

**Statement to the South Planning Committee  
Shropshire Council  
22 July 2014**

**On behalf of Bishop's Castle Town Council**

**Re: APPLICATION: 14/00885/OUT : land at Woodbatch Road, Bishop's Castle.**

Bishop's Castle Town Council understands the difficulties facing the South Planning Committee in the light of the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' which is central to the National Planning Policy Framework.

However, we believe that the framework itself provides robust reasons to reject this application. Paragraph 14 of the Framework actually states that there should be "a presumption in favour of sustainable development unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits **when assessed against the policies in (the) Framework taken as a whole**....."

This application does not satisfy the Framework's policies **when taken as a whole**.

**FIRSTLY: One of the Core Planning Principles of sustainable development, identified in Paragraph 17 is the fact that "planning should be genuinely plan led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings....."**

The Bishop's Castle community overwhelmingly rejected sites on this side of town for housing development in the rigorous SAMDEV consultation because of access problems to the town's hinterland

**SECONDLY: Core Planning Principles in Paragraph 17 of the Framework include " ..... supporting thriving rural communities....." and ensuring that "Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing ..... needs of an area and ..... take into account ..... housing affordability".**

New housing need in Bishops Castle is for affordable housing for our local young people and families. This is one of the most frequently quoted requirements in our recent survey, undertaken to update our Town Plan. Only by retaining our young will the town thrive and maintain its vitality.

The contribution of this application to the affordable housing stock will be absolutely minimal.

**THIRDLY: Paragraph 17 of the Framework has, as a Core Planning Principle “.... always seeking to secure ..... a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land.....”.**

To exit the development site and the town, traffic **must** use Kerry Lane. Only 1 vehicle width in places, with 5 junctions within a 440 meter stretch and 58% of its length having no pavements at all, this Lane is already unsuitable for existing residents and businesses. There are **currently 308 houses**, a Primary School; a Sure Start facility; 2 sheltered accommodation facilities, a Nursing Home, a Fire Station, a Church Hall, a Bowles club, a pub and a Brewery **whose only means of access is via Kerry Lane**. A recent survey, taken at the junction of Woodbatch Road and Kerry Lane recorded 129 cars and 76 pedestrians in a 15 minute period.

This application is the first of 5 current applications for housing which access Kerry Lane and which would further exacerbate the already significant problems that exist on the Lane. There will only be more if this application is granted.

In conclusion, this application is contrary to Core Planning Principles of Paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework. As such, the Committee has a sound basis to reject it on the grounds that the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” does not apply because, **when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole** the adverse impacts of granting approval would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.