**ROBERTSBRIDGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**EXHIBITION OF SITES WITH POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT: July 4 2015**

**SUMMARY**

Twelve potential building sites were demonstrated and visitors had the opportunity to record their personal views about the potential of each site for required future building in the Parish. 185 responses were received by the closing date, recording views as to which sites could be considered for development, giving reasons why (or why not). The following chart show the percentage of positive replies to the question “Is this site worth further investigation?”

1. **The Mill, Countrycrafts, Heathfield Gardens (West) and North of Northbridge Street (adjacent to the Mill Site).**

The Countrycrafts site had a previous (now lapsed) planning permission and it has long been accepted that building will go ahead here. Discounting this site, therefore, the most favoured new sites are at the north and south ends of the village. The Mill site has long been seen as a waste of a brownfield space, considered an eyesore, and 80 people specifically noted that it is their preferred site for development. Heathfield Gardens West is a newly available possibility, but also had considerable support.

1. **Heathfield Gardens (East), Grove Farm (Phase 1) and Slides Farm.**

Sites adjacent to the two preferred new sites: North of Northbridge Street adjacent to the Mill, and Heathfield Gardens East had middling support. A factor may be the plans for the primary sites were thought to be extensive enough.

Phase 1 of Grove Farm also had middling support, along with Slides Farm. These are both greenfield sites. The use of greenfield sites was a concern with many developments. This was a factor with Slides Farm, coupled with concern about how it would connect to the village for pedestrians and to the A21 for drivers.

Grove Farm (Phase 1) next to George Hill is known as likely to be accepted for development, and people seemed to assume building would proceed there, mainly identifying preferences for the range of homes and the feel of the village once the development is in place. The primary concerns were how the development would increase congestion on George Hill; access to the site; parking problems and also the potential of adding to surface water running down into the village.

1. **South of Pound Platt, Vicarage Lane, Grove Farm (Phase 2) and Bishops Lane.**

The remaining five sites were favoured by less than half of the respondents. Robertsbridge Club and Vicarage Land are both in the centre, and although thought useful for the GP and dentist’s surgeries, small developments for supported living or local first time buyers, there was considerable concern about access, about parking, and about any new building needing to blend in with the ancient centre of the village.

Phase 2 of George Hill is greenfield again, and although there were suggestions for mitigating potential problems by sensitive design and provision of community areas, there were still concerns about access, including to the A21, and additional pressure on George Hill.

Support for the site south of Pound Platt was partly because of it being owned by a local person and also because it would be a small development adjacent to existing houses. However, there were greenfield, access and traffic issues again, outside the development boundary, and potentially hazardous for pedestrians.

Support for the Bishops Lane site included its design and the way development would facilitate public access to the footpath and communal space. There were issues relating to the use of greenspace and the spoiled open views, but mainly recognition that access via Bishops Lane would exacerbate existing problems relating to both traffic and to pedestrians.