



REPORT ON HOUSING NEED
Stratfield Mortimer

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Contents

Report Summary	1
Introduction – The RHE Project and rural exception sites Neighbourhood Planning	2
Stratfield Mortimer Context	4
Availability and affordability of housing	4
Housing need survey – Method	6
Survey Findings	7
Part 2 – Housing Need	12
Conclusions & Recommendations	18

Appendices

1. West Berkshire District Council (saved) Policy HSG11 - Provision for Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites and National Planning Policy Framework
2. Housing Need Questionnaire
3. Site Suggestions
4. Comments

Stratfield Mortimer Housing Need - Report Summary

The Rural Housing Enabler's role is to work with rural parish councils in Berkshire to identify local housing needs and means of addressing them.

The survey questionnaire follows a national standard, agreed with the parish council and was hand delivered by volunteers in April 2015 alongside the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan (NP) questionnaire to all households in the parish.

From the responses the following can be determined:

- 31% of the forms were returned (513/1644 dwellings).
- 77% (367) of the responses indicated that they would be in favour of development of a small scheme to meet local needs. 20% (94) were against. 3% (15) were uncertain.
- 20 responses represent a real requirement for affordable housing (including shared ownership).
- There is a significant aspiration for home ownership but the aspiration may not be realistic given savings and income detail.
- The West Berkshire Housing Register currently indicates 54 families in need of an affordable home with a local connection to Stratfield Mortimer.
- The survey indicates there is a substantial need for homes for local people. The greatest need is for 1 and 2 bedroom properties. This would justify further investigation into possible development of an exception site for Stratfield Mortimer.
- Needs *may* be met within any general development that takes place, although any affordable units on such a development will meet the priority needs of West Berkshire rather than identified local demand.
- There is also an identified need for some specialist housing to meet the demands of elderly residents for: downsizing opportunities, ground floor accommodation, and for sheltered or extra care housing including dementia care.

A survey of this type provides only a snapshot in time. The findings are an indicator of current housing need in the parish. Any decision to progress towards development of a rural exception site requires the support of the parish council and further community consultation.

While many sites were suggested in this survey, no landowners have been contacted and no sites have been assessed for suitability. The Rural Housing Enabler can provide support for this.

Introduction

The Rural Housing Enabler Project and Rural Exception Sites

The Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) for Berkshire came into post at the Community Council for Berkshire in September 2005. The purpose of the Rural Housing Enabler project is to work with rural parishes in Berkshire to help them to identify whether there is local need for affordable housing. Where there is need for affordable housing, the RHE liaises between the community, the local authority (West Berkshire District Council) and appropriate stakeholders (e.g. Housing Associations, Landowners etc.) to facilitate the development of rural exception sites with affordable housing for local people to meet the needs of rural communities.

In 2010 a scheme of 16 homes for local people was developed in Hungerford, 8 units on Parish Council land in the green belt in Wargrave, and in December 2011, 7 units that compliment an existing scheme in Chaddleworth. Most recently, a rural exception site in Woolhampton of 8 properties was developed by Aster Housing and completed in January 2015.

Rural communities should be proactive about meeting their own needs, which can help to maintain the balance and sustainability of a village. This is particularly important given the 'localism' agenda of the coalition government. Increasingly parish councils will be expected to take a more active role in the delivery of local services; this can include housing and other amenities through the Community Right to Build.

Any general development includes a percentage of affordable housing. However, this housing goes towards meeting the statutory needs from the local authority housing register, and not the needs of people with a local connection to a particular village in the local authority. On April 27th 2015 there were 2763 households on the West Berkshire District Council Common Housing Register, though 1635 of these are not likely to qualify for an affordable home.

Generally there is limited development of housing in rural villages; local housing needs are met principally through the use of 'rural exception site' developments. These are sites that would not normally qualify for planning permission, but may be given exceptional planning permission provided the development is small (generally about 6-12 units) and meets a *proven* local demand. Local need is proven by means of a current housing need survey such as this one.

Provided there is a proven local need, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out national guidance on rural exception sites.¹ The NPPF replaces previous National Planning Policy Statements and came into effect from March 2012.

Affordable housing on a rural exception site differs from the affordable housing that is built as a percentage of regular open market development. It is ***reserved for people with a local connection to the village and is maintained as affordable housing for local needs in perpetuity***. There is no 'right to buy' on these sites. However, the NPPF has introduced the possibility of a very small element of housing on these

¹ See Appendix 1 for national and local policy references.

schemes to be available to sell on the open market in order to help finance the development of the affordable homes. See Appendix 1 for West Berkshire District Council Policy HSG11 (saved) – Provision for Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites.

Local housing needs can also be met by forming a Community Land Trust, whereby the local community takes full responsibility for the funding, development and the subsequent management of a scheme designed with the express aim of benefiting the community.

The proposals in the Localism Act and planning changes outlined in the NPPF provide increasing opportunities for parish councils to have more responsibility in planning decisions and delivery of local services. The Community Right to Build gives a community the right to build housing and / or other community amenities to meet identified local needs, provided the community can meet a number of prescribed criteria. In addition there have been significant changes in the way affordable homes are financed due to reductions in public subsidy. All of these changes will have a significant impact on the way affordable homes are provided in the future.

What is 'affordable' housing?

"Affordable housing" is housing that is available for people who cannot afford to rent or buy houses available on the open market. Traditionally affordability has been based upon housing costs not exceeding a third of monthly take home pay. Affordable housing encompasses existing social rented housing, the new 'affordable rents' which are set at up to 80% of open market rent; shared ownership and similarly subsidised schemes sometimes referred to as intermediate housing; and may include low cost market housing. It may be part-funded through grant from the Homes and Communities Agency or subsidised from private market housing development.

In rural villages, where there are significant development constraints, very little private market housing is built and therefore, little if any, affordable housing. Many of the old council houses have been sold as a result of 'Right to Buy' legislation, leaving few affordable housing alternatives for people on lower to median incomes. This can result in the gradual decline of communities, where young people and lower paid people who provide local services are priced out of the market.

Rural exception sites are generally the only way to provide, and reserve properties for local people, who can no longer access homes in rural villages. Properties on a rural exception site are reserved for local people. These conditions are stipulated in law, in perpetuity. Some of the changes outlined above may mean that exception sites in the future will require a small element of open market homes for sale to finance the development of homes for local people. This should not be viewed as a negative thing as the provision of a balanced range of homes for sale and rent can meet the wider needs in rural communities. Homes for rent or for part ownership are still reserved for local people in perpetuity.

Any community that decides to develop under the new Community Right to Build orders or under the Community Land Trust model has the same ability to preserve homes for local people in perpetuity on such schemes.

Stratfield Mortimer Context

Based on 2011 Census² Stratfield Mortimer has a population of 3,807 living in approximately 1,572 households. In 2001 the parish headcount was 3,473 in 1,411 households.

Stratfield Mortimer residents benefit from close proximity to Reading employment opportunities and amenities, and excellent access to transport links by train and motorway. Despite its situation near to the Reading conurbation, Stratfield Mortimer retains its rural character. All of this in addition to good access to amenities make Stratfield Mortimer a desirable place to live.

Stratfield Mortimer is identified in the Statutory Instrument of 1997 No.625, The Housing (Right to Acquire or Enfranchise) (Designated Rural Areas in the South East) as a Designated Rural Area. This instrument qualifies Stratfield Mortimer as rural. Further as a result of this designation the rights of tenants with long leases to enfranchise (buy) and the right of tenants of registered social landlords to acquire their homes under section 16 and 17 of the 1996 Act do not apply.

This legislation is important for 2 reasons; firstly it clearly identifies Stratfield Mortimer as rural and therefore eligible for rural exception site development. Also it should limit the number of social and affordable rented properties allowed to be sold under “right to buy” legislation.

The proposals by the new Government to extend “Right to Buy” are yet to be defined, however significant new legislation will be required should the Government want to remove the existing legislation.

Availability and affordability of housing

The census indicates that in 2011 there were 17 homes in Stratfield Mortimer that were under shared ownership and 235 homes that were rented from either the Council or a Housing Association. There is an existing rural exception site of 12 units on Windmill Road built in 1995. 8 of these units are managed by Sovereign Housing Association for rent and 4 are shared ownership units managed by English Rural Housing Association.

Households by tenure

The majority of homes in Stratfield Mortimer are owner occupied. The ratio of affordable homes (16%) is in keeping with the West Berkshire average of (15%) and the average across all of England (18.5%).

² Office for National Statistics www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk ©Crown Copyright. Census data is aggregated using a number of Lower level Super Output Areas. It does not represent 100% accuracy.

Tenure	Count	%
All households (lived in dwellings)	1572	
Owner occupied (with or without a mortgage)	1102	70%
Housing Association/Registered Social Landlord rent	246	16%
Shared Ownership (Part Owned / Part Rent)	17	1%
Private rent or other rented tenure	181	12%
Living rent free	26	2%

Table 1: Tenure based on 2011 Census³

There is a buoyant housing market around Stratfield Mortimer. The table below provides a summary of house sales in the parish and the bordering vicinity for a twelve month period, and a snapshot of current property listings in the parish.

HOUSE SALES IN STRATFIELD MORTIMER FEB 2014 – JAN 2015	
Number of sales:	140
Average Price:	£303,371
Median:	£330,000
Highest price	£930,000
Lowest Price	£110,000
Lower Quartile Average:	£189,887
Average Price in West Berkshire Apr 2015	£262,207
Avg house price England & Wales Apr 2015	£179,817
Land Registry data taken from: http://www.rightmove.com/properties/house-prices (16/06/15) ⁴	
CURRENT LISTINGS OF PROPERTY FOR SALE	
There are approximately 28 properties listed for sale in Stratfield Mortimer on property websites.	
They range in price from £130k to well over £4m, though both the high and low figure are extremes, the range is from £150k to £850k.	
There is a good range of properties available.	
Rental Properties in Stratfield Mortimer	
There is a good selection of properties to rent in the area. Rental values range from £825 pcm for a 1 bedroom cottage to £2k pcm for a 4 bed semi-detached house.	
There has been a significant development of 8 apartments to rent at The Bevers. These are being marketed at £950pcm for a 2 bed flat.	

Table 2: Property prices in Stratfield Mortimer

- To access even the lowest priced home in the village is in the region of £190,000
- Average gross income per person living in West Berkshire for 2014 was £31,833 per annum (median £25k).⁵ Median incomes are more commonly used in calculating affordability given that average incomes can be skewed by a small number of very high earners.
- To purchase an entry level property assuming a 10% deposit and a 90% mortgage would require nearly 5.5 times the average single income, or 7 times the median income.

³ Source: Office for National Statistics Crown Copyright www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

⁴ Land Registry Data to end July 2014 ©Crown Copyright 2014

⁵ 'National Office of Statistics 2014 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (provisional) (ASHE Gross Annual Income, Table 8.7a)

West Berkshire District Council Housing Needs Register

- As of the 27th of April 2015 the West Berkshire District Council general needs housing register had 1128 qualifying households registered on its waiting list and 1635 non-qualifying applicants.
- 51 of these have indicated some preference for housing in Stratfield Mortimer. With the greatest need for 1 and 2 bedroom properties.
- The vast majority of people that have registered a 'preference' to a particular parish are likely to have registered a preference for anywhere in West Berkshire as they do not want to limit their chances of getting a home. A preference is not a local connection.
- 54 have indicated a local connection to Stratfield Mortimer, with the greatest need for 2 bedroom properties.

Bedroom Size	Preference	Local Connection
1 Bed	18	20
2 Bed	17	24
3 Bed	11	9
4 Bed +	5	1

Table 3: WBC waiting list figures: Stratfield Mortimer

Only those people with a proven local connection to a village can access housing on a rural exception site. Unusually, the list of people with a local connection who have registered is higher than the list for a preference in Stratfield Mortimer. This is the first incidence that the RHE recalls of this happening. The Housing Options Team double checked the figures, they also found it unusual.

Housing Need Survey – Method

The format of the questionnaire was set according to a national format and the final version agreed by the Parish Council and the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. A full copy of the survey is attached in Appendix 2. West Berkshire District Council printed the forms which were delivered by volunteers with the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan Questionnaire in April 2015 to all households in the parish.

In order to preserve confidentiality, the forms were returned directly to the RHE in Freepost envelopes, with a closing date of 22nd May 2015 for the return of forms. Alternatively the option to input responses directly via a Survey Monkey web link on the internet was provided. Neighbourhood Development Plan Questionnaires were returned directly to the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group. In some instances completed Neighbourhood Plan questionnaires were inadvertently returned to the RHE. These were delivered to the Neighbourhood Plan Group.

Part 1 of the housing questionnaire is designed to survey all residents about their current views towards development and to get a basic understanding of the living conditions of existing residents in the village.

Part 2 is aimed specifically at those people who consider themselves to be in housing need. Part 2 is designed to help measure the level of need for affordable housing from those people with a local connection to the parish.

The Rural Housing Enabler has collated the data from all returned forms and analysed it as follows.

Survey Findings

Total forms distributed	-	@ 1644
Surveys returned by post	-	420
Responses input online	-	93
Total returned	-	513
% Return	-	31%

31% is an excellent rate of return for a survey such as this one and provides a statistically valid sample of views from the community.

Rate of return tends to be lower on a single issue survey than it would be on a more comprehensive survey such as the parish plan questionnaire, where the issues have a broader impact on the residents. Unfortunately, people from the most disadvantaged groups are the least likely to respond to such a survey, but the most likely to have some level of housing need.

Part 1 – for the whole community

Only three responses came back from people whose primary home is not in Stratfield Mortimer. They did not complete the rest of the questionnaire.

In Berkshire second home ownership does not have any significant influence on affordability, unlike in coastal and national park areas in the country where the impact is considerable. However given proximity to London there are likely to be many more people that have a primary residence in Berkshire and a secondary residence in London.

Length of residency in Stratfield Mortimer

There was a good spread of responses spanning people who have recently arrived in the village to people with lifelong connections, however the greatest response by far was from people who have lived in the parish for greater than 30 years, (30%).

In general a disproportionate number of responses to a survey such as this come from residents that have a longer vested interest in the community.

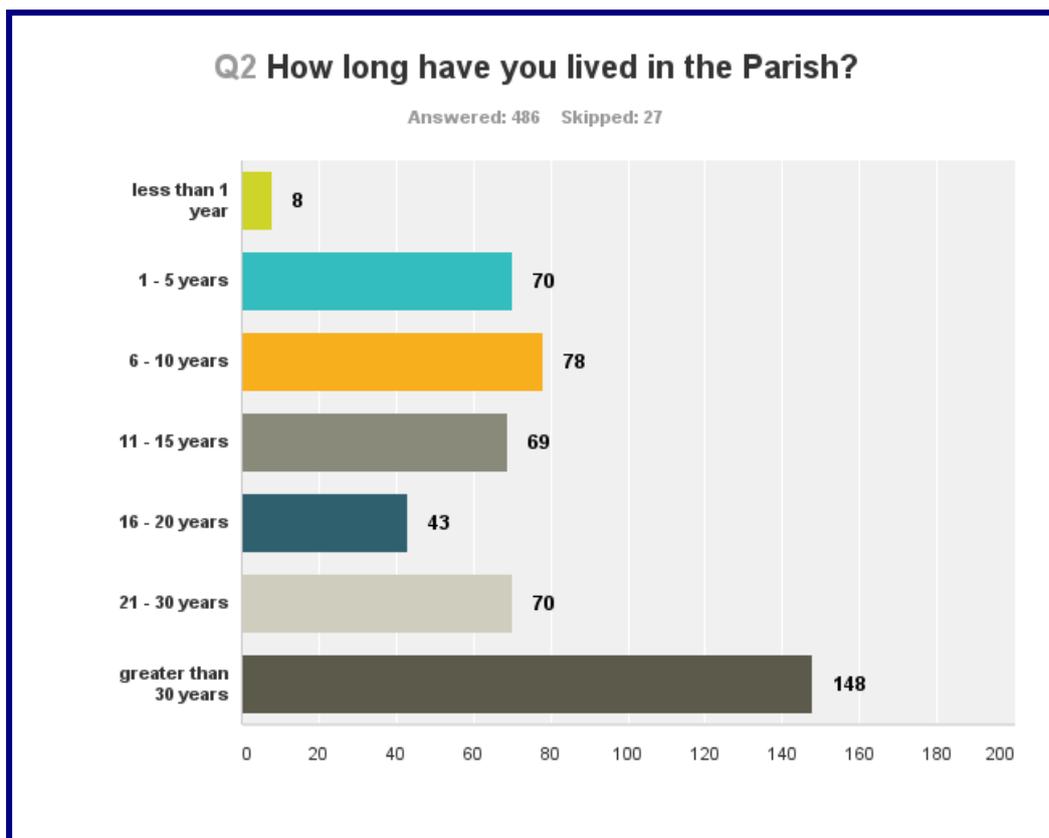


Chart 1 – Length of residency in Stratfield Mortimer

House Type

The large majority of responses came from people living in houses, (detached, semidetached, terraced or bungalows). There was limited response from residents living in flats, apartments, maisonettes, or bed-sit types of accommodation.

There was only one response from people living in alternative types of accommodation such as caravans, or park homes. People in these types of accommodation, particularly people living on Travellers sites are unlikely to complete surveys such as this one.

Type of dwelling	Response count	Response percentage	2011 Census Figures
House (detached, semi-detached or terrace, bungalow)	478	96.4%	1373 / 87.3%
Flat, maisonette, apartment or bed-sit	12	2.4%	184 / 11.7%
Sheltered. Residential care	6	1.2%	Not identified
Park Home / Caravan or other Mobile or Temporary structure	1	>1%	15 / 1%

Table 4: Dwelling type

Household make-up and travel to work distance

There were 495 households that responded to this question made-up of 1223 individuals.

Primary respondents (those that filled in the survey on behalf of their household) were:

- 49% (238) male
- 51% (247) female

Breakdown of household size:

No. in household	Count	Percentage (sample)	Census 2011 – Percentage (whole population)
1 person	104	21%	26.4%
2 people	201	40.6%	36.9%
3 people	62	12.5%	14.5
4 people	99	20%	14.7%
5 people	23	4.6%	5.9%
6 people	1	0.2%	1.3%
7people	2	0.4%	0.25%

Table 5: Household size

The above indicates that the survey sample closely represents views from across the complete range of household sizes.

Sample ages

The age spread of the sample is shown in Chart 2 below. This is compared with the age spread of the total population of Stratfield Mortimer in the 2011 Census.

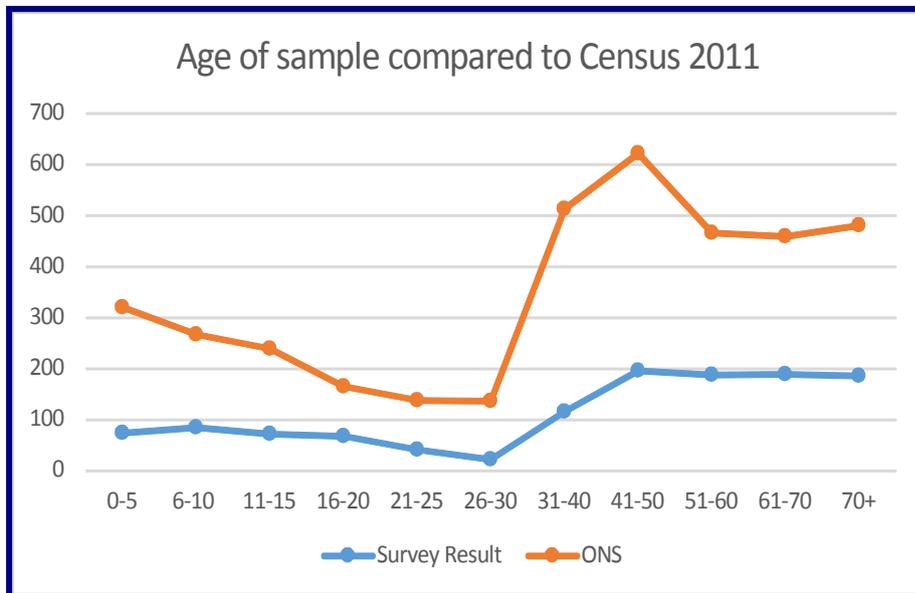


Chart 2: Age spread

The chart indicates that the sample population may not adequately reflect the views of the age groups in their 30's and may over represent ages above 50. This is typical in a survey such as this one, where older people are more likely to find the time to respond. And those in the 30 -50 range are the least likely to respond to such a survey as they are the most busy establishing careers and young families.

Travel to work or school distance:

- 71 household members (from the sample) marked this question as 'not applicable' – they may be too young to be in school, retired or not currently in paid employment
- 169 sample members indicated that they are retired
- 25 separate household members are currently away at university
- 63 sample members work from home
- 164 work or attend school locally in the village
- 311 sample members work or attend school within 10 miles of Stratfield Mortimer (this includes Reading & Basingstoke)
- 197 sample members work or attend school further than 10 miles from Stratfield Mortimer.
- 5 sample members are not currently in employment or education

One comment was made that there is no option for people who work from home but travel extensively. This will be included as an option in future surveys.

Have family members left the village due to difficulties finding suitable housing locally, or is there any intention to move within the village in the next 5 years?

- 47 of the sample population positively answered the question that asked if family members have had to move in the past 5 years. This represents nearly 10%. Of these, 10 went on to complete Part 2 of survey and 2 of 10 were for people no longer living in the village.
- 93 (20%) of the sample indicated that they expect they may move to a new home within the village at some point in the next 5 years. The main reasons given were:
 - Need for a larger home
 - Downsizing
 - Need for an adult child to have a starter home
 - Change of tenure (from rent to ownership)
 - Some indicated they will have to leave the village because there is nothing that meets their requirements or plans to retire to seaside, countryside, or elsewhere)
 - Anti-social neighbours

Special housing needs

There were 32 positive responses to the question about the need for any special housing requirements. Some of the respondents identified more than one requirement. 9 went on to complete Part 2 of the survey.

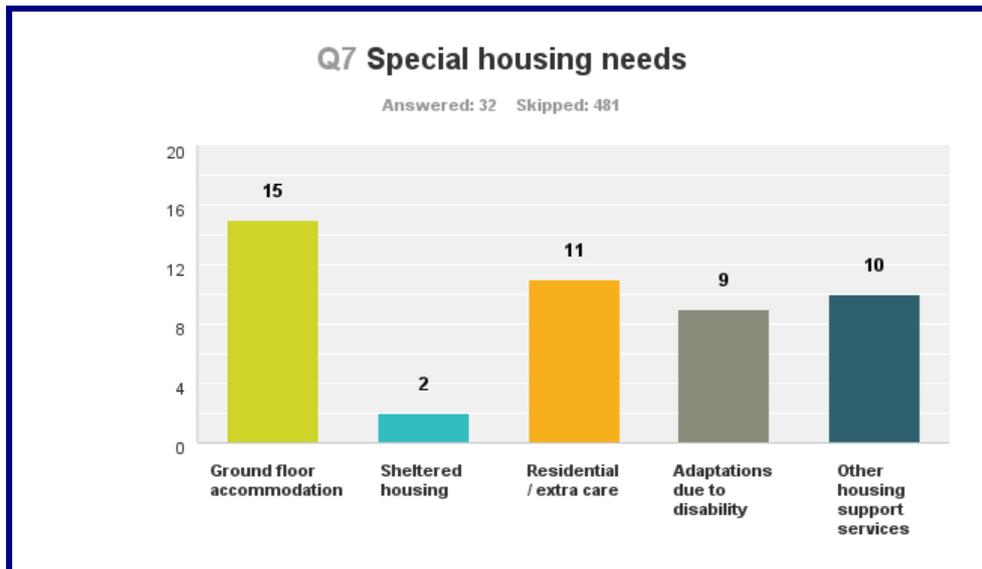


Chart 3: Special housing needs

The majority of need is for ground floor accommodation, which means there is a preference for bungalow style housing. Unfortunately these are not very economical to build and take up more land area than traditional house building.

Some of the needs are for disabled children or other family members that need local family support.

Support for a small development to meet local needs

A surprising majority of the sample population indicated support for a small development of homes to meet local needs.

- 77% (367) in favour
- 20% (94) against
- 3% (15) uncertain

It will be for the Parish Council and the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Plan to determine whether it is appropriate to progress towards any development of a rural exception site to meet local needs.

Site suggestions where a scheme might be developed

There were 156 individual responses to this question. A full account of the suggestions is available in Appendix 3. Suggestions are listed without prejudice and without the author's local knowledge. Landowners have not been contacted regarding the availability or suitability of these sites for such a scheme.

Many of the suggestions refer directly to those identified in the Neighbourhood Plan. While these reports normally summarise the sites suggested, the analysis of the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire is likely to identify the most appropriate development sites in Stratfield Mortimer.

Many of the suggestions may be referring to the same locations. Those that refer to locations outside of the parish, “Scotland” for example, are not appropriate for meeting the specific needs of people connected to Stratfield Mortimer.

Recommended sites in surveys like this often refer to locations outside of the parish or in more urban parishes (i.e. Reading or Thatcham) These areas are no more likely to want to have to have development to meet the need of rural communities than rural communities want to take the overspill from urban areas. If local needs are met locally then it should help mitigate the need to accommodate affordable housing for other areas. Further, local homes for local people improve the long-term sustainability of rural communities.

If there is a need for local affordable housing, site appraisals of all potential sites need to be done before any further action can be taken. Site appraisals determine whether sites are suitable for rural exception development. There are many obstacles to the development of an exception site such as:

- The land must be made available at low cost
- The land should not be land that has been identified for development purposes and should not have a significant planning history
- The land must be accessible
- Development must form a natural continuation of the village
- Development must not have a negative landscape impact
- The community must support such a scheme

Summary of Comments

There were 129 forms that included additional comments. A full list of the comments is attached in Appendix 4 of this report. The comments covered a wide range of topics both in support and against development of additional homes to meet local needs. A few of the key points were:

- Ensure affordable homes are for local people
- Lack of local infrastructure and services
- Some support for sympathetic development to meet local needs
- Concern that the community is already fighting proposed development.
- Concern that there isn't sufficient housing to meet the needs of adult children particularly that want to return or stay in Stratfield Mortimer.
- Comments that there is already too much social housing in the village and that it should be elsewhere.

Part 2 – Housing Need

Part 2 of the survey was completed by 37 of the respondents indicating some level of housing need. This represents 7% of the total return or 2% of the total households in Stratfield Mortimer. However many of these responses do not represent an affordable need but an aspiration to home ownership, or a desire to downsize.

Current residency in Stratfield Mortimer

Of the 37 respondents identified for affordable housing:

- 31 currently live in Stratfield Mortimer
- 6 do not currently live in the village, all used to live in the village
- 4 still have parents living in the village
- Only one has a connection of less than 3 years.
- 1 of these was completed on behalf of someone currently at university. This is not considered a need as it represents a speculative future desire to set-up a permanent home in the village.

Reasons for need

Reasons for needing affordable housing vary. In some cases there are more than one issue. Usually the greatest reason for people needing a new home is the desire for younger people to have a starter home and live independently of parents, as is the case here.

Reason for need		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Starter home (independence)	31.4%	11
Poor condition of current home (i.e. damp or lack of central heating)	11.4%	4
Overcrowding, need a larger home	11.4%	4
Need to be nearer to local employment	2.9%	1
Need to be near family to provide/receive care or support	2.9%	1
Need sheltered or extra care housing	8.6%	3
Need ground floor accommodation	8.6%	3
Need change of tenure	5.7%	2
Need a smaller home	2.9%	1
Lack of security in my current home	5.7%	2
Family breakdown/divorce	2.9%	1
Current home unaffordable	5.7%	2

Table 6: Reasons for need

In Stratfield Mortimer the greatest need by far is for starter homes.

Current Tenure and Preferred Tenure

There is a particularly high aspiration for private home ownership rather than any affordable tenure, although in many cases shared ownership may be the only way to access the housing ladder initially. 10 of the responses that completed Part 2 of the survey represent an aspiration to home ownership and are not included as 'affordable need'. This does however indicate local demand for access smaller homes for starters in the village. Where the aspiration for home ownership can only be met through a shared ownership option, the need has been included as affordable need.

Table 7 shows the current tenure, preferred tenure, reason for need and family size 20 responses that appear to represent a genuine need for affordable housing.

The need breaks down as:

- 8 in need of social or affordable rent tenures

- 8 who *may* qualify for shared ownership
- 4 where the eligibility is uncertain based on the information provided.

Only 4 responses indicate an interest in a shared ownership tenure, however a further 8 have indicated they would like to buy their own home but do not have sufficient deposit or income to do so. Realistically, based on the information provided, not more than 8 have sufficient deposit and income to access a mortgage for even a shared ownership property. The other 4 are unlikely to access home ownership at this point in time based on the limited scope of the responses given.

2 responses are from people that currently own their own home but no longer find it affordable. It is unclear in both cases whether the equity invested in their current home will be sufficient to allow them to purchase a more affordable home or whether they will need to go into private rent when they sell. They are unlikely to be able to access affordable housing options if they have equity.

Total in household	Length of connection	Reason for need	Current tenure	Preferred tenure	Likely allocation
2 adults (parent & child)	>20 years	Ground floor accommodation	Social	Social / affordable rent	No contact details. 2 bed need Social rent
1 adult 1 child	?	Poor condition of home	Private rent	Social / affordable rent	2 bed need Affordable rent
2 adults 2 opp sex children	>20	Need to be near family to provide/receive support	Private rent	Social / affordable rent	2 bed as children are well below age 10. Affordable rent
1 adult	>10 years	Need ground floor living	Social	Social / affordable rent	1 bed Social rent
1 adult 1 child	>10 years	Family breakdown	Owned (must sell)	Social / affordable rent	Depends on equity whether they qualify. 2 bed (tenure uncertain eligibility)
2 adult siblings*	>20 years	Security of tenure	Social	Social / affordable rent	No contact details. Uncertain eligibility)
2 adults 2 opp sex children	<10	Current home unaffordable	Ownership	Unclear, if there is equity following sale of home.	Depends on circumstances, 2-3 bed rooms. Uncertain
1 adult	>20 years	Starter home, need to be near family, condition of current home	Private rent	Affordable rent or ownership options	Shared ownership may be an option depending on size of deposit and income. 1 bed SO
2 adult siblings	>20 years	Starter homes for both. (2 homes)	Private rent	Ownership or affordable rent	Shared ownership may be an option depending on size of deposit and income. May want to consider a shared purchase initially to get started. 2 x 1 bed
1 adult 2 children	<5 years	Starter	Private rent	Shared ownership	No deposit and no income.

Total in household	Length of connection	Reason for need	Current tenure	Preferred tenure	Likely allocation
					2-3 bed affordable rent
2 adults 1 adult child	>20 years	Overcrowding	Sharing with extended family	Ownership	No deposit, insufficient income, should go on waiting list for affordable rent – 1 bed need , adult child will need to apply separately
2 adults + 2 opp sex children	> 20 years parents in village)	Nearer to family, overcrowding	Private rent	Affordable rent	Under current rules 2 beds is all they can expect until children are older, not considered to be overcrowded. Affordable rent
2 related adults	> 20 years	1 need to downsize & 1 need for starter home	Owned	Ownership & Private rent	Younger of these two is unlikely to afford private rent on current income. Should relative sell home, the younger will have difficulty with housing. 1 bed affordable rent
1 adult	> 20 years	Starter home	Living with parents	Ownership	Deposit but insufficient income to access mortgage. 1 bed SO
Couple	>20 years	Present home unaffordable	Private rent	Shared ownership	No deposit, insufficient information provide to assess affordability. 1 bed SO
2 adults + 2 adult children	> 5 years	Overcrowding	Social rent	Shared ownership	No deposit. Unlikely to get a bigger allocation with adult children, they will need to pursue independent solutions. Uncertain
1 adult	>5 years	Starter home	Living with parents	Ownership	Limited deposit/ limited income, shared ownership an option 1 bed SO
1 adult	>5 years	Starter home	Living with parents	Ownership	Has deposit, limited income – Shared ownership an option. 1 bed SO
1 adult	>20 years	Starter home	Living with parents	Ownership	Has deposit, limited income – Shared ownership an option. 1bed SO
1 adult	>20 years	Starter home	Ownership	Ownership	Has deposit, limited income – Shared ownership an option. 1 bed SO

Total in household	Length of connection	Reason for need	Current tenure	Preferred tenure	Likely allocation
Cells shaded in grey below represent details of need unrelated to affordability:					
1 adult	<5 years	Sheltered / extra-care (dementia)	Ownership	Ownership	Special needs
1 adult	>10 years	Need for sheltered	Ownership		Special needs
2 adults	>20 years	Need for sheltered	Ownership		Special needs
1 adult	>20 years	Need adaptations	Social	Social / affordable rent	Needs have now been met
2 adults	>10 years	Not given	Private rent	Social	Reason for need unclear. Limited contact details, not on waiting list. Against development. Assume no need.

Table 7: Need - Current & Preferred Tenures

*** In this case two siblings live with parent in housing association rented property. The tenancy belongs to the parent who is elderly and cared for by children. Uncertainty about the future of their tenancy. They did not complete Part 2 of the survey. Inclusion here is based on comments made.**

Three of the responses to Part 2 indicated that there is some requirement for specialist housing in Stratfield Mortimer to meet the needs of its aging population. This along with demand for ground floor accommodation in Part 1 should be considered in the wider housing requirements of the Stratfield Mortimer Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Only **5** of the above have indicated that they are registered on the West Berkshire District Council Common Housing Register. The West Berkshire Common Housing Register currently reflects **54** households with a local connection in need of homes in Stratfield Mortimer.

Anyone in housing need must register with the West Berkshire District Council Common Housing Needs Register (HomeChoice West Berkshire) whose staff can confirm eligibility criteria.

Allocations

There are strict rules applied when allocations of rented accommodation through a Registered Provider (Housing Association) are made, particularly with regards to eligibility and to the size of property allocated.

The size of any allocated property will be determined by the West Berkshire District Council Housing Options Team. The allocations criteria are based on a combination of factors, including the age and sex of any children in a household and are subject to availability.

Generally, property size is allocated for those meeting eligibility criteria. A separate bedroom is deemed to be needed for⁶:

⁶ West Berkshire District Council Housing Allocations Policy v. 2 17 October 2013

- Every adult couple (married or unmarried)
- Any other adult aged 16 or over
- Any two children of the same sex aged 16 or under
- Any two children aged under 10
- Any other child.

For those people eligible for Shared Ownership properties the criteria are slightly less rigid. For example, a couple may qualify for 2 bedrooms to account for potential future family growth.

Local Connection

Local connection for eligibility for a home on a rural exception site is currently defined within the housing policies of West Berkshire District Council.

Local Connection generally refers to those currently living in a village, working in a village or with family (parents and / or children) living in a village. Priority is given to those with a longer connection.

Should a tenant or part-owner move on, then subsequent tenants are expected to meet the same criteria. If there is no one from the local community that meets the criteria, eligibility cascades out to the neighbouring communities. Local connection takes precedence over priority need on a rural exception site.

Notes on Tenure and Allocations

Despite the high level of aspiration for ownership or shared ownership there is little evidence of sufficient savings or earnings to make that a possibility.

While the demand is often for a mixture of tenures, it can prove difficult to find eligible local people for shared ownership properties.

Affordable Rent - The advent of the Localism Act has introduced a new tenure called 'affordable rent', this tenure is expected to apply to all new build Housing Association rented properties as a condition of grant and will be charged at up to 80% of local private sector rents. No government subsidy will be provided for the development of new homes at rents lower than affordable rents. A proportion of existing housing stock may be transferred from social rent to affordable rent in the future.

West Berkshire District Council expects Registered Providers to keep affordable rents as low as possible. Due to high rent levels in the District, and low supply, preference is for Registered Providers to deliver affordable rents at 70% of Open Market Value (OMV) or below.

Social rented housing – is traditional rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and Registered Providers (Housing Associations), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. There is no longer grant available from the Homes and Communities Agency to develop properties for social rent, although some Housing Associations and Local Authorities will subsidise rents if absolutely necessary.

The impact of the new affordable rent regime in Berkshire is as yet unclear. It is assumed that for those people that are particularly vulnerable, Housing Benefit will make-up any shortfall from social to affordable rent. However the new regulations also include benefit caps that will affect the amount of Housing Benefit individuals can receive. Furthermore, restrictions have been placed on the property size criteria, and housing benefit will only be paid according to the size of property a family is eligible for, regardless of if it is a family home where grown children may have moved away.

Shared Ownership - provides opportunities for people who cannot afford open market housing to access the housing ladder and build a share in the equity on the property by purchasing a share of the equity and paying rent to the Housing Association on the outstanding equity. They can over time buy additional shares in their property to increase their equity. However on a rural exception site, residents can never purchase more than 80% of the equity in order to keep the property in the affordable sector for future residents. This option can still be unaffordable and even a 50% share can be too expensive for people on below-average incomes particularly given the costs of a mortgage and the additional rent burden.

As a general guideline, anyone earning less than £24,000 per annum is unlikely to be able to afford a basic entry level shared ownership property.

Conclusions and Recommendations

A housing need survey is only a snapshot in time of the affordable housing needs of a community. Each community is unique.

Stratfield Mortimer is faced with significant new development and many of the housing needs from within the community may be met through that development. However the only way to absolutely ensure that affordable homes are expressly for the use of local people is through the development of a rural exception site.

The survey indicates that there is certainly need for homes for local people in Stratfield Mortimer. Under normal circumstance, where no other development is projected, I would recommend the Parish Council consider a rural exception site of 12 units to meet the high level of local need.

The greatest need is for starter properties to provide for young singles and couples. Followed by 2 bedroom properties. There is very limited need for larger family homes.

Those that have expressed an interest in shared ownership may not at this time meet the financial requirements to obtain a mortgage.

Tenures would need to be reviewed in the future should such a development come forward. There is a considerable difference between the aspirations of the general community to provide more ownership opportunities for local people, and the actual demand for this type of tenure and ability to afford it from the local community. Shared ownership is a popular option in general, however on a rural exception site, where the

properties are tied to local people, it can be difficult to find local people that meet both financial eligibility and the local connection criteria. The shared ownership properties likely to be included in any 'affordable' element of a Section 106 agreement on any larger scale development may help to meet some of the local need. The Neighbourhood Development Plan may wish to consider ensuring that these types of homes are included on future developments, even if they cannot preserve them for local people.

It can take a number of years to identify an appropriate site for an exception scheme in that time the precise need may change.

With the introduction of Localism and Neighbourhood Planning it will be very important for the parish council to look very carefully at how these needs could be met with some form of mixed development in the future. This could include some exception site development, use of the *Community Right to Build*.

Any further action taken towards meeting these needs will require the support of the parish council and wider community consultation. The ongoing Neighbourhood Development Plan exercise should help the community to identify aspirations, needs and priorities for the future. Should Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council decide to take further action, the Rural Housing Enabler is available to help identify potential sites, conduct site appraisals and facilitate the process of identifying potential development partners.

APPENDIX 1

Provision for Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

National Planning Policy Framework⁷ - came into effect from 27th March 2012 defines the role of 'rural exception sites' for the provision of affordable housing in rural communities. Following is the relevant excerpt from the glossary of the document.

Rural exception sites: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

The Localism Act and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, in effect from 5th April 2012.

These set-out the provisions for the Community Right to Build and Neighbourhood Development Orders

West Berkshire Policy

The Adopted West Berkshire District Core Strategy 2006-2026 (Adopted July 2012) is in conformance with the National Planning Policy Framework above. Specific reference to exceptions sites is made in Section 4: Spatial Strategy:

***4.18** It is anticipated that part of the housing supply throughout the rural areas of the District will be affordable homes to meet local identified needs, which may come forward as rural exception sites rather than through site allocations.*

Policy HSG11 is a saved policy from the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006 and remains in force until adoption of the Site Allocations Delivery Development Plan Document currently under development.

3.11.4 Policy HSG.11 represents a major departure from the general aim of retaining housing development within settlements or on brownfield sites. This departure is justified because it enables housing associations to take further action to provide for the considerable levels of housing need that exist throughout West Berkshire.

3.11.5 The principle of rural exceptions is widely established in PPG3 and Structure Plan Policy H8 and applies across West Berkshire with the exception of Newbury, Thatcham and the western edge of Reading. In the rural areas schemes should be small scale, not normally exceeding 12 dwellings.

⁷ National Planning Policy Framework www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding this supersedes Planning Policy Statement 3 which previously set-out the role of exception sites for delivery of rural homes.

POLICY HSG.11 The Council, where justified as an exception to other policies of this Plan, will grant permission for small scale affordable housing schemes to meet identified local needs on sites adjacent to existing rural settlements provided;

- a) The need has been established by way of a recent local survey of housing need; and
- b) A scheme is prepared and agreed to reserve and control the occupancy of the dwelling for local needs; and
- c) The development does not adversely affect any landscape features that are important to the rural character of the area; and
- d) The development accords with Policy OVS.2
- e) Provision should be made for such schemes to be managed and occupied so that they remain affordable in perpetuity

For further information:

West Berkshire District Council Publication October 2008:

RURAL EXCEPTIONS SITE (Affordable Rural Local Needs Housing) Procedure, Information for the Council, Parish Councils, Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations) and Applicants

APPENDIX 2- Stratfield Mortimer Survey

23rd April 2015

Dear Resident

Housing Needs Survey in the Parish of Stratfield Mortimer

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council would like to find out whether there is a need for affordable housing in our community to help **local** people who are struggling to stay in the parish due to the high cost of housing. There may be people that need to be near close relatives to care for them or need the care of someone living in the parish. We are concerned that young people are finding it increasingly difficult to access homes of their own, and older people may not have homes to 'downsize' into. To find out the extent of the problem, a detailed survey has been organised to assess the level of demand and gauge the support that a small new housing scheme to meet *local* needs *might* have in our community. **The results of this survey will be studied alongside the results of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Questionnaire which you have also received.**

In planning the survey we have received support and guidance from Arlene Kersley, Rural Housing Enabler for Berkshire based at CCB (Community Council for Berkshire), a charity that works to support communities in Berkshire. For more information see the Rural Housing Project page at www.ccberks.org.uk

The survey results will provide useful information for both the Parish Council and the community generally. Depending on the results the council *may* try to find a suitable site or sites within the parish to meet local housing needs. If a need is identified, the parish council will engage in further consultation with parish residents before any decision to proceed with a rural exception development is taken.

This is an important issue for the community so please take the time to complete the attached survey.

Your views are important and your answers will be treated in strict confidence. You have also been delivered a Neighbourhood Development Plan Questionnaire – please complete both.

You can complete this survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VQVKTL6> between now and 22nd May 2015

If you complete this paper version please return just this form in the enclosed Freepost envelope by 22nd May 2015.

If you would like to know more or have questions about the survey, please contact **Arlene Kersley (at CCB on 0118 961 2000).**

Yours faithfully

**Councillor Mike Dennett
Chairman, Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council**

It is important to get the views on housing development from the whole community. Please help by completing PART 1 of this survey whether or not any members of your family are in need of affordable housing.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please use the pre-paid envelope to return this questionnaire to us by 22nd May 2015.

PART 1

1. Is this your main home? Yes, main home No, second home

If this is your second home do not complete the rest of the form but please do return it.

2. How long have you and your household lived in Stratfield Mortimer parish? _____ years

3. How would you describe your home? (please tick one box only)

House/Detached/semi/terrace Bungalow

Flat/maisonette/apartment/bed-sit Sheltered/retirement housing

Other (please explain)

4. Please complete the table below to show the age, gender, relationship and work/school location of all those living in this property at present.

	Age	Gender (M/F)	Relationship	Work/School Location
Person 1 (self)			Self	
Person 2				
Person 3				
Person 4				
Person 5				
Person 6				
Person 7				

5. Has anyone from your family (children, parents, brothers or sisters) moved away from the parish in the last 5 years, due to difficulties in finding a suitable home locally? Yes No

If you answered 'Yes' and the family member(s) wish to move back to parish, please ask them to contact the Rural Housing Enabler (contact details at the end of this form) for a copy of Part 2 of this survey form.

6. Does anyone in your household plan to move to a new home in the parish within the next 5 years? Yes No

6a. If yes, why?

7. Does anyone in your household require any of the following: (tick as many as required)

Ground floor accommodation <input type="checkbox"/>	Residential care/extra care <input type="checkbox"/>
Sheltered housing <input type="checkbox"/>	Other housing support services <input type="checkbox"/>
Adaptations to improve its physical accessibility because of disability <input type="checkbox"/>	

Please explain:

If you do have any special housing requirements and you need to remain within the parish then please complete Part 2 of this questionnaire which collects information on your housing needs. If there is the need for more than two households to move, then please request additional forms from your Rural Housing Enabler or Parish Council Clerk.

8. Would you be in favour of a small development of affordable housing to meet the needs of local people, if there was such a need? Yes No

9. Can you suggest any suitable site where such a scheme might be built?

10. Additional comments (Please feel free to add additional sheets if desired)

Thank you for taking the time to complete Part 1 of this questionnaire. The results of this survey will be available in the coming months and will help the parish to decide on its future plans.

Please be assured that this questionnaire is completely confidential and anonymous unless you supply your name and address at the end of this form so that the Rural Housing Enabler can follow up with you.

Local affordable housing can only be provided on land which is made available at a modest cost; therefore communities are dependent on the willingness of local landowners to consider making appropriate land available. The Rural Housing Enabler welcomes the opportunity to have discussions with landowners on any potential sites that relate well to existing settlements and do not constitute scattered development. Any eventual decisions on the appropriateness of a site for rural housing would be taken by the Local Authority in consultation with the local community.

**For more information contact the Rural Housing Enabler for Berkshire, Arlene Kersley at:
CCB**

Abbey House, 1650 Arlington Business Park, Theale, Reading. RG7 4SA

Tel: 0118 961 2000 Email: arlene.kersley@ccberks.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 1056367 Registered Company No: 3212736

PART 2 – for people in need of affordable housing

Please complete and return the rest of this form (Part 2) if you believe you are in need of an affordable home or have other housing needs in the Parish of Stratfield Mortimer. This should be completed only by people with a local connection to Stratfield Mortimer. A local connection is if you live in the Parish of Stratfield Mortimer and/or have parents or children living in Stratfield Mortimer and/or you work in Stratfield Mortimer or you grew up in Stratfield Mortimer and have a need to return to care for family.

Please complete a **separate form for each household in need of housing**. For instance, if a whole family will move together complete one form, or if mature children are in need of independent accommodation, complete one form for each person needing accommodation. Extra forms are available from the Rural Housing Enabler at CCB on 0118 961 2000 or by email at arlene.kersley@ccberks.org.uk.

YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE TREATED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE

Students in full time education: The survey cannot take into account the future housing need of students in full time education where it would be difficult to determine if they will return to, or remain in the locality.

1. **Please indicate age, gender, occupation and relationship to yourself of each person in need of affordable housing in a single household** (individual households should complete separate forms)

	Age	Gender (M/F)	Relationship	Work/School Location
Person 1 (self)			Self	
Person 2				
Person 3				
Person 4				
Person 5				
Person 6				
Person 7				

2. **Do you currently live in the Parish of Stratfield Mortimer?** Yes No

3. **If you do not currently live in Stratfield Mortimer, what is your connection to the Parish of Stratfield Mortimer?** (for each answer ticked, please specify when, where and how long)

Used to live in the parish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Parent or child lives in parish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Work in the parish full-time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Work in the parish part-time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>
Voluntary work in the parish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>

4. **Are you on the West Berkshire HomeChoice housing register (waiting list)?** Yes No

If you have ticked no, and you need an affordable home, you must register to be eligible at: <https://www.homechoicewb.org.uk/registration.aspx>

5. **How many bedrooms does your current home have?**

6. What is your main reason for needing a new home? (please tick one box only).

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Need a smaller home | <input type="checkbox"/> | Overcrowding, need for larger home | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Independent/starter home | <input type="checkbox"/> | Need a physically adapted home | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Current home unaffordable | <input type="checkbox"/> | Need to be nearer to local employment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Need to be nearer family to provide/receive care or support | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lack of security in current home (may include harassment) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Poor condition of current home (i.e. damp or lack of central heating) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Need change of tenure | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Family breakdown | <input type="checkbox"/> | Loss of housing due to retirement | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Need ground floor accommodation | <input type="checkbox"/> | Sheltered or extra care housing | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please explain) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> | |

7. What is the tenure of your current home?

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Owned (either with or without mortgage) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Provided with work (tied) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rented from Council or Housing Association | <input type="checkbox"/> | Part-buy/part-rent (shared ownership) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rented from private landlord | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> | |

8. What tenure would you prefer?

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Owned (either with or without mortgage) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Provided with work (tied) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rented from Council or Housing Association | <input type="checkbox"/> | Part-buy/part-rent (shared ownership) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Rented from private landlord | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="text"/> | |

9. Do you have savings for a deposit to purchase or part-purchase your own home?

Yes No If yes how much? _____

10. Are you employed? Yes No

11. Are you in receipt of any benefits? Yes No
(Not including Child Benefit)

12. Please indicate the total take-home (i.e. after deductions) income including benefits, of everyone responsible for the cost of housing (rent or mortgage) in your household
(Please tick one box only)

Weekly Income	or		Monthly Income	
Less than £95		<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than £420	<input type="checkbox"/>
£95 - £192.99		<input type="checkbox"/>	£420 - £834.99	<input type="checkbox"/>
£193 - £288.99		<input type="checkbox"/>	£835 - £1,249.99	<input type="checkbox"/>
£289 - £384.99		<input type="checkbox"/>	£1,250 - £1,665.99	<input type="checkbox"/>
£385 - £576.99		<input type="checkbox"/>	£1,666 - £2,499.99	<input type="checkbox"/>
£577 - £769.99		<input type="checkbox"/>	£2,500 - £3,299.99	<input type="checkbox"/>
£770 +		<input type="checkbox"/>	£3,300 +	<input type="checkbox"/>

If this survey shows there is a need for affordable housing for local people, we may need to get back in contact with you as we work with the Local Authority Housing Associations to deliver the homes needed. Therefore, it would be helpful to us if you include your name and address below:

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. The results of this survey will be available in the coming months and will help the parish council to decide on its future plans.

For further information contact the Rural Housing Enabler at CCB on 0118 961 2000 or visit the Rural Housing page under Projects at www.ccberks.org.uk

RETURN THIS FORM BY 22nd MAY 2015 TO CCB IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED OR SEND TO THE ADDRESS BELOW:

CCB
Abbey House
1650 Arlington Business Park
Theale
Reading
RG7 4SA

Registered Charity No: 1056367 Company Limited by Guarantee In England No: 3212736

APPENDIX 3 – SITE SUGGESTIONS

Site suggestions:
Near schools and surgery.
Should form part of any larger development not be 'isolated' or separated.
At a site near the woods at the top of the village
Near Strawberry Fields.
Centre of the village
Stephens Firs
The fruit farm development was to serve this purpose.
Kings Street.
Kiln Lane
All the sites should provide a small percentage each.
As outcome from Mortimer NDP.
Mixed with other proposed new housing.
Close to the centre of the village and amenities.
Opposite football pitch.
Try to find a non-rural site, centre of the village.
Integrated into site 7 in the NDP.
Any of the numbered sites in the Mortimer NDP, but especially No 2
Behind St John's School
Replace older properties with large gardens, e.g. The Red House, Tower House.
Site 5 as per The Neighborhood Development Plan, on the edge of the village
There are fields by the park home/pub en route to Tadley which could potentially cope with the loss of a small plot of land
No - but prefer infilling existing sites to using greenfield
King Street site
Around Brewery Common or Turks Lane
Behind St John's School
Behind St John's school.
Strawberry Fields extended possible or behind St John's. End of Kings Street, build some flats.
Within option 7 of the NDP
Behind St John's School Mortimer.
Sites identified seem the obvious choices.
Part of any planned development described by the NDP
plot 7 on map
Within the sites indicated in the Mortimer NDP.
Site 7 a Field behind St John's School.
The least unpopular of sites 1-3 and 5-6, of the Mortimer NDP. Site 2 of the NDP looking to be the most viable.
Site 6 which is adjacent to site 7 which will have doctor's surgery and school.
Best site would be at the East end of Mortimer, next to the station, as it would allow for easier access to the station and school, which would help reduce the amount of traffic through the village at peak times.
Behind St John's School
Yes - the site behind St Johns School as part of mixed housing development and there should be a much greater number instead of all the 'exclusive' houses being currently built
Refer to Local Development Plan.
Mixed with other new houses.
Somewhere within the village boundaries.
Behind the Horse & Groom
Near to the village centre.
Behind St John's

Land west of Kiln Lane, NDP areas 5,4,1,2,3
Site 2.
Fields behind St Johns school
As previously identified, West End Rd. opposite Palmer Memorial Field land to rear of College Piece (ask Englefield!)
Maybe some infill but I think they should be mixed in with other housing, i.e. not a ghetto!
Part of site 7 or site 2.
Section 7 in the map of the village
Within other new development.
North of Mortimer Hill or South of Football Ground
S106 affordable housing on proposed development site.
Behind Horse & Groom Public House or other central village site.
In fills
Cinnamon Tree
Behind St John's School.
Site 7 on Plan
Opposite Turners Arms.
King St
To the south of Mortimer Common - along with all other developments or Benyon Land
None specifically but near the village centre.
To rear of St Mary's School
Behind Strawberry fields (area 3 or 5 on the map AK note sorry cannot quite make out handwriting.)
1,3,5,6 sites
Scotland
All the sites were identified in the NDP
Perhaps around the Kiln lane area?
South of the Horse & Groom Pub
Within plot 7 of the main plan.
Only within the NDP sites.
Part of the field behind St John's School, or on site / field opposite The Turners Pub
South side of village
Windmill Road
Infill to College Piece & Stephens Firs
Station area, road to West End, Tesco Rd.
The field opposite Mortimer Football Club
Sites 1,3,6 on the enclosed plan
Kings Street.
On surgery site if it is relocated, and King Street site.
Behind the Horse & Groom
Behind St John's School
Down by St Mary's Church
The available site at the north end of King Street.
Opposite the Turners Arms Pub
Behind Horse & Groom
Burghfield
Within site 7 of the NDP
Site (2) on the Village Plan
Firlands although not sure if it qualifies.
Land opposite Mortimer Football Club near West End Rd.
The site of St John's school
This need could be met as part of a larger development - possibly at the rear of St Johns School or at the rear of Strawberry Fields
Site 2 on the Parish map. At bottom of King Street would be near amenities.

In the area between the Horse & Groom and the railway station
6 or 5 on Plan
Within site 7.
Mor 08
Behind St John's School.
Field opposite "Turner's Arms", bottom of Stanmore Gardens
The large field behind St Mary's Church.
Site 7
Area behind St John's School
Areas 1 and 3 on map
King Street
I approve of the current plan to build houses behind St John's School in King Street.
Behind Horse and Groom
Kiln Lane - as half way between the schools and walkable to train station.
In field behind Horse & Groom PH
Dury Lane or by the railway station
Opposite Turner's Arms
In the field opposite the Recreation field
Between the Train Station and St Mary's Church.
4
Behind St. John's School
The Street by Kiln Lane
Add on to Strawberry Fields
Site 7 as recommended by Mortimer NDP, provided adequate supporting infrastructure was funded and implemented.
Part of development behind Horse & Groom
Behind Strawberry Fields
On the land opposite the Turner's Arms Pub
The small field opposite the football field.
Contained within development site 7
Between College Piece and Groves Lea
Between St Mary's Road and the Avenue.
Opposite Turners Arms PH
Opposite Turners Arms, towards roundabout
As part of the development required by WBC, Area 7 on the NDP.
On the sites identified in the NDP
Centre of the village.
Within the two existing proposed sites!
On a bus route e.g. site 5
Near the station?
Mortimer Hill
only those highlighted in the NDP
Brown field or derelict areas only.
King St - currently a small motor trades business and yard and scruffy retail premises in the middle of residential area - suitable for say, 10 flats. Owner looking to redevelop.
Opposite the Turners Arms
Behind college piece
Land at bottom of hill, in close proximity to station and St Mary's School
SITE 3
Behind Strawberry Fields or behind St Johns School so central

APPENDIX 4 - COMMENTS

Below are the additional comments respondents made. Any names and personal information have been removed by the RHE to preserve confidentiality.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:
Nobody has a 'right' to live anywhere. Affordable housing is in Burghfield, Tadley & Reading. I'd like to be able to live somewhere expensive but I don't have a right to do so.
I feel this is an important issue and that people who grow up in the village should be helped in staying, and not driven out by not being able to afford to stay. It helps keep the village what it is.
If more houses are built though, we would need to consider school places as this year was a little stretched.
Local people only
Provided additional school parking / wider roads could be provided to support the additional people, I would support a new development.
We need more Council /Housing Association houses for people on low incomes
Keep developing Mortimer along with facilities to support village life.
We've had infill building - Keith Lock Gardens, by the fire station and others! Our services GP, schools, dentist full to capacity we don't have the infrastructure. My family of 40+ years in Mortimer - we plan to leave in the next 5 years as it's no longer a village.
Local infrastructure such as school places, GP appointment availability)already stretched!!) refuse collection, increase traffic must be considered.
Site No. 3 is very close to the village and should be looked at more closely. Site No. 5 has good access, the main road offers direct entry. Site No 7 is too big, only 50% should be used, otherwise it would be too far for people with disabilities to walk to the village!?
If affordable housing is to be maintained and recycled for other users the tenure must be foreseen & planned i.e.: Rented from a Council / Housing Association Private rented in a sufficiently desirable location to justify investment The continental system of inherited mortgages, where appropriate, would provide more flexibility, but assumes continuity which is less usual in the UK - Good idea though!
Mortimer is a wonderful village - there are no others left due to building jamming of areas by far too many houses. Keep all affordable homes in towns. I don't want the village destroyed.
I am not in favour of affordable housing, as local people seem to be overlooked, for whatever reason and people/families who have not contributed to the local economy seem to be favoured.
Affordable housing - keep it within a large development.
Affordable homes for village people. Not like affordable housing in Strawberry Fields they put people in there from Slough!
I am from this community, as is my mother, I would like to feel that my child can grow-up in this community. Community/Village cares and is more personal - think development should be small and scattered on existing brown belt lands.
The schools, medical facilities & infrastructure are already working to their full capacity. It is difficult to imagine how any large development would enhance the village. We've already lost the asset of the fruit farm & with increased urban facilities - e.g. street lighting - Mortimer is fast becoming a suburb of Reading losing its individuality.
In connection with affordable housing on further developments please ensure responsible housing associations are appointed who will help ensure their tenants do not cause a nuisance to other residents and promptly deal with reasonable complaints including those from private householders. Provision of approved contractors to help elderly residents with gardening, decorating, and small household repairs.
I am not against affordable housing but it should only be available to younger people who have been educated in Mortimer (primary school) and have family living in Mortimer. Also the affordable housing stock should be built to a quality standard, and not "second rate" building quality,
I think it would be better for affordable housing to be mixed in with other new development rather than hived off in a separate enclave - more socially inclusive.
Several small developments are preferable to 1 large one. In a small development there is more likelihood that there will be a sense of community.

Please ensure new buildings have more than statutory minimum insulation, & have their own energy generation schemes such as PV solar hot water & wind if feasible.
I think it is sensible to build a handful of affordable homes to cater for people with specific requirements. I do not believe a mass development will be of any benefit to the beauty of the local area and those people, including myself, who have saved hard to be a first time buyer in Mortimer.
Please try and avoid increasing reliance on any resident-maintained roads as these are already in disrepair
I cannot support this as I am very concerned about the strain on local resources - e.g. Doctors, infant and junior schools. Without the necessary assurances I cannot support additional housing.
Q8 Yes, but a small development that is managed to ensure the future of the village continues. I would like to stipulate that it goes to nurses, doctors, firemen - who are upstanding members of the community and deserve the opportunity of buying affordable homes.
My oldest child would love to move out in the next few years - but wouldn't be able to afford it around here.
My daughter would dearly love to stay in Mortimer, however feels unable to afford the current pricing. There is also popularity of building 4 bedroom homes and a distinct lack of 2 bedroom houses which would benefit my daughter / and myself.
Having moved to the village 11 years ago there have been a number of developments and "infill" in the village including the very large development at Strawberry Fields. The NDP state that West BC want a further 110 new houses built within 11 years. New development will contain up to 40% affordable homes so I would support affordable development within the 110 new homes build BUT NOT a separate small development in isolation. There is also concern that the continued development is putting strain on the village infrastructure and changing the village ethos in a detrimental manner.
If a development goes ahead, the schools must be expanded to accommodate the extra demand, otherwise it will be negative on existing residents. This also applies to the doctor's surgery. There is currently too few parking places at the railway station, this too will need addressing.
I am not in favour of large developments as I think we are in danger of turning our lovely village into a town. If I wanted to live in a town I would have. Village life in Mortimer must be maintained
If I had the choice I would (not want) more homes but realise this is probably not an option. My main concern is that Mortimer remains a rural village with the beauty of its green areas protected. The Fairground, Alfred Palmer Park, and Stephen's Firs should always be protected green areas.
I am not unhappy that large single house sites within the village are redeveloped, but I think that it is incredibly unfair on the young people of the village that a single large house be replaced with (say) 3 large houses. The balance should be changed, the single large house being replaced (say) along with 2 or 3 smaller houses to give youngsters a chance to stay here if they want to.
My children aged (mid-thirties) both young professionals would like to live in Mortimer and raise their children here but there are no suitable houses they can afford.
I feel it is important to maintain the village's character by not having additional street lights installed on any new, or existing, development. One of the appeals of living in a place like Mortimer is that it is a rural area and it should be kept that way to maintain the appeal to the current demographic.
Need to keep Mortimer as a village with no more large estates but if additional houses needed they should be infill or several small developments.
Suggest Local Authority buy back council houses that have been sold. New development could then be private housing at market prices.
I don't believe the infrastructure can support additional housing in the local area.
I think schemes such as ours at Strawberry Fields are perfect. We are a mixed development of privately owned and social housing. I think there is sometimes a view that those in affordable housing must somehow not have quite the same aspirational/community minded/work ethic as those not needing this kind of help. This is patently not the case. Affordable Housing should not be on its own. It should be a large part of any new housing being developed in the village and it should enable those with strong links to the village to continue to live and work here. (I would like to add that my husband and I are self-employed. We therefore work from home as well as travelling elsewhere - not an option offered in the survey.)
Should ideally be near Mortimer train station, as our younger people often reliant on public transport because of prohibitive costs of motoring.

What is a "small" development? The Doctor's surgery and school already struggle to deal with capacity in the village. The roads are far too busy and most people break the speed limit. Most landowners will be wanting to make maximum profit along with the developer so personally I don't think 'affordable' housing will ever happen.
Q8 Yes ONLY IF <10 homes.
By building there (Behind Horse & Groom) it would not be such a change in the village feel. The benefit of a new surgery would relieve traffic congestion on Victoria Rd.
A brownfield site should be the preferred location.
We as a family feel that there should be more Housing Association / Council properties to rent.
I should like to emphasise (re: Q8) "small" development. I have great concerns over the proposed 110 houses required to be built in Mortimer. We are a 'village' with the infrastructure of a village. I have heard mention of a new school and Doctors Surgery, however the plans do not extend to road and station use. The roads are not maintained to cope with the usage as it is now.
I believe affordable housing should be interspersed with other housing.
Affordable housing should be for house owners not scroungers.
Our infrastructure (schools, doctor, etc.) already at capacity as are our local roads. Car parking already a huge issue in village especially at doctors.
It would be very convenient if we could have a nearer bus stop to our house.
There is a large empty area north of Welshmans Rd which has been empty since at least 2006.
I believe there is sufficient affordable housing in the village already.
I would support a small development if required and a suitable location identified however I am very reluctant to see any large changes to the size of our village as I do not want to see it lose the unique village feel it currently has and watch it blur into a large town as I have seen with other villages in the area over the years.
The reason we came to Mortimer was because it was a small village - it just keeps getting bigger
Would like to see Mortimer stay a village, no more shops, takeaways or businesses, they belong in towns.
Key workers are a vital qualifier for affordable housing.
I do not believe that Mortimer can support more housing of any kind. Schools, Doctors, Roads are all at capacity. We are at risk of making Mortimer too large to be a village community.
I feel there is plenty of affordable housing (by ratio) in Mortimer already i.e.: College Piece Stephens Firs The Bevers etc.
There are enough properties for first time buyers already - Stevens Firs, Campbells Green & Grovers Lea. Personally I like to keep the rural feel and community as it is.
I grew up in Mortimer until aged 18. It used to have a village feel to it then, it was much smaller. Now with all the additional housing, the traffic is terrible due to the increase of houses with cars. Areas I remember as green fields have now been built upon with ugly / modern houses, Mortimer is already full!
We do not wish to move from our home which we have been in since 1974. My daughter and young family live in the village. (As we get older) we may need their help eventually, or of course, illness etc. may force us to downsize.
Thank you for this initiative and questionnaire for the benefit of the parish.
I have wondered about where to put homes in Mortimer and can't think of any area unless farmland.
I think all developments of affordable housing should be small so that they are incorporated into village life and do not become an estate. 10 houses max. less preferable. Large developments of affordable housing create social problems of their own.
I think it's wrong that people outside the village get social housing as my family has had to move.
Building on (site) 7 would be awful
I have worked hard to get to where I am & moved to Mortimer as I wanted to stay with my roots in a rural village. Mortimer has changed with too many "developments" the schools are full, the doctors are full. The village cannot take anymore.
Owner occupiers for affordable housing - no subletting.
We have affordable housing in the village but it has been taken up by people outside the village.
Affordable housing- in my opinion, shared equity allows residents more certainty and also more responsibility to maintain their property & the community. Shared equity schemes for local young people have been very successful for example in Aldermaston village in the 1990's.

Please do not build large housing developments where the houses look the same i.e. Strawberry Fields - not in keeping with the local area. Also too many detached houses being built on small land therefore leaving no garden space.
Although Q 7 doesn't apply to us at the moment, at our ages we do not know when these items might be needed.
Affordable housing should be within the envelope of the village and, if possible, on a brown field site such as the old telephone exchange.
If you compare the density of Strawberry Fields with the 1060's-70's housing in the village these are much less - with large grassed or leftover spaces that have a high maintenance costs. These could be considered as 'brown field sites' within the present settlement boundary.
I am not in favour as WBC won't guarantee it will be for Mortimer Residents only. (AK Note: Untrue - on a rural exception site WBC's policies are quite explicit and reserve properties for people with a local connection.)
Affordable housing' - what does that mean? A hefty subsidy on new houses by local authority/taxpayer/other, which enables the first occupier to sell at a huge profit 2-3 years later? I'm in favour of affordable housing within our village for the children of those of us who live here, but only if the housing inflation-adjusted subsidy is paid back or transferable to the new owner. Else it's just fueling house price inflation.
I am quite happy with my present home but because of my age and a recent serious illness I can foresee a time when I will find the stairs difficult and I am quite a distance from the village centre. There is only Badger Croft and Heathfield to cover such needs. I also feel there should be more affordable or shared equity housing for young people, otherwise Mortimer will be almost solely populated with elderly people.
SMALL development
Quality of the design and construction of any new development must be high.
We have two sons, both of whom have moved out of Mortimer in the last 2 years. One has bought a flat in Southampton and the other has bought a house in Tadley. I see areas like Tadley as the local area where young people can buy and Mortimer as an area to aspire to. If Mortimer loses its aspirational status, the nature of the village will change because those living in it will not value it in the same way as current residents.
This village needs younger people, they cannot afford to move here.
The jump from a 3 to a 4 bedroom home in the village is huge and very difficult. More affordable 4 bed houses required for those already living in the village.
Should be attractive housing in keeping with the existing design of Victorian housing in the area.
We have already installed disabled bath and stairlift in anticipation and hope that we stay where we are as long as possible.
Brownfield sites. Benyon estate
We feel any further developments will spoil the feel of the village we are. New developments tend to bring with them increased demands on the local infrastructure which is not up to the job as it is.
St. John's and St. Mary's Schools should be merged and relocated to a new site to the rear of the existing location for St. John's School there is a need for bungalow accommodation to enable elderly residence who have loved and contributed to the life of the Mortimer Community for many years to downsize and still stay in the village. Such accommodation needs to be central and within walking distance of shops and facilities. There should be strong and enforced covenants on the properties to prevent them being developed into larger family house and sold off. It might be possible to limit residential occupancy to two people per household. The modern equivalent of alms houses for elderly long term village residents might be a possibility.
They should be strictly for people whose family is from Mortimer parish and not as a Reading overflow development for example. Affordability is only realistically achieved by rented accommodation owned by a housing association otherwise they just get sold on at a profit and cease to be 'affordable' for future Mortimer residents.
I don't think 4-12 homes will meet demands.
The area between the Green and the Burghfield end of the village there is a large concentration of horses, whereas there are much fewer on the other end of the village. Extra accommodation close to the railway station would balance this out and would enable people with lower income, have employment in surrounding areas easily accessible by train.
I am unable to move from the house that I am in at present because I would be unable to get a mortgage in my own name and there is nowhere I can rent for a reasonable monthly amount in the area.

It would be good if we could keep Mortimer's village/rural atmosphere and community spirit!
The development MUST be small and provision must be made to increase the capacity of the local schools and Drs surgeries. Road access and parking must be considered to avoid problems such as that caused by the parking for the Railway and St Mary's School on the street e.g. congestion and hazard for drivers passing.
FOR LOCAL PEOPLE
Affordable housing for local people only.
Yes - I know of a young married - local couple who, although having a reasonable deposit, cannot afford to buy in Mortimer.
What is meant by 'local people'? If it means people from Reading not used to the ways of village life then I think there could well be integration problems on both sides.
Would be level access for wheelchair users.
Use large development affordable homes for locals.
There are too few affordable homes in Mortimer. A scheme that offers affordable housing to local residents would allow many people who want to stay in the village to have a life here. Nearly all properties are for those in a higher income bracket who do not have any true connection with the village and use it as a "dormitory village"
Ideal location for any future development (Horse & Groom)
Back of Horse & Groom Pub
My parent is the tenant and me and my sibling cannot find out what will happen when she dies as to whether we will be able to remain in the house we rent from Sovereign Housing Association. (AK note: No contact details given so unable to make enquiries)
Chose to live in Mortimer as it is a rural location and we do not want to see it expanded with more housing estates. Additional pressure on school places (both primary and secondary) caused by additional housing is a major concern for us.
I understand that at least 40% of the 110 houses to be built in Mortimer by 2026 will be designated for local people or people who are working in the village. I believe this should meet the requirement and if not, the portion can be increased beyond 40%. (RHE Note: This is not an accurate position. They may be 'affordable' but they won't be for local people, they will meet the statutory affordable needs of West Berkshire District Council. 40% is also unrealistic, despite policy, developers can now make viability cases that mean they provide far less than the % of affordable required in local policies.)
Any further social housing will spoil the village & surrounding area. People work hard to get a nice house in areas such as Mortimer - so should people who get social housing. We all had to. Residents in social housing ALWAYS ruin everything as they do not live to the same standard. If it needs to be built, build it in town or somewhere where their (sic) are other similar residents. Integration does NOT work.
Parking for Station use!! Parking for St Mary's School!!
Rather than trying to fit more homes in we should not be allowing developers to gain planning permission to build luxury expensive housing throughout the parish, thus out pricing locals.
I think affordable housing should be through English Rural on a shared ownership basis, like in Woodside Close Mortimer. I have benefitted from this scheme as they do not charge an extortionate rent like others. It is hard enough getting a mortgage without having to pay a rent at the same amount as the mortgage. Also English Rural ensure the properties stay with people with a strong Mortimer connection.
I feel if smaller properties were available people like myself - living alone would think about down-sizing; without moving from the village.
Mortimer lovely village to live in - any further housing - over populate and then would not be a village. Maybe doctor surgery needs to extend & better parking at surgery.
We would benefit from part-exchange opportunities to enable us to move up in property size.
Mortimer is becoming over-stretched. Schools, Doctor's surgery, and the infrastructure cannot cope with more housing developments.
There is plenty of choice IF the appropriate infrastructure is put in place.
My preference would be to keep Mortimer as a village not a small town. Therefore cap population @ current level.
Already overdeveloped - overcrowded - services being stretched. No need for additional housing of any type in Mortimer.

Stop building executive 4/5 bedroom housing and start building appropriate housing for the needs of local people.
We could do with both executive homes and social/affordable housing, but please not like Strawberry Fields.
I feel that Mortimer has grown very much recently and I am not in favour of further development which would alter the nature of the village. Small in-filling of one or two houses is perhaps necessary, but larger developments would alter the village. I do realise of course that affordable housing is needed but I feel there is insufficient room in the village for more to be built.
We have lived on a private estate with 25% affordable housing before. It does not work!
In future we would like to stay in Mortimer but can see there is a lack of suitable housing, i.e. bungalows.
Family moved because they have always lived in Mortimer, but left last year 2014 because there is nowhere to rent or low cost houses or flats to buy. My health is poor, they would like to live nearby.
A separate exclusive development of affordable housing is not desirable. A proportion of affordable housing should be included in any development. i.e. in the 110 dwellings proposed by WBC.
Affordable housing has been built in the village. However we seem to have little say in who lives in it. Unless an independent village trust is set-up to manage any housing developments the same will happen again.
I am against too much infill which changes use of land and keep the village diverse... e.g. semi industrial to residential
I would not want houses built on any green part of the village or farmland.
I believe affordable homes with equity shares existed on Strawberry Fields and then they were sold on fully once the initial owner moved on - so the equity share now seems pointless
The proposal for 4-12 affordable homes seems very small in a proposed development of 110 new houses in the village. Would there be an assurance that there would be at least 12 and that they would remain as social housing for those in need of local accommodation?
I think development should be in tight proximity to current buildings not to create a sprawl.

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