

Wellington Heath Parish Council

1 Aug 2017

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

Planning application 172441 - Myrtle Cottage, Church Lane, Wellington Heath,

Dear Madam,

The Design and Access Statement is over ambitious in a number of its claims. The Chairman of the Parish Council has not been consulted, however the Chairman of the Planning Committee had visited the site and discussed the relationship of the anticipated proposal to the NDP but did not see the plans or consider the details of the proposal. This response is consistent with that discussion.

The proposal does not comply with the Herefordshire Core Strategy policy RA2 "Their design and layout should reflect the size, role and function of each settlement and be located within or adjacent to the main built up area." The site is a long way from the main built up area of Wellington Heath village. It is distant from any former or currently proposed settlement boundary. The site is immediately adjacent to the Malvern Hills AONB. The main built up area of Wellington Heath village is located within the AONB, separated from the proposed site by the particularly sensitive Wellington Heath Wood.

The NDP settlement boundary was supported by 66% of parishioner responses and 12% of responses preferred a smaller settlement boundary. 12% supported a slightly larger settlement boundary, and only one response sought to significantly extend the settlement boundary to include this site. The published settlement boundary can be found on Map 4 page 20 of the Reg 14 NDP <https://sites.google.com/site/whnpwg/neighbourhood-plan/draft-neighbourhood-development-plan---regulation-14-version>. The proposed settlement boundary will accomplish considerably more than the target of 28 new houses. Completions since 2011 plus current planning applications amount to 29 (including 3 allocated sites) and a further allocated site will bring this total to at least 35 and further windfalls can be expected before 2031, historically almost 1 per year.

Wellington Heath parish councillors consider that a modified proposal may have the potential to be compliant with Core Strategy policy RA3.6 "is of exceptional quality and innovative design satisfying the design criteria set out in Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework and achieves sustainable standards of design and construction". The current proposal does not achieve this very high standard although it may have the potential to do so. We will list just some of the issues that are apparent. The new house is said to be "to enable their parents to live within the village and support child care needs, and in time enable the care of their elderly parents" The special requirements of older people are not adequately addressed, nor are those of children. A standard such as "Lifetime Homes" would seem applicable yet a 3 storey design and numerous flights of stairs is proposed with inadequate consideration of how it can be adapted in the future for elderly and less mobile occupants. Safety barriers around the roof or alternatively preventing access to the roof by children and others require a good deal more consideration and will significantly affect integration into the landscape. The chimney as currently designed is rather obtrusive. The details of the materials to be used are insufficient to judge their suitability and there is inadequate discussion of the Malvern Hills AONB Guidance on Building Design and Colour Guide. We suspect that more

detailed consideration would reveal other issues since there are inconsistencies in the design such as the mention of a heat store without an indication of the source of heat input on this shaded site, Passivhaus standards or similar would seem to be particularly relevant.

The proposed design makes good use of the profile of the site and we feel more careful design is in the interests of the the applicants and local distinctiveness and may achieve compliance with RA3.6.

C F Rozelaar

Chair of Wellington Heath parish council planning committee