

Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan

01 ABOUT THIS EXHIBITION

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Earlier this year, Staplehurst Parish Council completed the first full draft of its Neighbourhood Plan. The Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation period on this draft plan was for six weeks, between 4th June 2014 and 17th July 2014.

This poster exhibition provides the local community with an update on the range of comments received during the consultation period and the level of support and objection each policy in the draft Neighbourhood Plan received.

In brief, there was a majority support for all bar one of the policies contained in the Regulation 14 Draft Neighbourhood Plan. See Poster 03 for details.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Parish Council has produced a draft Consultation Statement listing all the views and opinions received and setting out how the plan is to be amended, if appropriate, as a result. The Consultation Statement is still in draft as the Parish Council continues to consider all the comments received.

The Parish Council is currently in discussion with Maidstone Borough Council about whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the plan is required. It is also seeking an agreement from Maidstone Borough Council on how the draft Neighbourhood Plan conforms with emerging and adopted Local Plan policies, particularly with regard to the proposed housing numbers.

Once the Neighbourhood Plan is revised, it will be submitted to Maidstone Borough Council, together with the final Consultation Statement, a statement that the plan meets the basic conditions as set out by the regulations and an SEA (if required).

The revised Neighbourhood Plan will then be published for a further six week period of consultation, after which an independent planning inspector will be appointed to examine the plan at a public meeting.

Should the independent planning inspector find the Neighbourhood Plan to be sound, then it will go forward to be the subject of a referendum, to be voted upon by the residents of the parish.



A drop-in event, including presentations and poster exhibition, was held in June 2014 at the beginning of the Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation period on the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

Comments can continue to be sent by email to:

StaplehurstNHP@live.co.uk

Digital copies of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, supporting reports and other documents can be downloaded from:

www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk
www.feria-urbanism.eu

Parish Council contacts for further information:

- **Mr. Mick Westwood**
Clerk to the Parish Council
- **Mr. Rory Silkin**
Chairman of Staplehurst Parish Council

The Parish Office, Village Centre, High Street,
Staplehurst, Kent, TN12 0BJ.

02 COMMENTS RECEIVED

Which parts of the plan do you most like and why?

Impressed by the amount of work done by the parish and the presentation of the plan.

The development of the village centre, focus on improvements in the drainage and most importantly that any new housing development does not simply funnel traffic into the crossroads.

Improving connectivity as a precondition to any significant development. The current road infrastructure is overloaded and the proposed developments would cause chaos if traffic cannot be routed away from the crossroads.

The station area would be much improved with this plan. The protection of the "green belt" round the village to prevent development towards other villages.

The areas designated for housing looks appropriate and hopefully the designs will be "village friendly".

Planning for new link roads north/south is particularly important I think, to reduce pressure on crossroads and to make Staplehurst more of a rounded development, rather than just a corridor.

The idea of redeveloping around the railway station. As it is now, the area looks tired and unwelcoming and needs substantial improvement.

The emphasis on maintaining the heart of the village and green spaces.

The many opportunities in the process for residents to voice their opinions.

I like the fact that it will be a binding planning document.

It has been a transparent process that has allowed everyone to clearly state their views.

As far as policy is concerned, I believe the most important part are the green edges which in addition to helping integrate the village with its rural surroundings.

I like the new roads/streets that will ease the A229.

I like all of the plan as it is the result of inputs from the consultation. I think it gives a good blueprint for Staplehurst for the future.

The concept of better internal connections by roads, footpaths and cycle paths.

I like the easy and clear layout, especially the diagrams and visual elements of the plan.

Which parts of the plan could be improved and why?

More reference needed to best practice elsewhere in the UK and beyond in planning and design.

I would like to see even more emphasis on bringing more jobs to Staplehurst.

The plan should take into consideration drainage, sewage and education.

Although improved infrastructure and amenities are suggested it would be good to add a target timetable for amenities e.g. the new village hall.

The green edges to the existing back gardens along Hurst Close should be widened to include sustainable recreational and wildlife areas.

The plan does not state the case for provision of adequate infrastructure or protecting the environment strongly enough.

We need more shops in the village.

I like the idea of sensitively designed houses but how will this be enforced with the builders?

How do we know that the plan won't just be overridden by MBC, KCC or central Government?

Too many houses squeezed in a small space. People like their own space and if you squeeze too many people in a small space you are creating a lot of unhappy people.

Emphasis of the plan should be on appropriate levels of housing, roads and health centre. New housing should be planned to avoid inevitable narrowing of routes by on-street parking, a major issue.

I am concerned that the provision of linked access roads is only a consideration and would prefer such infrastructures to be agreed as essential provisions of proposed developments.

Current parking in the heart of the village will be totally inadequate if new houses are built. I can't see how this can be addressed.

The proposed 40% social housing is a far too high a figure and is not compatible with the current proportion of social housing in the village.

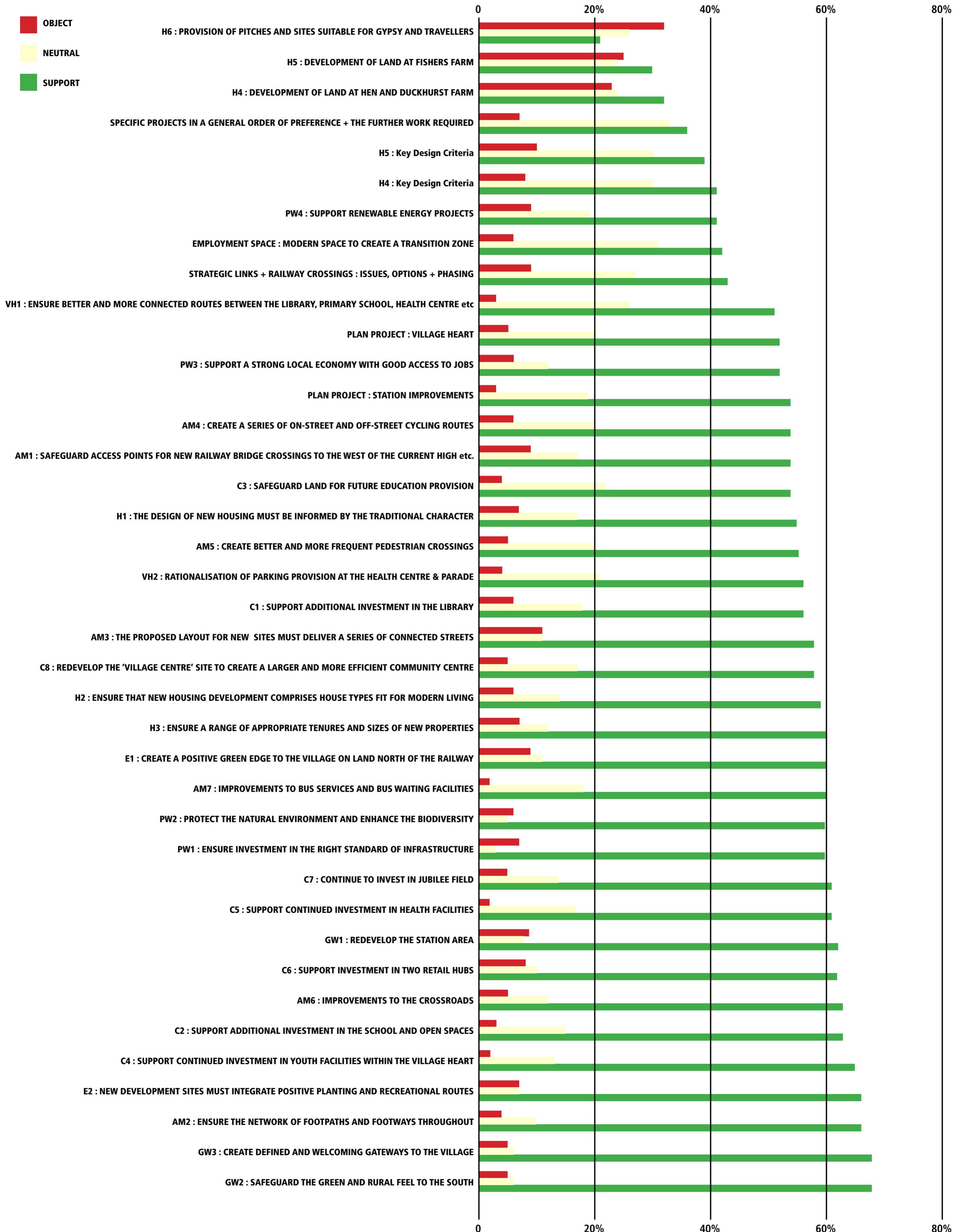
Ensure sufficient starter homes are provided for existing residents or workers in the parish.

The policies for the protection of our rural area are not strong enough as our rural setting is what makes Staplehurst so special.

Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan

03 DRAFT POLICY SUPPORT

This chart shows the level of support for each of the policies in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, as revealed by the online survey system.



04 PROPOSED REVISIONS

- Support 50 — 66%
- Strong Support 67 — 80%
- Very Strong Support 80% +

This table sets out some of the proposed revisions to the plan based on the results of the consultation. This work is still ongoing as the Parish Council continues to consider all the comments received.

Ref.	Description	Level of Support	Comments Received	Proposed revisions to the Neighbourhood Plan
H6	Gypsy policy	Generally Against or Don't Know	Generally negative	Delete Policy H6. This issue will now be addressed by the Local Plan, not the Neighbourhood Plan. Retain second paragraph of the draft policy text (listing the current number of pitches in the parish) as part of the supporting text and background information contained within the plan.
H5	Fishers Farm	Marginal Support or Don't Know	There is much resistance to the development in terms of the allocated site and the proposed numbers.	Introduce new landscape edges on the western side of the site, where it meets existing development at Hurst Close. Revised drawings to show how existing/potential Fishers Farm site in the north can be incorporated. Condition development so that it can only be implemented following the completion of Marden Road to Lodge Road connection and agreed improvements to the A229 crossroads.
H4	Hen and Duckhurst Farm	Marginal Support or Don't Know	While there is also resistance to the development in terms of the allocated site and the proposed numbers, this received more support than Fishers Farm.	Support for landscape edges on the eastern side of the site, where it meets existing development. All drawings to clearly identify each link as vehicular, pedestrian and/or cycle route. No vehicular access into Lime Trees other than emergency access. Road alignment to allow for future railway crossing beyond the plan period. Road extension into Lodge Road to be built as part of the development to support connectivity and reduce impact on A229 crossroads. Condition development so that it can only be implemented following resolution of drainage problems adjacent site; objections have been raised by Southern Water.
H4 H5	Key Design Criteria	Strong support	Strong support for the approach.	Revise design criteria for both sites to be consistent with proposed changes.
PW4	Renewable Energy Projects	Strong support	Strong support for the approach.	No change.
p.49	Employment Space to create Transition Zone	Strong support	Strong support for the approach.	These ideas needs more detail and the drawings in the plan need to be updated. As this concept allocates land for development, this will need to become a policy, with its own ref. number.
p.50	Strategic links inc. railway crossing	General support	General support for the approach.	Delete this page — combine with other parts of the plan as this issue is discussed elsewhere.
VH1	Better and more connected routes in the village heart	Very strong support	Varied comments, often about deliverability.	Further work required to identify these routes. Combine pages 56 and 39 to avoid confusion. Specific projects list to be retained but incorporated within the main body of the plan, adjacent to the relevant policy.
VH1	Village Heart	Very strong support	Need to emphasise Conservation Area status and its continued protection.	Add section on Conservation Area and Listed Buildings.
PW3	Support strong local economy	Very strong support		No change.
GW1	Station Improvements	Very strong support	Very strong support	Combine page 55 with page 41. Parish Council will continue to liaise with Sainsbury's on the provision of direct pedestrian access from Station Approach and enabling vehicular access to car park at rear from Lodge Road. Routes to be shown on drawings.
C3	Safeguard land for future education provision	Very strong support	Very strong support	Delete Policy C3 and amend Policy C2 to reflect school's position statement (i.e. redevelopment of the current site is the preferred option). Make a reference to the possible need to address secondary schooling on page 8, section on "Planning for the Future".
VH2	Rationalise parking at the Parade and the Health Centre	Very strong support	Generally supported with queries	Not clear how this can be achieved and so further work needs to be done around safeguarding and ring-fencing existing car parking for future needs.