

# Moretonhampstead Housing Study

On Behalf of Moretonhampstead Parish Council

February 2017



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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Purpose of the housing study

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This study has been undertaken to establish the views of Moretonhampstead residents in relation to the development of new housing; to examine housing need in Moretonhampstead in terms of quantity, size, type and tenure; and to evaluate how and where identified need could be met in Moretonhampstead.

The data collected will provide evidence to help shape local development and planning decisions.<sup>1</sup>

## 1.2 How data was collected

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Information was collected from residents of Moretonhampstead using a questionnaire that was made available in a paper and online format. The questionnaire was open for responses between 16<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and 2nd February 2017 and a total of 222 individuals responded, making a total of 1,386 long answer comments. The survey was publicised via:

- Posters;
- The parish council;
- The Information office;
- The post office;

- The Community Land Trust;
- Leaflets through individuals' doors;
- Social media;
- Word of mouth;
- School gate drop;
- The Dartmoor National Park Authority's consultation on the Local Plan review. The Steering Group attended the DNPA's consultation events at the community centre to offer information to residents and to collect views; and
- A consultation event specific to this study.

The two events encouraged a wide range of individuals to get involved and to give their views.

The information has been read, collated and analysed and is presented below.

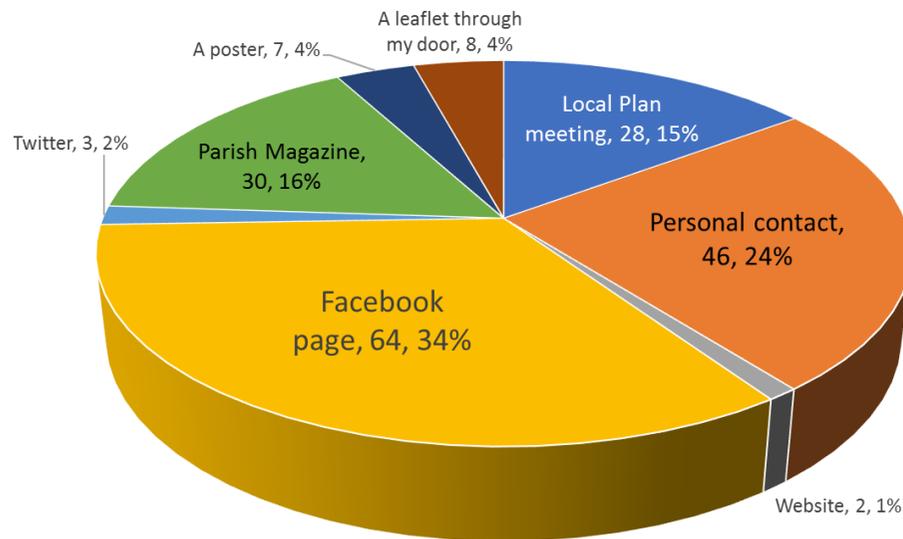
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<sup>1</sup> This study sits alongside the consultation Dartmoor National Park Authority are carrying out at the same time on the new Local Plan for Dartmoor.

## 2 Survey Results – The Respondents

### 2.1 Q1: Where did you hear about this survey?

Social media, the parish magazine and personal contact were the methods most people heard about the Housing Survey. Some people also found out about it through attending the events which were held in the town.



188 respondents answered the question.

The use of social media lead to a high percentage of those answering doing so via the electronic survey; 169 of the 222 replying online (76%).

### 2.2 Q2: Please provide your postcode

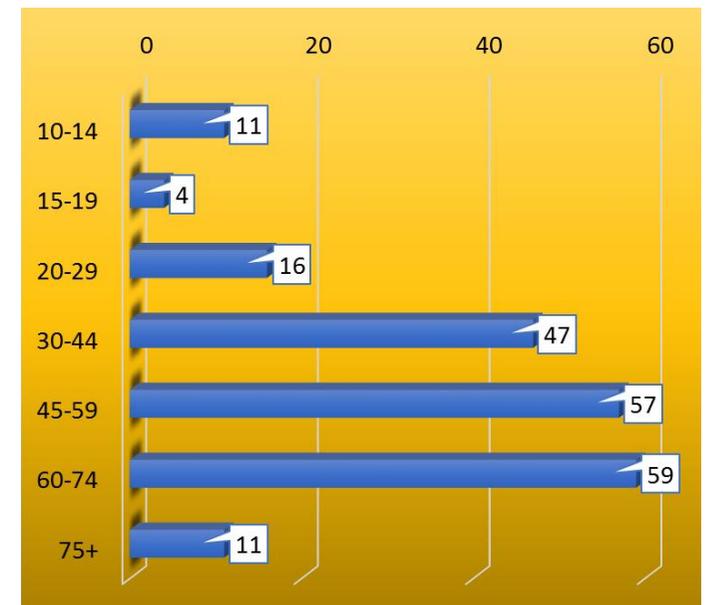
The postcode data collected revealed that residents from all parts of Moretonhampstead and the wider parish got involved in completing the survey. Several responses were made by individuals living outside the parish, including two from Exeter and one from Okehampton.

201 respondents answered the question.

### 2.3 Q3: Into which age category do you fit?

Although many responses were made by those in the older age categories, people in the age range 20-44, often the hardest to engage, made up 30% of the responses. Those under 20 accounted for 7% of respondents.

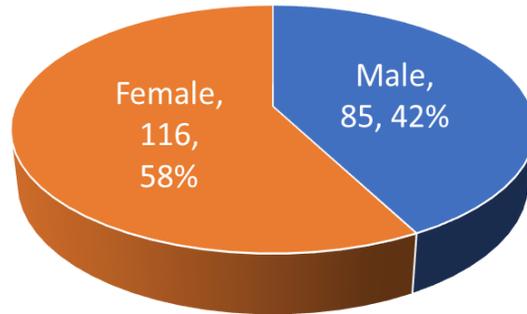
209 answered the question.



### 2.4 Q4: Please advise your gender

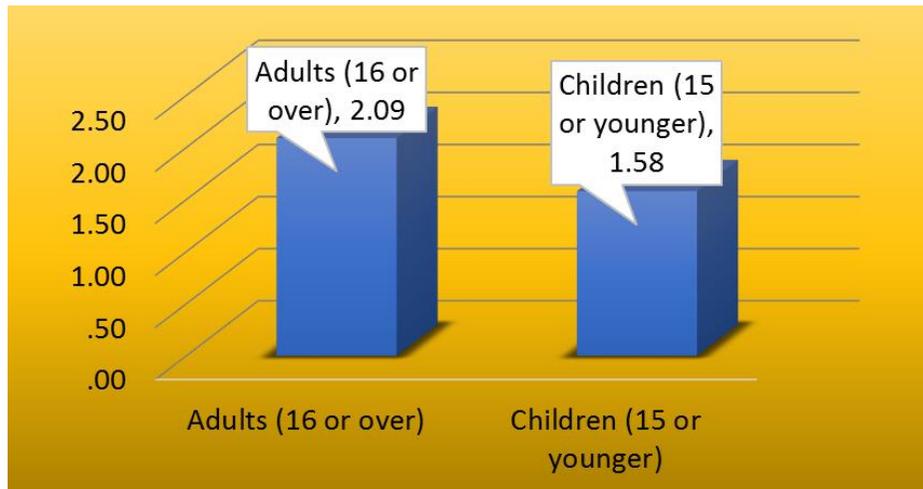
Female respondents made up 58% of those responding.

201 respondents answered the question.



### 2.5 Q5: How many people are there in your household?

There were on average 2.09 adults and 1.58 children aged under 15 in each of the households which responded. 209 people answered this



question, accounting for 587 people of all ages in the households who responded (437 adults and 150 children).

### 2.6 Notes on overall response

From the perspective of providing a community response which represents a reasonable view on the issues, there are two questions which need to be asked:

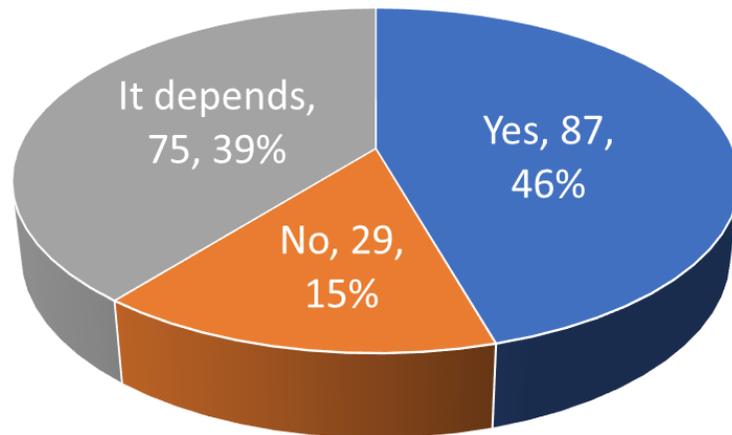
- Have the community been given *sufficient opportunity* to provide responses to answer the brief?
- Are the *numbers / type / depth of responses* sufficient to make the conclusions and the further recommendations that the group will make?

It is felt that the first of these questions has been fulfilled. There has been a range of methods, types of media, sufficient time and level of effort given in order that those people who wish to answer the survey have had the opportunity to do so.

The second of these questions has also been fulfilled. The aim of the survey is to provide a degree of depth to the issues with which the survey is concerned. In asking for such depth, this can often result in some loss in the number of responses; however, the Moretonhampstead local community has been up to the task and the positive and forthright responses provide depth and clarity.

### 3 Survey Results – the issues

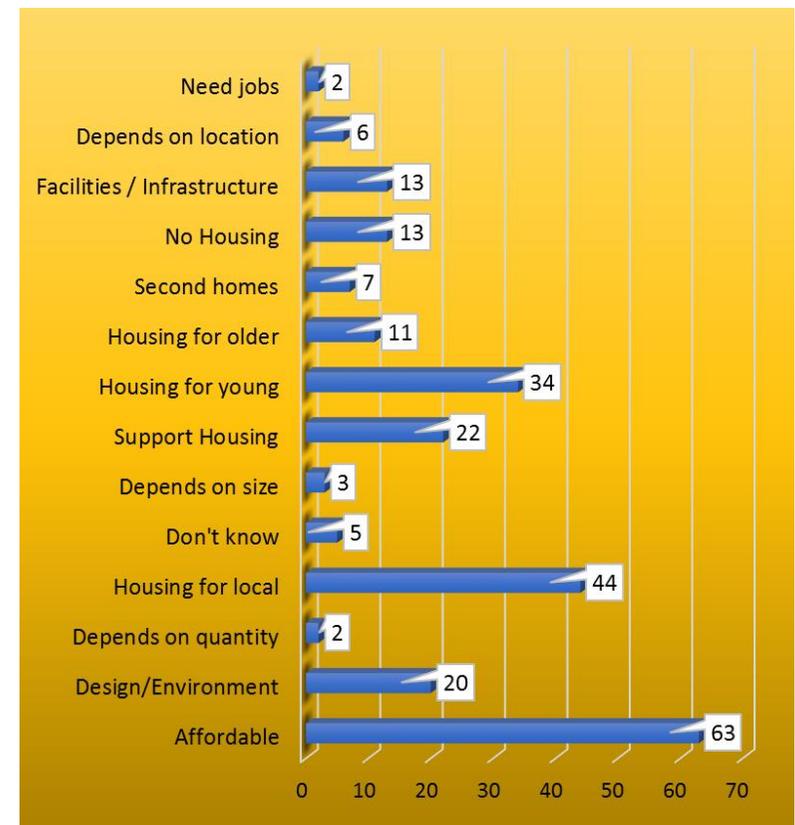
#### 3.1 Q6: Do you feel there is a need for new housing in Moretonhampstead?



Of the 191 respondents answering this question, 85% answered either “yes” or “it depends”. There is a significant number who feel, subject to particular conditions, they would support new housing in the town. Just over 15% of those who answered felt there was no need for new housing in Moretonhampstead.

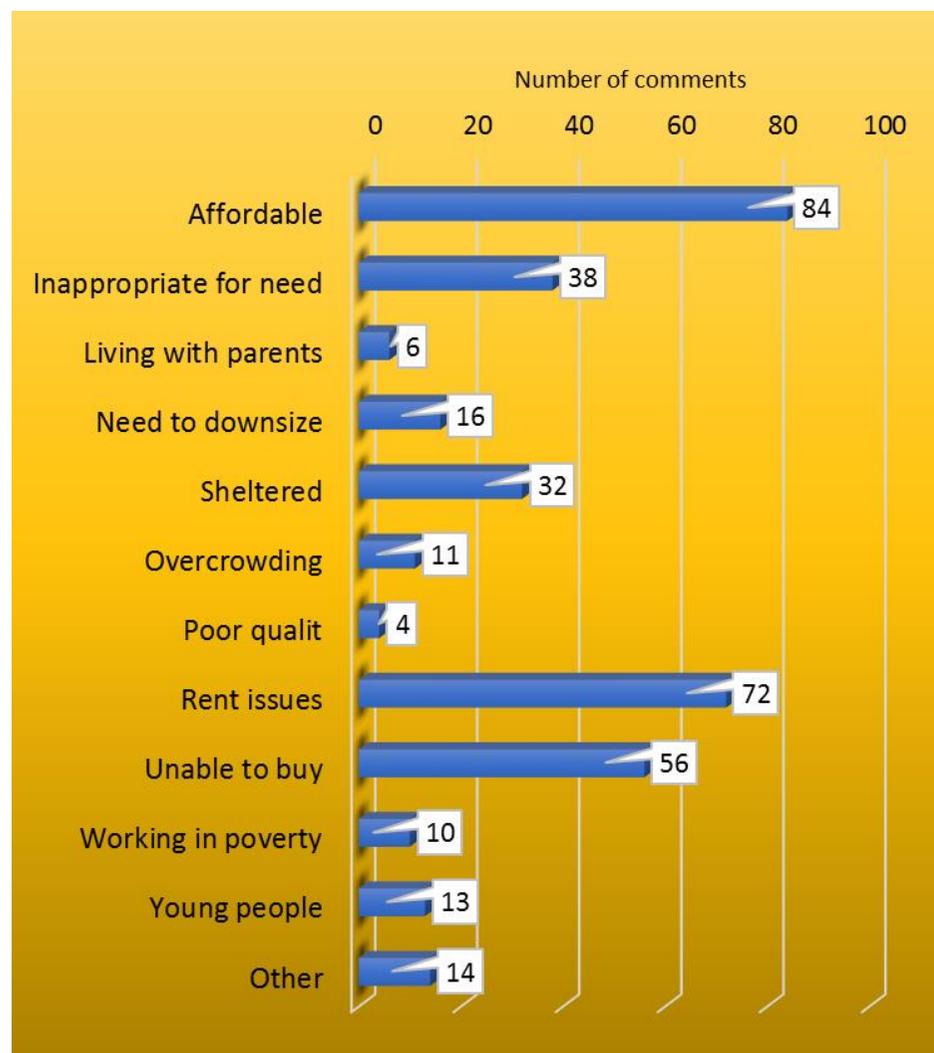
The additional comments individuals provided in support of their answers were particularly interesting. Many of the comments were made to qualify the “it depends” response, and their breakdown is in the graph on the right.

The most often occurring comment people made was that new housing would have to be genuinely affordable to be acceptable, and there was considerable support for housing that made provision for local young people and families. Some individuals noted that housing adaptable for the needs of older people was important, and others felt strongly that



any new building should not be used as second homes for people from outside the area. The quality, design and location of development are important factors for 26 respondents, and 15 people questioned the

capacity of local jobs and infrastructure to cope with additional growth. 13 people reinforced their answer that they did not feel new housing development was needed in Moretonhampstead.



### 3.2 Q7: What do you feel counts as "housing need"? This may include not being able to afford local rents / house prices, need a bungalow, need sheltered housing

168 respondents answered question

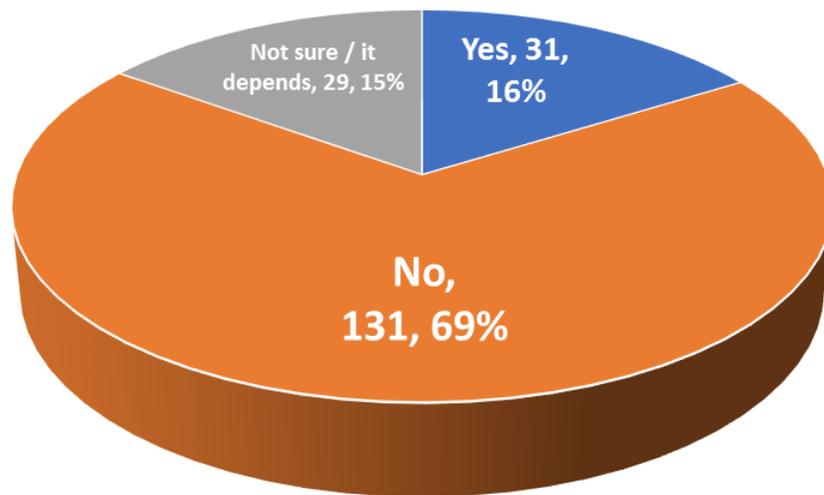
The key issues raised in response to this question were around affordability of rents and house prices in Moretonhampstead. Half of those answering this question mentioned the need for affordable housing, with others making comments about high rents and difficulties in finding suitable accommodation to meet needs. Issues concerning overcrowding, living at home with parents, working but in need, and poor quality housing were raised by some individuals; highlighting that at times housing need is not obvious and is complex. Almost 20% of those answering this question mentioned the need for sheltered accommodation for the elderly, and 9% drew attention to the needs of some individuals to downsize to smaller and more suitable accommodation; thereby making available larger family accommodation. Over a fifth of those who responded to this question felt that housing need could be identified as not having accommodation that meets the needs of your personal circumstances. One respondent summed up housing need from his own perspective as follows:

- *“Living in an overcrowded house for nearly 4 years, and as a father, sharing a room with my own daughter because there is NOTHING else around.”*

Several those who responded noted the difficulties of low wage earners in finding suitable accommodation at an affordable price, and many had empathy with young people trying to get on the property ladder, and having to move away to cheaper housing elsewhere.

### 3.3 Q8: Do you consider yourself/your family to be in housing need?

16% of respondents (191 answered the question) stated that they did consider themselves to be in housing need, with a further 15% responding with “not sure/it depends.” This amounts to 60 individuals/households responding to this survey who may be in some

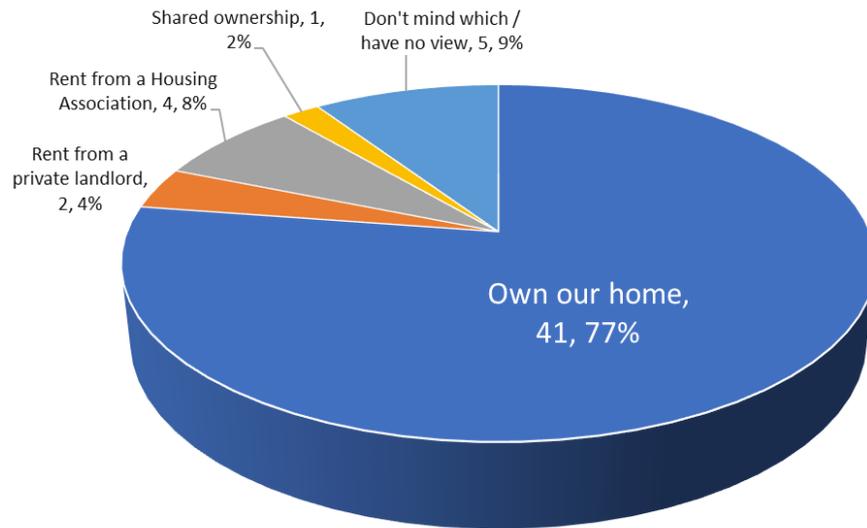


degree of housing need in the parish of Moretonhampstead at the time of the survey. Some individuals described their circumstances in more detail,

- *“At 23 and being at home with my parents because I cannot afford to move out”*
- *“At present, I depend on housing benefit so that I can afford to pay my rent. With affordable housing, this would not be necessary & I'd be able to start saving for my family's future.”*
- *“Currently renting but really would like to buy in the area, due to being born here and have family here.”*
- *“We are both able to cope with stairs at the moment but for how much longer?”*

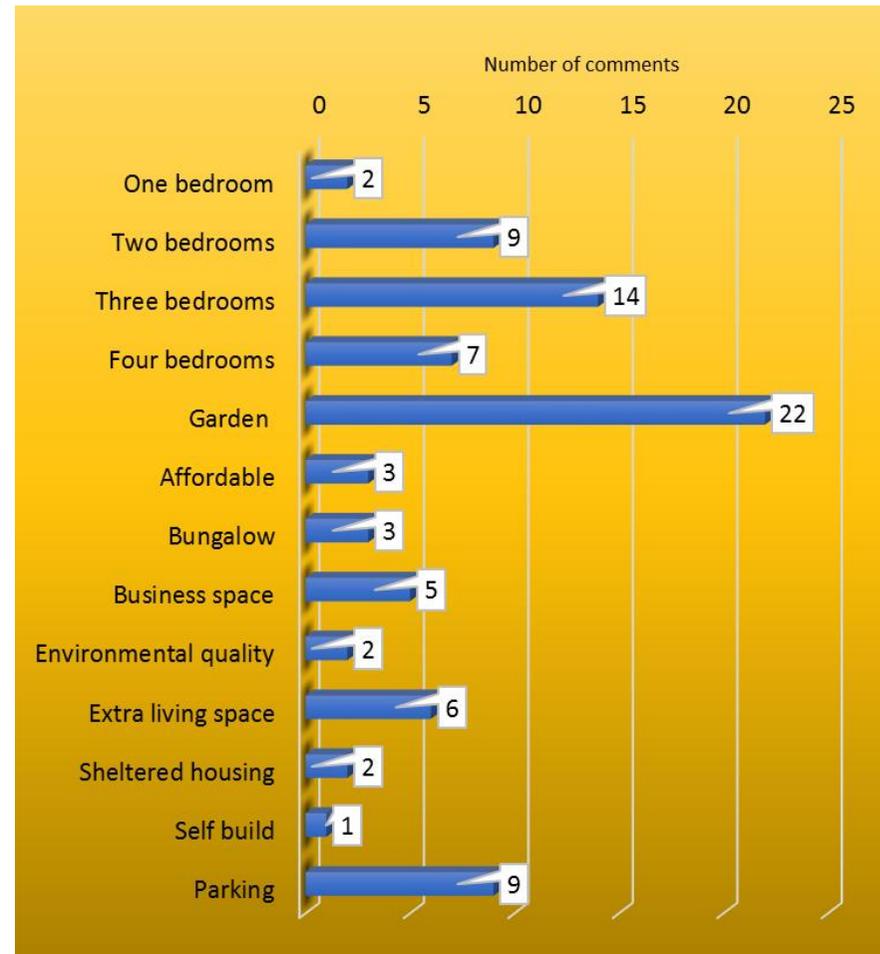
A total of 59 *long answer* responses were given to this question, providing details of housing need (with 22% of cases confirming they are not in housing need). A variety of different reasons were provided for respondents considering they are in housing need, including overcrowding, inability to afford the rent, an unfulfilled wish to buy, the unsuitability of current accommodation, and the Steward Wood planning situation.

### 3.4 Q9: Do you have a preference to own or to rent your property?



This question was only asked of those respondents who had indicated that they were in housing need. Other respondents were automatically directed to later questions by the survey. A total of 53 individuals answered this question, the great majority (77%) expressing a wish to own property. Other possible options such as renting from private landlords and housing associations or shared ownership were less popular. Individuals made comments in support of their choices, including concerns about the security of tenure for privately rented accommodation, affordability and a desire in some cases for self-build accommodation.

### 3.5 Q10: Please add any information on the type of housing you / your family may require?



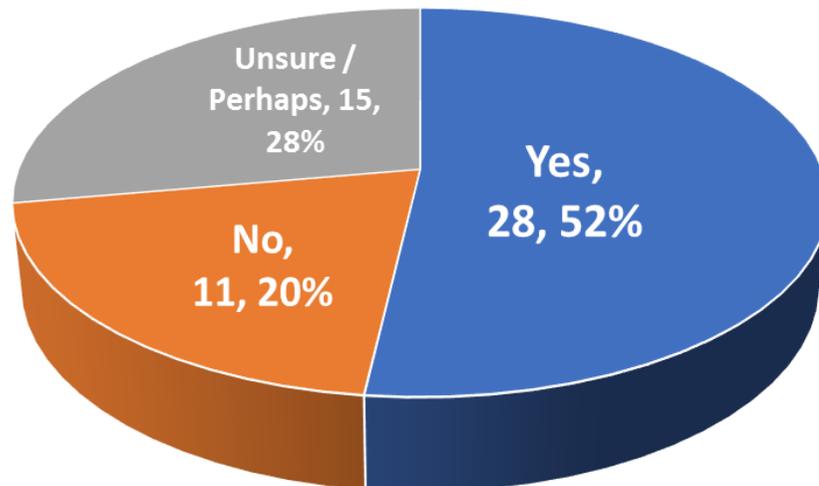
This further question was only asked of those who had expressed they were in housing need and was answered by 43 individuals. The chart

above shows the requirements these individuals noted would meet their needs.

Two and three bedroom houses with gardens and parking were in high demand, with other respondents requiring extra living space, office room and in some cases accessible accommodation (bungalows or sheltered accommodation) to meet the needs of older people or those with disabilities. Small properties with just one bedroom were the least in demand, with just two individuals noting that this would meet their needs.

### 3.6 Q11: Would you be interested in your own self-build home?

54 individuals answered this question and, of these, 28 were interested in the idea of self-build homes. A further 15 individuals answered that they may be interested or were unsure. Whilst there was some interest in



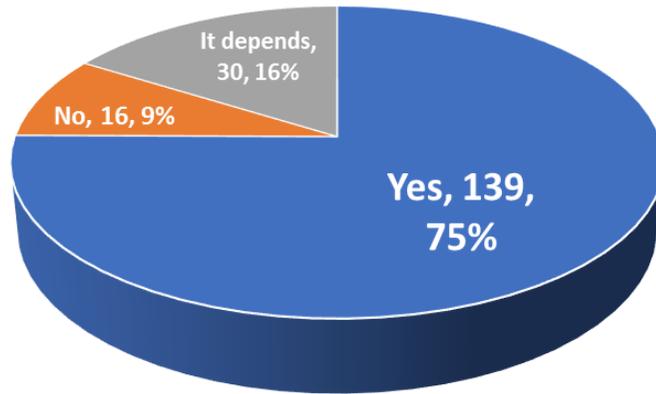
self-build, respondents raised several possible concerns around costs, planning issues and the size of dwellings; for example

*“I would love to do this but land is so expensive and planning permission is not easily available.”*

### 3.7 Q12: Would you be willing to give your contact details in order that someone may contact you to discuss these issues further?

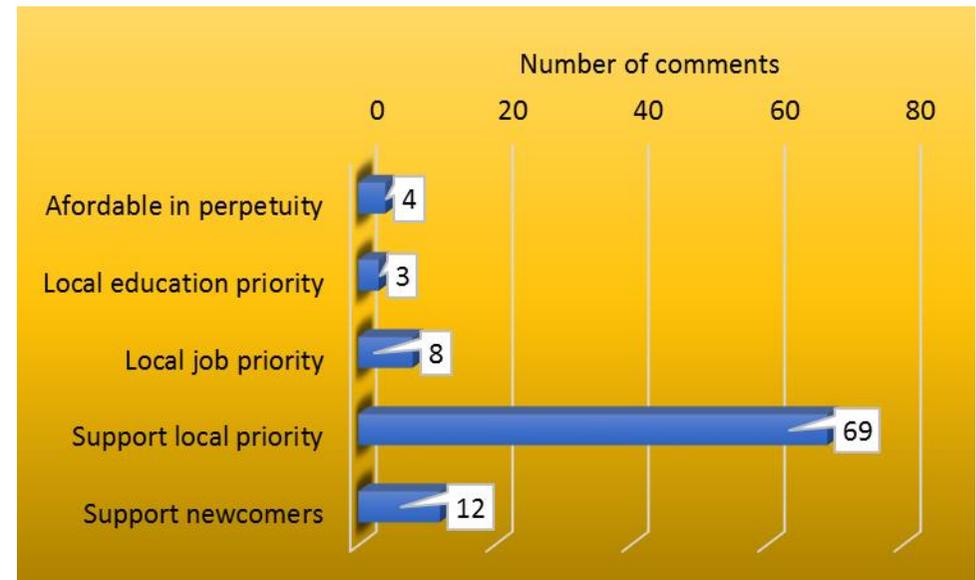
23 individuals left their contact details in response to this question. This information will be provided separately to the Parish Council for confidential follow up to take place.

3.8 Q13: Do you consider people with a local connection to Moretonhampstead should have priority over others in need if new affordable housing is developed (whether renting or buying)?



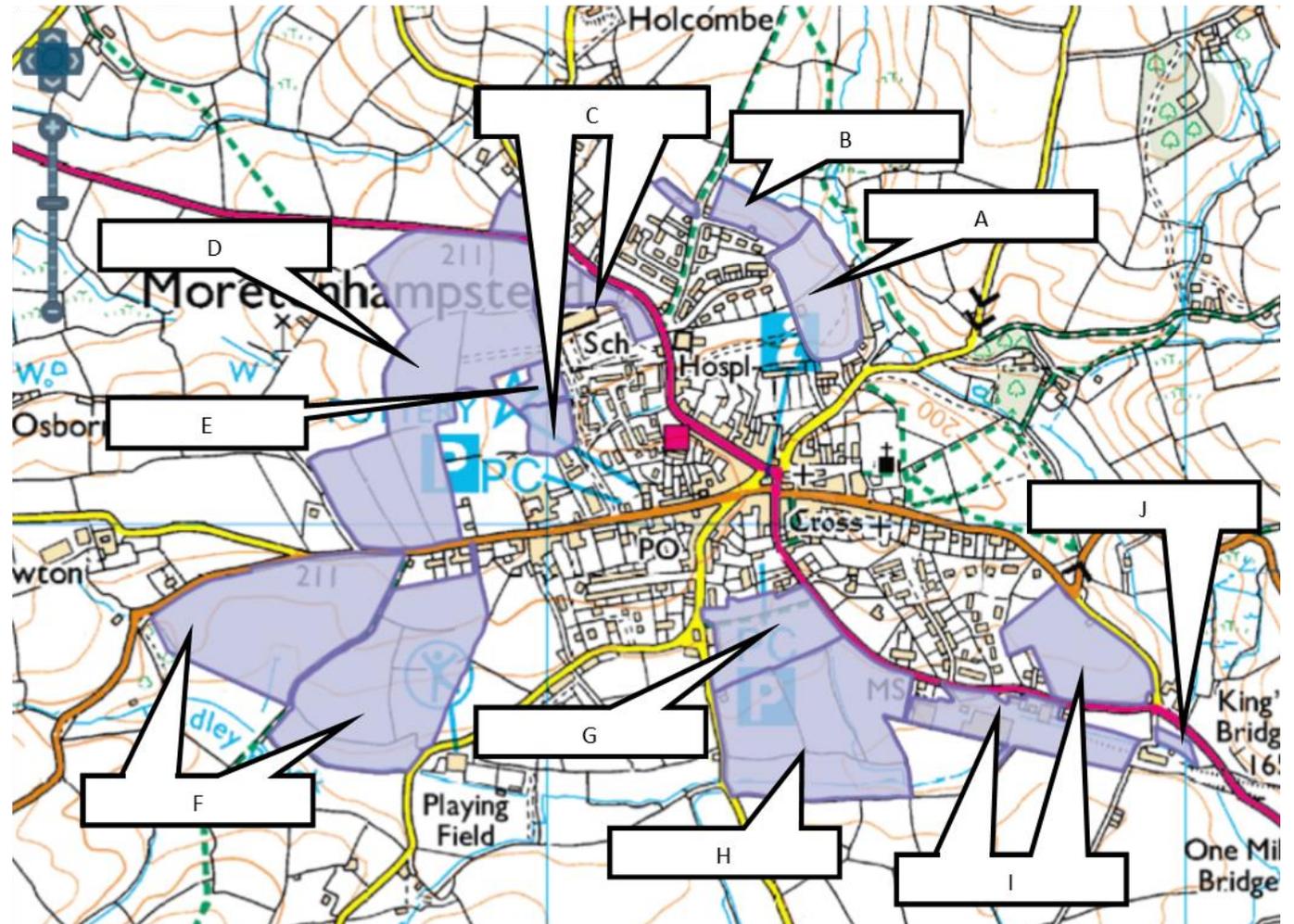
Of the 185 respondents answering this question, 75% (139 individuals) believed that a local connection to Moretonhampstead should offer priority for new affordable housing. 16% stated “it depends”, and then followed up with *long-answer* information. 89 people made *long-answer* comments on this question, reinforcing their answers. Many individuals cited the need to be close to family as a reason for prioritising the needs of Moretonhampstead individuals above those from outside, and

comments were made in support of people with jobs in the area being offered housing. There was a significant discrepancy between individuals’ views of what constituted “local”, with some claiming that a person would have to be born in the parish to be considered local, and others suggesting that those living in the area for the last 5 years might have such a claim. Others proposed that people with extended family living in Moretonhampstead could claim to be local. 13% of those who answered this question supported newcomers to the area, and saw them as an asset rather than as a threat.



## 4 Survey Results – Q14: Areas for possible housing development

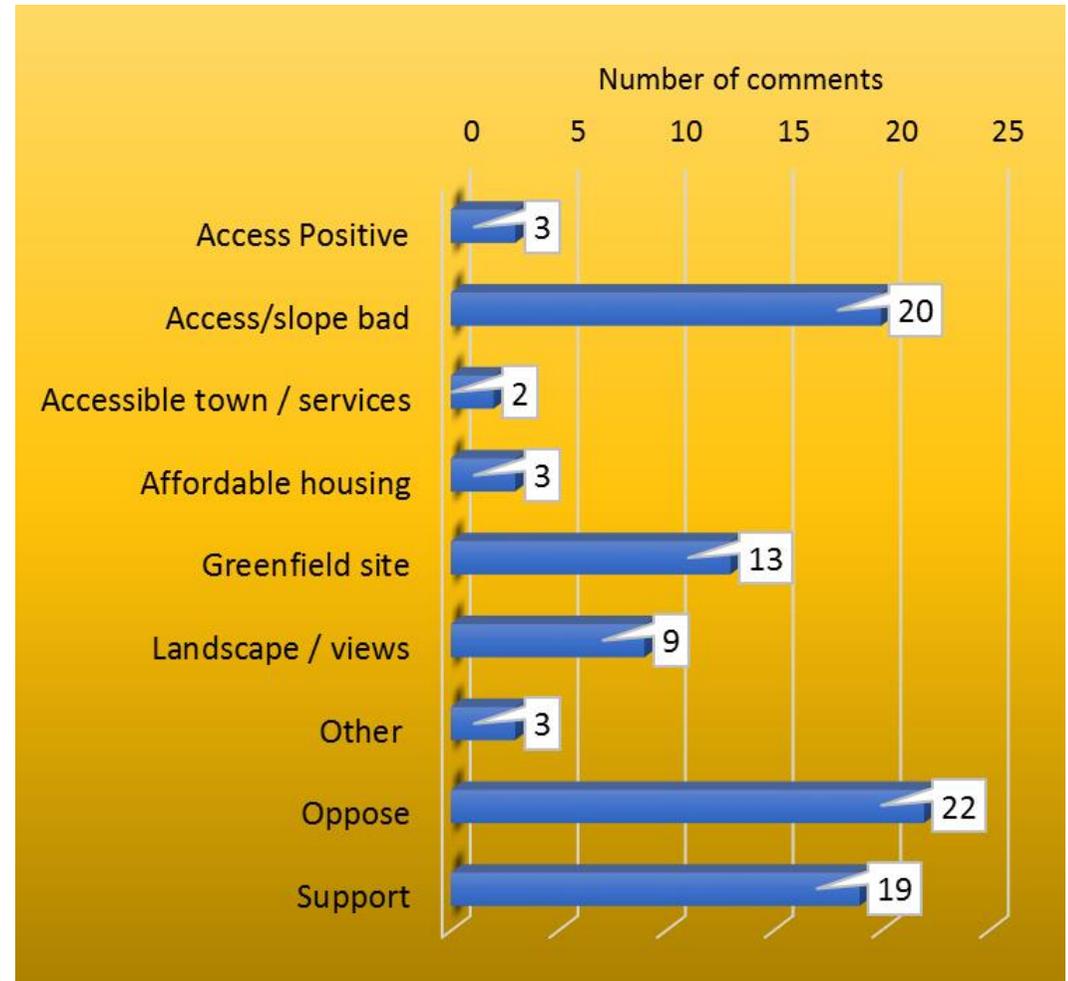
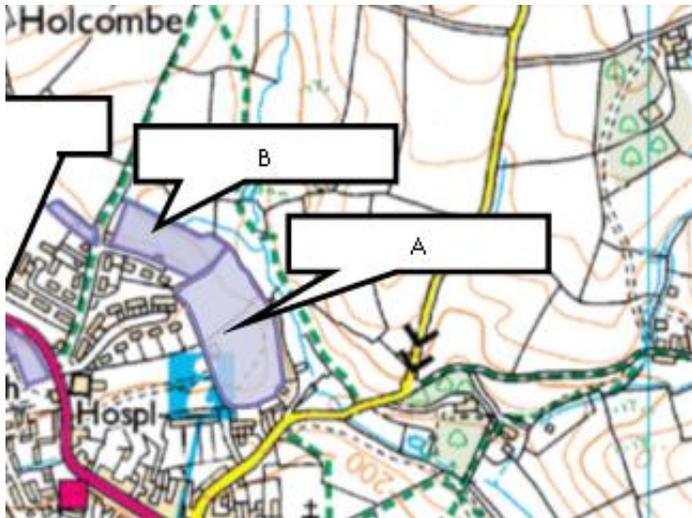
Respondents were asked to give their views on 10 potential housing sites around Moretonhampstead. These sites had been proposed by landowners/developers to Dartmoor National Park Authority through their Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. DNPA evaluated all the sites which were submitted, and these 10 were the most potentially suitable and deliverable to meet housing need. Respondents to the Housing Survey were also asked to comment on other possible housing land which they could suggest, over and above the 10 sites. In supporting some of the potential site allocations, many people have commented that they support growth to meet identified housing need, rather than the incremental growth of Moretonhampstead following developer pressure. The map shows the potential housing areas examined.



### 4.1 Site A – Off end of Embleford Crescent

66 respondents commented on this site

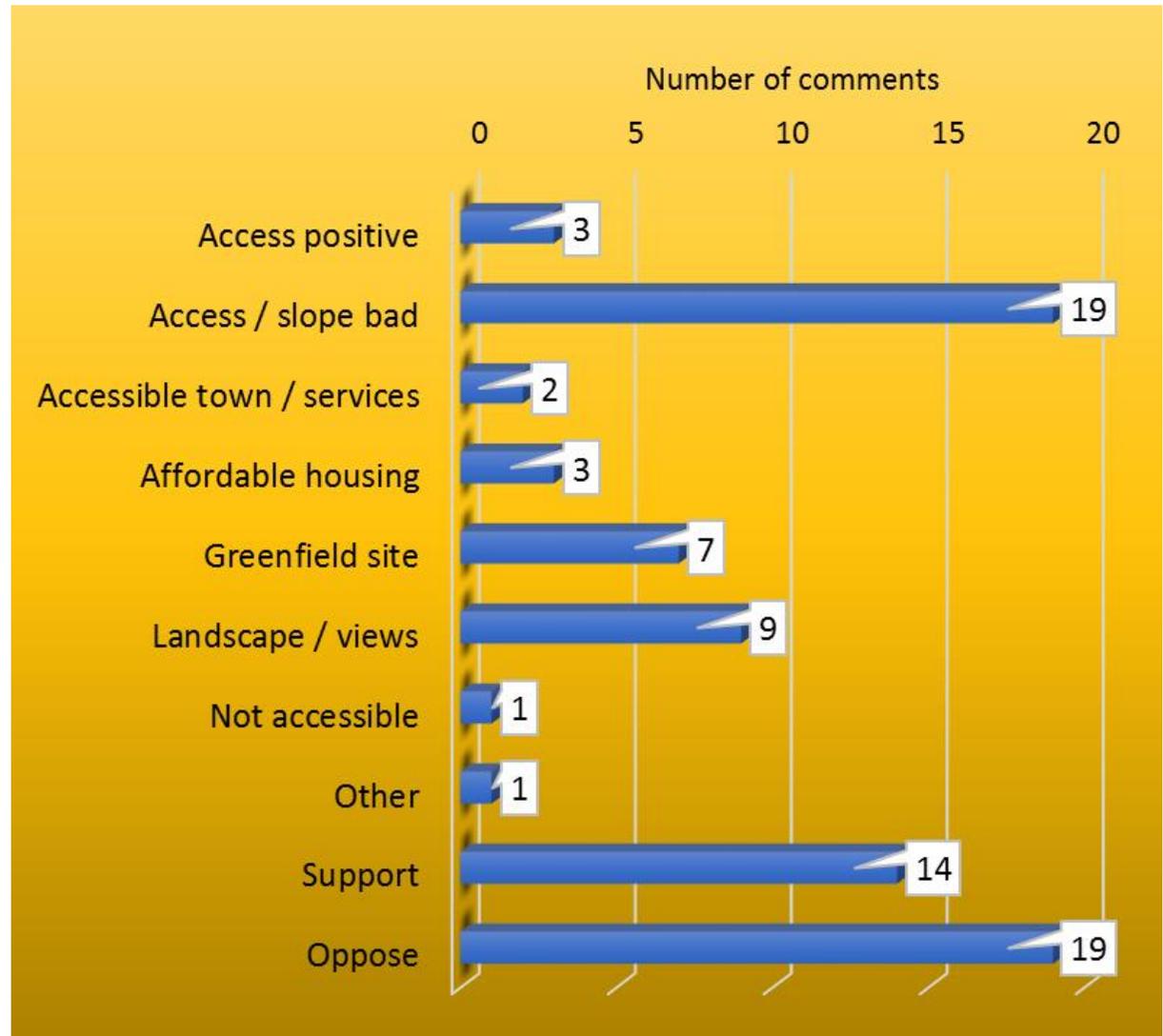
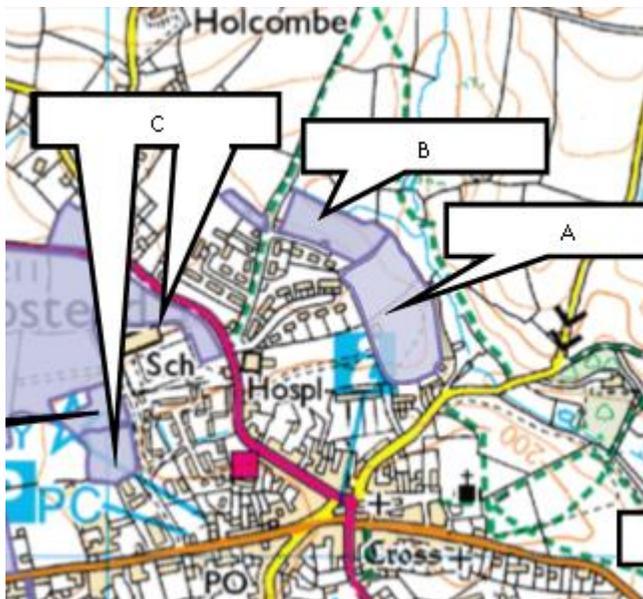
A total of 19 people made comments in support of this site, and 22 in opposition. The reasons individuals gave for not supporting this site were that it is a greenfield site (13 people), the access/gradient make it unsuitable (20 people) or that the impacts on the landscape are significant (9 people). Those supporting this site commented that they felt the site was accessible to the services and facilities of the centre, had reasonable access and was suitable for affordable housing.



### 4.2 Site B – DNP14-121 - Queen’s Road

56 respondents made comments on this site

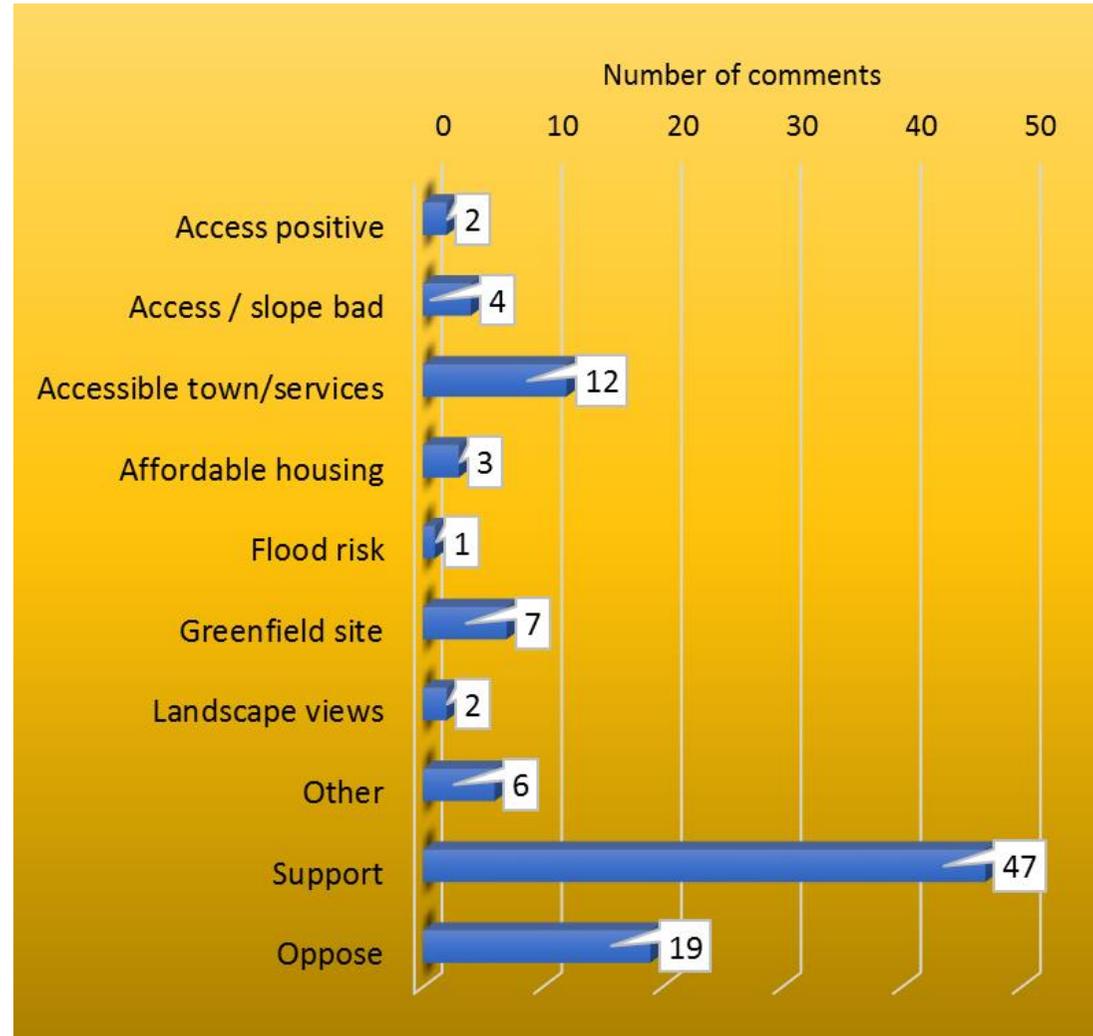
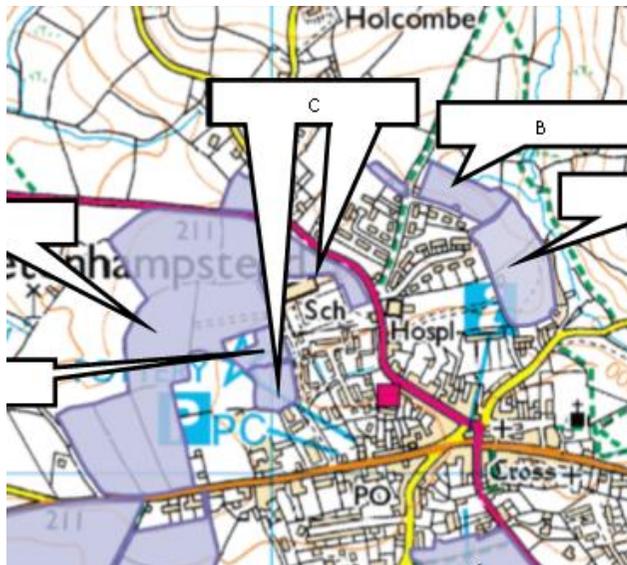
The comments made by respondents showed that 14 people made supportive comments, and 19 opposing. As with Site A, concern was expressed by some individuals over site access/gradient (19 people) and the fact that the site is greenfield (7 people) with landscape value (9 people). Accessibility to the town centre was seen as positive by 3 people, and 3 felt that site access was positive.



### 4.3 Site C – DNP14-095 – Chagford Cross and Bradford Meadow, Betton Way

78 respondents made comments on this site

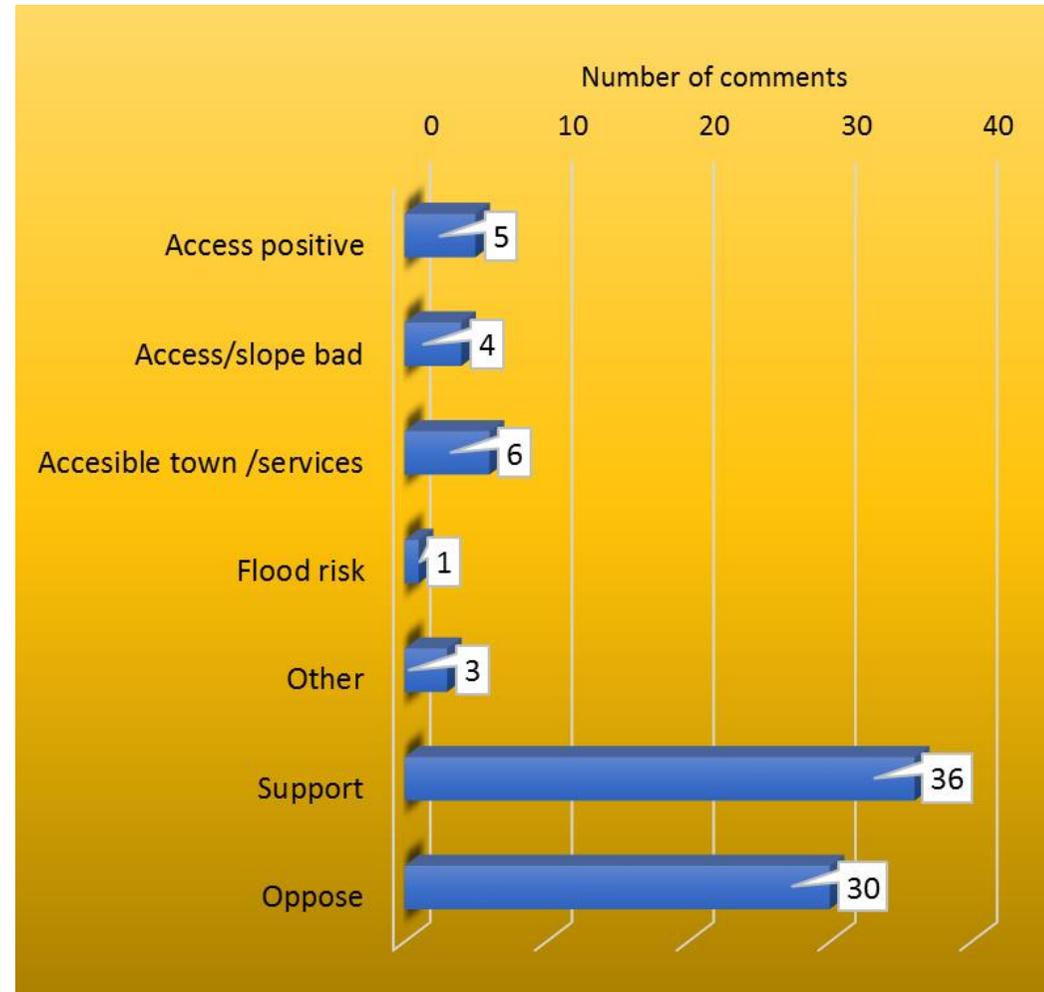
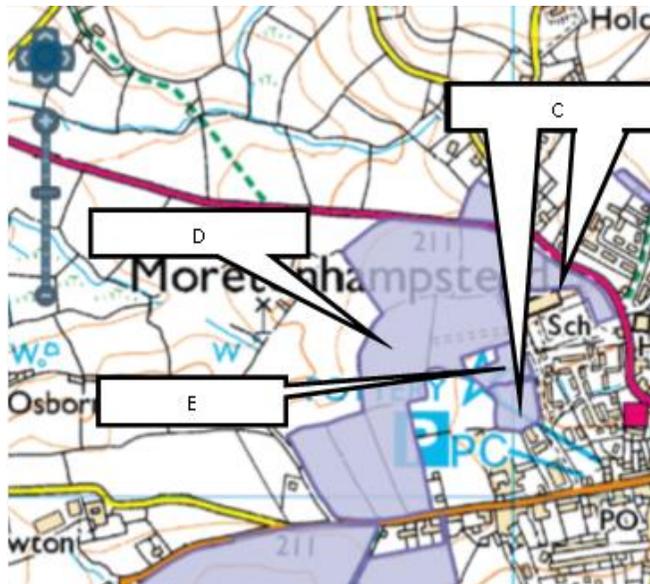
47 people supported this site for housing development, and 19 felt it was unsuitable. The accessibility of the site to services and facilities was felt to be a positive by those who supported it, and several individuals remarked that there was good access and that it could be suitable for affordable housing. Those who felt the site was unsuitable made comments about landscape protection, the use of a greenfield site, loss of opportunity for the school to expand if necessary, parking and traffic.



#### 4.4 Site D – DNP08-019 – Forder Farm

73 respondents made comments on this site

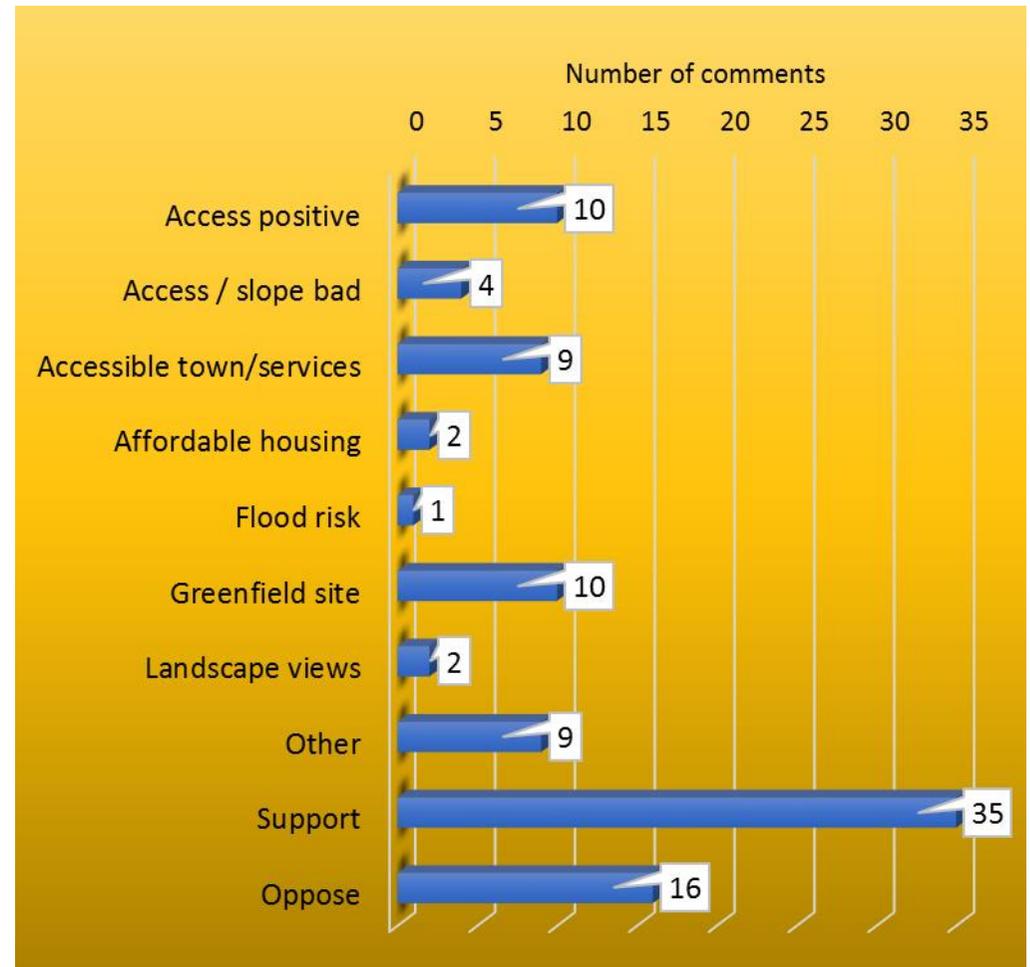
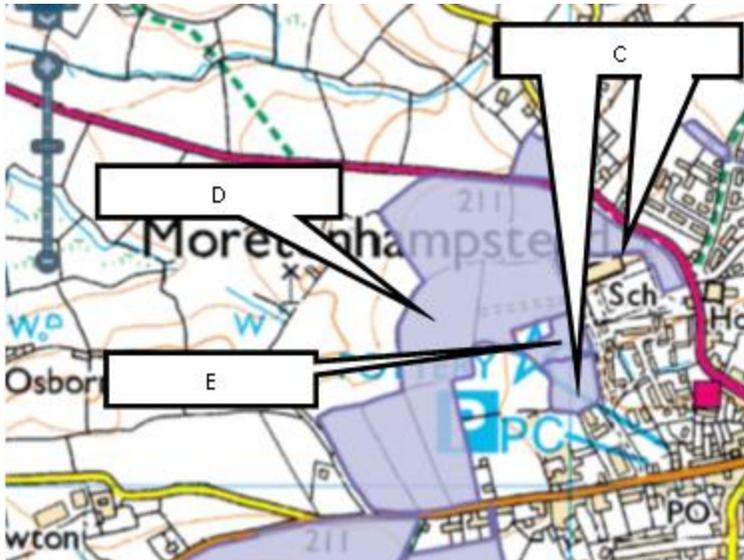
36 individuals commented that they would support the development of this site and 30 were opposed to this. Those who supported the development of the site commented that it is accessible to the school and other services and amenities of the centre, and that site access would be acceptable. Those who did not agree with the development of the site commented that it is too large, has poor access (4 people), is a greenfield site (8 people), would lead to excess traffic and would have unacceptable landscape impacts (8 people).



### 4.5 Site E – DNP-094 – Land adjacent to Betton Way

65 respondents made comments on this site

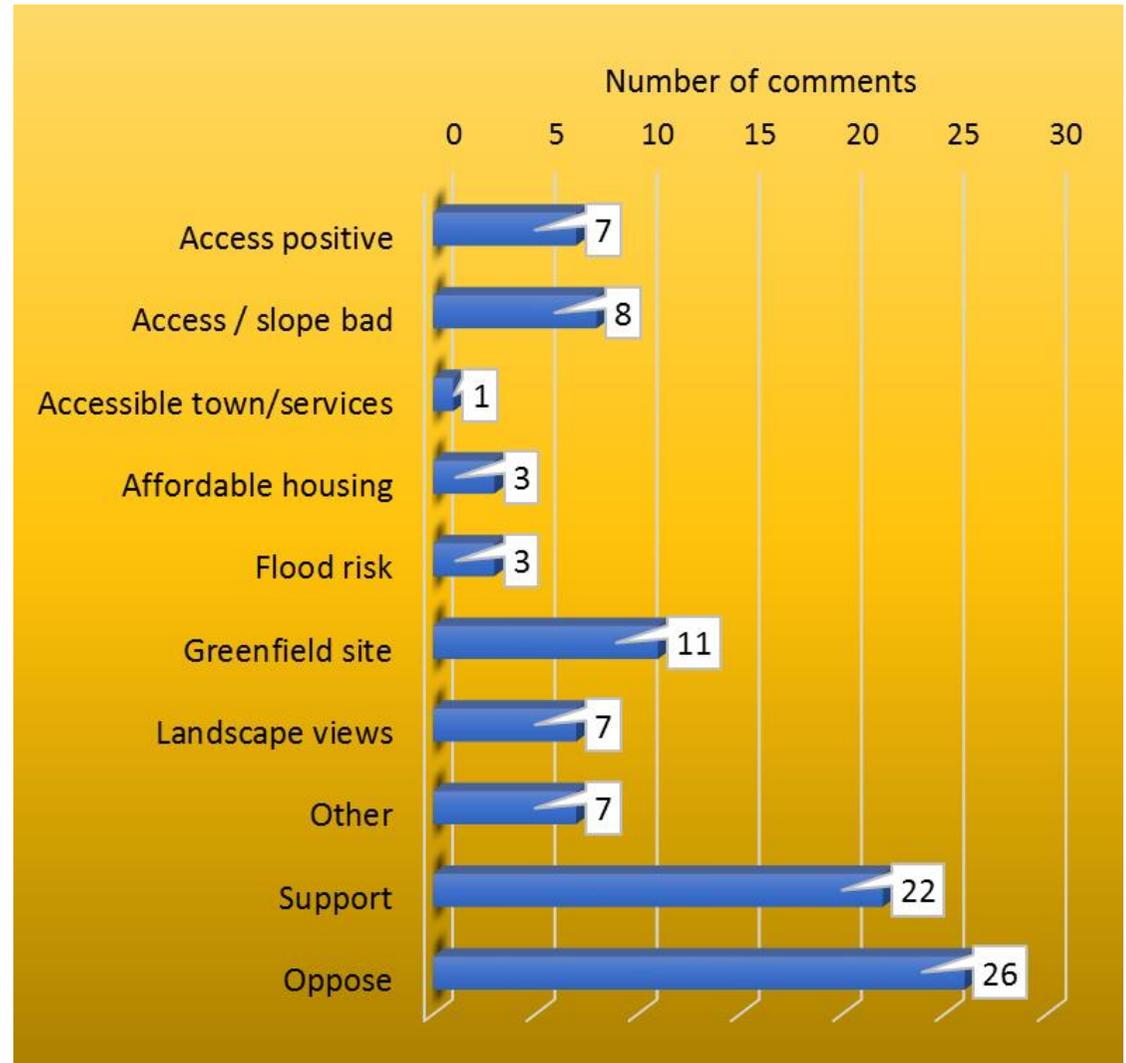
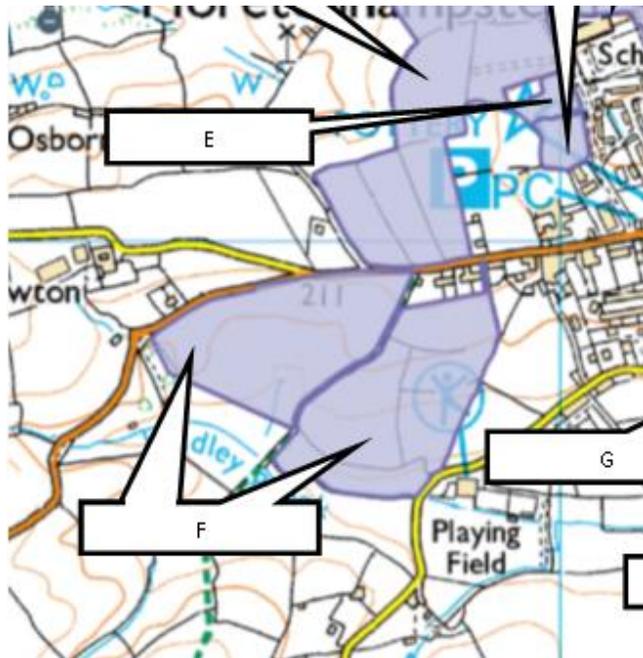
35 individuals stated they would support the development of this site, and 16 were in opposition. 10 people commented that the site had good access, and was close to the services and amenities of the centre. 12 people were concerned about the loss of greenfield land and landscape issues, several mentioned traffic and congestion issues, and one noted flood risk issues as a potential problem.



#### 4.6 Site F – DNP10/063 - Land between Court Street and North Bovey Road

64 respondents made comments on this site

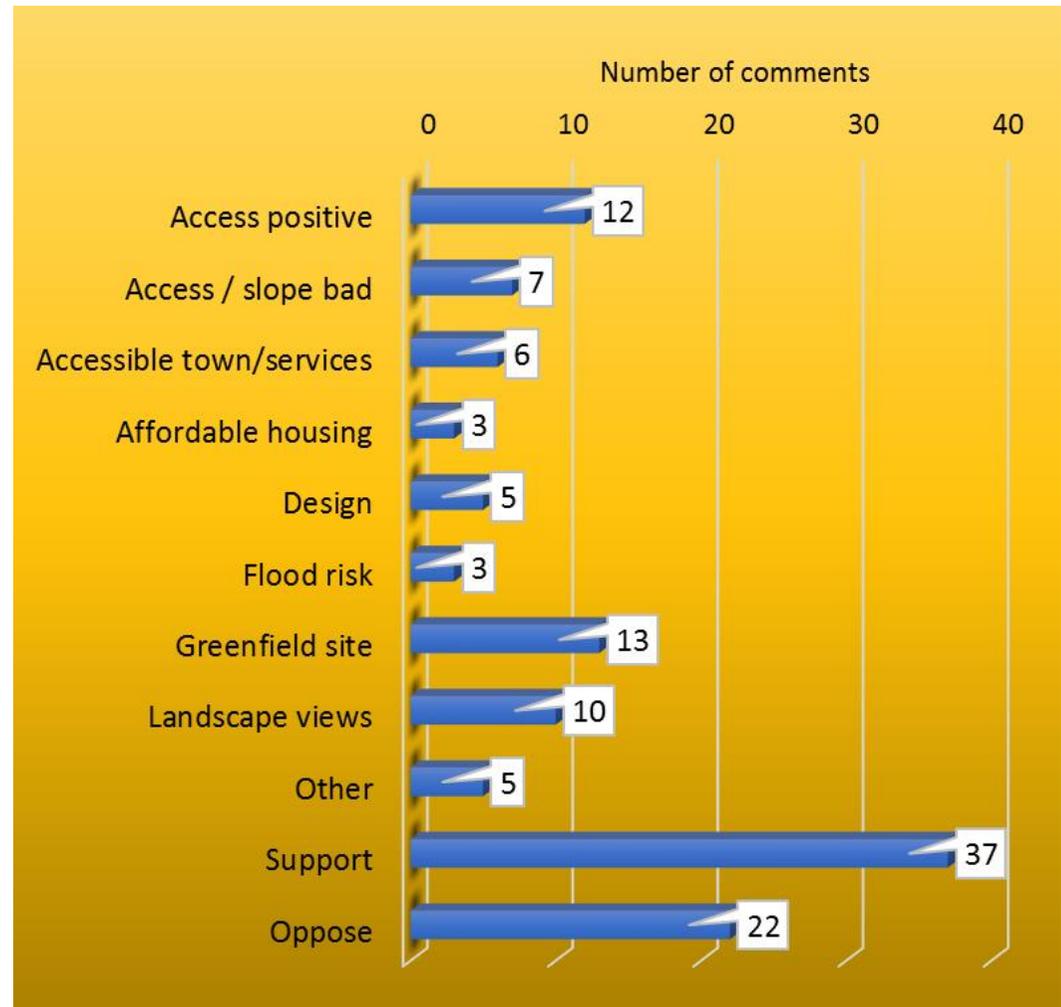
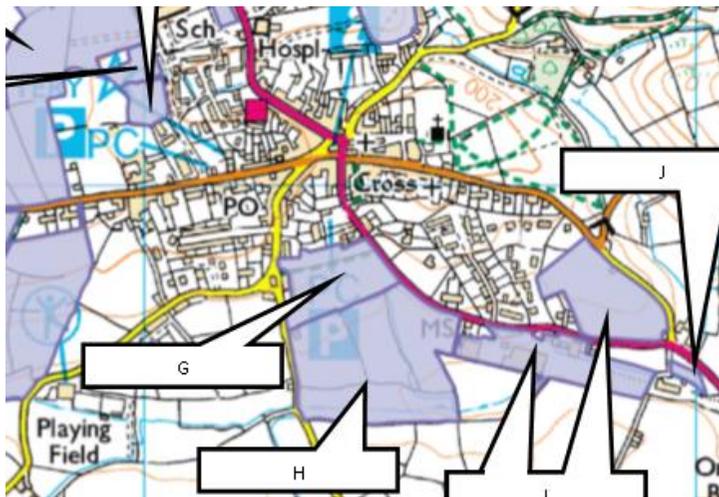
A total of 22 individuals supported the development of this site, and 26 opposed it. Those supporting the site felt it was near amenities such as sports and recreation facilities, and that it would fit in to the town and that the access to existing roads was good. Individuals who did not agree with the development of this site noted the greenfield/landscape issues (18 people), difficulties of accessibility and potential flood risk.



4.7 Site G – DNP08/018 – Field known as Courtney Park, situated between Pound Street and Station Road

67 respondents made comments on this site

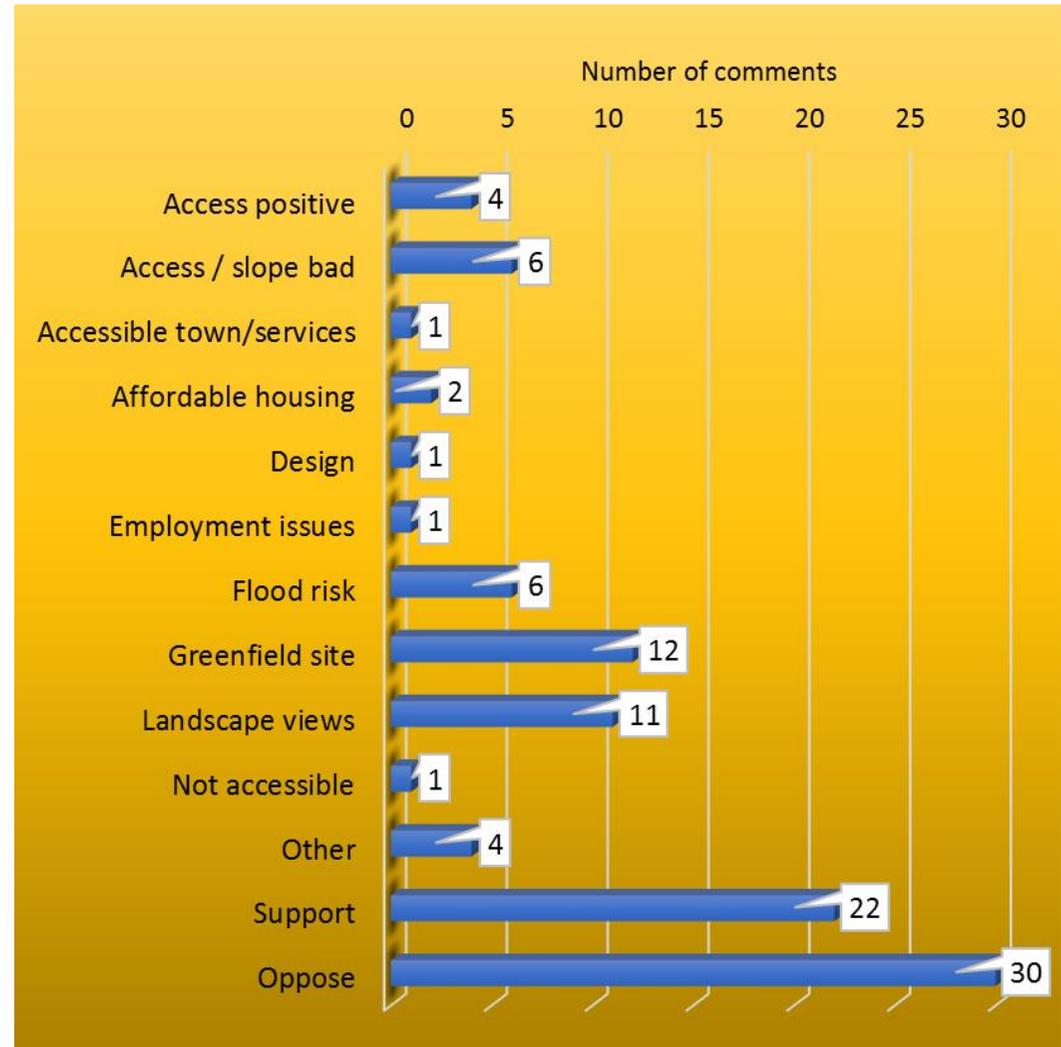
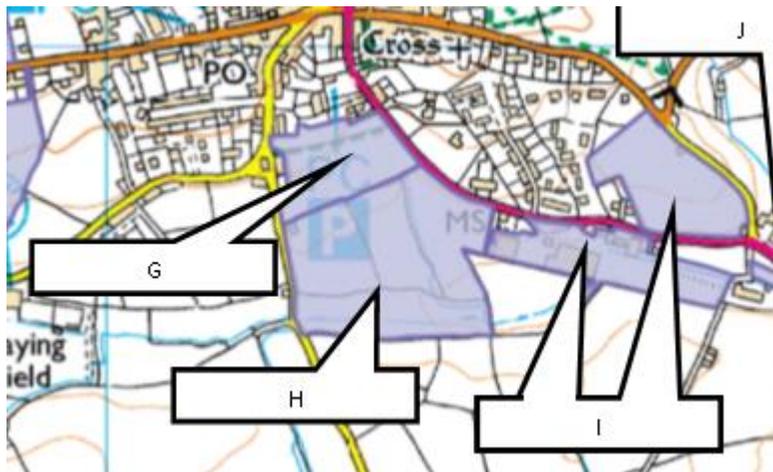
37 people responded to say they would support the development of this site, if housing development is needed. 22 people disagreed with development on this site, providing reasons such as the impact on landscape (10 people), opposed to greenfield site use (13 people), concerns about design and appearance and access/gradient issues. Those who supported this site felt it had good access to existing roads/paths (12 people) and was accessible to the services and facilities of the centre (6 people). Several individuals highlighted this site as good for potential starter homes or older people’s housing.



### 4.8 Site H – DNP14-102 – Land off Brinning Lane and Station Road

64 respondents made comments on this site

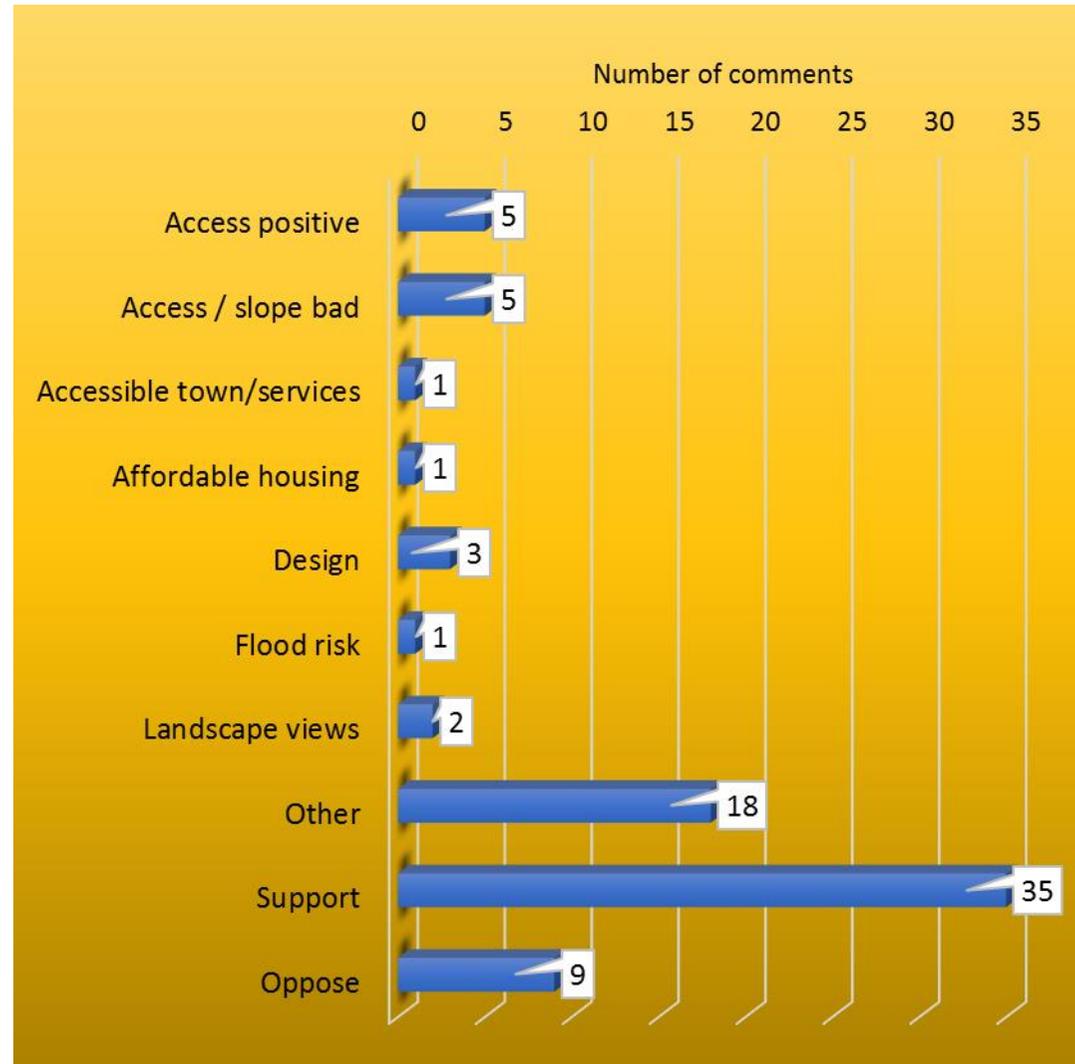
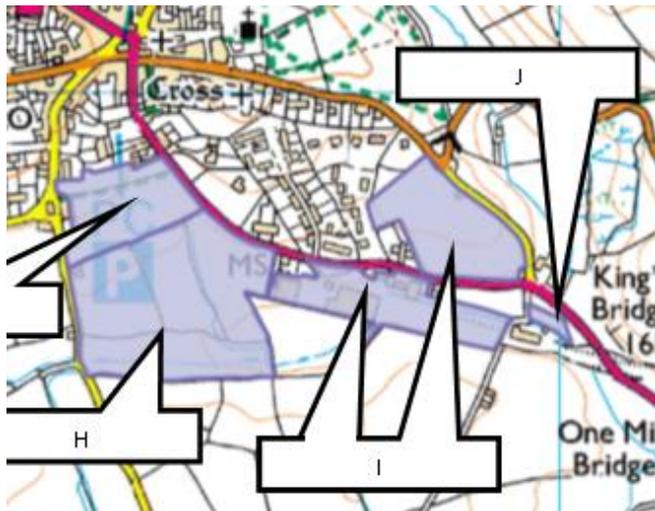
This site was supported by 22 people who responded, and opposed by 30. Landscape and greenfield development concerns were cited by 11 of those who responded and 6 felt that the access and gradient challenges were significant here. 6 people were worried about flood risk on this site, and several were concerned that the site is too far from the centre. Those who supported the development of this site felt that it was accessible and a suitable addition to the town.



### 4.9 Site I – DNP08-017 - Land on the south (Thompson’s yard) and north of Station Road

60 respondents made comments on this site

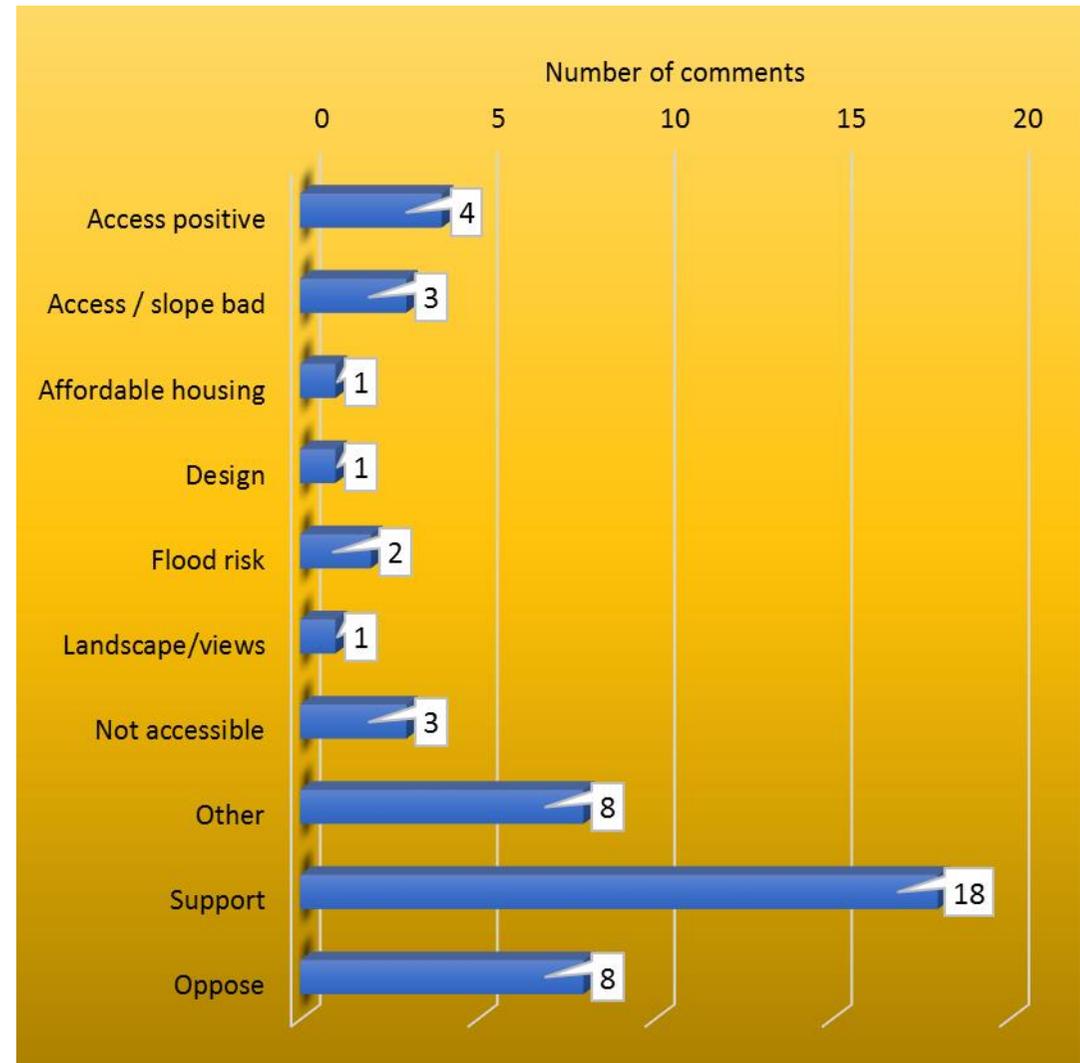
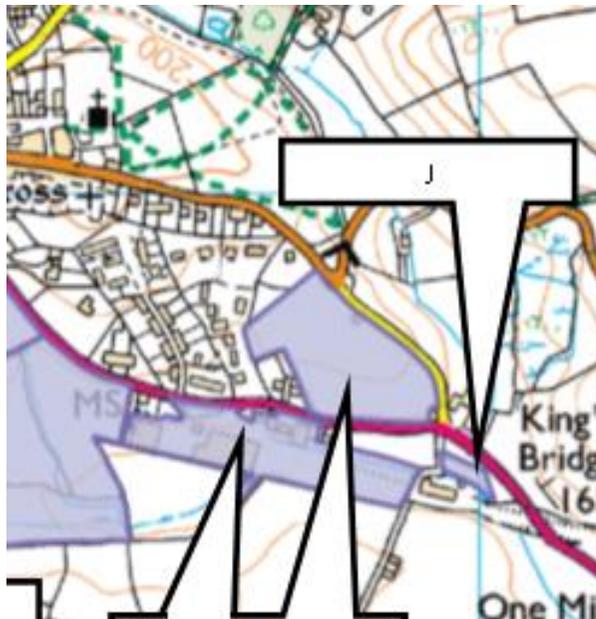
The development of this site was supported by 35 individuals who answered the survey, and opposed by 9. The use of brownfield land was supported by many of those who responded, though some concerns were raised over the possible loss of employment land for the town. Many respondents wished to resist the use of greenfield sites wherever possible, which accords with sound planning principles. 5 of those who supported the development of this site felt that access to the town was positive from this site. Several respondents made comments on the appearance of this site, and the idea of achieving good design and a high quality of building here.



4.10 Site J – DNP14/111 – Moretonhampstead Highway Depot, Kings Bridge, Station Road

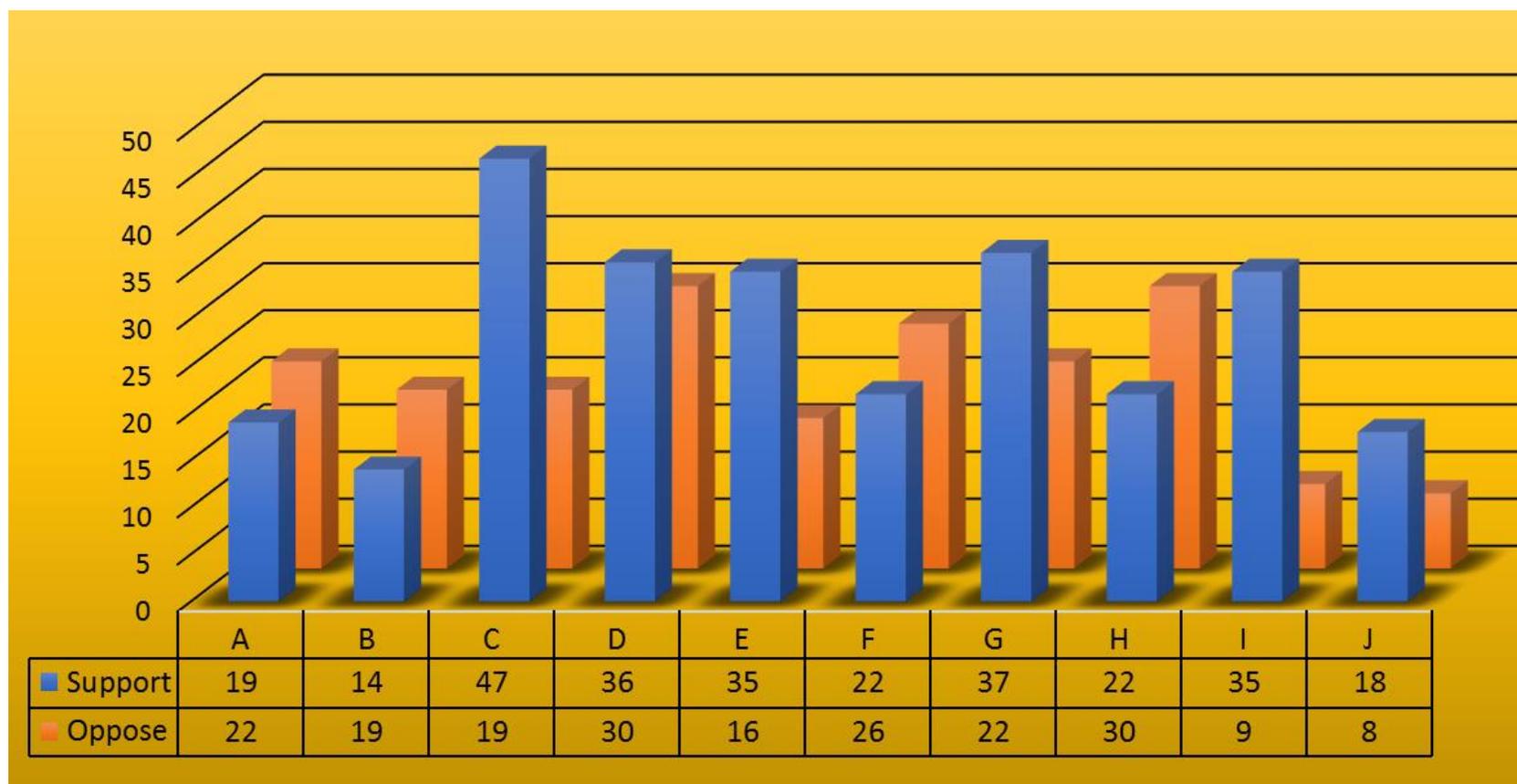
39 respondents made comments on this site

18 individuals made comments in support of this site, and 8 in opposition. The idea of brownfield land being used to offer affordable housing needed by local people was mentioned as a positive by people who supported the site. Those who did not support the development of the site felt it was inaccessible, and were concerned about the possibility of flooding. Some people also disagreed with the principle of more development in Moretonhampstead, on any site.



### 4.11 Indicative site comparison of support / oppose

Utilising the qualitative data from the above responses we can make an indicative interpretation, comparing the Support / Oppose responses across the sites. Care must be taken in using this as a definitive statistical guide to the ultimate support or otherwise between sites as this is based on subjective interpretation of the long answer data. However, it may be helpful for the Council in furthering recommendations or undertaking further detailed work.



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## 4.12 Other Areas

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39 responses were made on this issue

7 respondents proposed other areas for development and these comments are as follows:

- *“Any consideration given for the Exeter road? Would be a prime spot for those living in Moreton but working in Exeter as it allows them to be close to the town yet have easy access to the road”*
- *“Why not also convert the community hospital into a sheltered housing project for local old people. The health trust is obviously struggling to put community health services into this building having abandoned the inpatient beds. Ancillary services are already being incorporated into the revamped health centre next door and the-hospital is becoming less and less viable as a hub. Services-that could not be transferred to the health centre such as the physio dept could be retained as a separate entity within the building as existing”*
- *“Scrubby marginal land further out.”*
- *“Redevelopment of the old Holcombe Nursing Home site?”*
- *“There is also land on the Exeter road out of the town that could be used, but whatever site is chosen for what, I would urge the council to look for plans more like Trevor Maxwell has been attempting, housing with character, for the town and NO sprawling estates of boxes with no garden and no outlook! Also, do not forget that all the people occupying these homes have to work, and the closer they work to where they live, the better!”*
- *“Why not support and allow more development of backlands areas which are currently rotting and not used”*

Other individuals used this opportunity to make comments on the importance of using brownfield land first (11 people), good design (5 people) and avoidance of flood risk areas (2 people). The need for affordable housing was emphasised by three people, and 5 individuals noted landscape protection as a key factor.

## 5 Survey Results - Other Issues

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### 5.1 Q15 Do you have any further issues to add with regard to housing in Moretonhampstead?

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The most commonly raised issue in response to this question was parking in Moretonhampstead, with 39 people making comments about lack of parking, congestion and public car parks. Many individuals made the point that any new housing development needed to be built with onsite car parking, to avoid making the situation worse. Public transport problems and the condition of roads were raised as concerns by some respondents, and the need for local jobs (20 people) and services (26 people) were seen as essential with any growth in the town. In particular, medical facilities, shops and play spaces were identified as being needed alongside housing.

16 individuals described the type of housing they would like to see in Moretonhampstead, focussing on good design and environmentally friendly principles. The need for housing specific to the requirements of older people was raised by some people, who are concerned they will not be able to manage their current houses in the future, and would like to stay in Moretonhampstead. 6 people noted the need to support the town centre in order for it to remain vibrant and offer the range of shops and services needed by residents.

## 6 Study Conclusions

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1. 85% of respondents support the building of new housing in the town, provided that it meets locally identified need, specifically:
  - Genuinely affordable housing – particularly important for workers in care and hospitality who are crucial for our local economy;
  - Housing for people with local connections – 75% of responders said this should be a priority;
  - Housing for young people (single and families) – either for rent or purchasing, helping them get on the home ownership ladder;
  - Housing for older people – including smaller open-market units for people who are downsizing and sheltered housing; and
  - Self-building - 20% of respondents expressed an interest.
2. Some respondents emphasised that new housing ought to be well-designed and environmentally friendly; some that it should be linked to improved facilities (e.g. parking); and some that their support would depend upon which sites were chosen.
3. A significant number of individuals or households (around 60) reported being in some degree of housing need, of which 14 preferred to rent and 46 to buy. Different ages/ household groups had different concerns. Older people voiced concern about being able to manage in their homes, and whether there were other options, such as downsizing, bungalows and sheltered accommodation. Family connection and being close to family for support were concerns for both households with children and older people. Some younger families and single people faced issue like overcrowding, unsuitable accommodation, being forced out of the area by a lack of suitable accommodation and living at home with parents as young adults.
4. There is a strong sense of local identity in Moretonhampstead. People are keen to preserve the high quality of the natural and historic environment.
5. Respondents also had concerns such as parking, traffic congestion, public transport, medical services and social / recreational facilities.
6. There are a range of views about the different sites that would be most suitable for development. Many respondents added comments in favour of small infill sites where 1 or 2 homes could be built.