

Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common

Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity

Statement of Community Involvement

January 2025



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1. Introduction

This report has been compiled by Cratus Group, a specialist in community consultation and forms part of the planning applications made by Wates Developments Limited and the licensed Trade Charity for Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common.

This report outlines the community consultation work carried out by Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity and informed by Mid Sussex District Council's own Statement of Community Involvement (March 2019)

The key aims of the pre-application consultation have therefore been:

- To inform the local residents and the school community (including parents, staff and pupils) of the emerging proposals
- To consult the local residents and the school community throughout the process in an open and transparent manner and provide an opportunity to give their views and ask questions
- To provide the opportunity for local residents and the school community to contact the team for additional information through dedicated contact channels
- To engage with the local authority and with elected members
- To address points raised by stakeholders

2. Site Overview and Proposals

The application site is located on the Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common. The site (DPSC7) is one of five identified in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan (December 2023) to deliver up to 210 new homes and replace and relocate LVS Hassocks Specialist SEN School, along with informal outdoor space.

Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity has submitted planning applications to Mid Sussex District Council for the following:

Hybrid application for separate and severable elements comprising:

Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to retained for use within Use Class F and:

- a) Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and
- b) Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and drainage works

3. Policy framework

The consultation process undertaken has been in accordance with both local and national guidance for pre-application engagement. This guidance is within:

- Mid Sussex District Council Statement of Community Involvement (2019)
- The Localism Act (2011)
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

3.1. Mid Sussex District Council Statement of Community Involvement (2019)

Wates has conducted its community consultation work in line with the Council's own Statement of Community Involvement (2019) which states:

"The aim of consultation at this stage is to 'front-load' the process by encouraging discussion before a formal planning application is made. It should enable communities to have real influence over proposals before they are finalised. The process can help to identify improvements and overcome objections at a later stage.

Applicants undertaking consultation on major or significant developments are strongly advised to conform to the principles set out in the Council's Code of Practice 8, to demonstrate that the

consultation prior to application has been effectively undertaken and to provide the Council with the results of the process.

Applicants are encouraged to engage with the Town or Parish Council in which the site falls and with any neighbouring affected parishes.

Applicants should also include elected District Councillors in early discussion of their proposals as guided by the Council's constitution.

Applications for major development should include a Community Involvement Plan including report of consultation as part of the submission material.

Mid Sussex District Council's full Statement of Community Involvement can be found here: [Statement of Community Involvement \(SCI\) 2018](#)

3.2. Localism Act (2011)

Alongside the Council's own Statement of Community Involvement (March 2019), Wates community engagement work has also met the consultation principles established in the Localism Act 2011 for consulting the public. Principally, these are:

- The publication of the proposed application widely, to an extent that can be reasonably said to bring the proposed application to the attention of the majority of persons who live at, or otherwise occupy, premises in the vicinity of the land.
- To make clear how interested persons may contact the applicant team should they wish to comment or collaborate in relation to the proposed development.
- To give such information about the timetable to ensure the persons wishing to comment on the proposed development may do so in good time.
- Have regard to the responses to consultation that have been made following the consultation process.

3.3. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

Wates' consultation work has also complied with the NPPF's Framework (2024) in relation to pre-application engagement and front-loading consultation. These principles are outlined below:

"Pre-application engagement and front loading

40. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre- application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

41. Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application

services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.

42. The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.

43. The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage. Wherever possible, parallel processing of other consents should be encouraged to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.

44. The right information is crucial to good decision-making, particularly where formal assessments are required (such as Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulations assessment and flood risk assessment). To avoid delay, applicants should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible.

45. Local planning authorities should publish a list of their information requirements for applications for planning permission. These requirements should be kept to the minimum needed to make decisions, and should be reviewed at least every two years. Local planning authorities should only request supporting information that is relevant, necessary and material to the application in question.

46. Local planning authorities should consult the appropriate bodies when considering applications for the siting of, or changes to, major hazard sites, installations or pipelines, or for development around them.

47. Applicants and local planning authorities should consider the potential for voluntary planning performance agreements, where this might achieve a faster and more effective application process. Planning performance agreements are likely to be needed for applications that are particularly large or complex to determine.”

4. Community Consultation Process

Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity has endeavoured to conduct a consultation process which ensured that the local community were properly informed of the plans for the Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common, and had a chance to comment on and influence the scheme.

The consultation process carried out by Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity comprised:

- Pre-application meetings with Mid Sussex District Council Officers and Members
- Meeting with Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council
- Meeting with Twineham Parish Council
- Circulation of the consultation invitation to 3,432 addresses
- The creation of a dedicated consultation website
- The creation of dedicated communication channels to allow residents to submit their feedback and ask questions of the project team
- A consultation drop-in event held at LVS Hassocks, tailored specifically to the school community on the new school plans

5. Pre-Application Meetings

The proposed scheme has been designed in collaboration with officers at Mid Sussex District Council.

A pre-application meeting specifically focused on the new school was held on 4th June and a Design Review Panel on the new school was held on 10th September.

Wates held two pre-application meetings with Mid Sussex District Council on 23rd October and 4th December.

The table below sets out the topics raised during the pre-application meeting and Wates' response.

Issues raised across meetings	Outcomes
Location and design of the school, including its relationship to the parking, drop-off area and bridleway	The location of the school has been revised from the north-eastern field to the north-western field to enable improved design. The design changes improve separation between the parking and school frontage, enable the relocation of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and strengthen the relationship between the building and landscaped areas, whilst reducing the impact on the bridleway.
Location of apartment buildings in south western corner	The proposed location of apartment buildings takes a pragmatic approach. As requested, some apartment buildings have been placed along the spine road, whilst others remain in the south west corner. Given site constraints, such as the presence of mature trees and access requirements, apartments are better suited to this location
Connectivity to the South	Connections to the south are not considered viable due to the need to remove existing trees, the potential for flooding and the fact that the adjoining development consists of no clear point of connection and a wet pond adjacent.

Heritage

Officers queried how the scheme responds to the site's historic context.

The proposed development takes an informed and proportionate approach to the understanding of the history of the site, with specific design measures including:

- The retention of the former chapel and the use of the structure as a focal point within the development
- The arrangement of the proposed development to the north of the former chapel, in particular the reference to the curved nature of the former Monastic Arc
- The retention of the circular pond to which the Monastic Arc (and in turn the new development) addresses and which forms a relic of the earlier 19th century landscape
- The retention of the treelined approach and the 'grove' at its northern end, both elements of 19th century design landscape

Pedestrian connectivity

Officers emphasised the importance of clear pedestrian routes through the site, retaining the bridleway as the primary east–west route and demonstrating connections to surrounding areas. Officers suggested the movement network could be further enhanced with new footpath links.

The existing bridleway route through the site will remain. The proposed development has also been designed to mostly set back dwellings from the bridleway and front on to the bridleway where practical to do so, to improve surveillance and safety.

To enhance this network a footpath connection between the bridleway and footpath has been proposed, located along the eastern edge of the development along an existing tree belt. This will improve movement around Sayers Common and into the countryside. Play areas, benches and further circulation routes are also proposed along or just off these routes, further enhancing this experience for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

<p>Open space</p> <p>Concerns were raised that open space provision across Sayers Common could become fragmented.</p>	<p>An open space review and design process has been carried out to ensure the open space strategy adheres to local policy. The on-site open space provision exceeds policy requirements and open space will be woven through the development providing frequent opportunities for play areas, informal open spaces, recreational paths and native planting.</p>
<p>Relationship with wider Sayers Common development</p> <p>Officers stressed the need for joined-up infrastructure planning across multiple sites.</p>	<p>Wates is continuing to liaise with Berkeley and the Council on the Sayers Common Masterplan and infrastructure provision.</p>
<p>Play Space</p> <p>Officers suggested that they did not want to see a series of small play spaces, which wouldn't be used. They also suggested there was a need locally for more play spaces for teenagers.</p>	<p>Numerous play areas have been distributed throughout the development ensuring that all homes are within a short walking distance from a play area;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various teenage facilities such as a fitness trail, social seating, basketball hoop and swings would be incorporated into the site; catering for a range of interests which have been selected with both boys and girls in mind • A larger play area has been proposed beside the existing chapel, along with social seating, the community growing space, orchards and ponds to deliver a central hub for the development which would provide opportunities for community events and activities, and generally help to foster a sense of community

6. Stakeholder engagement

Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity has engaged with Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council, along with neighbouring parish councils: Twineham Parish Council and Albourne Parish Council.

6.1. Twineham Parish Council

On October 30, representatives of Wates met with the Chair of Twineham Parish Council. The Parish Council's comments focussed on the impact the development will have on the local road network and the inclusion of mitigation / traffic calming to ensure that additional vehicle movements from the development do not negatively impact the local rural lanes.

6.2. Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council

On 7 November, representatives of Wates met with the Chair and Clerk of Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council.

Their feedback focused on creating a development that is unified with other sites coming forward, ensuring connectivity into Sayers Common, and delivering facilities and infrastructure early. They also highlighted the need for more spaces for teenagers locally, expressing a preference to enhance and invest in selected spaces in Sayers Common rather than providing multiple spaces that may not be well used.

6.3. Albourne Parish Council

A meeting with Albourne Parish Council has been arranged for 29th February 2026.

7. Community Consultation

7.1. Consultation Invite

In order to promote the community consultation, Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity produced a consultation invitation leaflet that was distributed to 3,432 addresses on November 17th, 2025. The invite provided details of the consultation website where more information was available and contact details for the project team.

The distribution area was drawn to ensure that the village and the parishes of Twineham and Albourne were made aware of the proposals. Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity informed Twineham Parish Council, Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council, Albourne Parish Council and the District ward councillor ahead of the leaflet being delivered.

The leaflet can be seen in Appendix A and the distribution area in Appendix B.

7.2. Dedicated Project Website

A dedicated project website was set up to correspond with the invitation leaflet being distributed: <https://landatlvshassocks.co.uk/>. The website provided a detailed overview of the proposals and visitors to the website were able to access more information about the following topics:

- Welcome
- Background
- About Wates
- About Licensed Trade Charity
- The Site
- Our Plans
- Benefits
- A New School
- Community Ownership
- Landscape Principles
- Transport and Connectivity
- Drainage
- Biodiversity
- Design Approach
- Heritage
- Feedback Form
- Plunkett Survey
- Contact Us

The website will be updated on submission of the planning application to Mid Sussex District Council, informing website visitors about the planning application and the next steps.

The website home page can be seen in **Appendix C**.

7.3. Dedicated Project Inbox

From November 2025 to present, a dedicated project email – info@landatlvshassocks.co.uk – has been available to provide an open channel where members of the community could submit their comments and ask questions to the project team.

At the time of writing the project inbox has received 3 unique enquiries. These enquiries were largely responses to the consultation via digital feedback form submissions but also included comments on the proposals.

7.4. School Drop In Event

The plans for the new SEN school are key to the future of LVS Hassocks and the wider school community. As such, a specific event focused on the new school plans was held for teachers, parents, pupils and school staff on Monday 1st December, during the school day and after, from 9am to 5:15pm.

The event was attended by 45 adults (including parents and teachers) and approximately 90 pupils. The purpose of this event was to provide an opportunity for the school community to view the specific plans for the new school and ask questions of the project team. Representatives of Wates Developments, the Licensed Trade Charity, and the school architect were all in attendance.



As part of the consultation event, tutor groups visited the consultation space, where pupils could view the design proposals for the new school, speak with members of the project team, and contribute by drawing their ideal school.

Attendees were also invited to provide feedback via comment cards, with 14 completed comment cards received during the event.

8. Public Consultation Feedback

To provide an opportunity for residents to provide comprehensive feedback on the scheme, the project team created two dedicated feedback forms that are available on the project website. The form comprised the following questions:

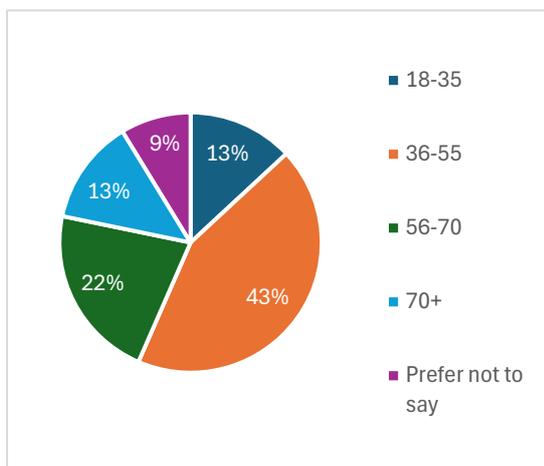
- A new low-carbon Special Educational Needs (SEN) school is proposed to replace the existing one. How supportive are you of this?
- How do you feel about the building up to 210 net-zero carbon ready homes, with 30% affordable homes (affordable ownership and affordable rent)?
- What type of accommodation from our proposals do you feel is most needed in the local area?
- A dedicated area for taxis would be created inside the school grounds to reduce congestion on London Road and keep the public bridleway clear. Do you agree with this?
- We're exploring the idea of turning the existing Chapel building into a community-owned and community-run space, with support from Plunkett UK. Would you support this?
- What kind of community business would you like to see here?
- Please tell us what you would like to see included in the areas of outdoor publicly accessible open space. Tick as many as you feel relevant.
- What are your views of the sustainable transport measures such as enhanced pedestrian and cycle links and the introduction of a car club with electric vehicle charging facilities?
- When considering the proposals, which features do you think are most important. Tick as many as you feel relevant.
- Do you have any other comments or thoughts on the proposals?

8.1. General Feedback on development

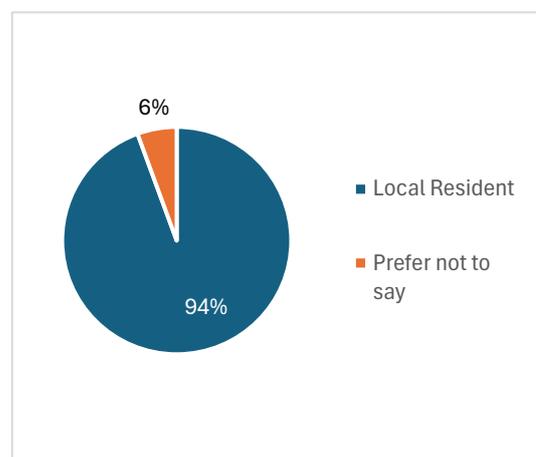
The consultation was open from the 18th November to 9th December 2025. In total, the consultation received 18 feedback forms during this period. The answers to the questions are laid out below:

Demographic Questions

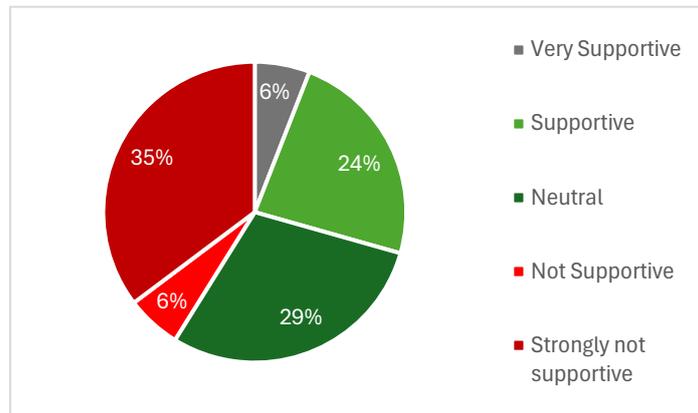
Age



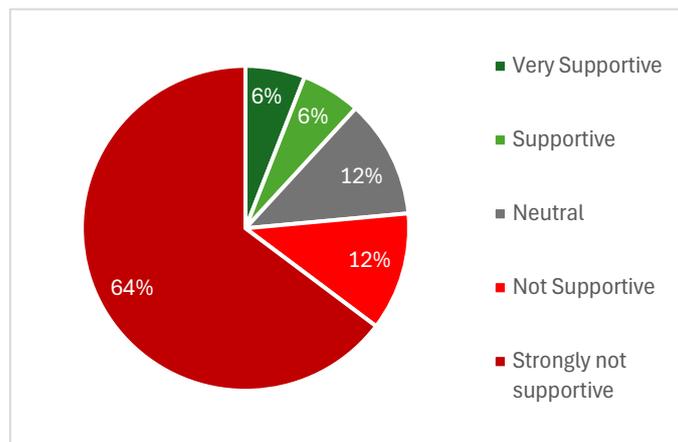
Are you a:



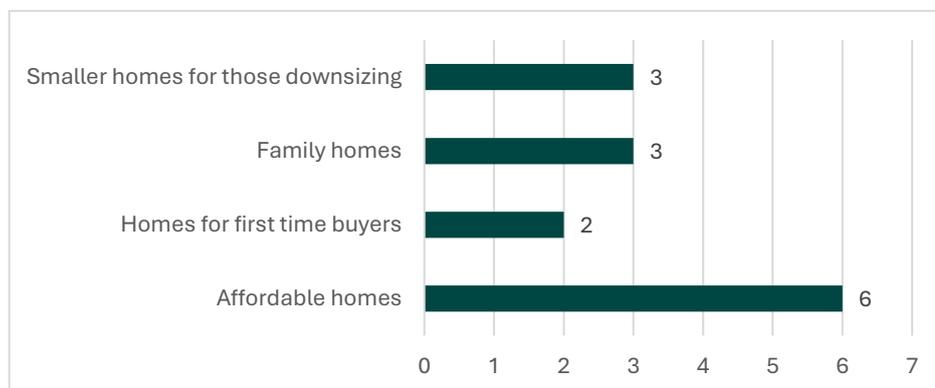
A new low-carbon Special Educational Needs (SEN) school is proposed to replace the existing one. How supportive are you of this?



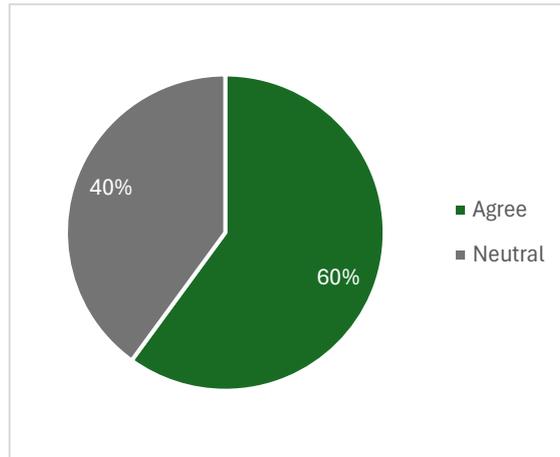
How do you feel about the building up to 210 net-zero carbon ready homes, with 30% affordable homes (affordable ownership and affordable rent)?



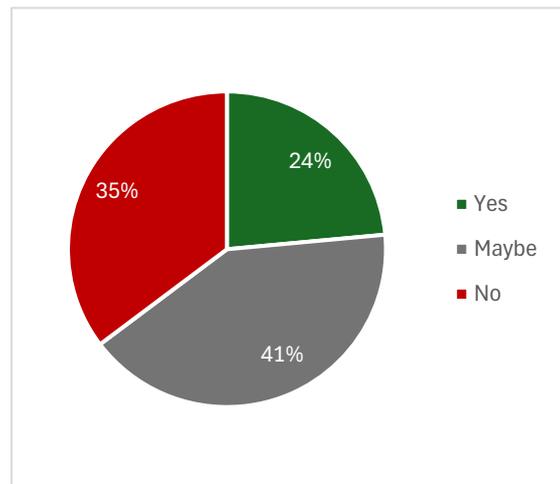
What type of accommodation from our proposals do you feel is most needed in the local area?



A dedicated area for taxis would be created inside the school grounds to reduce congestion on London Road and keep the public bridleway clear. Do you agree with this?



We're exploring the idea of turning the existing Chapel building into a community-owned and community-run space, with support from Plunkett UK. Would you support this?



What kind of community business would you like to see here?

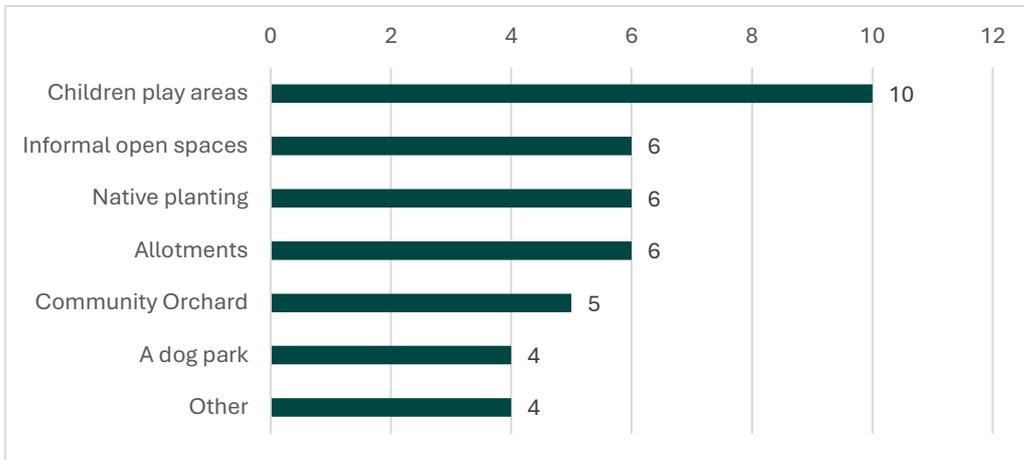
Responses showed mixed views on the need for new community businesses. Several respondents felt no additional facilities were required. Others supported community-focused uses such as cafés, workshops, libraries and children's groups to help bring people together.

Some respondents identified a need for everyday local services, including a small shop, post office, healthcare facilities and improved public transport. Education provision was also raised, with differing views on the need for a new school.

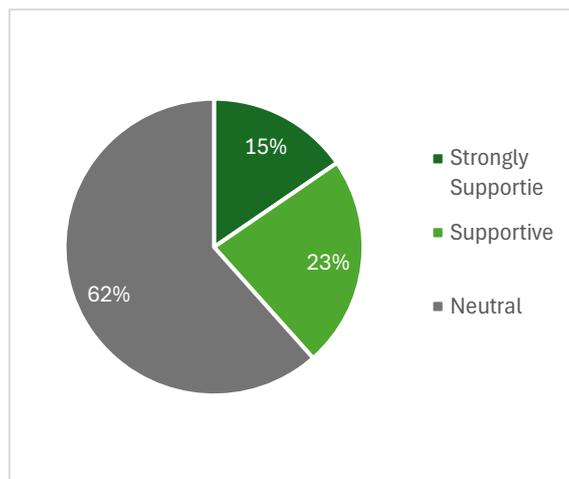
Example answer:

- "Workshops, cafe, kids clubs, baby groups etc."
- "I very much doubt that this will be a focus but obviously something that brings the community together would be good."
- "I think maybe a bakery."
- "Post Office General Store i.e. Tesco Express, Bus stop with adequate longer term parking adjacent, Doctors' surgery, Dentists', Pharmacy"

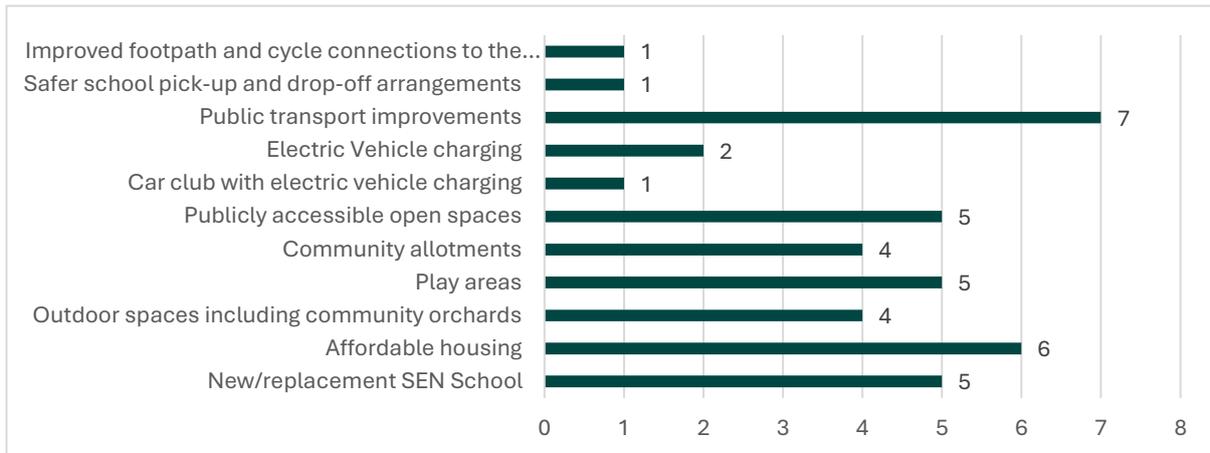
Please tell us what you would like to see included in the areas of outdoor publicly accessible open space. Tick as many as you feel relevant.



What are your views of the sustainable transport measures such as enhanced pedestrian and cycle links and the introduction of a car club with electric vehicle charging facilities?



When considering the proposals, which features do you think are most important. Tick as many as you feel relevant.



Do you have any other comments or thoughts on the proposals?

Responses raised a range of concerns regarding the proposed development, particularly in relation to its scale and suitability within the existing village context. Common themes included traffic, potential impacts on landscape and wildlife, flood risk and drainage, and the capacity of local infrastructure.

8.2. Feedback on new school

8.2.1. Verbal Feedback

Verbal feedback from parents, pupils and members of the school community focused on how the proposed school would meet the day-to-day needs of pupils with special educational needs. A recurring theme was the importance of calm, well-managed internal environments, with concerns raised about noise levels and the suitability of open or busy spaces. Feedback highlighted the need to separate noisier activities, such as music, from quieter teaching and therapy areas, and to ensure circulation spaces do not become overwhelming for pupils.



Wellbeing provision was frequently discussed, with emphasis placed on the availability and location of therapy spaces. Parents and pupils highlighted the need for sensory and calm spaces, appropriately sized therapy rooms, and proximity to nursing and pastoral functions, alongside the importance of accessibility and adequate toilet provision on both floors.



Feedback also supported strong connections between classrooms and outdoor areas, opportunities for outdoor learning and safe walking routes around the school. Additional comments related to the practical functioning of the school, including specialist teaching spaces, storage, lighting and facilities, as well as safeguarding, access arrangements, construction impacts and the school's long-term capacity.

8.2.2. Written Feedback

A total of 14 written comment cards were received in relation to the proposed school. The feedback focused on the need for a calm, supportive learning environment that reflects the character of the existing school and meets pupils' sensory needs. Respondents expressed concern that larger or more open spaces could feel overwhelming if issues such as noise, lighting and layout are not carefully managed.

Written comments also highlighted the importance of appropriate specialist and therapeutic provision, including the relationship between therapy spaces, nursing facilities and teaching areas, as well as the value of practical and experiential learning environments. The role of outdoor learning and maintaining a strong connection to the natural setting was seen as particularly important in supporting pupils' wellbeing.

More general comments related to how the school would function on a day-to-day basis and how the transition to a new building would be managed, with an emphasis on minimising disruption and ensuring the ongoing needs of pupils are met.

9. Response to Feedback

Wates has given the following consideration to feedback raised during the public consultation period, which has been used to inform the Masterplan submitted with this application. Feedback relating to the design of the school and how this has shaped the school proposals is also addressed in detail in a separate Design & Access Statement prepared by ECA Architects.

Most common themes from school consultation event:	Design response
Location of Specialist spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The layout of the school has been amended in updated proposals to include the separation of Music and Art rooms to reduce the impact of noise. • There will be 3x therapy rooms, in addition to 3x 1-2-1 rooms that can double up as therapy rooms when not in use. • Forest school included in landscape proposals.
Layout of the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated proposals include the relocation of some rooms as per feedback eg. admin relocated to near toilet and reception, head, deputy head, vice-head and nurse so that facilities can coordinate more easily. • The open balcony will be revised at detailed design stage. • The landscape architects' design includes a footpath circuit around the school, which as of the updated proposals can be accessed from a new exit from the dining hall.
Facilities and specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food tech specification to be agreed at detailed design stage. • Lockable storage included within admin area. • Café size and IT provision to be decided at detailed design stage.
Accessibility and welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of toilets will be provided in line with building regulation and BB101 at detailed stage.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighting strategy noted for autism needs. • Accessible toilets on both floors. • Nurse and therapy rooms grouped in updated plans. • 1x male and 1x female changing rooms are included in the plans.
Other requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For more detailed specifications e.g. lockers for staff and students, liaison will take place with the school at detailed design stage. • Science lab was not in the brief as to be provided. • A gate to the outer drive is provided in the landscape proposals. • On the provision of ponds, building regulation states that access for children to water, especially in a school environment, requires physical safeguarding measures such as barriers etc to prevent harm. Locating ponds within the playfields, where sometimes unvetted access to them is possible for children, is avoided. • The construction of the new school will be carefully managed through a construction management plan and safely secured from access to staff and children. Disruption will be minimised and coordinated to reduce effects to both staff and children.
Most common themes from online consultation:	
Capacity of local road network	This is addressed in the Transport Assessment which has concluded that there will be no severe impact on the local highway network.
Capacity of local schools	This will be addressed via a Section 106 Agreement, the heads of terms of which are set out in the Planning Statement.

<p>Drainage capacity</p>	<p>This is addressed in the Drainage Report, and the local provider has confirmed that the network has the capacity to accommodate the proposed development.</p> <p>In addition, rainwater from the roof of the school will be harvested and used for irrigation to the immediate planting areas adjacent to the building and the horticulture area.</p> <p>Water storage tanks specifically calculated for the building's capacities will be included within a plant room to ensure there is not a shortage of water for the school.</p>
<p>Discussion of a community owned business in The Chapel.</p>	<p>Wates Developments is working in partnership with Plunkett UK, a national charity who support people in rural areas to set up and run a wide range of businesses that are owned by the local community. Plunkett is undertaking a separate consultation to assess the appetite and potential for a community-owned business within The Chapel. As a community-owned business would not be operational for some time, Plunkett's consultation will extend beyond the consultation process detailed in this report.</p> <p>A full report detailing the engagement undertaken by Plunkett to date, and the views expressed, is provided in Appendix D.</p>

10. Conclusion

The consultation process for the proposals for the Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common, has been undertaken in accordance with national and local guidance, ensuring early, proactive engagement with stakeholders and the local community. Through this engagement and consultation, Cratus on behalf of Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity created clear opportunities for the community to share their views and understand the proposals.

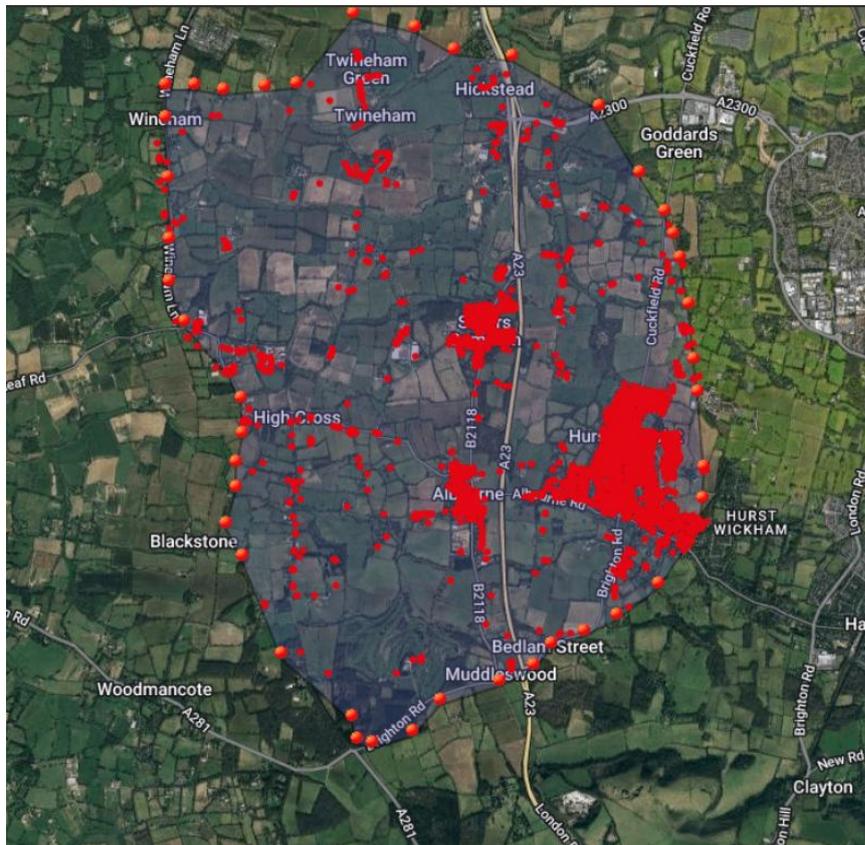
This process included engagement with elected representatives, residents and the school community. Public participation was supported through a consultation invite delivered to 3,432 residents surrounding the site, a dedicated project website and inbox, and a drop-in consultation event held for the school community.

Feedback received has been carefully considered and has informed the approach to the emerging proposals. Ongoing discussions will be held with LVS Hassocks to ensure that the design and layout of the school is suitable. In addition, Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity will continue to work with Berkeley to ensure that the new neighbourhood is integrated within Sayers Common.

This SCI demonstrates Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity's commitment to transparency and collaboration, ensuring that the development responds to feedback given by local stakeholders, the school community and local residents.

11. Appendices

11.1. Appendix A – Distribution area



Online Public Consultation

Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common

18 November 2025 to 9 December 2025

Wates



Wates Developments would like to invite you to visit our online consultation to share your views and feedback on our proposals for Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common. The site (DPSC7) is one of five identified in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan to deliver a well-connected new neighbourhood in Sayers Common.

The site has been identified to provide new homes and the replacement and relocation of LVS Hassocks Special Educational Needs (SEN) School, along with informal outdoor space. The existing school will remain open during the construction of the new facility, which is expected to be ready for use by September 2028.

Wates

The Proposals

Wates



A new low-carbon SEN School to replace the existing school facilities



Up to 210 net-zero carbon ready homes, of which 30% would be affordable – a mix of affordable ownership and affordable rent



A dedicated on-site pick-up / drop-off area for taxis within the school grounds, removing vehicles from Public Right of Way HSC-9YU and removing congestion at the site access, which currently creates issues on London Road



Potential for a **community-owned business to be run from within the existing Chapel**, run-by and for the community – in partnership with Plunkett UK who will engage with the local community to understand what business would be of benefit to local people



Upgrades to the existing public rights of way and improved footpath and cycle connections to the village centre



New public open space



Public transport improvements, including contributions to enhanced local bus services and bus stops



Electric Vehicle charging for every home



Potential for **Electric Bikes** to encourage sustainable travel and leisure



An **electric car club** available to new and existing residents



Green Travel Plan with initiatives to encourage sustainable transport



Introduction of **sustainable urban drainage system** to manage flood risk and enhance biodiversity



Financial contributions will be made via a legal agreement with Mid Sussex District Council towards new and improved facilities such as education, health, and policing.

Contact Us

We want to share these plans ahead of a planning application submission to ensure your views are taken into consideration.

We hope you will be able to take part in our online consultation. Please feel free to get in touch with us to offer your feedback by any of the contact details below:

@ info@landatlvshassocks.co.uk

✉ Freepost - CRATUS COMMUNICATIONS
(no further address details or stamps required)

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Online Consultation Details

The online consultation will run from:

Dates: 18 November 2025 to 9 December 2025

Website: landatlvshassocks.co.uk

Scan the QR Code to visit our online consultation



Wates

11.3. Appendix C – Public Consultation Website



Land at LVS Hassocks
Consultation site

Welcome
Background
About
The Site
Our Plans
Feedback
Contact Us

Welcome to our online consultation for Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common.

We are seeking your views on our proposals for homes and community facilities. The site (DPSC7) is **one of five identified in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan** to deliver a well-connected new neighbourhood in Sayers Common.

The site has been identified to provide new homes and the replacement and relocation of LVS Hassocks Specialist SEN School, along with informal outdoor space.



A new low-carbon SEN School to replace the existing school facilities



Up to 210 net-zero carbon ready homes, of which 30% would be affordable – a mix of affordable ownership and affordable rent



A dedicated on-site pick-up /drop-off area for taxis within the school grounds, removing vehicles from Public Right of Way HSC-9YU and removing congestion at the site access, which currently creates issues on London Road



Potential for a community-owned business to be run from within the existing Chapel, run-by and for the community – in partnership with Plunkett UK who will engage with the local community to understand what business would be of benefit to local people



Upgrades to the existing public rights of way and improved footpath and cycle connections to the village centre



New public open space



Public transport improvements, including contributions to enhanced local bus services and bus stops



Electric Vehicle charging for every home



Potential for Electric Bikes to encourage sustainable travel and leisure



An electric car club available to new and existing residents



Green Travel Plan with initiatives to encourage sustainable transport



Introduction of sustainable urban drainage system to manage flood risk and enhance biodiversity

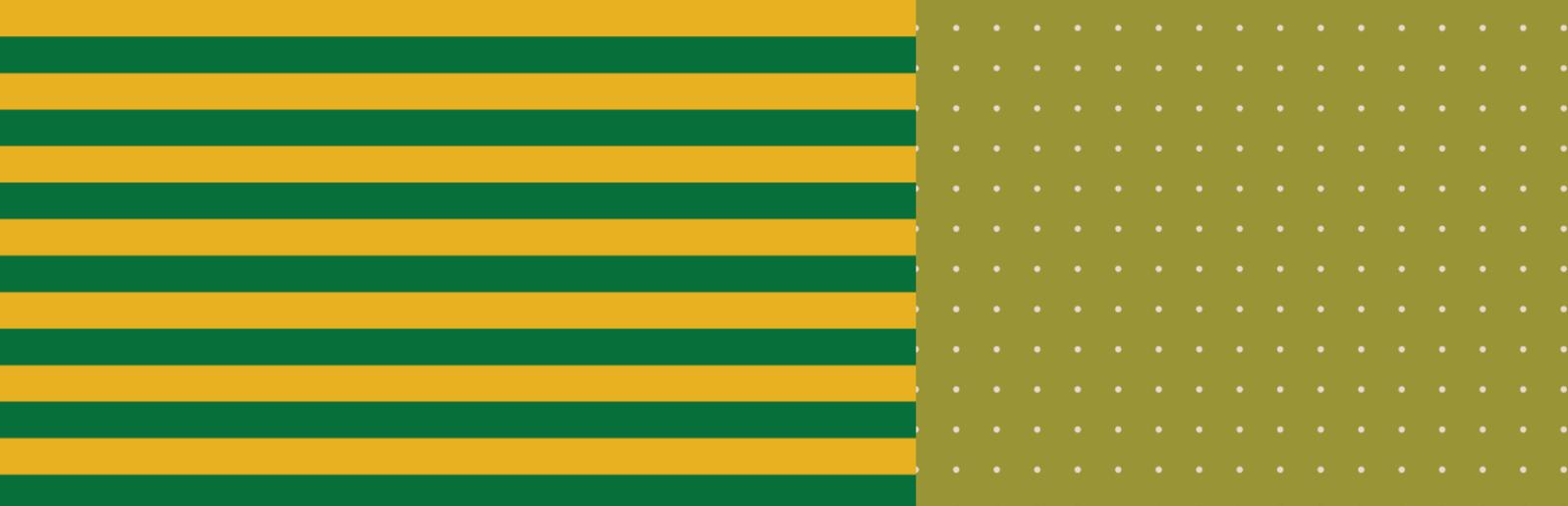


Financial contributions will be made via a legal agreement with Mid Sussex District Council towards new and improved facilities such as education, health, and policing.



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11.4. Appendix D – Plunkett UK Initial Community Consultation Report



Sayers Common Initial Community Consultation Report

JANUARY 2026



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1. Who are Plunkett UK?

Plunkett UK is a charity with a vision for resilient, thriving and inclusive rural communities. To achieve this, we support people in rural areas across the UK to set up and run a wide range of businesses that are genuinely owned by local communities, whereby members have equal and democratic control. Our support is delivered through a core staff team and network of business advisers across the UK. Today, we represent over 800 community-owned businesses throughout the UK, from shops and pubs through to woodlands, farms and fisheries, providing business support and training to help these businesses start up and go on to thrive. We also raise awareness of the community business model UK-wide and advocate on behalf of them.

2. What is a community-owned business?

A community business trades for community benefit and is democratically-owned and controlled by the local community. Community businesses can be any type of enterprise that trades products and services such as shops, transport, farms, hubs, pubs, gardens or leisure centres, with the common thread being that they are owned and run by local people for the benefit of the local community. There's a growing movement across the UK of communities taking back control of their local areas through business and, in doing so, they create employment and volunteering opportunities, support local regeneration, contribute to the fight against climate change, improve community wellbeing and make places better.

3. The Place

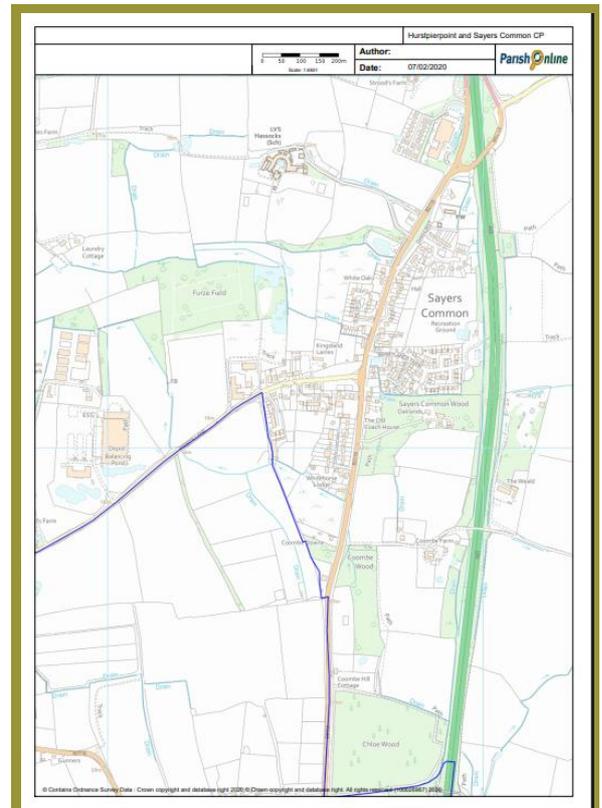
History and Geography

Sayers Common is a small village in Mid Sussex (itself a district of West Sussex). The civil parish of Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint closely links the two villages, as well as the village of Albourne. It sits in close proximity to the larger towns of Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath, which provide most major amenities, such as supermarkets and secondary schools.

The village itself is directly adjacent to the A23, once the main traverse from London to Brighton, with most residential property astride the smaller tributary B-road.

Sayers Common boasts a history that stretches back to the 11th century. Originally '*Sawyers Common*', the village derived its name from the sawyers who worked in the surrounding forests. In earlier times, it thrived as an agricultural hub, home to numerous farms and a vibrant rural economy.

Today, the village is a popular tourist destination, situated near the edge of the South Downs, in an area of beautiful countryside and with easy access to Brighton (9 miles south).



Population

The 2021 census recorded a population of 870 for Sayers Common itself, with numbers rising to nearly 8,000 across the wider parish of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common. Most identified as 'white British', with 61% of residents being of working age and 19% of residents aged over 65.

At the time of the 2021 census, 76% of residents aged 16 and over were in employment, and 50% of those worked mainly from home or within a 2km radius (this may have decreased since the end of the Covid-19 pandemic).

Housing, facilities and travel

There are 3,432 housing in the Parish of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers common, with around 300 of these situated in the village of Sayers Common itself.

Local facilities within the local area include a preschool, care home, village hall, community shop, play areas and playing fields. Local employment opportunities, including Valley Farm and Albourne Cout business parks are within a walking or cycling distance.

Primary education is provided at Albourne Church of England Primary School and secondary education is provided for at Downlands in Hassocks, with a dedicated school bus route 331 providing services twice in the morning and evening from London Road.

Planned growth in Sayers Common, identified as Policies DPSC 3 – 7 in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex District Local Plan (2021 – 2039) will bring forward a range of new local facilities including primary / secondary school provision, playspace, library, leisure facilities, healthcare provision, community facilities and open space.

Sayers Common is served by two bus routes – service 273 operates between Brighton and Crawley via Hassocks railway station, and service 100 operates between Horsham and Burgess Hill and its railway station. Further enhancement to local bus services are to come forward as part of planned development as identified by Policies DPSC 3 – 7.

Community Needs

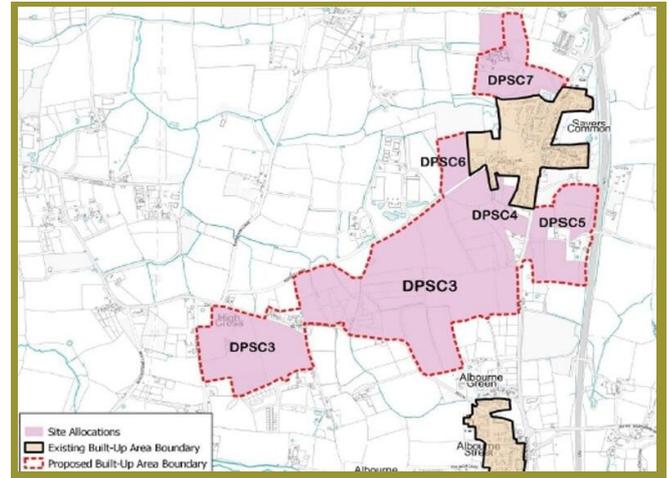
The census highlighted a significant percentage of residents working from home, so there is a possible need for more localised amenities such as café, co-working spaces, takeaways etc. In addition, with the play parks in Sayers Common in need of modernising, and one in particular (Oakhurst Play area) a site of some anti-social behavior or criminal damage (four incidences reported over a three-month period), there is a need for increased and appropriate facilities for children and young people.

4. Overview of the Project

The project proposes the development of a new neighbourhood on the edge of Sayers Common.

The site (DPSC7, fig. 1) is at the northern entrance to Sayers Common, accessed from the main B-road through the village. The new development will include up to 210 homes, with 30% provided as affordable housing, and the replacement and relocation of the LVS Hassocks Specialist SEN School into a new low-carbon building.

(Fig. 1)



The proposals also include public open space, upgrades to walking and cycling routes, public transport contributions, and measures to support sustainable travel.

The site, once the Priory of Our Lady – now a Specialist SEN School – contains a Chapel, which is a building of interest to the community. Wates Developments are working in partnership with Plunkett UK to establish the appetite for the development of a community-owned business to be run from within the existing Chapel, run by and for the community.

The Chapel

The Chapel, designed to echo the shape of an oast house, was constructed in the late 1970s alongside a wider grouping of monastic buildings to designs by the architect Michael Blee. The 1970s buildings, alongside an earlier 19th century building, were occupied by The Priory of Our Lady of Good Counsel until 2009. Since this date the buildings, and the wider site, have been occupied by LVS Hassocks, and have been subject to various phases of alteration and extension.



(Fig. 2)

5. Consulting the community - the approach

Desk-based research

The first phase of this work was to conduct desk-based research to gather historical and geographical data about the community as a foundation to understanding the community itself. (See section 3 and Appendix 1: Sayers Common Services)

Stakeholder research

We approached several key local stakeholder groups to outline the purpose of the project and hear their views and suggestions. By the submission of this report we had only been able to meet with 3 groups:

- The Village Society
- Village Hall
- Sayers Common Community Shop

The Parish Council were unable to meet in the timeline we offered, but gave initial feedback which is included here, and are willing to meet as the project develops.

Survey

Finally, a survey was sent as part of the Wates' wider community consultation survey to over 3,000 households. This only elicited 8 responses, with 16 answering initial questions as part of the wider survey.

The survey is summarised fully in Appendix 2.

6. Community consultation

The community understand the importance of building new housing in their village but were disappointed at the lack of consultation to this point. They would welcome further co-creation opportunities and to be included in conversations around the wider developments going forwards.

6A. Stakeholders' Views

We met with representatives from The Village Society, the Village Hall and Sayers Common Community Shop who were initially keen to talk about the wider proposed housing developments around Sayers Common. However, conversation was steered to the idea of developing a community business in the chapel which was the focus of this consultation.

The Parish Council were unable to meet during our visit, but sent an initial statement, as follows:

"We can see no obvious benefits for a community-based business in the venue, despite our best efforts. We are worried about the location off the beaten track, age/condition of the building, possible lack of insulation, lack of windows etc. We wondered if a light industrial/traditional craft workshops type venture might be better suited to it. But this was just an initial idea."

Further conversation has been invited by the Parish Council as the project moves forwards, starting with a visit to the Chapel.

i) The Concept of a Community Business

The stakeholders we met were not able to give clear support for establishing a community business in the chapel as things currently stand. They saw the suggestion of a new community business in the Chapel as theoretically positive but had various concerns, given the building's condition, its location, lack of footfall and the limited volunteer capacity in the village.

However, they were open to discussing ideas for a community business in the chapel whilst being realistic about the practical challenges. There was a clear message that any new business should complement and not duplicate existing local services.

Suggestions of possible Community Business Ideas:

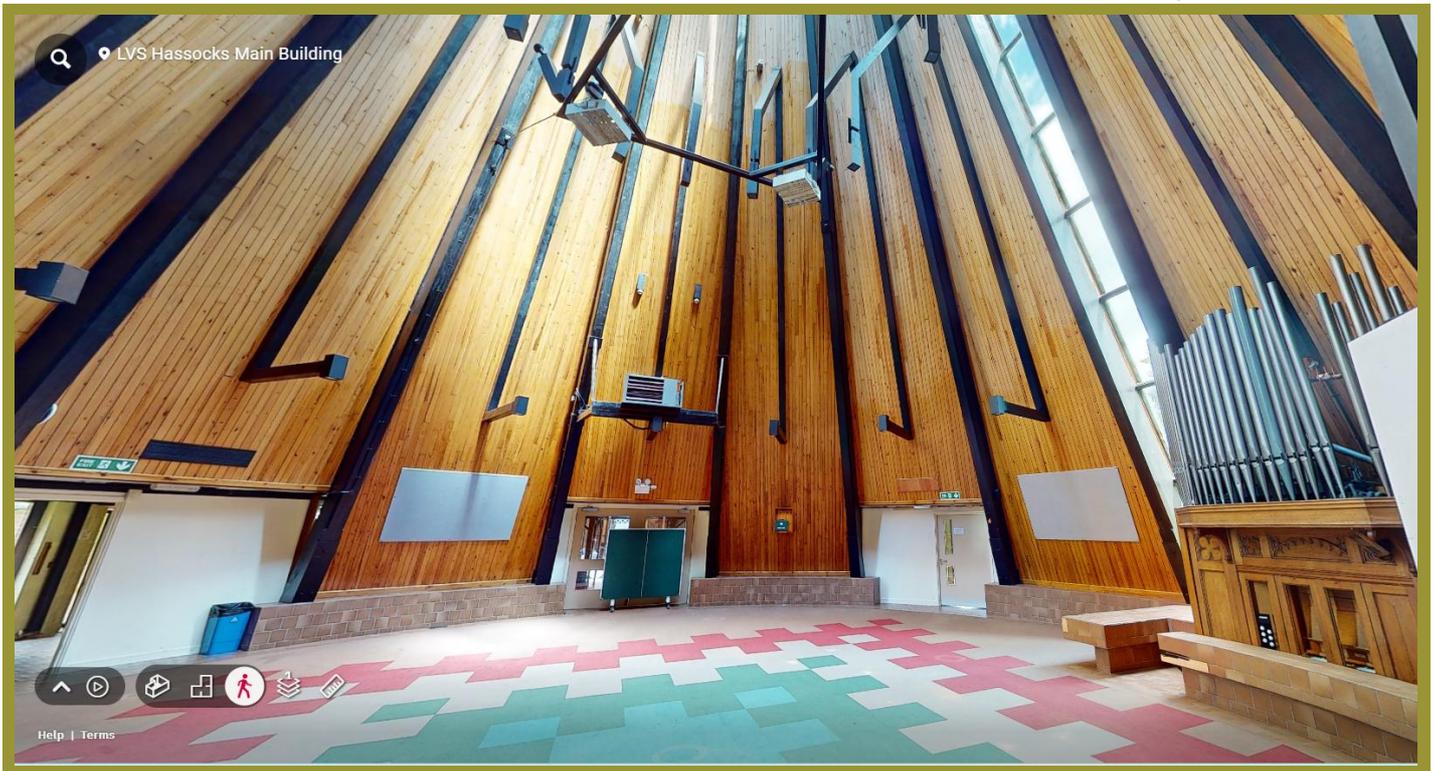
- Wellness / Fitness Uses, eg: Yoga or Pilates studio or wellness rooms (e.g. massage, therapy)
- Music or arts venue
- Sports facility, such as: indoor padel court or a rock climbing wall (questionable feasibility).
- Garden centre
- Small-scale microbrewery
- Hire space for parties or events (but would make it a basic rentable hall)

Concerns about the possibility of another Community Business in the village:

- The Community Shop is very successful, but is always in need of additional volunteers, as do other voluntary groups in the area. There was concern that additional community-run services may increase that pressure.
- A community business there would have to be a *destination*, not a walk-in service, as part of the reason for the shop's success is that it has a considerable amount of passing trade.

Despite the skepticism, the group was not ideologically opposed to the idea of a community business in the chapel if certain conditions were met, such as:

- Not being dependent on passing trade
- A guarantee of adequate parking and signage
- The business contributed to community cohesion, drawing new and current residents together
- It is not run by the same people already running the shop or village society
- The building is in good condition and there is limited liability for it



(Fig. 3) 3D image of the interior of the chapel

ii) Building

Whilst there was acknowledgement that community-owned businesses do help to bring the community together, there were genuine questions and concerns about the suitability of this building to facilitate that and a concern that the community would become responsible for a building not fit for purpose. In particular:

- It is located on the edge of the village, hidden from the main road, hard to access, and not naturally part of village life (at present)
- Major repairs and renovation are understood to be required, and may include insulation and heating (fig. 3)
- It could be expensive to heat and maintain, and a community business would not be able to generate enough surplus to maintain a building like the chapel
- As it will be central to a new housing area, there is potential for objections if used for evening/even noisy events
- Fear of being handed a building that is a liability
- There are limited possible usages due to its shape and small capacity
- Limited potential for parking
- Due to the current distrust amongst the stakeholders, there was a wariness that developers may try to “offload” an unwanted building onto the community.

iii) Specific Needs in the Community

The village has shifting demographics, with a traditionally older demographic changing due to young families moving into the neighbourhood. Therefore, the needs of the community are altering and stakeholders were unsure what future needs might be. The following were identified as needs that might arise alongside the increased population:

- Doctor's surgery or dentist
- Childcare / preschool / facilities for young families
- Children and young people's activities
- Indoor recreation or wellness space
- Central, accessible meeting places (due to concern that the new village would have no clear centre)
- Better community cohesion, especially integrating new developments
- Education, skills and training opportunities

6B. Key Findings from Survey

- There were mixed levels of support from the community for a community-owned business in the chapel, mainly due to a variety of concerns over the building itself
- Children and young people's activities, as well as community cohesion, were prioritised as the core needs of the community, but this was caveated by the fact that the fully-developed new Sayers Common may have as yet unidentified needs
- There was a clear remit requested of developers if the building were to be given to the community for a community-owned business in terms of:
 - a. Safe walking and cycling routes to the chapel
 - b. Adequate parking for community use
 - c. Clear signage to increase visibility
 - d. Guarantees about the building condition and forward maintenance expectations to reduce outgoings and liabilities
- The current support for the existing community-owned shop was high and there were strong requests for any additional community-owned businesses in the village (as well as other any other new community facilities) to complement and not compete with the shop

7. Questions, concerns and risks

From this consultation, it appears there is not much support at present for a new community-owned business if it is cited in the old chapel, with genuine concern over its suitability as the

venue for a community-owned business. There is, however, a desire to see the building stay as a building of historical heritage.

The community are keen to be engaged in any ongoing consultation about the possibility of a community-owned business, and with Mid Sussex Council about the wider housing developments in the area.

Various questions and concerns arose about the proposal of a community-owned business in the chapel as a result of our conversations such as:

- *What renovations will be completed before handover (including insulation and heating)?*
- *How will parking and signage be ensured within planning?*
- *What other community facilities are developers planning elsewhere?*
- *Could the chapel be transferred via charitable trust or parish council?*
- *How can Plunkett help with community engagement across expansions?*
- *Will the chapel become irrelevant once other facilities are built?*

8. Recommendations

1. Continue to Engage the Wider Community

Carry out broader community consultation to understand whether a community-owned business is supported, what benefits it should deliver, and how it could serve a growing population at Sayers Common.

2. Support Existing Community Businesses

Explore practical ways that Wates can strengthen and help prepare the existing community-led shop for the expected growth over the next 5-10 years, ensuring that any new provision in the chapel complements rather than competes with what already works locally.

3. Clarify Responsibilities if the Chapel Becomes a Community Asset

If the chapel is to be transferred for community use:

- Clearly define who is responsible for heating upgrades, building refurbishment, and associated costs before transfer
- Agree long-term maintenance and management responsibilities
- Secure permissions and commitments for appropriate signage and parking provision

4. Promote Community Cohesion as the Area Expands

Work alongside Berkeley Homes on integration of new and existing residents helping to build a cohesive, sustainable community.

Community Shop

Village Hall

Isabello's Preschool

Paws and Claws Animal Rescue

King Business Centre

Furze Field Manor Care Home

Appendix 2: Sayers Common Survey Summary

Summary

The residents of Sayers Common were told that ‘as part of the proposal for PSC7 Land at LVS Hassocks, the Chapel will be repurposed with the aim of providing a home for a community-owned business that can bring benefit to the wider community of Sayers Common.’ They were then invited to take part in a short survey to give their input on how this Chapel could be used, what benefits it might bring to the community and how they might like to get involved. To promote the survey, Wates delivered flyers to 3,000+ households alongside their own consultation.

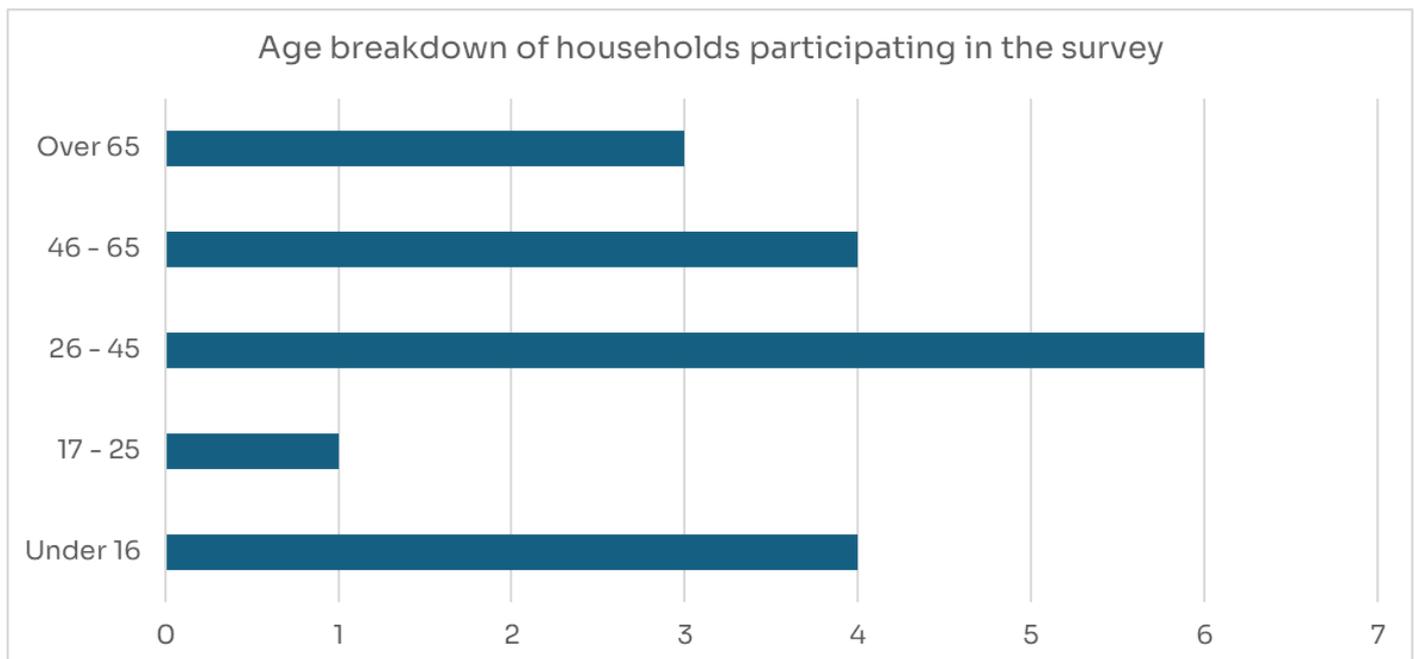
The questions were split into 2 parts – 2 in the main consultation and 7 in the Plunkett Survey.

Respondents

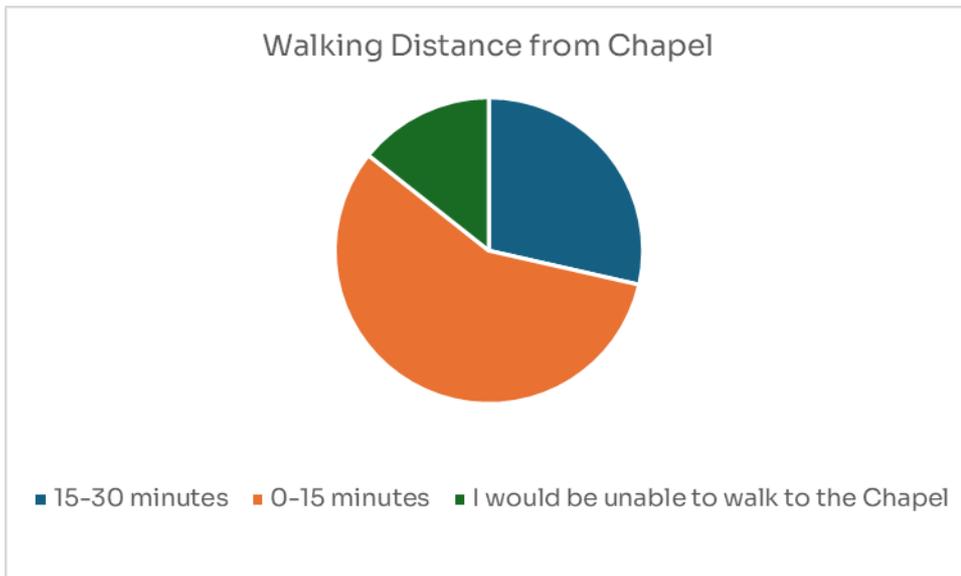
16 households responded to initial questions and 8 to the full Plunkett survey This is a very small share of the 3,000+ households invited and cannot be used to represent the views of the whole community. However, these views are important and have been summarised below.

Survey Participants

Most households who responded were of working age and over half had children living at home. 3 households that responded were single occupancy.

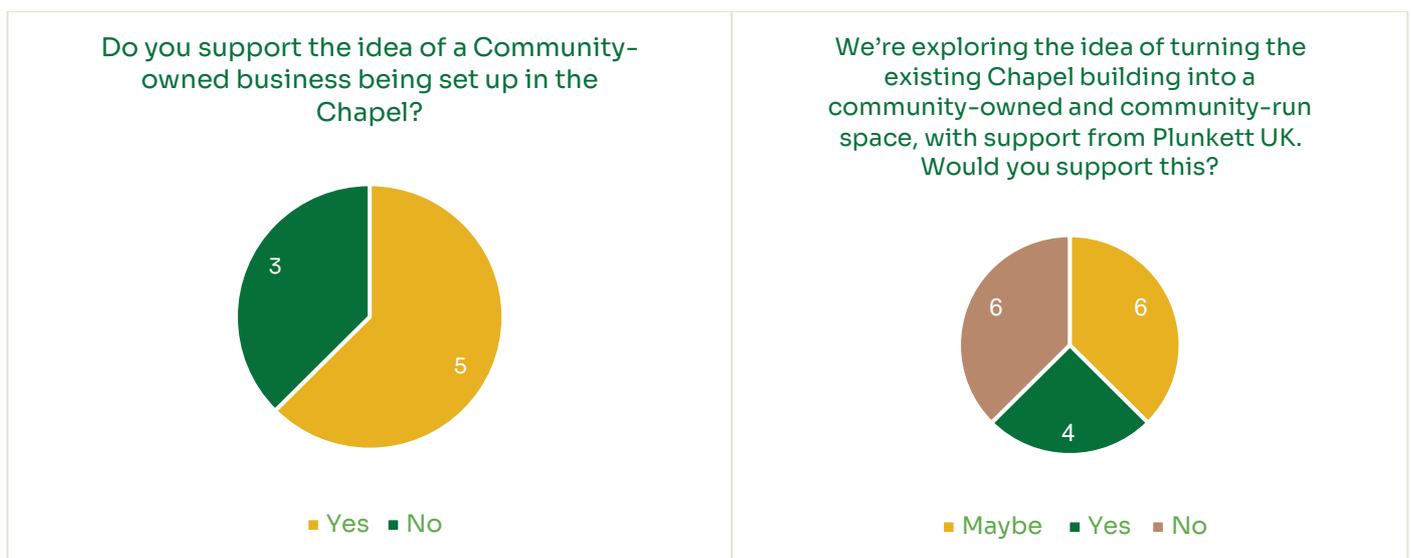


Respondents were asked how far they lived from the chapel to establish how much they might be affected by the change of use of the chapel. 57% respondents who answered stated that they live less than a 15-minute walk from the chapel. 1 respondent lived too far to walk.



When asked about the idea of a community-owned business being set up in the chapel, 5 responded positively, however in the main survey, only 3 respondents gave their full support for this project, with 37% answering equally ‘maybe’ or ‘no’.

This may highlight the lack of information given at this stage of the process and the need for continued consultation and community engagement.

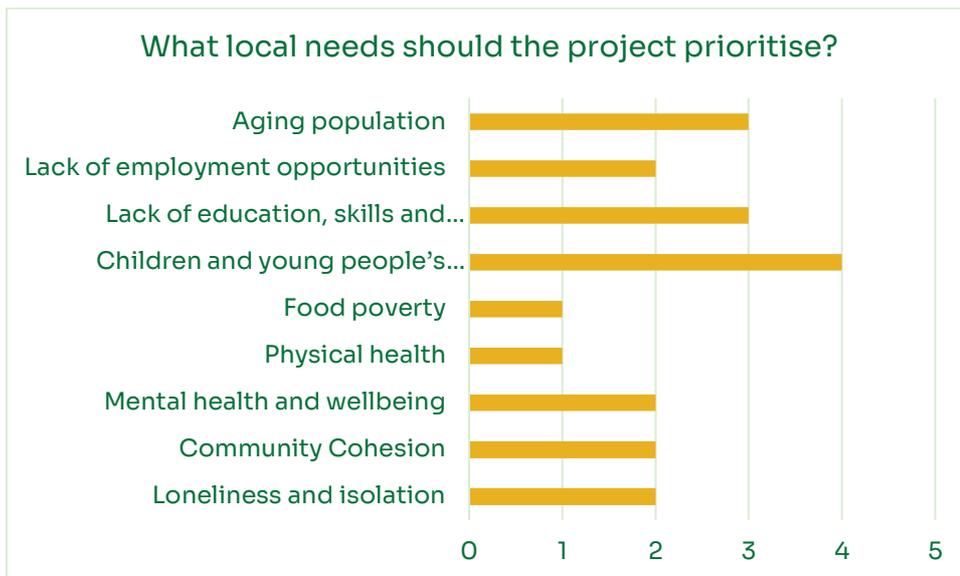


Reasons given for lack of support included:

- The remoteness of the building
- Concern over duplication of village hall facilities
- Distrust in the developers including: “Companies such as yours are never concerned with 'community'” and “It is only proposed as a site to allow LVS school to relocate”
- That it should remain a chapel (NB: it is not currently used as a chapel, but the community may not be aware of this)

Community Needs

When asked what benefit a community business should bring to the residents of Sayers Common, the needs of children and young people were highlighted as well as those of an aging population. A desire for more opportunities for education, skills and training was also prioritised – further consultation is required to establish whether this is for young people or the wider population.



Type of Community Business

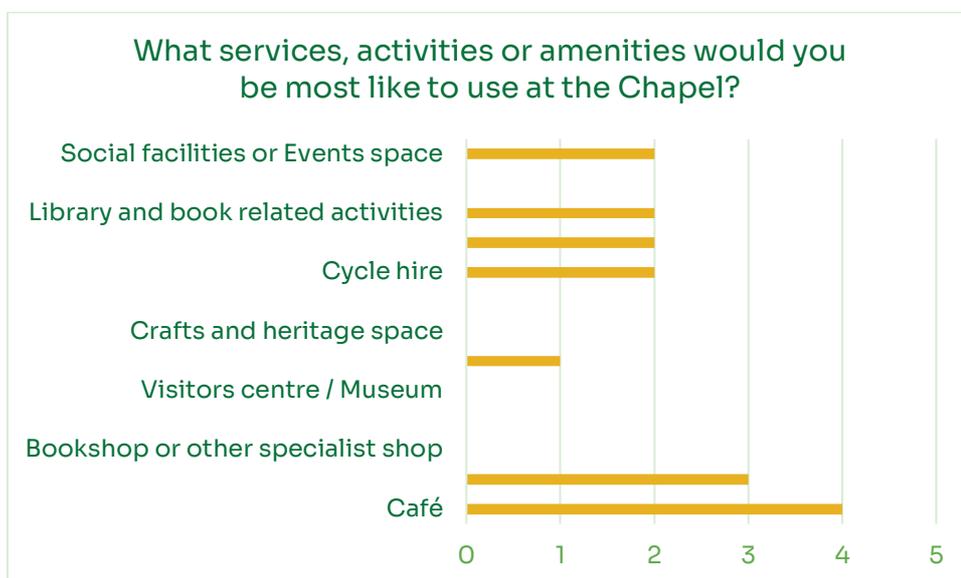
In the wider consultation, respondents were asked the broader question: What kind of community business would you like to see here? In order of most to least frequently mentioned these were:

- Community hub / shared space (for eg: workshops, kids' clubs, baby groups, events)
- Café
- Doctors' surgery (GP)
- Convenience store / general store (e.g. Tesco Express)
- Post Office
- Pharmacy
- Dental surgery
- School provision to accommodate an influx of children
- Bakery
- Library

Those who support the Chapel plan seem to lean towards using it for social/community space, a place where activities can bring the community together, such as a café. To a lesser extent, there was support for a more practical amenity, such as a medical centre. Participants who were unsure about whether they would support such a venture in the chapel favoured essential services but explicitly flagged the risk of competition with the existing community shop.

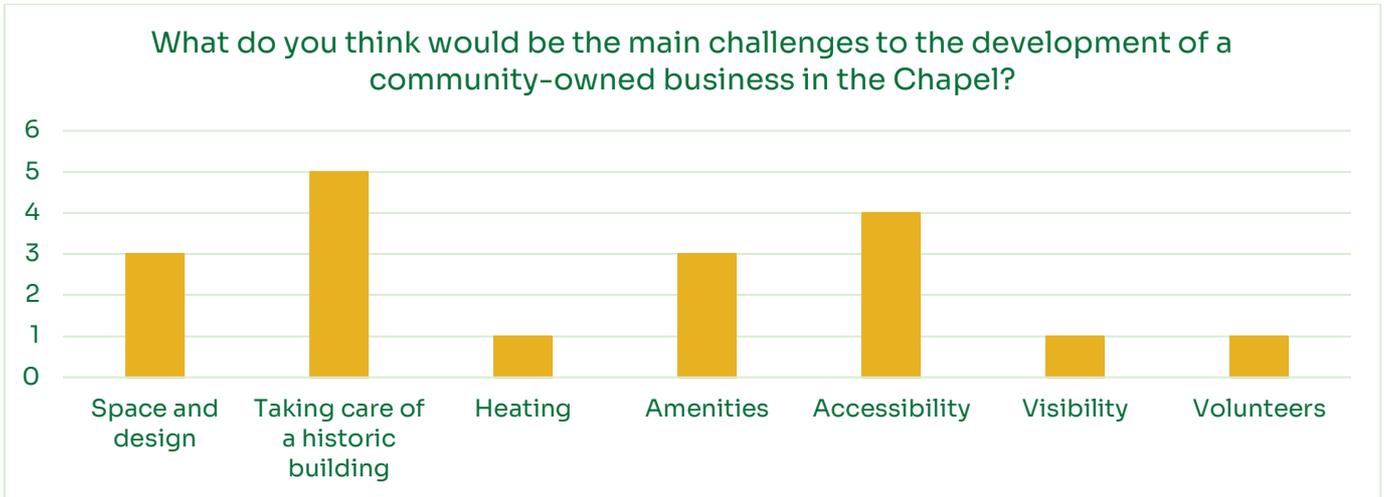
Some respondents used this question to highlight that they do not want change and consider the ‘area is fine as it is’. Others accept the change but are keen that any ‘community venture...must not compete with the existing community shop and its activities’ and that ‘the existing shop and community group have been very successful and should be supported by the community NEW and EXISTING to ensure they continue to flourish’

The Plunkett Survey asked them to give consideration to various types of possibilities for a community business, these are rated below:



Concerns and Challenges

All respondents highlighted at least one challenge a community-owned business in the Chapel would present. The majority were concerned about accessibility and the responsibility that comes with such an historic building and whilst visibility was only suggested to be a challenge by one respondent, another commented that: “It is too remote from the centre of the village”. Some respondents may have interpreted accessibility as being accessible to reach, rather than accessible for those who need building adaptations, which would highlight this issue further. In addition, there was caution around the potential for duplication of service or unnecessary competition.



Community Engagement

To run a successful community business requires strong buy-in from the community. Sadly, only one respondent was interested in helping with a new community-owned business. Further community engagement would need to be undertaken to ensure a community-led and owned business can grow and thrive.