

Technical amendments from the clerk and site submitters needed in the report.

Hi Emily

I hope you had a good break! Here we go again!

I have contacted all site submitters – any information they have given me is listed below by site number.

I have also attached the proposed NDP settlement boundaries – according to the initial questionnaire that went out in 2016. I have also sent it for comment to HC. I shall let you know if I get a response.

I have listed some of my key concerns below under clerks comments.

Clerks comments

- Please take out any numbers of dwellings that could be put on a bit of land over the required amount of 14.
- Comments that came from the Steering Group Meeting about site 10 are as follows: Septic tank in the middle; boggy ground; includes the neighbours garden; does have protected species on it; PRoW goes through the site and it does have power lines.

Site 1 – From Malcolm Davies

They are only intending 3 or 4 houses. Otherwise all fine

Site 2 – From Rob Manning

All fine

Site 3 – From Rob Manning

All fine

Site 4 – From S. Hawkins

Emailed, called and spoke to her – still no comment come through.

Site 5 – From Jenny Pearce

In response, the only things that we think we possibly should have included in the original submission relate to water pipes. We have a water meter outside our gate on the road verge. As far as we are aware, the pipes run along under the track towards our barns. Also our septic tank soakaway currently runs onto the site - this would obviously need re-siting and incorporating into any sewage system serving the new development.

Site 6 – From The Motts

On pages 42/43 under "Other key considerations" the report mentions in its summary of (our) Site 6 that there are power lines along the southern border of the paddock. We just wanted to mention that those power lines don't cross the border. Wasn't sure if/how important that was in terms of constraints.

Site 7 – From D. Kaner

The possible inaccuracies here are (a) that Aecom suggests the site is "away from" the settlement and (b) that the proposed development would be against existing policies.

A significant part of Site 11 is included in the draft settlement boundary proposed in the NDP Questionnaire circulated in February 2017. This was prepared with without my knowledge or involvement. I put the site forward with this background in mind. Aecom's assertion that the site is outside of the settlement appears to run counter to the progress made in the NDP process to date.

Herefordshire's Core Strategy supports the reuse existing buildings, envisages "windfall" developments and makes special provision for planning in parishes which lack a conventional form of settlement. It appears that none of these policies has been considered in the rejection of Site 7. Aecom has written to me, via you, advising that I should make a planning application to

Herefordshire separate from the NDP process. This seems to me to recognise that there could be grounds for such an approach under existing planning policies, a view supported by my professional advisors, who have detailed knowledge of Herefordshire's Core Strategy and planning guidelines.

The Aecom Report.

As you know from our earlier discussions, I have some reservations about the quality of the Aecom report and its recommendations. I am aware that other reservations are held by a number of parish residents. In very brief summary, my main concerns are as follows:

1. While the Aecom report may be deemed independent of the Stretton Grandison Group of Parishes NDP process to date, the NDP Steering Group and the Parish Council should be mindful that Aecom is an \$18bn American-owned multinational corporation with extensive global interests in construction. It appears to be expanding its construction activities in the UK at this time (reference, Aecom web site and press releases).
2. Aecom, in its report, proposes a preference for fewer larger sites, rather than more smaller sites, in order to maximise Section 106 contributions. This seems to be reflected in the site recommendations, although it runs somewhat counter to the recommendations of the NDP questionnaire and the NDP process to date, as I understand them.
3. A quick review of Aecom's recommendations confirms that all of the sites marked as green are listed as "in" settlements, whereas all but one that are listed as "close to" or "near to" settlements are dismissed. This suggests that being deemed "in" a settlement is a critical selection criterion. However, Aecom has confirmed that there are no settlement boundaries set by County and that they did not use the draft boundaries proposed in the NDP questionnaire. Accordingly, I have to conclude that Aecom has made its own estimate of where the boundaries should lie, based on undisclosed criteria. This could cast doubt on the transparency of the Aecom review process.
4. Canon Frome Court is described as a "detached part of an existing settlement". I believe that Canon Frome Court has more individual dwellings in it than any other identifiable cluster of homes in Canon Frome. Canon Frome church, the main public building in Canon Frome, is also close by the Court. Thus, it is not at all clear why Aecom does not consider Canon Frome Court to be the main settlement, rather than a "detached part". In any case, Canon Frome seems to be an excellent example of a community that lacks a conventional "settlement boundary", of a type explicitly anticipated in the Herefordshire Core Strategy. The NDP questionnaire clearly shows Canon Frome Court to be within the draft settlement boundary. All of this raises questions about Aecom's treatment of sites in Canon Frome, against existing planning policies.
5. Aecom proposes that development of Site 11 is "relatively sustainable". Site 11 is close to Stretton Grandison, a community listed as suitable for "proportionate development" in Herefordshire's Core Strategy. Site 11 lies outside of the draft settlement boundary for Stretton Grandison in the NDP questionnaire. Aecom has suggested a capacity of 90 homes on site 11. I struggle to see how this can be considered as "proportionate development", when the whole of Stretton Grandison consists of just over 60 homes, at present. In addition, Aecom notes the visual sensitivity of Site 11, but appears to dismiss this. This is despite discounting a number of other sites on the grounds that their development would not protect "the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside". There appears to be some danger of an inconsistency in approach here.
6. Herefordshire planning guidelines and the Core Strategy identify a preference for the development of "brownfield sites" in the villages. All of the sites flagged green by Aecom as suitable for further consideration are noted as "greenfield". All of the sites identified as "previously developed" or "brownfield" have been dismissed.

Of course, you can dismiss my comments as "personal opinion", if you wish. At its best, the NDP will be a consultation exercise involving all of the local community. As such, the Steering Committee may want to seek out and consider carefully such "personal opinions", as a key part of its remit.

At the recent meeting of the NDP Steering Committee, it appeared that many of the residents present had reservations about the Aecom report. I would ask that you, as Parish Clerk, and the members of

the Parish Council take due note of concerns regarding the process and outcome of the Aecom exercise, in addition to correcting any obvious factual errors regarding individual sites.

Site 8 – From N. Winfield

Emailed and phoned and a left message – no response.

Site 9 – From A. Nash

No issues

Site 10,11 and 12 - From Tim Raikes

Site 10. Old School Plot.

There are no poles on this plot except for the top NE Corner.

NE of the Small Leaved Lime tree is a pole which carries a three phase supply to the church and a single phase supply to the School Cottage complex and also the telephone wires.

The Small Leaved Lime Tree will, no doubt, be protected.

Site 11. Land adjacent Old Telephone Exchange.

This site has the electricity supply to Taylor's and Nurses cottages etc on the side of the A417.

This line clips the NW corner of the field and runs almost parallel with the N hedge to a pole in the hedge of the Exchange and on to another pole which carries the line running S to Coppice Cottage (there is a further pole towards the S boundary).

This N/S line continues over the road to the Park towards Lower Eggleton.

Site 12. North of the A4103 Lower Eggleton.

Plot 1 Opposite Lower Eggleton Court.

No electricity poles on this site.

Plot 2. Between Parry's Cottage and Rose Cottage.

Here the power lines run parallel with the A417 with one pole in Parry's garden hedge.

Plot 3. Between Rose Cottage and The Old Shop.

Overhead wires as before.

Plot 4. Between The Old Shop and Rowan Tree Cottage.

Overhead wires as before with a pole by the hedge.

Plot 5. Between Rowan Tree Cottage and Zilan.

No wires or poles.