

## **West Dean and West Tytherley Neighbourhood Development Plan**

Environment and Landscape Working Group

Survey results analysis

Question 2a

What do you most value about living in your village? List up to three in order of importance, one being the most important.

Methodology

Answers in column one, most important, were attributed a value of 3, with column two attributed a value of 2 and column three attributed a value of 1.

All answers were assessed and grouped together. Ten groups were identified.

<b>Grouping</b>
<b>Community</b>
<b>Rural countryside Character</b>
<b>Rural Tranquillity</b>
<b>Rural Character</b>
<b>Rural village Character</b>
<b>Community facilities</b>
<b>Transport links</b>
<b>Location</b>
<b>Work</b>
<b>Rural Agricultural Character</b>

Five have been identified as being directly relevant to the Environment and Landscape topic. These groups are defined as follows:

<b>Grouping</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Rural countryside Character</b>	<b>Comments specifically referring to the rural land of the area</b>
<b>Rural Tranquillity</b>	<b>Comments specifically referring to tranquillity</b>
<b>Rural Character</b>	<b>Comments referring to the rural nature of the area generally</b>
<b>Rural village Character</b>	<b>Comments specifically referring to the settlements of the area</b>
<b>Rural Agricultural Character</b>	<b>Comments specifically referring to the agricultural use of the area</b>

An aggregate score was created as outlined above for all comments attributed to a group. The score of each grouping and its percentage of the total score is shown below.

<b>Grouping</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Rural countryside Character</b>	253	18%
<b>Rural Tranquillity</b>	251	18%
<b>Rural Character</b>	204	15%
<b>Rural village Character</b>	159	11%
<b>Rural Agricultural Character</b>	8	1%

### Analysis

Few comments specifically valued the agricultural use of the land in the area, however the rural landscape and its perceived tranquillity are highly valued. These attributes are closely linked to the use of the land which is predominantly agricultural and forestry. It is therefore identified that current land use creates significant value that is seen as a positive part of life in the NDP area.

The results show the countryside and settlements are seen together to create a positive rural character that is valued with a significant element particularly valuing the village settlements. This shows that the settlements, the predominant land uses and the countryside together make a very significant contribution to what is most valued by those living in the area.

It is also reasonable to assume that these aspects of the character of the area create value for those working or visiting the area.

### Conclusion

The present character of the settlements, the predominant land uses and the countryside as a whole are among the strongest elements in contributing value to the lives of those living in the area. The aim of NDP policy should be to promote and conserve these elements of the environment and to support them in changes and adaptation over time so the positive characteristics continue to play a significant role across the life of the plan.

### Question 2b

What do you most dislike about living in your village? List up to three in order of importance

### Methodology

Answers in column one, most important, where attributed a value of 3, with column two attributed a value of 2 and column three attributed a value of 1.

All answers were assessed and grouped together. Eighteen groups were identified.

<b>Grouping</b>
<b>Bad digital communications</b>
<b>Traffic</b>
<b>Poor infrastructure</b>
<b>Lack of amenities</b>
<b>Negative change</b>
<b>Poor public transport</b>
<b>Social division</b>
<b>Nothing</b>
<b>Remoteness</b>
<b>Parking</b>
<b>Noise/disturbance</b>
<b>Environmental crime</b>
<b>Property mix</b>
<b>Resistance to change</b>
<b>Potential Change</b>
<b>Administrative geography</b>
<b>Commercial activity</b>
<b>High living costs</b>

Five have been identified as being directly relevant to the Environment and Landscape topic. These groups are defined as follows:

<b>Grouping</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Negative change</b>	<b>Inappropriate change in built environment or countryside</b>
<b>Nothing</b>	<b>Those who disliked nothing</b>
<b>Noise/disturbance</b>	<b>Noise/disturbance from a variety of sources</b>
<b>Environmental crime</b>	<b>Fly tipping etc</b>
<b>Resistance to change</b>	<b>Too much opposition to reasonable change</b>
<b>Potential Change</b>	<b>Fears of future change</b>

An aggregate score was created as outlined above for all comments attributed to a group. The score of each grouping and its percentage of the total score is shown below.

<b>Grouping</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Negative change</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Nothing</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Noise/disturbance</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Environmental crime</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Resistance to change</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Potential Change</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1%</b>

Analysis

It is notable that a number of people find nothing to dislike at all. Overall environmental and landscape play only a very small role in people's dislikes about living in the area. Prime amongst these is concern about degradation being caused by inappropriate development which includes increasing density and increasing suburbanisation/urbanisation. Some of this concern is about potential future change. Significantly fewer responses showed concern that resistance to change was a negative factor. Noise and disturbance come from a variety of sources such as the railway and military helicopters. There is also some concern about fly tipping degrading the area.

### Conclusions

Most of these dislikes can be dealt with by minimising unsympathetic change so there is a need in NDP policy to reinforce and refine efforts to conserve the aspects of the villages that make a positive contribution. Other issues like noise and environmental crime are management and enforcement issues that are not within the remit of the NDP.

### Question 2c

How would you like your village to be described in 15 years time? Please tick up to five and feel free to tick 'very important' for your most important answer

### Methodology

This is a multiple choice question, the responses to each alternative were counted and divided into important and very important. Those two figures were then expressed as a percentage of the 268 returned questionnaires. The result is as follows:

	Prosperous	Vibrant	Attractive	Affordable	Accessible	Tranquil	Traditional	Beautiful	Peaceful	Safe	Rural	Friendly
Important	30	34	55	59	68	71	94	96	124	155	160	177
Very Important	1	1	4	11	3	15	9	2	12	22	33	12
Important %	11.2	12.7	20.5	22.0	25.4	26.5	35.1	35.8	46.3	57.8	59.7	66.0
Very Important %	0.4	0.4	1.5	4.1	1.1	5.6	3.4	0.7	4.5	8.2	12.3	4.5

### Analysis

The strongest support is for the rural character of the area to be conserved over the plan period and that this should include the aim of that character including beauty and peacefulness. There is very strong support for the villages to be friendly and issues of accessibility are also of concern.

### Conclusion

Policy in the NDP should aim to maintain the rural nature of the area and that needs to take into account aesthetic aspects of the character of the area while supporting openness and accessibility.

Question 2e : What worries you about further development in your village? In other words, what outcomes of further development would you say are unsustainable?

For the Environment and Landscape topic only the answer to the option “Loss of countryside and/or green space between existing settlements” was analysed.

#### Methodology

The responses to the selected option were counted and divided into important and very important. Those two figures were then expressed as a percentage of the 268 returned questionnaires. The result is as follows:

Important	150
Very Important	40
Important %	56.0
Very Important %	14.9

#### Analysis

There is a concern amongst the majority of respondents that loss of countryside and green space could happen as part of further development and that this would be damaging.

#### Conclusion

There is a need in NDP policy to reinforce and refine efforts to direct development to locations that best conserve the rural aspects of the area.

Question 2f : Thinking about sustainable development, what single change would most improve your quality of life?

#### Methodology

All answers were assessed and grouped together. Thirteen groups were identified.

<b>Digital communication</b>	
<b>Better infrastructure</b>	
<b>No change</b>	
<b>Appropriate housing mix</b>	
<b>Public transport</b>	
<b>Flood defence</b>	

<b>Preservation</b>
<b>Heritage Conservation</b>
<b>Traffic calming</b>
<b>Countryside access</b>
<b>Dark Skies</b>
<b>Employment</b>
<b>Neighbourliness</b>

Five have been identified as being directly relevant to the Environment and Landscape topic. These groups are defined as follows:

<b>No change</b>	<b>Keeping things as they are now</b>
<b>Preservation</b>	<b>No or minimal development</b>
<b>Heritage Conservation</b>	<b>Firm protection for Conservation Areas</b>
<b>Countryside access</b>	<b>More footpaths</b>
<b>Dark Skies</b>	<b>Remove light pollution</b>

The total in each group was counted and is expressed as a percentage of the 268 returned questionnaires.

<b>No change</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Preservation</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Heritage Conservation</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Countryside access</b>	<b>&gt;1%</b>
<b>Dark Skies</b>	<b>&gt;1%</b>

#### Analysis

As this question was asking for change to improve quality of life it seems clear that little need is identified for change to make a positive improvement.

#### Conclusion

There is no real demand for policy to improve these issues.

Question 2g : A rural feel and access to the countryside is fundamental not only to our quality of life and community identity, but also to many aspects of our economy.

#### Methodology

The responses were counted and have been expressed as a percentage of the 268 returned questionnaires.

Strongly agree	155	57.8
Agree	87	32.5
Disagree	4	1.5
Strongly disagree	1	0.4
No opinion	7	2.6
Don't know	2	0.7

#### Analysis

There is overwhelming identification that the rural nature of the area and access to the countryside is fundamental to what sustains and defines the community and is seen as the core positive characteristic of the area.

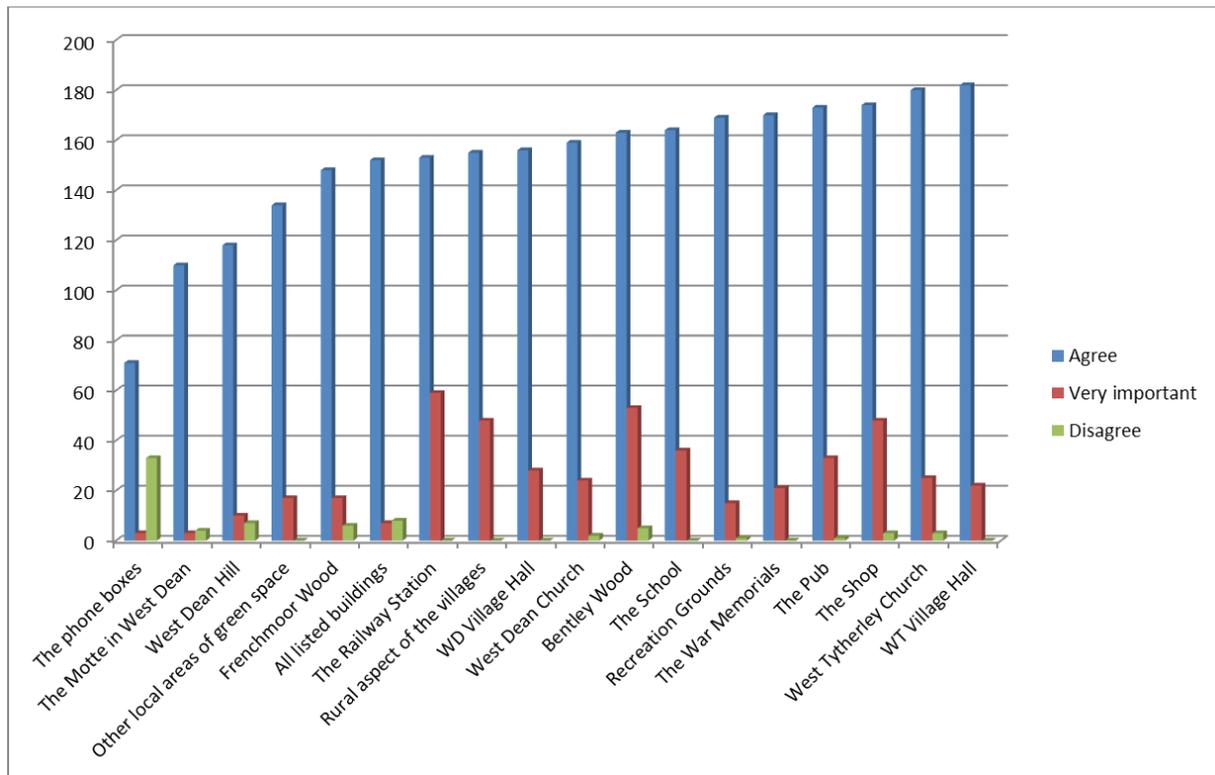
#### Conclusion

It should be a key aim of NDP policy to define the essential characteristics of the rural feel of the area and access to it. The resulting policies should seek to conserve and enhance these core positive aspects of the Plan area.

Question 3d : The following have been identified as features of the neighbourhood which residents would like to protect. Please look through the list and tick any that you agree with tick very important for those that you think are most important and tick disagree against any that you think should not be on the list.

#### Methodology

The responses were counted and have also been expressed as a percentage of the 268 returned questionnaires.



## Analysis

The features include landscape features and most of the built features are also heritage assets. What is clear from the strong support for protection of these features is that most of them are highly valued by people across the NDP area and not just by those in the village where they are located.

Features with a symbolic importance like the war memorials and the parish churches are strongly supported. Bentley Wood which is such an extensive feature and is also accessible is supported by over 80% of respondents.

Many of the features combine functional uses and are also heritage assets like the village halls, the pub, the railway station and the school. These are supported by between 69% and 79% of respondents. Those features that do not have community functional uses are less strongly supported with West Dean Motte having 42% support and Listed Buildings 59% support

## Conclusions

The support for the very high scoring features shows that their protection needs to be addressed directly by NDP policies. It also shows that policy should support the use of heritage assets to provide important functions in the villages as this help to secure the future of the heritage assets as well as providing highly valued facilities.

Policy should also seek to conserve the highly valued landscape features and support access to them.

## Question 5c

Do you think that the neighbourhood plan should include policies that protect land that is currently either woodland or land tied either agriculturally or to equestrian usage?

#### Methodology

The responses were counted and have been expressed as a percentage of the 268 returned questionnaires.

Response ID	Count	%
Strongly in favour	197	73.5
Moderately in favour	32	11.9
Moderately against	12	4.5
Strongly against	2	0.7
No opinion / don't know	12	4.5

#### Analysis

As with other questions strong support is shown for protecting the countryside character of the area

#### Conclusions

The aim of NDP policy should be to promote and conserve these elements of the environment and to support them in changes and adaptation over time so the positive characteristics continue to play a significant role across the life of the plan.