

October 7th 2013

Planning Colwall's Future; Meeting; October 10th 2013

Colwall has been defined as a Growth Village as it is well connected by public transport and has good facilities (shop, school, village hall, church, bus service) meaning it will be a preferred location for housing¹. **Currently 119 houses are predicted as the minimum allocation for Colwall².**

The community through its Neighbourhood Plan can decide where these should go.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), is a draft document published for consultation and not binding as yet in planning terms. It is available on the Council website. It has allocated two main sites for the housing

1. The field behind the Village Hall (O Col 007 on the SHLAA) on its east and north, circa 50 houses allocated
2. The field south of Walwyn Road, opposite the Thai Restaurant for 20 houses (P321 on SHLAA). This site currently has a Planning Application on it, for 12 houses (132321/F)

Personally I would be sad to see O Col OO7 the Village Hall field developed. The rural location and outlook of this part of Colwall is enjoyed by all the people who visit the Cricket Field for the many events, by walkers and cyclists and by the many people who use the Village Hall. The view is important for the village, as are the footpaths. The shape and outlook of the field draws the eye north, giving a sense of open countryside, inspiring you to walk or run towards the hills beyond. It would be a pity to lose this setting.

I think better sites can be found near to the current Settlement Boundary. I am happy to suggest these but will wait until the landscape presentation on October 10th.

Sites with current applications

Sites that have current planning permissions should be included in the housing allocation given to Colwall. The most important is

- The Water Works site, it should be included in the new allocated housing, not as an add on extra; **27** houses
- 'Windfall' houses, additional houses within the village settlement boundary; **20** houses

The field opposite the Thai Restaurant (P321 on SHLAA, **currently planning application 132321/F**) lies outside the current Settlement Boundary. It should be refused now, but if included in future within the settlement boundary it should be part of the new allocated housing, not as an add on extra; **20** houses

¹ See

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/5358051/Rural_Settlement_Hierarchy_Paper_November_2010%283%29.pdf with Colwall the highest number of points and

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/435778/place_shaping.pdf, fig 4.2

²The 119 figure comes from the Rural Allocation of houses in the Core Strategy and the number of points allocated to Colwall in the Settlement Hierarchy Paper. See piece written by Cllr Liz Harvey, following Cabinet Meeting on the Core Strategy <http://www.itsourcounty.org/blog/2491-housing-quotas-imposed-on-villages/>

Type of houses to be built

The quality of design and building materials of new build means everything for its integration into the landscape. Trees, hedges and paths should be specified in the design, tile roofs, good quality brick, wooden fences should be incorporated into the plans.

A large number of the new builds should be for one and two people households because this is what the demand for housing requires now³. It means, possibly, a higher housing density (50 to 70 dwellings per hectare) is possible.

Neighbourhood Plan and Settlement Boundary:

It is important to **state clearly** places within the Settlement Boundary that the village definitely **do NOT want building**, because unless stated, anywhere within the Settlement Boundary is a potential building site:

Currently the Village Green, Cricket Field and area surrounding the cricket field are outside the village settlement boundary, but if the settlement boundary *is* moved it is important to state clearly where no development should happen.

For example, the following to be protected

- Village Green
- Cricket Field and surroundings
- The Village Hall field O Col 007, important for views and setting
- O Col 003 Redland Drive, which is a Nature Reserve
- School playing fields and grounds, for their high quality environment

³The Worcestershire Demographic Report 2011 ed M Rice, Worcester City Council, predicts that the number of One person households in the county is projected to rise in the 2011-2030 and will account for 80% of the increase in households in the plan period. This rise is similar to that of Herefordshire, see https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/5759863/draft_lhma_report_05_02_13.pdf . Though one and two person households may want to buy bigger houses, there will always be a rent and home ownership market for one and two person dwellings.