

Otterpool Park Garden Town Masterplan Stage 2 Community Engagement

September 2017



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Cover image Consultation event at Lympne Community Hall, 22nd June 2017

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1. Introduction

This report covers a series of engagement events with the community and local, regional and national stakeholders, as part of the preparation and design process for the Otterpool Park Garden Town masterplan. These are referred to as the Stage 2 events.

Otterpool Park Garden Town is being jointly promoted by Shepway District Council (as landowner) and Cozumel Estates, and has been since mid-2016. The masterplanning process, being led by Arcadis, involves the preparation of an aspirational and deliverable masterplan that:

- Can embrace the landscape features of this rural area
- Meets the district's housing needs for future generations
- Is well designed and planned
- Engages and is informed by the community and stakeholders

The purpose of this promoter-driven engagement is to explore perspectives, ideas and concerns ahead of finalising any masterplan and making any application. This is an iterative process with the local community and other stakeholders, prior to formulating a finalised masterplan as the basis for a formal planning application.

It should be noted that this is not a statutory process, nor is it about the principle of development. These matters will be addressed separately in the consideration of

- The Shepway Council Core Strategy
- Any formal planning application

This Stage 2 engagement builds on an earlier stage (1) in December 2016, and is due to lead to another Pre-Application stage (3), in early 2018.

This report summarises the issues, ideas and feedback obtained at the following engagement events held between **April and the end of June 2017**:

- Policy & Agency Stakeholder event, Folkestone - April 21st
- Civic and business workshops, Folkestone - June 14th
- Sellindge Primary School, Sellindge - June 15th
- Community Drop-Ins, various venues - June 22nd to 24th

In total, some 400 participants attended these events, with the workshops run as 'by invitation' sessions and the 'open' community drop-Ins attracting local residents, local businesses, parish and district councillors.

As with Stage 1 engagement, the majority of people attending the Drop-In sessions were members of the local communities living within or close to the area of search for the proposed Garden Town. The second stage events included a presentation of the initial design ideas summarising 13 exhibition panels which set out in more detail how the masterplan was being developed around transport, housing, resources and so on. The discussion, comments and feedback from these sessions was wide-ranging with detailed questions and specific issues being raised in response to the indicative framework masterplan.

Sections 2-7 of this report record the events, with sections 8 providing a Thematic Overview Summary and section 9 Conclusions from the events, with additional detail in the Appendices.

2. Background

The programme of engagement events for the second stage of community engagement took place between April 21st and 24th June 2017, comprising the following:

a. Schedule of events

DATE & TIME		FRIDAY 21 st APRIL		
AM	Folkestone <i>The Burlington Hotel</i> National policy and agency stakeholders' workshop			
PM				
DATE & TIME		WEDNESDAY 14 th JUNE		
AM	Folkestone <i>Leas Cliff Hall</i> Civic and Business stakeholders Workshop One			
PM	Folkestone <i>Leas Cliff Hall</i> Civic and Business Stakeholders Workshop Two			
DATE & TIME		THURSDAY 15 th June		
AM	Sellindge Sellindge Primary School Interactive Years 5&6 workshop			
DATE & TIME	THURSDAY 22 nd JUNE	FRIDAY 23 rd JUNE	SATURDAY 24 th JUNE	
AM		New Romney <i>The Mach</i> <i>The Marsh Academy</i> 10.00am -12.00pm (Presentation at 10.30am)	Folkestone <i>Folkestone Library</i> 10:00am – 2:00pm (Presentations scheduled for 10.30am and 12.30pm)	
PM	Hythe <i>Tin Tabernacle</i> 2:00 – 5:00pm	Sellindge <i>Sellindge Sports & Social Club</i> 2:00 – 5:00pm (Presentation at 3.00pm)		
EVENING	Lympne <i>Lympne Village Hall</i> 7.00 – 9:00pm (Presentation at 7.30pm)			

3. National Policy and Agency Stakeholder Workshops

This day of workshops with a professional national and agency stakeholder audience began with an initial presentation on the origins of the proposition for Otterpool Park and how best to meet local needs, the evolving design approach and timeframe for the project. This was followed by a 'question and answer' session before attendees worked in mixed groups to respond to the following questions:

- What are the core issues, policy and influencing parameters (e.g. market & community perceptions?) that need to be addressed;
- Identify the issues and opportunities for taking the Garden Town approach forward.

A full list of the organisations invited and those that sent one or more representatives is attached at **Appendix A**.

The feedback reported is drawn from the analysis of the verbal, mapped and written feedback. Within the workshop the following dimensions were discussed, each with a lead policy theme:

- Specific parameters, processes, and policies to meet?
- Future policy and technology context?
- Any details and trade-offs to develop?
- Priorities and next steps?

All attendees were also asked to fill in a feedback form. The feedback form asked the 6 following questions:

- i. What were the key issues in taking forward Otterpool Park Garden Town?
- ii. What policy parameters and/or thresholds needed to be met
- iii. What ideas or concepts would help to develop Otterpool most beneficially?
- iv. What are the priority steps, investigations or trade-offs that need to be addressed in the next stage of planning and design?
- v. Any other issues or suggestions in taking the Garden Town proposals forward?
- vi. What other organisation or individual should be engaged with in the process of planning Otterpool Park Garden Town?

In discussion and feedback there was a level of support for the 'one town and two villages' concept, and for the high street, though these were caveated by other issues and concerns, as noted below in the group feedback summaries.



Figure 1 Stakeholder workshop participants, Folkestone April 2017

Address community demographic balance

The new community should be one that attracts young people, taking care not to create a commuter settlement, with the aim of making Otterpool Park a 'whole life cycle development'. Re-addressing the age balance locally and creating business communities onsite was seen as critical so that young local people don't leave the area.

Progressive transport approach needed

The need to liaise with the rail franchisee (ending 23rd May) and Network Rail to secure a good outcome for Westenhanger station was seen as important, i.e. upgraded platforms.

Because the aspiration is to encourage walking as much as possible within the site, car parking at the station should be the minimum to meet needs. However, whether the station could help develop a new community without encouraging commuting was questioned.

Upgrading existing transport infrastructure and applying good practice demand management measures were viewed as potentially aiding sustainable transport flows and modal interchange with the station. Moving the station towards the centre of the site is unlikely to be viable but it has been raised in the forthcoming Aecom report.

There is a danger that improving local road networks for easier use would make access to the AONB easier, creating higher through flows of traffic. A strategic approach to accessibility and mobility should help to foster higher use of improved public transport services; these could be geared to enabling easier public transport access to events and to the AONB.

HGV impacts are high and need to be better controlled but the motorway junction itself has the capacity to take more traffic.

A cycle route/walkway from Sellindge to the station was suggested, as was a bus network within and through Otterpool Park to other towns nearby e.g. Hythe, Lympe etc.

Future-proofing Otterpool Park was advised so that the design allows for new technology e.g. in public transport such as bus routes changing on demand and electric bus links to the station reducing the need for car parking etc.

Landscape and infrastructure

Effectively managing flood risk within and beyond the site using effective SUDs solutions to achieve infiltration rates better than existing levels was raised as an issue requiring agreement by a range of stakeholders. The landscape-led design approach enabling significant, strategic use of SUDs was considered to be a way of providing good solutions for flood mitigation, energy efficient insulation and biodiversity benefits. Securing new infrastructure investment within the main utilities' five yearly business planning cycle was strongly advised.

The landscape around existing settlements like West Hythe and the M20, Junction 11 and A20 is eroded and in need of enhancement. Considering how to 'present' the development by using the opportunity to redesign existing and 'left over' road infrastructure, so that the network is more effective and better integrated into the landscape was strongly advised, not least because "people are drawn to good places".

Address water, waste and flooding

Due to the complex water supply/waste treatment/flood risk issues, it was suggested that a dedicated group be established to consider and help resolve the water and infrastructure

issues.

Emphasis was also placed on a sustainable waste management involving allocation of areas on the masterplan for energy-to-waste plants giving a self-sufficient waste disposal system whilst creating a local energy source that would also provide local employment.

Housing

There was considerable discussion as to how homes could best be allocated to local people, including those wishing to return to the area. There were concerns about getting the right balance between attracting incomers to encourage new business, and preventing Otterpool Park from becoming a commuter settlement for London.

Discounted house prices and specific mortgage packages were considered for health/medical practitioners and key workers, as provided by the Dolphin Trust in London, and similar set-ups, with such properties being safeguarded for health/medical workers as part of an Otterpool Park Community Management Trust.

Community facilities

The provision of new schools for Otterpool Park was discussed alongside the urgent need for new health facilities. Recruiting the necessary staff was a concern due to the existing skills shortage. There was agreement that not only must new provision meet the needs of the new community, but also support existing provision in the surrounding areas. Transferring good practice approaches for new ways of delivering health and social care from other parts of the UK was suggested, including links with green infrastructure for healthier lifestyles.

Meeting needs across all age groups by providing cultural, social and leisure facilities and amenities that enable active lives, including links to Canterbury and Folkestone, was considered essential.

Encouraging community cohesion around business places, rather than a linear layout, was thought beneficial, i.e. something circular would allow for socialising in the spaces between business premises. Changing work patterns, with older people working longer in future, perhaps part time and preferably locally, with homes near jobs will encourage movement, walking and socialising.

Getting the retail and leisure offer right to encourage a thriving local centre was seen as very important. Integrating community facilities to ensure viable delivery of facilities should be considered, as well as encouraging 'pioneer' new shops possibly concentrated around the station. Also, the shortage of burial spaces in the area was raised as an issue for consideration.

Green networks, landscape and long-term management

There was much support for a landscape-led approach with new woodland planting providing a sense of settlement and screening. Setting the new development into the existing landscape, responding to cues from its history and topography was considered potentially more important than taking design cues from the existing settlements; Otterpool Park must respect the existing context but have its own character.

There was support for greenspace around Westenhanger Castle, to protect it and restore its southward aspect. Visual impact assessment will be essential for views from the AONB, within and across the site. The landscape-led approach raised questions about who will manage this new public resource, with suggestions for setting up a community trust in perpetuity using a

S106 agreement like the Milton Keynes Park Trust.

The search area lies outside the AONB but within its setting, which is an important consideration for the proposed Otterpool Garden Town. This includes views out from the AONB over the new development must be carefully considered, including the adjacent Ashford Council's 'Dark Skies' policy to the west of the search area. Building heights and legibility will be important considerations relating to development within this setting. Combining green courses with watercourses is considered desirable.

Taking account of the historic grain and how this might influence the layout would also help in making Otterpool Park attractive to incomers and local communities, the public green space envisaged could be used for events (walkable for many residents). The local Creative Foundation is worth considering as a partner/stakeholder for how best to utilise new greenspace/green infrastructure. Taking design cues from the surrounding area, e.g. neighbourhoods to the north echoing the traditional built form found at the base of the North Downs could work well. Tenterden has a unique interface with local geography.

Sustainability, sustainable design and a prosperous economy

Opportunities for renewable energy and innovative technologies were raised, including energy efficient design and C21st energy systems for better development, so that not only new but also existing residents/settlements can benefit.

Encouraging new technologies for heat recovery and cooling, particularly on allocated business employment sites was advised. Using solar roofs, not simply PV panels, encouraging green roofs and walls and re-chargeable home-batteries and public charging points for electric vehicles were all suggested.

The recent Aecom waste and water strategy reviews were advised to be factored into Otterpool Park's design approach.

An effective design review process to achieve high standards was requested with explicit, clearly phrased design codes embedded in S106 agreements that are legally effective.

Employment and mixed use

A robust employment strategy was seen as necessary, with attractive propositions to draw the right mix of people. A mixed use high street (commercial/retail/housing) with an evening economy such as that in Rochester could be an explicit aim.

Planning and delivery process

There was discussion about how Otterpool Park will work with other developments within the site area that have already received planning permission, plus how the proposals impact on adjacent areas.

Making the proposals clear within the SDC Core Strategy and being transparent about the planning process and how people can respond to it was seen as important.

Safeguarding the masterplan so it is developed as intended and can be secured through effective planning conditions, whilst not preventing future applications in the longer term for something different/better, was advised.

4. Civic and Business Workshops

This day comprised two separate, identically run workshop sessions at Leas Cliff Hall in Folkestone for civic representatives from parish, town and district councils and business people from across the Shepway area and adjacent districts. Views were sought about the location of the proposed development, its timeframe, the emerging framework masterplan and its proposed phasing. All participants had been specifically invited to take part, working in self-selected groups of between five to eight per table.



Figure 2 Group discussions at Civic & Business workshop, Folkestone June 2017

Each workshop session began with a comprehensive presentation by the Arcadis-led project team, explaining the reason for the location and area of search, the design approach and the relevance of garden town principles for what was being proposed. People were invited to ask questions during the presentation and each session then led into group discussions facilitated by team members followed by verbal feedback on the proposals. Each group was given a main topic to focus on: transport and infrastructure; the economy and local business; housing and community; sustainability; green infrastructure and environment, but could also cover anything they felt was important. They were each asked to consider the following four questions:

- What do you support about these proposals?
- What is of concern to you?
- What ideas and suggestions do you have that the team should take on board?
- What other advice or questions do you have?

The following is a summary of the main points of the discussions from each workshop session but every participant was also invited to complete a feedback form which is attached at **Appendix C**. This form was also used for the subsequent community drop-ins at the end of June to aid consistency in analysing the results, which are provided in **Section 7**.



Figure 3 Group discussions at Civic & Business workshop, Folkestone June 2017

Dimensions of support for the proposals

There was general support for the proposals which were considered to be coherent and the strong emphasis on a landscape-led development was especially welcomed, as was the restored setting for Westenhanger Castle as a heritage asset.

The proposed 'town centre' density and height of buildings was felt to work if properly balanced with high-quality green space. A Tenterden-style of development and design was welcomed by some, whilst providing flats over shops was felt to be positive because it livens up a retail area, making it a more vibrant place; many said they were encouraged by the masterplan.

The attention given to high-quality employment - with a new town centre and commercial areas – would offer young families and young people opportunities in what is currently an ageing rural community. The provision of several schools was seen as a positive as this is a big local issue, with pressure on existing schools to increase their intake.

“Not only jobs but housing for the younger generation will be supplied on what is a good, well-chosen site, making it possible for people to stay in the area, not have to move away for work. It will be a place for young people.”

“Good opportunities for young people and young families, they need this.”

People felt that the business areas were generally in the right place but queried what type of businesses could be attracted to Otterpool Park as there would need to be a range of business premises for start-ups, those expanding, offices and manufacturing space with equal opportunities for small as well as larger businesses.

The construction sector would obviously benefit, although there was concern that local companies may lose out to larger businesses.

The provision of multiple local centres to encourage walking and cycling was felt to be good, with the provision of dedicated cycle paths especially welcomed. Other new infrastructure like a possible light rail/tram link to Hythe was considered to be a good idea, if feasible.

Matters of concern

The main concern was that Otterpool should avoid becoming a dormitory town of London commuters. Attracting one or more bigger employers to create jobs and a fairly self-sustaining community, where people don't need to commute out, was seen as critical.

Attracting a mixed demographic comprising local people as well as younger people from further afield, was cited as important. Whilst new employment opportunities would be created there was real concern about local salaries not being attractive enough to younger people, with a high proportion attracted to London jobs with higher salaries.

Pinning down the infrastructure issues, like the possible upgrade to Westenhanger station, and whether or not HS1 will stop there was a concern. Providing a park and ride that's too big could attract more London commuters, defeating the main local purpose of Otterpool Park.

Concern remains about whether the lorry holding area will go ahead because it's not seen as sustainable or compatible with this development.

Public distrust about the proposals means that existing residents need trust/credibility/transparency in the process. It will be important not to swamp the existing villages or cause any loss of identity but achieve improved quality of life for all ages.

"There is a need to demonstrate more clearly what Otterpool can offer to the existing communities and how they can benefit; it needs to be inclusive".

Some felt that volume homebuilders might not provide high standards of construction and that there needs to be surety in provision of a range of tenures and sizes of homes in each phase of development so that local needs are met.

The spread of multiple local centres to meet local needs was popular, but innovation in parking areas would be needed to avoid replicating problems in Folkestone.

Questions were asked about long-term responsibilities for shop and office premises, especially if flats are above ground floor business premises, (i.e. what freehold and leasehold arrangements are being considered?) as this will affect whether premises are attractive enough to potential users.

Questions were also asked about the housing need figures and how these match the plan phasing, which would need to ensure that services are provided at the right time to have a community to supply, and vice versa. Whilst the principle of development was accepted some felt that it was important to first consider existing brownfield sites, and develop those first as a priority.

"Whilst the emerging plan looks good, why not focus first on those brownfield and derelict parts of Folkestone and adjacent towns that are in need of investment and regeneration; this would require less infrastructure and have more immediate benefits."

Transport infrastructure improvements to the local road network and a new motorway junction to the east of the site were considered to be long overdue and should be a priority. Getting traffic movements right to avoid station traffic and HGVs on the new high street was important.

One group felt that the design approach wasn't brave or innovative enough yet, stating that the masterplan and vision need to be more forward-looking and challenging.

Addressing local housing needs of all types was critical including the percentage of affordable homes to be provided. Social rented housing, shared ownership provision and private rented housing, involving some of the larger providers, was considered to be an important ingredient.

Getting a careful balance between housing and commercial development, whilst establishing a high street able to withstand changing retail trends, would be needed.

Businesses need the right facilities to succeed so getting good broadband and similar services was also requested.

Environmental concerns included the need to consider groundwater, especially to the south where springs could be an issue; A key point was ensuring that water supply and water shortages had been assessed in detail because creating a new town/village could make an existing situation worse.

The potential for grey water recycling and rain-water harvesting need to be fully investigated

Addressing waste management right and avoiding adding to existing air quality problems that have long-term health consequences, especially for the young, are important.



Figure 4 Group discussions at Civic & Business workshop, Folkestone June 2017

Ideas and suggestions for the design team

Getting information (the emerging masterplan and proposals) out to the younger generation as fast as possible was strongly advised. "they need to know about this, they're the future."

The need to stress the 30-year timeframe and the multiple benefits the development could bring to existing communities was strongly advised.

SDC was also urged to use all its powers and influence as a landowner/developer to get volume homebuilders and others to fully deliver the right outcomes. It was seen as important to attract a logistical hub company to pull in more businesses.

Aiming for Otterpool to be zero carbon and making good use of renewable energy technology was suggested. Having green walls and roofs was considered to be good for reducing pollution and an aspiration that Otterpool should ideally aim to be a 'particulate free' settlement was

raised. It was argued that this could be pursued in several ways including using only electric buses, installing electric car charging infrastructure across the development from the outset and prioritising parking for electric cars.

Using a variety of building styles and tenures to attract a good range of people was suggested, as was the idea that local building companies should get preference. Creating a design guide and using more contemporary architecture, plus a range of wide and narrow streets should be an aim; trying to get a feel of a Cinque Port development or Tenterden-style should make Otterpool Park an attractive place to live and work. Creating a sense of civic pride in Otterpool Park as a good place to live should be an aim.

Using sport and cultural facilities to be proud of, as long as these compliments what is on offer elsewhere in the district, was advised as this would help attract people and help to create a new identity.

Local food production was seen as important with a suggestion that the lorry holding area could be used to return land to farming in the event of any future food shortages. Making sure that structural woodland planting addresses the issue of ash die-back was cautioned and new public facilities like a fishing lake were recommended.

Other advice and further questions

Further ideas and queries were grouped around the following:

- Improved road and rail links, including liaison with Ebbsfleet, and possibly a shuttle bus to Ashford link to improve access to Eurostar.
- Have an experimental technology cluster and encourage more innovative sustainability solutions.
- What type and scale of local food production would be feasible and what would the benefits be for local producers?
- Avoid parking on streets in neighbourhoods, as this inhibits children playing outside together. Boulevard type roads and proper cycle paths to make cycling safe for everyone. Having small blocks of homes around mini greens creates communal areas for play, socialising, etc. so that neighbours can get to know each other.
- Go for a diversity of architectural practices and really challenge them to get the best out of them, to make Otterpool Park distinctive. Don't keep harking back to Ebenezer Howard when things have moved on considerably, with new technology, new priorities, and so on.
- Houses to be built with water harvesting/solar panel and dementia-proof housing. Try to pitch a new, more exciting proposition that really focuses on distinctiveness.
- New churches and faith centres will be needed as will either a crematorium or burial space.
- What impact will Otterpool Park have on existing communities, businesses and infrastructure – construction traffic will need better infrastructure from the outset.
- Given lorry holding area proposals there is concern that freight/haulage do not fit with the proposals
- What is affordable housing in reality? What opportunities for social affordable housing, private and government schemes will be provided?
- A buffer between new development and Aldington is needed. Who will own the green buffers and who will manage them? Otherwise they will lose their role and value.

5. Sellindge School Session

This interactive workshop for Year 5 and 6 pupils was attended by the form teacher and a teaching assistant as well as the KMA team and a representative from SDC. The pupils were split into groups of five to six per table and were given a very short introductory presentation about the proposals to create a new garden town. It was explained that nothing was definite but that a project team was working on several studies covering the area of search to see what was possible including new housing, green space, cycle routes, shops and offices, new roads and other facilities. The KMA team explained that it would take many years for the town to be slowly developed and that they would be grown up and may have children of their own by the time the first phase was established.

The pupils were invited to ask any questions before being asked to work in their groups to list out all the things they felt would be needed for the new town, and to think carefully about what it would be like to be grown up and live there if Otterpool were to go ahead. Once each group had agreed what they felt was important to provide for children, families, older people and workers, that were asked to create their own 'masterplan' on maps provided. This involved cutting out and sticking on coloured paper, with each colour representing a different type of facility or infrastructure:



Figure 5 Group work at the Sellindge school workshop, Sellindge 2017

The pupils participated enthusiastically and seemed pleased that they had been asked to take part in helping the masterplanners to design the proposed new settlement, with some requesting a follow-up visit. The series of images overleaf show the groups each presenting their final plans to their classmates and teachers. There were suggestions for fun parks, football stadiums, shops and restaurants but also very thoughtful suggestions like new parks that would be good for people to walk and play with their dogs, green areas where older people could sit and talk and even a special knitting centre for grannies. Every group advised that a new hospital would be needed, with a couple suggesting that two would be best, with one being very specialist and a second being for non-emergency care. The children also felt that it would be much better to be able to walk or cycle to school on safe pathways away from cars and lorries.

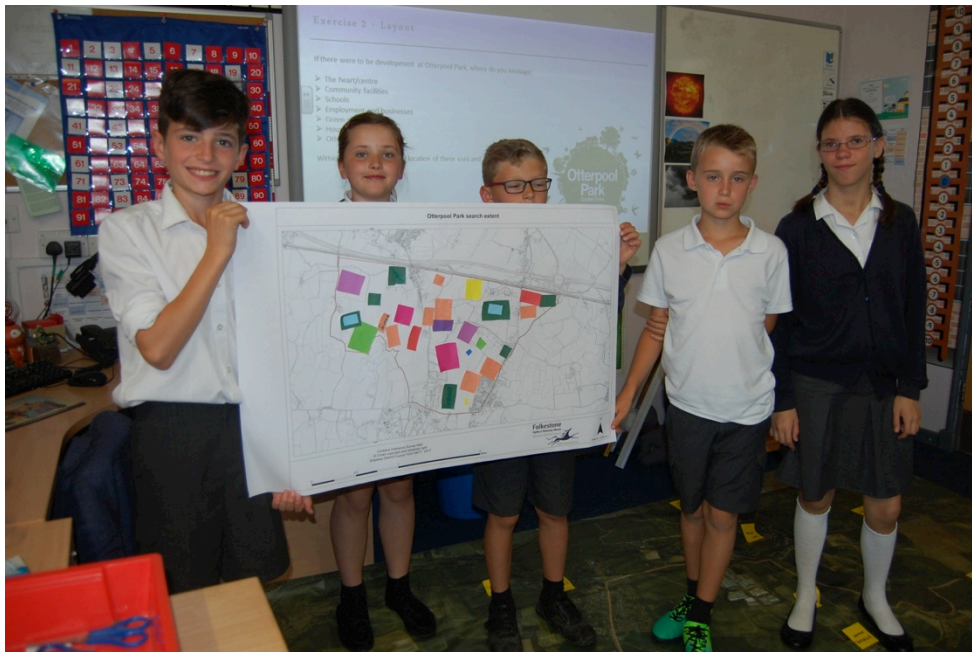
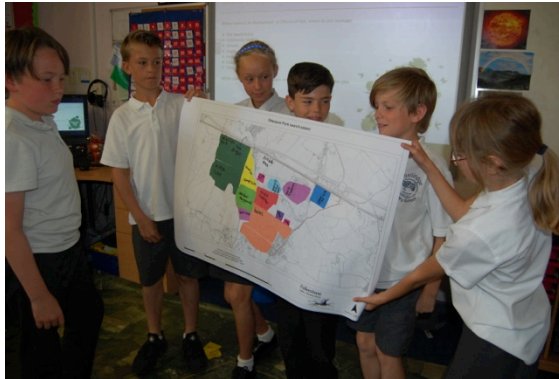
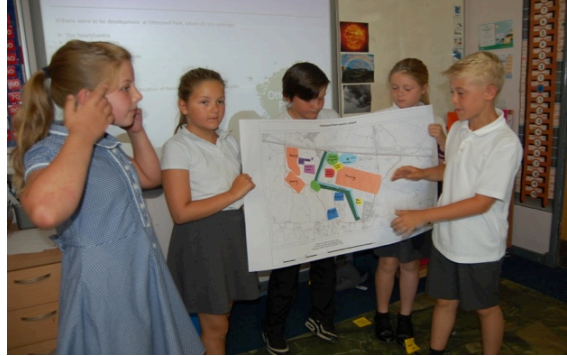


Figure 6 Group presentations at the Sellindge school workshop, Sellindge 2017

6. Community Drop-In Sessions

As with the Stage 1 Engagement in December 2016, the locations, venues, times of the day and week were all arranged to enable participation by as large a number of people as possible, especially for those who felt they may be more directly affected by any development within the area of search. The exhibitions were in well-known and used local and community venues that were easy to get to and took place consecutively over two week days, one evening and during the day on a Saturday.

a. Publicity

The events were once again widely publicised through direct mailings, posters and flyers and the local media, including the following:

- A press briefing on 14th June for invited members of the local press, which resulted in 10 pieces of coverage a week ahead of the event;
- A joint SDC/Cozumel press release issued on 12th June, resulting in 5 pieces of coverage (**See copy at Appendix B**).
- Three broadcast interviews with Kent radio stations, of which two were on 14th June following the press briefing whilst the second took place on the 21st June, as part of the advance publicity;
- Social media was also used; Facebook and Twitter channels were established, and several targeted posts ‘boosted’ on Facebook were aimed at relevant audiences.
- Posters and flyers were printed and distributed to local libraries and event venues in the relevant parishes in advance of the sessions. They were also provided as handouts to stakeholders attending the civic workshop session on 14th June and to everyone who came to the public Drop-in sessions (**see posters and flyer below**);



Figure 7 Publicity posters for the second stage of community consultation

b. Event format and feedback method

As with the December engagement, the events comprised a staffed, public drop-in exhibition open to all, but with the main difference being a short, pre-publicised presentation at a specified time during each session. The purpose in offering these presentations was to explain the design approach in more detail, complementing the summary information provided on the exhibition panels and provide people with the opportunity to ask more targeted questions.

The series of display banners explaining the approach taken to designing the phases of development for Otterpool Park covered transport, green infrastructure, employment and skills opportunities, the approach taken to housing design and density in each phase, health, education and environmental considerations including water and biodiversity. These were designed to address questions and concerns arising from the Stage 1 community engagement events at which the following had been raised:

- Some ideas as to what a ‘garden town’ or ‘garden village’ might look like and where it would be located within the area of search
- State, in fairly simple terms, why more houses are needed in the area and who SDC think they are needed for, i.e. local people and/or people moving to the area
- Show how the development might grow if it commenced to allay concerns about new homes being provided before services and facilities are in place
- Provide some initial ideas on road design, new on/off road provision and integration/connectivity
- Explain outline ideas on how houses could be made affordable and for local people
- Provide some initial thoughts on services and waste/sewage provision

For this series of community events the indicative framework masterplan ‘graphic’ was provided on a large floor map. The masterplan layout was shown within the area of search for the garden town and identified the likely phases of development, starting at the north-eastern corner of the site close to Westenhanger station and developing south and west within the area of search over a 40 to 50-year period. An exhibition panel considered the size, location and character of the first two phases in more detail covering the first 10 to 15 years of development.

Members of the Arcadis design and planning team, along with representatives from Kevin Murray Associates, Property House Marketing, Shepway District Council and Cozumel Estates were available throughout the three days to answer questions, listen to comments and take notes.

An A4-size summary leaflet about the indicative masterplan was available as a handout to take away (**copy in Appendix C**). This also provided an explanation of the planning context for the new town proposition, in particular the need for new housing identified in a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) prepared as evidence for Shepway’s Core Strategy and Local Plan.

Feedback forms were available for people to complete, preferably before they left, or to take away and post back to Property House Marketing. Everyone who came to the events were invited to provide comments on the indicative masterplan to inform its next iteration.



Figure 8 Image showing the exhibition banners (on left) and the large floor map (centre right)

c. The feedback form

The feedback form (see copy at Appendix C) was used at different types of events – professional/statutory stakeholders, civic and business stakeholders and members of the community – to enable consistency of analysis and comparison of responses between each type of stakeholder.

The feedback data collated during the drop-ins sought to review the emerging indicative framework layout, phasing and overall design approach and to contribute issues and aspirations to inform the ongoing analysis and design process. People will have the chance to support or object to specific development proposals at the planning application stage, should they wish.

d. Number of participants

The table overleaf shows that some **304 attended and 100 completed feedback forms** were returned for the respective sessions. The indicative masterplan, the design themes and propositions presented gave people a much better idea of the likely extent and type of new settlement that is likely to come forward as a formal planning application. As with the December events, the attendance at the Stage 2 drop-ins may not be statistically representative of the population of Shepway District (circa 108,000 people) so we cannot make any claims on behalf of the views of the whole district-wide population.

Event	Approx. nos. Attendees	Feedback Forms
Tin Tabernacle, Hythe	94	34
Lympne Village Hall	90	29
The MACH, The Marsh Academy, New Romney	8	1
Sellindge Sports and Social Club	87	26
Folkestone Library	25	10
TOTAL	304	100

In addition to feedback forms completed during the session, a further 25 responses were emailed after the events. As with the Stage 1 December events, because several individuals and households submitted multiple responses, it is not possible to state the exact percentage of those attending the sessions who provided a response.

Three to four members of a local protest group¹ objecting to the garden town proposal were again present outside the entrance to each event (except at the Mach Academy, Romney) without any prior notice to, or agreement with Arcadis, Shepway District Council, Cozumel Estates or the individual venues. Attendees were greeted on arrival by members of this group and given a handout before entering the venue.

The leaflet prepared by the objectors group sets out their perspectives on the proposition for a new garden town, containing their interpretation about the number of new homes needed for the Shepway area. A major concern raised is around a sense of loss of rural/village identity in the locality.

The issues that people raised are combined into the thematic section 8., with the feedback form issues in Appendix D.



Figure 9 The Folkestone drop-in presentation



Figure 10 Drop-in presentation

7. Overview Thematic Analysis

The results of the feedback form analysis in Appendix D have been combined with the notes taken by team members present at the civic and business events and the community sessions. Notes were taken to record key issues, views and ideas, particularly as they affect the masterplan moving forward.

As with the Stage 1 report, the analysis has been grouped into the headlines themes emerging from the discussions and feedback information. These are listed below and may be regarded as the core topics being raised, discussed and fed-back by people following each event.

- Infrastructure – existing and future capacity
 - Transport and traffic demand management
 - Water supply
- Housing, especially local affordability
- Health services and facilities
- Business, employment and education
- Greenspace and environmental quality
- Trust and control over the planning and construction process
- Continuing consultation and engagement

7.1 Infrastructure – existing and future capacity

Transport and traffic demand management

Concern was expressed about the potential impact of the proposed development on the local road network, saying that the local roads won't cope and that traffic management across the area needs re-thinking, including to ensure that existing issues are resolved as a priority.

There was considerable concern about **the impact of additional traffic on the roads at peak times**, especially during the summer weekends when more people want to go to the beach, and for other 'peak traffic' times.

A number of people expressed the aspiration that **new and improved transport links** and transport interchange facilities be provided **in advance** of any development at Otterpool. Concern was also expressed about undesirable changes to the character of the rural roads in that they are attractive and any loss of character to a more urban feel, with associated street-lighting, would not be welcomed.

The indicative masterplan identified new roads within each phase of the development but portrayed the existing A20 and other roads as they currently are. There was concern about whether the relevant authorities would achieve an effective **solution to the A20's current traffic issues**.

There was also continuing concern about the potential impacts of **Operation Stack/the lorry holding area** proposals on both the existing road network, and any improvements that might be possible.

The potential to create **safer routes for cyclists and pedestrians** across the development, linking to adjacent areas was very popular, especially where segregated cycle lanes and off-road routes could be provided.

There were several questions at each session about the likelihood of **upgrading Westenhanger station** and the impacts this may have. There were concerns that making Westenhanger a HS1 stop would take this service away from another local station, to the detriment of existing residents. Another concern was that making Westenhanger a HS1 stop would simply encourage London commuters to move into Otterpool Park, i.e. it would effectively become a satellite of London. There was a very strong sentiment that any improvements to the station should benefit locals and that extending parking provision could be double-edged in terms of impacts. The potential to reinstate the old racecourse branch-line was also raised.

Water

Water was considered a critical issue, with the many people at each community event concerned about water shortages being avoided, especially during summer drought conditions. Water was seen as a finite resource, already severely under pressure because **no-one wanted their existing supply to be put at risk**. There was also concern that any new water supply and aquifer re-charge infrastructure for Otterpool Park may unfairly increase costs for existing communities in the area. People were generally very concerned about options for water management and security of supply and sought convincing detail on this.

“This area is already water-stressed with risks of water shortages so how can it support this size of development?”

The **green infrastructure and SUDs design** approach were strongly welcomed by those with a technical and in-depth knowledge of their value. There was some limited discussion about the potential for aquifer recharge and links with measures that could enable improved winter flood mitigation.

Some felt that the proposals for a green corridor along the river Stour complimented necessary flood risk mitigation identified by the Environment Agency, whilst also benefiting biodiversity. There was also limited discussion about the potential **for integral rainwater collection and water recycling systems** being built in at the design stage for each phase. Reference was made to how cost-effective this could be, whilst some requested more information.

7.2 Housing, especially affordability

There was some high level of agreement that new **housing was needed** but considerable variation in views as to how much, what type and where. There was a recurring line of debate around whether new homes could be accommodated by infill development in existing rural villages and the main coastal towns, set against the evidence that most available sites had already been accounted for in the recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

There was concern and confusion about the figures provided, their origin and accuracy. Those who were supportive of the Otterpool Park proposals in principle, were however sceptical about whether local people would be able to afford to live in the development unless measures were put in place to ensure that preference was given to local people to rent or to buy. There was generally much concern about the **importance of providing new affordable** – including social rented - housing in perpetuity to benefit local people, especially young families and key workers in the health and education sectors.

There was **scepticism that ‘affordable homes’ would actually make it to market** and examples of recent and new development in Hythe, Ebbsfleet and other local towns were cited as

evidence of promised affordable homes not being delivered. Concern was cited about inflated rents and high prices for second-homes to attract incomers from London were common, e.g. the Fisherman's Beach development. The point was made that average salaries in Shepway (around £25K) mean very few people have the chance of making it onto the property ladder.

There was an exchange of views amongst some participants around nimbyism and selfishness when it came to new housing development, i.e. those who are against any change are denying younger people the chance to get on the housing ladder. The focus of the discussions about housing was around how best to **ensure that affordable homes really were provided** within the right mix of tenures, and were available only to locals on a long-term basis. The importance of providing a good mix for young and older people was also stressed, and to ensure key workers are supported to get on the housing ladder. There was pressure on SDC/Cozumel to provide more information about tenure options and long-term measures.

"It's good to have all the generations together in a new development, but there will have to be special provision for the elderly as well as 'lifetime homes'."

There was also some mistrust around how the **housing statistics and forecasts** had been derived. A proportion of people found it difficult to believe the level of housing required over the next 30 years and more. Some felt that the proposals for mixed high street development with housing in Otterpool Park were attractive, but felt strongly that existing places like Folkestone needed a similar design treatment first.

Several participants strongly advised that **more people, especially younger people**, should be sought out to make them aware of the proposals and to encourage them to get involved in shaping the development.

7.3 Health and well being

The challenge of maintaining **good levels of accessible healthcare** are as much of an issue in Shepway, as they are in other areas. There were high levels of concern expressed about local closures, limited GP surgery hours at existing medical centres, and threatened changes to hospital services. A high proportion of people felt that even if Otterpool Park had a new multi-service health hub for the wider area, finding the medical staff to work in it would be very difficult.

"GP surgeries are closing as there are no doctors to work in them, so why would Otterpool Park be different."

Elderly and acute hospital care issues, such as timely treatment for stroke patients, were specifically raised in relation to the recent (temporary) downgrading of Canterbury Hospital's A&E and strains on the William Harvey hospital. The question was asked several times as to whether **Otterpool Park would at some point have its own hospital**. The point was made that expansion of the University of Canterbury will put further pressure on local GPs and that this needed to be taken into account in any proposal for Otterpool Park as a large-scale development.

Because the GP funding formula (Cahill formula) is less per head for Shepway than for adjacent areas, **Shepway's greater, more complex mental and general health issues** (related to income and employment problems) are not being fully addressed. Whilst this is an issue for the NHS

Care Commissioning Group, SDC needs to work very closely with the NHS to avoid new development making things even worse.

“There is a local duty of care to existing residents that must be met before new capacity is needed for new residents in Otterpool Park.”

There was limited acknowledgement that several existing GP surgeries are no longer fit for purpose and that new, better designed and equipped centres were needed, with the potential for **Otterpool Park to provide this in a new health hub**. How this would attract and retain the right type of staff was again a matter for considerable debate.

7.4 Business, employment and education

There is concern that if existing, recently built business developments in places such as Folkestone and Ashford were not being occupied **why would the ones at Otterpool Park be any more successful?**

Attracting independent shops for the proposed new high street and local centre would offer a different shopping experience to Folkestone’s. There was concern that Otterpool Park’s high street and business units would need subsidising, possibly at the expense of Hythe and Folkestone businesses.

“Rental rates on the high street are rising, people cannot keep up and small independent shops close – we need [the certainty of] fixed rates.”

There were divided views as to **whether and what kinds of businesses** were needed. Some locals said that they didn’t need new facilities and wouldn’t use them, even if Otterpool’s high street and Business Park were built. Others were interested in the potential mix of commercial units and disappointed that there wasn’t more information available.

The potential to offer local school leavers **training opportunities** was welcomed, but several made the comment that once trained, young people preferred to work in London on higher salaries and would commute out of Otterpool Park.

“We need to see an economic development strategy to mitigate risk of commuter dormitory settlement.”

The number and location of **potential primary and secondary schools** to service the new development was generally accepted. The main concerns were that these would not adversely impact the catchment for existing schools.

7.5 Greenspace and environmental quality

Overall, the **green infrastructure and landscape proposals** were generally strongly welcomed, especially in the way that public open space linked by cyclists and pedestrian routes would be provided.

Residents at **Barrow Hill** were very concerned that no green buffer appeared to be provided for their community.

There were some comments about **the loss of agricultural land** to provide what was described as a 'productive, edible landscape' not really making sense, whilst others were much more welcoming and felt that allotments should be available too.

The potential to benefit local producers by providing new centres to sell local goods was felt to be important, especially where stronger links could be made with the farming community of the Kent Downs AONB.

Despite the maps available there was some limited confusion as to whether or not the area of search and proposed development was within the AONB boundary.

7.6 Trust and control over the planning and construction process

Many local community participants were still querying why new large-scale development is being targeted in a rural area on farmland, rather than in other parts of Shepway District. There also remains a core of local residents who feel that SDC's land purchase was unfair and not transparent.

Some consider the engagement process was "*cosmetic*" with not much more information provided since the December events, and that more Council members should be present to explain the rationale for the proposals.

There were arguments that the proposal was closing the door on other sites.

There was a proposal that profits from the sale of new private housing could be invested in affordable and social housing and other public needs.

Questions were also asked about who is going to make sure that Otterpool Park would get built to high standards.

Getting the right specifications in place and following through to make sure that high aspirations for Otterpool Park's construction standards are fully met were a concern for some.

"We would like details of, and to understand, the procurement process before and during, not after things get built".

Some participants urged greater transparency in the planning process with the links between the SDC Core Strategy and the planning application clearly explained in public.

The matter of how the finance necessary for managing public assets like the schools, public realm and open space into the longer term was raised by several respondents.

The amount of green space being proposed was highly welcomed but there was concern about who would pay for it in the long term. Discussion about the use and effectiveness of Section 106 planning obligations raised concerns about effective follow-through at county and district level.

There is an understanding that the design process was far from complete and people wish to formally respond to the final masterplan layout once a formal planning application was made in 2018. There was also general acceptance that the final decision on any formal application

would be made by the government's independent Planning Inspector and not SDC.

The sequencing of the development in discrete phases was broadly accepted, with acceptance about the need to also phase in services and facilities as homes are completed and occupied.

There were, however, concerns about how to guarantee that whatever gets put forward formally as the preferred masterplan actually gets fixed and not changed over time. There was some discussion about other garden towns such as Letchworth, where the original design and layout remains intact several decades later.

"Who will make sure the plan is guaranteed, who will be held to account?"

7.7 Continuing consultation and engagement

Some participants expressed concern that the scheme felt predetermined and that their voice held little sway. They wanted to feel their opinions were responded to.

Others advised that a proportion of local residents had avoided the sessions to avoid any heckling. Some of those who attended were annoyed by the vociferous objection and left part-way through the presentations due to the constant interruptions. (Written feedback suggests that the presence of the local objectors group may have put other people off from coming to the sessions.)

"I wonder if many people ... avoid the Otterpool Park consultations because they feel a bit side-lined by other issues and 'groups'. I don't know, there must be a better way to connect with the actual residents ..."

Attendees at the Folkestone events urged that young people should be much more involved and actively engaged in the consultation process, especially the unskilled who might benefit from the proposals. Some people suggested that future information should be provided as door to door mail-outs, as well as posts on parish/ residents' social media web pages. Posters and flyers on village notice boards would also be welcomed.

7.8 Impact on existing settlements and services

A recurring theme was **the impact of any future development on existing places and communities**, whether in Shepway or even into Ashford. This ranged from traffic effects, to schools, water and health provision, to shops and specialist services and even the internet.

People wanted to understand the scale of development and **likely impacts over the suggested phases** and future decades, with reassurances that any new development would not worsen the existing situation for communities already living in the area, and that key improvements or upgrades would be in place early, rather than as an afterthought.

A strong message coming through was that local **communities should not be swamped** by the development, or completely lose their identities. In addition to in principle opposition, there were views that existing settlements actually had something to gain and that every opportunity should be taken by SDC to ensure that these communities were sensitively integrated with Otterpool Park to their advantage; in order that there are mutual benefits.

8. Stage 2 Engagement Conclusions

Overview points

As in Stage 1 engagement in December, most of those who participated were from the villages within and adjacent to the 'area of search', or relatively local residents/organisations, who may be impacted by development in some way. Overall, some 412-people attended the workshop and drop-in sessions and a total of 179 feedback forms and additional follow-up correspondence was received. As this obviously represents the views of a small percentage of Shepway District's total population, we are not in a position to claim this is representative of the wider district population or their views.

Session	Date & Time	No of Attendees	No of Attendees signed in	No of feedback forms returned
National Policy a& Agency Stakeholder Workshop	Friday April 21 st 10.00 - 3.00	41	41	-
Business & Civic Workshop 1	Wednesday 14 June 14:00 – 16:30	50	50	39
Business & Civic Workshop 2	Wednesday 14 June 18:00 – 20:30	17	17	15
Hythe	Thursday 22 June 14:00 – 17:00	94	42	34
Lympne	Thursday 22 June 19:00 – 21:00	90	25	29
Romney Marsh	Friday 23 June 10:00 – 12:00	8	3	1
Sellindge	Friday 23 June 14:00 – 17:00	87	43	26
Folkestone	Saturday 24 June 10:00 – 14:00	25	12	10
Online or post	Deadline Friday 7 July	-	-	25
TOTAL		412	233	179

(1) The engagement process

The local pressure group lobbying against the development proposals materially affected the nature, feel and output from some of the events, especially the Lympne drop-in. Whilst many of the views expressed in conversations and feedback were reflections of points made by this group of objectors, there was a view expressed by many that they would prefer to learn more about the proposals in a 'less adversarial' environment. This need, coupled with the need to obtain the views of younger people living in Shepway and those seeking greater employment opportunities, was frequently made. This does not pre-suppose the view of these people but rather that there are voices and opinions that could be more fully engaged.

(2) The issues and content of a garden town

Whilst those taking part in the informal engagement stages of the masterplanning process seemed to appreciate the maps and plans showing how the design ideas are shaping up, there

was still considerable frustration at the lack of detailed information about how the development can be physically accommodated within the area.

The primary concerns expressed were about:

- The capacity of local road networks across the district to cope with the increase in traffic the development would bring, and how rail services may influence this;
- Adverse impacts that increased demand for water supplies would have;
- The importance of providing locally affordable homes including new social housing, well into the future, especially for young people earning local salaries, and;
- Adverse impacts resulting from increased demand for already over-stretched health and social care services.
- The origin and robustness of housing need forecasts for England and the Shepway area over the coming decades, i.e. next 10, 20, 30 and even 40 to 50 years.

Because of concerns about the potential impacts of a garden town on the local environment, and the requests for more, it is recommended that the next stage of engagement should incorporate the results of the in-progress baseline assessments. The resulting reports and the conclusions about capacity for new development should ideally be made publicly available in advance of the next stage of engagement.

(3) Understanding the masterplanning process, from initial design to planning application

The current and continuing process is the non-statutory pre-cursor to a formal application of the preferred masterplan approach. There remains a need for a comprehensive, highly accessible explanation of the planning process for a garden town, from initial discussions, to the development of potential options, through to how a preferred option would enter the formal planning process as a full Outline Application. At what point **formal** objections can be made also needs to be explained, as this is much misunderstood.



Figure 11 The master plan layout being discussed at the Tin Tabernacle Drop-In session, Hythe

References made to other new developments in the area, and how these may or may not have delivered what was promised, suggest that more information about what is good planning and

development practice needs to be made available. This should include the wording and application of Section 106 planning conditions and obligations and at what point in the planning process these are set and legally triggered.

(4) Other aspects of going forward

There are a number of concerns and issues that some people who have attended so far want more fully addressed, in particular around more detailed information about what would work well in remedying concerns. This information ideally needs to be made publicly available in advance of further opportunities for people to take part in the engagement process.

For instance, several issues were raised around health and social care, in particular. It would be helpful to make clear how the Council is working with other bodies such as the NHS Care Commissioning Group; the Kent County Highways Authority; the Department for Transport and other relevant stakeholders in addressing issues and informing the emerging design of the Otterpool Park proposals.

The next stage of engagement should also reflect people's requests for accessing information on-line, via Facebook and village websites. A comprehensive district-wide mailing of information to all households and homes might be worth considering, including asking about preferences for taking part in discussions about more detailed aspects of the emerging design proposals.

Whilst it is desirable to gain wide views from communities, the events in New Romney and Folkestone were less well attended despite being publicised in the same way. It may be desirable therefore to consider diverse approaches for engaging and informing people, particularly if the views of a broader cross-section of the population of the area are to be sought.

Effective feedback to local communities on the results of this second stage of the engagement process should also be beneficial for all those involved, going forward.

Appendix A: National Policy and Agency Stakeholder

Specialism	Organisation
Waste Management	Kent County Council
Transport & Development Planning	Kent County Council
Public Transport	Kent County Council
Membership Development	Kent Coastal CCG
Sustainable Development	Natural England
Planning – Growth, Environment & Transport	Kent County Council
Sustainable Development Team	Natural England
Landscape and Urban Design Officer	Shepway District Council
Biodiversity	Kent County Council
Area Planning	Southern Water
Heritage Conservation	Kent County Council
Planning & Strategic Development Projects	Shepway District Council
Stakeholder Engagement	Southern Water
Senior Archaeological Officer	Kent County Council
	Kent County Council
Head of Planning	Shepway District Council
Economic Development	Shepway District Council
	Shepway District Council
Group Racing & Property Director	Cozumel Estates
Principal Transport & Development Planner	Kent County Council
	Network Rail
Primary Care Estates	South Kent Coast CCG
Feasibility Engineer	Affinity Water
Developer Services – South East	Affinity Water
Director	Kent Downs AONB
Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments	Historic England
Planning Adviser	Shepway District Council
Primary Care Commissioning Manager	Canterbury, Coastal & Ashford CCG
Head of Strategic Planning & Policy	Kent County Council
Planning Manager	Kent AONB
Planning Adviser	Environment Agency
Otterpool Park Project Coordinator	Shepway District Council
Director	CPRE
Planning Policy Officer	Ashford Borough Council
Head of Timetable Strategy	Southeastern Rail
	Kent County Council
Project Manager – Integrated Commissioning	Kent Coastal CCG
Planning Policy Manager	Shepway District Council
Stakeholder Engagement & Account Management	UK Power Networks
Head of Development	Cozumel Estates
Drainage	Kent County Council

Appendix B: Press release

Otterpool Park public engagement to continue in June 2017

Community consultation report on December 2016 sessions now available

Kent residents, people who work in the county and other stakeholders are being encouraged to attend the next engagement sessions for the proposed Otterpool Park garden town.

The next series of community drop-in events will take place between Thursday 22nd and Saturday 24th June 2017 in various locations around Shepway. There will be presentations from the consultant team at each session, giving more details on the design process and how planning will progress. In addition, consultation events are being planned for local organisations such as businesses, schools and colleges.

Over 500 people attended the first engagement sessions last year, sharing their views on what they would like to see as part of Otterpool Park as well as their concerns regarding development.

Andy Jarrett, spokesperson for Otterpool Park, comments: "We were pleased to see so many local people attend the sessions last year, and the feedback we've received will help to shape the proposed garden town. We hope to see even more people at the next events. Residents and other members of the community can see how their contributions so far have informed ideas, and importantly, can find out more about how we are addressing areas of concern for infrastructure, housing type and green space."

The community consultation report detailing the feedback gathered in December 2016 is available at www.otterpoolpark.org.

Community engagement drop-in sessions:

Location	Date	Time
Tin Tabernacle, Hythe Portland Road Hythe CT21 6FL	Thursday 22 June 2017	2:00pm – 5:00pm (Presentation at 3:00pm)
Lympne Village Hall Aldington Road Lympne CT21 4LE (please note that stiletto heels are not to be worn inside the hall)	Thursday 22 June 2017	7:00pm – 9:00pm (Presentation at 7:30pm)
The MACH at the Marsh Academy Station Road New Romney	Friday 23 June 2017	10:00am- 12:00pm (Presentation at 10:30am)

TN28 8BB		
Sellindge Sports and Social Club 69 Swan Lane Sellindge TN25 6HB	Friday 23 June 2017	2:00pm – 5:00pm (Presentation at 3:00pm)
Folkestone Library 2 Grace Hill Folkestone CT20 1HD	Saturday 24 June 2017	10:00am – 2:00pm (Presentations at 10:30am and 12:30pm)

Ends

Contact:

Lisa Flounders, Property House Marketing
lisa@housegroup.co.uk 01483 561119

About Otterpool Park

Otterpool Park is a proposed garden town in Shepway, Kent, situated seven miles from Folkestone and accessible from Junction 11 of the M20 and Westenhanger train station.

In partnership with the local community, Otterpool Park will provide the homes and jobs that will enable future generations to remain in the area in which they were raised, and the necessary facilities and services to support the residents, as well as bringing increased economic benefits to Shepway's wider communities. Plans for the garden town will include homes, land for employment, shops, schools and medical centres, as well as extensive open spaces and access to the countryside.

Otterpool Park is a long-term project, spanning approximately 30 years. With a collaborative approach and careful masterplanning from the outset, Otterpool Park will bring value, sustainability and a high quality of life to local residents.

Appendix C: Feedback form

Page 1 of 3



Otterpool Park Engagement: June 2017

Background

1. How did you find out about this engagement regarding Otterpool Park Garden Town?

Personal invitation

Newspaper/press

Radio/TV

Poster/flier

Word of Mouth

Facebook

Other internet

Other (specify)

2. Did you participate in any of the engagement events regarding Otterpool Park in December 2016?

Yes No Not sure

If yes, do you consider this latest phase responds to issues raised in December?

Yes No Not sure

Information about the process

3. Is the information clear about why new homes, employment opportunities and garden town facilities are required?

Yes No Not sure

4. Is it clear why this area of Shepway is under consideration for future growth?

Yes No Not sure

5. Do you consider the masterplan team to be considering the correct range of issues in exploring a garden town masterplan?

Yes No Don't know

If NO to above, please advise what issues they should be addressing:



Masterplan content

6. In your opinion, what are the most pressing three issues in addressing the concept and delivery of Otterpool Garden Town

Issue 1

Issue 2

Issue 3

7. Is there anything you particularly welcome or support in the approach to Otterpool Park?

Yes No Don't know If YES, please specify

8. Is there anything that particularly concerns or worries you about the approach to Otterpool Park?

Yes No Don't know If YES, please specify

9. Do you think there are key employment and business opportunities associated with Otterpool Park?

Yes No Not sure

If Yes, what are they?

10. Is access to a network of green spaces at Otterpool Park important in your opinion?

Yes No Not sure



11. From what you have seen and heard so far, would you consider...

Living in Otterpool Park	Yes	No	Don't know
Visiting Otterpool Park for leisure	Yes	No	Don't know
Working in Otterpool Park	Yes	No	Don't know
Using services in Otterpool Park	Yes	No	Don't know
Opening a business in Otterpool Park	Yes	No	Don't know

Priorities

12. Please rank the following transport projects listed below, in terms of what you think are the most important elements of an access and travel strategy for Otterpool Park (where 1= most important, 5= least important)

- Improved facilities and services at Westenhanger Rail Station
- Frequent bus services connecting to new town centre and rail station
- Improvements to motorway junctions and main highway connections
- Local highway improvements
- Walking and cycling network

13. Please name ONE social, community, business or recreational facility would you like to see provided as a priority at Otterpool Park?

Follow up

14. Do you wish to be kept informed of further developments in the plans and proposals for Otterpool Park?

Yes No Don't know

15. Would you be willing to be part of a 'pilot community' testing the functionality of Otterpool Park, to help optimise its use for residents, businesses, and local services?

Yes No Don't know

Thank you.

Contact details:

Appendix D: Feedback Form Analysis

The feedback form for the civic and business workshops and the community sessions comprised a total of 15 questions, many of which sought simple *yes/no/don't know* responses, with others seeking specific information about issues, priorities and ideas using open-ended questions. This format enabled respondents to answer as briefly or as fully as they wished whilst enabling consistency in the analysis.

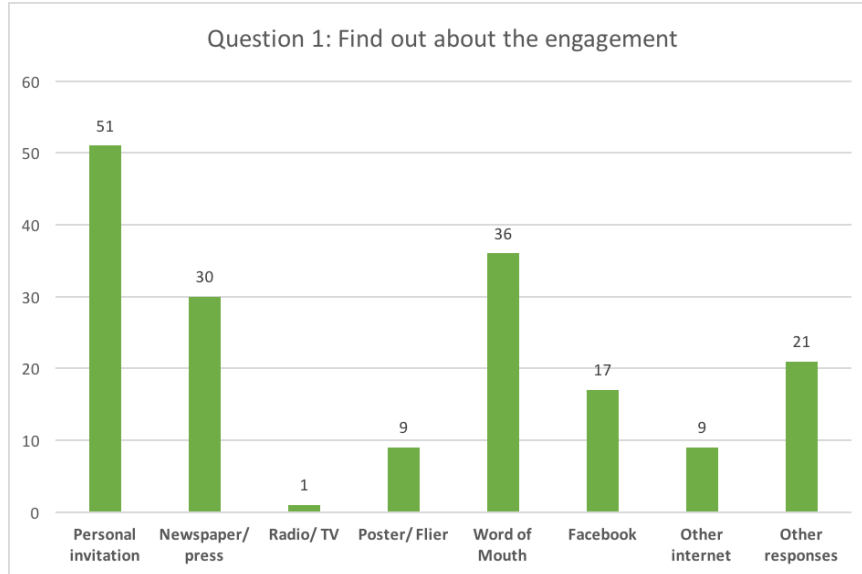
The form is available in full at Appendix C and comments at Appendix E (available as a separate document) with the summarised results and analysis are provided in the following sub-sections. It is important to note that whilst people may have been reticent to voice their concerns about or their support for the proposals, being able to complete the form may have enabled them to, more freely and anonymously if they prefer, express their views in writing.

The total number of completed feedback forms from the civic and business workshops and the community drop-in sessions was **179**. The table below shows the number of forms returned at each venue, plus a small number submitted later on-line or by post.

Session	Date & Time	No of feedback forms returned
Business & Civic Workshop 1	Wednesday 14 June 14:00 – 16:30	39
Business & Civic Workshop 2	Wednesday 14 June 18:00 – 20:30	15
Hythe	Thursday 22 June 14:00 – 17:00	34
Lympne	Thursday 22 June 19:00 – 21:00	29
Romney Marsh	Friday 23 June 10:00 – 12:00	1
Sellindge	Friday 23 June 14:00 – 17:00	26
Folkestone	Saturday 24 June 10:00 – 14:00	10
Online or post	Deadline Friday 7 July	25
TOTAL		179

The analysis of the feedback for each question is provided, with graphs and charts which help to summarise the findings.

Q1. How did you find out about this engagement regarding Otterpool Park Garden Town?



Out of **159** responses to this question:

- **51** respondents said they received a personal invitation – these were most likely to be attendees to the civic and business workshops
- **36** heard about the events by word of mouth
- **30** saw the newspaper/press details
- **20** read about them via Facebook
- **9** saw a poster/ flyer and/or details on the internet
- **1** heard about the events through radio/TV

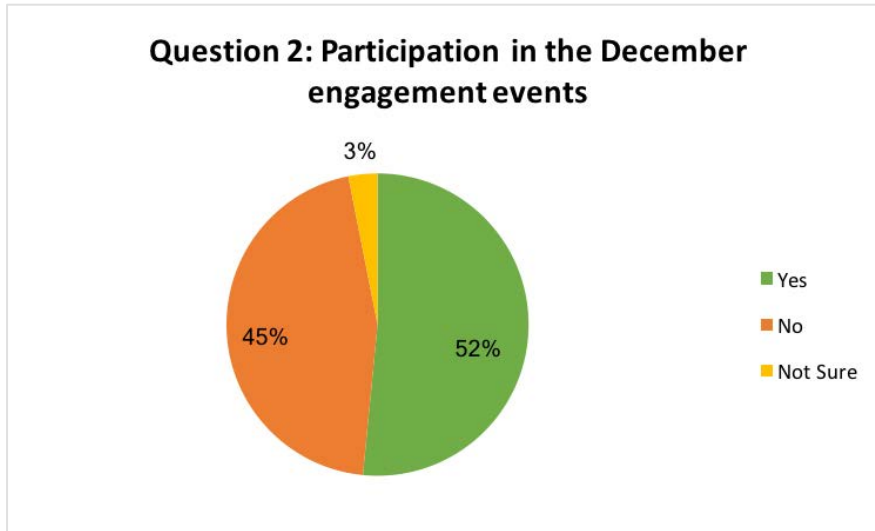
The remaining 21 respondents said they found out through the following channels:

- **2** through a council invitation, e.g. parish council, because they are a Sellindge resident
- **2** from emails from local associations
- **2** from the Lymgne or village newsletter or local parish newsletter
- **2** attendees were looking at purchasing a property in the area

It is worth noting that the public, community engagement events were held at a number of alternative venues, during the week and weekend including, morning, afternoon and evening sessions, to enable the greatest participation.

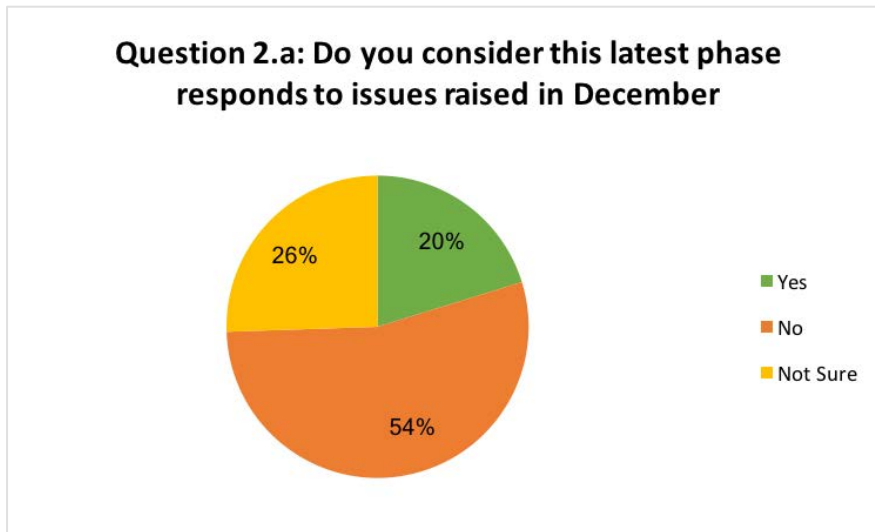
However, feedback was also received from a small number that even these options did not provide enough flexibility for them to participate.

Q2. Did you participate in any of the engagement events regarding Otterpool Park in December 2016?



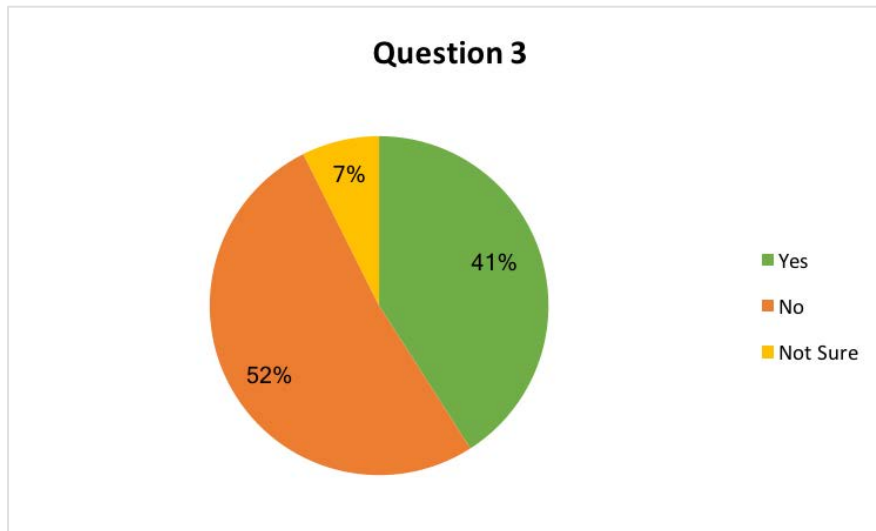
Out of 161 responses, 83 people said they had attended a previous event, 73 were attending for the first time and five people were not sure if they had attended before or not.

Q 2a If yes, do you consider this latest phase responds to issues raised in December?



Of 94 responses to this question, 51 respondents (54%) felt this latest phase of consultation did not respond to the issues raised in December. Of the 24 respondents (26%) who were not sure, some mentioned that "more detail was required", probably reflecting that the masterplan layout was indicative at this stage and that several technical studies (traffic, water, etc) have yet to report. Others thought that only some issues were addressed, and one person said, "at least you are trying". Some 19 respondents (20%) agreed that this latest phase responded to the issues raised in December.

Q3. Is the information clear about why homes, employment opportunities and garden town facilities are required?

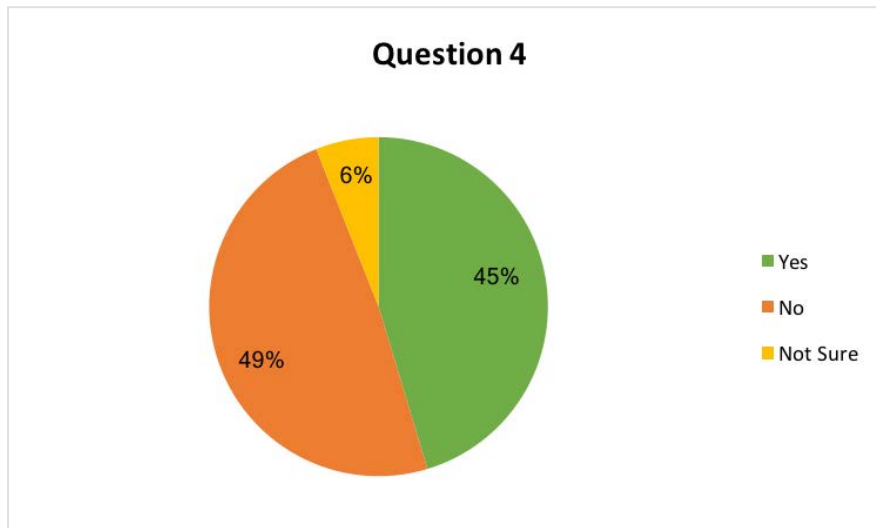


Out of the 153 responses 63 (41%) people who responded said that the information was clear, about why the homes, employment opportunities and garden town facilities were required; 79 (52%) felt that the information was not clear ; a further 11 respondents were not sure.

Representative comments included:

- *“it is clear that the nation needs housing but why does it have to be on this site on this scale?”*
- *“has a figure of 14,600 homes needed, but not sure where this figure comes from”,*
- *“believe they are not required here in such great numbers”*

Q4. Is it clear why this area of Shepway is under consideration for future growth?

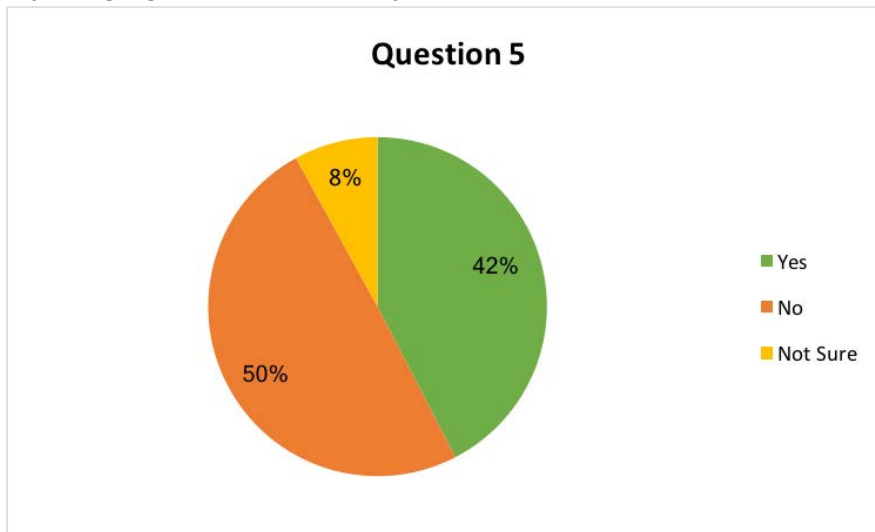


Out of the 150 responses to this question, 68 felt that it was clear, 73 respondents felt that it was not clear why this area is under consideration for future growth. Nine were not sure. Some asked why it has to be Otterpool Park, others claimed the information presented was “or it was *“vague”* and *“not specific”* enough.

Some of the local opposition group comments against development were: *“this development is not needed”*, *“it never should have been taken to the government”* or *“the basis is incoherent”*.

The results for this question clearly show a strong dichotomy of views expressed.

Q5. Do you consider the masterplan team to be considering the correct range of issues exploring a garden town masterplan?



Out of the 125 responses, just under half (53 people) felt that the right issues were being considered, and half of the responders (62 people) felt that the masterplan team was not considering the correct range, with a further 10 not sure. This again demonstrates a strong dichotomy, similar to other responses. When asked to advise what issues the masterplan team should be considering, the main themes coming through were:

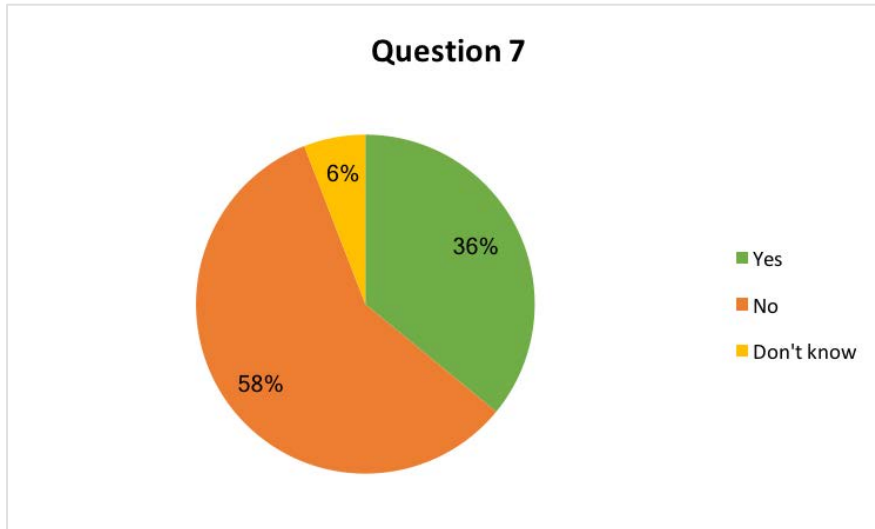
- **Brownfield development:** some thought that instead of building on greenfield, the team should look at developing brownfield sites and rehabilitating empty properties first.
- **Sustainable approach to a bold design - an Eco-town:** some wanted the concept of the garden town to be more ambitious and pushed even further into a sustainable eco-town that would provide Otterpool Park with a unique identity. This might help mitigate some of the current infrastructure issues such as water scarcity.
- **Deliverability of the project:** More detail on the phasing and deliverability of the development was requested by several.
- **Employment sustainability:** Some concern was expressed about Otterpool Park primarily becoming a commuter town and that local employment opportunities must be provided to mitigate this.
- **Amenities, facilities and infrastructure:** Some felt that current facilities and infrastructure like health centres, schools, nurseries, water supplies and roads are already saturated and would not cope with the increase in population. Others suggested enhancing and creating links between the garden town and the surrounding villages to integrate these for mutual benefit.
- **Considering the point of view of local people:** those who object to the proposed garden town felt that their opinion was not being taken into consideration
- **Objecting to the development:** the main reasons for this were related to building on open farmland, or that the development was too intensive, not needed and not appropriate for the character of the area.

Q6. In your opinion, what are the most pressing three issues in addressing the concept and delivery of Otterpool Park garden town.

The following key issues raised were:

- **Better and improved infrastructure networks:** water, broadband and transportation networks were seen as very important.
- **The size and scale of the development:** For some, the number of houses proposed is too many. A town-scale development was not seen as appropriate within the rural local surroundings. Fewer houses at lower densities (max 3 storey) was seen as more in keeping with the character of the area.
- **Sustainability:** a more ecological, carbon neutral approach was requested by some.
- **Facilities and amenities:** new schools, health care (GPs and hospitals), nurseries are all needed.
- **Affordability and mixed tenure housing:** ensure the development contains a mix of tenure between social housing, shared and private ownership, including houses and flats to meet the needs of different age groups.
- **Business and employment:** attracting businesses and employment to the area such as tech industries and start-ups. The phasing of the project could help to achieve this and secure more sustainable growth. It is important not to create a dormitory town where people will have to commute to London.
- **Consulting the communities:** more consultation with the local communities and taking into account their opinion was requested. Concern was expressed, mainly by local community groups, about how the land was initially acquired.
- **Loss of farmland, countryside and wildlife:** it was thought that the development would result in the loss of farmland and the scale of it would damage the countryside, in spite of the increase in greenspace and areas for wildlife.
- **Delivery of the masterplan** - the main issue raised, primarily by local residents was how the masterplan would be delivered, especially around who would end up paying for the public realm and public open space to be provided. There were concerns, again primarily from community members, about the order of phasing and how shops built in phase 1 would be able to survive with only a small start-up community; business viability was seen as an issue. The timescale for delivery was queried, possibly within the context of recent developments that had failed to deliver enough affordable housing or infrastructure; would what was planned actually get built? Some had concerns about delays and legal difficulties in bringing any worthwhile development to fruition.
- **Green areas and open space** – overall the amount of new greenspace was seen as a benefit by many, but concerns about how it would be managed and by whom, were common.
- **Car parking** – getting car parking levels right for the station and new town centre were seen as critical, to meet needs without encouraging commuter parking which would add to pressures on local roads.
- **Lorry holding area** – there is still much concern as to whether this will go ahead and what impact it will have without, but especially if Otterpool also goes ahead.

Q7. Is there anything else you particularly welcome or support in the approach to Otterpool Park?



Out of the 153 responses, 55 (36%) said they welcomed and supported the approach, 89 responders (58%) did not, whilst 9 were unsure. This result possibly reflects the numbers and views of those attending the civic and business workshops, who were generally more positive, and the larger numbers of people attending the community sessions at which there was more opposition.

Those who welcomed and supported the approach provided the following comments:

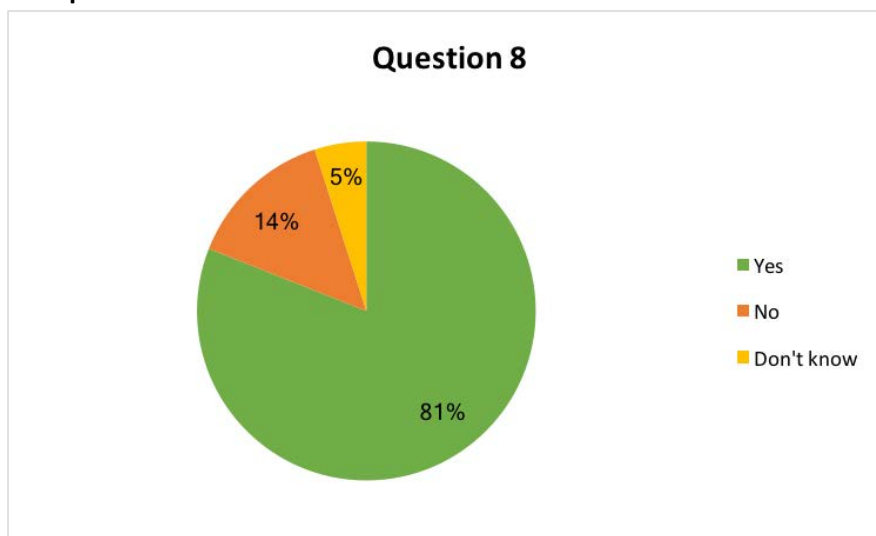
- **This is an opportunity to be innovative:** it is an exciting development
- **Mix of uses:** integration of businesses and residential, using insulating concrete framework (ICF) and modular design to create a new High Street with a mix of uses.
- **Green spaces:** the green spaces were very welcome and there was a lot of support for having a greenspace-led design.
- **This is a sound concept with thoughtful design:** Several appreciated the design, for example, the new woodland and the improved approach to the castle, seen as a local asset of high historic interest and deserving of an improved setting. The sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) design was also welcomed as a means of improving surface water management in both wet and dry seasonal conditions.
- **HS1 and transport infrastructure:** was seen as attracting new employees to live in Otterpool, including those who would not be reliant on driving, i.e. providing opportunities to walk, cycle and use public transport.
- **Effective communication of options:** a request for regular communication about the developing ideas for layout and phasing of all types of infrastructure to be provided.
- **Addressing long-term housing needs:** this was seen as very important, especially for younger people and those on lower incomes.

For those who were less supportive of the approach, comments included:

- **Not addressing the local view and opposition to the project:** some considered that the issues raised in December had not been addressed.
- **No development:** “I do not welcome any development”, “No Otterpool” were common statements made by those who most strongly oppose the proposition.
- **Consider public services:** particularly health, policing and social care.
- **The development would not achieve the “benefits”:** especially in relation to creating new jobs, i.e. it might possibly provide employment for a small fraction of new residents, but the rest would have to commute.

- **Smaller scale development would be more acceptable:** a large proportion of those most opposed do not believe the scale of development is necessary or desirable.
- **Create a green-buffer zone:** Several respondents expressed concern that Barrow Hill especially has no green buffer shown on the indicative masterplan. *“it is absolutely crucial that this land/all of the field is maintained as a green buffer, either being maintained as farmland or a protected area for nature. This land is home to many species of wildlife, notably including hares, badgers and two species of rare to the UK birds of prey.”*

Q8. Is there anything else that particularly concerns or worries you about the approach to Otterpool Park?



Out of the 142 responses, 115 responders (81%) expressed concerns and worries about the approach, 20 responders (14%) were not concerned and seven (5%) were not sure.

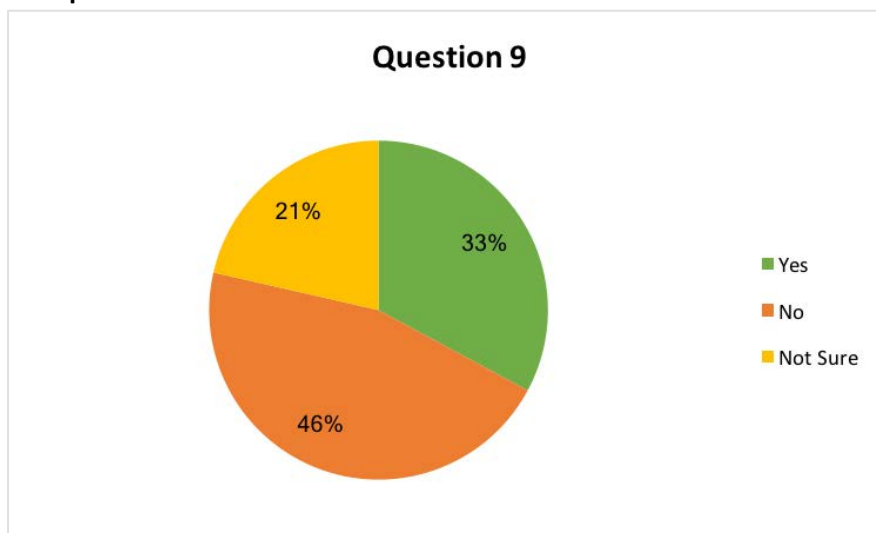
The areas of concern were:

- **How the land was acquired:** many community respondents felt misled about the reason for SDC acquiring the land within the area of search.
- **Development of farmland instead of brownfield sites:** some believe this development does not belong to the area because of the destruction of 'valuable' farmland and that new development should be prioritised on brownfield sites.
- **The project being a commercial development:** whether many local developers and architects will be approached rather than the larger companies, plus concern about the development of the site to simply maximise profits to benefit a minority at the expense of the majority.
- **Infrastructure impact:** the concern is that a large development will overload the already stretched infrastructure including roads, water, drainage, internet and waste systems plus the impact of construction lorries adding to other lorry traffic, especially after Brexit
- **Engagement with the younger generation:** engagement with young people needs to be conducted since they will be the ones to live there.
- **Inadequate responses to those who oppose the development.** Those who most strongly oppose the development feel that their views are being ignored, *“Shepway council's refusal to directly seek a mandate for the project from local residents”*.
- **Delivery of the garden town:** the financing of the development and the building work around residential areas *“will result in 15 to 30 years of construction”* in addition to

how well the project will integrate with the surrounding neighbourhood and villages. Some were concerned about the lack of clarity on what Shepway wants to achieve from this project (vision and objectives). The uncertainty in relation to the proposed start date. More information about the project timescale was demanded.

- **Density and scale of the project:** height of housing at 6 storeys [*proposed for the new town centre*] was deemed too high. Furthermore, the surrounding areas are all rural, so building a town in this rural setting was an issue for some. There was concern about the proximity of the development to the surrounding villages and towns, such as Hythe.
- **Employment opportunities:** It was thought that there would be few employment opportunities within the development and that most people will be commuters to London.
- **Housing type and numbers needed:** the development will not provide the kind of housing needed for the area.
- **Buffer/green zone:** no green buffer zone to protect existing properties on Barrow Hill from urbanization and new development.

Q9. Do you think there are key employment and business opportunities associated with Otterpool Park?



Out of the 140 responses, 64 (46%) believed the development would not provide key employment opportunities, however 46 people (33%) answered yes and were of the view that new opportunities would be created whilst 30 (21%) were not sure.

The key employment and business opportunities suggested were:

- Business start-ups
- Technology led initiatives
- Leisure and Hospitality: bars, restaurants, pubs
- Retail – High Street: shops
- Manufacturers
- Service related: Doctors
- Marine engineering
- Educational: University college of the sea, schools, apprenticeships
- Green and biotech companies
- Light industries

Type and size of business suggested:

- Youth employment
- Home working
- Varied business sizes
- Business park
- Offices
- Small independent businesses (making sure they get access and not be pushed away by big business)

Tenure and scheme suggested:

- Long-term ownership
- Buy/ share scheme

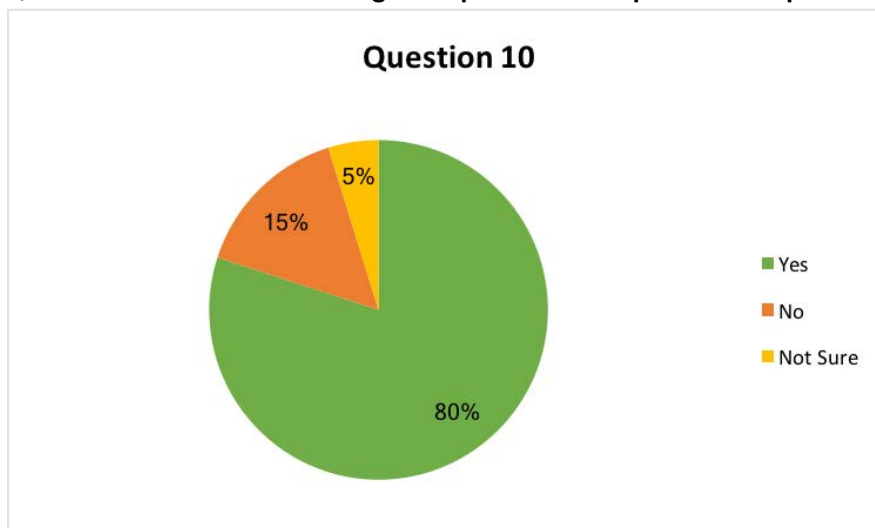
Amenities suggested:

- Better communication and quality high speed broadband was seen as critical.
- Proximity to M20, J11 and good public transport seen as beneficial for business
- Visitor and worker parking
- Good infrastructure

Other comments:

- Location of business
- Attract Londoners (young couples/ single people)
- A rural town
- Engagement with business communities needed.
- No commuter town!
- Is the amount of businesses suggested too little for this type of development?
- Requirement for a core employer to be based at Otterpool for it to be viable.
- Local businesses should benefit most

Q10. Is access to a network of green spaces at Otterpool Park important in your opinion?

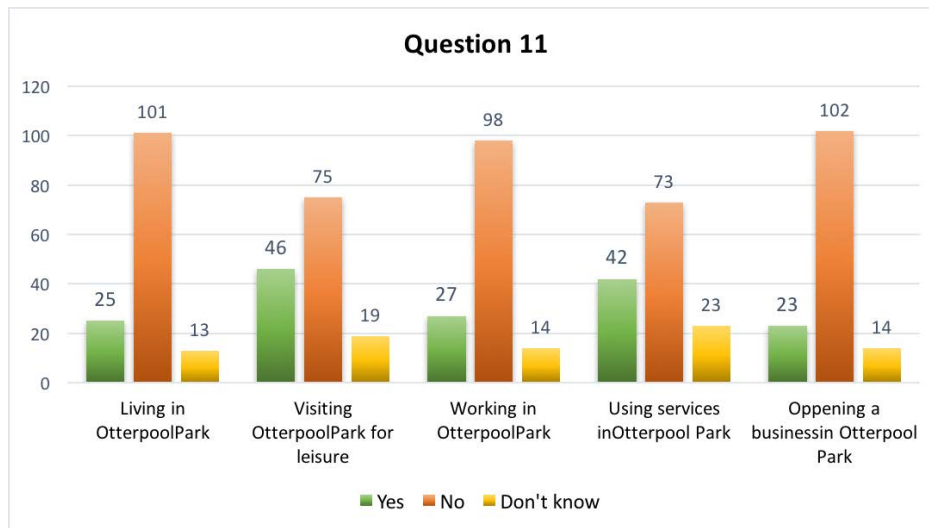


Out of the 125 responses, a large majority of 100 responders (80%) thought that green spaces are very important, 19 responders (15%) answered no and only six (5%) were not sure.

For those who replied no, the comments were:

- Not just a few trees, use of space and helping the environment “green” also means recycling, waste management and energy generation – solar, wind. Insulation
- For some the area is already green which will be ruined by this development

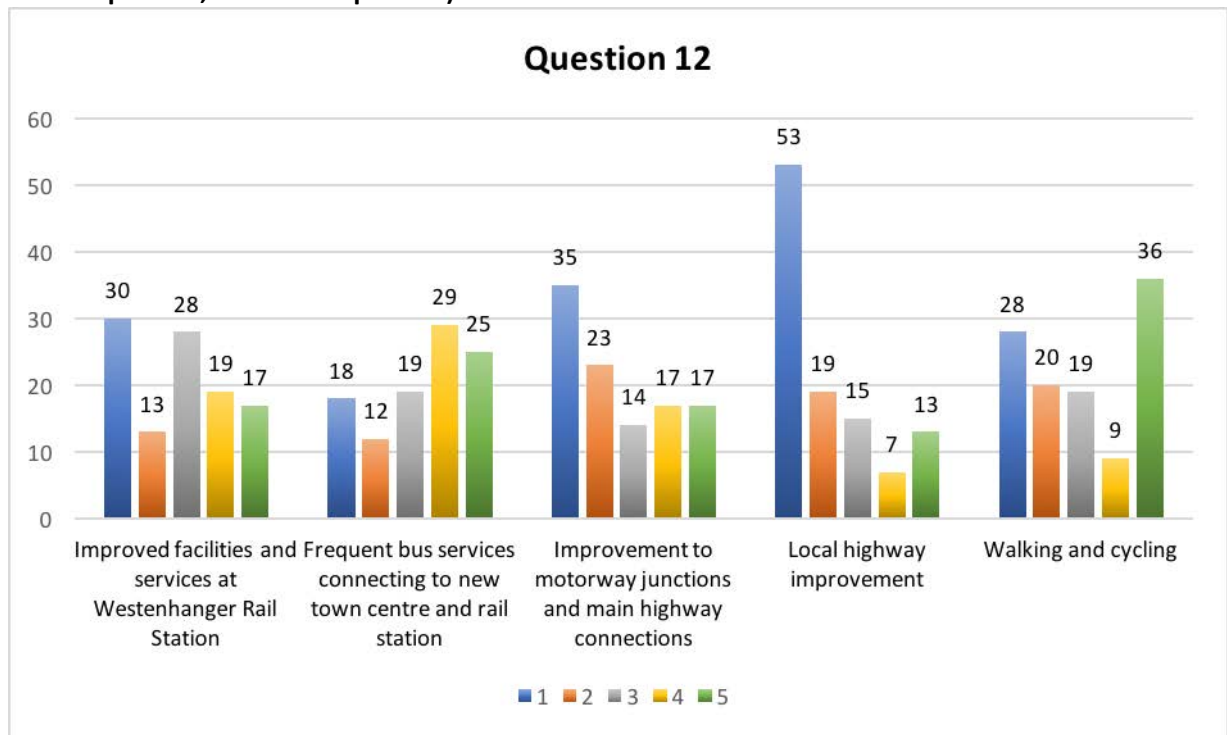
Q11. From what you have seen and heard so far, would you consider any of the following options ...



Options	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Living in Otterpool Park	18%	73%	9%
Visiting Otterpool Park for leisure	33%	54%	14%
Working in Otterpool Park	19%	71%	10%
Using services in Otterpool Park	30%	53%	17%
Opening a business in Otterpool Park	17%	73%	10%

The majority of respondents were negative about living and working in, or visiting Otterpool Park at this stage, though some envisaged using it for leisure or services. This may be reflective of the strong dichotomy in views between those people attending the community sessions and those attending the civic and business workshops.

Q12. Please rank the following transport projects listed below, in terms of what you think are the most important elements of an access and travel strategy for Otterpool Park (where 1 = most important, 5 = least important)



Local highway improvements were overwhelmingly cited as the most important element to be provided as these are considered to be pressing, even without the Otterpool Park proposals. A close second was improvements to motorway junctions and main highway connections to alleviate potential causes of further congestion. Improved facilities and services at Westenhanger Rail Station were listed a third overall in order of important. Frequent bus services connecting to new town centre and rail station were not seen as very important and walking and cycling were seen as the least important at this stage despite this being strongly promoted as a positive aspect of the masterplan. The results most probably reflect the existing situation in that the majority of people living in this rural area currently access most services and places by car as the most convenient form of transport.

Q13. Please name one social, community, business or recreational facility would you like to see provided as a priority at Otterpool Park

Social:

- Town centre
- Access to green spaces, parks
- Affordable homes, council homes

Community:

- Health centre, hospital, doctors surgery with GPs
- Dementia Village
- Care home
- Schools
- Community event place, community centre

Business:

- Employment theme - i.e. tech related/ artistic
- Attracting business that will employ higher paid employees
- Modern flexible business space
- Farming to continue
- Business start-up centre - Low cost and easy low process availability
- Small business units

Recreational:

- A heritage park (Westenhanger and great park) reinstatement of the deer park/forest etc, plus a visitor centre, a nature park
- A leisure complex centre with sports/water facilities, a park and restaurants
- Sports facilities, tennis club, swimming pool
- Cinema, theatre, art/concert hall
- Free recreational facilities for young persons and teenagers and children’s play areas
- Quality, well maintained outdoor space
- Running trail without crossing a road
- Cycle routes, mountain bike tracks
- Restaurants, pubs
- Horse racing

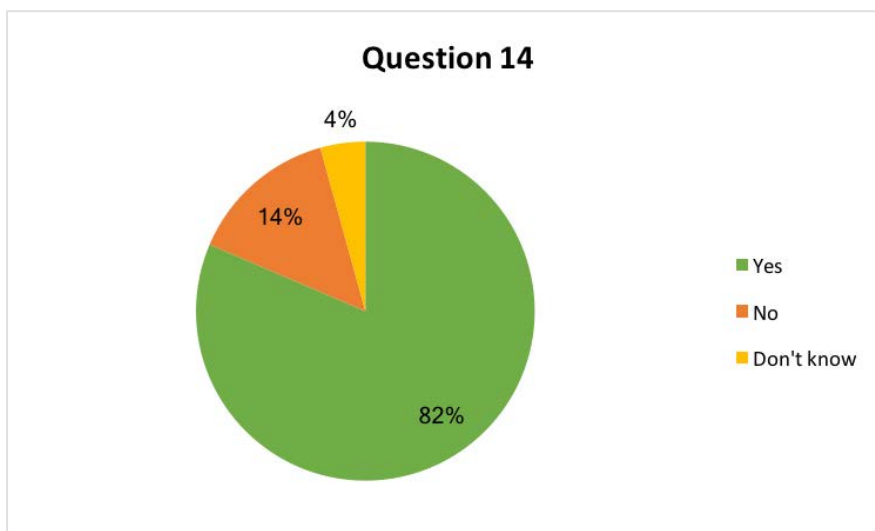
Infrastructure:

- Slower road on A20! No lorries.

One key comment received was *“Need to find something nobody has locally, e.g. major conference/ hotel centre perhaps as none locally, especially given the proximity to the continent. Shepway needs to decide if it is going to do something innovative or normal [conventional] in terms of development especially as it owns some [of the] land”*.

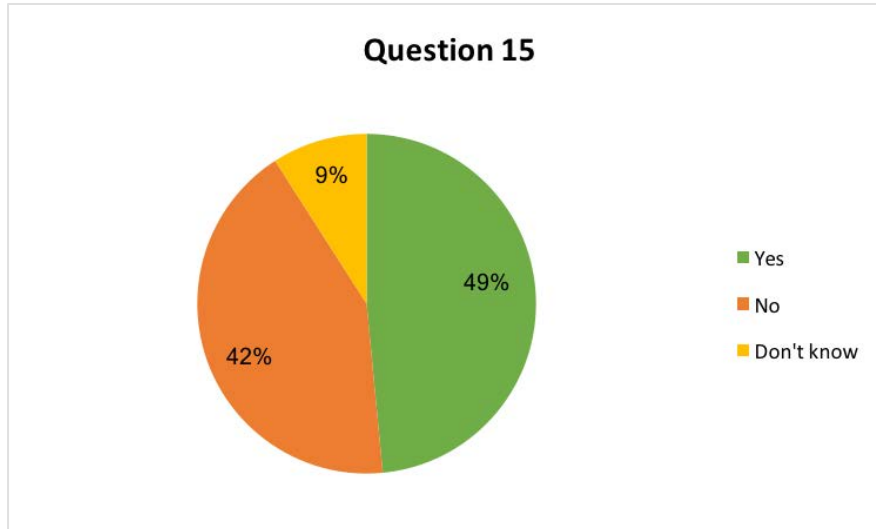
Those most opposed to the project wrote *“No new town”, “no development”, “not needed”, “Nothing but farming”*

Q14. Do you wish to be kept informed of further developments in the plans and proposals for Otterpool Park?



Out of the 140 responders who provided their name, 114 people (82%) would like to be kept informed, 20 people (14%) do not want to be kept informed and six were not sure.

Q15. Would you be willing to be part of a "pilot community" testing the functionality of Otterpool Park, to help optimise its use for residents, business, and local services?



Out of the 132 responses, a promising majority of 64 people (49%) would like to be part of a "pilot community", 56 people (42%) do not want to be involved and 12 (9%) were not sure.