Bromham Neighbourhood Plan

Analysis of Comments Received at the Launch Event – 20-21 February 2015

1.   From the 250 (approx.) people who attended the launch event, we received 532 individual post-it notes over the two-day event, some containing comments on more than one subject. A numerical breakdown by theme is set out below.

Table 1

Total individual post-its and notes   532

General comments	20
Development sites	107
Housing types	66
Getting Around	135

Incl -		
	Speeding	30
	Buses	30
	Parking	20
	Cycling	5
	Pedestrians	5

Environment	75
Heritage	40
Village facilities	45
Employment	18
Schools	18
Young People	36

Note - Comments were categorised according to substance rather than where they were placed at the launch event.

The individual themes are discussed below.

General comments

2.   Most of the general comments suggested that Bromham should retain its discrete identity and character as a rural village – it should not be absorbed into Bedford or merge with Biddenham or Oakley.

3.   Another overarching theme was that the peaceful, undeveloped nature of Bromham Park as a place where people can walk and enjoy its rural tranquillity is important to many residents (over 30 comments). Green spaces more generally were regarded as an important factor in the character of the village.

4.   There is also a desire for Bromham Mill to be better utilised throughout the year (over 20 comments) providing a site for a café, farm shop, small or start-up business units, and a youth centre, as well as hosting more open air events.

Housing and Development

Development Sites

5.   A map of the potential development sites is at Annex A.

6.   There were many (c.50) comments requesting no housing development in Bromham Park (site 48) because of its contribution to the village's character. The site off Molliver's Lane and Oakley Road (site 56) drew the next most requests not to be developed (14), because it would substantially increase traffic on Molliver's Lane, Oakley Road and Village Road, which already suffer speeding (see Getting About), as well with the risking the merging of Bromham with Oakley. Molliver's Field (site 45) attracted six requests for it not to be developed for similar reasons.

7.   Sites 44 and 54 in Lower Farm Road both attracted 10 comments opposing development, mostly because of the poor access in Lower Farm Road itself, its rural setting, and the consequent additional traffic that would use Oakley Road and Village Road.

8.   The sites attracting most support for development were sites 43, 49, 51, 47, 52 and 53, all of which abut or are close to, Bromham Bypass. All of them attracted between 12 and 14 supporting comments, although each attracted between one and four objections to development.   The rationale of those supporting development at these sites was that much of the traffic from such developments could be channelled via the A428 or Bromham Bypass (i.e. for those travelling to and from Bedford, Milton Keynes or Northampton). Another reason given was that such development would not change the essential shape of the village.

9.   See Appendix B for a quantitative analysis of this theme.

Housing Types

10.   The main support was for a balanced mix of housing (22 comments), and many who supported this approach suggested that it would help to retain the existing character of the village. There were 16 requests for sheltered accommodation, 13 for more starter homes (but one objector), nine for

smaller homes for downsizers and three for larger /executive homes (although five objected to this type of home).

11.   There were two requests each for family homes and social housing and one for 'affordable' homes. Three people asked for a residential care home and three sought more bungalows.

12.   Appendix C sets this out quantitatively.

Getting About

Speeding

14.   There was general concern about speeding in the village (5), but specific concerns were expressed about Village Road (14) and Oakley Road (5), (and so 19 if you take the two as a continuation of the same village through road) and to a lesser extent in Grange Lane/Springfield Drive (3) Molliver's Lane (1), Bromham Bridge (1) and the Swan Junction (1).

15.   Proposed solutions included speed cameras (4) although there was one objector, traffic calming/speed bumps (12) and speed-sensitive traffic lights (2).

Parking

16.   There were eight comments about parking on verges and pavements, concern about parking in Grange Lane, Springfield Drive and the library car park at school drop-off and pick-up times (6), and non-enforcement of double yellow lines in Stagsden Road and Molliver's Lane (2).

17.   There were three specific complaints about parking dangerously close to the junction between Manor Close and Oakley Road, a similar comment about the junction of Wingfield Road with Village Road and one general comment about parking too close to road junctions.

Bus Services

18.   There were a number of requests to improve bus services covering more frequent (6) and additional services (3), more early morning services, including some timed to get passengers into Bedford at 9 am (6), and an evening service (7). One comment suggested the installation of bus due times indicators in bus stops in the village.

19.   Many people (13) wanted the X5 service to call at Bromham or somewhere between Bromham and Biddenham.

Road Surfaces and Markings

20.   Poor road surfaces were reported in Woodland Drive and Wingfield Road, Grange Lane and New Road and it was suggested that the road lane

markings should be renewed at the Box End Road, Stagsden Road and Village Road complex of junctions

Cyclists and Pedestrians

21.   There were five requests for improved facilities for cyclists, including from Oakley Bridge and along Oakley Road, as well as cycle paths alongside pavements.

22.   There were individual requests for wider pavements for buggies and wheelchairs, continuous pavements on both sides of Village Road, and a new pavement from the entrance to the disused railway line to the existing pavement on Oakley Road. There were various suggestions in relation to Bromham Bridge that reflect its heritage status: two requests for a pedestrian bridge alongside the bridge; four of a pedestrian/cycle path on the bridge; two for heavy traffic to be excluded from the bridge; and two for the bridge to be traffic free.

23.   There were six requests for a footbridge/bridle path over the ford in the Great Ouse near Clapham and individual requests for a light tram service and an ultra light rail service from Bromham to Bedford.

Village Facilities

24.   A number of people (7) thought the current village facilities were about right in that increasing facilities too much would spoil the rural nature of the village, and, some argued, Bromham is close enough to Bedford for easy access to more facilities. However there was some recognition that more facilities may be needed by 2032.

25.   Those arguing for more facilities wanted –
   ➢ coffee shop (6) but one specified not at the Mill;
   ➢ more shops (2) with specific requests for a baker's (2) butcher's (1) greengrocers and a sweet shop (1),
   ➢ a Chinese takeaway (1)
   ➢ retail units at the Mill.

26.   Other requests included –
   ➢ a sports centre (1) or a new school with sports facilities for general use (3)
   ➢ facilities for older people (e.g. outdoor bowling) (1) adult education classes (1) or a daytime centre (1).
   ➢ More use of the village hall (2) – although one commentator suggested current hire prices were too expensive).
   ➢ Faster broadband.

27.   Two people were keen to retain the library – one of them wanted it open every day.

Schools

28.   There were no common themes on schools. There was some recognition that additional development could require additional school capacity (2). One commentator wanted a further lower school and a middle school and argued that the current school is oversubscribed. One suggested a purpose-built pre-school facility – not a day nursery. Two doubted the need for new schools but one of them argued that if new schools were needed they should be purpose built, not on a split site.

29.   Another suggested the need for primary and secondary schools rather than lower middle and upper schools, and that the current lower school should become a primary school.
One suggestion was that site 45 (Mollivers Field) should be used for a school which would be a community asset – for adult evening classes, sports facilities etc

Heritage Sites

30.   There was significant support (c.20) for further use of Bromham Mill including the café being open all year (6). There were also suggestions of a restaurant at the Mill site and that the Mill should be used to house youth facilities, a craft shop, small and rural businesses.

31.   Bromham Bridge is dealt with under Getting Around and Bromham Park under Environment.

32.   Other suggestions included a notice board outside the village hall showing the location of heritage sites, and better signposting of the sites.

Employment

33.   Ideas for employment opportunities included the development of small/start up/ craft units at Bromham Mill so that the rural character of the village was not lost (6) and the provision of small scale employment/start-up facilities more generally (4). Some of the ideas for new village facilities, such as retail outlets or a microbrewery may also provide employment opportunities.

34.   Some commentators (4) suggested there was no need for any new employment opportunities, on the grounds that it would detract from the rural nature of the village and because industrial units and other centres of employment in Bedford were nearby.

Young People

35.   Aside from requesting more activities for 10-16 year olds (2) a range of specific ideas was put forward in this category, including –

- A youth club (8) although some specified not church-run, and others suggested that it could be at the Mill, and provide opportunities for music, art, theatre or a dance studio.
- A skate park (6)
- Tennis courts (4)
- Cricket club (1)
- More play areas (1)

36. One comment suggested asking young people directly what they wanted and a similar suggestion was that a school visit should be made to seek young people's views

Environment

37. Many people (over 50) requested that Bromham Park should be kept in its present state (15) from an environmental perspective (i.e. not just the housing issue), others that the Skinner family deed relating to the Park should be publicised, or that it effectively prevented development of the Park (8).

38. Many (10) asked for Hall Farm/Lower Farm Road to be retained as an equestrian area and others were keen for its rural character to be maintained.

39. Others (11) valued the quiet green areas and footpaths around the village and four people mentioned the nature reserve specifically as well as local woodlands.

40. More practical requests were for a 'dog parking facility' in Bromham Park, that litter bins should be placed alongside dog bins, and that the quiet walks around the village should be retained.

41. One plea was for the corridor between the built up area and the by-pass and Stagsden Road should be maintained (also reflected in Development Sites).

Other Comments

42. There were also comments about –

- areas of poor street lighting;
- the state of the outdoor gym;
- dog fouling and litter;
- the intrusive nature of aeroplane noise
- the need for public toilets in the village; and
- a display (notice?) board on Stagsden Road.

Appendix A

CALL FOR SITES 2014
Sites submitted in the Parish of
BROMHAM
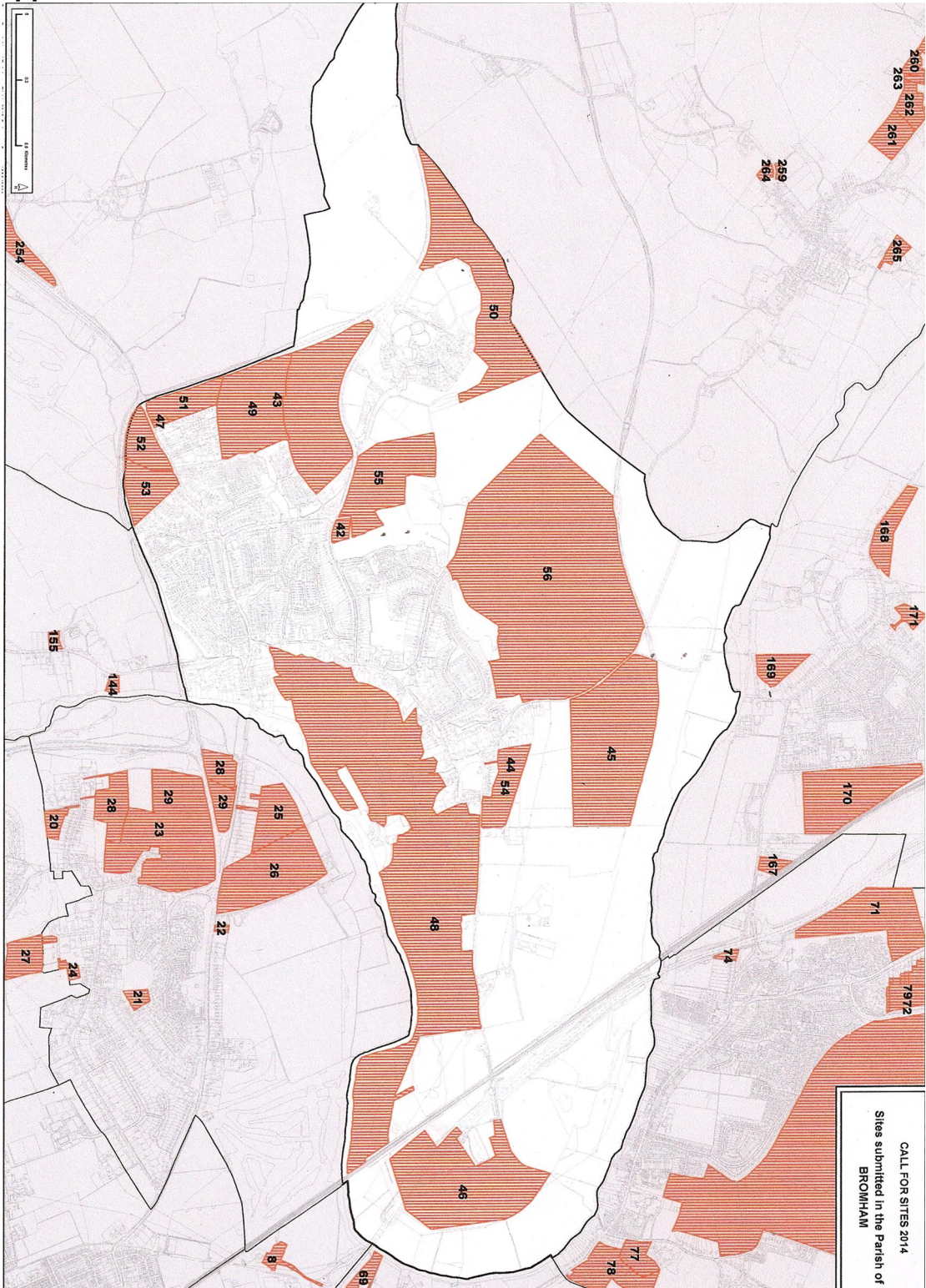
Appendix B

Comments for or against specific proposed development sites

Site	Yes	No
42 Grange Lane (small)	1 sheltered	0
43 South of N'hampton Road	12	4
44 North of Lower Farm Road 1	0	10
45 Molliver's Field, Oakley Road	0	6
46 Bedford North Station	1	2
47 Adj 164 Stagsden Road	14	2
48 Bromham Park & Lower Farm Rd	0	49
49 N'hampton Road 1	12	3
50 N'hampton Road 2	0	2
51 Stagsden Road North	14	2
52 Stagsden Road South 1	12	1
53 Stagsden Road South 2	11	1
54 Lower Farm Road North 2	0	10
55 Grange Lane/ N'hampton Road	0	0
56 Molliver's Lane/Oakley Road	1	14

Appendix C

Comments received relating to specific housing needs

Housing Types

A balanced mix	21
Sheltered accommodation	17
Starter homes	13
Smaller homes for 'downsizers'	8
'Large' homes	3
'Family' homes	2
'Affordable' homes	1
Residential care home	3
Social housing	2
Bungalows	4
Not large/executive homes	3
No starter homes	1