The Mere & Zeals Public Meeting – Mere Social Club – 19:00 – 20:20
In attendance:

Cllr Ashley O'Neill (chairman), Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Ian McLennan.

Public: 22, Officers: 2

Cllr O'Neill delivered the presentation slides, setting out what a CGR is and why one was taking place in this area, and explaining the draft recommendation of the Committee.

Views were then sought from those present.

Points in Support:

- MTC – reasoning behind our support of the draft rec – The site is an extension of our community and is widely used, the carnival uses the site and our young people go to the Hillbrush site – we feel that the people who will be at the care home will be our neighbours and they will come to Mere to use facilities and pharmacy. There will be integration with the care home from Mere. The workers there may not all be residents, but they would relate to Mere.
- Hillbrush Company Chairman – & MTC – When Hillbrush moved to the site we registered the add as Mere – everyone in the industry knows we are from Mere and didn't want to change that – The bypass is only reason we are in Zeals – we have a huge relationship with Mere and none with Zeals – has now become a natural boundary which should be changed.
- MTC – a lot of this started when MTC initiated a NHP – we wanted to include that area in our plan as the site was allocated in the previous local plan as employment land for mere – at the time ZPC were not supportive of us doing that. The planning team send all proposals for that area to both councils.
- Local Businessman & MTC – on the perspective of lorries and things coming into Mere – its an industrial estate that borders Mere – seems strange that they aren't already in Mere. The drivers of the lorries and the staff will come into Mere for refreshments and shops/services. When you drive past the entrance to the site there is a welcome to Mere sign 100y down the Road.
- MTC – the roads cut off and isolate the space – we live in the real world not on a bit of paper. Look at how removed Zeals is from the area, there is a huge gap. Most people don't even know it is in Zeals.
- MTC – It is insulting to be accused of requesting the boundary change due to financial reasons. When the request was made in 2019 there were no financial ties to the request at all. Everything happens in Mere, nothing happens in Zeals.
- MTC – if the brush factory and the care home had to change the address to Zeals – people looking for those would go in the wrong direction – coming off the A303, cause confusion. Answer: Addresses and post codes are not part of this process. No obligation for any postcodes or addresses to be changed.
- Resident of Mere – there is a volunteer who does a litter pick from A303 down into Mere – he is a Mere resident, and he assumes that the area is Mere up to the A303, whatever the official boundaries are. Why are we worrying about boundaries which are not based on Anglo Saxon or such they are recently drawn up boundaries by government- should not be too emotional about it if there are reasons why a boundary should change. There isn't a lot

of signage that demonstrates that that part of the parish is part of Zeals – its almost like its not something they are proud to have possession of it.

- Resident of Mere – look at it from a topographical point of view – that way when I walk along the road on the footpath to the restaurant at Hillbrush which is used by local residents. The use of the road would increase when the care home is finished. We would like the MTC to look after the area, so we know we are being looked after.
- MTC – We only knew it was possible to request a boundary review in 2019, not 40/50 years ago.
- MTC – Feel that Mere is being impugned – the reason we are doing this is not financial – we feel the people in that space would be better served in Mere.
- MTC – regarding CIL – it is our understanding that CIL should be spent on the demand created by the development.
  Answer: There is guidance on CIL – but it is to mitigate the impact of development. Clive –
- Will all members do a site visit?
  Answer: We encourage the Committee members to do a site visit – not a requirement.
- Resident of Mere – There has not been much notice about the consultation, today is the last day.
  Answer: The Consultation has been extended to 28/3, we will update the date on the website, please promote it locally.
- MTC – when I visited Norwood Lodge, the resident advised me they thought they were in Mere
- MTC – Mere are very proud of the Hillbrush business, which has been associated with Mere since 1922.
- Hill Brush – we have supported Mere because we were in Mere before, there is a historical connection.
- MTC – when we first raised the CGR in 2019 – the land was purely for industrial use at that time – the CIL discussions at that time were not relevant.
- MTC – Our volunteer Litter Pickers collect along the road up to the A303, we take care of the area.
- MTC - Would ask that the majority of the Cmmtt members come to view the area – to get a better picture in their minds.

Points in Objection:

- Resident of Zeals – the ideas are flimsy, I appreciate the Hillbrush long-time link to Mere. What are the real reasons for the MTC request. I believe it is financial gain. The football teams playing there were named Zeals – the young people in Zeals will also attend the care home. It's nowhere near Castle Street. Most of us have a postcode which is named Warminster but are nowhere near it.

- ZPC – I am representing myself and the residents of Zeals – I am disappointed with the ERC and the draft recommendations supporting a change to the boundary. Became apparent quickly that it's not a consultation and the decision has already been agreed. There were 112 opposing responses to the online survey from Zeals parish residents – the process is a waste of council time and money – no logic in changing the boundary – other than moving badly allocated funding from one area to another. Seems like a land grab for financial gain. I request that ERC consider the views of the Zeals residents and reconsider the decision.
  Answer: This is definitely not a decision that has already been made. There will be another cmmtt meeting which is public, we will consider all information and discuss again. There have been many times in the past where the draft recommendations have been changed and sometimes dropped.

- Resident of Lower Zeal's – there are clear anomalies, it is commercial valuable land. What consideration has been made for mission creep beyond this boundary change – creep to parkland and listed buildings, when more valuable land becomes available.
  Answer: The Cmmtt does not think about what may or may not happen further down the road – future development not a consideration (outside of the electorate increase arising from known major development in a 5 year period).
- ZPC – There is a sort of pre-occupation with an imaginary boundary where people struggle to find their way back to Mere. What is suggested looks out of place, like a nose stuck on. It doesn't matter that the brush factory is in Zeals – this is nonsense.
  Answer: We don't pick and choose what comes to us – we have a duty under legislation to look at the requests. Anywhere in Wiltshire can come forward with a request.
  It is a statutory process and legislation is in place to enable parishes to be reviewed, to recognise that areas change and develop and there is a need to make changes to boundaries for governance and community cohesion. The cost of the process is fairly negligible as part of the day cost for officers – little additional cost to the process.
- ZTC – what is the logic, there is no logic saying that if you travel somewhere then that should be part of your parish.
- Resident of Zeals – we were bypassed 40/50y ago. If that was a natural boundary why didn't MTC ask for a boundary change then, when it was just a field when it was used for agricultural field?
  Answer: WC underwent an electoral review 2017-19 – at the conclusion of that process – we went out to all parishes in Wiltshire to ask if there were any boundary changes they wished us to look at. The Mere request came in as a result.
- What constitutes a good reason to move a boundary?
  Answer: Some examples could include where 2 dwellings are either side of a boundary – explaining why one is in one parish and the other is in another – geographically – is the area to be transferred more remote than the other dwellings in it and use facilities in the opposite parish.
- Interested in the decisions based on residents – we have a site on the corner in zeal's – does it mean that that part of land which is closer to Mere than the other site should that part of land also be transferred as its due to be developed.
- Answer: It may be, as it could form part of a review for the future or if proposed as an alternative, we would look at that. Its dependent on what is raised.
- Could the boundary line be amended to just go around the dwelling (Norwood Lodge) in the piece of land to fix the problem?
- Residents in Zeals appreciate and enjoy the Hillbrush facility very much – it is a shared facility.

Division Member Comments:

Cllr George Jeans – Requested information relating to CIL payments, following the development of the site, as the care home had already generated some funds. Where would the CIL end up? If a PC has a NHP they are entitled to 15% of that. can you feedback to the relevant PCs when you find out.

Answer: CIL can be complicated; it depends on differing factors such as dates and stages of the process. We would need to go to spatial planning to ask specific questions.

Cmmtt Comments:

- What impact do the 2 PCs have in that area at the moment?

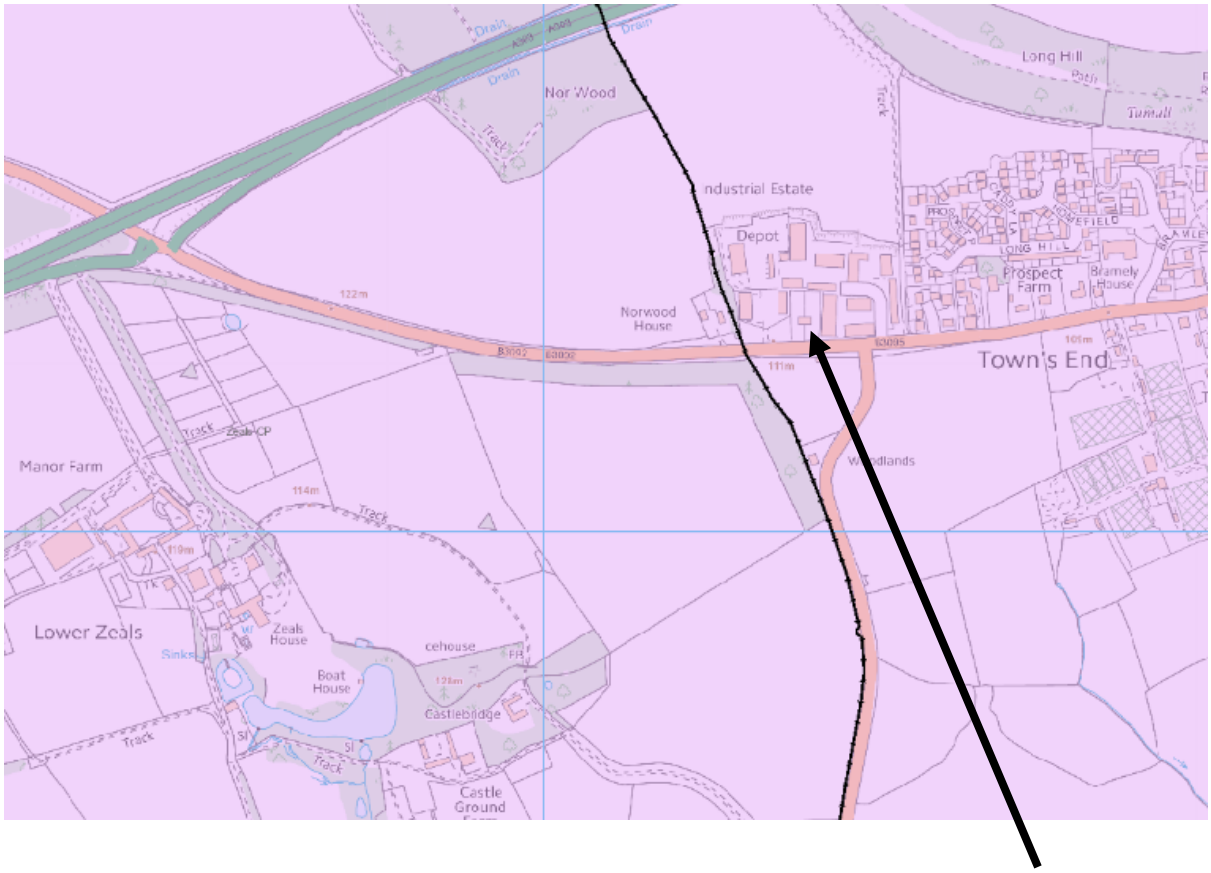
- The care home is a game changer, in the past when it was not a factor, the cmmtt's focus would be on electors, not on businesses. So the real focus of all of this is where do those residents naturally belong as a community.
- There have been instances in previous CGRs where a large industrial estate has the name of the neighbouring parish, and that parish asks for the boundary to be moved to incorporate the industrial estate with no electors. We don't usually support requests such as that. The A303 cuts Mere and Zeals in half in reality the A303 is a bit of a red herring.
- CIL was something that would get sorted out as a result of a decision – but will not form part of our decision making.
- What is the relationship between the dwelling on the site (Norwood House) – and those that lie along road in Mere nearest to it?
- The Resident of Norwood lodge was written to with a copy of the survey, seeking their comments.
- Looking to the south of the area, why did the boundary go off road below the site in question? Would there be any reason either way to move it to the road or leave it.
- The current deviation from the road is possibly due to the land ownership around those 2 farms.
- The property South Lodge, is that considered to be in the right parish?
- Should the boundary line be moved to run along the road.
- The property Mapperton Hill Farm is in Mere should it be in Zeals

Close

Cllr O'Neill provided details of how people could respond to the survey, the parish councillors took away hard copy forms and maps, and stated they would seek to promote the review to residents.

The ERC next meet on 3 April to consider info again. Final recs could be as is, same as draft recs, we could say leave it with no change or could be something different. Then it would go to Full Council, any changes would not come into effect until May 2025.

If changes are not made in 2025 – the next time would be 2029.



Nearest Houses to the dwelling Norwood Lodge (inside the triangle area) are two indicated by the black arrow, within Mere.