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MY REF: 21/1108/DH

25th February 2022

Dear Members of Farlow Parish Council,

POSSIBLE AFFORDABLE DWELLING – LAND IN ORETON – SARAH HOWELLS AND MARK HARDING.

My clients, Sarah Howells and Mark Harding are hoping to securing planning permission for a “build-your-own” affordable home on a parcel of land in Oرتون within the Parish of Farlow. Please note that at this stage a planning application has not been made.

As part of this process the Parish Council is asked to formally confirm the applicant's “strong local connections”. I would therefore be most grateful if you would consider Sarah Howells's eligibility, as the lead applicant, against the relevant criteria – attached.

To assist, I can offer the following information:

- Sarah Howells' parents were permanent residents in the parish at the time of Sarah's birth;
- Sarah remained in the parish for all her childhood and attended Farlow Primary School from 1993 to 1999;
- Sarah's family live in the parish at Ingardine Farm – Sarah regularly helps her dad on the farm with jobs at the weekend, and also cares for her nan. In return Sarah's family child-mind her children as necessary.

I would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this request together with details of the meeting at which the matter will be discussed. Having considered the request I would be most grateful if you could provide written confirmation to me, which in turn, I am required to forward to the Housing Enabling Officer at Shropshire Council.

Please do not hesitate to come back to me if you have any concerns or queries or wish to discuss the content of this letter further.

I shall wait to hear from you in due course.

Kind regards,

[Dyanne Humphreys](#)

Dyanne Humphreys

Chartered Town Planner

CERT H ED BRITISH VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Determining "Strong Local Connection"

General Guidance:

The determination of local connection is a matter of fact - an applicant either meets the required policy criteria or they don't.

In relation to single plot exception sites, Shropshire Council asks applicants to seek written confirmation from the relevant Town / Parish Council as to the validity of their claim to have a 'Strong Local Connection' with that specific area. Establishing a 'Strong Local Connection' is part of the eligibility test applied by Shropshire Council officers to determine if the applicant's needs should be met within the Parish. These other elements include analysis of the applicant's *Housing Needs, Locational Needs, Finances/Affordability, Availability of other Suitable Properties and the Locational Suitability of the Proposed Site.*

Whilst Town / Parish Councils are of course free to ask applicants appropriate questions about other aspects of their application, their determination at this point in time should be based solely upon the issue of 'Strong Local Connection'. In this aspect, it is for the applicant to demonstrate to the Town / Parish Council's reasonable satisfaction how they meet the criteria (eg: proof of address history, schooling, family connections, employment, other community connections etc). If the Town / Parish Council is satisfied by the facts of the local connection (or has no reason to disbelieve reasonable claims made by the applicant) then the case should be confirmed.

Policy Criteria:

To be eligible for this scheme, applicants have to demonstrate a 'Strong Local Connection' to the Parish area within which the suitable plot of land lies. This will normally be satisfied where at least two of the following descriptions apply to at least one of the adult members of the household:

- Their parents were permanently resident in the local area at the time of the applicant's birth;
- They were in permanent residence in the local area for any period of five years as a child attending a local school, (or who for special reasons attended a school outside of the local area but would have been expected to attend a local school but for those special reasons);
- They are currently lawfully resident in the local area and have lived there for at least the previous 5 years;
- They don't currently live in the local area but have previously lived there at some point for 15 continuous years as an adult;
- They are currently employed or routinely carry out self-employed work within either the local area or 5km of the site;
- They have a confirmed written offer of permanent work within either the local area or 5km of the site;
- They can demonstrate active community involvement in the local area sustained for at least the previous 2 years; or are determined by the Parish Council as having some other form of strong connection with the local community and/or its hinterland.
- Their parents currently live in the local area; or another close family member who provides or requires a substantial degree of support currently lives in the local area;
- If over 55, they have a close family member currently living in the local area

Additional Notes:

For the purpose of this Policy, "Local Area" is initially defined as being within the Parish/Town Council Area. Other issues relating to the applicant's eligibility for the scheme are determined by Shropshire Council.