

## Summary- Economic Development Sub group -Business Consultation

Gamlingay is unlike many more affluent villages within South Cambridgeshire. It has above national average levels of people living in fuel poverty and identified pockets of deprivation amongst its young people. There are a wide variety of established businesses in the village including manufacturing industry. The area has a long history of market gardening and small holdings some of which still remain. Gamlingay has its own micro economy and unlike many other villages locally is not just a dormitory village. It is important that it stays this way and that all housing development is accompanied by opportunities to increase local employment. Successful sustainable development requires housing and employment to be viewed as complimentary and supportive of each other.

The principal central village employment site has recently been given permission for housing on 75% of its area. This has resulted in the relocation out of the village by a significant number of businesses with associated loss of jobs to local people. Gamlingay has a core blue collar/unskilled workforce which has historically sourced most of its employment locally. Recent diminution of rural bus services has made it even more difficult for people without access to private transport to find work. The young are particularly affected and there is evidence of young people leaving education and training due to the logistics and costs associated with commuting. It is a key strategic aim for the Community Development charity, Forward Gamlingay, to improve the opportunities for young people to gain employment and training locally from local providers.

Early feedback indicates that almost 20% of working adults are employed in the village.

Within Gamlingay there are:

- 3 employment sites
- A primary school
- A small selection of basic retail outlets.
- 2 public houses
- A post office
- 1 restaurant including take away
- 1 fast food outlet
- 2 cafes
- 1 farm shop
- 1 petrol station

**i. The main centres for employment other than the village are:**

- Cambridge 18 miles
- London 51 miles
- Biggleswade 7 miles
- Sandy 4 miles
- Bedford 17 miles
- St Neots 8 miles
- Great Gransden 4 miles
- Stevenage 20 miles
- Cambourne 10 miles
- Hitchin 17 miles
- Milton Keynes 30 miles
- Papworth 9 miles
- Huntingdon 14 miles
- Melbourn 12 miles
- Royston 13 miles
- Peterborough 37 miles

**ii. Using Neighbourhood Planning to Support Economic Development**

**Why did we Include Economic Development in our Neighbourhood Plan?**

- The Greater Cambridgeshire Area is experiencing huge economic growth and Gamlingay could easily be left behind
- We need to make sure we have the right sorts of jobs in the right places
- Gamlingay must remain a sustainable community and not become a commuter village
- We need jobs as well as houses
- Lack of public transport means that we must have local jobs, local shops and local service providers.
- Gamlingay has already lost its principle large central village employment site to housing and there is potential threat to other existing sites.
- Residents have told us that they place a high value on local employment opportunities

**What overriding economic aims did we include in the Neighbourhood Plan?**

- To retain existing businesses in the village
- To facilitate growth of existing businesses
- To create an environment which encourages some new business and start ups
- To attract businesses to relocate to Gamlingay and to relieve pressure on other employment centres including Cambridge

**Who and how have we consulted the business community?**

- Put together a business directory of 120 Gamlingay businesses
- Mapped existing and potential employment sites and premises

- Held meetings with owners of employment sites to ask how the Neighbourhood Plan could help them
- Held 2 Business Development workshops attended by 50 local businesses to ask how the Neighbourhood Plan could help them
- Created an economic development action plan and a supporting project.
- Delivered 2 questionnaires to land -owners and businesses
- Gathered feedback on the draft policies September 2019.

### **iii. Summary of Results of Consultations with Businesses and Business Site Owners and Promoters.**

#### **What did the owners of employment sites tells us about the barriers to economic growth?**

- Planning regulations make getting planning permission very difficult
- Small developments are required to produce as much evidence to support planning applications as big developments
- Business rates are too high
- Need for housing is a threat to employment sites and discourages development for employment use
- The local workforce does not have the skills needed.

#### **What did the owners of businesses tell us about the barriers to growth?**

- Broadband connectivity is not good enough
- Isolated businesses have serious security problems
- To keep the volunteer run fire service we need people to live and work locally
- The cost of planning advice and applications is too high
- Sole traders and home workers are very isolated in terms of information and support
- Businesses do not know about each other so they are not part of each other supply chains.
- There are few opportunities to access skills and development support locally and affordably and few opportunities to build networks to promote mutual support.
- There is no affordable way to advertise local jobs
- There is a lack of small, secure and affordable premises for business
- Planning polices inhibit business growth

#### **What are the Two Priorities identified?**

- Developing and securing local employment sites and premises (The Neighbourhood Plan)
- Providing business support to meet identified needs (the Business Hub-a non land based project)

#### **What policy areas have we looked at for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan?**

- Protecting existing employment sites
- Identify suitable areas for business development
- Identify sites adjacent to existing sites
- Set design standards for buildings including environmental standards
- Facilitate development of the village as a visitor destination

### What is the Economic Development Project?

- Establish an Actual Business Hub i.e. the Gamlingay Business Hub
- Establish a web based Virtual Business Hub to include a local service directory, links to business support, a communications forum etc. (Solution Gamlingay)

#### **iv. Summary of Business consultations**

June 2015- Sub group initial meetings (15 attendees)

September 2015- Employment brainstorming Sessions (14 attendees)

January April 2016- Business Meetings continuing (20 attendees)

September 2016- Face to face consultation at The Village Show (200 responses)

January 2017-Business Consultation –(2 sessions)

January-November 2017 policy formation

29<sup>th</sup> September 2017- Green End site brainstorm session (13 attendees)

Delivery of virtual business Hub (Solution Gamlingay)- Autumn 2017  
[www.solutiongamlingay.com](http://www.solutiongamlingay.com)

2018-Virtual Hub work and the delivery of Business Development Hub (Economic Development Project)

2019- Draft plan policies finalized

September 2019- 2 Business meetings presentation of draft policies and questionnaire feedback (10 responses)

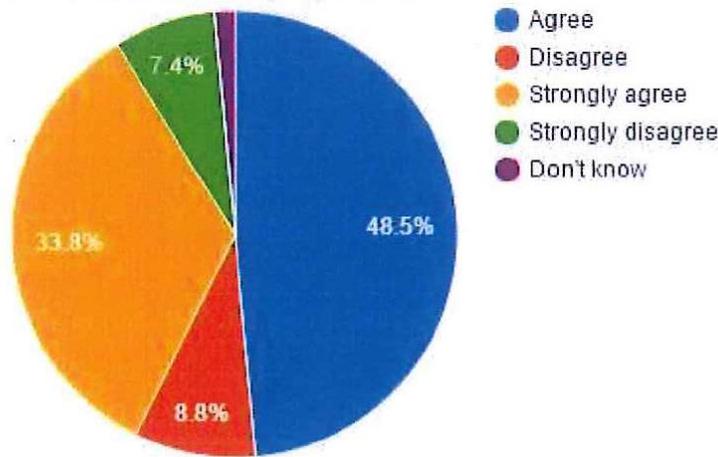
September 2019- Questionnaire on vision and objectives (residents and businesses)

**v. Face to Face Survey September 2016 (200 respondents)**

**Setting aside land for employment**

We asked people whether or not they supported setting land aside for local employment. This is important because the alternative is that Gamlingay becomes a dormitory village where everyone commutes to work outside the village. It would also have an impact, for example, on the Parish's ability to keep its local fire station because in cases of emergency retained firefighters have to be able to reach the station within five minutes of receiving the alert. Encouragingly, 82% of people agree (48%) or strongly agree (34%) that the Neighbourhood Plan should set aside land for employment.

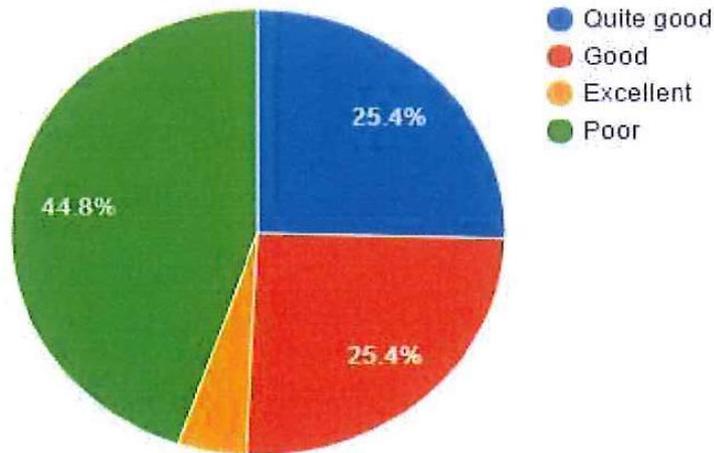
**Thinking about employment in Gamlingay over the next 20 years, do you believe we should set land aside for employment?**



**Mobile and broadband communications**

The majority of people (45%) think that broadband and mobile reception in Gamlingay is poor. Just over half think it is quite good or good (51% total). 55% want to see better broadband regardless even if no new housing is built compared to 65% who say we need better mobile reception.

**How do you rate mobile/broadband communications in Gamlingay?**



**vi. Support for business development in specific area-Survey results 2016-17**

1	Drove Rd	Percentage	Data set 1	Data set 2	total
	Strongly agree	20%	32	48	80
	agree	34%	62	77	139
	no opinion	22%	19	69	88
	disagree	20%	20	61	81
	strongly disagree	4%	14	2	16
	Total respondents		147	257	404

2	Mill Hill	Percentage	Data set 1	Data set 2	total
	Strongly agree	19%	34	41	75
	agree	37%	62	89	151
	no opinion	22%	20	69	89
	disagree	19%	21	57	78
	strongly disagree	3%	9	2	11
	Total respondents	100%	146	258	404

3	Station Rd	Percentage	Data set 1	Data set 2	total	
	Strongly agree	28%	47	67	114	
	agree	50%	70	130	200	
	no opinion	10%	11	29	40	
	disagree	8%	7	27	34	
	strongly disagree	3%	10	3	13	
	<b>totals</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>401</b>	

Area specific responses relating to Mill Hill, Drove Road and Station Road

Type of business support

1	Drove Rd	Percentage	Data set 1	Data set 2	total	
	Light industry	51%	126	78	204	
	offices	13%	22	31	53	
	Don't know	24%	83	13	96	
	Heavy industry	12%	27	22	49	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>402</b>	

2	Mill Hill	percentage	Data set 1	Data set 2	total	
	Light industry	51%	79	125	204	
	offices	16%	31	33	64	
	Don't know	22%	16	72	88	
	Heavy industry	11%	19	27	46	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>402</b>	

3	Station Rd	percentage	Data set 1	Data set 2	total	
	Light industry	54%	71	142	213	
	offices	17%	40	29	69	
	Don't know	13%	12	41	53	
	Heavy Industry	16%	22	41	63	
	<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>398</b>	

Type of business preferred by area

**vii. Summary of the Sept 2019 Business consultation on the draft vision and objectives**

(10 respondents)

70% trading more than 10 years.

½ respondents are sole traders/with less than 5 employees

50% of respondents -more than half their employees live in or close proximity to Gamlingay

80% strongly agree with the vision of the Plan

70% strongly agree with the local economy objective in the draft neighbourhood plan

‘We will nurture and grow local businesses to sustain and develop new opportunities for residents in the parish.’

Regarding supporting existing employment sites on Station Rd and Green End- 60% strongly agree , and 80% agree or strongly agree .

New Employment on Mill Hill- 60% strongly agree or agree with policy

New Employment on Drove Rd- 80% strongly agree or agree with policy

Access places by foot or bike- 80% strongly agree or agree with policy

Employment developments should be built to high environmental standards- 60% Strongly agree/agree.

60% responses agree strongly agree that developments should not obstruct special views and vistas

70% strongly agree/agree that employment sites should address the impact they have on community facilities.

Additional comments:- There is a need to provide community facilities . the First School site needs to be in the Plan. Broadband and mobile phone 4G/5G needs to be provided /improved.