



# **Catesby Estates Survey Monkey “Consultation”**

## **Fact Sheet & Advice to Residents**

### **Background**

Catesby Estates, a Land Promoter intends to seek consent to build 110 houses on Green Belt Land South of Sidney Gardens located between the two nature reserves of Palace Park Wood and Oxenhill Shaw. No planning application has yet been submitted and Catesby will be gathering as much information as possible to support a future application. This Fact Sheet aims to explain to residents why **The Otford Protection Committee (part of The Otford Society) is advising residents NOT to respond to Catesby Estate’s “Consultation”**. If residents have any questions, please email us at [protectotford@otfordsociety.org.uk](mailto:protectotford@otfordsociety.org.uk).

### **Importance of Local Opinion**

Whilst Sevenoaks District Council is the authority that will actually grant or refuse permission (in the first instance), the opinions of local people will be an important factor to be considered. Catesby are therefore highly likely to want data that demonstrates a level of demand for housing from local people to counter the high level of opposition. A “Consultation” survey is a good way for them to gather this data.

### **What is The Otford Protection Committee’s Advice?**

The Otford Protection Committee respects the right of all residents to make their own decision on whether or not to respond to the “consultation”. We know that some people have been concerned that a low response might be used to imply that there is a very low level of local opposition. This is a valid concern, and is precisely why local residents have organised a petition that already has hundreds of signatures. This clearly demonstrates the level of local opposition with no risk of survey data being used to help justify development.

### **What are the Specific Risks of Responding to the “Consultation”?**

Unlike statutory Consultation exercises, Catesby Estates are under no obligation to publish all of the data from the survey. They will be free to selectively pick and choose what data they share. Any data that does not support their planning application is highly unlikely to be shared and similarly, any data that supports the development is highly likely to be used for that purpose. For this reason, The Otford Protection Committee strongly advises residents not to respond to the survey and instead to gather signatures for the petition.



### Are There Any Examples of How the Data Could be Used to Justify Development?

Here are just a couple of examples of how the data in the survey could be used to help justify the need for this development:

#### \* 7. Do you think there is a need for new homes in the area?

- YES - We need new homes
- YES - But limited amounts
- Unsure
- NO - We don't need new homes here

If for example 70% of survey respondents ticked the “YES – We need new homes” box, this could be used to suggest that these residents were not just in favour of new homes but that they should be built on Green Belt. However, it is quite possible that many of the people suggesting that new homes are needed would prefer for these to be built on Brownfield sites rather than Green Belt. The survey does not enable people to properly express their views, together with WHY they feel homes are needed or WHERE they should be built.

#### \* 8. Thinking about the current local housing market what type of homes do you think are in short supply currently? (Select all that apply)

- Affordable homes for first time buyers
- Small family homes with gardens
- Larger family/executive homes
- Bungalows for downsizers
- Privately rented homes
- Social housing or affordable rent homes
- Fully accessible homes
- The housing market in the area currently caters for a wide range of needs

For question 8, residents might feel that certain types of homes are needed locally. Answers could once again be used to imply (for example) that residents want more “Affordable homes for first time buyers” AND that those homes should be built on the beautiful Green Belt site South of Sidney Gardens.