

East Malling Trust – Planning for the Future

Statement of Community Involvement



Index

3: **Introduction**

4: **Public Exhibitions**

 The Venues

 Pre-publicity

5: **Public Exhibitions**

 Format and attendance

Project Website

6: **Feedback**

 Number of responses

 Summary of responses

7: **Feedback**

 Summary of responses (continued)

Introduction

This report has been compiled by Maxim, a Tunbridge Wells-based agency engaged by East Malling Trust to organise and manage two public consultation events in relation to the Trust's proposals for Parkside, East Malling, and Ditton Edge, Ditton.

This report summarises how the two events were publicised to local people, what information was made available to attendees, details of numbers of attendees, how public feedback was encouraged and received, and a summary of public responses to the proposals.

December 2018

Public Exhibitions – the venues

Two Public Exhibitions were organised to publicise the proposals. Local residents, parish councillors, ward councillors and other interested parties were invited to attend.

The first exhibition was held on Wednesday, October 31st between 12.30pm and 8pm, at the East Malling Centre, Chapman Way, East Malling ME19 6SD.

The second was held on Thursday, November 1st between 12.30pm and 8pm at Ditton Community Centre, Kiln Barn Road, Ditton, ME20 6AH.

At both events the first 90 minutes was focused on Parish and Borough Councillors, with the event open to the public from 2pm.

Pre-publicity for Exhibitions

In order to inform people of the exhibitions a leaflet was distributed to residents and businesses of East Malling and Ditton. In total 2,750 direct flyers were distributed.

An advertisement was placed in the October 25th edition of the Kent Messenger and a press release was issued to the Kent Messenger and the Downs Mail publicising both events.

The Parish Clerks were informed of the dates and details were circulated to all parish members. Invitations were sent to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Councillors.

Public Exhibitions – Format and attendance

The design team prepared 13 presentation boards for the exhibitions. These provided a summary of the design, details of the indicative Masterplan and indicative design information and the rationale behind the proposals.

They also outlined the history of East Mallong Trust and its work on the site, and the scientific research undertaken by NIAB EMR.

Attendees were free to review the boards and members of the master planning and East Mallong Trust teams were on hand to discuss the proposals and answer questions.

The attendees of both the Councillor and Public events were invited to fill in our feedback form. The form was structured with a number of questions with the intention to get a broad indication of the local community views on the development scheme and an assessment of the proposed benefits. A copy of the feedback form is attached at Appendix i.

The East Mallong Public Exhibition was attended by 59 people. No councillors attended during the 90 minutes set aside for local members, although members of the Parish Council did attend throughout the rest of the day.

A total of 269 people attended the Ditton event, with nine attendees during the 90 minute session set aside for local councillors.

Project website

A project website, www.EMT-planningforthefuture.co.uk, was created and went live ahead of the Public Exhibition. This included all the information available on the information boards and provided an opportunity for interested parties to give feedback on the proposals.

An email address for submissions, info@emt-planningforthefuture.co.uk, was created and publicised on the website.

Since going live the website has received 673 hits up to November 30th.

Feedback – Number of responses

Interested parties were offered the opportunity of completing the feedback form at the Public Exhibition, or completing the online version.

Of the 59 people who attended, 26 completed and returned the feedback forms on the day of the East Malling Public Exhibition.

Of the 269 who attended the Ditton Public Exhibition, 112 returned forms on the day.

In all, 78 people completed the online form.

Three emails were received via the website.

Summary of Feedback Responses

Specific analysis of the responses to the questions is summarised below:

Do you support ongoing scientific research at East Malling?

	East Malling	Ditton	Online
Yes	25 (96%)	93 (84%)	9 (12%)
No	1 (4%)	13 (12%)	1 (1%)
No answer	-	4 (4%)	68 (87%)

Do you support the development of new homes to ensure the continued success of NIAB EMR?

	East Malling	Ditton	Online
Yes	14 (54%)	23 (21%)	3 (4%)
No	6 (23%)	79 (70%)	33 (42%)
Unsure	1 (4%)	-	-
No answer	5 (19%)	10 (9%)	42 (54%)

Do you think the proposed sites and illustrative designs of the developments are in keeping with the existing communities and local landscape and heritage?

	East Malling	Ditton	Online
Yes	13 (50%)	15 (13%)	2 (3%)
No	8 (31%)	87 (78%)	9 (12%)
Unsure	1 (4%)	-	-
No answer	4 (15%)	10 (9%)	67 (85%)

Which of the following would you regard as important to be included in any development? (Respondents could select more than one response)

	East Malling	Ditton	Online
Affordable housing	16	29	8
Green space	23	84	18
Children's play areas	8	35	14
Protecting historic views	25	71	38

Both the printed and online feedback forms left space for general comments, a summary of which appears below.

East Malling

There were a number of supportive comments from attendees of the East Malling event, which included describing the proposals as reasonable, sensitive, sympathetic and sensibly placed, while another highlighted the importance of the work carried out at NIAB EMR and the role the proposed development plays in supporting that.

Respondents raised concerns over the proposed southern access to the Parkside site leading onto an already difficult junction, with suggestions and requests to investigate access via the north of the site, with possible pedestrian and cycle access from the south towards East Malling station.

Other concerns centred on additional traffic on local roads and the A20, the impact on local health services such as GPs, and the density of development proposed.

Ditton

The majority of the concerns raised by respondents from the Ditton event concentrated on the additional traffic the development would generate on local roads, including Kiln Barn Road, St Peter's Road, New Road, the signal-controlled junction of New Road and the A20, the A20 itself and other local roads.

Respondents raised concerns that the local road infrastructure cannot cope with current traffic levels and that there is a lack of additional local amenities such as GP surgeries, hospitals and school places.

Comments also questioned the number of houses proposed for the Ditton Edge site and raised the need for sufficient provision of parking spaces.

Appendix i



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Thank you for attending this Public Exhibition. We would appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to complete this form to share your views on the proposals which have been presented today. The information you share on this form will be used solely for the purposes of collating feedback into East Malling Trust's proposals for Ditton Edge and Parkside, East Malling. Neither East Malling Trust nor any of its partners in these projects will pass your details on to any third parties. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail as a result of filling out this form unless we have explicitly requested and received your permission.

Name (optional):

Address and post code (optional):

Email (optional):

Do you support on-going scientific research at East Malling?

☐

Yes

☐

No

In principle, do you support the development of new homes to ensure the continued success of NIAB EMR, formerly East Malling Research?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Do you think the proposed sites and the illustrative designs of the developments are in keeping with the existing communities and local landscape and heritage?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Continued overleaf

Which of the following would you regard as important to be included in any development?

☐

Affordable housing

☐

Green space

☐

Children's play areas

☐

Protecting historic views

Your comments:

☐

I would like to receive updates by email

Please leave this form in the box by the exit. Alternatively, you can submit your views via our website: www.EMT-planningforthefuture.co.uk