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Date: 26 February 2016



Mr A Ellis
Chairman
Ashtead Community Vision

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Dear Mr Ellis

**Ashtead Community Vision - Neighbourhood Development Plan
Consultation
Response by Trinity College Cambridge
In support of Land south of Ermyn Way, Ashtead**

On behalf of my client, Trinity College Cambridge, please see below a response to the Neighbourhood Development Plan consultation. I have also responded to the consultation via the online questionnaire.

Policy AS-H2 – Balancing the housing mix

Do you support the policy? Yes/No. **Yes.**

We support the policy's intention to increase the proportion of smaller family properties in the village in line with the evidence presented in the supporting text (section 4.1). However, we consider that the policy in itself would be ineffective at controlling the mix of new housing because there is no wider framework to which the supply, location and quantum of new housing within the village can be anticipated or encouraged. To rebalance the housing mix in a manner that would meet local needs requires larger scale strategically planned growth including smaller family housing. To enable this to happen Mole Valley District Council must play its part in facilitating larger scale growth to meet local need in Ashtead by pressing ahead with its Local Plan Review in a timely manner. This would provide a framework for ACV to enable solutions to the housing issues identified in the Neighbourhood Plan to be accommodated in a manner that would provide meaningful delivery expectations, in line with an up-to-date development plan, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance.

Do you have any further comments?

Yes/No. **Yes.**

We support the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan but we are concerned that MVDC's Local Plan does not provide sufficient steer to enable the issues and aspirations raised in the Neighbourhood Plan to be addressed during its lifetime, notwithstanding the evidence prepared by ACV. This is because MVDC's development plan is out-of-date and the emerging Local Plan Review is not forthcoming. This produces a situation whereby there is no wider spatial strategy within which ACV can positively formulate its own policies for growth that facilitate development for the good of its own community.

We draw upon the issues of housing and the economy as raised in the consultation document. In respect of housing (section 4.1), the Plan identifies that Ashtead has an ageing population, a decline in the working age population and that the relatively small increase in housing provision through windfall development within the

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existing development boundaries will not be sufficient to address these trends. In respect of the economy (section 4.2), the Plan identifies recruitment difficulties local businesses encounter because there is an ever increasing disparity between the jobs available and residents' skills. These issues are inextricably linked to the supply of housing and without a reasonable expectation of new growth to assuage these disparities the Neighbourhood Plan would be ineffective.

The land south of Ermyn Way (identified as broad area "F" in the Green Belt Boundary Review, 13 February 2014) is assessed as the single strategic scale site that contributes little towards the purpose of the Green Belt and that "the current boundary could be considered for amendment and moved along to the strong M25 boundary to the south". Furthermore, the key considerations raised in respect of the site in the Final Site Assessments (site reference AS11, June 2014) may be adequately addressed through mitigation measures as confirmed by existing technical evidence presented to ACV. However, the Neighbourhood Plan is hamstrung in its identification of the site because the Local Plan is outdated and MVDC has not reviewed its Green Belt. If released from the Green Belt and allocated for residential development the site could provide a meaningful strategic contribution to the development requirements of MVDC in a manner that would satisfy locally identified development and economic needs in Ashtead.

In summary the Neighbourhood Plan needs strategic level steer from MVDC if it is to meet the development and economic needs of the community. Without this the Neighbourhood Plan would be ineffective. ACV's own evidence points to the suitability of the land south of Ermyn Way to deliver development in a way that would not cause harm to the function of the Green Belt. We consider MVDC should use this evidence to press ahead with its Local Plan Review in a timely manner including the de-allocation of land within the Green Belt which no longer performs a Green Belt function.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Houghton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ray Houghton
Partner