

Longtown Group Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan

**Longtown Group Parish Council response to representations made at the
Regulation 16 Stage, September 2019**

Longtown NPD Response - Overview

When reviewing the detailed Regulation 16 responses to the NDP, there is a need also to read these in the context of what the NDP Steering Group, Group Parish Council and the Community Questionnaire have identified as the main concerns about the future of the Parish.

Longtown Group of Parishes is the most rural within Herefordshire and borders Wales and the Brecon Beacons National Park. The NDP identifies the need to build more smaller houses for families and to enable self-build. Provision to enable its older residents to remain within the community is also seen as very important. Isolation is an issue for many within the rural community and consequently enabling some housing development outside of Longtown village is seen as beneficial to the community's health and wellbeing, and the NDP seeks to address this so far as it is able through utilising its historic assets and landscape characteristics while remaining in accord with national guidance.

The siting of Longtown village close to the Brecon Beacons National Park and located upon a Scheduled Ancient Monument is such that there is a desire to maintain its character. It does, however, limit the number of sites that are available for development, especially those that will provide opportunities for smaller houses to be built.

The approach to accommodating new housing, including the location of new housing on the two sites proposed, is aimed at addressing the community's needs within the environmental constraints that exist. It is considered that the environmental issues are capable of being overcome through design informed by appropriate impact assessments. In this way it is considered a reasonable response to meeting both strategic and local needs.

Representations

A number of representations provided support, no further or neutral comment in response to consultation. The Parish Council is, however, grateful for the organisations concerned in providing a response. They include:

- The Coal Authority
- National Grid
- Highways England
- Herefordshire Council Strategic Policy Team

The following representations considered in the order presented in the Progress to Examination Decision Document are considered to require a response.

Ref	Representation By	Summary of Representation	Response
1	A Turner, Herefordshire Council (Air, water and land protection)	<p>1. Policy LGPC 4: Residential Use Associated with Historic Farmsteads</p> <p>Some farm buildings may be used for the storage of potentially contaminative substances (oils, herbicides, pesticides) or for the maintenance and repair of vehicles and machinery. As such it is possible that unforeseen contamination may be present on the site. Consideration should be given to the possibility of encountering contamination on the site as a result of its former uses and specialist advice be sought should any be encountered during the development.</p> <p>Regarding sites with a historic agricultural use, I would mention that agricultural practices such as uncontrolled burial of wastes or excessive pesticide or herbicide application may be thought of as potentially contaminative and any development should consider this.</p> <p>2. Please note it would make it easier to reference and identify sites in the next NDP if the proposed housing sites are labelled on the plans.</p> <p>3. Developments such as hospitals, homes and schools may be considered 'sensitive' and as such consideration should be given to risk from contamination notwithstanding any comments. Please note that the above does not constitute a detailed investigation or desk study to consider risk from contamination. Should any information about the former uses of the proposed</p>	<p>1. As indicated in the response to a similar representation at Regulation 14 requiring effective and appropriate remediation of contaminated land is covered by Herefordshire Local plan Core Strategy policy SD1. The matter is not one that is specifically relevant to Longtown Group of Parishes and there is no need to duplicate that policy within this NDP.</p> <p>2. The approach to referencing sites is consistent with that which Herefordshire Council has adopted and it has produced the village policies map in its 'house-style'.</p> <p>3. As 1 above.</p>

		<p>development areas be available I would recommend they be submitted for consideration as they may change the comments provided.</p> <p>It should be recognised that contamination is a material planning consideration and is referred to within the NPPF. I would recommend applicants and those involved in the parish plan refer to the pertinent parts of the NPPF and be familiar with the requirements and meanings given when considering risk from contamination during development.</p> <p>Finally, it is also worth bearing in mind that the PPF makes clear that the developer and/or landowner is responsible for securing safe development where a site is affected by contamination.</p> <p>These comments are provided on the basis that any other developments would be subject to application through the normal planning process.</p>	
2	M Knight, Herefordshire Council (Principle Building Conservation Officer)	<p>Has concerns about the potential for harm to a non-designated heritage asset by the southern housing site within the NDP. Longtown is a Roman Fort, later adapted to a Motte & Bailey castle with a linear town extending from this. The site is highly important, although not designated as a Conservation Area. The southern site has the potential to affect the understanding of the history of the wider settlement as the layout already established by the cul-de-sac would not be characteristic of the wider settlement. This would harm the setting of 'The Old Greyhound' Listed at Grade 2: https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-</p>	<p>The representation appears to be in relation to policy LGPC2.</p> <p><u>1. Non-designated heritage asset.</u></p> <p>The non-designated heritage asset is not identified. It would have been helpful to have identified the non-designated heritage asset when HC was consulted at the Regulation 14 stage so that this could have been considered. The reference in policy LGPC2 to the need for a heritage impact assessment informing the scale and nature of development should enable this asset to be taken into account in accordance with NPPF paragraph 197. xxxxxx</p>

[list/list-entry/1078156](#). It may be possible to carefully design a scheme which reinforces the linearity of both historic plots and the village, a specific policy or a Conservation Area designation, to help to control the nature of development on this site may be beneficial. We note that the site does not benefit from an area designation other than the Scheduling of the Castle.

2. The Old Greyhound Listed Building

The Old Greyhound sits to the north of Greyhound Close. It is not connected to the proposed housing site and there is no direct impact upon that building or its curtilage. The recent development at Greyhound Close sits between the Listed Building and the proposed site. As such it is difficult to envisage how the development of this site would affect the setting of The Old Greyhound. The Map and photographs in Appendix 1 to this statement show the relationship of the proposed housing site to The Old Greyhound.

3. Uncharacteristic development form

The representation points out that the linear form has already been compromised by the modern development at Greyhound Close. Its development provides for access to the proposed housing site. Herefordshire Council's SHLAA indicates there are no land of high suitability for housing in Longtown. This site is indicated to be of medium suitability and the best site of all it considered. In relation to Landscape and the Historic Environment the SHLAA concludes *'The site is highly visible from the surrounding hills, but well-screened in the village, potentially acceptable for infill with limited constraints and effects'*. This is understood to have included consultation with the Council's historic environment specialist. The overall conclusion indicates *'The site is well contained and could accommodate a moderate sensitively designed scheme as it could correlate with the existing settlement pattern of the village'*. (Longton SHLAA link <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2582/longtown.pdf>)

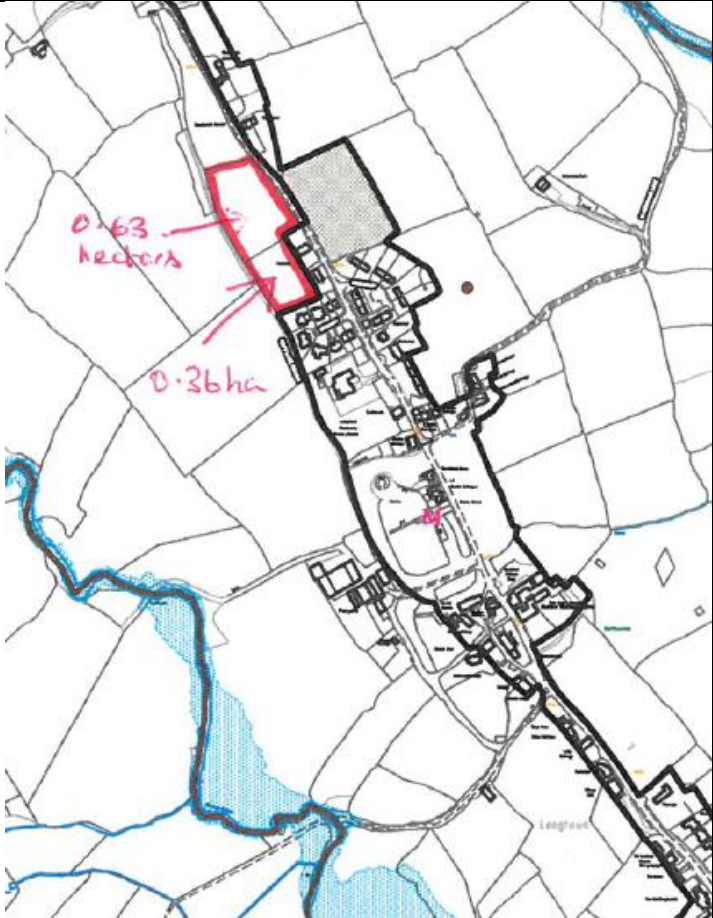
Core Strategy policy RA2 affords greater environmental protection to those settlements included in its Table 4.15 where development is *'expected to demonstrate particular attention to the form, layout,*

			<p><i>character and setting of the site and its location in that settlement’.</i></p> <p>Longtown is included in Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy table 4.14. If the concerns now expressed were of such significance then HC could have included Longtown within Table 4.15.</p> <p>The site sits to a similar depth to development both to its north, comprising Greyhound Close, and to the south, where the domestic curtilage of a detached dwelling along Penyrhwiau extends to a greater depth. It sits behind development that restricts views to and from Longtown Castle Scheduled Monument, with Greyhound Close between the site and the castle to the north and frontage development along the main village street between the site and that part of the monument to the east. In these regards it does not alter the settings of the monument in those directions.</p> <p><u>4. Specific policy or Conservation Area designation</u></p> <p>As indicated there is no conservation area covering the village or any of its parts. Herefordshire Council is responsible for designating conservation areas and it is not something that can be done within a neighbourhood development plan. Policy LGPC2 does, however, make reference to a number of criteria to address design issues, including the need for this to be informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment which should address the suggestion for a specific policy requirement to help to control the nature of development on this site.</p>
3	Historic England	<p><i>“Historic England is generally extremely supportive of both the content of the document and the vision and objectives set out in it. The emphasis on the conservation of local distinctiveness through good design and the protection of locally significant buildings and landscape character including archaeological remains, farmsteads and important views is to be applauded.</i></p>	<p>Very serious consideration was given to this representation at the Regulation 14 stage and Historic England was contacted on 5th April indicating suggested changes to the policy and supporting paragraph, seeking HE’s advice upon whether it would meet its needs and asking whether, should it do so, a meeting was still necessary (See Appendix 2).</p>

	<p>However, in the Regulation 14 response we also registered our significant concern in relation to the allocated housing site “south-east of Greyhound Close” (Site reference No. 3) pointing out that Historic England could not support the allocation of this site in the Neighbourhood Plan for housing development. As stated previously, in the view of our Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Alison Macdonald:</p> <p><i>“The siting of 8-12 houses on this plot would change the character of this part of the village and therefore the setting of the Scheduled Monument. Although it is acknowledged that the re-development of the adjacent farmyard has already had a negative impact on the character of the village this should not set a precedent. It is acknowledged in the site assessment (pg 32) that “the development of this site would exacerbate the uncharacteristic form of development in this location”. Housing within the core of historic Longtown of which this is part (as acknowledged by the SM parcel on the other side of the road) faces the road and is within the burgage plot divisions. This plot has no street frontage and access would be through the farm development (Greyhound Close). The landscape of this area is also highly sensitive in this location, with views of the village, showing its historic form, from the Brecon Beacons National Park”.</i></p> <p>Alison concluded that, with further detailed discussion with both the neighbourhood plan team and the local planning authority, it may be possible for a sensitive design to be arrived at for a small number of houses on this site, but not the numbers suggested, and it would very much depend on layout and design. Unfortunately, no</p>	<p>There is no record of any reply being received and it was assumed that HE was content with the change.</p> <p>The reference to a number was a suggestion but is not included in the policy and this is to be informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment, which is the suggestion given by Herefordshire Council’s Archaeological Adviser. If it would help, there would be no objection to the removal of the final sentence to paragraph 6.11.</p> <p>The response to representation 2 above explains the effects of developing the site upon village character and the settings of the Scheduled Monument, among other matters.</p>
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4	Welsh Water	<p><u>Policies LGPC2 and LGPC3</u></p> <p><i><u>Water supply</u></i></p> <p>There are currently isolated water pressure issues across the network in this area, and as such we are undertaking ongoing investigations. If a developer wishes to bring this site forward in advance of our future regulatory investment, they may need to fund the reinforcement works themselves by undertaking a hydraulic modelling assessment and carrying out the required upgrades in order to ensure their site can be accommodated without causing detriment to existing customers' supply.</p> <p><u>Policy LGPC3 – Land north of Penbailey – 12-16 dwellings</u></p>	<p><i><u>Water Supply</u></i></p> <p>As responded to in relation to the same comment made at the Regulation 14 stage the issue of water pressure would be a constraint to development anywhere within the village. It is understood this is a matter that would involve arrangements being made between DC/WW and any developer and not a matter for the NDP. In promoting the suggested sites, the anticipated level of development would be more likely to enable developer funded arrangements than smaller sites or individual plots.</p> <p><i><u>Sewerage and WwTW</u></i></p>

		<p><u>Sewerage and WwTW</u></p> <p>The site is traversed by a 150mm public foul sewer for which protection measures will be required by way of an easement/protection zone or diversion.</p>	<p>A change was proposed to policy LGPC3 following the Regulation 14 consultation to take this into account.</p>
5	Peter Kirby for and on behalf of Sunderlands	<p>Act for the owners of the parcels of land edged red on the attached plan being adjacent to the proposed settlement boundary and immediately abutting Pontilla HR2 OLG. This land is available for housing during the plan period. Our clients would also be sympathetic to the nature and scale of housing as set out in Policy LGPC1. In our view the allocation of one or both of these sites would be consistent with the pattern of the development of Longtown with the parcels being in a sustainable location for access to the village facilities. We shall be grateful if you can consider the site and forward this email to an independent examiner in due course.</p>	<p>The two parcels of land were not submitted for consideration in response to either of the two 'Calls for Sites', nor at the Regulation 14 consultation stage and have not therefore been assessed against the criteria used in the housing site assessment. Sitting on the western side of the settlement it is open to the views from the west which includes from Offa's Dyke National Footpath and the Brecon Beacons National Park. Notwithstanding the opportunities to mitigate the effects through landscaping, it would have a greater impact on the setting of Longtown Castle than the chosen two sites, being closer to and more closely associated with the higher ground upon which the castle sits.</p> <p>There is no need to make any further site allocations in this plan even should the site proposed under policy LGPC2 accommodate fewer dwellings than indicated.</p> <p>To include the sites now would require further formal consultation to be undertaken and delay the adoption of the NDP for no good reason. The sites can be considered at such a time as the NDP is reviewed.</p>

			
6	Jeanette and Russel Pryce	<p>1. The introduction of additional clarity and explanation in policies LGPC1 and LGPC 4 (which we commented on at reg 14 stage and our letter is attached as some of the concerns remain) is welcomed. However, we remain of the view that permitting infill ribbon development running northwards out of the village is not necessary to fulfil the CS housing requirements and moreover, will</p>	<p>1. Policy LGPC1 – the comments given in response to the representation made at the Regulation 14 stage remains valid, viz: <i>'The extension of the settlement boundary to the north of the Penbailey Site is in order to provide opportunities for commissioned or, more especially, self-build opportunities. It is felt that the previous boundary offered little opportunity for this. It is not a matter of number of dwellings but to provide greater flexibility to meet local needs. It is</i></p>

	<p>adversely affect the character and setting of the village. We have no objections to additional housing but consider the modest level of housing delivery that will arise from extending the settlement boundary so far north does not justify the adverse impact that will raise. Whilst the policy reference and intention to retaining green gaps is an improvement, this will be difficult to enforce in practice and over time, it is inevitable that there will be a continuous run of properties from the far northern end of the settlement boundary into the village. The character of this end of the village is primarily clusters of properties orientated to both address the road and at 90 degrees to the road with generous gaps/fields between them. This character will be lost with infill development. The settlement boundary should not therefore extend north of the Penbailly allocation.</p> <p>2. In terms of policy LGPC 4, this is still a little ambiguous and could be interpreted that new build housing is permitted on farms beyond the allowance within national policy for enabling development or exceptional design.</p> <p>3. Also, the Longtown settlement boundary has now been drawn to exclude The Crown Public House and properties in this immediate area which I assume is an error as this was not the case at the reg 14 stage. Perhaps the shop should also be within the village settlement boundary?</p>	<p><i>however recognised that the form of development is, as suggested, important so that the ‘wayside’ dwelling character is retained. Criteria ii) and iii) are aimed at addressing this issue, although this might be strengthened through additions to the policy and in its justification.’</i></p> <p>The boundary provides opportunities to meet Government’s promotion of self-build opportunities. The criteria set out are considered appropriate and realistic. This extension falls on the eastern side of the village street where views from the Brecon Beacons National park will be far less than on the west side. The boundary reflects linear form indicated as an important characteristic by the Council’s Historic Building Officer (see representation 2 above).</p> <p>2. Policy LGPC4 – Historic Farmsteads, both in terms of built-form and number, make a considerable contribution to the character of the Group Parish (see NDP Appendix1). Historic England has produced advice upon the form that these farmsteads would have comprised (https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/wm-county-summaries/herefordshire-county/). Its section 3 indicates that <i>‘ There needs to be mechanisms for using the evidence base so that there can be material consideration of sites that make a strong contribution to local character in planning, so that future change can work with and capitalise upon this inherited character. The continued relevance of the project will depend upon it being used by professionals, researchers and the public.’</i> It also points to the need for a local policy. It is understood that Historic England asked for a policy to cover these heritage assets within the Core Strategy but that this was left to be covered in more detailed plans. This policy seeks to promote an approach based on the exceptions provided by the NPPF para 79 and Core Strategy policy RA3. The NPPF and Core Strategy policy would enable the appropriate conversion of rural buildings, provision of affordable housing (including market housing where this subsidises affordable housing) and key worker housing. They would also enable schemes where the design is of exceptional quality. There</p>
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			<p>is no reason why this should not include such schemes for new housing in association with historic farmsteads where they meet that requirement and also maintain the historic character of the landscape, especially in an area such as this where such complexes of buildings are essential elements of the local area character. NPPF paras 192 and 202 are also relevant (including in combination). In each instance a Heritage Impact Assessment would address these aspects to inform decisions upon whether the criteria indicated in the policy have been met. It is considered that the policy does not extend beyond the provisions of the NPPF but indicates what this might comprise in relation to the local area's historic and landscape character.</p> <p>The policy is very similar to that in Almeley Neighbourhood Development plan (ALM13) which was found to meet the basic condition.</p> <p>3. Village Policies Map - The exclusion of the Crown Inn is a drafting error and the PC is grateful to Mr and Mrs Pryce for pointing this out. The inclusion of the village shop within the boundary would not be easy given the gap between the shop site and the proposed boundary (as shown in the Regulation 14 draft). There is no need to include it for any policy reason.</p>
7	Charles O'Neill	<p>Firstly, the proposed number of possible additional dwellings is unsustainable for a village like Longtown. Access to and from is very narrow and limited, in addition to its very poor state of road surface. At times is downright dangerous with high risk of collision. (V narrow lanes, blind corners etc). Not only would additional dwellings increase local people traffic, but associated increases in service vehicles, deliveries, trades etc. Longtown's very important status as a historical site (especially with the recent discovery of Roman origins) would be adversely affected, and all this in full view from</p>	<p>1. Herefordshire Council has already established that Longtown is a location where housing growth should take place, including it within Table 4.14 which are settlements which are locations that should be the main focus for housing growth under Core Strategy policy RA2. In that regard that Council will have taken potential constraints such as the nature of the highway network and its historic environment into account. This would have been consulted upon during the preparation of the Core Strategy, including with the Council as Local Highway Authority and Historic England. The Inspector appointed to consider the Core Strategy emphasised that the level of proportional housing growth was to be a minimum. The proposals advanced in this NDP</p>

		<p>Offas Dyke. Specifically, the proposals for the field to SE of Greyhound Close. There is very limited access, the entrance to the close is narrow and there is insufficient room for 2 cars to pass, meaning one is partially blocking the road through the village when this happens. Because of dwellings either side of the entrance, widening is not an option. If additional traffic were coming through there, there could be problems and increased risk of collision. There also a number of young children who play in the close, and so a very big increased risk to their safety! From a nature point of view, the field is a source for a number of local Red Kites, any development would obviously have huge impact on their habitat. It is also used by a number of lesser horseshoe bats, particularly towards the lower end near the sewage plant. Talking of the sewage plant, there are a number concerns about the capacity, and its ability to cope. Overall, Longtown is a beautiful, fairly isolated location, some miles for mainstream requirements, especially for families. So lots of additional cars journeys and significant increase in carbon footprint. Additional housing needs siting closer to these mainstream facilities and certainly not where you are forcing them to use their cars more.</p>	<p>provide the high level of certainty that the minimum level will be delivered, and plans positively for growth, both of which are understood to be requirements set out for neighbourhood plans. The windfall elements are less certain although the trend evidence is relevant.</p> <p>The village has a number of facilities including a village shop, which many similar settlements do not. In relation to that element of sustainability, it is relatively well served for a community within Herefordshire.</p> <p>2. In relation to the site off Greyhound Close, Herefordshire Council's highway section will have been consulted upon the draft plans at Regulations 14 and 16 stages and have not objected to the development. The access and road dimensions are understood to comply with Herefordshire Council's Highways Design Guide for New Development. The access road be considered a shared surface it would have the capacity for up to 25 dwellings. However, it does have a footpath along one side. Should a maximum development of 12 dwellings be possible this would be expected to generate some 66 additional vehicle trips (normally considered 16 hours and based on 5.5 trips per day for a detached dwelling). This figure is based upon all vehicles coming and going not just those of residents. It is also worth pointing out that while many of us would imagine most houses might produce 2 vehicles leaving in the morning rush hour, this isn't true of the average. Consequently, the proposed maximum level of development might generate an addition 4 trips per hour over the course of the day which should be acceptable along the access road. A degree of inconvenience must be accepted on all roads.</p> <p>3. The site has no national or local nature conservation designation. There is no suggestion that it is optimal habitat for any protected or BAP species. Birds and bats will forage across large areas and the site</p>
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			<p>has no particular benefits in terms of habitat compared to other areas within or adjacent to Longtown.</p> <p>4. Sustainable development encompasses a number of elements and not just car travel. Herefordshire Council's development strategy was examined against the NPPF provisions for sustainable development. Its rural settlement policies approved by a Government Inspector to comply with the NPPF.</p>
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Appendix 1: Evidence in relation to Policy LGPC2

Plan 1: Location of The Old Greyhound in relation to the proposed site.



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Figure 1: The Old Greyhound

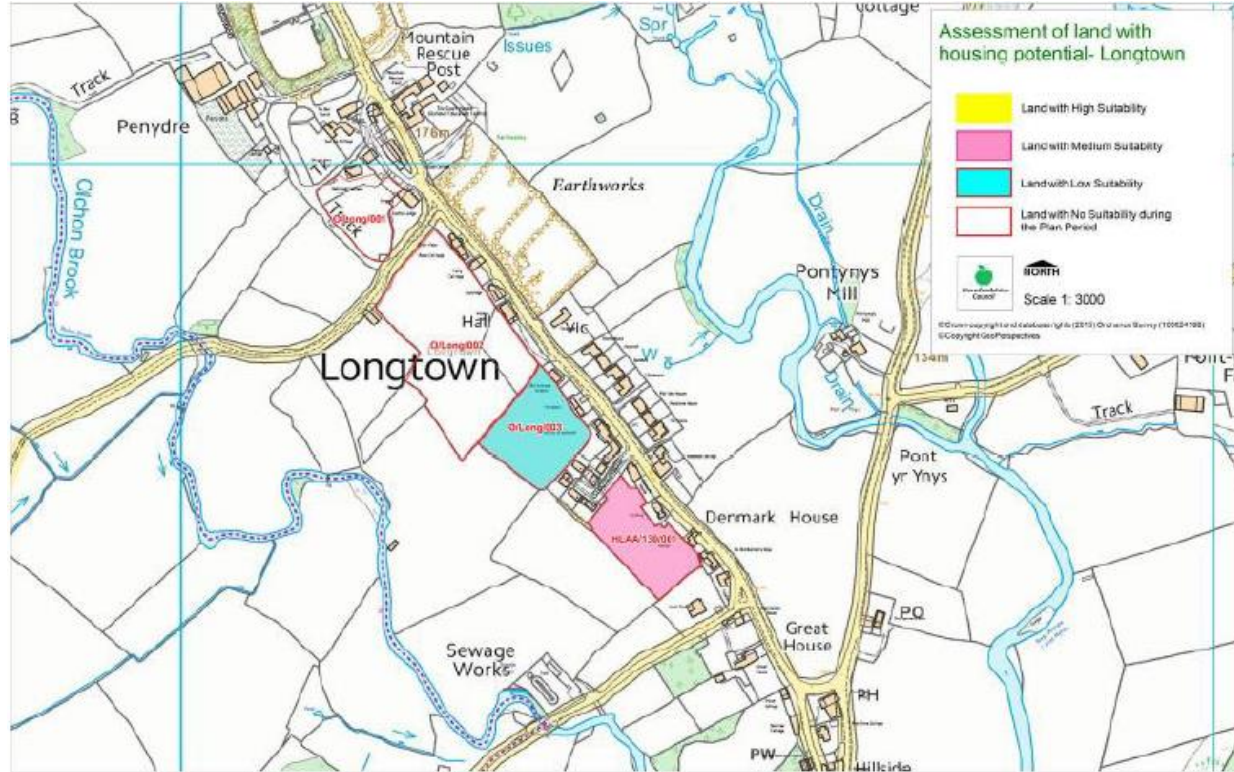


Figure 2: The Old Greyhound in Relation to Greyhound Close

(NB the northern edge of the Proposed Housing Site sits immediately on the left hand edge of this photograph and is visually separated from The Old Greyhound by buildings along Greyhound Close, including one attached to it.)



Map 2: Extract from Herefordshire Council's SHLAA for Longtown



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Appendix 2: Email to Historic England in Response to its representation at Regulation 14

Longtown Group Neighbourhood Development Plan

William Bloxsome<william.bloxsome@lineone.net>

5/4/2019 10:34

To peter.boland@historicengland.org.uk **Copy** [Longtown Group Parish Council](#) [and 2 others](#)

Dear Mr Boland,

Longtown Group Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has asked me to write to you following consideration of Historic England's representation upon the Regulation 14 draft NDP, most particularly upon policy LGPC2. Comments were also received from Herefordshire Council's Archaeological Adviser upon that policy.

In relation to this policy Herefordshire Council's response was:

'Given the significant difficulties in terms of the very high value historic landscape here in finding suitable allocations, supportive of the plan.

Two sites being put forward in LGPC2 and LGPC3 are, whilst challenging, the best available. Realistically, there are no other options likely to be viable.

There will be a need under policy for any proposal on these sites to be supported by appropriate assessments and evaluations and by a high quality of design.

With care, there is some likelihood that these sites could be suitably developed.'

As a consequence of both this and your representation the Steering Group proposes to add the following criterion to policy LGPC2:

'e) The scale and nature of development on this site should be informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment.'

In addition, the supporting statement will now read:

'The assessment of the site identified that it was suitable for development despite a number of constraints, but these can be overcome by informing the scale and nature of development through a Heritage Impact Assessment and incorporating the conditions listed above. It is hoped that 8 to 12 dwellings could be accommodated although meeting the minimum housing requirement does not require this amount.'

In the light of these changes, does Historic England still wish to meet with representatives of the Steering Group?

Kind regards

Bill Bloxsome