



Lilleshall Parish Council

The Memorial Hall, Hillside, Lilleshall, Shropshire, TF10 9HG.

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Dear Sir

EXAMINATION OF THE TELFORD AND WREKIN LOCAL PLAN 2011-2031 MATTERS, ISSUES & QUESTIONS PAPER Matter – 3 Question 3.2

Is the Local Plan's settlement hierarchy and proposed distribution of development, particularly between the urban and rural areas, sufficiently justified? With reference to paragraph 28 of the Framework, is adequate provision made for development in rural settlements?

I write on behalf of the Lilleshall Parish Council to confirm our support for the statement issued by the Parish & Town Council Group regarding Policy HO10 of the emerging Local Plan. We (the Parish Council) would like to supplement the statement by pointing out that the fundamental aspects of our rural communities are the built and natural environments which combine to provide the intrinsic quality of our landscape. This makes our rural communities what they are. It is therefore impossible to consider the distribution of sustainable development within the rural area, without consideration for the natural environment.

The emerging Local Plan provides for sustainable development along with protection of our natural environment through the Policy HO10 in conjunction with the proposals included in Section 6 - Natural environment, where Policy NE7 - Strategic Landscapes is of particular importance.

However, Question 6.2 of the Matters challenges the justification of Strategic Landscapes and their consistency with national policy in the Framework. We therefore wish to supplement the statement issued by Parish & Town Council Group with the following points for your consideration.

The Lilleshall Parish Council supports the adoption of the Strategic Landscapes, and their purpose to protect the appearance and intrinsic quality of the designated areas. This is in line with the support of our residents, which is evident from their correspondence, issues raised at parish council meetings and through representations at open forums held as part of our developing Neighbourhood Plan.

Over 50% of the parish is made up of land designated as Strategic Landscape. This land falls within two distinct areas. The west of the parish includes a portion of the Weald Strategic Landscape, made up of reclaimed and managed wetlands, managed woodlands, and a section of the currently abandoned Shropshire Union Canal (Shrewsbury Branch). A second and the larger area of Strategic Landscape lies to the east of the parish. Titled the Lilleshall Strategic Landscape, the area includes the village of Lilleshall, the pastoral valley lying between the village and Lilleshall Hall, and the Lilleshall Hill with its panoramic views across the low lying Weald to the hills of South Shropshire and Mid-Wales. Its designation is due primarily to unique character and value of the landscape, produced by the combination of local historic and ecological features, some of which are listed below.

Nationally and Regionally Recognised Natural Features

- Ancient Woodlands of the Lilleshall Abbey Woods
- Lilleshall Hill Local Wildlife and Geological Site
- Lilleshall Old Quarry Local Wildlife and Geological Site

Areas of National and County Archaeological Interest

- Lilleshall Abbey Ruins, maintained by English Heritage
- The Duke of Sutherland Memorial
- Lilleshall Triple Lime Kilns
- Shropshire Tub Boat Canals. Totalling 6.5 km. the canal routes within the Area, they include:-
 - Donnington Wood Canal
 - Hugh's Bridge Incline Plane
 - Lilleshall Branch Canal
 - Pitchcroft Branch Canal
 - Pitchcroft ropeway
- LNW Railway, Stafford – Shrewsbury Branch, track route and bridges.

Particular Features and Attributes

- The Area is covered by almost 20km. of public footpaths and pathways, some of which follow the old canal towpaths, providing access to the designated Area
- The Area is connected to other parts of Telford, Shropshire and Staffordshire via the Hutchison Way Long Distance Path, and the National Cycle Route 55
- The Area includes thirty eight Listed Buildings and Structures, including two Grade 1 listings
- Lilleshall Abbey Mediaeval Mill and Fish Pond (still in use)
- Views from and to the Lilleshall Hill and monument

When incorporated with the natural environment and agricultural landscape, these listed features combine to provide a unique Area which, it should be noted, is not exclusive to local residents, as location, public transport and ease of access provides a facility for neighbouring parish and the broader population of Telford, Shropshire and Staffordshire.

As a rural parish we, the council, consider that the Lilleshall Strategic Landscape Area is fully justified, and its introduction, along with those of the Wrekin and the Weald, provide protection for the landscape, and enable future enhancement of our ecosystem. Their introduction not only adds to the wellbeing of the people of Telford and thereby contributes to the sustainable development of the borough, they are also consistent with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 11 – Paragraphs 109 and 117, and Section 12 Paragraph 131.

We request the opportunity to appear at the Examination in Public to confirm our position, to challenge those who oppose the plan, and to answer any questions that the Inspector has for us.

Yours Faithfully

David A. Shaw (Councillor)
Chairman
Lilleshall Neighbourhood Planning Group