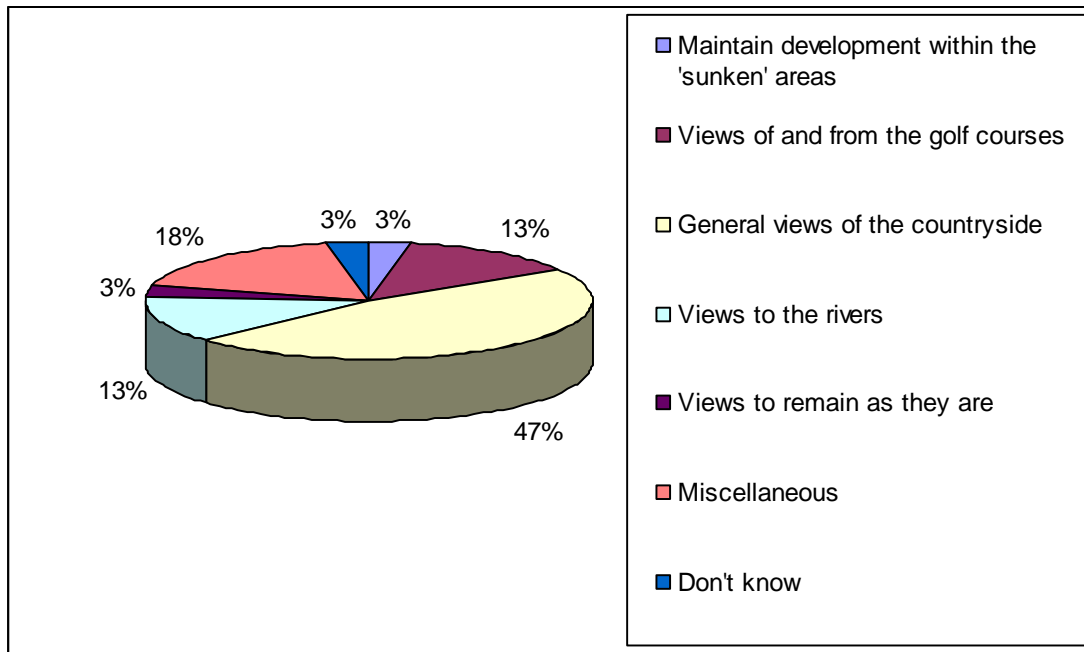
“Happy for it to stay as it is, as it’s peaceful.”

Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

The miscellaneous comments (10%) were varied and interesting. Suggestions included:

- Allotments
- Ponds / lakes
- Water reservoir for waters sports and sailing
- Education block
- Picnic areas
- Observation tower for views
- Information centre
- Granny play park
- Open air museum
- Creative areas to explore
- Heritage park

Q12: What do you think are the most important views to and from the Lodge Hill site?



47% of the comments in response to this question, answered by 147 of the respondents, believed that the important views to and from Lodge Hill were those of the countryside:

“All the open space and green field areas that are there at the moment.”

Resident, Ruggles Close

“Green trees, uninterrupted views of woodland.”

Resident, Bells Lane

“Maintain country and wildlife views across marshes.”

Resident, Woodside Green

“Maintaining woodland and not polluting views with excess or ugly buildings.”

Resident, Lingley Drive

Views across the River Thames and River Medway (13%) also appeared to be a defining visual element of this part of Kent:

“Over the Thames estuary and the marshes.”

Resident, Shepherds Gate

“Views to the Thames and Medway rivers.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

“To both rivers Medway and Thames, also general view overlooking towards Hoo and Strood.”

Resident, Berry Road

With regard to the specifics of potential development at Lodge Hill, the view of the site from the neighbouring golf courses appears to be a concern, with 13% of comments made in relation to this.

“The views though the golf course and fields.”

Resident, Coe’s Green

“This will spoil the view of anyone playing golf at Deansgate.”

Resident, Mackintosh Close

3% of the comments made believed that the views to the site should remain as they currently are. This is supported by a further 3% of comments in relation to the topography of the site and that the primary focus of development should be in the valley to avoid spoiling any current views:

“Wildlife, green areas, trees, fields, lanes, golf club, this is a semi rural area and should remain so as far as is possible.”

Resident, Elm Avenue

“The views to and from the high point of Lodge Hill (the 70 meter contour line) must be preserved.”

Resident, Walters Road

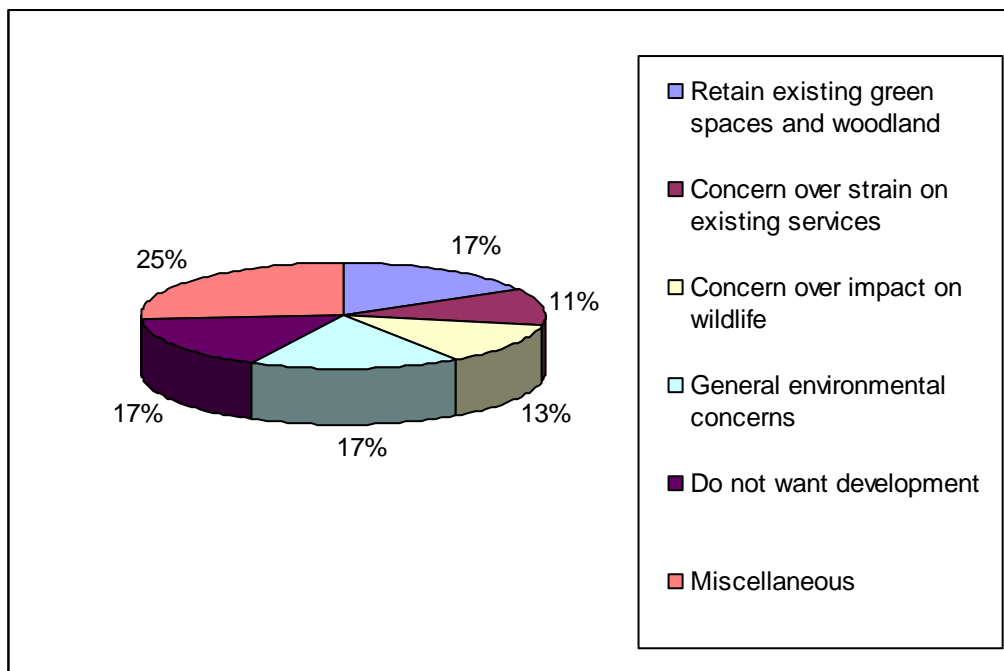
“I feel strongly that any development should be in keeping with the existing character of the Peninsula. It should be visually pleasing, ecologically sound and cause as little damage to wildlife and environment as possible in all aspects.”

Resident, Bells Lane

“It’s in a valley – keep it hidden, and keep the woods and fields as they are.”

Resident, Sharnal Street

Q13: If you have any further comments about Environment, please detail them here:



85 respondents answered this question, one of the lowest responses. 109 references were made on five key themes along with a miscellaneous category to capture individual comments made.

Retain existing green spaces and woodland (17%)

The following comments provide a summary of the responses regarding green spaces and woodland:

“As much natural woodland and green areas should be kept to protect wildlife habitats. Buildings should be built to as many eco friendly standards as possible. It is however good to see ‘Brownfield’ sites being used for development.”

Resident, Lingley Drive

“Nature should be encouraged and preserved.”

Resident, Bells Lane

“All the perimeter woodland must be preserved and improved/ managed to a high standard.”
Resident, Pankhurst Road

“It would be desirable to have some of the woodland (Chattenden Woods) left standing (for wildlife and scenery) as the Hoo Peninsula is not particularly scenic or wooded.”
Resident, Hill Court

“Safeguard the surrounding woods and wildlife.”
Resident, Chartwell Close

Concern over strain on existing services and facilities (11%)

The following comments provide a summary of the responses regarding strain on existing services and facilities:

“As a local resident of a small community I feel that a development as large as proposed would overwhelm the current communities and place undue stress on local services and facilities. The area is predominantly rural and semi rural and this development would impact on the sylvan nature of the area.”
Resident, Castle Street

“The water supply to such a large development is a great concern, as is the provision of gas, electricity and medical services.”
Resident, Trubridge Road

“I am very concerned about medical facilities, schools, water, sewage and other utilities. The village and rest of Peninsula is struggling now, how will it cope with a further 5000 households.”
Resident, Hoo Common

“Services- water, gas, electric, doctors and dentists must be addressed.”
Resident, Tunbridge Road

Concern over impact on wildlife (13%)

13% of comments made were in relation to wildlife; stating specific areas of wildlife interest and asserting that the wildlife must be protected:

“Kent is the top county in UK for nightingales. Chattenden and Upnor is one of the top 5 sites in Kent. The numbers of breeding pairs deem it for national significance. Therefore Medway Council have a duty to protect this essential habitat.”

Resident, Chalfont Drive

“In the field next to Swinton Avenue there are foxes and owls and bats.”

Residents, Swinton Avenue

“Don't wish to lose any wildlife.”

Resident, Woodside Green

“Preservation of nature especially bird life is a high priority.”

Resident, Parsonage Lane

General environmental concerns (17%)

Given the drive for sustainable development and increasing awareness of climate change, it is unsurprising that many comments were in relation to general environmental concerns. These referenced light pollution, pollution generally, lack of water supply and flooding, along with comments that the development should be as environmentally friendly as possible.

“Knowing this town was going to be built one way or another, why haven’t the local council, government, water and sewage companies (who have had years to organise this) not addressed the severe water shortage (by building a reservoir- the space is there). The appearance of water sewage during heavy rainfall and the drop or lack of power on the Peninsula – this will be vastly exacerbated when the new town is built unless the infrastructure is put in first!”

Resident, Elms Avenue

“Main concern over the discharge of surface water into existing systems. i.e Surface water into the holding pond at the bottom of Peninsular Way which discharges into the Brook that passes through Hoo as it can’t cope at present.”

Resident, Main Road

“Added pollution. All the wildlife disappearing as well as only countryside and green space we have left!”

Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

“All housing/buildings to be built to high environmental standards and make the most of renewable energy sources (installation of renewable energy on all new buildings to be compulsory.”

Member, Medway Green Party

Do not want development (17%)

The following comments provide a summary of the responses regarding an objection to development:

“The Peninsula is losing its ‘village’ status due to over development of housing in almost every green space available. No more development in this area.”

Resident, Avery Way

“Having chosen to live in the countryside feel worried/ concerned that this might affect our way of life!”

Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

“It is a green space already – cut down the number of proposed housing.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

“We have too many new developments going on now. Leave site alone.”

Resident, Benenden Road

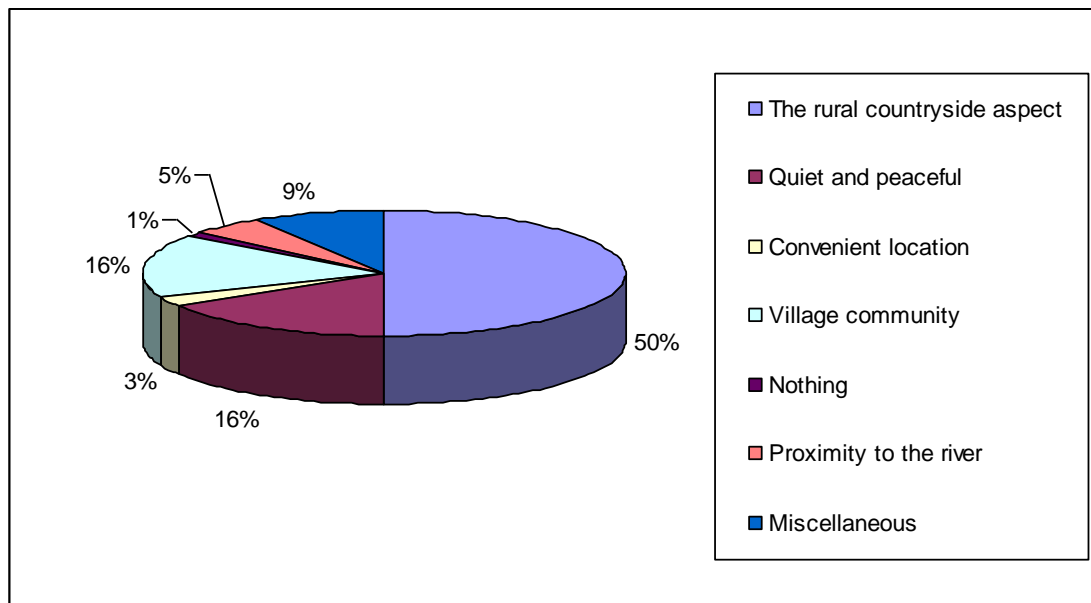
Miscellaneous (25%)

A variety of individual comments were made in this general section, from the need for a large amount of green space within the development; worries that the existing footpaths will become overcrowded and abused; to the need for the development to be in keeping with the existing character of the area.

“As this site has been closed from public view for many years, it cannot be said that this development is a loss of amenity. It should create an amenity.”

Resident, Pankhurst Road

Q14: What do you currently like about your local area?



50% of comments made in response to this question (from 173 respondents) asserted that they liked the rural countryside aspect of their local area; the open and green space with wildlife and woodland:

“The semi-rural location of my property.”

Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

“Beautiful countryside.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

“Rural feel of the area.”

Resident, Miskin Road

“Nature, peace and openness.”

Resident, Moly Road

“Countryside and its rural feel.”

Resident, Coe’s Green

This is perhaps consistent with the second largest response theme, which is that the area is quiet and peaceful (16%). Interestingly, the draw of a village community also appears to be strong (16%), along with an attraction to be close to the river (5%).

“A generally peaceful and harmonious area.”

Resident, Walters Road

“Village community life.”

Resident, Christmas Lane

“The open countryside and community spirit.”

Resident, Elm Avenue

“Close to the river and countryside.”

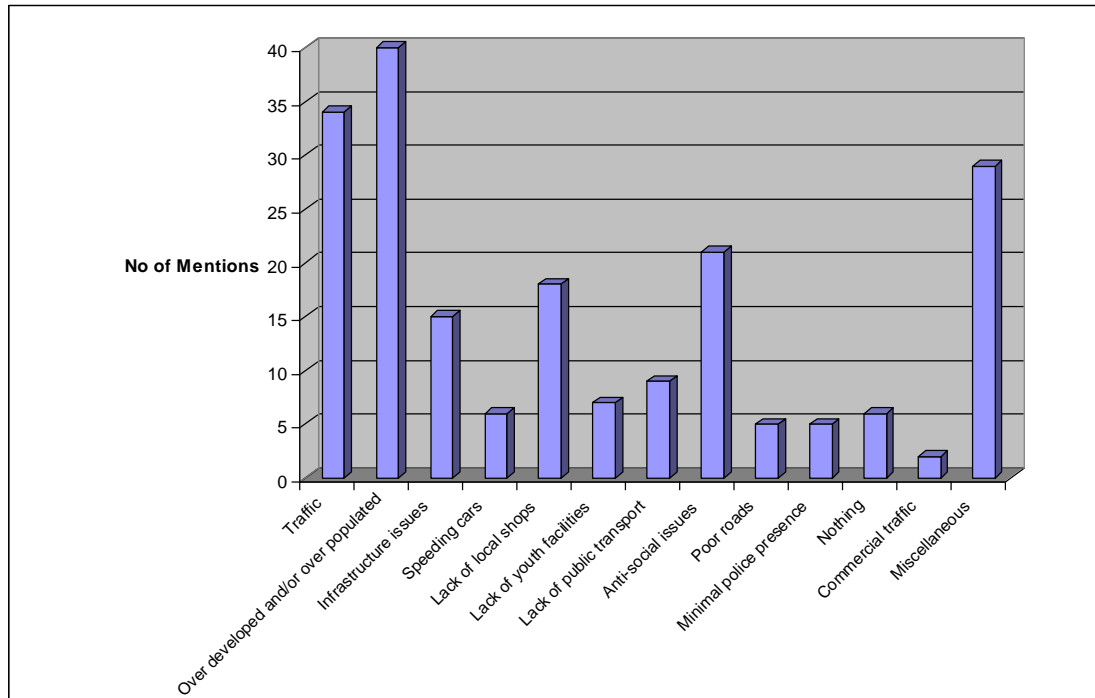
Resident, Frindsbury Hill

“Being able to see the river from my window.”

Resident, Benenden Road

Q15: What do you currently dislike about your local area?

There were many individual responses to this question. A summary of key comment themes made have been included in the graph below, drawn from the responses of 166 people.



Further clarity is provided on the three most frequently detailed dislikes:

Over developed and / over populated (40 references)

Comments made under this theme focused on the assertion that the area was already over developed:

“Over development that is not in keeping with the area.”

Resident, Mackintosh Close

“Too many building sites and too much traffic.”

Resident, Benenden Road

“It’s growing too quickly.”

Resident, Pankhurst Road

“The constant covering of the countryside by houses.”

Resident, Marden Road

Furthermore, the perception is that new housing continues to encroach on the area and supporting services are not being provided for the level of new homes which have already been built or are planned:

“I am concerned that this development will increase the urbanization of the surrounding villages and woodlands.”

Resident, Hoo St Werburgh

“Encroaching urban development crammed into small spaces. Not enough pride in the community.”

Resident, Bells Lane

“5,000 homes = 10,000 people = min. 5,000 vehicles. Hoo Peninsula and Medway will never cope with roads, shops, hospitals, schools, doctors and dentists.”

Resident, Avery Way

“You must include in the development full facilities for shopping and medical services. A new hospital would be very useful this side of the Medway.”

Resident, Brompton Farm Road

Traffic (34 references)

Reinforcing the comments made in the Movement section of the feedback form, traffic continues to be an issue for residents and one of their main concerns.

“The traffic – one road in and one road out”

Resident, Hoo Common

“Congestion of cars especially around the school; the traffic noise on Four Elms roundabout.”

Resident, Hill Court

“Traffic using our road as a rat run.”

Resident, Pankhurst Road

Anti-Social Issues (29 references)

Littering, graffiti and vandalism were given as reasons why people disliked their local area:

“Ghetto like status of Chattenden estate.”

Member, Youth for Christ

“Graffiti and vandalism.”

Resident, Schooner Walk

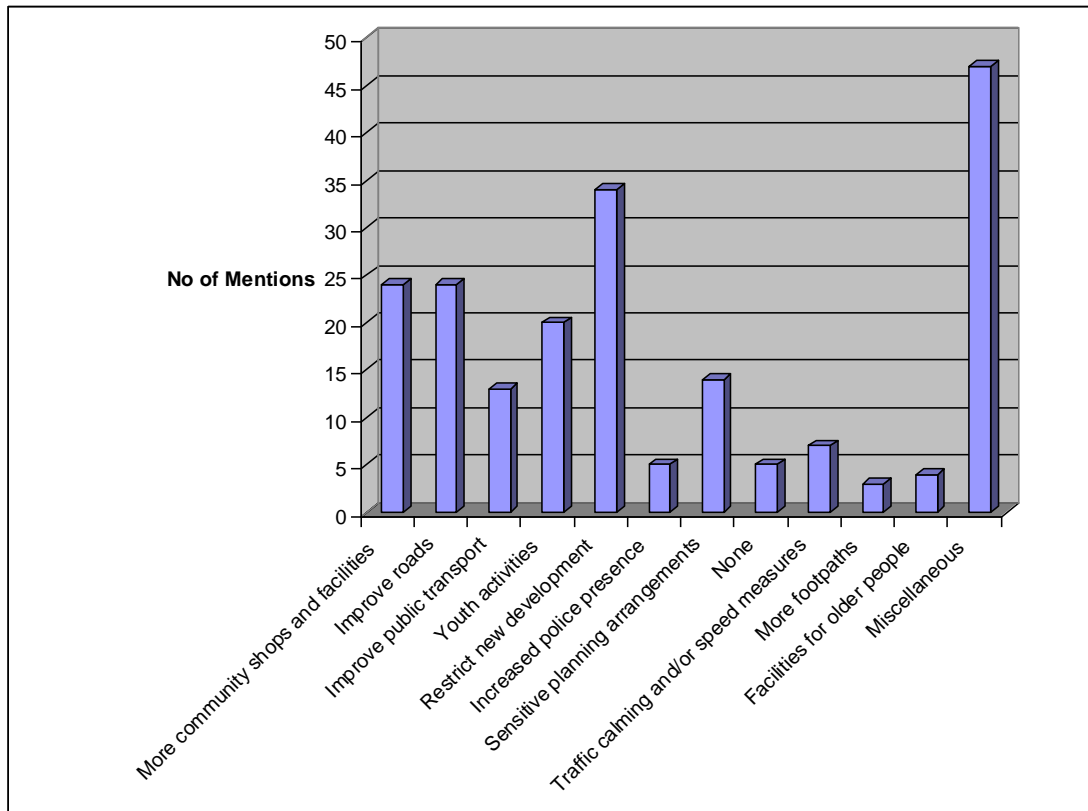
“Lack of activities for youth.”

Resident, Broadwood Road

“People dropping litter even in green space e.g. Great Lanes.”

Resident, Waterloo Road

Q15: What improvements could be made to address the issues you dislike?



161 respondents identified improvements which they believed could be made in order to address the issues which are currently disliked. The three most frequently referenced improvements are illustrated below:

Restrict New Development (34 references)

“Stop building houses on the Peninsula, which would stop the traffic chaos on the A228, A289 and A2.”

Resident, Avery Way

Create Community Shops and Facilities (24 references)

“No retail outlet – the nearest one is Four Elms Hill.”

Resident, Schooner Walk

“There are no shops.”

Resident, Upper Stoke

“No amenities – no shops, no chemist and no pub!”

Resident, Elmwood Road

Improve the Roads (24 references)

Road improvement comments related to either traffic flow and / or road safety. There were also requests to rebuild Dux Court Road.

“Speed of traffic on narrow lanes.”

Resident, Marsh Crescent

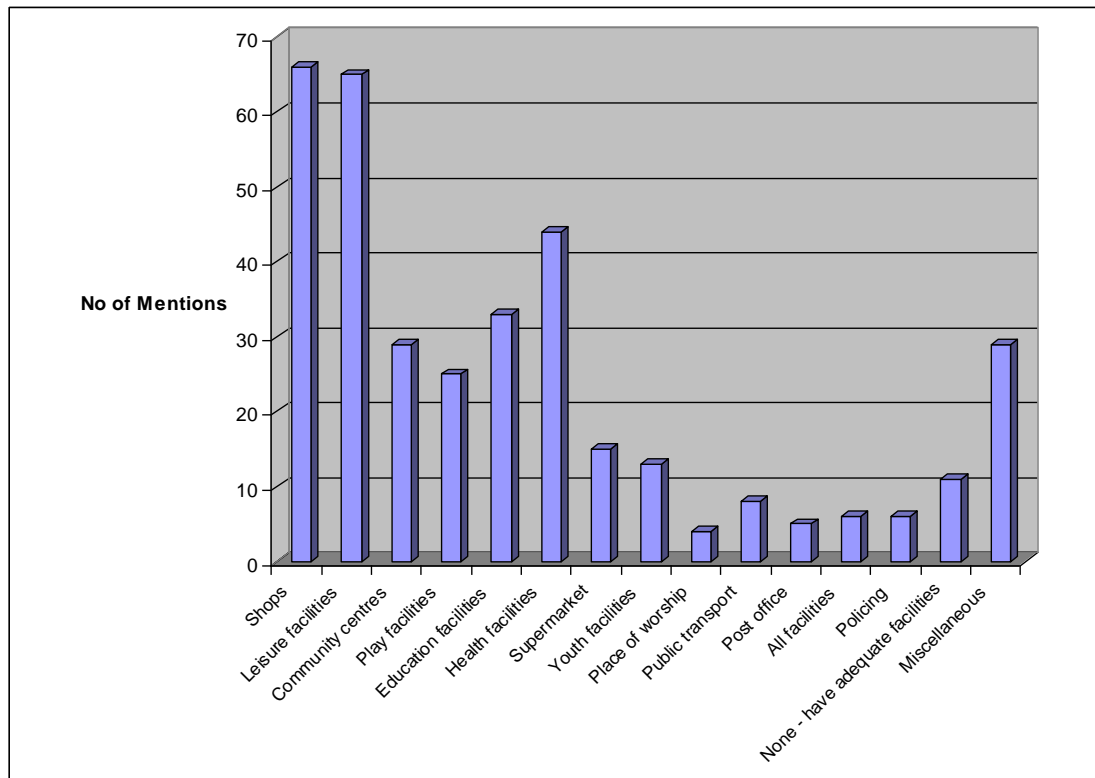
“Noise and pollution due to increase in roads and traffic and the dangers these have caused to the area.”

Resident, Frindsbury

“Dux Court road is dangerous, re-build Dux Court road.”

Resident, Thames Avenue

Q16: What local facilities do you think are currently missing, or in your opinion are unsatisfactory, on the Hoo Peninsula?



154 respondents provided 359 references to local facilities which they believed were missing or unsatisfactory on the Hoo Peninsula:

Shops (66 references)

It is also interesting to note that in addition to the 66 references given to shops, there were also 15 references given to larger retail outlets, such as a supermarket.

“A few small shopping precincts.”

Resident, Lingley Drive

Leisure Facilities (65 references)

65 references were made to a variety of leisure activities, including; pubs; allotments; leisure centres; country park; restaurants; cinema; coffee shops; theatre and water sports facilities.

“Occupations for young people out of school time- playing fields, community centres ‘outward bound’ type of facility.”

Resident, Vicarage Lane

“All of the above and leisure facilities such as cinemas, theatres, restaurants, bowling, swimming. They could all be housed in one complex.”

Resident, Elm Avenue

Health Facilities (44 references)

Health facilities generally, and specifically dentists and a hospital, received 44 references.

“Hospitals, doctor’s surgeries/ local shops.”

Resident, View Road

“Doctors, hospitals and dentists and senior schools.”

Resident, Chattenden

“Medical and dentists facilities.”

Resident, Main Road

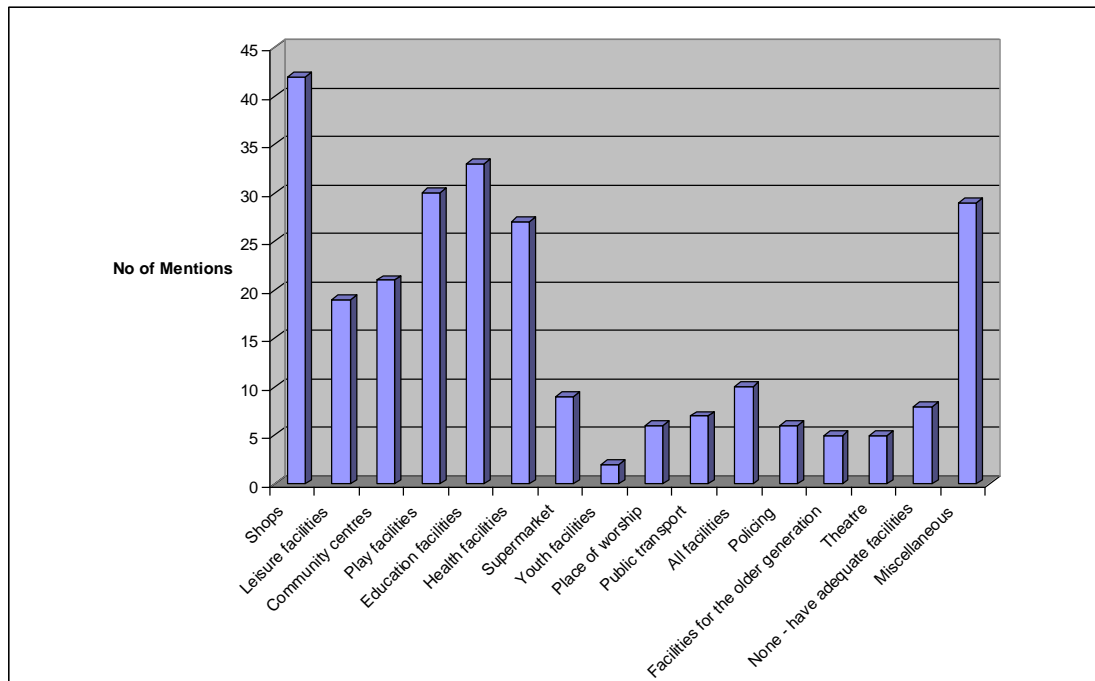
“Better medical facilities.”

Resident, Bells Lane

The miscellaneous responses included; places for the elderly to meet; post office; takeaway; airport; hairdressers; hotel and ice rink.

A Place of Worship received four references on the feedback forms, but 10 individual letters were received from the Parish of Frindsbury with Upnor and Chattenden, requesting a centre for Christian worship within the development.

Q17: What local facilities do you think are currently missing, or in your opinion are unsatisfactory, in Medway?



Following on from Q16, respondents were asked what facilities they believed to be missing, or unsatisfactory, in Medway as a whole. 145 respondents answered this question.

Shops (42 references)

The lack of retail provision appears to be an issue for the Hoo Peninsula and Medway as a whole. However, it only generated 42 references regarding Medway and, as per question 16, there were also nine references to a lack of a supermarket.

“Supermarkets and shops.”

Resident, Green Lane

“A large supermarket this side of Strood so villagers do not have to travel into Medway.”

Resident, Marshland View

“We need a large supermarket as small ones are too expensive, preferably between Hoo and Strood.”

Resident, Willow Avenue

Education Facilities (33 references)

33 references were made of the lack of nurseries, schools and adult education centres.

“Improved secondary school provision.”

Resident, Lower Upnor

“Not enough schools and local shops.”

Resident, Marden Road

“Schools – primary, secondary and grammar schools will be required in the area as well as nurseries.”

Resident, Cooling Road

“The schools are insufficient, especially the secondary school. Hoo School is the only secondary school on the Peninsula.”

Resident, Main Road

Children’s Play Facilities (30 references)

Play centres and children’s play parks were felt to either be missing or unsatisfactory, receiving 30 references.

“Toddlers play park.”

Resident, Newitt Road

“Not enough for young to do.”

Resident, Cooling Road

“Play areas, playing fields and nurseries.”

Resident, Goldsworth Drive

“Youth club for young children”

Resident, Pankhurst Road

Two further elements felt to be missing or unsatisfactory in the Medway area were a theatre (five references) and facilities for the older generation (five references). It is interesting to note that references of youth facilities have dropped considerably from 13 references with regard to Q16 on the Hoo Peninsula, to only two references when considering Medway as a whole.

It is also interesting to note that, whereas the leisure facilities references given in response to Q16 mentioned a wide range of differing facilities, 16 of the 19 leisure references were regarding the lack of pubs in Medway.

The miscellaneous responses included; allotments; garage; post office; park and ride; restaurants; a disco and public landing facilities for yachts.

Q18: If you have any further comments about Community, please detail them here:

Given the very open nature of this question, a wide variety of comments were generated from the small number of people who completed this question (53 respondents). However, it is possible to identify two key themes which respondents chose to reiterate in this general section:

That more is needed for the community

"We need more facilities for our younger generation."

Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

"We are concerned that extra population at Lodge Hill will cause a drain on public amenities, doctors, dentists and health facilities."

Resident, Main Road

That the new population cannot rely on existing community facilities and new ones must be provided

"The proposed development is on the scale of a large town. It needs all you would hope to find in a town of such a size, together with good transport links (public transport and roads) within a new development and the rest of Medway and London etc."

Resident, Greenfinches

Q19: Please use this section to detail any general comments you would like to make

113 respondents chose to make further general comments and this section appears to have been used predominately to reiterate previous comments made in the Movement, Community and Environment sections. Sample quotes demonstrating the main thrust of comments are detailed below:

“Do we need such a large development? Will it make Medway a concrete jungle? How will it help the unemployed, or will it just make it worse!”

Resident, Hoo St Werburgh

“What about drainage from area. Where is all the domestic water coming from?”

Resident, High Halstow

“All health, leisure, utility and road facilities need to be increased and improved.”

Resident, Chattenden

“This is very quiet area and hope it’s kept that way.”

Resident, Chattenden

“The transport infrastructure is not up to supporting a development of this size.”

Resident, High Halstow

“If you are going to build so many houses then appropriate amenities need to be considered.”

Resident, Lodge Hill Lane

“When the development is built I hope it doesn’t spoil the surrounding countryside and it caters for all the community.”

Resident, Hoo St Werburgh

“I would rather not see the area developed. But I have been impressed with the approach shown by Land Securities and the attitude of your staff. So I am hopeful that this will turn out to be much better than just another housing estate in the country.”

Resident, Cliffe Woods

5.0 Implications for the Masterplan

The previous sections provide an objective analysis of the information received from the feedback forms, generated from the first stage of public consultation regarding Lodge Hill. From this information, Trimedia has identified key considerations for the Lodge Hill masterplan.

These conclusions, along with all responses to the previous sections, will be provided to Land Securities and its specialist consultant team in order to start shaping the masterplan for the development. As mentioned earlier, some issues identified may be outside of Land Securities' and the development's remits and, where this is the case, this information will also be shared with Medway Council and/or other statutory agencies.

Road Infrastructure

The key issue which has been identified by the community is traffic congestion, specifically at the Four Elms roundabout, and the possibility that this will get worse as a result of increased cars on the road from the Lodge Hill development. This is perhaps exacerbated by the lack of public transport provision, the perceived poor road infrastructure and the heavy reliance on the car for travelling to work and/or pursuing leisure activities.

The introduction of more convenient public transport appears to be desired and this could be one solution to minimise the reliance on the car. The results also indicate that respondents recognise that development on the scale of Lodge Hill has the potential to initiate infrastructure improvements, and the consultant team will need to assess how this can be achieved.

Road Safety

Road safety concerns appear to focus on the A228 and specifically Four Elms Hill, caused by the speed and volume of traffic, combined with a need to cross the road to reach facilities in Hoo St Werburgh, such as Hundreds of Hoo School. When considering the road infrastructure, Land Securities should also consider measures which could be introduced to minimise the possibility of accidents, for example traffic light phasing, a footbridge, underpass etc.

Site Access

A well thought out access to the site is a key opportunity for infrastructure improvements.

Health Facilities

Health provision was identified as an area of concern by respondents who appeared to have experienced difficulty in accessing their local services. It is believed that these services are already at capacity and there should be additional health facilities at Lodge Hill to accommodate the increase in population, as well as to provide additional support to the already overstretched medical facilities.

The Lodge Hill masterplan should consider introducing these facilities early to accommodate an existing demand, along with the new demand which will be created as a result of the development. Land Securities will need to assess the phasing and provision of this in more detail with the relevant authorities.

Educational Facilities

In a similar vein to the point above concerning health facilities, education provision is also perceived to be at capacity, particularly Hundreds of Hoo School which, due to its location, is the sole secondary school for the Peninsula.

The Lodge Hill masterplan should consider introducing educational facilities early to accommodate an existing demand, along with the new demand which will be created as a result of the development. Land Securities will need to assess the phasing and provision of this in more detail with the relevant authorities.

Concern Regarding Development

It is evident that there is some concern as to why development should take place, as there is a perception that new homes are not required in Medway. There is also a concern that villages on the Hoo Peninsula may lose their village identity. Medway Council is undertaking public consultation on its Core Strategy in 2010, and these comments will be passed onto the relevant planning officers for their consideration.

Open Space Amenity

Key open space elements which could be recognised in the Lodge Hill masterplan are:

- The creation of a country park(s)
- Creating a village green
- Providing playing fields
- Introducing children's play areas
- (n.b. this is a prerequisite list and other open space facilities should also be considered alongside these)

Views

Land Securities should strive to protect countryside views. This could be achieved by giving consideration to minimising the building height and locating development within the lower areas of the Lodge Hill training ground to reduce the impact on far reaching views.

Public views over the surrounding countryside and the rivers should also be maximised as a result of the development, to create an opportunity for the wider public to enjoy the rural area. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the golf course – views to and from it appear to be an important concern for a percentage of the community.

Woodland and Environment

Land Securities must ensure that as much woodland as possible is protected as it is an important feature of the local landscape and is home to wildlife such as nightingales. Land

Securities must strive to protect existing wildlife on the site and should consider the introduction of measures which could enhance its presence.

Leisure Amenity

Feedback from respondents indicated that a particular draw of this part of Medway is the rural countryside aspect; the open and green space with wildlife and woodland. As the Lodge Hill site has been predominately inaccessible land for over 100 years, there is the opportunity to provide access to this area as a leisure amenity alongside housing. This can be achieved by enabling the local community to make the most of their countryside surroundings through the introduction of new, safe, footpaths, cyclepaths and bridleways, on dedicated circular routes. The woodland around Chattenden appears to be a focus of recreational activity, i.e. many walks appear to take place in this area, and this location could provide some type of leisure hub.

Further consideration should be given to other leisure amenities which could provide a focus for the area, as these facilities were identified as currently missing, or unsatisfactory, in the local area. The masterplan should consider opportunities for leisure provision for the existing and new communities. Suggestions provided on the feedback forms include; pubs; allotments; leisure centres; restaurants; cinema; coffee shops; theatres and water sports facilities – Land Securities should consider the viability of these suggestions

Retail Provision

Retail provision, or the lack of it, appears to be an issue for the Hoo Peninsula and wider into the Medway region. This may be somewhat compounded by the limited public transport provision serving the Hoo Peninsula. Retail provision can take many forms, from local community shops, through to farm stores, supermarkets and department stores. It is essential that the appropriate retail facilities are provided in early build phases.

General

Key issues which the team must investigate further:

- Water, gas and power supply; to understand why the area is experiencing fluctuations with supply and to ensure adequate provision is in place for future development

6.0 Conclusions

Trimedia would like to thank all attendees to the public consultation and those who took the time to complete a feedback form and therefore create a permanent record of their views. This is the first stage of public consultation for Lodge Hill and the issues which have been identified at this early stage by the community will be assessed in more depth in the next consultation stage – Movement, Environment and Community workshops which are taking place in June / July 2009.