

Direct Line (01233) 330229
Ask For Doreen Cox
E-mail doreen.cox@ashford.gov.uk
Fax No (01233) 330682
Our Ref
Your Ref
Date 2nd July 2008

Jackie Grebby
Pluckley Parish Clerk
Giles Farm
Pluckley
Kent
TN27 0SY

Dear Ms Grebby

The Local Development Framework – Tenterden and Rural Areas Development Plan Document

Ashford Borough Council has recently received the Inspector's report regarding the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy has been found to be sound subject to minor amendments. These amendments are binding on the Council and it is proposed that the Core Strategy will be formally adopted by the Council on the 10th July 2008.

I am contacting you in light of the Inspector's Report, as Pluckley is a parish directly affected by these amendments. As part of policy CS6, Pluckley will now provisionally be included as one of the tier 3 settlements and thus has the potential of receiving limited development through site allocation, as part of the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD.

The full Inspectors report can be found on the Core Strategy pages of the Borough's website and the amended Policy CS6 has been reproduced at the end of this letter.

As you may be aware, all tier 3 settlements identified in the original Core Strategy undertook 'community workshops'. These community workshops were an opportunity to engage with local stakeholders about local issues and help find suitable development sites. As an addition to tier 3, the Borough Council would like to invite the Parish Council to participate in one of these community workshops and we would like to press on with arrangements where there is local commitment to this approach.

The proposed format for a Pluckley community workshop is set out below:

- The parish council should identify a lead person who is interested in helping to co-ordinate and take some responsibility for setting up the 'community workshop' and being our first point of contact and the link for the local community;
- The parish council is encouraged to identify a group of local people representing as diverse a range of interest as possible – clearly some local parish councillors are likely to be involved and there should ideally be representatives from different areas of the parish; with varied perspectives – for example, long standing and newer residents; a wide age range of both sexes; people who work or run a business in the local area; people involved in local community support services. We envisage a group of 20-30 people as a maximum. The Borough Councillor should also be invited.

- In addition, there will be up to 3 Council officers involved in the workshop to help engender debate and discussion and answer any questions that may arise. A facilitator will orchestrate the day – someone who can act with a degree of independence; be a 'critical friend' to the workshop as a whole, and avoid any one interest taking over;
- The workshops will follow a general format that firstly makes sure that all attendees understand the nature of the event and start with the same level of understanding. This enables people to take part with confidence and on an equal basis. A key starting point is that people accept that some development should take place– this is not the forum to debate the principle of whether there should be growth or no growth as this has been established , in the Core Strategy policy;
- Next we will explore constraints that affect where potential sites for development may come forward (e.g. AONB, nature conservation designations, etc). We will map proposals that have come forward – both from landowners directly to us and any preliminary thoughts about options that the local council may have had. We will overlay this with an analysis of the landscape setting of the community and seek to establish a broad consensus;
- From this analysis we will focus in more closely on short-listed sites and explore the potential of each – often by careful design, e.g. of open space, it is possible to create benefits for the wider community;
- We will explore the impact development of the scale proposed might have on local facilities and identify improvements needed that the development could fund. We will need to be realistic about this and challenge more extreme ideas that have little hope of being achieved.
- At the end of the session we will draw together the views of the workshop and establish what level of agreement there is. In our experience it is often possible to get high levels of consensus by having a structured, friendly but challenging event of this sort. The conclusions from each event will be taken together to Borough Councillors. I am sure that there will be further participation at that stage but in any event the Council's proposed site allocations will be published for comment. The submitted version of the document will subsequently be considered by an independent inspector at an examination.
- It would be helpful if you could respond to the points below as soon as possible:
 1. would your parish council support holding a workshop of this sort? (If not please contact us as it would be useful to understand your reasons).
 2. if so, would you be able to make a venue available locally ? and would anyone be able to provide teas/ coffees during the event ? (costs for these will be reimbursed)
 3. would you prefer a morning/ afternoon or evening session and are there any preferences on which days of the week (Monday – Friday) ? Please suggest a range of suitable dates over the next 2 months.

If you are keen to take forward this idea it would be helpful if you could nominate an individual who will be lead contact for us to work with and who can begin to draw up a representative list of local people. It would also be very helpful to hear now about any ideas of suitable development sites the parish council might already have.

I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely



Doreen J Cox (Mrs)
LDF Support Assistant



Policy CS6 : The Rural Settlement Hierarchy

In the Borough outside the Ashford Growth Area, housing site allocations will be made through the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD based on a hierarchy of settlements suitable for limited expansion. Subject to a more detailed assessment of environmental constraints to be carried out in the Tenterden & Rural sites DPD, the aim is for the allocations to be distributed at the following settlements and within the following periods:

	Phase 1 (2006 - 2013)	Phase 2 (2014 - 2021)
Tenterden	220	280
Charing	50	60
Hamstreet	50	60
Wye	50	60
Tier 3 settlements*	80	90
Totals	450	550

* The composition of this tier will be finalised in the Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD. At present it is expected to include Aldington, Bethersden, Biddenden, Chilham, Pluckley and Woodchurch, together with, probably, Challock and Rolvenden.

The hierarchy will also be used as a basis for employment land allocations, again to be made in the Tenterden & Rural Sites DPD on a scale capable of avoiding any worsening of the jobs to homes ratio in the rural area as a whole and the larger settlements in it. Proposals for other forms of development in the rural area will also be tested against the hierarchy and will normally be expected to reinforce it.