

Thank you for your email of 6 January regarding the progression of Ashperton NDP to examination and inviting comment on submissions arising from the 2nd Rule 16 consultation. Ashperton Parish Council has no comment on all but two of the submissions, most of which relate to the way in which earlier submissions have been taken into account. The exceptions are

- 1) As has already been pointed out, the response from Highways relates to a potential development site in Stretton Grandison and not Ashperton. The Parish Council would be grateful if it could be made clear to the Independent Examiner that this inclusion was due to an error by Herefordshire Council;
- 2) The submission by Mr Pryce of Collins Design and Build on behalf of Mr H Davies. It is somewhat late in the day to object to the settlement boundary or to the design policies, all of which were subject to public consultation from early 2016.

Mr Pryce does not appear to understand the purpose and history of the settlement boundary. The boundary is intended to define the extent of the existing built environment and directly associated land. The Ashperton settlement boundary was established during initial public consultation on the NDP before planning permission was granted for the development North of the Village Hall. The development site is located in a large open field in a substantial gap in the built envelop of the village, clearly outside the established settlement boundary. That said there is no suggestion that all land within the boundary is appropriate for development nor that permission must be refused for land outside the boundary. Indeed Policy H1 states that the majority of development would be expected to be within or adjacent to the settlement boundary. The development site is adjacent to the boundary and the development is not in conflict with Policy H1. To extend the settlement boundary would be illogical, unnecessary and contrary to the expressed views of the residents of Ashperton during the initial consultation period when, despite invitation, no party put forward an alternative.

In support of his claim that the boundary should be extended to include the proposed development Mr Pryce quotes Herefordshire Guidance that the boundary should include sites with planning permission. As noted above the boundary was clearly established in consultation with the entire population of the parish **before** planning permission was granted. To draw a settlement boundary to encompass proposed development would defeat the very purpose in that the boundary would encompass any proposed development within the plan area.

Mr Pryce also suggests that the boundary has been extended to encompass other areas, including sites put forward for development and illogical plots such as the land behind the school. The boundary follows an appropriate line but it is not the case that residential development would be supported on all land within it. For example it is proposed that the land behind the school, owned by Ashperton Consolidated Charities, be used by the school for educational purposes such as games and outdoor education. Sites N7 and N8 may be shown as within the settlement boundary but, as explained above, that does mean that they are regarded as suitable for residential development and both have been discounted for other reasons.

There was ample opportunity for Mr Pryce's client to propose an alternative settlement boundary at the appropriate stage, that is the initial consultation period. To propose a revised boundary, which the Parish Council contend is unnecessary and illogical, would necessitate another consultation period, frustrating the NDP process to no avail.

With regard to Policy D1 Mr Pryce quotes NPPF paragraph 131 but choses to ignore the final phrase "so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings" in the argument. Policy

D1 is aimed at ensuring that development does fit in with the form and layout of the surroundings. Furthermore, although the proposed development to the North of the village hall was originally 'sold' as highly sustainable, there is nothing innovative promoting high levels of sustainability in the detailed proposals.

With regard to Policy D2, this policy seeks to preserve the fundamental character of Ashperton as described in the NDP, that is one of gradual and proportionate development of individually designed dwellings. It is true that 'The Ryders' and 'Web's Orchard' do not conform with this character but they are both situated away from the principle linear development along the A417. The development which Mr Pryce's submission seeks to support, which appears to be its sole purpose, would be in an elevated and prominent position in clear view from the main road through the village.