

M29 - Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council

Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council

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Mr Michael J Hetherington BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI MCIEEM
c/o Environment & Planning Policy Team
Telford and Wrekin Council
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Wellington Civic Offices
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15th September 2017

Dear Mr Hetherington

RE: Proposed Main Modifications to the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011-2031 Publication Version-January 2016

I am instructed to write on behalf of Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council regarding its response to the proposed main modifications to the above Local Plan. The Council has asked me to restate its previous comments relating to cemetery provision and the Shrewsbury and Newport Canal.

1. Cemeteries and Burial Places

The Local Plan contains much detail of areas identified for housing development and it is clear that the population of Telford and the surrounding areas is likely to increase during the period covered by the Local Plan. However, there is no mention within the Local Plan of the need to identify, allocate, obtain and equip suitable sites for future development as cemeteries and burial places.

This issue is of particular concern to Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council in its role as a Burial Authority. The Parish Council's current cemetery, which opened 1902 on a site which was at that time surrounded by open farmland, is now surrounded by residential development and has no room available for expansion.

It is anticipated that the cemetery will reach full capacity in the next 10 to 15 years and the Parish Council has already had to introduce policies to restrict the purchase of rights of burial in the cemetery to residents of the Parish. Similarly, a higher scale of fees for burials of non-residents in existing graves has had to be introduced, in part to manage demand on space within the cemetery.

Cemeteries provide valuable spaces of calm and tranquillity in urban areas. They can be valuable elements of the Green infrastructure as well as providing 'wedges' between areas of development. They also provide a place for the bereaved to remember loved ones and for quiet contemplation which can be an essential part of the grieving process.

Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council strongly believe that provision for future places of burial should form part of the Local Plan and that Telford and Wrekin Council should work with town and parish councils that are burial authorities to identify suitable land, assist in the process of satisfying compliance with the necessary environmental requirements, and support burial authorities in the purchase and establishment of burial places. This should extend to working in partnership with burial authorities to investigate alternative forms of burial such as woodland burials, which might not provide a conflict with other land uses identified in the Local Plan.

2. Shrewsbury and Newport Canal

Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council strongly supports the restoration of the Shrewsbury and Newport Canal to a navigable standard. Consequently, the Parish Council is seeking an assurance that the Local Plan will ensure that the viability of the canal restoration project is not jeopardised.

Clerk: Jonathan Brumwell

Chairman: Councillor John Smart

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The restoration, which is being driven by the Shrewsbury and Newport Canal Trust, will bring economic and environmental benefits as well as contributing to preserving the rich heritage of the areas that the canal passes through. Locally this includes the regeneration of the Flax Mill in Shrewsbury, the first iron aqueduct at Longdon on Tern, the wharf buildings at Wappenshall and the Thomas Telford locks on the Trench arm of the canal. The time and money invested already has achieved a lot, and Telford & Wrekin Council will be aware of the successful bid for lottery funding to restore and regenerate the Wappenshall site (which was acquired with the help of Telford & Wrekin Council).

Telford & Wrekin Council, Shropshire County Council, and Staffordshire County Council have made clear for many years that the line of the canal will be protected from building development to enable future restoration, and this must include any physical obstacles including access roads and hard standing.

The Parish Council therefore asks that the Local Plan, and any further development plans based upon it, ensure that the future restoration of the canal is not put at risk and that the alignment of the canal is given appropriate protection from development.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Brumwell

Clerk to the Council