Matter 1  Spatial Strategy  Issue 1

1.1  Strategic Corridor

The notion of a strategic corridor of commercial and residential development is not well established.

- It appears not to exist outside the LDF papers. We do not know of its adoption as a feature of District planning – and although our parish forms part of it (in so far as it does exist) we have never been informed.
- It seems not to be recognised among fellow members of the Shepway committee of the Kent Association of Local Councils.
- If it were well established it might also have had a greater impact on transport policy where the link between motorways and railways (which is possible where STOP24 and Westenhanger Station are contiguous) should have been promoted as a key component of the development of the District.

1.2  Settlement Hierarchy

The place of Westenhanger in the Settlement Hierarchy is wrongly (and confusingly) given within the Core Strategy and SDC planning responses:

- figure 4.4 p48 shows it as a secondary village,
- the table in #4.62, p 46 shows it as a primary village.

It fits the definition of neither, even if all 160 dwellings of the total Parish of Stanford are included.

However, Planning Services at SDC has always considered the 60 houses of Westenhanger to be within ‘countryside’ in planning terms. It is separated from the larger part of the parish by the railway and the M20. It has never had a ‘building line’ drawn around it (see the last two Local Development Plans). Planning decisions spelled this out twice in 2011 when the need to refuse new building in this place was emphasised in emails to the Stanford PC clerk from planning officers:

- Of Tollgate Cottage (at the entrance to the racecourse), “The application property …. is outside of any establishment settlement ….” (July 2011)
- Of Jesters (overlooking the racecourse), “The site therefore in planning terms forms part of the countryside and in such locations both national and local policies seek the protection of the countryside………” (August 2011).

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April 2012