

Formal Objection to the Inclusion of Site 4069 within the Settlement Boundary : Land to the East of Colwinston

I wish to register a formal objection to the proposed inclusion of Site 4069 within the settlement boundary. The proposal raises significant concerns in relation to heritage protection, sustainability, infrastructure capacity, transport accessibility and the overall scale of development within the historic settlement of Colwinston. The proposal appears inconsistent with the objectives of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and the principles of sustainable development.

1. Redrawing of the Settlement Boundary

The site currently forms part of the rural setting of the Conservation Area and contributes to the open countryside that defines the existing settlement edge. Extending the settlement boundary to incorporate Site 4069 would materially alter the established settlement envelope and erode the historic transition between the village and surrounding countryside. This conflicts with the statutory duty to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposal lacks clear, site-specific justification and is not supported by the accompanying impact assessment. Notably, the site was previously rejected during earlier stages of the plan preparation process on the basis that development would represent an “unacceptable intrusion into the open countryside.” No clear evidence has been presented to demonstrate why that conclusion no longer applies.

2. Heritage and Landscape Impact

Colwinston is recognised as a County Treasure and its historic character forms an important component of the local heritage landscape. Development on this site would have an adverse impact on the character, setting and wider landscape context of the Conservation Area and would therefore conflict with relevant heritage protection principles.

The open fields forming Site 4069 contribute to important views into and out of the village and form part of the agricultural landscape that defines the historic setting of the settlement. Development in this location would fundamentally alter the relationship between the village and its surrounding countryside.

3. Integrated Site Appraisal

The inclusion of this site is not supported by the findings of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA). The ISA undertaken for the Deposit Plan concludes that development of Site 4069 would result in 82% negative impacts across the 17 sustainability objectives, including 29% major negative effects and 35% minor negative effects, with a further

18% assessed as uncertain. Only two objectives were identified as having minor positive effects.

This demonstrates that the site performs poorly against the Council's own sustainability framework and raises serious concerns regarding its suitability for allocation.

4. Inadequate Community Consultation

The consultation process has relied predominantly on digital engagement. This approach is likely to have excluded sections of the local community who may not have reliable access to digital platforms, thereby limiting meaningful public participation in the planning process.

5. Disproportionate Scale of Development

When considered alongside recent development within the village, the proposed level of growth would represent a disproportionate expansion of the settlement.

Prior to the development at Heol Cae Pwll, Colwinston contained approximately 155 dwellings. The addition of 64 homes at Heol Cae Pwll, together with the proposed 25 dwellings on Site 4069, would represent an approximate 57% increase in the size of the village since 2016.

Such expansion would fundamentally alter the scale and character of this historic rural settlement and risks undermining its conservation status and community cohesion. The proposal does not appear to be supported by robust evidence demonstrating a clear settlement-based housing need.

6. Inconsistent Site Assessment

The Local Authority has previously assessed this site as unsuitable for development on several occasions. The current proposal therefore represents a significant departure from earlier assessments. Given that the site continues to present adverse impacts and conflicts with relevant planning policies, the rationale for this change in position remains unclear and insufficiently justified.

7. Flood Risk and Drainage Constraints

There are known drainage and flooding issues affecting both the site and the surrounding area. In addition, there are concerns regarding sewerage capacity and connectivity with the Cowbridge Wastewater Treatment Works.

The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal identifies that the site intersects with Groundwater Source Protection Zones and highlights potential risks associated with development on greenfield land in relation to surface water flooding. These constraints

raise legitimate concerns regarding the suitability of the site for development and its resilience to future climate conditions.

8. Highways and Traffic Impact

Recent residential development and the construction of the new primary school have already increased traffic movements within the village. This has affected traffic flow, parking availability and the safety of walking and cycling routes.

Access to and from the village via the A48 is already constrained, with junctions at Twmpath and Crack Hill presenting visibility and safety concerns on a high-speed road. Any additional traffic associated with further development would intensify existing pressures on the local road network.

9. Site Access and Construction Traffic

The proposed access arrangements raise significant safety concerns. Construction activity associated with the development would generate substantial volumes of plant, machinery and contractor traffic, which would be inappropriate within a small village setting.

Access through an existing residential estate would introduce additional risks for pedestrians, school children, walkers and animals, creating unacceptable safety hazards for residents.

10. Lack of Sustainable Transport and Local Services

The village has extremely limited public transport provision. The nearest bus stop is approximately a 30-minute walk from the site along roads that lack pavements and have poor lighting, making pedestrian access unsafe and impractical, particularly during winter months.

The site also lies in a location that would extend development outward toward the A48 rather than consolidating the existing settlement pattern. This cannot reasonably be described as infill or rounding-off development and instead represents a form of “rural crawl” toward the A48. Access to services from this location would require crossing or travelling alongside the A48, a three-lane road with a 60mph speed limit, which presents clear safety concerns and reinforces reliance on private car travel.

In addition, the village lacks essential services such as a GP surgery and larger retail facilities, meaning future residents would be heavily dependent on private vehicles. This runs contrary to the principles of sustainable development and the objective of reducing car dependency.

11. Loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

The site comprises predominantly greenfield land identified as Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, including Grades 2 and 3a. National planning policy requires that such land be protected and only released for development where there is an overriding need and no reasonable alternatives.

No evidence has been presented to demonstrate such a need. The site is also identified as lying within a mineral safeguarding area, raising further questions regarding the appropriateness of residential allocation.

Planning Policy Context

The proposal appears inconsistent with the principles of sustainable development set out in Planning Policy Wales, which requires development to be located in sustainable locations with appropriate access to services, infrastructure and public transport.

It also conflicts with the placemaking and rural development principles within Future Wales: The National Plan 2040. Furthermore, potential harm to the Conservation Area is contrary to the heritage protection principles set out in Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment.

In accordance with national planning policy and the requirements of the Local Development Plan process, site allocations must be supported by robust evidence, demonstrate clear sustainability credentials and represent the most appropriate option when reasonable alternatives have been considered.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, the inclusion of Site 4069 within the settlement boundary cannot be considered justified, sustainable or consistent with the objectives of the Local Development Plan. The proposal would harm the character and setting of the Conservation Area, place additional strain on local infrastructure and introduce safety and accessibility concerns that have not been adequately addressed.

It is therefore respectfully requested that Site 4069 is not allocated for development and remains outside the defined settlement boundary. In the absence of clear evidence demonstrating that the site represents the most appropriate and sustainable option, its allocation risks undermining the overall soundness of the Replacement Local Development Plan and may require further scrutiny during the independent examination process.