



Cuddington Neighbourhood Plan

Overview of Village Survey

Summer 2018

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Executive Summary

Survey

167 villagers completed the Neighbourhood Plan Village Survey out of as possible 478 on the polling register.

This is a great response to the initial consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and gives the Steering Group valuable feedback for the next phase of the process leading up to a Draft version of the NP by the end of the year.

The main concerns raised were about speeding traffic, visibility at junctions and anti-social parking. There were suggestions for more parking space near the centre of the village to help service the Shop, Church, School and Bernard Hall.

The community facilities within the village were all valued highly, and improvements were supported for all of them with the top three choices being the Social Club, Playing Fields and local Bridleways and Footpaths.

Views on housing growth varied but there was positive feedback on providing some form of affordable housing and the idea of a Community Land Trust. In terms of size of potential housing sites there was a preference for smaller sites and some above 11 homes that could provide affordable houses. There was felt to be most need for 1 to 2 bed smaller, starter homes although there was recognition that the village may also require some additional 3 to 4 bed houses and homes for the elderly.

The key design issues for any new housing were considered to be good traffic access, adequate off-street parking and minimal impact on the landscape and views. There was a particular desire to protect and enhance the green spaces, trees and hedgerows within and around the village.

Response

The Survey was published on the 30th July 2018 with an article included in Village Voice and on the Cuddington Website to announce the launch. The survey was open to all residents of the village and was available online to be completed for over 5 weeks, closing on the 7th September. Paper copies of the survey were made available in the village Shop and Denise's Salon. A reminder leaflet was circulated in late August to help improve uptake and by the 7th September a total of **167 responses** to the survey had been received. The last census in 2011 recorded **480 residents** in Cuddington so the figures would suggest that **35% of residents** in the village responded.

The first part of the survey, **questions 1 through to 4** asked some information about the person completing the survey. Whilst 50 people chose not to disclose where they lived, responses were received from people living in **23 different roads or streets** in the village with the most responses coming from the larger streets including Dadbrook, the Aylesbury Road, Holly Tree Lane, Lower Church Street and Bernard Close.

The results also show engagement in the survey from residents of the village who have lived here for both a long and short period of time with **42% having lived in the village more than 20 years** and **26% having lived in the village less than for 0 - 5 years**.

How many years have you lived in the village?

167 responses

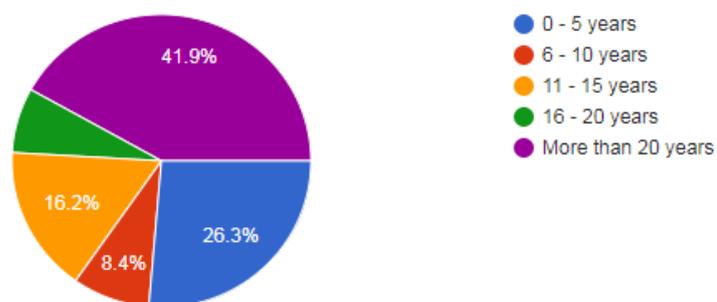


Fig 1: Answers to Question 2. How many years have you lived in the village?

Traffic

Questions 5 & 6 asked residents about Traffic Issues.

The first question asked residents in the village to state what their concerns were regarding 11 different aspects of traffic in the village. **Of least concern was Agricultural Vehicles with 77% either not concerned or slightly concerned** followed by **Parking on pavements and verges (56% not concerned or slightly concerned)** and **Lack of Pedestrian Crossing (53% not concerned or slightly concerned)**.

Of most concern to respondents was **Speeding with 81% either concerned or extremely concerned**, followed by **Pot Holes or Road Condition (80% concerned or extremely concerned)** and **HGV's (76% concerned or extremely concerned)**.

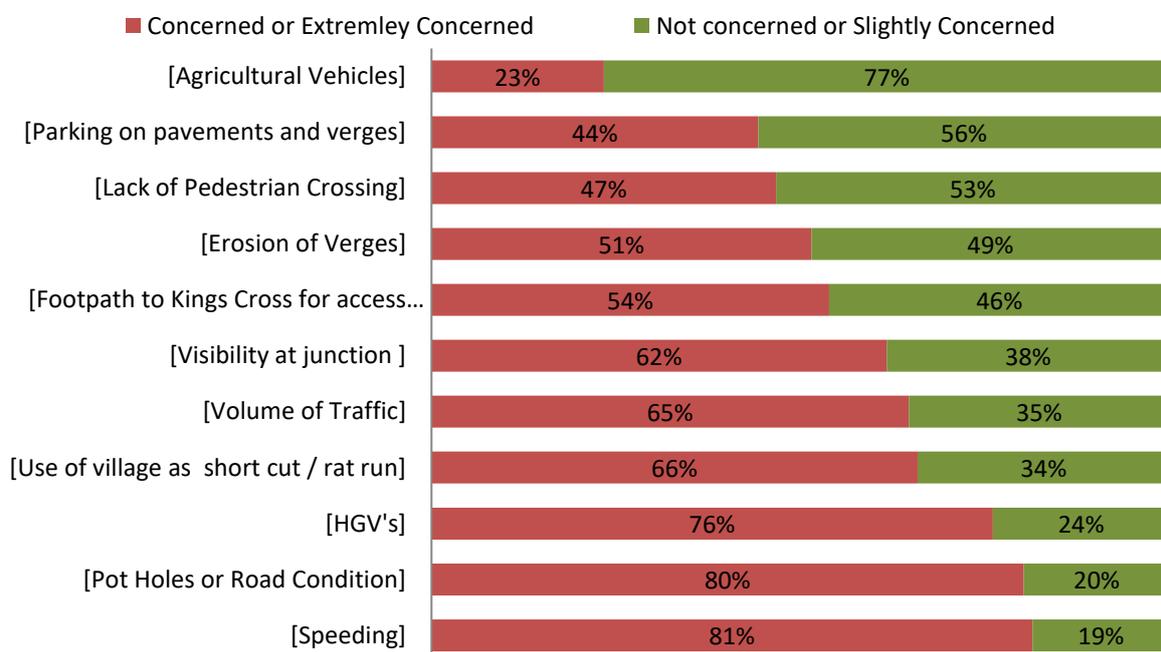


Fig 2: Answers to Question 5. What are you traffic concerns?

It should be noted that more than 50% of villagers were either extremely concerned or concerned with 8 of the 11 aspects that they were asked about and there were also 107 additional comments received in Question 6 to accompany the answers to this question.

Question 6 asked respondents to provide additional details of the traffic issues in Question 5. There were 110 comments. The majority were about the Dadbrook / Aylesbury Road junction where there were concerns about the lack of visibility to the west when approaching from the south (60 comments) and the need for a safe pedestrian crossing by The Crown and at Swan Hill (37 comments).

There were also a number of comments about speeding (18), lack of visitor parking (14), lack of safe pedestrian access to the bus-stops at Kings Cross on the A418 (14) and the increasing number of HGVs passing through the village (12).

Overall there was a very high level of interest in this part of the survey with significant concerns being expressed about a variety of traffic issues in the village. When ranking the 11 aspects that were specifically asked about even those towards the bottom in terms of concerns still have a significant number of concerns raised against them.

Parking

Questions 7 & 8 asked residents about how often they were concerned about Parking issues in the village focussing on 9 specific areas in the village.

Of least concern was **Bernard Close, Swan Hill and the Dadbrook area with less than 6% of respondents expressing they were regularly concerned about parking in these areas.**

Of most concern to respondents was parking at the **School with 46% regularly concerned or concerned every day**, this was followed by parking on the **Lower Green Area with 26% regularly concerned or concerned every day** and parking at **Bridgeway with 19% regularly concerned or concerned every day.**

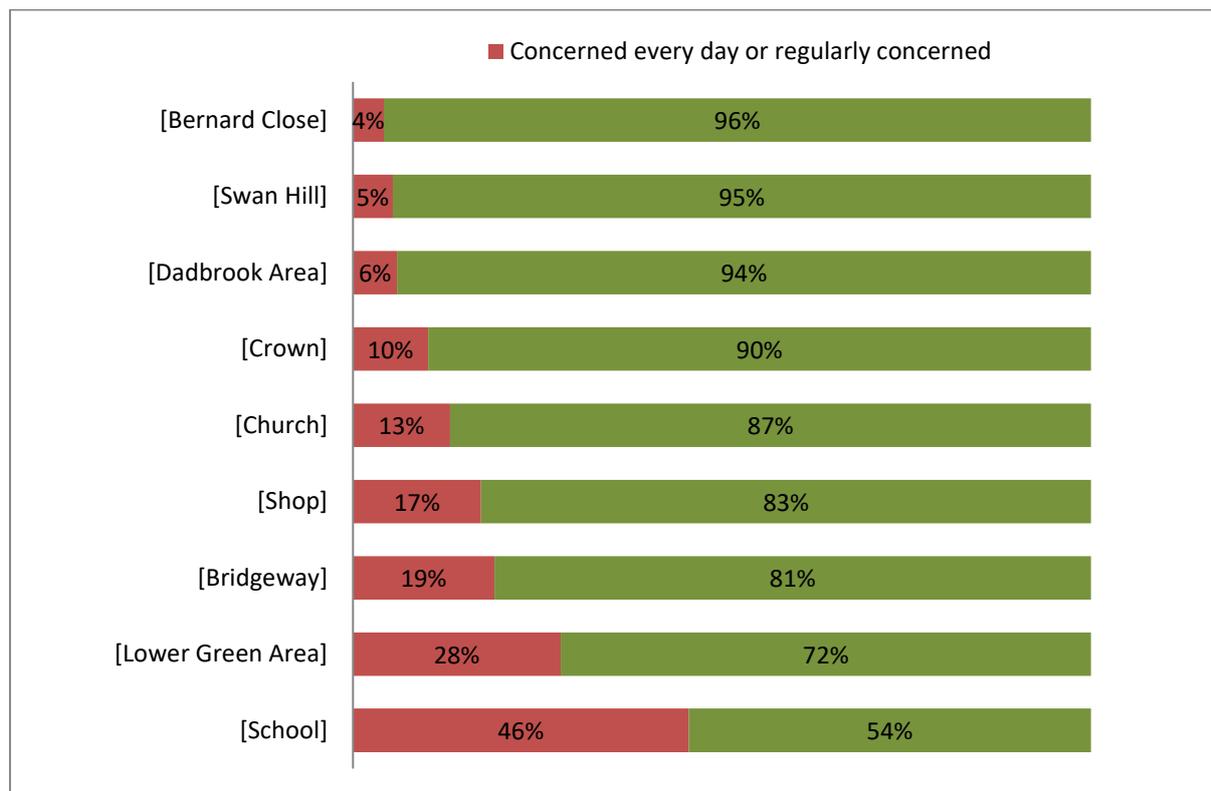


Fig 3: Answers to Question 7. Please let us know how often you have concerns about parking in the village.

There were also 69 additional comments received in **Question 8** to accompany the answers to question 5 about parking (4 parking comments were taken from questions 6 and 19).

The major concern of the residents is unsociable parking (56 comments). This includes parking without due concern for others; i.e. parking in such a way to stop access to and from private properties, parking footways, impeding access to emergency vehicles. There is also a major concern on the parking of vehicles on Bridgeway because parked cars near the bus stop obstruct drivers' views from oncoming traffic. (This comment was also raised in Question 6)

The solution to most of this unsociable parking would be to create off street parking spaces that will allow people access to the School and shops safely without crossing Bridgeway or the Aylesbury Road. There is a good car park available at the Playing Fields, but it seems people are reluctant to

use it. This may be because they find it too far to walk and they would have to cross the Aylesbury Road at The Crown, where there is no designated pedestrian crossing.

The solution to the parking problems around the Lower Green is more difficult; especially if residents cannot park on their own property. Their only option is to park on the footways and road outside their property. There is no facility to provide extra parking areas.

Comparing the parking and traffic results it could be assumed that villagers have significantly less concerns about parking in the village than traffic. However, it should be considered that parking is far more likely to be a very local area of concern based on the specific road/area that a person lives in or based on any other facilities that residents frequently park near. (For example, residents in Dadbrook are far less likely to be worried about parking in the Lower Green than residents who live near the Lower Green). It is perhaps safe to assume that parking in Bernard Close, Swan Hill and the Dadbrook area is not a significant concern or problem. Clearly some residents have concerns about parking at The Crown, Church and Shop and Bridgeway but the vast majority do not. Of most interest is the Lower Green and the School where a significant number of concerns about parking were raised.

Visitor parking numbers are particularly heavy during school drop-off and pick-up periods and for events at the Bernard Hall or Church, however the period of disturbance is relatively short, albeit regular in the case of the School.

Community Assets and Facilities

Question 9, 10 and 11 focussed on current facilities and amenities in the village, some of which have been registered as community assets. How often these facilities are used varied considerably with the Bridleways and Footpaths, the Shop and The Crown being used the most, and the School, Allotments and Sports and Social Club being used the least by respondents.

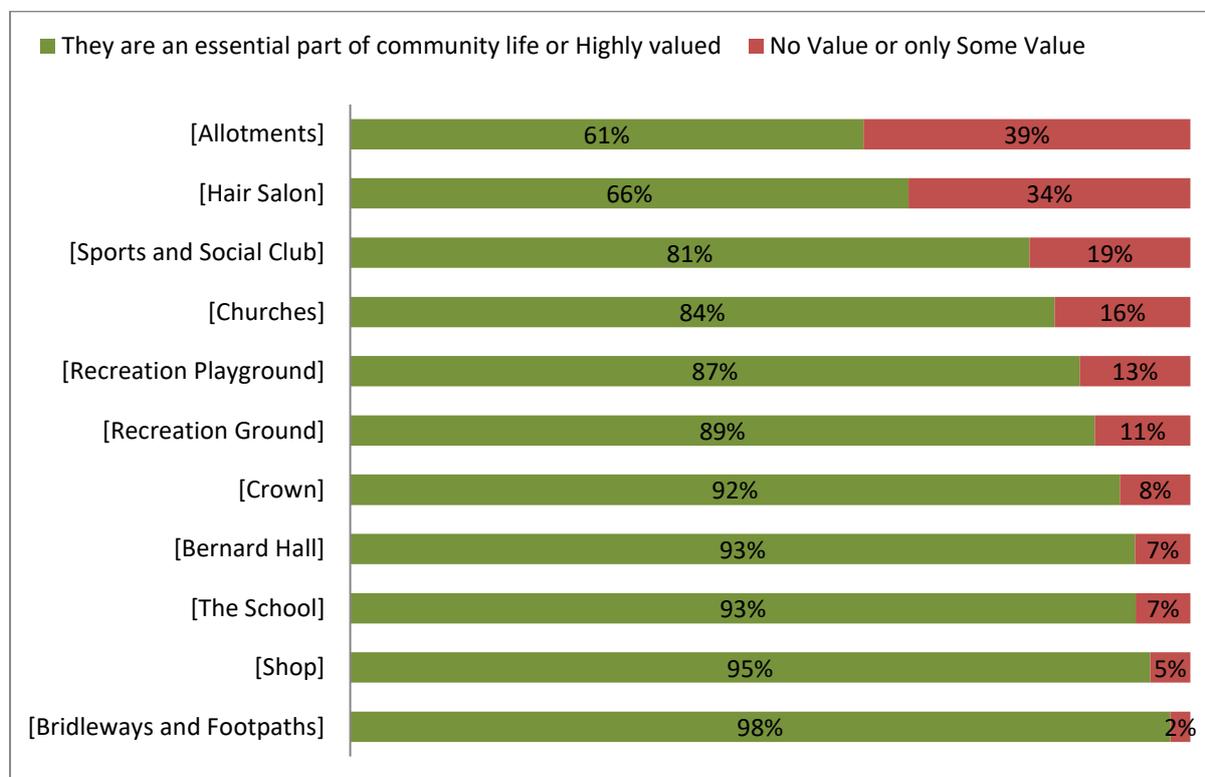


Fig 4: Answers to Question 10. Please tell us how highly you value the protection of each of the facilities in the village. Even if you do not use them frequently, you may still value them as a community asset.

On the whole, respondents do value all the village facilities with all facilities being either rated as an essential part of community life or highly valued by 61% of respondents. The facilities valued the most were the Bridleways and Footpaths, Shop, School and Bernard Hall and the ones valued the least were the Allotments, Hair Salon and Sports and Social Club.

Respondents were also asked to choose which facilities they felt would benefit the most from improvements in quality or capacity and were asked to choose only three items. Whilst preferences were spread out amongst the assets, only 6% of respondents chose the Churches and only 10% chose The Crown or the Allotments. Conversely 52% of people felt that the Sports and Social Club would benefit from improvement and 45% selected Bridleways and Footpaths and 41% the Recreation Ground.

There appears to be very little correlation between how often village facilities and assets are used and how much they are valued. A lot of respondents said they rarely or never used certain assets but still valued them highly and perhaps the best example of this is the School which is never used by 134 of the 167 respondents but considered to have at least some value by all 167 respondents.

It appears to be safe to conclude that all the village assets are valued or considered an essential part of village life by the majority of respondents to the survey and this would be a strong indicator that they should be preserved.

There is no clear preference for which facilities should be improved although it is interesting that the Sports and Social Club appears to be the most popular candidate for improvement when it appears in the bottom three both in terms of frequency of use and how much it is valued by villagers. Perhaps if it was improved it would be used more and valued more highly? Because there is no clear preference very careful consideration should be given to how any funds that might present themselves should be allocated.

Housing Provision

Questions 12 specifically asked how important it was that we identify housing sites of at least 11 homes so that they provide at least 3 affordable homes. 15% stated they had no strong feelings either way and 21% stated that it was not important. The majority view, 63%, was that it was either very important or important.

167 responses

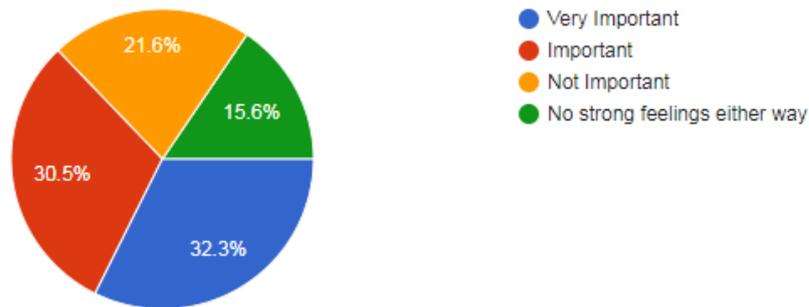


Fig 5: Answers to Question 12. How important is it that we identify housing sites of at least 11 homes, so they provide at least three affordable homes?

Question 13 focussed on Community Land Trusts and asked if we found an opportunity to form a Community Land Trust, should we do so?

167 responses

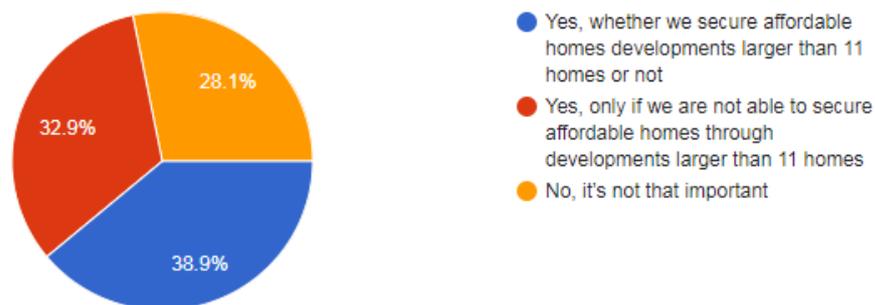


Fig 6: Answers to Question 13. If we can find an opportunity to (form Community Land Trusts), should we?

28% of respondents felt this was not important and 72% felt it was. However, of the 72% that felt it was important, there was a clear division of opinion about under what circumstances this would be necessary with 39% saying it was only important if we are not able to secure affordable homes through development larger than 11 homes and 33% saying it should be done whether we secure affordable home developments larger than 11 homes or not.

Question 14 asked villagers to confirm their own preferences for how we plan for growth. 28% opted for incremental growth on small sites containing less than 11 homes and 47% opted for growth on a mixture of relatively small sites, some of which can accommodate more than 11 homes. 6% said they did not mind and 19% opted for one or two larger sites.

Preference appears to be for growth on a mixture of relatively smaller sites and this supports the answers to question 12 where there appears to be a preference for securing affordable homes through identifying some sites of at least 11 homes.

167 responses

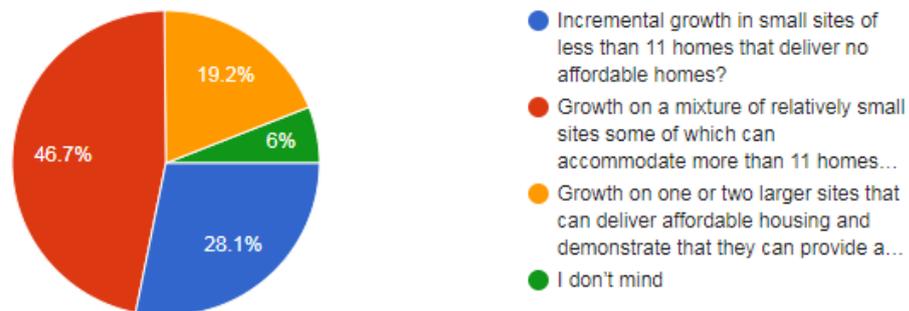


Fig 7: Answers to Question 14. From our discussions with AVDC, we know that some housing growth is inevitable in the village. How would you like to plan for this growth?

Question 15 sought views on the top three factors influencing the location of any new housing.

Locational issues with a more than 40% response rate were; good traffic access, minimal impact on landscape and views, where it creates opportunities for improvement, no impact on green spaces and minimal impact on village facilities.

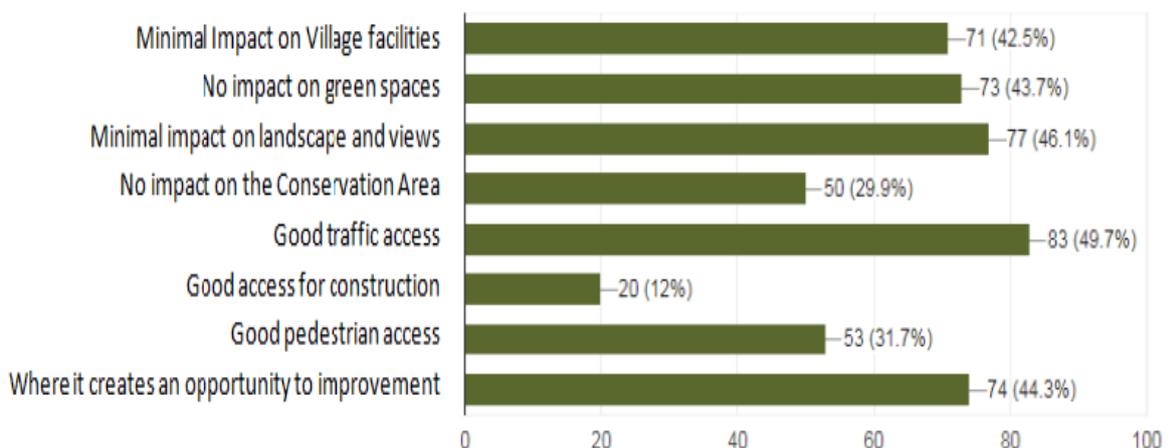


Fig 8: Answers to Question 15. In terms of location of any new housing, what do you think are the THREE most important factors we should take into account? (Please tick three only).

Question 16 asked about the type of housing that Cuddington needs. There was a clear preference for smaller, starter homes of 1-2 bedrooms and this is consistent with the overall aim of encouraging more affordable homes and creating a more balanced mix of housing within the village.

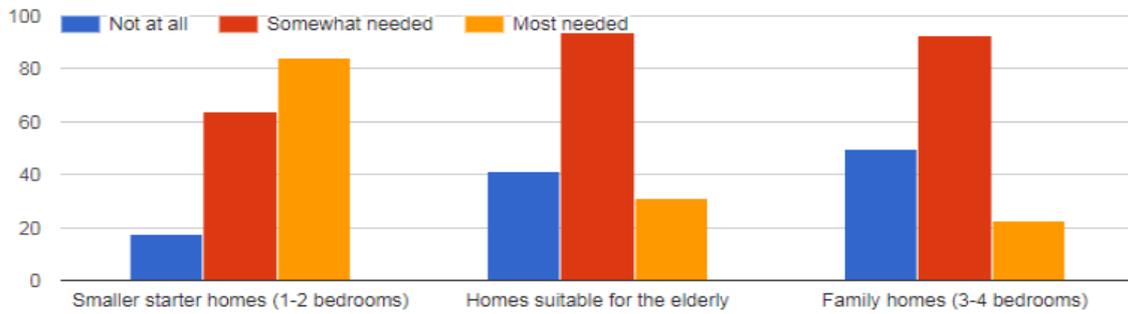


Fig 9: Answers to Question 16. In terms of the type of new housing, what do you think Cuddington needs?

Design and Natural Environment

Questions 17 and 18 focussed on design issues, trying to focus on what the key design criteria should be considered for any new properties that are built in the village. Question 17 asked respondents to pick what they considered to be the most important considerations when it came to new developments and respondents were encouraged to tick all the ones they felt applied.

89% of respondents felt Off-street car parking spaces should be considered, in addition Landscape design features, Control impacts on open views, Building heights and Use of local materials and design features were ticked by 63% or more of respondents.

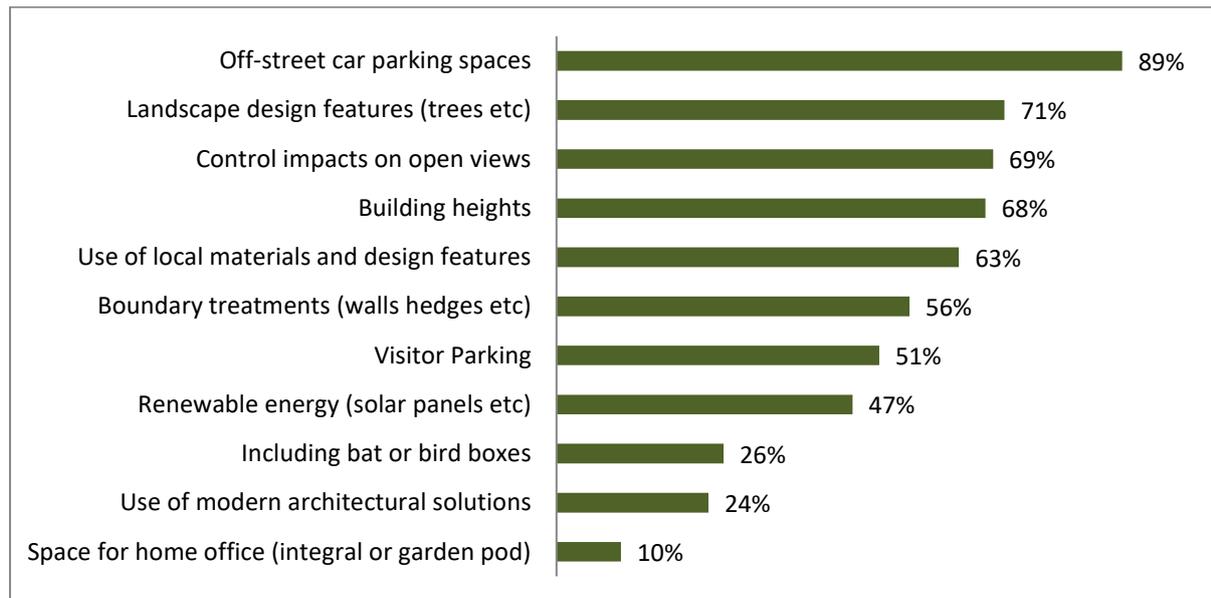


Fig 10: Answers to Question 17. Which of the following do you think the design guidance should cover?

Question 18 asked how important it was to conserve and if appropriate enhance four key features of the village, Rural views, Natural bird and animal habitats, Trees hedgerows grass and flower verges, Area of green space around the village. **At least 80% of the respondents to this question felt conservation of all four of these areas was either essential or important.**

When considering possible sites for development the survey results suggest a clear preference for certain design features to be considered. The relative merits of each site should be assessed carefully against these preferences to ensure they match as closely as possible to survey results. Whilst it is acknowledged that not every respondent to the survey felt that conserving all village features was important the overwhelming majority of respondents felt that this was very important and so protection of green spaces, wildlife habitats, trees, hedgerows verges and views and rural views should be considered a high priority when considering possible sites for development.

Additional Comments

The final **Question (19)** invited any other comments to be provided and 79 respondents chose to make additional comments. As anticipated, a number of respondents made several different points giving opinions on separate subjects. These have been analysed by adding a number for each opinion listed on the subject headings below and as a result, there were 132 specific opinions in all.

However, 10 of these were comments about the Survey itself, half of which were positive and/or thanked the Steering Group for doing a good job, and half raised some complaint. Two thought it a waste of time because they had no faith it would result in any difference, one was concerned about its cost, another complained of grammatical or spelling mistakes and one thought the survey should have gathered more data about gender, age and vehicle ownership.

These 10 comments are excluded from the statistics in brackets below, so these refer to the number of responses with a particular opinion as a percentage of the 122 overall substantive comments about the Neighbourhood Plan received. The topics are listed in the order of the number of comments received about each.

Housing Developments - 37 comments received

1. Nearly half (17 – 13.9%) of responses on this topic expressed opinions against any new housing development or were in favour of only small-scale discreet development that would not damage or impact the village or its amenities. Two respondents specifically voiced opinions against development on the Dadbrook Farm site.
2. In contrast to this, only 3 respondents (2.4%) were in favour of larger scale development, one of whom thought there should be just one large development minimising impact elsewhere and 2 (1.6%) would approve larger development if it delivered major benefits for the village.
3. However, about one third (12) of comments on this subject (9.8%) made the same specific suggestion, that the land behind the school to the north of Bridgeway and west of the Drive to Cuddington Court and Nether Winchendon, would make an ideal location for a combination of new housing and car parking for the village, with pedestrian access to the heart of the village, the Church, School and Shops, without needing to cross the busy Aylesbury Road.
4. In respect to type of housing needed, 2 (1.6%) were against larger 5 bed houses and 2 (1.6%) would like single story houses for older people.

Natural Environment and Green Spaces – 23 comments received

1. All 23 opinions (18.8%) on this topic were concerned to sustain and conserve the villages existing green spaces and natural environment and encourage biodiversity and wildlife habitats. Two persons felt it important to maintain a defined village boundary with unspoilt rural countryside beyond this.

Included in this group are all 7 (5.7%) comments received about the Allotments, because they all had a green spaces message, that there should be no building on the Allotments and that instead this area close to the village should be maintained as an accessible green space for village enjoyment and as a wildlife refuge. Three comments (2.4%) made the interesting suggestion to create a community orchard or woodland on the allotment site while others were in favour of maintaining the Allotments but improving the awareness of them.

Character, Beauty and Feel of the Village – 16 comments received

1. All 16 responses (13.1%) on this topic expressed the opinion in various ways that the character, beauty and feel of Cuddington as a traditional small village should be valued highly and conserved and to lose this would be a great shame. Any future development should therefore be approached carefully and with sensitivity to this concept. Two people expressed a wish to see the village status changed back from “Medium” to “Small”.
2. One person suggested the village needed another shop, e.g. a butcher or baker.

Community Assets (Recreation Ground, Club House and Children’s Playground, etc) – 15 comments received.

1. Of the 15 responses received here, 7 (5.7%) wished to see no building at all on the recreation ground. One said that any community land used for development should be replaced by similar area elsewhere. One respondent noted that the playing fields were purchased for the village by soldiers returning after the second world war, who raised monies specifically to enable donation of the grounds to the village as an asset for future generations to enjoy.
2. Three people made comments (2.4%) that the Club House was not of the quality expected of a village like Cuddington and should be significantly improved.
3. Two persons requested that Cuddington had its own doctors’ surgery or health centre.

Traffic, Road Crossings and Footpaths – 14 comments received

1. This is a bit of a mix of wishes. 5 expressed concern over excessive traffic through the village, 2 requested a pedestrian crossing at the Aylesbury road junction, 3 would like a footpath or cycle way to King’s Cross and 3 others would like improved public or community transport. It was felt by at least one person that any housing development should be linked to the village by pedestrian footpaths.

Affordable Housing – 11 comments received

1. There was no support for developer led affordable housing. The majority of comments (7 out of 11 – 5.7% of overall comments) thought affordable housing was not needed and should be resisted and that the village could not afford to lose any assets to fund affordable homes. Of the 4 who thought there may be a need for affordable housing, 3 felt they should not be built by or with the support of developers.

The School – 6 comments received

1. Three comments (2.4%) were that parking outside the school was a major problem. Three others (2.4%) were that any further development would be likely to increase demand on the School and the Neighbourhood Plan needs to include provision for this.

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