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LONGDEN VILLAGE PLANNING DEVELOPMENT

We have been residents of Longden Village since 1988, we wish once again to make comments of our concerns regarding Longden Village Development to a **HUB** and hope that some notice this time will be taken.

We are a small village, with only 135 residential dwellings, to become a **Community Hub** is '*ridiculous*'. We are a very small and old village (First mentioned in the Domesday book) and only a fraction of the size of all the other hubs in the area, and only half the size of the next smallest proposed hubs. Our limited road infrastructure reflects the size of the current community; the road outside our house the bus and a tractor cannot pass and on occasions have to pull into our driveway to enable them to pass.

We feel very strongly about this proposal to make Longden a **Hub**. In 2018 a survey was carried with a large portion of the village taking part. The results were that 100% wished to remain a '**Community Cluster**' and **AGAINST becoming a hub**. This culminated in Longden Village Development Statement which was endorsed by the Parish Council, the proposals now are making Longden a **Hub** our feelings having been completely ignored by the Council

Managing Development in Community Hubs states that community hubs have been identified by the extent to which the settlement provides services and facilities, including employment opportunities.

Particularly what employment opportunities are the in the village. The plan for Longden as a **HUB** is completely flawed in the way that this 'points totalling system' for villages becoming a Hub are scored. The points system does not reflect the size of the services and most importantly, the capacity to expand to cater for more residents. That is to say, for example, other villages in the area have brick built substantial **libraries** and get 3 points, whereas Longden has a mobile library which attends once every two weeks for ten minutes and also gets 3 points. This surely is unfair and not logical and it is felt that Longden should as a maximum get only **one** point for this item.

The same applies to the shop/post office. (4 +4 points) Please note that the village Post Office has closed down and the shop has moved into a section of the Tankerville Arms public house. This alone has taken the points system below the threshold of the village becoming a Hub

The 'Tankerville Arms'" **Public House** in the village (3 points) is now very small as the large portion of it has been sold off for housing and a large portion of the car park has also been sold off for housing. It is also only open three days a week and the one remaining bar room is now a very small dark room with just the bar and a couple of tables. We recommend that a maximum of 2 points should have been awarded for this.

The **Primary School** has a total of approximately 100 pupils as opposed to other much larger schools in the area and the **Nursery/Pre-School** is also very small. Both are awarded 4 points each. This surely is unfair for such a small village school.

Super Fast Broadband. (5 points) The village does NOT have superfast broadband, or anywhere near that. It is understood from Council members that this was available via a satellite link. Surely this applies to EVERYONE in the UK, so why is it even in the scoring system

Outdoor Sports Facility (3 points) and Children's Playground (3 points). The sports facility consists of two tennis courts, this is private members club and not open to the public. There is a football field and a small Children's Playground only after a great deal of effort and fund raising from the village. We feel that these two items should be grouped together for 3 points rather separately for 6 points.

Public Transport Link (5 points). Regular Service Offered During Peak Travel Times (5 points).

The bus service from Longden village to Shrewsbury is regular but it is not sufficiently frequent to have a major impact on sustainability. It is impossible to connect with either trains or other buses out of Shrewsbury town centre to reach other destinations at a reasonable time in the morning or returning in the evening. There is no bus service to local catchment GP services at Pontesbury, Bayston Hill or Dorrington.

These issues have been raised with the Council on many occasions, either through the planning application process or through public consultations of the bus strategy etc. These limitations force residents to use cars, often two/three per house hold., especially with children still living at home. A high percentage of our population have high levels of car dependence meaning a higher proportion of transport carbon emissions from this sector of the population than others.

Whilst planning policy needs to provide some new housing in rural communities, sustainable principles require that most development takes place where alternative means of travel is best.

Recognising that the main connecting road to Shrewsbury is unclassified and that to connect East to the A49 and A5 requires travel through narrow, often single-track lanes, together with our infrequent bus service does not provide a sustainable transport link from Longden. To describe it as a transport link and award it 10 points does not reflect the true nature of the limited infrastructure. It should be awarded one or two points.

There are very few employment opportunities in Longden Parish and most residents of working age are forced to commute to Shrewsbury or beyond.

This would mean additional carbon emissions would be generated by new housing development under the proposed **HUB** status. This analysis demonstrates that Longden as a **HUB** would generate significant additional levels of carbon which is contrary to Government policy and Shropshire Council's Climate Change strategy and policy SP3.

There is limited electric car ownership in the whole village and the prohibitive price of such vehicles means that most residents (especially younger families and people living in affordable homes) will not be able to afford such vehicles for the foreseeable future.

The development of 13 homes in Arrow Court, most have 2 cars parked in the very narrow road in Arrow Court, no attention was given by planners to this. The refuse truck has to park at the entrance to the Court and wheel the bins to the truck. Many residents have put paving on their front gardens to park on.

Making Longden a **HUB** will have a negative impact on the climate, increasing carbon emissions from this part of Shropshire, especially as the Council's policy SP3, 3.29 states that road transport contributes 33% to CO₂ emissions in Shropshire.

Retaining cluster status would enable the village to experience some growth through infill and if we are to meet Climate Change targets, limitations in infrastructure needs to be addressed before significant numbers of housing are built.

Longden is an ancient village with mature trees and hedgerows. The boundary to any new development in Longden will require removal of mature hedgerows to enable access and this is surely contrary to this policy. At best hedgerows will only be partly replaced to allow for access and visibility, so as well as an element of total destruction of hedgerows, it will take many years for any replacement hedgerow to mature, thereby reducing CO₂ capture and storage, this is obvious if you look at the planting done around Arrow Court development and this is an eyesore on the landscape coming into Longden

Residents supported the Council that indicated Longden required an additional 18 homes. Residents feel that the survey carried out has been conveniently forgotten about because it did not provide the Council with the anticipated numbers to fit the Local Plan Review. We personally always mistrusted the Council asking for input, as regardless of what people indicated they want did what they wanted regardless. This is now substantiated, once again we have been misled by the Council which further undermines our trust and confidence in the Council's actions.

Local Plan Review can be reviewed and updated every five years and we feel that in five years' time the numbers of new houses will change once again, especially as key settlements and hubs will be the focus for development. Longden engaged with the Council and took part in rural toolkit workshops to inform the SAMDev 2006-2026. The number of new houses for Longden was stated as between 25-30 to 2026. The Council is now suggesting that the numbers built since the start of SAMDev and 2016 be ignored in the new calculation of 50 and that the new reference point is houses completed/committed since 2016. Also, there is another six years to reach 2026. This continual shifting makes of us mistrust of local government. We feel we have been misled and deeply regret previously engaging with the Council to assist with housing targets.

We feel that the evidence base for Longden, established through the 'Right Home, Right Place' survey has been completely ignored in the Council's housing guideline number, exception sites will be identified through an ad hoc approach and highly valued agricultural fields will become housing estates over the period of the Plan.

Also, one of the reasons taken into consideration is population size, but again we feel that the Council is being simplistic – assuming the limited services are only for Longden residents when in actual fact Longden's services are accessed by people living outside of Longden i.e. the school and nursery.

As can be seen from the above, Longden is a very small rural village which has always been a rural cluster. To change this to a **HUB** is "*ridiculous*" would be unfair, not logical and devastating for the village. We wish Longden to remain a **Rural Cluster** and **DO NOT** want to become a **HUB** because of the sound reasons we give as above; the Shropshire Council Local Plan is flawed.