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**The Lion Applications – Strong Objection**

Edgmond Parish Council cannot support the planning applications for The Lion, High Street, Edgmond, Newport Shropshire – reference numbers TWC/2021/1208 and TWC/2021/1220.

Having looked in detail at both applications, it became clear that they should be considered together, and we are grateful that our application to call them in, in order that they be determined by the Planning Committee, has been accepted.

This was necessary due to the fact that the applications are contrary to Edgmond Neighbourhood Plan and many of the policies in the TW Local Plan as well as being against the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to rural settlements such as Edgmond, and the Edgmond Conservation Area Management Plan.

There are numerous inaccuracies within the applications, the first and most significant being that this proposal **does not** comply with the TW H011. This policy states

***“the Council will support small scale affordable housing schemes as a exception to normal rural housing policy provided that i) it demonstrates that it will address an identified local housing need and ensure that adequate occupancy controls are in place, and ii) the proposal is of an appropriate scale and design for the location”***

As is clearly evident, this is not a small-scale scheme, there is no identified local housing need for 27 affordable homes (as required by the NPPF) and no evidence base to show such a need exists. There is also no mention of a Local Lettings Policy to ensure that any homes within the scheme will be available for local residents, their families or for those with work connections. Nearby Harper Adams University has confirmed that they do not require additional ‘affordable homes’ for students or staff and have evidence that there are many local examples of accommodation available, with no waiting lists.

The site is known to flood, particularly in Autumn and Spring and the use of this entire site will have a detrimental effect and result in loss of wildlife habitat.

The scale and design are NOT suitable, they are not appropriate (as required by HO11) and are UNSYMPATHETIC, for the Edgmond Village and Conservation Area.

May we refer you to the Landscape Character Assessment that formed part of our Neighbourhood Plan, this helps to define what is meant by rural character – ie farmland extending right in the heart of the village and providing rural views out of the village for everyone to enjoy. It is very clear that this is a very urban form and it does not fit in with Edgmond's rural character. In the link below, on the TW website,

[https://www.telford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6177/landscape\\_character\\_assessment.pdf](https://www.telford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6177/landscape_character_assessment.pdf)

it is clear to see the view that would be blocked by the proposal and this is specifically referenced in the landscape character assessment.

The proposals do not meet any criteria for sustainability and future-proofing. There is a lack of energy efficiency, the properties appear to be of a poor standard and these concerns have already been raised by some potential tenants. There is no mention of solar panels or electric car-chargers and the lack of landscaping is not acceptable. The scheme is more like a dense urban design transported into the countryside and is completely unsuitable and not acceptable. I would like to refer you to PE-2021-0121 in which a TWC Planning Officer advised that a proposal for 4 detached houses was not the right form or design for this site and considered that development in this area would be considered to encroach into the countryside, therefore for continuity and consistency, this application is also not the right form or design for the site. Development in this part of the village would detract from the rural character. As this is the same planning officer, may we respectfully suggest that the same conclusion be reached?

This is further supported in TW HO6 in respect of affordable housing where in paragraph 5.2.3.2, the proposed site fails to achieve:

***“The delivery of affordable housing can be framed around three principles, namely; the identified local need for affordable housing; the economics, or viability, of affordable housing provision; and other relevant planning considerations that might be relevant relate to the delivery of affordable housing on the particular site in question, for example the existing mix of housing in the locality”***

The design of the properties is described to be of a sustainable design but values for the sustainability features are not quoted other than they are produced by LoCal Homes. It is worthy of note that LoCal Homes is a member of The Accord Group which also owns Green Square Accord Housing Association.

HO6 goes further in respect of the design of affordable homes in paragraph 5.2.3.5

***Policy HO6 will contribute toward delivering sustainable communities by ensuring that, as far as possible, the distribution of units across sites and the design of individual dwellings do not openly identify the affordable dwellings as different to market properties for sale or rent.***

The designs of these proposed buildings have no features that enable them to merge into the street scene in that section of the village, due to their stark urban appearance which is equally contrary to the governments ambition to build in beauty as per the report of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission of 2020

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/861832/Living\\_with\\_beauty\\_BBBBC\\_report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/861832/Living_with_beauty_BBBBC_report.pdf).

This application for affordable homes, needs practical consideration. There is a lack of local employment and a very limited public transport system – any tenants are likely to need their own transport, and car parking within the site will be a problem. Although, the homes may be described as ‘affordable’, living in a rural area does come with additional costs. We do not believe that Edgmond is a sustainable location for a big social housing development. The site itself will be accessed at a dangerous location in the centre of the village, where visibility is poor.

What are the arrangements for primary and secondary school placements?

The nearby large sites at Allscot and Crudgington will ensure that TWC reaches its target for the Local Plan in the rural area, so these properties will not be needed to meet the numbers. Edgmond has had a number of applications permitted for infill sites within the village, which the Parish Council has supported as small-scale development, of appropriate size and design, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan.

It would be good to remind people of TW HO6 in particular paragraph 5.3.1.5 and the element highlighted within the paragraph

***The Council anticipates these five settlements accommodating in total around 80 new homes over the lifetime of the Local Plan. It is expected that this new housing will be delivered on small infill sites within existing settlements. For the avoidance of doubt, Edgmond means the settlement of Edgmond and not Edgmond Marsh or Harper Adams University. Development proposals will need to demonstrate that they relate appropriately in scale to the community in which they are located without representing a visually undesirable encroachment into the surrounding countryside. It is important to ensure that Edgmond does not coalesce with Newport so this settlement retains its distinctiveness.***

***Development proposals in Lilleshall will be expected to take account of its location in a Strategic Landscape which merits additional protection as set out in Policy NE7. Proposals should also provide an appropriate mix of housing size and tenure***

Edgmond Parish Council successfully applied for The Lion to be designated as an Asset Of Community Value (ACV) and Members are keen to ensure that the pub (in whatever form) will re-open and offer facilities for the community in accordance with the requests of local residents. There is no guarantee, within this application, that the pub will be re-open. We would have expected a commitment that the pub will be refurbished and re-opened prior to any of the homes being occupied – this could be achieved through planning conditions.

Edgmond and its rural aspects are to be treasured. This is supported by the designation as a Conservation Area, and a number of Listed Buildings and Structures. We are the custodians of the Parish for future generations, and we (by working with TWC) should be ensuring that any development is in keeping with the locality.

The planning officer should also be encouraged to read in full the number of objections lodged on the planning application portal for both applications 1208 and 1220, as there are now in excess of 100 objections. One has supporting images of flooding in the locality which supports comments raised by TWC's own Environmental Services Engineering Services Engineering Design & Advice (Drainage) objection lodged on the 25/01/2022.

We strongly urge the Planning Officer to recommend refusal of this application. However, if they are minded to consider it further, or recommend approval, the Parish Council will attend the Planning Committee to address the Members of the Committee to ensure that they have all the information available to make an informed decision.

Edgmond Parish Council is still committed to the re-opening of The Lion, as an ACV, and therefore if the Planning Officer would like to meet with the Chairman, Members and interested residents, with or without the landowner / developer, to discuss an alternative proposal to bring about the ACV, please do not hesitate to contact the Parish Clerk.

Kind regards

*Katrina Baker MBE*

Edgmond Parish Clerk

For & on behalf of Edgmond Parish Council