

Crawley₂₀₂₉

September 2013

Additional Site Consultation Housing Development Consultation Report

Contents

Page no

2-3	Key messages
4-11	Housing development sites in Bewbush Breezehurst Drive Bewbush West Playing Fields
11-14	Goffs Park Depot
15-17	Other housing development sites that were suggested
17-20	Other housing development issues raised in the consultation

The development of housing

This report examines opinions and views about additional housing sites that could be included in the Local Plan before it is formally submitted for inspection.

The report includes the following information:-

- Whether there was support for the developments being proposed for Bewbush West Playing Fields and Breezehurst Drive. Who agreed and disagreed with the proposals and what were the main areas of concern,
- Whether there was support for the development of Goff's Park Depot in Southgate. Who agreed and disagreed with the proposals and what were the main areas of concern.
- Alternative sites being proposed for housing development.
- Whether there was support or not for including some of the housing sites that had already been rejected or required further work.
- Other ideas and solutions to bring forward land for the development of housing.
- General views and concerns about housing future generations of the town.

In total 2,068 people took part in the Crawley 2029 consultation. Less people answered questions regarding additional housing development sites compared to other sections in the questionnaire. ***Please note that percentages have been calculated based on the numbers of people answering each question rather than the total number of respondents.***

For a full list of those comments received please refer to Appendix A. Within this report a number of comments have been used to give a 'flavour' of the views being expressed; they are not necessarily representative of all comments received.

Key messages

- Most respondents were against developing the two sites within Bewbush although people were more likely to be against developing on Bewbush West Playing Fields than Breezehurst Drive.
- Most of the resistance to developing the two sites within Bewbush came from residents living in the neighbourhood itself.
- If Breezehurst Drive were to be developed respondents would prefer to see fewer houses built (100 homes) with more space being allocated for community use.
- Respondents disagreed with the further development of Bewbush for a number of reasons:
 - 1) Respondents valued their open space. They were concerned about losing it to development and what this would mean for the wider community. There was a perception that the areas were well used by local people.
 - 2) There were concerns about building up to the edge of the borough boundary.
 - 3) There was a perception that the area was already densely populated and that further development would exacerbate this.
 - 4) There was a view that the infrastructure isn't there to support further growth.
- People who supported the proposals in Bewbush were more likely to live elsewhere in the town.
- There was strong support for developing Goff's Park Depot but most people supporting the proposal did not live in Southgate.

- Although there was support for the developing Goff's Park Depot there was a concern about the impact it would have on the flow of traffic which was already congested at certain times of the day. There was also a call for the design of any new development to be sympathetic to other buildings in the area.
- Respondents appeared to support sites within Stephenson Way coming forward as possible housing development sites even though there was still work to be done on them. To a lesser extent respondents also supported the inclusion of Tinsley Lane and Three Bridges station.
- People agreed with the sites the council had rejected as part of development of the Local Plan.
- People appear to be strongly opposed to the development of open space and playing fields. There was a view that these should not be developed on under any circumstances and that the council should exhaust all other avenues first.
- As with previous consultation exercises people wanted the council to make better use of brownfield sites to bring forward housing development. This has been a recurring theme during the stages of the Local Plan consultation. They talked about making better use of the empty office blocks in and around the town centre, or utilising the space within Manor Royal and Stephenson Way that currently isn't used. Some people expressed a desire to change the way in which land is used. For example, designating less space in the town centre for employment use and allocating more for housing use was preferred by some.
- There was a feeling that losing open spaces would change the look and feel of what was often described as a 'green' town. That was the attraction of the town; it was why people lived in the town, and some respondents worried about it was becoming too urbanised.
- A number of people were very clear that the town needs to look outside its boundary for land in order to support future growth. Further growth within the boundary could not be supported.
- The town should be better at managing the housing stock it currently has; this was one view expressed by some. Bringing back into use empty properties and modernising or completely rebuilding the current stock were two examples put forward as to how more homes could be built.
- Many alternative sites were put forward by respondents and these are included in the main body of the report.

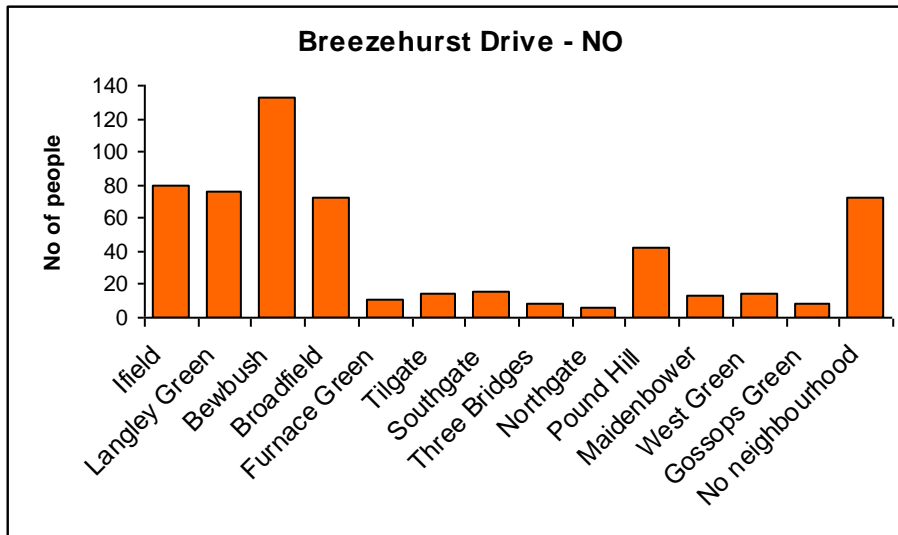
1. Development in Bewbush

Further development of Breezehurst Drive Playing Fields

1.1 57% (1188) of the overall Crawley 2029 sample answered the question that related to the proposed housing development site at Breezehurst Drive.

People disagreeing with the Breezehurst Drive site

1.2 48% (569) of those respondents did not agree that housing should be developed on the Breezehurst Drive site.



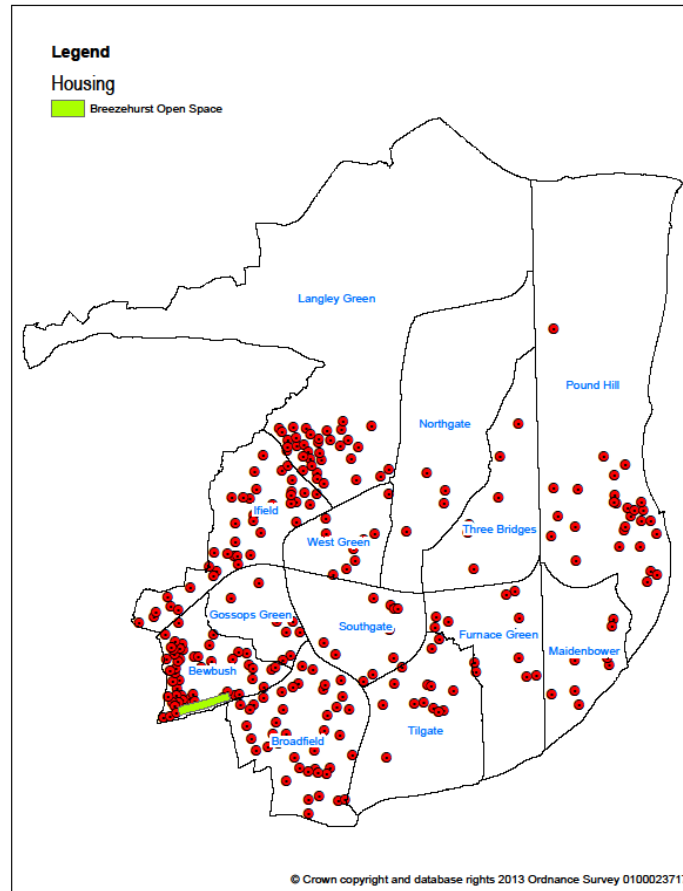
1.3 As the graph above illustrates most of the respondents who did not support the development lived within the Bewbush area (133 (23%)).

1.4 A further 14% (80) of those respondents lived in Ifield, 13% (76) lived in Langley Green and 13% (72) did not indicate which neighbourhood they lived in.

1.5 Of those respondents who did not support this site 269 (47% of those who said No) provided a valid postcode which has been mapped. This enables us to see the geography of the responses received. As the map below indicates those disagreeing with this site tended to be drawn from around the two development sites being consulted on within Bewbush area rather than being specific to the Breezehurst Drive site itself.

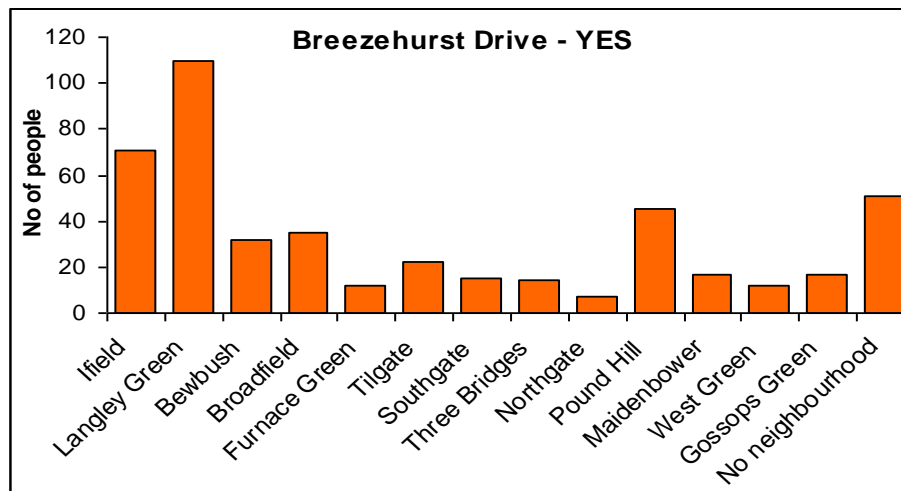


Breezehrst Drive location for NO

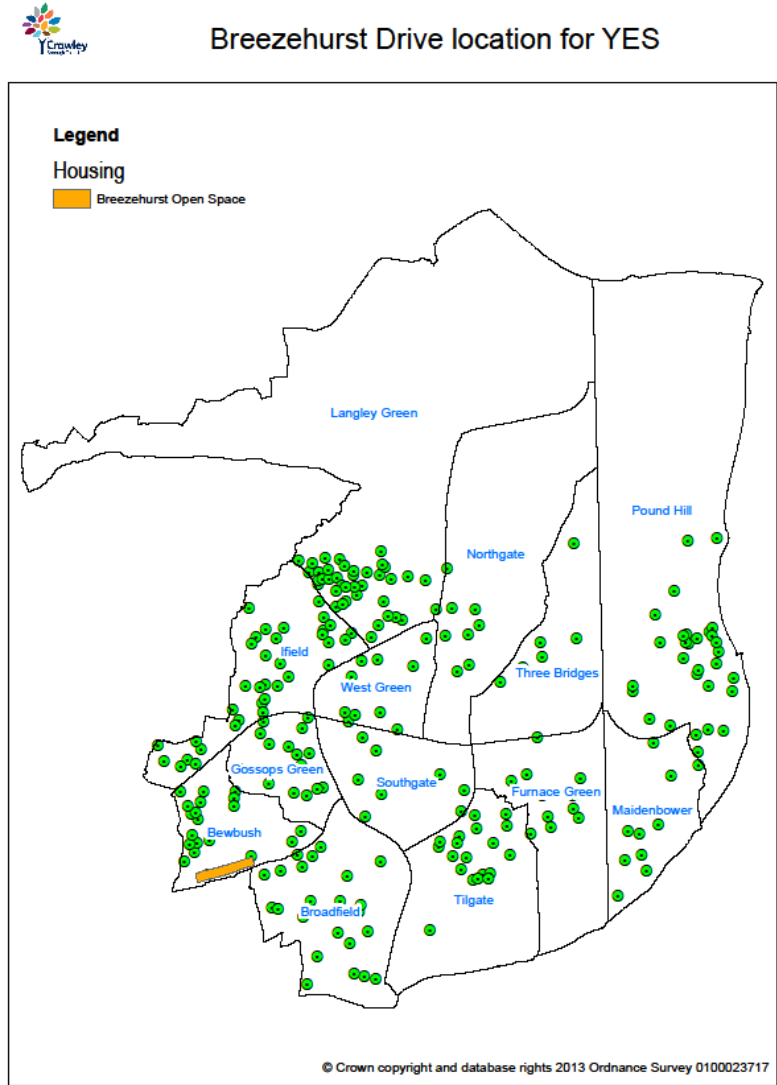


People agreeing with the Breezehrst Drive site

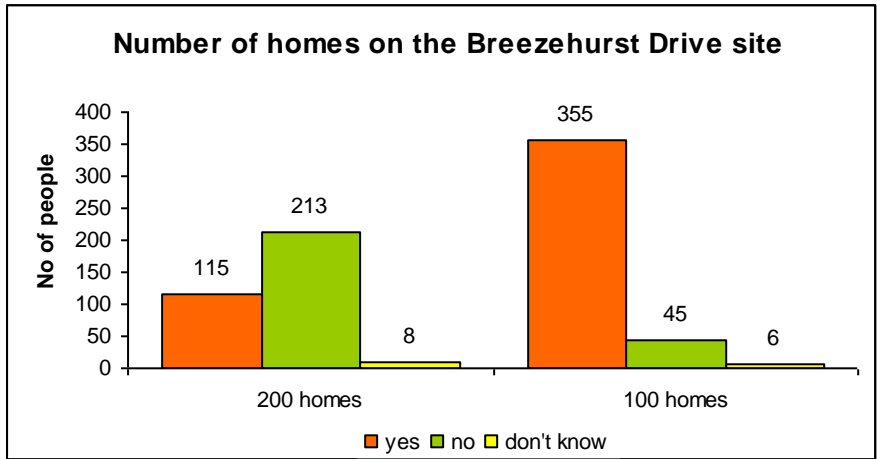
- 1.6 While 48% disagreed with the Breezehrst Drive site, 39% (460) agreed with the proposal.
- 1.7 As the graph below illustrates 24% (110) of respondents supporting the site lived in Langley Green, 15% (71) lived in Ifield and 10% (45) lived in the Pound Hill area.



- 1.8 237 (52%) of those respondents who supported the Breezehurst Drive site provided a valid postcode. As the map below illustrates within the Bewbush area there was support for the site although very little was around the immediate area. Some Bewbush residents around the Bewbush West area supported the development of the Breezehurst Drive site.



- 1.9 Respondents were asked if they supported the Breezehurst Drive how many houses should come forward in the Local Plan. As the graph illustrates most of those people supported developing 100 houses being built with more space being set aside for the local community to enjoy.



People who didn't know whether Breezhurst Drive site was a good site or not

1.10 159 (13%) respondents did not know whether the Breezhurst Drive site should come forward or not.

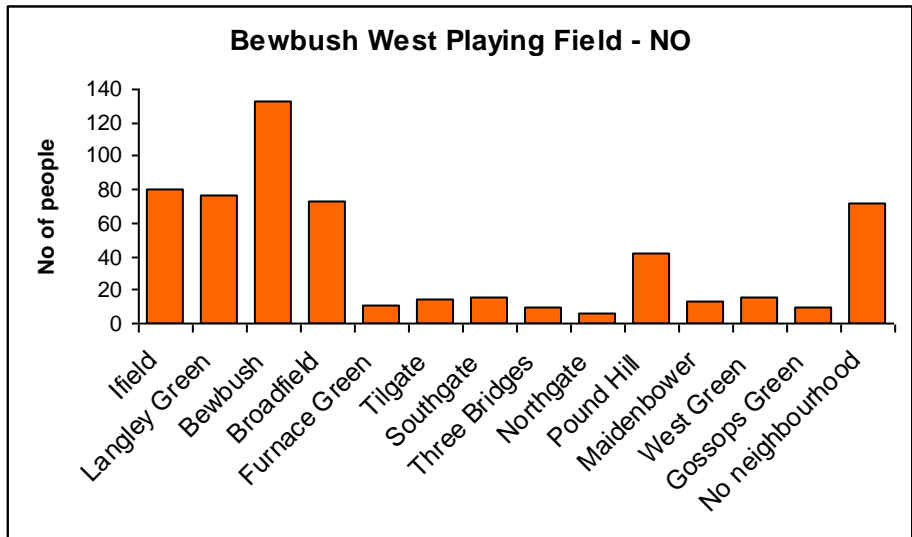
Bewbush West Playing Fields

1.11 Off the 2068 people who took in the Crawley 2029 consultation 1182 (57%) answered the question about the housing development site proposed for Bewbush West playing field.

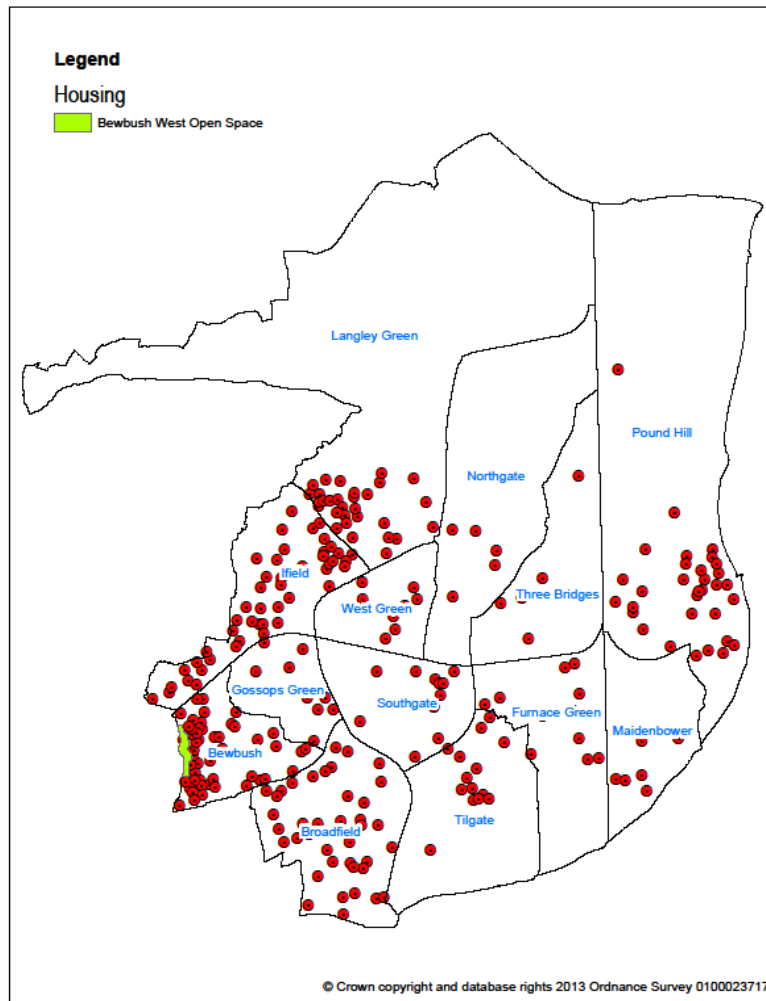
People disagreeing with the Bewbush West Playing Field site

1.12 621 (52%) of respondents did not agree housing should come forward on the Bewbush West playing field site.

1.13 144 (23%) of those people lived in Bewbush, 101 (16%) came from Ifield, 80 people (13%) lived in Langley Green and 73 (12%) respondents resided in Broadfield.



1.14 52% (237) of those who disagreed with the site provided a valid postcode that could be mapped to better understand the geography of responses.

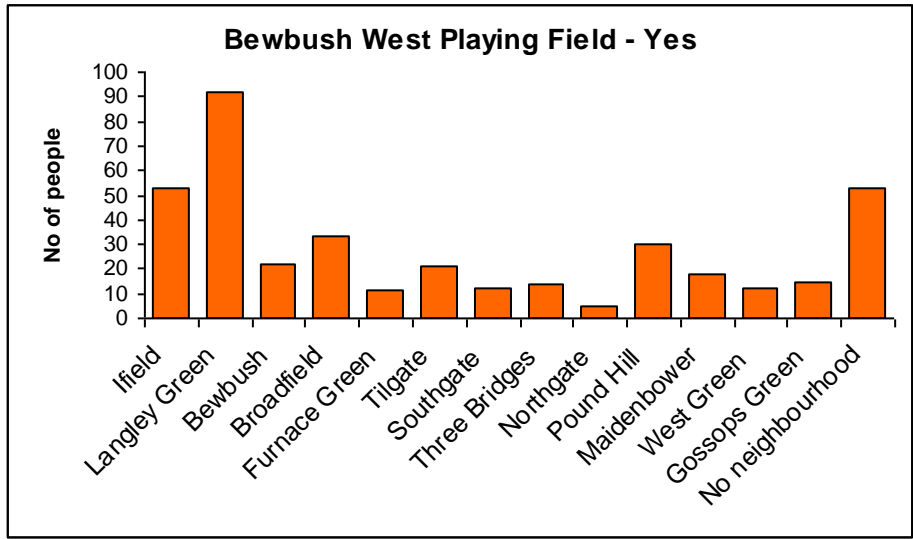


1.15 As the map illustrates respondents against the proposed development were drawn from the immediate area around the site. Clusters of postcodes were also drawn from Ifield and Langley Green. Postcodes from within Broadfield area appear to be more dispersed.

People agreeing with the Bewbush West Playing Field site

1.16 33% (391) of the people who answered the Bewbush West question agreed that it should come forward as a housing development site in the Local Plan.

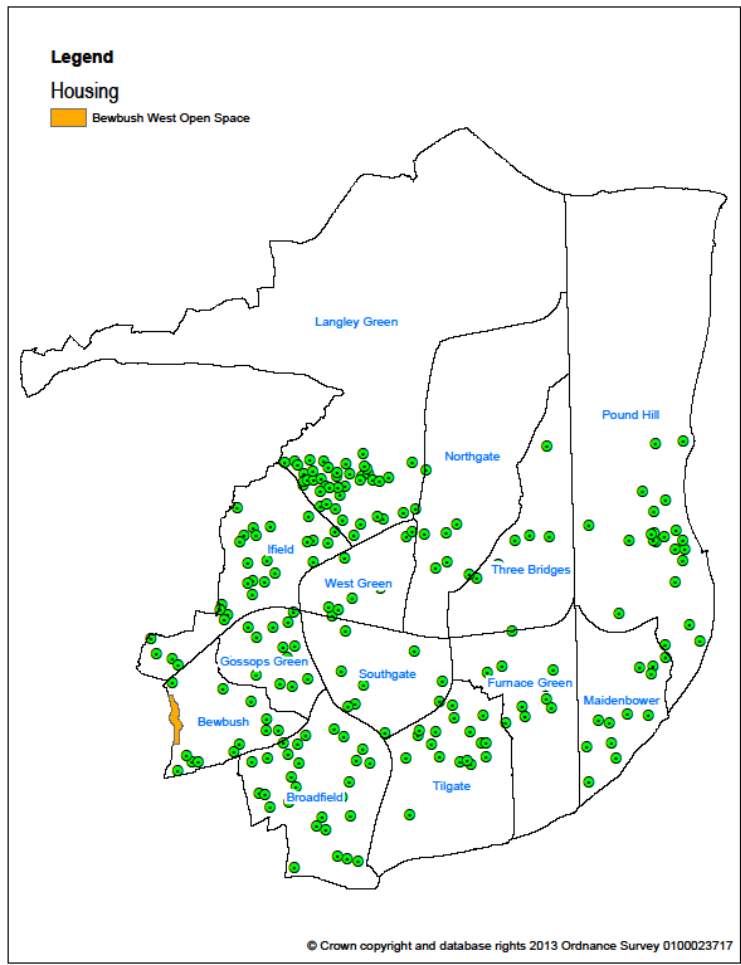
1.17 24% (92) of those respondents lived in Langley Green, 14% (53) came from Ifield and a further 14% (53) did not indicate which neighbourhood they lived in. The remaining respondents were drawn from all neighbourhoods across the town.



1.18 216 of the 391 people (55%) provided a valid postcode that could be mapped. The findings corroborate the neighbourhood data in that support appeared to be strongest in Langley Green. The map on the next page clearly illustrates that there appeared to be little or no support for the development in the area next to the development site.



Bewbush West location for YES



People who didn't know whether Bewbush West Playing Field site was a good site or not

1.19 170 (14%) people did not know whether the Bewbush West playing field site was a suitable development site or not.

Why people supported development in the Bewbush area

1.20 Comments made by respondents suggest people supported development in Bewbush for a number of reasons:-

- 1) The development of the Kilnwood Vale housing site made the Bewbush sites a good option as they would sit well within the overall planning of the area.
- 2) Bewbush was thought to have good access and infrastructure to support more housing, and
- 3) the loss of open space was considered acceptable because of their access to Buchan Park. Some people felt the footbridge made this accessible for the residents living in the neighbourhood.

“Bewbush has a large amount of open space for development and transport services etc. It is much better than in some other neighbourhoods. The community centre and shops have been developed and this will further support the new housing.” (resident of Langley Green)

“Buchan Park is across the road.” (resident of Gossops Green)

“The field(s) off Breezehurst in Bewbush are totally unused and would make perfect sense to build on since the new area is being developed around the corner; there is no reason not to....” (resident of Pound Hill)

Why people did not support development in the Bewbush area

1.21 Respondents were more inclined to talk about why development should not come forward within Bewbush. Reading the comments a number of key themes emerge:

- 1) the value of open space and playing fields to the local community. They are perceived to be well used by people playing sport, children playing and dog walkers. There was a general concern about the continued loss of these sites for future generations.
- 2) some people talked about the need to retain a green boundary between Crawley and Horsham which was considered to be even more important now that Kilnwood Vale was being developed.
- 3) there was some confusion and lack of understanding as to why these houses needed to be developed particularly as the Kilnwood Vale site was being developed. Perhaps people did not understand they were meeting Horsham's housing needs and not Crawley's need which still had to be accommodated.
- 4) higher population in Bewbush compared to other neighbourhoods making it already feel quite crowded.

“Bewbush playing fields are our ‘green belt’ between us and Kilnwood Vale. This space is used all the time, be it for football, rounders, dog walkers, general ball games and kite flying...” (resident of Bewbush)

“Do not build on Bewbush West as this area is used for sport and children and dog walkers and walkers.” (resident of Bewbush)

“Breezehurst Drive playing fields are used a lot for families to play with their kids...where will they go now?” (resident of Bewbush)

“Why do Crawley council need to build 200 homes on the Breezehurst Drive playing fields when there is development for 2,500 homes less that a mile away towards Horsham....(resident of Bewbush)

...“Bewbush houses have little personal space in back or front for play and recreations. With Horsham building against the bewbush boarder it is vital to keep bewbush playing fields for recreation....” (resident of Southgate)

“Bewbush is too full. Too many people per hectre than any other neighbourhood.” (no neighbourhood stated.)”

2. Goff’s Park Depot

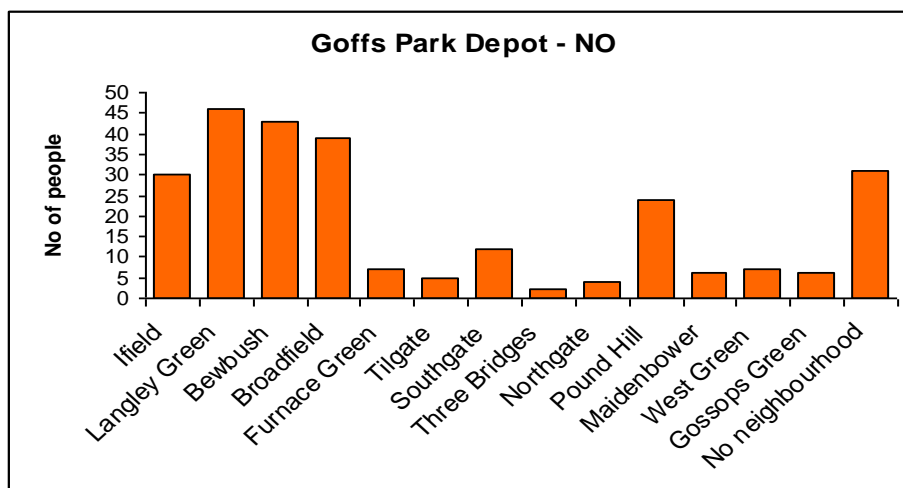
2.1 1184 (57%) respondents answered the question which asked whether they supported the possible development of the Goffs Park Depot site.

People disagreeing with the Goff’s Park Depot

2.2 Unlike the sites being proposed within Bewbush, less people disagreed with developing the Goffs Park Depot site.

2.3 262 (22%) of respondents did not support the development of the site. These respondents resided within the neighbourhoods who were being directly affected by all sites within the consultation, i.e. Langley Green (18% (46)), Bewbush (16% (43)), Broadfield (15% (39)) and Ifield (11% (30)).

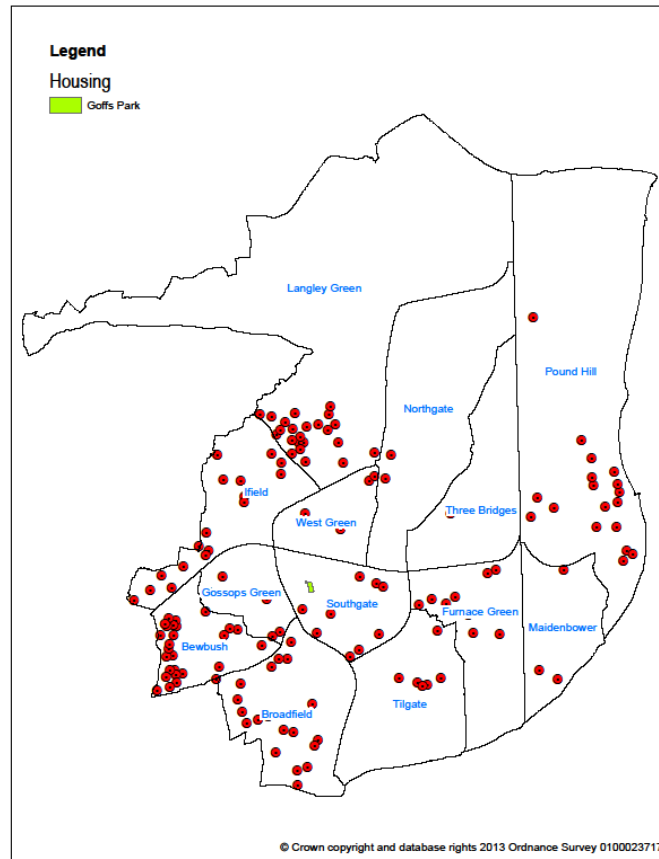
2.4 Only 5% (12) of those who disagreed with the proposal lived in the Southgate area.



2.5 145 respondents (55%) provided a valid postcode that could be mapped. It illustrates that there was little resistance to the proposal from around the Southgate site and corroborates the neighbourhood data.

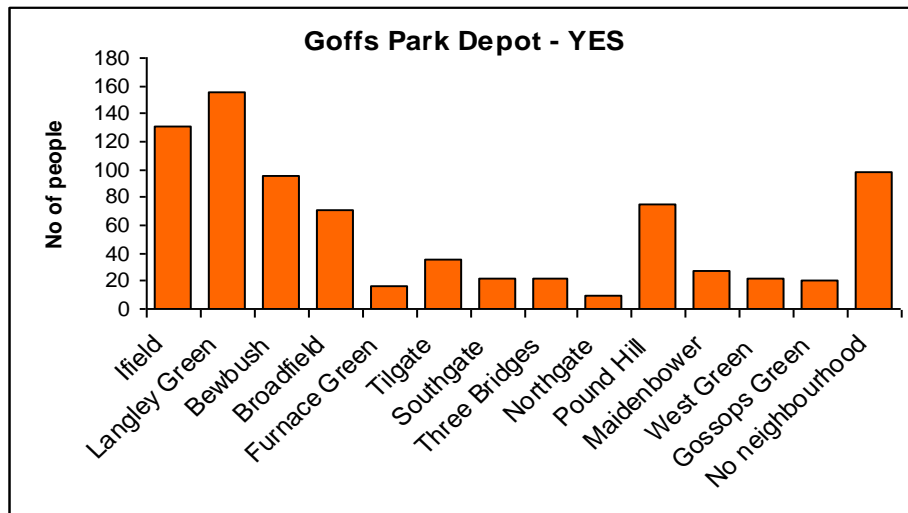


Goffs Park location for NO



People agreeing with the Goff's Park Depot

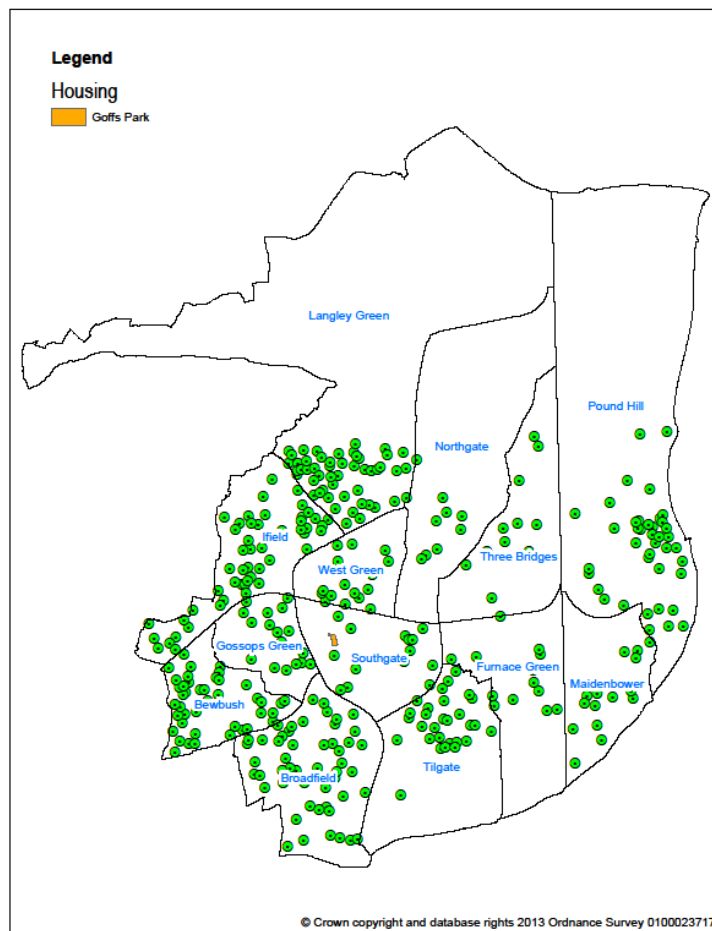
- 2.6 68% (800) respondents agreed that the Goffs Park depot should be included in the Local Plan as a housing development site.
- 2.7 Like those who disagreed most respondents lived in the other neighbourhoods who were directly affected by the proposals in the Crawley 2029 consultation. 19% (155) lived in Langley Green, 16% (131) resided in Ifield, 12% (96) lived in Bewbush and 12% (98) did not indicate what neighbourhood they lived in.
- 2.8 3% (22) of respondents lived in the Southgate area.



2.9 363 (45%) people who agreed with developing the Goff's Park Depot site provided a valid postcode that could be mapped. Although small in number it does indicate that there was support for the proposal within the Southgate area although it wasn't directly next to the development site. Again the data corroborates the neighbourhood data outlined above.



Goffs Park location for YES



People who didn't know whether the Goff's Park site was a good site or not

- 2.10 122 (10%) of respondents didn't know whether the Goff's Park site was a good site or not.

Why people supported development at Goff's Park Depot

- 2.11 Comments tended to reflect what previous consultations had found; better use should be made of brownfield sites. People supported developing housing on the Goff's Park Depot site because it wasn't green space; it had already been used for something else and it currently derelict.

**"Goff's Park Depot area would not be adversely affect the area as a lot of other development has occurred here in the previous years."
(resident of Pound Hill)**

**"Southgate is less populated and the Goff's Park depot is an ideal site for some homes."
(resident of ifield)**

**"Using Goff's Park Depot seems ok as there is already a building so nice land isn't being taken away from the local community and the land will be more useful as a housing estate than an empty building."
(resident of Pound Hill)**

- 2.12 However, some comments suggested a cautious approach should be taken and that any development should be in keeping with the local area and built to a good standard. Someone suggested that it should be used for building retirement homes while another respondent questioned whether this site would be suitable for the cemetery.

**"This site is aptly suitable for housing of the right quality. As long as Goff's Park remains there is ample greenery and leisure areas available to the locals."
(resident of Bewbush)**

Why people were against development at Goff's Park Depot

- 2.13 As to why people did not support the development of the Goff's Park Depot comments made by those against the proposal tended to reflect a more general attitude to development rather than be site specific. They did not agree with losing green spaces within the town in order to build housing. They talked about the value these spaces had for the community as a whole and how losing them would affect their health and well being.

**"At present Crawley has some lovely neighbourhoods with enough green space for children to play and communities to meet – by taking these away and building more houses it will be like living in a city where green space is a premium."
(resident of Broadfield)**

- 2.14 A few comments raised concerns about road safety particularly around the school as well as traffic congestion.

**"....I am concerned at the impact on traffic movements and pedestrian safety, especially with St Wilfrid's school in the vicinity if 30 new housing units are introduced onto the council depot site...."
(resident of Southgate)**

**"Access onto Horsham Road is already congested at school times."
(resident of Bewbush)**

3. Other housing sites that were suggested

- 3.1 Respondents were asked to consider a number of housing development sites that had either been rejected or needed additional work before they would be viable development sites, to find out whether they should be included in the Local Plan or not.
- 3.2 Not all respondents answered this part of the questionnaire. Just over 1,000 people answered each question which represents around 50% of the sample. As mentioned before percentages are based on the numbers of people answering each question rather than the total number of respondents.

Sites that require further work

- 3.3 In total there were seven sites that had been discounted because they required further work in order to make them suitable for development.
- 3.4 As the table below outlines, respondents were very clear that the sites within Stephenson Way should be considered as possible housing development sites. Respondents also supported including Tinsley Lane and Three Bridges Station although the overall support was not as great as the Stephenson Way sites.
- 3.5 Respondents were uncertain whether the site at the east of Brighton Road should be included in the Local Plan or not. As many people disagreed as agreed and there was also a number of people who didn't know whether it was a good idea or not.
- 3.6 Respondents indicated that land adjacent to Langley Walk and Burlands should not be considered although the support was not necessarily overwhelming.

Neighbourhood (sample size)	Map Ref	Site name	Areas of further work to be undertaken	Site should not be considered	Site should be considered	Don't know
Three Bridges (1135people)	1	Land adjacent to Langley Walk and Burlands	Transport & Access	540 48%	339 30%	256 22%
Southgate (1082 people)	2	East of Brighton Rd	Transport & Access	374 34%	364 34%	344 32%
Three Bridges (1095 people)	3	Stephenson Way Industrial Area (site 1)	Flooding & Employment	265 24%	583 53%	247 23%
Three Bridges (1095 people)	4	Stephenson Way Industrial Area (site 2)	Flooding & Employment	265 24%	574 53%	256 23%
Three Bridges (1083 people)	5	Stephenson Way Industrial Area (site	Flooding & Employment	270 25%	567 52%	246 23%

Neighbourhood (sample size)	Map Ref	Site name	Areas of further work to be undertaken	Site should not be considered	Site should be considered	Don't know
		3)				
Three Bridges (1088 people)	6	Three Bridges Station	Flooding & Employment	385 35%	457 42%	246 23%
Three Bridges (1087 people)	7	Tinsley Lane	Environmental Pollution	350 32%	432 40%	305 28%

Sites that have been rejected

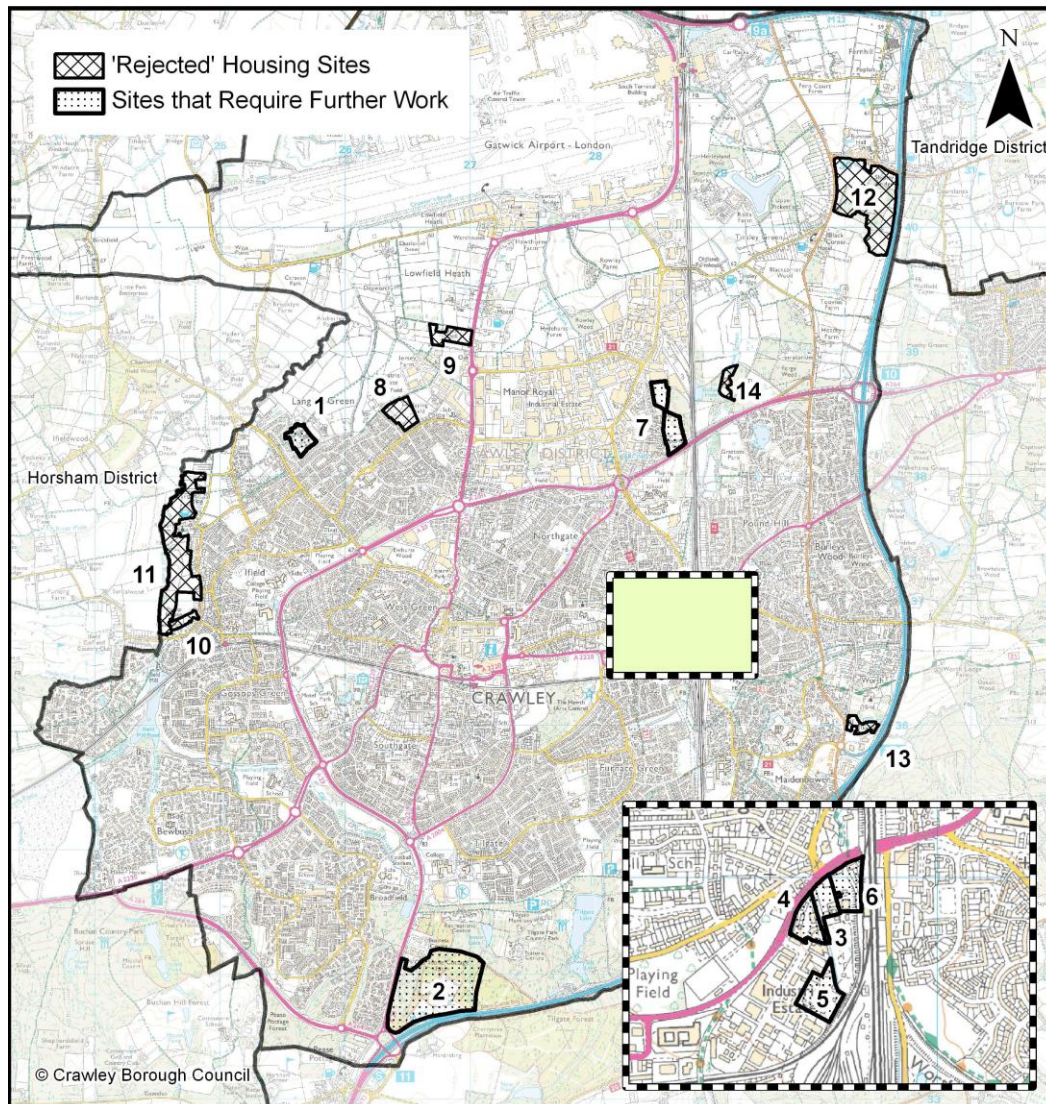
3.7 Altogether seven sites had been rejected for many reasons; some relating to flooding, noise, the proximity to the airport, conservation issues as well as the heritage of the area. The purpose for including them within the consultation was to give people an opportunity to indicate whether they agreed with the council rejecting them.

3.8 As the table illustrates most respondents agreed with the council and thought that all the sites listed should not be included in the Local Plan. Support was strongest for not including Cherry Lane playing fields within the plan although we must remember that around a quarter of the overall sample indicated they lived in Langley Green and perhaps the response is not a great surprise. Respondents were less convinced about discounting the Gas Holder site (site 14) and land east of Balcombe Rd (site 12)

Neighbourhood (sample size)	Map Ref	Site name	Reason for the site being rejected	AGREE – site should NOT be included	DISAGREE – site should be included	Don't know
Langley Green	8	Cherry Lane Playing Fields	Access, noise, Hub Park	861 78%	111 10%	131 12%
Langley Green	9	Land at Poles Lanes	Noise, Airport, Countryside	565 54%	208 20%	273 26%
Ifield	10	Land at Meldon	Flooding, nature conservation, heritage	660 61%	145 13%	271 25%
Ifield	11	West of Ifield	Flooding, nature conservation, heritage	697 65%	145 14%	227 21%
Pound Hill South	12	Land east of Balcombe Road	Noise, Airport, countryside	521 48%	309 29%	253 23%
Pound Hill South	13	Land east of Street Hill	Flooding, heritage	563 53%	207 19%	304 28%
North East	14	Gas Holder	Flooding,	481	301	298

Neighbourhood (sample size)	Map Ref	Site name	Reason for the site being rejected	AGREE – site should NOT be included	DISAGREE – site should be included	Don't know
Sector		site	contamination	45%	28%	27%

Location of rejected sites and those that require further work



4. Other housing development issues raised by the consultation

- 4.1 At the end of the development of housing section within the questionnaire there was an opportunity for people to explain their answers as well as identify other areas of land that might be looked at.
- 4.2 Respondents used this space to do a number of things:
- 1) they used it as a space to raise concerns about housing development generally.
 - 2) they suggested other areas that might be looked at for developing housing.

- 3) they offered up creative solutions to the issue of trying to house future generations in the town
- 4) and in a few cases they used the space to reinforce their support for housing development.

Concerns about housing generally

Don't use green open space

4.3 Comments suggested that respondents were very reluctant to see open green space, of whatever size, being used for housing development. They worried about Crawley becoming too urban, that peoples overall health and wellbeing would be affected and there was a fear that once taken these areas would be lost forever.

“I don't want to see valuable playing fields lost....once they are built on they are gone forever.”

“By the sounds of things there is unlikely to be enough playing fields in the future if housing takes them over. We need to look after ourselves and our children's wellbeing now...”

“Save our parks and open space. We do not want to live in a concrete jungle. There is plenty of space in other parts of Sussex. The open spaces is what makes it enjoyable living in this town.”

Infrastructure can't cope

4.4 There were also some people who felt the infrastructure of the town could simply not cope with more house building coming forward and some wondered whether there was the employment to support this growth. Infrastructure comments referred to schools, health services and the road network.

“Crawley has no employment to cater for more houses to be built.”

“The town does not have sufficient infrastructure in place to support further development – the nearest hospitals to admit A&E patients are in different counties. There is no maternity unit in Crawley and the park spaces are the only areas that you can escape the ill-conceived urban mess that this once nice town has become.”

Other areas that should be looked at

4.5 Respondents suggested a number of alternative sites for housing development. These are outlined in the table below and where possible the rationale for suggesting them has also been given.

Site	Neighbourhood	Why it was suggested
Desmond Anderson site/ K2	Tilgate	Site has already been identified but just hasn't come forward.
Land opposite Paymaster General	Three Bridges	Site has already been identified but just hasn't come forward.
Burley's Wood	Ifield	No reason given
Land to the south of Gatwick	Ifield	No reason given
Allotments between Southgate Avenue, Brewer Avenue and Malthouse Road	Southgate	No reason given

Site	Neighbourhood	Why it was suggested
Disused garage blocks	across the town	Not used and prone to criminal activity in some cases
Broadfield Kennels	Broadfield	No reason given
Crawley Football Club	Broadfield	Club needs bigger ground and if found site would make good housing site
Ifield Park	Ifield	No reason given
Playing fields behind Cherry Lane	Langley Green	No reason given
Small plot of land in Mowbray Drive	Ifield	No reason given
Land near Ewhurst Playing Fields – end of the Mardens	Ifield	No reason given
Rusper Road Playing Field	Ifield	No reason given
Edward Social Club	Ifield	No longer used
Land between Broadfield Brook and A23	Furnace Green	No reason given
Farm on the Worth Way – the other side of M23	Pound Hill	Large enough to develop another neighbourhood
Northgate Playing Fields	Northgate	No reason given
Land around Waterlea Adventure Playground	Furnace Green	No reason given
Park next to Tesco's petrol station	Pound Hill	No reason given
West Green Park	West Green	Run down and unused
Ewhurst Playing Fields	Ifield	Run down and unused
Old nurse's home next to hospital	West Green	Land unused
Old Southern Counties site next to Asda	West Green	Land unused
Old Ifield Community College site	Ifield	Land unused

Creative solutions to the housing future generations

- 4.6 A number of people offered up alternative ways of providing housing in the future and some of these had been reflected in previous consultation exercises; although some new ideas were also coming through this exercise.

Better housing management

- 4.7 There was a call for better management of the housing stock that we currently have. There were questions as to why more could not be done to bring empty homes back into use and whether it was better to invest in improving what we currently have rather than building new houses.

“Lots of houses in Crawley especially Broadfield need replacing; they are looking old, out of date, run down and dirty. I’m sure new technologies and improved knowledge of living and lifestyle you could rebuild these areas and houses. Get rid of the rotten out of date houses and replace them. That’s the answer. You will improve lifestyle, living cleanliness and be able to build more homes. Improve what you do have.”

Use brownfield sites before developing on open space

- 4.8 As with previous stages of developing the local plan respondents were very keen for the council to look to the brownfield sites within the town rather than develop on open space. They talked about the empty office blocks within the town centre as well as the undeveloped or unused sites within Manor Royal and Stephenson Way and suggested that these could be used to build houses on. Some people talked about rebalancing the need for employment space against the pressure to bring forward more homes.

“As there are many empty offices in the town centre these could be used for housing. Manor Royal was intended as the ‘work place’ for Crawley keeping housing, recreation, and shopping separate from work. Perhaps all office space should be on the industrial area. Crawley has none of the old industries only support industries so all offices could go there opening up many new sites for housing.”

“Here is a little out of the box idea; you have so many office buildings go up that we all see half empty - why not convert some of the ones in the town into sort of apartments i.e. as they would come with high ceilings and be really close to town for London and Gatwick.”

Expanding the boundary of Crawley

- 4.9 A number of people expressed a view that recognised the limitations of space within the built up area of the town. As one person put it, **‘you cannot get a quarter into a pint jug!’** These people suggested that either we start to build right up to the edge of the town boundary; which was preferable to in fill development, or that the town must look to expand. A number of people talked about buying land outside the town and encourage the boundary commission to redrawn the boundary of Crawley.

“Can we just have the boundary commission enlarge Crawley’s boundaries? Why have a very large power house of commerce when we are effectively wrapped up in a tight jacket. We need to expand but not within our present boundaries.”

Support for development

- 4.9 Only a few comments were received which supported the need for development and most focussed on who housing should be built for. Comments suggested that housing needs to be built for people living in the town and that it had to be affordable.

“...The areas that I have said ‘yes’ to, I believe should be used to build houses in Crawley as there is a huge shortage which is affecting young families.”

“Yes, you should build homes but council homes not private.”

“The construction industry needs help and building new houses is part of the solution. Also with so many people desperate for housing it is essential that this development should go ahead.”