

Appendix F

Dorstone Parish – Parish Planning Guidance

Introduction

The development and implementation of Planning and Conservation policy, as it applies in Dorstone Parish, rests with Herefordshire County Council Planning Department. These policies are presently contained in the Herefordshire Unitary Development Policy, (UDP adopted in 2007) and in due course this will be replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF). This document sets out to augment these policies reflecting the views of Parishioners, as expressed in the Questionnaire, and the Parish Council, with regard to the nature and scale of future development(s) in the Village and surrounding countryside. This Parish Planning document will be used by the Parish Council to guide their recommendations on Planning Applications submitted to them, as part of the Planning consultation process.

This document does not set out to be a definitive guide to Planning and Conservation issues in the Parish. For detailed guidance, contact should be made with the Planning Department of Herefordshire Council or by using its web site.

Key Features of the Unitary Development Policy as applied to Dorstone Parish

The Unitary Development Plan is a substantial document and no attempt is made here to repeat all aspects of the Plan as it applies to Dorstone and individual planning applications. However there are certain key points of context which are summarised below and are worthy of repetition.

1. Dorstone has been classified as a smaller settlement in terms of Housing development. Policy H6 therefore states that:- “proposals for residential development on plots arising from the infilling of small gaps between existing dwellings within the settlement will be permitted where:-
2. the dwelling is limited to a habitable living space of 90sq.metres (bedroom house) or 100 sq. metres (4 bedroom house)
3. the plot size is limited to a maximum area of 350 sq. metres and
4. the infill gap is no more than 30 metres frontage.
5. Proposals for housing development outside smaller settlements such as Dorstone will not be permitted unless they comply with certain conditions laid down in Policy Number H7 of the UDP. Key clauses of this policy, in terms of relevance to Dorstone, are that housing development will not be permitted unless:-
 - i the development is clearly necessary in connection with agriculture or forestry and complies with policy H8.
 - ii it is a necessary accompaniment to the establishment or growth of a rural enterprise.
 - iii It results from the re-use of a rural building

- iv it is a replacement for an existing building
 - v it is an extension to an existing dwelling
 - vi it is a rural exception housing such as affordable housing/
6. Policy DR1 Design of the UDP lays down certain minimum criteria with which all developments should comply. In relation to Dorstone, which includes a Conservation Area, it is particularly important to note that all developments will be required to
- i “promote or re-inforce the distinctive character and appearance of the locality in terms of layout, density, means of access and enclosure, scale, mass, height, design and materials” .
 - ii “retain and where possible incorporate existing site features contributing to the quality of the local environment, including landscape, historic and natural elements such as wildlife habitats and species.
 - iii “respect the context of the site, taking into account townscape and landscape character and topography, including the impact of the proposal on urban vistas, longer distance views and ridgelines”.

Future Housing Development

The response in the questionnaire, supports the view set out in the UDP, that any future housing development should comprise small infill developments within the Village, supported by 73%. Similarly 72% of the replies were opposed to any developments involving 6-15 homes. Small developments of up to 3 homes were also supported by 65%. Support for developments beyond the Conservation Area was evenly divided.

Therefore in considering new Planning Applications the Parish Council will take the following factors into account:-

1. The size of the development, favouring individual or development of 3 homes or less, taking a close and critical view of developments of 3-5 homes and opposing larger developments of 6 homes or more.
2. Any developments outside the Conservation area will be carefully considered in line with Policy H7 referred to previously, but will give detailed attention to the impact on both the Village and surrounding landscape.
3. Very careful and critical consideration will be given to any developments which lead to a significant loss of open spaces immediately adjacent to and within the conservation area.
4. Planning applications will be equally welcome for proposals involving privately owned homes, privately rented housing, older person’s housing, low cost housing for outright sale, housing association and shared ownerships.

Building Style

The Parish Council's view on future developments will reflect the response that 93% of respondents thought that it was important the new buildings matched the existing styles of surrounding buildings. It is recognised that there is no predominant style of building throughout the Parish but in considering any new application strong emphasis will be placed by the Council of the styles of adjacent buildings. Proposals for building extensions should also be in keeping with existing and adjacent buildings. The impact on the landscape of new buildings will also be taken into account.

The Parish Council appreciates that the use of building materials is sometimes an issue of individual preference, design and cost. However, in so far as possible, support for individual schemes will be given for new buildings which incorporate some or all of the following materials:-

- ★ Use of stone, either in terms of total or partial use (rendered with stone edging).
- ★ Slate roofing tiles
- ★ Wooden window frames
- ★ Use of wood cladding
- ★ Rendered finish
- ★ Clay and concrete roofing tiles.

All these materials were supported by a majority of respondents in the questionnaire.

Whilst it is unable to stipulate that other forms of materials cannot be used the Parish Council will give detailed and critical consideration to applications which involve, brick construction, aluminium window frames, and UPVC frames. In the questionnaire the use of these materials was opposed by a clear majority of respondents. In considering future applications the Parish Council welcomes innovative quality designs which incorporate the preferred building materials

Conservation Area Boundaries/Rules

The conservation area boundary is shown in the attached Map of the Village. There is no settlement boundary as such, although the Parish Council considers that the Conservation area boundary should be considered the settlement boundary and that applications outside this area should be governed by UDP policy H7 referred to above.

Conservation Areas are defined by central Government as “areas that include important examples of our social, cultural and aesthetic history that must be safeguarded from indiscriminate or ill considered change. However, it is not always enough to protect these building in isolation. Their surroundings and general environment are often of equal important and conservation areas are intended to protect that environment. We have a responsibility to ensure that the character of these issues is not diminished in our lifetime.” [Directgov – home and community website]. The Dorstone Parish Council agrees with this statement and has in the past and continues to take its responsibility for the Conservation Area very seriously.

Detailed rules governing Conservation Areas are contained on both UK Government and Herefordshire web sites. The following is a short summary of some important rules as they apply to the Dorstone Conservation Area;

1. Conservation Area consent is required for the demolition in whole or part of most buildings and structures, including walls and outhouses. An exception to this rule is that consent is not required to demolish a building which does not exceed 115 cubic metres or take down a wall, gate or fence which is less than one metre high where abutting a highway or less than 2 metres elsewhere.
2. Six weeks notice must be given to Herefordshire Council before work is carried out to fell, lop or top or uproot certain trees. Tree Preservation orders, of which there are ? in Dorstone, involve additional restrictions.
3. The siting of a satellite dish on the chimney stack or on the roof or elevation fronting the road requires consent of the Council
4. Alterations to roofs and cladding of building proposals to change the profile of a roof, for example with the provision of a dormer window or to clad a building with a different material require consent from Herefordshire Council.
5. The size of residential extensions which may be carried out without the need for planning permission is also reduced. For example no permitted development for rear extensions of more than one storey and no side extensions are allowed. Restrictions also apply to roof extensions.
6. Rules relating to outbuildings, for example sheds, greenhouses and garages are more restrictive in the Conservation area. For example such buildings sited at the side of properties will require planning permission.

It is strongly recommended that Herefordshire Council's conservation team is consulted if consideration is being given to changes involving the above.

In addition to the above there are 10 sites/buildings which are Grade II buildings within the conservation area:-

- ★ Barn around 15metres south of Bridge Cottage
- ★ The Court House
- ★ Church of St. Faith Grade 2*
- ★ Jones Memorial (in churchyard)
- ★ Morris Memorial (in Churchyard)
- ★ Dorstone Court
- ★ Cowhouse about 20m east of Great House Farm
- ★ Cart Shed about 10m east of great House Farm
- ★ Cross Shaft and Sundial (formerly listed as Village Cross)
- ★ The School House

Grade 2 are buildings of special interest, warranting every effort being made to preserve them. Grade 2* (St Faiths) are regarded as being particularly important and of more than special interest. Listed buildings are subject to Listed Building Control which applies to the building in its entirety, meaning that both exterior and interior are protected.

Consultation on Planning Matters

Dorstone Parish Council has made every attempt in the past to consult on Planning Applications with neighbouring properties. This is carried out by Parish Councillors contacting and discussing any proposal with those immediately affected by an Application. Recognising that there is considerable interest in planning matters within the Parish the following additional methods of consultation are proposed:-

1. Listing Planning applications on the Dorstone Web site with links to the Herefordshire Council web site where the full application can be viewed.
2. Maintaining a list of Planning applications in the Dorstone Front Room, where the full application can be viewed on line using the DFR Computer. Help will be provided for those unfamiliar with using a computer.
3. Reporting back via the Dorstone web site on the results of Planning Applications as reported to the Parish Council.
4. As now a designated Councillor(s) will be responsible for consulting with neighbouring properties. In addition that Councillor(s) will monitor the progress of the application, with the Clerk, and report back to neighbouring properties and to the Parish Council, any important issues which arise as the Planning Application is processed by Herefordshire Council.

Housing Needs

Further consideration has been given to the identification of future housing needs within the Parish. Given that the issue of housing needs is an important feature of the proposed Local Development Framework, it is considered that any further local work on this issue is postponed until the rural policy elements of the LDF are more fully developed.

Working with Herefordshire Council Planning Department

The Parish Council wishes to establish a positive relationship with both the District Councillor for Golden Valley North, and Herefordshire Planning Department staff in order to be able to influence decisions made about planning applications. The Parish Council hopes that these guidelines will form the successful basis of that relationship.

April 19th 2010