

Eardisland Neighbourhood Development Plan

Report of the Options Consultation Open Events Friday 14 and Saturday 15 November 2014

2 days of Open Events were held in Eardisland Village Hall, 14-15 November 2014 with the aim of: eliciting the views of parishioners with regard to 4 specific questions; getting data on which of the views suggested by the Steering Group should be considered for protection within the Neighbourhood Development Plan; and to gain general comments on the Plan and the process.

A letter encouraging residents to attend an Open Event and a copy of the Consultation Form was delivered to every house in the parish by members of the Steering Group. 93 people attended the Open Events and 51 response sheets on the protected views were completed at the Open Events (these response sheets were only available at the Open Events).

As some residents were unable to attend the Open Events, they left completed Consultation Forms in a box at the Community Shop or emailed the Forms and/or comments to the Parish Clerk. In total, Forms were returned from 82 named houses, out of 240 houses within the parish, giving a response rate of 34.1%. 111 individual Forms were returned, out of 389 people on the electoral register, a response rate of 28.5%. Not all Consultation Forms were fully completed, so the results are based on the data provided. Of the 111 Forms returned, 58 residents were identified as living within the Settlement Boundary, 47 as living outside the Settlement Boundary and 6 people did not give either an address or postcode.

The results shown below give the responses to the specific questions.

1. The Settlement Boundary for Eardisland shows the current limit of housing within the village as defined by Herefordshire Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) of 2007. The Herefordshire Council Core Strategy document will replace the UDP when it is adopted and made law early next year. All Settlement Boundaries are removed in the Core Strategy. Therefore, the Eardisland NDP Steering Group recommend that a Settlement Boundary for Eardisland should be retained – as shown on the map overleaf.

Do you agree with the preferred option that a Settlement Boundary should be retained? (please circle your answer)

Yes – 77 respondents (69.3% of respondents and 19.7% of all electoral registrants)

No – 33 (29.7% of respondents and 8.4% of all electoral registrants)

2. Planning applications for new developments will be submitted between now and 2031, which is the timescale for the NDP. The Steering Group believe there should be a limit on the number of houses built in any one development.

What do you think the limit on the number of houses should be? (please circle your answer)

1-3 houses – 37 respondents (33.3% of respondents)

4-5 houses – 50 respondents (45% of respondents)

6-10 houses – 21 respondents (18.9% of respondents).

3. The Steering Group believe that particularly special views and vistas that are publically accessible within the parish should be protected. The suggested views will be shown at the Open Event.

Do you agree that special publically accessible views should be protected? (please circle your answer)

Yes – 91 respondents (81.9% of respondents)

No – 18 respondents (16.2% of respondents)

4. Currently all proposed developments outside the Settlement Boundary have to submit a Sustainability Assessment, which shows items such as how the development will be energy efficient, how water run-off will be managed and what materials will be used. The Steering Group believe that all future developments in Eardisland parish should have to submit a Sustainability Assessment for planning approval.

Do you agree that all future developments in Eardisland parish should submit a Sustainability Assessment? (please circle your answer)

Yes – 91 respondents (81.9% of respondents)

No – 18 (16.2% of respondents)

Of the 51 response sheets about protected views, 23 people chose all 14 views to protect. 8 people attending the Open Events made comments on the protected views response sheets and 8 respondents commented about views on the Consultation Form. Of these 16:

- 2 stated that no views should be protected at all
- 9 said that these were the wrong views to be protected or that only views relating to the tourist route or village centre should be protected
- 1 person stated the views were being used as an excuse to stop all new building.

2 comments were made on the Consultation Forms relating to Q1 (retaining the settlement boundary). 1 said that the Settlement Boundary should not be retained as there is a shortage of suitable development sites within it and 1 stated it should be extended for the same reasons.

In the rest of the comments on the Consultation Forms, 13 related to Q2 (the number of houses that should be built in any development). Of these:

- 8 said that the number should depend on the size and appropriateness of the site for development
- 1 stated that limit should be probably 1-3 and no more than 4-5
- 2 said more than 10 houses
- 1 person commented on the need for low cost affordable housing for younger families.

6 respondents commented on the Consultation Forms about Q4 (sustainability assessments), either that such assessments are important, that they could increase the cost, that the definition of a sustainability assessment was incorrect or that it is already required for planning applications.

6 emails were received by the Parish Clerk following the Open Events and a number of comments were made on the Comments sheets provided at the Open Events. It must be recognised that these comments were in general critical of the consultation process undertaken and/or of the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan that was available for the Open Events. The main themes from these emails and comments are as follows:

- Lack of consultation with local landowners and other stake holders and lack of a Call for Sites
- Concern that the suggested views were to protect members of the Steering Group and/or to prevent any development
- Concern about a lack of previous community consultation/engagement and that decisions had been taken by and promoted by the Steering Group without consultation and represented personal views
- Belief that the Steering Group do not want any development in Eardisland
- Overemphasis on flooding in the draft Plan
- Expansion of the design statement needed.

The documents and tables showing all the comments received by whatever means can be seen at www.eardisland.org.uk on the Neighbourhood Development Plan pages.

Many verbal comments made during the Open Events were very positive; however these were not recorded in a suitable format. The majority of the responses on the Consultation Forms were equally positive and supportive.

Following consideration of all the results and comments from this consultation and the Open Events, it was recognised by the members of the Steering Group that elements of the consultation process and Open Events were under-prepared and had led to genuine and relevant concerns about the draft Plan at this stage. It was agreed that certain of the Community Led Plan (CLP) data, on which the NDP is based, now need to be reviewed and where necessary updated. Further work is required on various aspects of the Plan and that community consultation and involvement is needed. Although all meetings are open to the public and regularly advertised and articles have been published in every relevant parish magazine, with Bulletin Boards also posted round the parish, public interest and participation has been low. Advice has been sought from Kirkwells, the planning consultants advising the Parish Council and from the allocated officer in the Neighbourhood Planning Department of Herefordshire Council and work on the Plan is now continuing.