

## Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group

### Questions and Answers log

Date	Question	Answer	NDP SG action taken
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	How do the house building requirement numbers for Walford Parish compare with the National average?	This is a bit of a difficult one to answer, without going through each of the individual council areas requirements. Addition to response: This paper provides an insight into the complexity of housing requirements nationally <a href="https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7671/CBP-7671.pdf">https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7671/CBP-7671.pdf</a>	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Is 14% requirement a national number?	The 14% figure that has been applied by Herefordshire Council across "rural areas" to meet its overall housing requirements. It is not a National requirement, other councils will have had their own targets set.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Does the number required of the plan refer to "physically built" or just "planning approved"?	Neither. As part of our plan we must demonstrate the potential to reach the numbers required. Whether developers wish to build or not is outside the control of the plan.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Will the National Framework and Core Strategy alter with changes in government and how does that affect our plan?	Quite likely, and of course there will be a knock-on effect into our plan that will require adjustment. We can, however, construct our	

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		plan in a manner that provides flexibility and avoids constraints, to minimise the impact of any imposed changes.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	What is the role of consultants?	Their role is multi-purpose. First, they bring expertise in planning, data analysis and understanding the construction of NDPs having expertise in all these areas. They also provide a degree of independence.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Will Hereford Planning Authority refer to our plan at all before it is adopted? Is there a stage that it becomes more relevant to planning decisions?	The plan gains weight as it progresses. So, once we have a draft plan in place, Herefordshire Planning Authority will reference it to some extent during planning decision making. It will not become fully part of the process until it is adopted.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	What has happened to all the work undertaken by previous steering groups?	All that has been achieved in the past is being taken forward by the new Steering Group. It will of course need to be understood and verified as still relevant, particularly as some of the information is quite old.	The steering group has commissioned a further site assessment to address new sites available now and a number of issues with the old report.
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November	Are the sites offered going to meet our required quota?	At this stage there appears to be enough sites that may be suitable	

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2019		to meet the number for the current plan's requirements. We need to bear in mind that this is a rolling process. The current plan extends to 2031, this will be followed by a subsequent plan, most likely with a different number of houses required.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	I attended a very similar, and equally enthusiastic meeting in 2017. What is different now?	We have a new council and a new steering team and a renewed energy. We have also engaged consultants to help us with the progressing of the plan, something not done previously. Will that get us to the finish line? It's impossible to say!	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Where are our settlement boundaries and what is the impact of drawing them?	Our settlement boundaries are a bit of an unknown, we may set them as part of our plan. However, there are implications arising from setting a boundary . Firstly where are Walford (Coughton), Bishopswood and Howle Hill, our local understanding needs to be defined. Secondly where might it be best to draw a boundary where development might be more favourable inside than outside; whose land is inside and whose is	

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		outside. We have to do this in a consultative way to make sure it will stand up to scrutiny.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Can Herefordshire override the Parish Plan?	Herefordshire planners must take our plan into account when making decisions. However, as with most documents they are open to interpretation. Some things that we may have defined in one way may be taken to be something else by others. Skilful development of our plan will help negate this.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Drainage in many areas is becoming a greater problem as water table levels increase. Will new development be required to have mains drainage systems?	Infrastructure is outside the direct remit of the plan, as it is not a planning issue. We have the opportunity of adding our concerns as a note within the plan, but it will have no direct planning decision influence.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Are we expecting a flurry of planning applications just before the planned adoption of the plan, to try and get around it's constraints?	Not particularly, the planning process will remain the same and once we have submitted a draft plan it will have some influence on decisions.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Will residents still be able to input to individual planning applications as they do now?	Yes, we are not altering any planning processes, merely adding a level of detail to the decision making. Parishioners will continue	

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		to be able to comment and lodge objections to planning applications as now.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	If a site is deemed unsuitable at this stage is that the end of it?	Not necessarily, we are about to re-evaluate the current site assessment using new criteria set by parishioners. It is possible that part of a current site may be deemed suitable, where the whole site is not considered so.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Electricity in Walford keeps going off. Will this get worse with more development?	This is much the same as the drainage issues raised in an earlier question. There is not a direct planning requirement for stability of electrical supply. However, we can note our concerns as an appendix to the plan.	
13 <sup>th</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2019	Two individuals have asked to submit sites for development, is this possible?	As the call for sites exercise was undertaken some time ago, we will be accepting additional sites and reviewing them alongside the existing 16 that have been put forward. Site submission forms will be added to the parish website soon.	The call for sites was extended until end March 2020 and a total of 30 sites is now offered. Site assessments will commence in April.
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	How has this target of 91 new dwellings been calculated and given to Walford to fulfil? Further, what	The target comes from the Herefordshire Core Strategy which in turn is derived from national	

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	<p>types and locations of properties are included in the 30 nr dwellings already committed to? How does this allocation fit with the extensive residential development that is currently taking place within Ross and around the A40?</p>	<p>housing targets allocated to county councils. Basically 91 is 14% of the housing in the parish as at 2011. You can find a map of the 34 houses which are either built or approved on the website (<a href="https://walford-ndp.co.uk/the-plan/?eeSFLF_ListFolder=The-Plan/Evidence-Base/Maps">https://walford-ndp.co.uk/the-plan/?eeSFLF_ListFolder=The-Plan/Evidence-Base/Maps</a> ). The number of houses required for Walford parish are separate from any adjoining parishes. They have their own targets, which are also 14%. Ross, as one of the market towns, has a slightly higher target to meet. The Core Strategy set all of these targets and how Herefordshire, as a whole, will meet those figures.</p>	
<p>17<sup>th</sup> March 2020</p>	<p>Walford Parish needs to ask local government which groups of people need housing, what their needs are and then identify appropriate locations for development. As opposed to the other way around. Is this target just a "box ticking exercise"?</p>	<p>The process is one where local government needs to find good solutions to the housing shortage. It is a process of planning and at the end of the day if there is no demand then builders are not going to build. Herefordshire Council has a housing land supply target which is to have identified a minimum of 5 years land supply so</p>	

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		the NDP process is geared to support this, but at the end of the day market forces and real needs will be in the lead as far as they are currently.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Who are these additional dwellings aimed at, i.e. locals, incomers etc?	The Core Strategy allocates housing numbers by Parish. Studies conducted by Herefordshire Council have indicated that the internal demand for housing is well below the nationally applied target figures. However the targets for Herefordshire as a whole were based on extrapolation of the actual increase in population over the period 1991 to 2011. It is therefore highly likely that many of the new dwellings will be for those moving into the County from outside. We are permitted to take a view on what we anticipate may be the best fit for our Parish and including any affordable housing we feel is locally needed but the market will ultimately determine what is needed.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	What are the needs that are driving this target?	Basically the needs come from national targets for housing growth and are cascaded down through	

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		layers of government.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	As a general principle sites should be selected on the basis of needs and not just because they are currently unused/underutilised green fields. The previously commissioned Aecom report refers to the Parish Council undertaking a "call for sites" to landowners and developers rather than a needs-based assessment.	The parish council could have chosen not to call for sites in 2017 and the result would have been that HC would choose them for us. The parish council decided that it would be better to have parish control over our land development, which is why it was originally decided to make a NDP in the first place. Better that we, as a parish, shape our land use and development than people who are not here and do not know the local character and features to be used and preserved.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	The Aecom report was based on 16 sites that were offered for development in 2017. The recent public consultation drop-in sessions include 23 potential sites.	We have extended the call for sites because of a sufficiently large time lag between the first one and our current efforts to draft an NDP document.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	The pro-forma criteria that was used by Aecom in evaluating the original 16 sites is purely subjective and there is no weighting of criteria or use of a scoring matrix. All 16 sites in the report were visited in one day in November 2017 which does not	Fully agree. This is why it was decided to do the whole exercise again and to do to clear up a number of anomalies. We have consulted the parishioners in February as to what criteria are important to them and the sites	



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	allow anywhere near enough time to properly assess both sites and the environs in which they are located.	will be subject to two stage assessment. We are developing stage one "knock out" criteria which are things like does it conform to the core strategy (things like is it in or adjacent to a named settlement), or is it within an unacceptable flood risk zone. If it passes that test it will be assessed on criteria which are more qualitative like the ones which the parishioners have advised us they are happy with. The process is likely to take more than one day and will involve desk assessment as well as physical assessment.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Apart from flood risk the criteria by which a site has been determined to be classed as "no development, "potential development" or "yes (to development) appear to be mixed. For example, several sites are remote from public transport and amenities, or affect wildlife or views over the AONB but these are not mentioned in the entries in the Executive Summary.	We intend to use the criteria the parishioners are happy with which include these aspects you mention. To date we have not had any suggestion of a view which should be preserved.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March	The density of proposed	The National Planning Policy	

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2020	development in the Aecom report that forms the basis of the potential development of each site is based on 30 dwellings per hectare. Where has this been taken from? Is this an urban "yardstick"?	Framework (NPPF), the highest level of the planning hierarchy, defines a figure of 30 dwellings per hectare as the lowest density that should be used to make best use of available land. Within cities the target figure can be as high as 4,800 per hectare. The Core Strategy has to align with the NPPF, as does our NDP. In their assessment Aecom chose the lowest figure. However there are exceptions to this density target and one of these is development within AONBs, where visual and habitat impact is given a high priority. We intend to include this as a consideration in the site assessment but I cannot give you any specific figures at this stage.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	All the existing sites will require a change in planning use from agricultural to residential use.	True.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Generally, there appears to be a move to take away the "green belt" between Walford/Coughton and Ross-on-Wye.	The event on 22 <sup>nd</sup> February gave the opposite view; that the gap should be preserved.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March	What proportion of social/affordable	We have yet to discuss the point	

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2020	housing is required as part of the total Social/affordable house owners would generally prefer proximity to Ross-on-Wye with good public transport and good access to shops, schools, doctor's surgeries, amenities etc. This would be true for both a younger and older demographic.	about affordable housing although the last housing assessment undertaken by Herefordshire Council only identified one family looking for affordable housing within Walford Parish.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	How does this proposed development plan on greenfield sites sit with the government's green agenda and general focus on brownfield development?	There is a preference to use brownfield sites but it is marginal. Whilst we might prefer brownfield sites we need to have them offered and/or planned to count towards the target of 91. Having said many of the houses built or approved are on brownfield sites.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Public transport is generally poor in the parish once you stray from the main B4234	It's basically non existent away from the B4234.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	What effect will increased numbers of dwellings and associated traffic have on the attractiveness of the AONB for tourism?	Visual and habitat impact are already key planning elements when considering any development within an AONB. The NDP gives us an additional opportunity to have our say on where we want houses and the character of the houses to be built. Unfortunately traffic	

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		density is not normally a key planning issue and in rural areas traffic levels are usually considered to be low by modern, urban standards.	
17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Once off the B4234 roads are generally small which should be borne in mind when greater traffic movements are generated, especially in inclement winter weather.	This will be taken into account.	
17 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Generally we were very impressed by the thoroughness of the meeting... however the technology, or the means of communication was poor. I urge you to invest in <a href="https://zoom.us">zoom.us</a> so members of the public can see the graphs etc. and each other. I suggest that this social distancing will extend into the autumn and the committee should do whatever they can to encourage public participation.		In future the steering group meetings will be open to video attendance for residents using WebEx.
17 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Coronavirus. There was scant regard paid to this in relation to development. This national emergency is not going away any time soon and must be factored into	We have to work within the current planning system and that doesn't currently include making provision for pandemics.	

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	any plan.		
17 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Flood zone. Even considering just for one moment building onto the floodplain is totally irresponsible and should be avoided at all costs.	Our approach aligns directly with current Government directives on the use of areas liable to flooding and we are preferring sites which are in flood zone 1.	
17 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Hereford have approached their plan rather ingeniously by scattering new builds across the country... unlike Cheshire who have attached high density developments to existing conobations. I think this is a fundamental consideration for you all at the outset: scatter or focus? What impact do you want these 91 houses to have on our community?	We are required to focus developments in or around the named settlements. Outside of these settlements we will expect to have some RA3 open countryside development in line with core strategy rules, these would by nature be scattered around the parish.	
17 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Are you interested in people from outside the community buying homes in the Parish? If you are... what provision are you making for them? There seemed to be a resistance within the steering committee to even considering looking beyond the immediate parish to expand the community. Frankly, identifying local 'need' is missing the point and not what is required of you. 91 new	The purpose of the NDP is to plan for a minimum of 91 new houses and also to shape development in the parish according to what existing residents need/want. I agree that if 91 new houses are to be built that there will be a lot of incoming residents, however this demand will be made through market forces which we cannot control. Attracting residents is not in the remit of any NDP, however	

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	families must be attracted into Walford. It is up to the council to make them feel welcome. There is a national housing shortage, each region has been assigned a certain number of home to be built and Walford must build 91 houses.	we are striving for a parish which would be worthy, and welcoming, for incoming as well as existing residents.	
17 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	Walford no longer has a pub or a local shop from what I saw last month. Any development should have a caveat for all developers given planning permission should provide say 10% of build costs to provide community amenities so the 91 new families who move into your parish have amenities like a village shop or pub. What kind of new business are you looking to attract into the village?	This is a good point and where we can we will encourage amenities. Herefordshire Council is working towards introducing a community infrastructure levy which would provide funds for amenities in the parish. Also feedback from our consultations demonstrated a desire for a village core(s) and we will be taking this into account when developing policies. This may also bring a greater support for any business providing amenities like a shop or pub.	
17 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	In my opinion if you scatter new builds across the parish rather than concentrate them say along the Walford Road a more audacious approach would be to consider any plot from Coughton Corner to Kerne Bridge to Howle Hill for appropriate development creating a	We are only permitted to allocate potential development sites to the named settlements, we cannot include any sites outside of these. This does not stop all development in open countryside provided these are approved by Herefordshire Council Planning and for this they	

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	<p>development zone unconnected to the flimsy and arbitrary settlement boundaries and force all areas take one or two houses. This gives the opportunity for multiple landowners to cash in on the building bonanza rather than just a couple of lucky locals. This also might encourage the council to think about upgrading foot paths or Welsh Water to invest in sewerage.</p>	<p>must meet the tests of Core Strategy Policy RA3.</p>	
<p>17<sup>th</sup> April 2020</p>	<p>Attitude toward change. This is perhaps the most difficult for all of you. Change is hard but inevitable. I sensed from a couple of you that you wished these 91 houses would just go away. Talk of the SSI and OINB are all well and good but should not be weaponised against the project at hand. As for 'local Nature reserves' etc. you know as well as I do this is nonsense. Walford during the 18th C with it's many lime kilns and quarries was agrubby place and has only recently become a green enclave. And only just 'green'. The timber yard is not only a ghastly visual scar on the landscape but responsible for</p>	<p>75% of the Parish lies within the Wye Valley AONB and that the AONB designation was granted in 1971 based on the landscape qualities of the Wye Valley at that time, not what it may have looked like in the 18th Century. Both Herefordshire Council and Walford Parish Council have a statutory duty, under the CROW act of 2000, to maintain and enhance that landscape. The precise wording, from <a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a> - Under the CROW Act, you, the relevant local authority, must make sure that all decisions have regard for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of</p>	

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	<p>terrible noise pollution. Poly tunnels interrupt the view for miles and the higher you climb Bulls Hill the worse the noise from the motorways in the Wye Valley. The committee must abandon this bucolic fantasy of Walford and address the immediate housing demands of the nation. Pragmatism not nostalgia must guide you all.</p>	<p>the AONB. Your decisions and activities must consider the potential effect it will have within the AONB and land outside its boundary.</p>	
<p>17<sup>th</sup> April 2020</p>	<p>There was mention of 'good design' this always perplexes me. Do you mean architecturally significant and assessed as such? Or do you mean local mish mash pastiche? Great design will always attract people with means. Again, I'm asking you what kind of people do you want in your community? 91 homes is a lot of people. Over what time scale do you want this influx. Again... what provision are you making for an influx of say 300 more people in your parish? Are you prepared for more people?</p>	<p>The NDP is the parish's approach to preparing for additional 91 houses in the parish, which with local occupancy rates would lead to around 200 more people. The timescale for the increase is 2031. We are still discussing what types of housing might be important and still working towards what if any design aspects we might want to include in the NDP.</p>	
<p>17<sup>th</sup> April 2020</p>	<p>As we start to consider what this Covid19 means to us as a nation we must also consider how it might impact us locally. Will it mean that</p>	<p>Covid 19 is outside the scope and timescale of this project.</p>	



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	<p>people continue working from home? Fragile people will have to stay at home for long periods? The effects of long term social distancing. What kind of broadband capability does the area have during this time of increased use? Would an urgent care facility be appropriate? A local shop or baker attracted into the village to create a community hub? Will restaurants and bars only open after we have a vaccine?</p>		