

Chelmer Mead

Summary of exhibitions held in Henham, Elsenham,
Great Dunmow and Felsted

January 2008

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of Chater Homes' pre-submission work, an extensive programme of public consultation was undertaken. This was to provide all residents in the Dunmow and Elsenham with the opportunity to view Chater Homes' development proposals and express their views directly to the assembled project team or through the medium of a feedback form.

1.1 Exhibition Timetable

Venue	Date	Stakeholder Session	Public Exhibition
Henham Village Hall	Monday 10 Dec		4pm-8pm
The Maltings, Great Dunmow	Tuesday 11 Dec	2pm-3pm	3pm-8pm
United Reformed Hall, Felsted	Wednesday 12 Dec		3pm-7pm
Elsenham Memorial Hall	Thursday 13 Dec	2pm-3pm	3pm-7pm

1.2 Publicity

Letters of invitation were sent to 11,863 households. This mail-out was focused on areas in and around Great Dunmow and Little Dunmow, and Elsenham and Henham. In addition, Uttlesford councillors and planning officers were separately invited, along with the relevant parish councils.

The exhibition was publicised in the local press by means of a quarter-page advertisement in the Dunmow Times, Dunmow Observer and Herts and Essex Observer in the week prior to the exhibition. A news release with the exhibition details was also sent to the local newspapers.

1.3 Exhibition Format

The exhibition comprised 11 display boards, giving a brief outline of the planning process currently being carried out by Uttlesford District Council followed by information about the Chelmer Mead option. A feedback form was handed to all attendees. This was divided into four sections:

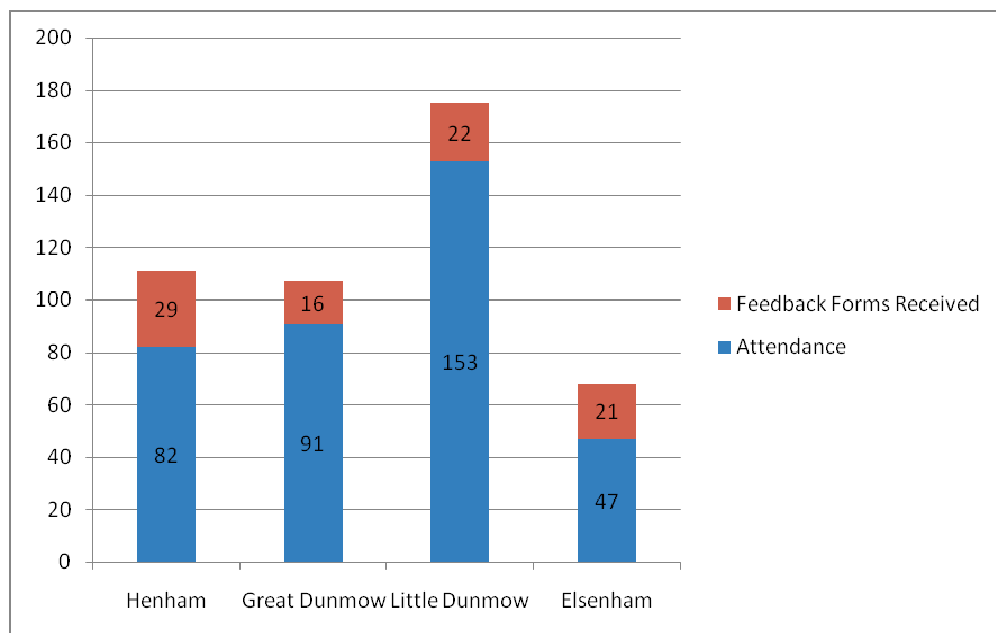
Chelmer Mead

- Design and layout
- Transport
- Community benefits
- General comments

Ian Chater, from Chater Homes, was in attendance at all times, along with representatives from Andrew Martin Associates, Landscape Partnership, CBuchanan (Transport) and Green Issues.

1.4 Exhibition summary

Across the four days 373 people attended the exhibitions, with 87 people filling in feedback forms. The breakdown of numbers between the four venues is illustrated below.



All four exhibitions were viewed as constructive exercises. The oral and written feedback from the Elsenham exhibitions was extremely positive, while in Great Dunmow and Little Dunmow there was understandably much more concern. A general synopsis of the written feedback from the four exhibitions is listed on the following pages.

2. EXHIBITION DETAILS

2.1 Henham – 10th December

82 people attended the exhibition at Henham Village Hall, with 29 feedback forms returned detailing resident's responses to the four matters; **design and layout, community benefits, transport and general comments**. The general feeling was that Chelmer Mead is the best housing option for Uttlesford and would least affect the area in a detrimental manner. The specific points most often raised are listed below:

- The respondents felt that unlike in Henham and Elsenham the Chater development was well thought out.
- The A120 was felt to provide adequate transport links to the proposed Chater development in Dunmow.
- The proposals for Dunmow were felt to be more 'environmentally' acceptable than the other housing options proposed for Uttlesford.
- The separation of Great and Little Dunmow by the country park was said to be a good idea.
- The option of a new secondary school was recognised as being of great benefit to the Dunmow area.
- Concern was expressed by attendants over the lack of rail link for the proposed development.

2.2 Great Dunmow – 11th December

91 people attended this exhibition, with 16 feedback forms submitted. Overall there appeared to be more opposition than support for the proposals; although there were a number of supportive comments from people who wanted to see a change to Great Dunmow. Comments were generalist in

nature and few respondents chose to relay their thoughts on the specifics of the proposals. The following were the most salient points raised:

- With regard to the design of the scheme, there was a balanced spectrum of support
- A large proportion of respondents failed to see how the scheme would deliver any community benefits.
- On transport, opinion was divided into three camps: there were those who wanted public transport (i.e. buses and trains) to be greatly improved; those that believed the roads would become gridlocked if the development came to pass; whilst a third group of respondents objected to any more road-building due to environmental concerns or because they thought it was unnecessary.
- When asked to provide general comments, half the respondents chose to reaffirm their opposition to the proposals. Of these the theme was clearly a concern that their countryside surroundings would be ruined.
- In addition, there were some respondents who were convinced that the whole consultation was merely a 'spin' exercise in which their comments would not be taken seriously by the developer.

2.3 Little Dunmow – 12th December

This exhibition was attended by 153 attendees and 22 feedback forms were submitted. In general, there were many more negative comments than there were positive, with most clearly having a poor view of developers, local authorities, and central government when it comes to planning issues.

- Most comments pertaining to the design of the scheme were negative in nature, with two distinct themes. People were not convinced the

details had been comprehensive enough; many respondents were against *any* design of the scheme because they were against any form of development.

- The majority of respondents did not think the development would provide any community benefits, with many citing Oakwood Park as an example of promises being broken by developers.
- A large number of respondents replied very negatively to the development on the grounds that roads the B1256 and the A120 would become even more gridlocked than they already are. There were those who were sceptical that bus and rail links could improve in an adequate fashion to support additional households.
- When asked to provide general comments, many attendees were suspicious that the needs of local people would not be properly taken into consideration.
- There was also concern that the Chater Homes development would further delay the facilities that were apparently promised to Oakwood Park residents.

2.4 Elsenham – 13th December

47 people attended the exhibition at the Elsenham Memorial Hall, with 21 feedback forms being returned. Echoing the feedback from the Henham exhibition, the overwhelming sentiment in Elsenham was that the development proposed by Chater Homes is more appropriate to solve Uttlesford's housing needs than the current options. Below is a summary of the main points

- The key issue expressed in many of the feedback forms was transport and access. In particular access to the A120 and concerns that an increase on traffic could have on the surrounding area.
- The respondents from the Elsenham exhibition also felt that the Chater Homes scheme provided good community benefits for the Dunmow area.
- The design and layout were generally appreciated by nearly all respondents.
- Most respondents felt that a new secondary school would be of benefit to the Dunmow area due to its currently oversubscribed schools situation.
- Some concern was expressed that Dunmow's infrastructure, in particular the need for doctor's surgeries.
- Concerns were expressed regarding the delivery of 'developer promises' in light of the controversial Oakwood Park scheme.

2.5 Post Exhibition Feedback received

After the exhibition Green Issues received 19 feedback forms through the post. The majority of the feedback received post exhibition was from Dunmow. After the exhibition a website was also set up to give people the opportunity to view the proposals displayed at the exhibition and to feedback their comments. Thus far 13 email responses have been received. The following is a summary of the most commonly raised issues present in the feedback:

- The negative effect the Chater Homes scheme would have on 'local' traffic.
- When asked to comment on the community benefits offered within the proposals, many recipients referred to Oakwood Park and the 'promises' that have been 'broken'.
- A number of feedback forms received referred to the Chater Homes 'option' as being preferential to those currently being offered by the Uttlesford District Council.
- There was a large amount of concern expressed for the infrastructure of Great and Little Dunmow in terms of education and health provision.
- A number of recipients felt that this proposal was in keeping with the local area and well thought through.