

Walford Neighbourhood Development Plan Examination

Request for further information and questions from the Examiner to Herefordshire Council and Walford Parish Council

I have carried out a preliminary review of the Walford Neighbourhood Development Plan and the evidence submitted in support of it and there are a few points where I need some clarification or further information. I would therefore be grateful if both Councils could assist me, as appropriate, in answering the following questions.

1. Policy WALF3

Policy WALF 3 sets out how major development within the AONB will be assessed. Clause d) states “ For development elsewhere, the scale in relation to the locality”. Is this clause intended to apply to development elsewhere in the AONB but not adjacent or close to a settlement, thus is linked to clause c), or is it intended to have a wider meaning across the NDP area?

2. Policy WALF18

Policy WALF18 refers to supporting “accommodation for assisted or supported living for elderly people” but the supporting text in paragraph 7.5 also mentions other sectors of the community with mobility needs. I would welcome the Parish Council’s views on this.

3. Policy WALF21

Paragraph 7.12 refers to a total of 4 housing sites and 16 dwellings being allocated by the NDP, but the totals in Policy WALF 21 amount to 21 dwellings and lists 5 sites. Can the Parish Council confirm that this is due to the site on the edge of Ross on Wye (WALF21D) not being included in this total?

Paragraph 7.20 refers to a Memorandum of Understanding being agreed between Ross on Wye Town Council and Walford Parish Council, whereby the former has agreed to notionally allocate up ten dwellings on land off Watling Street, to meet any shortfall within Walford Parish. The site is in Walford Parish, but immediately abuts the settlement boundary of Ross on Wye, as defined in the adopted Ross on Wye Neighbourhood Development Plan. I would be grateful for Herefordshire Council’s views on the legal basis for a Memorandum of Understanding between neighborhood planning bodies and how such an agreement might work in practice.

4. Housing land supply

I require some clarification on the housing land supply position. Para 3.9. refers to “a further nine dwellings close to Howle Hill”. Is this a reference to the site granted at appeal for 8 dwellings in September 2021 which is now identified as a new third cluster at Howle Hill and is referred to in para 7.10 on page 59? Or is a reference to another site or sites? As a consequence, is an update to the housing land supply figures in Para 3.9 and Table 2 on page 63 required?

5. Local Wildlife Site

A representation has suggested that the boundary of the Local Wildlife Site to the north of Howle Hill should be amended to include all of the plot which is woodland and is used solely for wildlife purposes. My understanding is that Local Wildlife Sites are designated in the Core Strategy under policy LD2 Biodiversity and Geodiversity. They are mapped as such in Core Strategy Policies Map. I would be grateful for Herefordshire Council and the Parish Council’s comments on the suggested amendment.

Thank you for your assistance with these questions. Once I have received your responses, I may need to ask for further clarification or further queries may arise as the examination progresses.

Please note that these questions and requests for information is a public document and the answers and any associated documents will also be in the public domain. Both my questions and the responses should be placed on the Councils’ websites as appropriate.

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30 November 2022