

15 WESTON-UNDER-PENYARD PARISH PLAN**Report By: Forward Planning Manager****Wards Affected**

Penyard.

Purpose

To consider the Weston-under-Penyard Parish Plan for adoption as further planning guidance to the emerging Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

Background

The Government's White Paper 'Our Countryside, the Future' (2000) proposed that all rural communities should develop 'Town, Village and Parish Plans' to identify key facilities and services, to set out the problems that need to be tackled and to demonstrate how distinctive character and features could be preserved. Parish Plans form one of the four initiatives of the Vital Village programme. They should address the needs of the entire community and everyone in the parish should have an opportunity to take part in its preparation. Local Planning Authorities are encouraged to adopt the planning components of Parish Plans as supplementary planning documents.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 has recently come into force. It introduces a new system of development plans, which at local level will require Local Planning Authorities to replace UDP's (or local plans) with Local Development Frameworks (LDF's). Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's) will supplement policies and proposals in the LDF's and provide additional guidance to applicants and developers. Herefordshire Council is in the final stages of the production of the UDP. The next step will be to prepare a LDF in accordance with the requirements of the new Act. During this transitional period (UDP to LDF) Parish Plans are to be adopted as further planning guidance to the UDP, since old style supplementary planning guidance (SPG) can no longer be formally adopted. The further planning guidance should, however, be afforded the same weight by both the Herefordshire Council and the Government's planning Inspectors since it will be produced in the same way as former SPG.

Adoption by Herefordshire Council

Parish Plans will not have any statutory powers. They will however be a definitive statement about local character and issues. For a Parish Plan to be adopted as further planning guidance, it must be consistent with planning policy and prepared in wide consultation with the community and interested parties. Only elements of Plans relevant to land use and development can be adopted as further planning guidance.

Adoption will enable the Parish Council and local community to draw the attention of the Local Planning Authority and others to its context whenever it is pertinent to planning decisions within the village/parish. The Parish Plan will be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and be of assistance at their earlier compilation and pre-application stages.

Given the publication of the Revised Deposit Draft UDP, it is now more appropriate to consider, wherever possible, Parish Plans as further planning guidance against the emerging UDP rather than existing local plans, where they are broadly consistent with the UDP policies and to adopt them as such. The adoption of Parish Plans as further planning guidance, albeit in interim form, will confirm their status in the Council's overall planning policy framework and is in line with Government and Countryside Agency guidance and UDP policy.

This Parish Plan is the tenth to be presented to Members for consideration as further planning guidance.

Weston-under-Penyard Parish Plan

The Weston-under-Penyard Parish Plan was initiated by the Parish Council and subsequently a Parish Plan Steering Group was set up to develop the Parish Plan, which first met in September 2003. The steering group were advised and supported by the County Training Partnership in collaboration with the University of Gloucester. A two-pronged consultation process of engagement with parishioners was undertaken, using a Planning for Real® event and conducting a parish survey in the form of a questionnaire, in addition to holding public meetings. Also, the younger members of the parish were invited to enter an essay competition about their aspirations for Weston. The final version of the Parish Plan has been produced following consultations with the Herefordshire Council's key contacts and the Countryside Agency.

The main objectives of the Weston-under-Penyard Parish Plan are:

- To provide research-based evidence in support of future bids and applications;
- To enable the local community to participate actively in managing their affairs.

Chapter 4, Section 1 of the Parish Plan - Housing Development and Planning – is the part of the plan dealing specifically with land use planning issues and it is primarily this section which is to be considered for adoption as further planning guidance to the UDP by the Herefordshire Council. Its purpose is to show how the policies of the Herefordshire UDP can best be applied to Weston parish.

The section on Housing Development and Planning discusses how residential development has taken place across the parish over recent years and how the UDP will guide development in the future, together with the desires and needs expressed by the local community on new housing for the area. In addition, issues relating to housing design and layout and open spaces are specifically dealt with, and an action plan is set out.

The Housing Development and Planning section of the Weston-under-Penyard Parish Plan conforms to the emerging UDP and contains sufficient detail to be used as a material consideration in planning decisions and issues.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT It be recommended to the Cabinet Member (Environment) that the planning elements of the Weston-under-Penyard Parish Plan be adopted as further planning guidance as an expression of local distinctiveness and community participation.

Background paper

Weston-under-Penyard Parish Plan