

**Question 6 – Comments on questions 3 – 5 particularly if disagreed/strongly disagreed with anything.**

**Housing Mix**

Twenty one comments were received. The need for affordable ‘starter’ and ‘downsizer’ homes are common threads.

Comment
<p>In order to maintain the character of the village it is not possible to accommodate the range of houses on the list. Mortimer has over the last 20 years attracted wealthy families. It also has a large retirement population. Due to the fact that Mortimer is rural the car will always be the most popular form of transport. Development of a commercial &amp; retail centre with ample parking would be of benefit to the village but the developers should develop this as part of there planning application for 110 homes.</p>
<p>To maintain the character of the village it is not possible to have a range of housing. Like it or not Mortimer's demographic is wealthy families and older residents. Development should cater for these groups. Relocation of schools and health services to the centre will only promote congestion. Any development of the village centre should focus on commercial, shopping etc. Better parking and accommodation of private vehicle transportation should feature in development plans. Rather than isolate drivers it must be realised that car transportation in rural areas will dominate</p>
<p>I do not see how you can make it possible for people to live their whole lives in the village if they so wish and also I'm not sure that this is desirable. A vibrant village has residents coming to live in it from everywhere with all views and ideas otherwise it doesn't develop. Many existing residents originally came from London suburbs. I don't think there is a problem with ribbon style developments.</p>
<p>I don't necessarily agree with a range of homes should be required in the village. Most starters generally live /buy houses in the larger towns and move out to the villages as they increase their income and want to have families. In a way this ensures a population of homeowners which takes pride in their home and village and are more likely to positively contribute towards village life.</p>
<p>Speaking as an older couple, there is very little suitable property for downsizing but still maintaining a detached house - eg. 2/3 bed detached. This means we will have to leave Mortimer on retirement , unless we can find something suitable.</p>
<p>There is very little suitable property for downsizing eg. 2/3 bed detached close to village centre</p>
<p>St Mary's parking need to be safer and there is nothing affordable housing for young adults to live they have to move away</p>
<p>The proposed developments will overcrowd the village even with new proposed school and doctors surgery. Why spoil a lovely place to live. Will there be plenty of homes for young people who already live into the village but won't be able to afford them!</p>
<p>I feel proposed developments will ruin the life and substance of the village especially as the most of the homes will be executive homes which will not offer opportunities for young buyers to stay in their village</p>

Mortimer does not need this extra housing. It is a desirable village because of its amenities, but the people who wish to move here, would have no intention of buying in the middle of a large housing estate - and certainly current owners wishing to downsize, similarly would not.

1. I believe St Mary's school should stay central to the village and the car park facing the Horse and Groom pub, extended, in order to allow more parking for everyone in the village / centre. 2 - I feel strongly that the (110 site 7) be considered, in order to reduce rush hour traffic flow, from the proposed sites directly filtering into the village. 3 - x 2 of my own adult children have had to leave the village to find accommodation elsewhere, so single person accommodation to residents living in the village - should (as suggested) be made available.

Mortimer is a self contained village (increasingly rare these days) which will be spoiled by further development. My husband and I refute the need for further housing in Mortimer. Mortimer must not become another version of Tilehurst. Instead of building in Mortimer, further building expansion should be made on brown field sites in Reading, where there are already suitable locations and the infrastructure. This should be done before any green field sites in Mortimer are used by irresponsible developers for easy profit. Our green spaces are precious and we need to preserve them at all costs. Any "affordable" housing in Mortimer will inevitably end up as "un-affordable" housing due to schemes like the "right to buy". Houses in Mortimer are already too expensive and further development will make them more expensive. A house should be a home – not an investment.

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I propose a proportion of dedicated housing / services for the elderly near to the centre of the village to create exemplary facilities for older residents.

West Berkshire should be pressured into giving priority to the immediate merger of St Mary's and St John's Schools on to a new site behind St. John's School, Well away from 'The Street' the new enlarged doctors surgery should be located there as well. The old site of St Mary's school should be given over entirely to the development of family houses of which at least one third should be affordable housing. The land should become part of a land swap agreement with land owners and developer to achieve this result. The only housing on the central site should be bungalow for elderly long term residents of Mortimer who are downsizing and need to be within walking distance of amenities as they get older.

The schools can not accommodate any more children. Schools must be addressed before any housing plans. We have paid over the top prices to live in a village location, and people say build more houses so our kids can live here, sadly they can't afford to on a starters wage so maybe more renting or rentals buy houses would be a good way to go. It always makes me cross when I see people in housing association houses being placed in the village who don't work, when there are hardworking people who can't afford to buy in the village a 3 bed house... So maybe some 3 bed affordable homes for those that work would be best as well...coming in around the 250,000 to 275,000 price range.

The basic principle of allowing everyone born in the parish to live in the parish is a

mathematical, and logical, impossibility. The parish should decide on a number of residences, in total and type, and then build towards these goals over time.

Ref qu 3. It's wrong to assume everyone who is on their own or old or children moved out will want to downsize. Many or most people I know want to stay in their family home. Although good to have some reasonable priced housing I would not want a situation where affordable - cheap housing is placed altogether and the area to become a 'trouble' spot - already in other areas of the village where cheap houses are there is more social problems.

Moved in when I was 2 and more than anything i wish to live here in Mortimer till it is my time to exit the world of the living and for me that would mean more places for low income people to afford housing in the village with priority to those who live here already but are looking to move out from parents or are having parents close to end to be blunt!

St Marys junior school does not need to be relocated it just needs a large car park. the village needs affordable housing/ starter homes 2-3 bed houses not 5bed houses

The problem is, that Mortimer is being marketed as a "commuter" village. Now the only houses being built are 3-4 bed "executive" "luxury" houses, not aimed at local people, but incomers. They are aimed at people who want a country postcode, with all the amenities of a town. This is resulting in an over populated village, with the loss of village character and rural charm. The estate built at Strawberry Fields (on top of a lovely fruit farm which was a favourite place in my childhood) has created an enclave, of expensive suburban homes, not village properties. These houses are being constructed at the expense of green fields, gardens and the rural character of the village. Most front gardens are now being gravelled for cars (more villageness lost) and the village is being blighted by cars, parking and noisy neighbours blaring music out of garden offices. You want to encourage more footfall into village shops? Where are these customers going to park? The Café is a case in point: they recently underwent an enlargement and refurbishment of their seating area, and are now open 7 days a week. nearby residents now get no peace from customers making noise, dropping litter and double parking and causing obstructions. The owners of the café are unwilling to do anything about it. This property is NOT SUITABLE for this type of establishment. It was meant to be an office or a pop in and exit type shop. You want to encourage more people to work from home, with garden offices etc? This does not take into account the noise during the day that this creates. I work from home, as does my neighbour, yet he continually blares music out into the garden, with no respect for anyone else. As someone in their early 30's, who has grown up in the village, been to both St Johns, St Marys, and Willink, in my opinion this place has been ruined by the constant want to encourage commuters to move to this area. It appears as a resident, that you want to improve the village for those MOVING here, rather than the people who already live here, and have lived here for a long time.