

Wellington Heath Parish Council

25 July 2017

To HCC Planning Gemma Webster
Copy AONB Paul Esrich
Copy Liz Harvey

Planning application 172015 Land Opposite The Gables, Ochre Hill, Wellington Heath

Dear Madam,

Wellington Heath Parish Councillors are opposed to this planning application which falsely claims "The site is within the boundary for new residential development as set out in emerging Neighbourhood Plan documents".

The NDP settlement boundary was informed by a professionally prepared landscape assessment and subsequently 3 options were the subject of a consultation on 10 December 2016. The results were published in NDP bulletin 8 in January 2017 which included a settlement boundary map and was delivered to every house in the parish including the applicants. The settlement boundary which 66% of parishioner responses supported excludes the proposed development site. 12% of responses preferred a smaller settlement boundary which also excludes this site whilst only 12% supported a larger settlement boundary which included the proposed site. The published settlement boundary can be found on Map 4 page 20 of the Reg 14 NDP <https://sites.google.com/site/whnpgw/neighbourhood-plan/draft-neighbourhood-development-plan---regulation-14-version>.

The landscape character is critically important to the local distinctiveness of Wellington Heath. The proposed development site is in the AONB on the crest of Ochre Hill adjacent to a well used footpath. Development on this site would be seen from viewpoints to the east at Frith Wood including from the Geoparkway and Herefordshire Trail. To the west this ridgeline is very prominent and is seen from the nearby Herefordshire Trail, Geoparkway and the Old School listed building on Ledbury Road.

Planning permission on Ochre Hill has previously been refused or only granted in special circumstances :-

- **Permission was refused (140811) for development on a nearby, fairly well screened site on Ochre Hill because it was considered to be in open countryside.** Subsequently planning application 151917 for an Eco-dwelling of exceptional architectural merit meeting the criteria for development in open countryside was subsequently approved.
- 160541 Erection of a small 3-bedroom dwelling east of Ochre Hill on a brownfield site of a former sawmill was approved but limited to an existing concrete base and foundations.

C F Rozelaar
Chair of Wellington Heath parish council planning committee