

NOTES OF A REMOTE ORCOP NDP STEERING GROUP MEETING
on 3 June 2020

Present:

Margaret Serle – Chair

Peter Garratt

Barry Shaw

Dot Shaw

Graham Bowen

Margaret Bowen

Mick Murphy

Sam Banks – Herefordshire Council

Stephanie Kitto – Herefordshire Council

David Nicholson – Planning Consultant

David Nicholson opened the discussion by raising the issue of housing numbers by confirming the indicative target of 26 of which two have been built with a commitment of eight. This includes Newcastle Field which currently does not have planning permission, thereby leaving an overall requirement of 19. Given the windfall situation it may be necessary to allocate some sites to achieve 26. A “call for sites” exercise has been undertaken resulting in a spread across the parish but very few close to Orcop or Orcop Hill and it is necessary to consider all the available options.

Sam Banks explained that one option might involve replicating the approach adopted by Much Marcle where they considered settlements outside those included in the Core Strategy, with supporting evidence that a housing development in the main settlement area was not feasible. The examiner considered that this was a good local solution and passed the examination. Sam Banks also confirmed that Herefordshire Council would be content to consider any draft should the Steering Group decide to pursue this option. David Nicholson added that proximity to the existing Core Strategy settlements would be an issue. Sam Banks advised that sustainability to Orcop and Orcop Hill would be important when looking at possible sites outside the Core Strategy and added that if an alternative were promoted it would be prudent to define a settlement boundary for that area.

Sam Banks offered a second option involving redistributing the requirement to neighbouring parishes. It may be possible to argue for a reduction in Orcop’s proportional growth as parishes such as St Weonards have exceeded their proportional growth target by 40, but it would still be necessary to include a site allocation in the NDP.

David Nicholson referred to a third option which would involve the Parish Council in arguing that the housing target cannot be met. Sam Banks added that there are risks attached to this approach as the material weight of the NDP would be lower. For this reason, it was suggested that this should not be the preferred option. The first two options in combination would be the preferred approach.

Councillor Shaw commented that the parish of Orcop comprises single track lanes which could hinder settlements in other areas. Councillor Shaw also asked about potential windfall that may arise from the areas which emerged from the “call for sites” exercise. Sam Banks suggested that the Parish Council might wish to consider listing possible windfall sites as an appendix to the NDP, adding that all those offered will need to meet planning regulations.

Councillor Shaw raised the issue of poor drainage on Orcop Hill and suggested that the NDP includes a planning policy which insists on proper testing of drainage and no cess pool tanks. Sam Banks advised that any NDP draft policies, e.g. on drainage, would be referred to the Development Management teams. Sam Banks also advised against submitting policies which are too prescriptive especially around the issue of drainage. Mick Murphy added that compliance with Policy SD4 should prevent cess pits at Newcastle Farm. David Nicholson advised that, as SD4 allows for cess pits under “exceptional circumstances”, the NDP should define those circumstances without being too prescriptive.

The Chairman confirmed that the next steps will be the Housing Delivery report being produced by David Nicholson.

Mark Hearne
Clerk to Orcop Parish Council