



Holmhurst St Mary, Hastings  
Gladedale Special Projects Division

A Report on the Stakeholder Preview Session  
and Public Exhibition  
10 and 12 April 2008

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## 1. Introduction

This is an initial report setting out the results of public consultation on the development principles and draft Master Plan for land at Holmhurst St. Mary, Hastings.

This report will be supplemented and revised by the results of additional pre-application public consultation prior to submission in support of a planning application for housing later in 2008.

The land at Holmhurst St Mary has been allocated for residential development in the adopted Hastings Local Plan. The Mother Agnes Trust and Gladedale Special Projects Division are working on detailed proposals for the site. The development principles and draft Master Plan for the Holmhurst site were presented for public comment at both a stakeholder preview session on 10 April 2008 and at a public exhibition on 12 April 2008. Representatives of Gladedale and the consultant team were present for both public consultation sessions.

Local councillors, council officers and key stakeholder groups were invited to view the proposals on Thursday 10 April between 5.30pm and 8.00pm at Little Ridge Primary School. Members from the planning policy team, representatives from the Ore Valley Forum and the Environment Agency attended.

This was followed by the public exhibition held on Saturday 12 April between 10am and 4pm. Over 1000 households were notified by individual letter and invited to attend and in addition a number of notices were put up around the site. Over 75 people attended on the day including the ward councillors.

Residents were encouraged to fill in feedback forms either on the day or to post their forms directly to Engage Planning. Residents were also made aware of the website [www.engageplanning.co.uk/holmhurst](http://www.engageplanning.co.uk/holmhurst) where they could also view the plans and give feedback.

We were made aware, at the display on 12 April, that some local addresses had not received notification of the exhibition and consequently a further letter to those residents was circulated advising that paper copies of the content of the display boards could be provided or, alternatively, the content could be viewed on the website.

To date 25 feedback forms have been received and comments via the website and directly to Engage Planning and Barton Willmore have totalled eight. Residents have also telephoned to ask for information and to seek further clarification on some of draft proposals.

The following appendices set out details of the public consultation:

Appendix One: Copy of the invitation letter sent to local residents.

Appendix Two: Copy of the feedback form, available at the exhibition and on the website.

Appendix Three: Project Team

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## 2. Summary of Feedback

In addition to any general feedback on the development principles, residents were asked four specific questions relating to the proposals:

- 1) What is your opinion on the design and layout of the proposals?
- 2) Do you have any comments on the proposed family housing mix?
- 3) What do you think of the proposals for public access, the improved management of the SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation Importance) and the provision of children's play space on site?
- 4) What are your thoughts on the proposed cycle, pedestrian and bus link through the site?

All feedback forms, together with comments received via letter, email and the website have been passed in their entirety to the relevant consultants and Gladedale Special Projects Division.

Below is a summary of the feedback received over the course of the public exhibition and via the website. Gladedale Special Projects Division, as prospective developer of the site, will seek to address these issues in the development of the masterplan and the response to these issues will be shown in the Statement of Public Consultation and Community Engagement to be submitted with the planning application.

### General Comments

- The majority of residents seemed generally pleased with the design and layout of the development and acknowledged that the principle of residential development has been established by the Local Plan. There was a very positive reaction to the amount of proposed open space within the application site, and the proposals for safeguarding areas of woodland.
- One resident said that the design and layout of the new development was good, but that it was a 'pity we have to have it at all'.
- Another resident suggested a narrow footpath behind 40-50 Welton Rise on the south east boundary of the site, to allow young people to access the sports fields.
- A resident of Welton Rise requested that the housing should be restricted to 2 storeys behind 40-50 Welton Rise to allow for privacy. Another resident requested bungalows.
- It was suggested that consideration be given to the elevation of the land and the sloping nature of the site between Welton Rise and Beaulieu Gardens.
- One resident commented that they would prefer to see larger gardens.

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- One resident said that they were unhappy with the proposed road next to the burial site and development on the SNCl area. Another commented that they were concerned that the proximity of the road and footpath to the cemetery would spoil the quiet atmosphere there.

Comments received included:

*“Overall reasonably good.”*

*“Good use of unused land.”*

*“Positive. Good consideration to existing landscape.”*

*“Housing is needed in this area and the design layout did look attractive.”*

*“I am generally pleased with the proposed design and layout . I am delighted that it is intended to leave so much of the area not built on.”*

*“Could have more greenery and rural landscaping between houses.”*

*“Not very green or sympathetic to existing properties or the needs of the general public”.*

### **Parking and Access**

- The most frequently raised issue related to ‘on street’ parking. Concerns were raised about ‘overspill’ parking from the Conquest Hospital and from the Government Offices (Ashdown House). This affected The Ridge, Eldridge Way and other roads in the local area. Residents were also concerned about access for emergency vehicles and buses via Welton Rise which they consider too narrow for the purpose, especially due to parking issues in the area.
- Related to the above issue was one of noise. One resident has complained of noise from passing vehicles along Welton Rise which they fear would be worse with the addition of buses.
- Concerns were also raised over the number of parking spaces allowed in new developments, with a number of residents saying that there should be space for two or more cars per household.
- Another issue that was raised by several residents was that garages should not be allowed to be turned into rooms by home owners.
- Parking along Welton Rise was raised as a concern by a majority of respondents from that area, particularly given the added impact of employees at Ashdown House using the area to park.
- One resident said that they were concerned about there being only one access into the site from the Ridge, which they said is already very busy at peak times.

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- Residents on Harrow Lane expressed concern that new residents would be using Harrow Lane to get to the town centre, thereby adding to already heavy traffic flows.
  - Another resident said that they were worried that extra traffic would cause greater difficulties for emergency services going to Conquest Hospital.
  - Residents in Francis Bird Place said that they would prefer it if the housing in the north eastern part of the development were not required to use Eldridge Way.
  - Residents also wanted reassurance that construction traffic would not access the site from Welton Rise.

Comments received included:

*“Vehicles already access The Ridge via A21 and A259 via Queensway with the proposed by-pass this will increase volume on to an already very busy road. Something must be done about hospital parking already causing problems for all nearby houses.”*

*“Cycle and pedestrian are a good idea, but not so sure about the bus route – will it be affordable and regular as at present it’s expensive and non-existent at evenings and weekends. Unless costs are reduced people will use their own cars.”*

*“Considerable concern about the bus link up Welton Rise – difficult for cars to pass already with so much on-road parking.”*

*“We are opposed to any bus route on to Harrow Lane as there are ample bus stops within easy walking distance.”*

*“We would like to see parking only allowed on one side of Harrow Lane to cut down congestion, 30mph signs painted on the road surface and interactive speed reminder signs at both ends of the lane...”*

*“Impact on The Ridge needs to be considered in view of delays by the Highways Agency in altering this major junction.”*

*“I am concerned about the volume of traffic that will be using the northern section of Eldridge Way and wonder what will be done to minimise its impact on those who live nearby.”*

### **Housing Mix**

- Lower density, family housing met with general support.
- One resident said that they would prefer to see a mix of privately owned and private rented accommodation for elderly people.
- Another commented that it was “good that it is a mix of family types”.

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- One resident said they would have liked to have seen more emphasis on affordable properties for first time buyers.
  - A number of residents said that they were worried ‘affordable housing’ could lead to anti-social behaviour.
  - A couple of residents asked if existing homes would be devalued.

Comments received included:

*“Good mix and good that lower density than could be.”*

*“Looks a good mix of homes but they should not be too close together to avoid ‘urban sprawl’ look.”*

*“I think it is important that the housing which completes the ring around the original convent is consistent with the rest of Francis Bird Place so am broadly in favour of what I can see at this stage, with a smaller number of detached houses. I like the clustering of homes into small neighbourhoods.”*

*“Would want footpaths to be well lit and away from the backs of existing properties on Francis Bird Place for security reasons.”*

### **Children’s Play Facilities**

- The main issue raised in relation to the children’s play facilities was that of vandalism and anti-social behaviour with residents keen to ensure that it did not attract such problems.
- Several residents commented that they felt that play equipment was not always best for children and that they should be allowed to wander in a more natural environment.
- A request was made that the play facilities would be well served by footpaths, which need to be wide and open so that people feel safe using them.
- Opinion varied on the best location for such facilities.

Comments received included:

*“Please make play area a form of nature trail to encourage children to learn of nature and not sit smoking and drinking. Please maintain the hedgerows.”*

*“Maintenance of the play space is currently an issue on the existing Gladedale development.”*

*“You need to consider the fact that children’s play areas also attract ‘trouble’ and that positioning them directly in front of houses can be a hindrance. This I have experience with.”*

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*“The proposed play areas should be sited away from existing and new properties (as is proposed) as these areas can be ‘magnets’ for noise, vandalism and litter.”*

*“Children’s play areas are best utilised when they are sited in central position, easily overlooked by the houses from where the children come. On the plan they seem to be tucked away. If they are, they won’t be used and will be vandalised.”*

### **Site of Nature Conservation Importance and Environmental Issues**

- The management of the SNCI and the proposals for public access met with approval from many residents.
- Some asked what was being done as part of the management plan for the site to ensure the SNCI was not damaged.
- Structure planting between the gardens of existing properties at the top of Welton Rise and the gardens of new properties was supported.
- Some expressed concern that the site was being developed at all.

Comments received included:

*“SNCI absolutely must be left alone.”*

*“Pleased that the conservation site has been retained.”*

*“I did not notice what plans, if any, are being put forward to separate and protect the SNCI from damage from peoples’ leisure activities – dogs, mountain bikes etc. I hope this is thoroughly thought about and planned for.”*

*“It’s good to keep the nature conservation and other natural features, but access should be strictly from The Ridge not Harrow Lane.”*

*“Gardens of my own and neighbouring properties are visited by a large number and variety of birds... as well as squirrels and mice. The boundary (Welton Rise) should therefore be in the form of a natural landscape buffer or green chain to provide suitable habitat and encourage this wildlife. It should also seek to maximise privacy and minimise visual intrusion between the new and existing developments.”*

### **Queen Anne Statue and associations with Augustus Hare**

- One respondent questioned the validity of moving the statue of Queen Anne, particularly in relation to the listed status of the Old Convent and challenged the development in principle.

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Comments received included:

*“The architecture of the Old Convent includes specific pieces that directly relate to the current location of the Queen Anne statue (indeed there is a Bay Window specifically built for viewing the statue in its current location). Surely moving it goes against the listing in that case and also means that clear line of sight to the statue (in its current location) should remain – hence this piece of land should not be developed.”*

#### **Other Issues raised**

- Some residents asked if the local schools and hospitals had capacity and if sufficient flood mitigation measures were being undertaken.
- Another questioned the need for the development in its entirety.

Comments received included:

*“It (the Roar) runs behind houses in Harvest Way with excessive building plans it could flood and break its banks in heavy rainfall which could flood properties that have been built for 20 years. It would be better too if all the land was left to nature.”*

*“Too many houses, not sufficient off road parking, no footpath access to shops in Little Ridge so everyone will get in their cars when the surrounding roads are woefully inadequate for the existing traffic already...We do not have the need, roads, shops, schools and leisure facilities for such a development.”*

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### 3. Conclusion and Next Steps

This report summarises the feedback that was received following the exhibition via completed feedback forms, letters, the website and email. Consultants and representatives from Gladedale Special Projects Division have had a number of more detailed discussions with individuals, to clarify aspects of the development proposals and for other detailed points to be covered.

This report will be revised by the results of additional pre-application consultation prior to the submission as a formal Statement of Public Consultation and Community Engagement in support of a detailed application for planning permission for residential development later in 2008.

The main points that have emerged thus far in the consultation process are:

- Residents have been generally positive about the development principles as set out in the draft Master Plan and the design and layout of the proposals, together with the retention and management of the SNCI and existing trees on site.
- The overriding issue of concern was that of traffic generation, particularly in relation to existing traffic flows on the Ridge and on Harrow Lane, and also concerns about 'on street' parking and the bus link through Welton Rise. Residents are concerned that not enough parking spaces would be provided within the new development.
- Location and maintenance of the children's play area led to differing views being expressed with an overall feeling that these areas should be planned so as not to attract vandalism or anti-social behaviour.
- There was a general acceptance of the need for lower density, family homes. Some expressed concern that 'affordable housing' can lead to anti-social behaviour.
- In terms of the proposed layout, residents sought reassurance that buildings would be no higher than 3 storeys, and limited to 2 storeys close to the boundaries of the site. Retention of existing tree belts on the boundaries was considered important together with areas of new screen planting.
- Access to the open space within the site should be available, with footpath links to surrounding areas, such as the Harrow Lane recreation ground; footpath routes should allow for a 'circuit' of the retained open space within the site.

Gladedale Special Projects Division, as prospective developer of the site, will consider all points raised during the consultation process and show residents and local representatives how the plans have developed before a planning application is submitted. Updates to the proposals can also be viewed at;

[www.engageplanning.co.uk/holmhurst](http://www.engageplanning.co.uk/holmhurst)

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We would like to thank all those who attended the exhibition and gave feedback and also those who have commented via the website. If you have any queries about the proposals or any comments on this report please contact Rachel Carson at Engage Planning Ltd, 12 Castle Hill, Windsor SL4 1PD.

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## 4. Appendices

### 4.1 Exhibition Invitation Letters



25 March 2008

**Invitation to Public Exhibition of  
Development Proposals at Holmhurst St Mary**

*Dear Resident*

I am writing to invite you to a public exhibition on behalf of Gladedale Special Projects Division.

Gladedale is intending to submit a planning application for residential development at Holmhurst St Mary, south of The Ridge (B2093). The site is allocated for residential development in the adopted Hastings Local Plan 2004.

The scheme will include the provision of public open space, new bus and cycle links and enhancement of the Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).

The exhibition will give local residents the chance to view the proposals and influence the development of the masterplan. Representatives from Gladedale and the project team will be there to answer any specific questions you may have and to talk through what is being proposed.

The exhibition will take place:

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April 10am-4pm**  
**at**  
**Little Ridge Primary School, Little Ridge Avenue**  
**St Leonards on Sea, TN37 7LR**

Further information on the proposals will be available on the website [www.engageplanning.co.uk/holmhurst](http://www.engageplanning.co.uk/holmhurst) after the event. Please feel free to invite friends and family and anyone who is interested. We look forward to seeing you there.

Yours faithfully

*Rachel*

**Rachel Carson**  
Engage Planning Ltd  
Castle Hill House, 12 Castle Hill, Windsor. SL4 1PD  
Tel: 01753 839315  
Email: [rachel@engageplanning.co.uk](mailto:rachel@engageplanning.co.uk)

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Name  
Title  
Address Line 1  
Address Line 2  
Address Line 3  
Postcode

19 March 2008

**Re: Invitation to Public Exhibition Preview, Holmhurst St Mary, Hastings**

I am writing to invite you to a preview session on behalf of Gladedale Special Projects Division, in advance of the main public exhibition.

Gladedale and their consultant team, has prepared a draft Master Plan for land at Holmhurst St Mary, south of The Ridge (B2093). The site is allocated for residential development in the adopted Hastings Local Plan 2004.

The proposals have been drafted in consultation with Hastings BC officers, as a basis for a detailed planning application for residential development, including affordable housing. Key issues are maintaining the integrity of the Site of Nature Conservation Importance with future management initiatives, protecting trees and restoring the listed statute of Queen Anne.

Gladedale is already well represented by other development projects in Hastings, and want to ensure that the views of the local community are taken into account in the preparation of detailed proposals for the Holmhurst land. Representatives from Gladedale and the project team will be there to answer any specific questions you may have and to talk through what is being proposed.

**The preview session will take place on: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April 5.30 pm-8.00pm at Little Ridge Primary School, Little Ridge Avenue, St Leonards on Sea, TN37 7LR**

Further information on the proposals will be available on the website [www.engageplanning.co.uk/holmhurst](http://www.engageplanning.co.uk/holmhurst) after the public exhibition which is being held at the school on Saturday 12th April from 10am-4pm. If you would like any further information please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to seeing you there.

Yours sincerely

**Rachel Carson**  
Engage Planning Ltd

# Feedback Form



## FEEDBACK FORM

*Thank you for attending our exhibition.  
Please do leave your comments below; your views will be taken into account as the plans progress.*

What is your opinion on the design and layout of the proposals?

Do you have any comments on the proposed family housing mix?

What do you think of the proposals for public access, the improved management of the SNCI (site of nature conservation importance) and provision of childrens play space on site?

What are your thoughts on the proposed cycle, pedestrian and bus link through the site?

Other Comments /Feedback

You can either fill out your comment form and leave it with a representative of the development team or post to:

Rachel Carson, Engage Planning, Castle Hill House, 12 Castle Hill, Windsor, SL4 1PD.  
Alternatively you can send any comments via email to [rachel@engageplanning.co.uk](mailto:rachel@engageplanning.co.uk)

Please leave your details if you wish to be informed as the proposal progresses and to be sent a copy of our report on feedback received from the exhibition.

Name
Address
Email

Your details will not be passed to any other parties and will only be used internally by the Gladedale Special Projects Division, Engage Planning and Barton Wilmore



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## 4.2 Project Team

### **Landowner**

Mother Agnes Trust

### **Developer**

Gladedale Special Projects Division

### **Consultants and their roles**

- Barton Willmore Lead consultants/Planning
- OSP Architecture
- Fabrik Landscape
- Cannon Transport and Infrastructure
- Bioscan Ecologist
- CgMs Archaeology and Heritage
- Ben Larkham Associates Arboricultural Consultants
- Engage Planning Community Consultants