

Walford Neighbourhood Development Plan Examination

Walford Parish Council's response to the request for further information and questions from the Examiner.

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?

WPC Advice

It is linked to clause c) -i.e. for development that is not adjacent or close to a settlement but within the AONB (settlement as defined by Core Strategy Figures 4.14 and 4.15). It is presumed that despite the advice given in PPG (042 Reference ID: 8-042-20190721) which states that land within the setting of an AONB often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, the provision within NPPF paragraph 177 cannot apply to development that might affect the setting of the AONB.

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.

WPC Advice

Core Strategy policy H3 requires provision for those with additional or specific needs but only in instances involving sites for more than 50 dwellings. No such sites are proposed or likely within the Parish. The need for assisted or supported accommodation for elderly people was specifically identified as a concern and one developer indicated an intention to promote such a development. Enabling a scheme was thought to be best through a policy statement rather than identifying a site. There has been no indication that a developer wishes to provide a scheme for those with mobility needs. A need could not be ruled out but normally these are upon an individual dwelling basis. Phrasing an acceptable policy for these outside of settlement boundaries may be difficult because such cases are often advanced on the basis of specific and personal circumstances. Hence the NDP recognises there may be a need from time to time but support from relevant professional organisations would no doubt be required by Herefordshire Council.

3 (1). 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?

WPC Advice

Unfortunately, the change following the Regulation 14 consultation which added a further site (Land south of Cedar Close, Coughton) appears not to have been carried through to this

paragraph. It should read 5 housing sites and 21 dwellings. The site on the edge of Ross-on-Wye, yet within Walford Parish should remain in this total.

3 (2). Policy WALF21

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 neighbourhood planning bodies and how such an agreement might work in practice.

WPC Advice

To clarify the status of the site adjacent to Ross-on-Wye, off Watling Street, it is not provided under the MoU with Ross-on-Wye Town Council but an allocation for an estimated 5 dwellings within Walford Parish adjacent to a settlement boundary.

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?

WPC Advice

The 9 further dwellings granted permission after April 2021 does include the site forming the third cluster (P190316/F – 8 dwellings at Waters Edge Sharman Pitch Howle Hill Ross-on-Wye Herefordshire granted permission on appeal 2nd September 2021).

We have contacted Herefordshire Council to agree updated figures, indicating, in particular, that the site for 8 dwellings does not appear in the list of commitments provided for April 2022. We would be happy to update the required paragraph and table (and elsewhere as necessary).

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

WPC Advice

We understand that a review of Local Wildlife Sites is underway by Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and includes a process for confirming new designations (including any extensions). We believe the first tranche of potential new sites were during November 2022 so there

were no new designations before that month. We have not been advised that the site in question has been resurveyed and that a revised boundary for the site has been agreed.