

Cheveley Housing Needs Survey – presentation of key findings to Cheveley Parish Council, 10-March-15

Introduction – thanks for invitation etc. Purpose is to run through results of the HNS.

The HNS has 3 objectives:

1. Canvas opinion on the development of a small affordable housing scheme in the village
2. Assess level of need in conjunction with HR data
3. Collect additional information on the type of need (type, size, tenure etc) to help shape any potential future development

Parish economic and housing market context

- About 1,900 people in 900 dwellings. Half in Cheveley village. Most of remainder live in 'Newmarket fringe'. 108 net new dwellings 2002-2014 – quarter of these in the village
- Permission for 20 dwelling scheme opposite Spurling Close (6 affordable)
- Housing profile fairly typical of a rural community – $\frac{3}{4}$ o-o; 8% in social and private rented. 9% 'living rent free' –stud farms? Very few small properties
- Very little property on the market for less than £200k
- Young people and other people on low incomes have little chance of finding a home in the village without support

Housing Needs Survey

Survey in the field during Jan & Feb 2015. Report sponsored by CHS.

Posted to all 976 residential addresses. 149 returns (15%). Low response rate due to low response from Newmarket fringe?

Opinions

66% in favour. 31% opposed. 3% did not state an opinion. Typically 55-75% support

Important to look at comments to get a better understanding of viewpoints:

There was recognition of the challenges faced by local people in accessing the local housing market:

- *Affordable homes badly needed.*
- *It is essential that people on modest incomes should be able to live in and contribute to their own community. A settlement of the elderly and/or wealthy ultimately serves no one's interests.*
- *There should be more housing for local people to save them moving from the area and being able to keep in touch with elderly relatives.*
- *We would like our son and/or daughter to be able to move back to the village (currently not possible).*

There was concern that any affordable houses should be specifically for local people:

- *How local would be the local connection? Cheveley Parish also includes part of Newmarket town quite a way from the village of Cheveley itself.*
- *Yes, if it was for local people who already have a connection with the parish i.e. Next generation, children, grandchildren etc.*
- *Provided it included persons from the North Ward not just the village, i.e. The South Ward.*

There were a number of comments about support being conditional on any potential scheme being of an appropriate scale, location and design:

- *A small development as Cheveley is a fairly small village, just long.*
- *Dependant on location, volume of houses, style of houses and traffic considerations.*
- *On the condition that it does not harm the natural beauty of the surrounding area.*
- *I would be in favour of a very small development. Houses should nicely fit in the current setting/type of houses present.*

Objections tended to focus on the lack of infrastructure capacity, questioning the need for more affordable housing and concern that any further development would have a detrimental impact on the environmental quality of Cheveley:

- *It would need to be accompanied with a plan for increased school provision and transport and I'm not sure that this would happen.*
- *No need for any more houses in the village, the roads, school etc will not be able to cope.*
- *With Mildenhall base closing, there will be a lot of houses becoming empty there and elsewhere in the area where people from the base have been renting. This should make affordable housing available.*
- *No more affordable housing is needed in the area. We need to preserve our countryside.*
- *We are concerned that land of high landscape value would be turned into housing estates completely out of character with the village.*
- *It would ruin the character of the village. Absolutely not in favour.*

The survey has demonstrated a significant level of support for the principle of affordable housing for local people. However, much of this support comes with caveats around the allocation, location, scale and design of any such development. Such concerns are common place and most can be ameliorated with a carefully considered scheme. However, it must be noted that for a minority of residents no scheme will be acceptable. The Parish Council will need to balance these views in developing its position.

Level of need

The HNS identified 5 additional households in need of affordable housing with a local connection to Cheveley. However, this must be added to the 18 households on the HR giving a total of 23 households.

Nature of need

The majority of need is for small dwellings:

- 11 x 1-bed; 9 x 2-bed; 3 x 3 bed

Need for 10 bungalows reflects need among the elderly. Also some need for family accommodation. 3 households identified through HNS could be potential shared ownership candidates. (None on Help To Buy Register)

It should be noted that any resulting scheme is likely to present a bias towards larger properties compared to the profile of need. Too many 1 bed properties is not sustainable (economically or socially)

Next steps

The next steps, assuming the Parish Council accept the report's overall findings and are minded to address the issue of affordable housing, are to identify appropriate site(s) and work up a scheme.

Any sites – 'Home office bungalows'?

Mark Deas; 09.03.2015