

# BETCHWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Guy Davies\Mole Valley District Council  
Pippbrook  
Dorking  
RH4 1SJ

7 February 2019

Dear Guy

## **Future Mole Valley Proposals – Further response from Betchworth Parish Council**

Since writing our initial comments on the Future Mole Valley plan on 4 December 2018, we have had a number of representations from parishioners and also had further debate on the issue within the council in particular with regard to area A5 on the attached plan. We support the principle of modest sustainable development to maintain and enhance the character and vitality of the village. However, although this area would appear to provide such an opportunity, we are very concerned that there is no obvious access that does not cause a traffic safety issue within the village. We have had representations from residents living close to the proposed development site who strongly object to this boundary change and also equally views expressed in support of the changes. There has also been considerable debate both with parishioners and within the council on the type and number of dwellings that would be appropriate.

Further to our Parish Council meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2019 Councillors have requested that I submit further comment to you following additional feedback from a number of Parishioners. Parishioners are aware that there will be an opportunity to respond to MVDC directly at the time of Public Consultation however as residents who will be directly impacted by any change to the existing boundaries and proposed amendments, it is important that their views are also considered at this stage and we would ask for this to be the case.

The following views expressed relate to the boundary change and proposed site allocation marked A5 on the map attached.

- Parishioners have questioned the need to amend the boundary in any way at all, as it is acknowledged that infilling could be possible without the need for amendment to the boundary.
- There is considerable concern relating to potential for disproportionate over-development, risking the loss of amenities.
- A parishioner has brought to the attention of the Council two historic applications for a property at the site labelled A5, which had been refused by MVDC citing “undesirable intensification, failing to comply with definition of suitable infilling, increase in traffic movement, inadequate access”. Access remains inadequate, which is a concern shared by Parishioners and

# BETCHWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Councillors, and the reasons for refusal contradict the Future Mole Valley proposal.

- Parishioners question MVDC's guidance for accommodating infilling within villages with defined boundaries as proposals for Area A5 do not, in their opinion, conform to MVDC's definition of infilling; "the development of a small gap within an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, or the small-scale redevelopment of existing properties within such frontage"

On behalf of a Parishioner, I also refer to Area A3 on the map. The parishioner has expressed support of the amendment proposed, however Councillors note that if the boundary is amended as illustrated, the amendment would exclude a property from the village envelope which is currently within it, and cannot see a justifiable reason for this.

A number of Parishioners have also independently questioned the words MVDC have used to define 'Infilling', as Parishioners have expressed that in their opinion the proposals outlined for Betchworth do not correctly conform to the definition outlined by MVDC. The Parish Council would respectfully ask that full consideration is given to explanations of definitions used by MVDC and that they are accurately explained so as to avoid any misinterpretation.

Whilst parishioners and Councillors are aware that land owners and MVDC have been in dialogue with developers, at the time of submission of this letter, no plans have been submitted to the Parish Council by developers despite their attendance at Parish Council meetings. This has resulted in an unwanted sense of unease and mistrust between the Parish Council and its Parishioners, the general consensus amongst parishioners being that the Parish Council is more informed than it is letting on, which is simply not the case. Taking all of the above matters into consideration, and on further reflection, the Parish Council has decided that it cannot support the boundary amendment marked A5 on the village boundary map and in order to avoid any further conflict we, the Parish Council, would ask to be kept fully informed of any future discussions relating to proposals.

Betchworth Parish Council would be grateful for your full consideration regarding the above comments, and for these comments to be submitted in conjunction with the response submitted on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

Kind regards



**Marion Hallett**

Clerk, on behalf of Betchworth Parish Council

Cc County Councillor Helyn Clack  
District Councillor Simon Budd

# BETCHWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

