

Shorne Parish Council

————— Borough of Gravesham —————



THE PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

December 2017

Lower Thames Crossing

Highways England's latest thinking, announced on 1st November 2017, is to remove the proposed junction from the A226 between Chalk and Shorne, in order to reduce the traffic impact on local roads.

The removal of this junction is of course welcomed, although it is noted that the land required for the junction and the diversion of the A226 is still included in the redline development boundary plans.

The removal of the junction would enable the tunnel portals to be moved further south, away from Chalk, and it is disappointing that Highways England has not made this decision yet. Whilst it is encouraging that they are continuing their assessment of the length of the tunnels and where to locate the entrances, the Parish Council considers it essential that the tunnels should be extended as far south of the A226 as possible, and further mitigation measures taken to minimise the impact on the environment and the lives of people living in Thong and Shorne West.

Even with the removal of the A226 junction, we should be under no illusion about the level of traffic and environmental impact that the crossing will bring to this area. It is now planned that the link road will be 3 lanes in each direction, and that the A2 will be widened from 4 to 5 lanes in each direction between the M2 and the junction east of Gravesend. The changes to the redline development boundary in these and other areas needs clarification.

The Parish Council will be arranging a meeting Highways England to seek further information.

Vacancy for a Parish Councillor in Shorne West

Following Martin Redfern's recent move to Wales, a vacancy has arisen for a Parish Councillor to represent Shorne West Ward, and we are looking to fill this vacancy by co-option of a suitable applicant. If you are interested in being considered for this vacancy, please let us know by emailing shorne.parish@yahoo.co.uk or by writing to The Clerk, 70 Colyer Road, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 8AY.

Gravesham Housing Strategy Consultation – Have Your Say

As part of the development of the Local Plan, Gravesham Borough Council is planning to carry out a public consultation on their Site Allocations and Development Policy. This will include their latest assessment of the volume of new housing required during the period 2011 to 2028, and their settlement strategy to determine where these new dwellings will be built.

The key issue is the increase in the volume of housing required. The current core strategy was based on a requirement for 6,170 additional dwellings between 2011 and 2028, which itself was a significant uplift on the 4,600 originally proposed. However, the latest assessment has a headline figure of 7,905 dwellings, further increase of 28% over the same period.

The documents state that the reason for this is that the population of Gravesham has grown by 11,000 since 2001, including 6,900 due to international migration, partly offset by 2,600 people leaving the Borough, and births exceeding deaths by 6,160. Projecting these trends forward produces a growing population, and hence a larger requirement for new homes.

In terms of where the additional properties will be built, the first place of search is the Gravesend and Northfleet urban area and the villages inset from the Green Belt, namely Shorne (various parts), Higham (two parts), Cobham, Hook Green Meopham, Meopham Green, Culverstone Green, and Vigo.

However, given the latest increased housing requirement assessment, the Council states that around 2,000 dwellings cannot be accommodated in the urban area or inset villages. This, allowing for other land uses, would require about 80 hectares of land, which is roughly the size of Istead Rise. The Borough Council therefore considers that it will be necessary to look at development opportunities elsewhere, which means looking at land in the Green Belt.

Since this is the last issue of the parish magazine until February 2018, it is possible that the consultation will take place before then. Should this happen, the Parish Council will publicise the consultation on its website at <http://www.shornepc.kentparishes.gov.uk> and on its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/shorneparishcouncil.

Whatever your views on this may be, the Parish Council would like to wish all our Parishioners a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Parish Council Meetings in December and January

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| Thursday 7 th December 2017 | - | Parish Council Short Meeting. |
| Thursday 11 th January 2018 | - | Parish Council Meeting |
| Thursday 25 th January 2018 | - | Planning & Highways Committee |

The meetings will start at 7.45pm in the Committee Room in Shorne Village Hall.

Bob Lane

Shorne Parish Council