

Key Issues Raised on Growth Strategy Options

Response Analysis – Option 1 (Multiple Sites)*

Theme	Description	Count	Percent
Infrastructure and transportation concerns	There is a significant emphasis on the strain on existing infrastructure and transportation networks due to new developments, with particular focus on the potential for increased traffic congestion, inadequacies in parking facilities, and the inability of current road systems to handle additional volume. Concerns extend to the impact on public transport provisions, highlighting the limited capacity of local train stations and the need for expansion in services to accommodate the additional residents.	871	66%
Environmental and ecological impact	Concern around the repercussions of developing on designated Green Belt and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)/National Landscape. This encompasses the negative effects on local biodiversity, including the potential loss of habitats for protected species, increased air, light, and noise pollution, and the detrimental impact on the natural landscape. Concerns about the legal and ethical implications of encroaching on protected land are also raised, underlining the importance of preserving these areas for future generations.	823	62%
Housing needs and development strategies	The discussion highlights a divide between the demand for housing and the methods of achieving it. While there is an acknowledgment of the need for additional housing, there is strong opposition to large-scale developments, particularly on Green Belt land. The preference leans towards smaller, more dispersed housing projects that integrate into existing communities without significant environmental or infrastructural impact. Need to find a balance between meeting housing needs and preserving the character and sustainability of local areas.	787	60%
Legal and policy framework	Within the discussions, there's a critique of the planning policies and decisions, questioning their alignment with national guidelines and the local community's interests. Issues of transparency, engagement, and the interpretation of 'exceptional circumstances' required for Green Belt release are brought into focus. The narrative underscores a demand for adherence to policies that protect Green Belts and AONB, urging a reconsideration of development plans that contravene these principles.	354	27%
Community and healthcare services	The potential overburdening of local healthcare facilities and the need for more robust community services in light of new developments are key issues. The communities express apprehension over the adequacy of existing medical services to cater to the increased population, as well as the challenges in staffing new healthcare facilities. There's a desire for more comprehensive planning to ensure the provision of essential services, including schools/shops, to support community needs.	287	22%
Social and cultural preservation	There is a concern for maintaining the social fabric and cultural identity of existing communities amidst the pressure to develop. The fear of local villages losing their distinctiveness and merging into urban sprawl is evident, with residents calling for development that respects the historical and cultural significance of the areas. The potential loss of recreational facilities and green spaces, which contribute to the community's quality of life, is also highlighted as a critical issue.	213	16%
Flooding / climate considerations	A portion of the response is dedicated to concerns over potential flooding, exacerbated by construction on natural absorption areas and the impact on water drainage systems. The dialogue extends to broader climate considerations, including the role of green spaces in carbon sequestration and air purification, emphasizing the need for environmentally conscious development plans that consider the implications of climate change.	53	4%

Response Analysis – Option 2 (Pedham Place)*

Theme	Description	Count	Percent
Infrastructure and services enhancement	Critical need for wider development that encompasses not just housing but also the expansion and improvement of supporting infrastructure and services. This includes roads, public transport, schools, medical facilities, and leisure amenities. Many express concerns about current infrastructure inadequacies and the potential exacerbation of these issues with additional houses. This option is also perceived as facilitating simultaneous infrastructure development, which could mitigate strains on existing systems and support new communities effectively.	1166	75%
Balancing development with preservation	Accommodate housing needs while simultaneously ensuring the preservation of the natural environment, including Green Belts and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)/National Landscape. This reflects an understanding of the importance of safeguarding natural landscapes for future generations, set against the necessity of meeting housing demands. Development must strike this balance, minimizing environmental impact while addressing the acute need for more homes.	987	64%
Traffic management / congestion concerns	Traffic and transportation issues form a substantial part of the discussion, with many residents worried about the impact of new developments on already congested roads and insufficient public transport links. Concerns include safety, pollution, and the general quality of life for existing and future residents. A strong inclination towards development options that consider / plan for effective traffic management, enhance public transportation, and incorporate pedestrian and cycling infrastructure	671	43%
Sustainable / integrated community development	Enthusiasm for development proposals that offer a comprehensive approach to building new communities. This includes an emphasis on sustainability, including EV charging hubs and green spaces, alongside provisions for schools, healthcare, retail, and employment opportunities within the development site. This theme underscores an aspiration for self-sufficient, integrated communities that reduce reliance on overstretched existing facilities and contribute positively to local economies and lifestyles.	470	30%
Environmental sustainability / biodiversity	Environmental concerns extend beyond the preservation of the Green Belt and AONB, with discussions on biodiversity, pollution, and the potential for planned developments to adopt green and sustainable practices. There's a strong sentiment in favour of developments that minimize environmental impact, promote eco-friendly transport and lifestyle choices, and consider ecology.	335	22%
Protecting community character and wellbeing	Residents express a strong connection to the character and ambiance of their towns and villages, with many highlighting concerns about large-scale developments potentially undermining these qualities. Issues such as overcrowded schools, strained local healthcare services, and loss of green spaces are mentioned as detrimental to community wellbeing. There's an evident desire for development plans that respect and integrate with the existing local character, fostering environments that support both physical and mental wellbeing.	335	22%
Economic implications / employment opportunities	The potential for new developments to create job opportunities and stimulate local economies is both a concern and an aspiration. There's a recognition of the need for such developments to include commercial spaces, leisure facilities, and other amenities that could provide employment. Moreover, there's an awareness of the need to plan these aspects alongside residential construction to ensure balanced community growth and economic vitality.	94	6%

Response Analysis – Option 3 (Combined)*

Theme	Description	Count	Percent
Housing demand and distribution	The need for affordable and sufficient housing is a common concern, with many advocating for a balanced distribution of developments to meet the growing demand. Responses suggest different scales and locations for housing, highlighting the necessity for strategic planning that accommodates both immediate and future needs. However, there's apprehension regarding the impact on local services, infrastructure, and the environment.	64	61%
Local services and amenities	Concerns about the capacity of existing amenities, such as schools, GP surgeries, and local shops to support an increased population. The anticipation of more developments leads to calls for a proportional expansion of local services to ensure they can accommodate growing communities without compromising on access or quality.	41	39%
Community impact and social infrastructure	The potential for new housing to affect local communities, including issues related to health, education, and general welfare, is noted. Discussions around the advantages of new developments bringing job opportunities and enhancing local economies are counterbalanced by worries about social cohesion, mental health, and the adequacy of social infrastructure to support new residents.	38	36%
Traffic and transport infrastructure	Increased traffic congestion and insufficient public transport services are highlighted as major concerns associated with new developments. While some see the expansion of housing as an opportunity to improve road infrastructure and public transport options, others worry about the exacerbation of current traffic issues and the sustainability of travel patterns.	28	27%
Strategic planning and consultation	The need for a comprehensive and transparent planning process is underscored, with suggestions for a hybrid approach that considers community feedback, environmental assessments, and long-term implications. There's a call for more involvement from local councils in the early stages of planning to ensure developments meet the broader objectives of community welfare and environmental sustainability.	27	26%
Green Belt considerations	There's a strong sentiment towards preserving Green Belt lands and also the natural beauty of the area, with some advocating for development on previously used sites like disused golf courses. The debate around this topic revolves around balancing the urgent need for housing with the long-term benefits of maintaining green spaces and environmental quality.	26	25%
Sustainability and future-proofing	The emphasis on sustainability in future developments suggests a desire for housing that is not only environmentally friendly but also adaptable to the changing needs of residents. This includes the integration of green technology, efficient public transport, and community spaces that encourage a lower carbon footprint.	10	10%

Response Analysis - 'None of the above'*

Theme	Description	Count	Percent
Environmental impact and preservation of green spaces	Communities are worried about potential harm to natural environments due to development strategies, including destruction of wildlife habitats, pollution increase, and irreversible local landscape changes. On the other hand, planned development could introduce sustainable living options and promote environmental awareness.	752	62%
Infrastructure and public service strain	There are anxieties over inadequate infrastructure and public services to support new developments, possibility of increased congestion, pollution, and strain on essential services. However, development could allow for infrastructure improvements and modernization.	735	61%
Traffic and transportation concerns	There are worries about increased traffic congestion and pressure on public transportation systems, safety hazards, and inadequate road facilities. Development, however, could lead to improvements in local transport networks.	651	54%
Housing needs vs. community character	A conflict exists between the need for housing and the desire to preserve local community character. Some people fear development may lead to overcrowded conditions and loss of community identity, others see it as necessary to meet housing demand. Well planned development could respect local communities while integrating new homes.	616	51%
Access to essential services	Concerns are raised by potential inability to access essentials like healthcare, education, and recreational facilities due to population rise. Development could significantly improve and expand local services, addressing long-standing deficits.	347	29%
Economic implications	The economic motivations behind development plans are questioned, with worries that profit may be prioritized over community benefits such as affordable housing and sustainable growth. Development could stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and enhance local amenities and services.	123	10%
Environmental sustainability and climate impact	Development should not contribute to climate change or compromise environmental sustainability. Development presents an opportunity to adopt green building practices, enhance local biodiversity, and promote climate resilience.	117	10%

*Please note where respondents did not provide a reason for their option choice, these results could not be included in the above theme analysis.