

Representation Form

Please complete a separate **Part B Representation Form** (this part) for each representation that you would like to make. One **Part A Representation Form** must be enclosed with your **Part B Representation Form(s)**.

We have also published a separate **Guidance Note** to explain the terms used and to assist in making effective representations.

Part B: Representation

Name and Organisation:	Clive Roberts - Kembertons
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Q1. To which document does this representation relate?

- Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan
- Sustainability Appraisal of the Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan
- Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan
- (Please tick one box)

Q2. To which part of the document does this representation relate?

Paragraph:	<input type="text"/>	Policy:	SP9	Site:	<input type="text" value="Click or tap here to enter text."/>	Policies Map:	<input type="text" value="Click or tap here to enter text."/>
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Q3. Do you consider the Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan is:

- | | | | | |
|--|------|--------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|
| A. Legally compliant | Yes: | <input type="checkbox"/> | No: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. Sound | Yes: | <input type="checkbox"/> | No: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| C. Compliant with the Duty to Co-operate | Yes: | <input type="checkbox"/> | No: | <input type="checkbox"/> |

(Please tick as appropriate).

Q4. Please give details of why you consider the Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible.

If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments.

A Community Cluster is said to be, in Policy SP9.1 an individual or group of small rural settlements of varying function with aspirations to maintain or enhance their sustainability through modest levels of appropriate development.

When first devised, in the Core Strategy 2006 – 2026, the idea of a Community Cluster was that they would comprise two or more small settlements, where combined settlements offered a range of services contributing to a sustainable community. The present proposal loosens this description, such that it is no longer based on the provision of services and can be any amount of small settlements, including single settlements that do not have to have a relationship with others in terms of reliance on services.

Measbury and Maesbury Marsh lie abutting each other, with the unclassified county highway running between Knockin and Oswestry running through the middle of both. Together, they do not rely on any other

small or nearby village for any particular public or community service. They do, however, rely on each other, and share community facilities. They are an example of the sort of situation that the idea of Community Clusters was designed for. However, they have not been designated a Community Cluster in the Local Plan Review, this means they will both be regarded as open countryside, and development opportunities will be extremely limited.

Settlements are assigned as Community Hubs or Community Clusters, or neither, on the basis of a scoring system which reflects the availability of **existing** community services. The scoring system is an attempt to redress the situation that was promoted through the existing Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan, where Parish Councils were encouraged to determine which villages should accept development, and where and how much such development might be. If no development was wanted by the local Council then the village was given a designation that would not allow any. The present system is an attempt to make the designations of villages more objective. Those villages that do not reach the appropriate level of points to be regarded as a Community Hub may, depending upon their size and provision of facilities, be designated a Community Cluster, or might simply become open countryside. The Parish Council concerned will again be able to determine what level of development it feels is appropriate in a Community Cluster – in some cases the Council concerned might decide that they do not want further development.

As indicated above, Maesbury and Maesbury Marsh act as one, sharing services. Each has a population (according to Table 9: Population and Dwelling Estimates for Recognisable Settlements, of Appendix A to the Hierarchy of Settlements evidence paper (December 2020) produced by Shropshire Council) of over 200, with Maesbury having 211 residents and Maesbury Marsh 245. Together, then, they have a population of over 450. Many of the settlements that are listed as being elements of a Community Cluster in Schedule SP2.3 of the Hierarchy of Settlements paper, do not have populations approaching 200 (some as low as 20) and a number of the Clusters do not reach a total of 450 residents when all the settlements in that Cluster are added together.

The Council appears to refuse to accept that Maesbury and Maesbury Marsh act as a single settlement on a day-to-day basis, though there are other Clusters where villages comprising two distinct elements are included (Ash Magna/Ash Parva, Upper/Middle/Lower Hengoed, Chirk Bank/Gledrid, for instance).

There also appears to be a somewhat questionable apportionment of 'points' in relation to the assessment of local facilities and services in Maesbury/Maesbury Marsh. For instance, there is a Pre-school Children's Nurse, in the village (created in the former Primary School building, and several businesses that employ more than five people. Combining the scores of the two settlements and adding in those points that should have been attributed to the villages but have not, brings them very close to the score required for being designated a Community Hub.

Through the planning policies adopted in relation to Maesbury/Maesbury Marsh over the past twenty years or so, the joint settlement has become LESS sustainable than it was. The most important factor in this situation is the loss of the village primary school, but it also lost its village shop. While the points system now adopted brings a form of objectivity to the designation of villages being suitable for various levels of development, it is not sufficiently sensitive to the actual needs of the community. Restrictions on development simply perpetuate the trend, with loss of sustainability being used as justification for further losses.

Maesbury and Maesbury Marsh do, indeed, operate as a single entity, and should be the subject of detailed consideration of what might be needed to make the settlements MORE sustainable; they might then begin to grow and retain the services that currently exist. This is the basic concept behind the development strategy set out in Policy SP2, but the scoring system for identifying Community Hubs and Community Clusters is insufficiently sensitive to actual needs of communities and in several cases does not promote im-

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	Part B Reference:

proved sustainability. As the plan stands a settlement of 450+ residents is not to be allowed any development (other than for special purposes) for the next 16 years. This is not in line with the strategy expressed in Policy SP2.

(Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Q5. Please set out the modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan legally compliant and sound, in respect of any legal compliance or soundness matters you have identified at Q4 above.

Please note that non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination. You will need to say why each modification will make the Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

Policy SP9 should be revised in order to allow flexibility in the identification of Community Hubs and Community Clusters when it is realised that settlements are becoming less sustainable and more reliant on private motor vehicles. Positive action should be taken to encourage such settlements to increase their sustainability.

(Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Please note: In your representation you should provide succinctly all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support your representation and your suggested modification(s). You should not assume that you will have a further opportunity to make submissions.

After this stage, further submissions may only be made if invited by the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he or she identifies for examination.

Q6. If your representation is seeking a modification to the Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan, do you consider it necessary to participate in examination hearing session(s)?

Please note that while this will provide an initial indication of your wish to participate in hearing session(s), you may be asked at a later point to confirm your request to participate.

- No, I do not wish to participate in hearing session(s)
 Yes, I wish to participate in hearing session(s)

(Please tick one box)

Q7. If you wish to participate in the hearing session(s), please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

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	Part B Reference:

The situation where a settlement is losing sustainability is not being considered in the Local Plan. The emphasis is on increasing sustainability of settlements but there is no indication of what should be done when that policy fails and settlements become less sustainable. It is important that someone is included in any discussion at the Examination on the sustainability of rural settlements.

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Signature:

Date:

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Representation Form

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Q2. To which part of the document does this representation relate?

Paragraph:	<input type="text"/>	Policy:	<input type="text" value="SP2"/>	Site:	<input type="text" value="Click or tap here to enter text."/>	Policies Map:	<input type="text" value="Click or tap here to enter text."/>
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Policy SP2 sets out the manner in which the Council intends to distribute new development across the County. New housing development is intended to achieve the delivery of 30,800 dwellings in the Plan period (2016 – 2038) with some 27.5% of those properties being assigned to the rural area of the County – that is located outside of Shrewsbury Strategic Centres, and the Principal and Key Centres. This means that around 8,470 dwellings at a rate of 385 dwellings per annum will need to be constructed in the rural area.

To distribute this development Policy SP2 indicates that new development in the rural area will be focussed on Community Hubs (which are identified in Schedule SP2.2) which are considered to be significant rural service centres and, to a lesser extent, Community Clusters (which are identified in Schedule SP2.3). Policy SP2.7 indicates that additional Community Clusters can be identified through the production of Neighbourhood Plans. The purpose of the focus on Community Hubs and Clusters is said to be to ensure the long-term sustainability of rural communities.

The principal behind this policy and the ambition to ensure greater long-term sustainability for rural settlements is supported, but the manner in which the villages have been assigned as either Community Hubs or Community Clusters is not, in the representor's view, likely to produce development which will ensure the long-term sustainability of rural settlements and, in some cases, will have the effect of making them less sustainable.

Attempting to identify those settlements that are to be considered as Community Hubs or Community Clusters in an objective fashion is to be applauded, but the method chosen by the Council, a scoring system based on the provision of services, is not sufficiently sensitive to recognise the roles that certain villages perform, and thus those villages can end up categorised as a Hub or Cluster which is inappropriate for its actual function. If a village should be wrongly categorised either by designating it a Community Hub when the function of the village is not that of a small centre to which others look or, one is categorised as a Cluster when it has significant local services to support and thus is not permitted appropriate levels of housing, it can lead to closure of services and increased use of private motor travel. The scoring system adopted needs to be carefully and flexibly applied if the stated aims of Policy SP2 are to be achieved.

As the Policy relating to the identification of Hubs and Clusters stands at present, the scoring system is too rigid, and will not be effective in achieving the aims of Policy SP2, and is in conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework as it is not responsive to local circumstances or reflective of local needs as required by NPPF para 77. The delivery required cannot be guaranteed by the Plan Review.

The Plan will not, therefore, promote sustainable development in rural areas and will not enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities as required by NPPF para 78.

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