

M21 - Duncan Bayliss

Comments on the amended Telford and Wrekin local plan

Duncan Bayliss, Edgmond 21/9/2017

The main issue which concerns us in Edgmond is that the villages need more protection from housing estates being forced on them. Telford is a new town, there is no need to allow by accident or default the urbanization of the rural area of the district.

The rural area needs more protection from housing estates, infill is already proceeding at a fast pace.

Evidence is presented here of the rate of recent development in Edgmond Parish alone. The Local Plan first draft anticipated 80 new dwellings across the rural area, outside of key brownfield sites. There are already in excess of 30 new dwellings in Edgmond Parish, not counting sub-divisions, over the plan period. At the present rate of infill, Edgmond could end up with development equivalent to the total number of infills anticipated across the whole rural area of the district. It is also important to note that most of these infill applications have received little or no objections.

The following table summarizes the planning permissions within Edgmond Parish over the period 2011-2017. The source is Telford and Wrekin Council's online register of planning applications. The figures were checked by foot survey in July 2017. There are also additional new dwellings which have resulted from sub-division of larger properties not requiring planning permission not included in these figures.

Area	Permission Granted For	Notes
Edgmond Village & Edgmond Marsh Hamlet	24 new dwellings	The vast majority of these are 1-3 bedroom dwellings Also include 1 dwelling of multiple occupancy for 9 students at Chetwynd Grange Farm
Harper Adams University	4 new 55 student accommodation blocks	Accommodation for 220 students
Harper Adams University	Major Innovation Centre	Opened 2017
Harper Adams University	Major Extension to Teaching Block	
Harper Adams University	2 new research buildings	
Calvington	2 dwellings	
Adney	6 dwellings	Including one dwelling of multiple occupancy for 8 farm workers

This is a substantial amount of development activity within a small rural parish. There has also been significant development (over 1500 homes) in Newport 1 mile away from Edgmond, in the last 5 years. There is no need for these homes within Edgmond. A range of property sizes and significant amounts of affordable housing have been available within 3 to 5 minutes drive of the site, in Newport.

M21 - Duncan Bayliss

FIGURE 1 - PLANNING PERMISSIONS – EDMOND VILLAGE & EDMOND MARSH 2011-2017

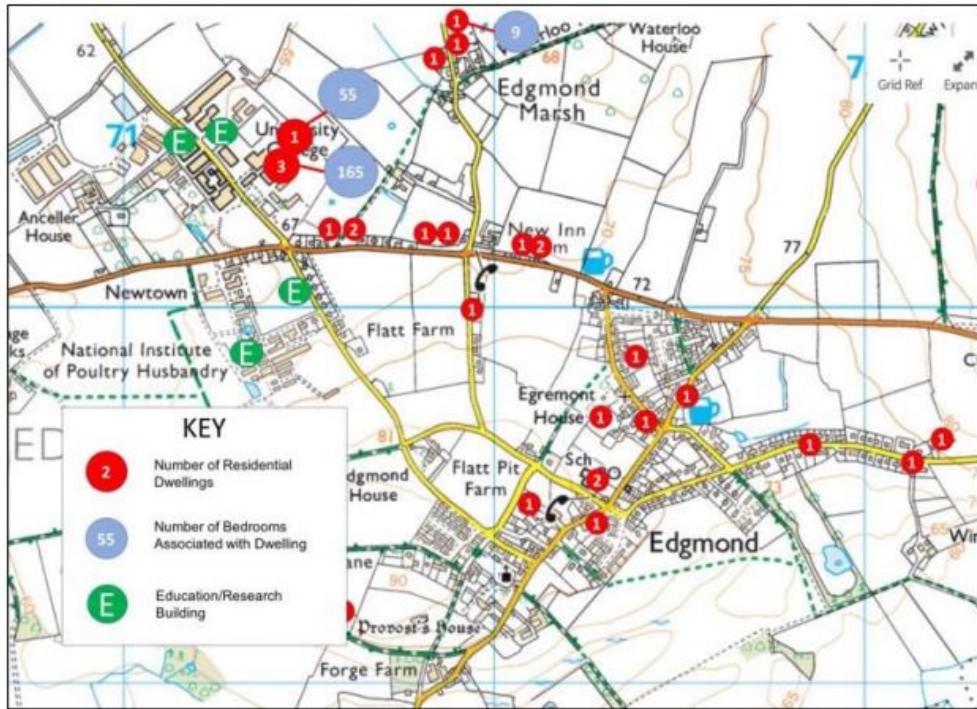
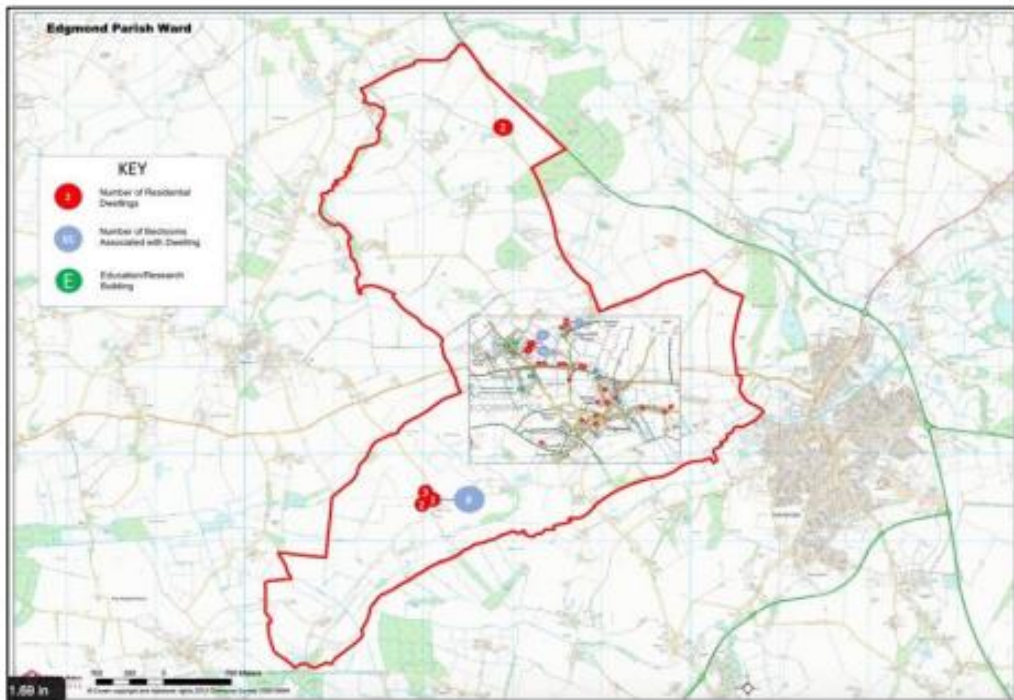


FIGURE 2 - PLANNING PERMISSIONS – EDMOND PARISH 2012-2017



M21 - Duncan Bayliss

I do not believe that the Local Plan sets out clear enough protection for the villages of the rural area. Why is there not a clear statement that new housing estates will not be permitted in the rural area beyond those already with permission? If this is not possible, then the effect of policies in aggregate must be to achieve this outcome.

Thus, why is there still no explanation as to how under delivery in the rural area on the two large brownfield sites will be dealt with? Under delivery on those sites must not result in more housing estates in the villages.

There is still insufficient recognition of the capacity for additional housing on many small infill sites within Telford.

Failure to address these simple issues will leave the communities of the villages in the rural area facing ongoing battles and planning appeals, trying to prevent erosion of their rural character by new housing estates that should be in Telford New Town, which is what it was built for.

Development of Harper Adams University must respect the rural character of Edgmond

The second issue of concern is retaining the rural character and landscape of Edgmond village and parish, whilst allowing Harper Adams University (HAU) the ability to expand. Any further expansion of HAU must be required to respect the rural character and landscape of Edgmond village and Edgmond Parish.

The Local Plan supports 'appropriate development' within the Harper Adams campus, but doesn't explain what this will mean in practise. We think the Local Plan should ask Harper Adams to respect the rural character and landscape of Edgmond village and parish, and that it should retain its physical separation from Edgmond and Edgmond Marsh. Major new developments such as student accommodation or teaching or research blocks, especially over 2 storeys height, should go north of the Shrewsbury Road (B5062).

If we look at the future of Edgmond we can see two likely scenarios that can play out.

If we get it right, then Edgmond will continue to evolve organically with high quality infill, more than exceeding a reasonable share of the numbers anticipated in the Local Plan. It will retain its open form and strong connection to surrounding countryside, with countryside and open spaces forming an integral part of its identity. Across the parish the hamlet of Edgmond Marsh and Harper Adams University (HAU) will remain physically separate from Edgmond village. HAU will be able to continue to grow whilst fitting sympathetically within the landscape. The result will surely be, by any reasonable estimation, a more than adequate contribution to the development needs not just of the district but the wider region.

If we get it wrong, then Edgmond will be swallowed by suburban housing development, lose its distinctive rural character and both Edgmond and HAU will be irreparably diminished by being overcome by urban development. We will be left with Edgmond Conservation Area separated from the rural context that is integral to its experience and enjoyment, sitting within yet another urbanized village on the urban fringe. We can do better than that. There is space within the district

M21 - Duncan Bayliss

of Telford and Wrekin and indeed within the wider region for sensitive infill development to occur whilst respecting the valuable qualities of parishes like Edgmond. That diversity is what makes the English landscape such a joy and places like Edgmond so special.

Whilst comments have been requested on specific wordings, recognition of these issues in principle needs firmer embedding in the local plan and I look to Telford and Wrekin to find wordings acceptable to the inspector to achieve these outcomes. Taken in balance I do not believe that the present policies are strong enough to guarantee we can achieve these twin goals of directing housing estates to the urban area and achieving appropriate protection of the rural landscape and rural character of the villages.