

Allensmore Neighbourhood Development Plan

Report for Parish Council 13th March 2020

Steering Group and meetings

Since the last Parish Council meeting, there have been no formal meetings of the Steering Group.

No changes to the Steering Group.

NDP Examination Stage

As reported at the last Parish Council meeting, The NDP has progressed to the Examination Stage and an external examiner, Ann Skippers, has been appointed.

We received a document containing questions from the examiner on 22nd February 2020. There were eight questions in all which were mainly clarifications and requests for up-to-date information on planning applications, commitments and completions. The Steering Group discussed the responses to the questions via email and phone, and submitted a document of responses to Herefordshire Council on 26th February for them to supplement a couple of answers and provide the most recent maps of planning applications, commitments and completions.

Herefordshire Council provided their response based on different dates and quoted a figure that we questioned. We provided our evidence to Herefordshire Council and requested them to make the correct figures clear to the examiner. We are still not sure that the final response from Herefordshire Council to the examiner was exactly correct and we were still questioning it last Tuesday 10th March. However, later on Tuesday 10th March, we received the confidential draft examiner's report for "fact checking". This report has been circulated to the Parish Council for information.

The examiner's report is very positive and she generally suggests changes that either clarify and/or strengthen our policies. There is one recommendation that we would like her to reconsider – that is to change our settlement boundaries to include the site behind Murrayfield in Cobhall Common. We intend to argue that the draft settlement boundaries deliberately exclude all double-depth dwellings (ie houses behind other houses) in order to preserve the linear character of all the settlements in our area. To include this site would be inconsistent and contrary to our draft Policy A4, which has already been used by the council to reject three applications since the examiner received the draft plan. These are:

- the development on the land behind Bramble Cottage in Allensmore
- two development sites near Cobhall House in Cobhall Common.

The Steering Group would like to ask the Parish Council if they support this argument.

Next Stage

Responses to the examiner's report are to be submitted by Tuesday 17th March. It is anticipated that the final report will be received from the examiner soon after. The final edit of the NDP will then be completed by us and the document submitted to Herefordshire Council for checking. Herefordshire Council will then organise the referendum which is expected to take place in April or May 2020.

Nick Chapman, 13th March 2020