

Wellington Heath Parish Council

30 July 2017

To HCC Planning Mrs G Webster
Copy AONB Paul Esrich
Copy Liz Harvey

Planning application 172149 Behind The Croft, Ledbury Road, Wellington Heath

Additional information

Dear Madam,

This letter is in addition to our response dated 18 July 2017. Wellington Heath Parish Councillors and our NDP working group have recently reviewed the collective effect of recent planning applications and representations received regarding our NDP Reg 14 consultation.

There is a major imbalance in the size and hence likely cost of houses being proposed in all recent planning applications in Wellington Heath, in every case the proposed houses are larger and with more bedrooms than expected and no smaller houses have come forward.

This accelerates the trend of recent decades towards larger, less affordable houses, in the 2011 Census only 25% of dwellings in Wellington Heath were in council tax bands A to C whilst 64% were in bands E to G.

We had expected proposals for 3 bedroom houses on this site whereas 4 bedrooms are proposed. Our draft NDP says "up to three 3-bedroom bungalows".

The AONB guidance on building design pages 79 & 79 gives clear guidance regarding domestic buildings and local distinctiveness "respect the local character of modest buildings in terms of, size, form, style, and limited ornamentation". "Individual and unique buildings are preferable. Avoid uniform developments of identical buildings or larger buildings. Focus on creating character and identity between the different buildings to reflect the historic build character." Core Strategy Policy LD1 is very relevant regarding both scale and the AONB but inevitably lacks the detail of local distinctiveness expressed by AONB guidance.

The Core Strategy recognises the issue " 4.8.19 Housing affordability is a significant issue in rural Herefordshire. This situation is exacerbated by an existing housing mix that is heavily skewed towards higher value properties, together with demand from people moving to rural areas and restricted scope for new house building. As a result there is a need for market housing priced at a level that can be afforded by local people." Core Strategy policy RA2 clause 4 is especially relevant "Providing ----- They result in the delivery of schemes that generate the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular settlements, reflecting local demand". We note that smaller houses and bungalows sell quickly in Wellington Heath whereas some other houses have been on the market for well over a year.

C F Rozelaar
Chair of Wellington Heath parish council planning committee