

# Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Plan

Site Assessment and Options - Addendum

Stoke Lacy Parish Council

November 2021

## Quality information

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## Abbreviations used in the report

### Abbreviation

DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
dph	Dwellings per hectare
Ha	Hectare
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
QB	Qualifying Body

### Disclaimer

This document is intended to aid the preparation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NP) and can be used to guide decision making, and, if the Qualifying Body (QB) chooses, as evidence to support draft Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is not a neighbourhood plan policy document. It is a 'snapshot' in time and may become superseded by more recent information. The QB is not bound to accept its conclusions. If landowners or any other party can demonstrate that any of the evidence presented herein is inaccurate or out of date, such evidence can be presented to the QB at the consultation stage. Where evidence is presented that conflicts with this report, the QB should seek advice from the Local Planning Authority in deciding how to take new information into account in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. An explanation and justification for all decision making should be documented and submitted with the draft Neighbourhood Plan, together with supporting evidence.

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# Executive Summary

This addendum follows a previous Site Options and Assessment report produced by AECOM on behalf of Stoke Lacy Parish Council in January 2021 (updated in February 2021 following site-specific comments from Herefordshire Council). The January 2021 report assessed 12 sites and provided recommendations on their potential suitability for allocation in the Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Plan.

Since the publication of the January 2021 report, an additional site has become available and has been promoted to the Town Council for possible inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. The site has been promoted for residential development. In order to ensure that all site options have been considered before land is allocated for development in the revised Neighbourhood Plan, Stoke Lacy Parish Council has requested this new site is assessed using the approach employed in the January 2021 report. This allows for a direct comparison with the 12 sites previously assessed.

The addendum concludes that the site is unsuitable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan due to the impact of development on the character of the settlement, the adverse impact on locally important views and landscape character, and the potential for harm to the setting of listed buildings.

This means that of the 13 sites identified for potential allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan, one site is considered suitable for allocation, four are potentially suitable subject to identified constraints being addressed, and the remaining eight sites are unsuitable for allocation.

The information contained in this addendum is intended to assist Stoke Lacy Parish Council in the selection of appropriate sites for allocation, in line with the Local Plan and the objectives of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. It should be read in conjunction with the conclusions of the January 2021 report and can be used by the Parish Council to inform further engagement with the local community, landowners, developers, and the Local Planning Authority.

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent site appraisal for the Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of Stoke Lacy Parish Council. The work undertaken was agreed with the Parish Council and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) as part of the national Neighbourhood Planning Technical Support Programme led by Locality.
- 1.2 The Parish Council is in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) which will cover the whole of Stoke Lacy Parish. The NP is being prepared in the context of the adopted Herefordshire Core Strategy (adopted October 2015) and the emerging Rural Site Allocations Development Plans Document (2017). Stoke Lacy Parish Council seeks to identify sites which are potentially suitable for allocation in the NP to help ensure that development within the parish preserves the rural character of the neighbourhood area.
- 1.3 There is currently no defined housing requirement which needs to be met through the NP, although Herefordshire Council encourages those involved in Neighbourhood Planning to plan positively for growth. The draft NP<sup>1</sup> objectives include ensuring that there is sufficient housing to meet the needs of local residents and support a sustainable community, and the draft plan sets out support for the delivery of up to 10 new homes over the plan period to 2031.
- 1.4 The Parish Council previously received Technical Support from AECOM in the form of a Site Options and Assessment report<sup>2</sup> which looked at 12 sites in the neighbourhood area which had been promoted through the NP Call for Sites process. The report, prepared in January 2021<sup>3</sup>, provided recommendations on their potential suitability for allocation in the NP and concluded that one site was suitable for allocation for residential development, a further three were potentially suitable for residential development subject to the mitigation of identified constraints and/or consultation with Herefordshire Council, and a fifth site was considered to be potentially suitable for allocation for employment use. The remaining seven sites were found to be unsuitable for allocation due to significant development constraints.
- 1.5 Since the AECOM report was produced, a further site has become available and has been promoted to the Parish Council for possible inclusion in the NP. In order that the final selection of sites allocated in the NP is robust and defensible, Stoke Lacy Parish Council has requested that this site is assessed according to the same methodology used in the previous assessment. This report should be viewed as an addendum to the January 2021 report, and its conclusions used in conjunction with the earlier report to inform the final choice of sites to be allocated.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://stokelacyparishcouncil.org.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> Available at <https://www.stokelacy.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/210210-Stoke-Lacy-Neighbourhood-Plan-Site-Options-and-Assessment-Final-Report-1.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> The January 2021 report was revised in February 2021 to incorporate feedback from Herefordshire Council on the suitability of access to two sites. This additional information resulted in those sites (Site 7 and Site 12) being considered unsuitable for allocation.

## 2. Methodology

- 2.1 The site assessment methodology used in this report is the same as that employed in the January 2021 AECOM report to ensure consistency between the conclusions of the earlier report and the assessment of the new site which has been promoted to the Parish Council.
- 2.2 As with the 12 sites previously assessed, a detailed site assessment was prepared to identify physical, environmental and policy constraints. The results of this assessment are presented in the pro-forma at **Appendix A**.



## 3. Policy Context

- 3.1 The NP policies and allocations must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan, and it is recommended that consideration is given to the direction of travel of the emerging development plan so that policies are not superseded by a newly adopted Local Plan. A policy review was carried out for the January 2021 site assessment report. This has been revisited to ensure that the policy context for the NP remains the same.
- 3.2 A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021<sup>4</sup>. This replaces the 2019 version which was reviewed for the January 2021 site assessment report. The principal changes relate to design quality, environmental protections, sustainability, and active travel, but modifications have been made throughout the NPPF and as a result many of the paragraph numbers referred to in the previous report have changed.
- 3.3 There has been no change to the Herefordshire Local Plan since the earlier report was produced, and the key document making up the adopted statutory development plan for Herefordshire remains the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031 (adopted 2015)<sup>5</sup>. No further documents have been published in relation to the Rural Areas Site Allocations Document since the consultation on issues and options in June-July 2017<sup>6</sup>.
- 3.4 There has been no material change to either local or national policy which would affect the conclusions of the January 2021 report, and the supporting evidence base, including the Landscape Character Assessment, has not been updated in the interim period. Therefore, the policy review in the January 2021 report remains relevant to the assessment of the new site.
- 3.5 For ease of reference, a list of the applicable policies from the NPPF and the Core Strategy is provided below, including details of updated NPPF paragraph numbers and, where applicable, revised policy wording (indicated with underlined text). Full details of the individual policies can be found in the January 2021 site assessment report<sup>7</sup>.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 3.6 The following NPPF paragraphs are of particular relevance to this site assessment:
- **Paragraph 14** remains unchanged.
  - **Paragraph 70** (previously Paragraph 69) has been amended to state that neighbourhood planning groups should give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium sized sites (i.e. sites of no

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<sup>4</sup> Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

<sup>5</sup> Available at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan-1/local-plan-core-strategy/2>

<sup>6</sup> Available at <https://consultations.herefordshire.gov.uk/news/article/43/rural-areas-site-allocation-plan-document-rasa-dpd-issues-and-options-consultation>

<sup>7</sup> Available at <https://www.stokelacy.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/210210-Stoke-Lacy-Neighbourhood-Plan-Site-Options-and-Assessment-Final-Report-1.pdf>

more than one hectare, consistent with paragraph 69a) suitable for housing in their area.

- **Paragraph 78** remains unchanged, but has been amalgamated into a single paragraph with the former Paragraph 77.
- **Paragraph 79** remains the same with the exception of a minor change from 'residential dwelling' to 'residential building' in sub-paragraph d).
- **Paragraph 120** (previously Paragraph 118) remains unchanged.
- **Paragraph 174** (previously Paragraph 170) remains unchanged.
- **Paragraph 175** (previously Paragraph 171) remains unchanged.
- **Paragraph 190** (previously Paragraph 185) remains unchanged.
- **Paragraph 199** (previously Paragraph 173) remains unchanged.
- **Paragraph 206** (previously Paragraph 200) remains unchanged.

## Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (2015)

3.15 The following policies from the Core Strategy are of particular relevance to this site assessment:

- **Policy SS1** – Presumption in favour sustainable development.
- **Policy SS2** – Delivering New Homes
- **Policy SS6** – Environmental quality and local distinctiveness
- **Policy RA1** – Rural housing distribution
- **Policy RA2** – Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns
- **Policy RA3** – Herefordshire's countryside
- **Policy RA5** – Re-use of rural buildings
- **Policy H1** – Affordable Housing
- **Policy H2** – Rural exception sites
- **Policy LD1** – Landscape and townscape
- **Policy LD2** – Biodiversity and geodiversity
- **Policy LD3** – Green infrastructure
- **Policy LD4** – Historic environment and heritage assets
- **Policy SD1** – Sustainable design and energy efficiency

## 4. Site Assessment

- 4.1 The site to be considered through this site appraisal was promoted independently to Stoke Lacy Parish Council following the production of AECOM's January 2021 report. The location of the new site (Site 13) is shown in **Figure 4-1**. This map also shows the location of the twelve sites assessed in the January 2021. **Figure 4-2** provides a more detailed map of the sites.
- 4.2 The site has not been previously assessed either by AECOM or by Herefordshire Council. It has therefore been appraised using the detailed site proforma in **Appendix A**, allowing for a consistent comparison of all thirteen sites.
- 4.3 **Table 4-1** summarises the information in the proforma, indicating whether the site is appropriate for allocation in the NP. The final column in the table uses the same 'traffic light' rating used in the January 2021 report, with **Red** indicating the site is not appropriate for allocation, **Green** indicating the site is appropriate for allocation, and **Amber** indicating the site may be appropriate for allocation through the NP if certain issues can be resolved or constraints mitigated.
- 4.4 Site 13 is considered to be unsuitable for allocation due to the potential impact of development on the character of the settlement, the adverse impact on locally important views and landscape character, and the potential for harm to the setting of listed buildings.
- 4.5 **Figure 4-3** shows the suitability ratings of all 13 sites assessed in the January 2021 report and this addendum.

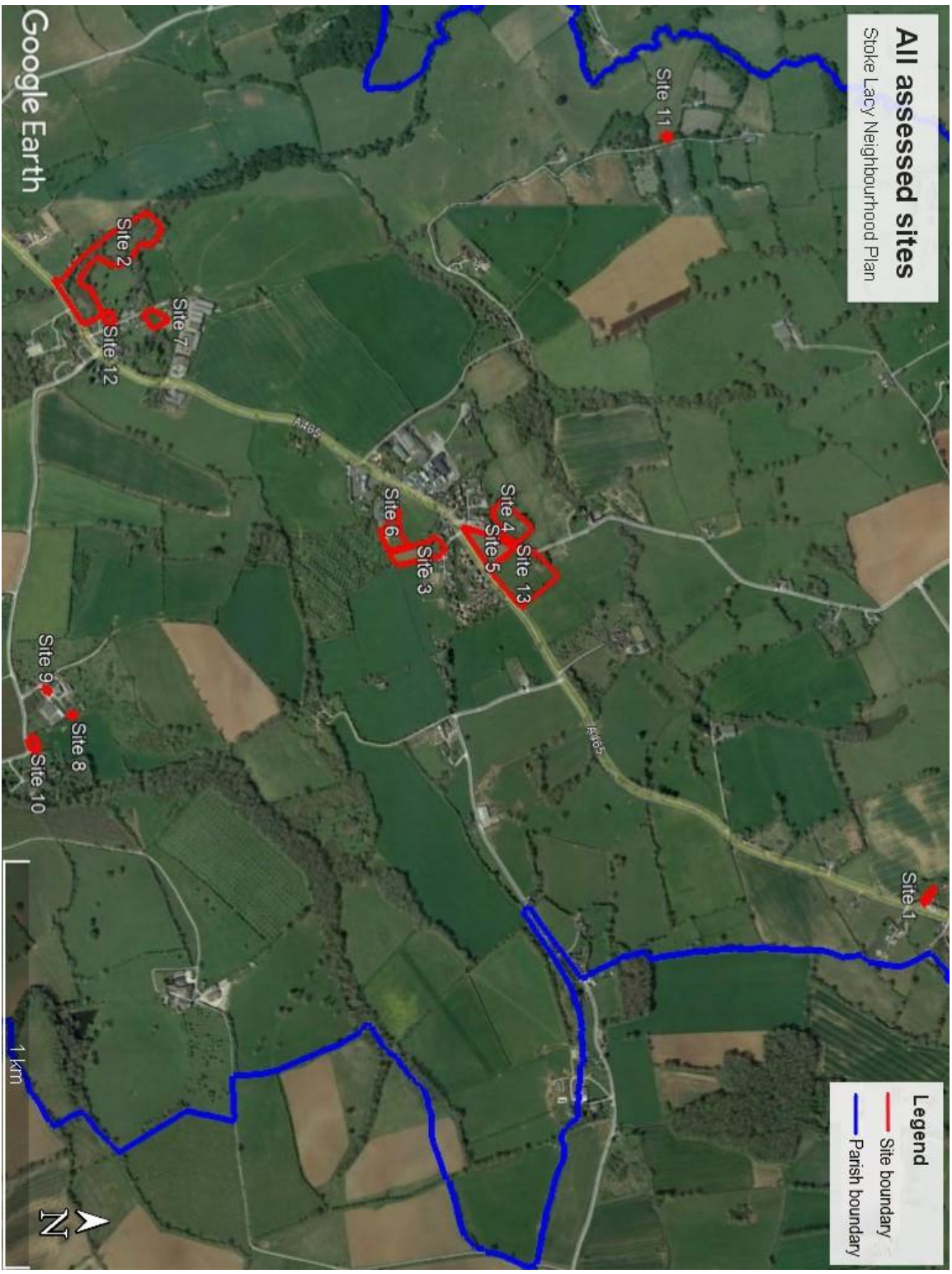


Figure 4.1 Map of assessed sites





Figure 4.2 Map of sites assessed in Stoke Cross

**Table 4.1: Site Assessment Summary**

<b>Site Ref.</b>	<b>Location/ description</b>	<b>Site area</b>	<b>Current land use</b>	<b>Site Capacity (Dwellings)</b>	<b>Proposed use</b>	<b>Summary of Assessment</b>	<b>Assessment of suitability for allocation</b>
13	Land north of A465/ south of C1116, Stoke Cross	1.3 (ha)	Agricultural field	N/A	Residential	<p>The site is a field (Grade 2 agricultural land) which is currently in agricultural use, but which is available for development.</p> <p>The existing access from the C1116, a narrow single-track lane, is unsuitable for servicing new residential development. Access could be created from the A465, which would require the removal of hedgerow. There is no suitable pedestrian access. It may be possible to extend the footway which runs along the A465 to Woodland View on the southern side of the road, but this would require additional land.</p> <p>There are limited facilities in the settlement of Stoke Cross, apart from a pub and village hall. A regular bus service from Hereford to Bromyard runs in close proximity to the site, although there is no pedestrian link to the bus stops.</p> <p>While hedgerows provide screening along the southern and western boundary, the site's northern and eastern boundaries are open to the larger field in which it sits. Any development would therefore be quite prominent, particularly given the sloping nature of the site which exposes it to long-range views. There is a Key Public View (draft NP Policy SL1) looking north across the site from Woodland View (also known locally as Newlands), and residential development on the majority of the site is likely to have an adverse impact on this view, triggering the need</p>	<b>Assessment of suitability for allocation</b>

for a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment under the draft policy.

The setting of the group of Grade II listed buildings at Hall Place Farm would also be adversely affected by development of the site as their relationship with the surrounding agricultural landscape would be altered. The site contains a set of earthworks (the remains of a probable medieval motte) in the north-western corner, adjacent to the existing access. Archaeological surveys may be required before any development could take place. While this is unlikely to be a major constraint on development, since construction could avoid this part of the site, consultation with the heritage/archaeological officer is recommended.

The site is opposite a recent residential development at Woodland View, but is separated from the rest of the settlement by the field to the west. If developed, it would create an uncharacteristic extension into the open countryside and would begin to encroach on the isolated farmstead to the north-east. The site lies outside the settlement boundary proposed in the draft NP. If this settlement boundary is retained in the made NP, proposals would need to meet the criteria set out in Core Strategy policies RA3 and H2, which restrict the type of development which would be acceptable in this location.

Permission was granted in 2017 for a part-earth dwelling on land immediately adjacent to the site, although this does not appear to have been implemented and may have lapsed.

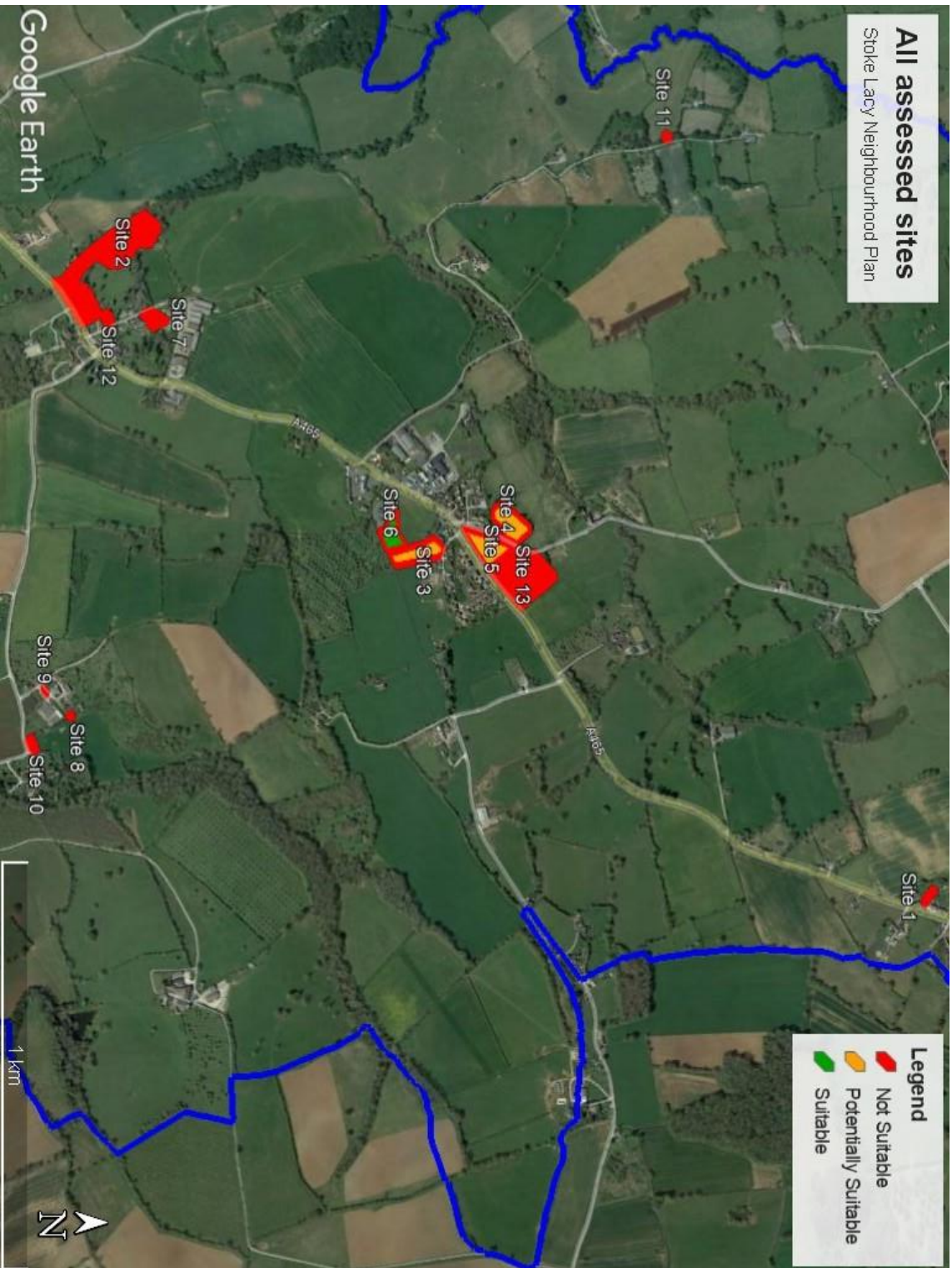
While this may indicate that the principle of development is acceptable on Site 13, the approved scheme was sited immediately north of the earthworks, further downhill and in a less open part of the field. This is likely to have led to a

reduced impact on landscape character, whereas Site 13 lies at the top of the slope and is therefore more visible from further afield.

The site is considered unsuitable for development given the potential impact on landscape, heritage assets, locally important views and settlement character.







**Figure 4.3 Map of all assessed sites with suitability rating**

## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Stoke Lacy Parish Council is considering options for potential allocation in the NP for residential and employment use. Following a call for sites in 2020 which resulted in 12 sites being promoted for allocation, a site assessment report was produced in January 2021 which provided recommendations on the suitability for development of those sites.
- 5.2 Since the January 2021 report was published, a new site has become available and has been promoted to the Parish Council. In order to ensure that all known available sites are considered equally before any decisions are taken on site allocations, a further assessment was commissioned so that the new site could be appraised using the same methodology as the January 2021 report.
- 5.3 This assessment concludes that the new site (Site 13) is unsuitable for development due to the potential impact of development on the character of the settlement, the adverse impact on locally important views and landscape character, and the potential for harm to the setting of listed buildings.
- 5.4 Therefore, of the 13 sites assessed in the original report and this addendum, one site is considered to be suitable for development (Site 6) and a further four sites (Sites 3, 4, 5 and 9) are considered to be potentially suitable, subject to identified constraints being addressed. Of these five sites, four are being promoted for residential development and one (Site 9) is being promoted for employment use.
- 5.5 The remaining 8 sites are considered unsuitable for development.

### Affordable Housing

- 5.6 Four of the 13 sites considered in the January 2021 report and this addendum are suitable or potentially suitable for allocation for housing or mixed-use development. One of these sites (Site 5) has the potential to accommodate 10 or more dwellings and could be required to include a proportion of affordable housing depending on the thresholds for provision of affordable housing in your area<sup>8</sup>. It is therefore potentially suitable for Discounted Market Housing (e.g. First Homes<sup>9</sup>), affordable housing for rent, or other affordable housing types (see NPPF Annex 2). The proportion of affordable housing is usually set by the Local Plan but is expected to be above 10%, unless the proposed development meets the exemptions set out in NPPF para 65.
- 5.7 The requirement for Affordable Housing provision on sites proposed for allocation in the NP should be discussed with the Local Planning Authority (usually the neighbourhood planning officer) to understand the specific requirements for the sites proposed for allocation.

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<sup>8</sup> See NPPF paragraphs 63-65.

<sup>9</sup> The Government recently consulted on the First Homes Policy and a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions will need to be first homes. You can find out more here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>.

## Next Steps

5.8 From the shortlist of potentially suitable sites, Stoke Lacy Parish Council should engage with Herefordshire Council and the community to select sites for allocation in the NP which best meet community needs and plan objectives.

5.9 The site selection process should be based on the following:

- The findings of the January 2021 site assessment report and this addendum;
- Discussions with the planning authority;
- The extent to which the sites support the vision and objectives for the NP;
- The potential for the sites to meet the identified infrastructure needs of the community;
- Engagement with key stakeholders; and
- NP conformity with strategic Local Plan policy.

## Viability

5.10 The Parish Council should be able to demonstrate that any sites allocated in the NP are viable for development, i.e. that they are financially profitable for the developer. It is recommended that the Parish Council discusses site viability with Herefordshire Council. It is further suggested that any landowner or developer promoting a site for development should be contacted to request evidence of viability, e.g. a site financial viability appraisal.

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# Appendix A Individual Site Assessments

# Site 13

## 1. Site Details

<b>Site Reference / Name</b>	Site 13
<b>Site Address / Location</b>	Land north of A465/south of C1116, Stoke Cross
<b>Gross Site Area (Hectares)</b>	2.31
<b>SHLAA/SHELAA Reference (if applicable)</b>	N/A
<b>Existing land use</b>	Agricultural
<b>Land use being considered</b>	Housing
<b>Development Capacity (Proposed by Landowner or SHLAA/HELAA)</b>	Unknown – no information in site submission document
<b>Site identification method / source</b>	Promoted following Call for Sites consultation
<b>Planning history</b>	P163658/F - new-build part earth dwelling with submerged garage. Approved with conditions May 2017. Approval follows refusal in June 2016 for similar scheme on a smaller part of the site (P152759/F). The new dwelling was to be constructed on land outside the boundary of Site 13, but the application site boundary includes the entirety of Site 13.
<b>Neighbouring uses</b>	Agricultural fields, residential (on opposite side of A465)





## 2. Assessment of Suitability

### Environmental Constraints

<p><b>Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following statutory environmental designations:</b></p> <p><i>Yes / No / partly or adjacent</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient Woodland</li> <li>• Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</li> <li>• Biosphere Reserve</li> <li>• Local Nature Reserve (LNR)</li> <li>• National Nature Reserve (NNR)</li> <li>• National Park</li> <li>• Ramsar Site</li> <li>• Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)*</li> <li>• Special Area of Conservation (SAC)</li> <li>• Special Protection Area (SPA)</li> </ul> <p><i>*Does the site fall within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone and would the proposed use/development trigger the requirement to consult Natural England?</i></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to the following non statutory environmental designations:</b></p> <p><i>Yes / No / partly or adjacent / Unknown</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Infrastructure Corridor</li> <li>• Local Wildlife Site (LWS)</li> <li>• Public Open Space</li> <li>• Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)</li> <li>• Nature Improvement Area</li> <li>• Regionally Important Geological Site</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>	<p><b>No</b></p>

**2. Assessment of Suitability**

<p><b>Site is predominantly, or wholly, within Flood Zones 2 or 3?</b>                  See guidance notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flood Zone 1: <i>Low Risk</i></li> <li>• Flood Zone 2: <i>Medium Risk</i></li> <li>• Flood Zone 3 (less or more vulnerable site use): <i>Medium Risk</i></li> <li>• Flood Zone 3 (highly vulnerable site use): <i>High Risk</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Low Risk</b></p>
<p><b>Site is at risk of surface water flooding?</b>                  See guidance notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less than 15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – <i>Low Risk</i></li> <li>• &gt;15% of the site is affected by medium or high risk of surface water flooding – <i>Medium Risk</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Low Risk. There is no surface water flood risk on the site itself, but there are parts of the unnamed road (C1116) to the northwest of the site which are at risk of flooding.</i></p>
<p><b>Is the land classified as the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 or 3a)?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p><b>Yes. Grade 2</b></p>
<p><b>Site contains habitats with the potential to support priority species? Does the site contain local wildlife-rich habitats? Is the site part of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK BAP Priority Habitat;</li> <li>• a wider ecological network (including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity);</li> <li>• wildlife corridors (and stepping stones that connect them); and/or</li> <li>• an area identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation?</li> </ul> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p><b>Yes. The site is within Network Enhancement Zone 1, which connects primary habitats and may be suitable for creation of the primary habitat.</b></p>
<p><b>Site is predominantly, or wholly, within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>

**2. Assessment of Suitability**

**Physical Constraints**

<p><b>Is the site:</b>  <i>Flat or relatively flat / Gently sloping or uneven / Steeply sloping</i></p>	<p>Gently sloping or uneven. The site slopes downwards towards the west, with a noticeable change in level between the eastern and western edges of the site.</p>
<p><b>Is there existing vehicle access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Unknown. There is existing access in the north west corner of the site from the unnamed road (C1116), but this is unlikely to be suitable to service residential development as the road is a narrow single-lane road. There are also earthworks at the entrance with potential archaeological value which may prevent widening of the access. Access could be created directly from the A465 with the removal of part of the hedgerow.</p>
<p><b>Is there existing pedestrian access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No. There is no footway along the A465 leading to the site, and to create one would require additional land outside the site boundary. It may be possible to extend the footway on the opposite side of the A465 which serves Woodland View, but a crossing point would need to be provided.</p>
<p><b>Is there existing cycle access to the site, or potential to create suitable access?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes. There is potential to create access from either the A465 or the unnamed road (C1116), but there are no dedicated cycle lanes.</p>
<p><b>Are there any Public Rights of Way (PRoW) crossing the site?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>Are there any known Tree Preservation Orders on the site?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>Are there veteran/ancient trees within or adjacent to the site?</b>  <i>Within / Adjacent / No / Unknown</i></p>	



## 2. Assessment of Suitability

<p><b>Are there other significant trees within or adjacent to the site?</b>  <i>Within / Adjacent / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Unknown. There are a number of mature trees on the site boundary, notably in the northwestern corner of the site</p>
<p><b>Is the site likely to be affected by ground contamination?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No. The site is an agricultural field with no previous development.</p>
<p><b>Is there any utilities infrastructure crossing the site i.e. power lines/pipe lines, or is the site in close proximity to hazardous installations?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Yes. There are power lines running from the south-east to north-west, close to the north-eastern boundary of the site.</p>
<p><b>Would development of the site result in a loss of social, amenity or community value?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>No</p>

**Accessibility**  
 Distances to community facilities and services should be measured using walking routes from the centre of each site to each facility. The distances are based on the assumption that 400m is equal to approximately 5 minutes' walk and are measured from the edge of the site.

Facilities	Town / local centre / shop	Bus / Tram Stop	Train station	Primary School	Secondary School	Open Space / recreation facilities	Cycle Route
<b>Distance (metres)</b>	>1200m	<400m	>1200m	>1200m	>3900m	<400m	>800m

**Landscape and Visual Constraints**  
 This section should be answered based on existing evidence or by a qualified landscape consultant.

## 2. Assessment of Suitability

<p><b>Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of landscape?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Low sensitivity:</b> <i>the site has few or no valued features, and/or valued features that are less susceptible to development and can accommodate change.</i></li> <li>• <b>Medium sensitivity:</b> <i>the site has many valued features, and/or valued features that are susceptible to development but could potentially accommodate some change with appropriate mitigation.</i></li> <li>• <b>High sensitivity:</b> <i>the site has highly valued features, and/or valued features that are highly susceptible to development. The site can accommodate minimal change.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Medium sensitivity. The site has a strong connection with the surrounding landscape, particularly when viewed from the A465. There is potential for new development to alter its relationship with the valley and farmland beyond and to change the character of the settlement when approached from the east. The Landscape Character Assessment recommends that new development in the Timbered Plateau Farmlands takes the form of modest additions to existing settlements or individual dwellings in order to maintain its character.</p>
<p><b>Is the site low, medium or high sensitivity in terms of visual amenity?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Low sensitivity:</b> <i>the site is visually enclosed and has low intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would not adversely impact any identified views.</i></li> <li>• <b>Medium sensitivity:</b> <i>the site is somewhat enclosed and has some intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it may adversely impact any identified views.</i></li> <li>• <b>High sensitivity:</b> <i>the site is visually open and has high intervisibility with the surrounding landscape, and/or it would adversely impact any recognised views.</i></li> </ul>	<p>High sensitivity. Due to the sloping nature of the site, and its lack of defensible boundaries to the north-west and north-east, it has a high degree of intervisibility with the surrounding landscape. Any development would be highly visible from the Newlands development on southern side of the A465 and from the road itself. There are currently open long-range views across the site to the valley beyond, and the view north from Newlands has been identified as an important local view in the November 2020 Neighbourhood Plan issues and options consultation and draft Neighbourhood Plan (View 3). The site is also visible when looking southwards from the C1116 near Hall Place, although it is partially screened by existing vegetation from this viewpoint.</p>

## 2. Assessment of Suitability

Heritage Constraints	
<p><b>Would the development of the site cause harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting?</b></p> <p><i>Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible /</i>  <i>Some impact, and/or mitigation possible /</i>  <i>Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation</i></p>	<p>Some impact and/or mitigation possible. There is a group of Grade II listed buildings and structures at Hall Place Farm to the northwest of the site. Hall Place itself is a large half-timbered building which is visible from the A465 looking north across the site. There is the potential for development, particularly on the eastern half of the site, to have an adverse impact on the setting of the farm and to affect its relationship with the surrounding farmland. The impact could be reduced through the siting of development towards the western edge of the site.</p>
<p><b>Would the development of the site cause harm to a non-designated heritage asset or its setting?</b></p> <p><i>Directly impact and/or mitigation not possible /</i>  <i>Some impact, and/or mitigation possible /</i>  <i>Limited or no impact or no requirement for mitigation</i></p>	<p>Some impact, and/or mitigation possible. There are earthworks, the remains of a possible motte, in the north-west corner of the site. Archaeological surveys may be required prior to any development taking place. This part of the site is covered with mature trees, and adverse impacts on the earthworks could be avoided if development took place away from the wooded area.</p>
Planning Policy Constraints	
<p><b>Is the site in the Green Belt?</b></p> <p><i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>Is the site allocated for a particular use (e.g. housing / employment) or designated as open space in the adopted and / or emerging Local Plan?</b></p> <p><b>Yes / No / Unknown</b></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>

<b>2. Assessment of Suitability</b>	
<b>Are there any other relevant planning policies relating to the site?</b>	Policy RA1 - Rural Housing Distribution
<b>Is the site:</b> <i>Greenfield / A mix of greenfield and previously developed land / Previously developed land</i>	<b>Greenfield</b>
<b>Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing built up area?</b> <i>Within / Adjacent to and connected to / Outside and not connected to</i>	Adjacent to the existing built up area. There is new residential development to the south, on the opposite side of the A465. The field to the west, separating the site from the homes on Westbury, is currently undeveloped.
<b>Is the site within, adjacent to or outside the existing settlement boundary (if one exists)?</b> <i>Within / Adjacent to and connected to / Outside and not connected to</i>	N/A - there is no defined settlement boundary in the Local Plan
<b>Would development of the site result in neighbouring settlements merging into one another?</b> <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	<b>No</b>
<b>Is the size of the site large enough to significantly change the size and character of the existing settlement?</b> <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i>	Yes. The site is of a similar size to the development on the opposite side of the A465 which resulted in 28 new dwellings (application ref: P151937/O). If developed at a similar scale it could result in a significant increase in the size of the village and alter the form of the village by extending into open countryside.

**3. Assessment of Availability**

<p><b>Is the site available for development?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Are there any known legal or ownership problems such as unresolved multiple ownerships, ransom strips, tenancies, or operational requirements of landowners?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>Is there a known time frame for availability?</b>  <b>Available now / 0-5 years / 6-10 years / 11-15 years</b></p>	<p>Available now</p>

**4. Assessment of Viability**

<p><b>Is the site subject to any abnormal costs that could affect viability, such as demolition, land remediation or relocating utilities? What evidence is available to support this judgement?</b>  <i>Yes / No / Unknown</i></p>	<p>Unknown. There are power lines just inside the eastern site boundary. Relocation may increase the costs of development.</p>
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**5. Conclusions**

<p><b>What is the expected development capacity of the site? (either as proposed by site promoter or estimated through SHLAA/HELAA or Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessment)</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>What is the likely timeframe for development</b>  <b>(0-5 / 6-10 / 11-15 / 15+ years)</b></p>	<p>0-5 years</p>
<p><b>Other key information</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Overall rating (Red/Amber/Green)</b>                  The site is <b>suitable and available</b>                  The site is <b>potentially suitable, and available.</b>                  The site is <b>not currently suitable, and available.</b>  <b>Are there any known viability issues?</b>  <i>Yes / No</i></p>	<p><b>Red: The site is not currently suitable</b></p> <p>Unknown. There are power lines just inside the eastern site boundary. Relocation may increase the costs of development.</p>

### Summary of justification for rating

The site is a field (Grade 2 agricultural land) which is currently in agricultural use, but which is available for development.

The existing access from the C1116, a narrow single-track lane, is unsuitable for servicing new residential development. Access could be created from the A465, which would require the removal of hedgerow. There is no suitable pedestrian access. It may be possible to extend the footway which runs along the A465 to Woodland View on the southern side of the road, but this would require additional land.

There are limited facilities in the settlement of Stoke Cross, apart from a pub and village hall. A regular bus service from Hereford to Bromyard runs in close proximity to the site, although there is no pedestrian link to the bus stops.

While hedgerows provide screening along the southern and western boundary, the site's northern and eastern boundaries are open to the larger field in which it sits. Any development would therefore be quite prominent, particularly given the sloping nature of the site which exposes it to long-range views. There is a Key Public View (draft NP Policy SL1) looking north across the site from Woodland View (also known locally as Newlands), and residential development on the majority of the site is likely to have an adverse impact on this view, triggering the need for a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment under the draft policy.

The setting of the group of Grade II listed buildings at Hall Place Farm would also be adversely affected by development of the site as their relationship with the surrounding agricultural landscape would be altered. The site contains a set of earthworks (the remains of a probable medieval motte) in the north-western corner, adjacent to the existing access.

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Archaeological surveys may be required before any development could take place. While this is unlikely to be a major constraint on development, since construction could avoid this part of the site, consultation with the heritage/archaeological officer is recommended.

The site is opposite a recent residential development at Woodland View, but is separated from the rest of the settlement by the field to the west. If developed, it would create an uncharacteristic extension into the open countryside and would begin to encroach on the isolated farmstead to the north-east. The site lies outside the settlement boundary proposed in the draft NP. If this settlement boundary is retained in the made NP, proposals would need to meet the criteria set out in Core Strategy policies RA3 and H2, which restrict the type of development which would be acceptable in this location.

Permission was granted in 2017 for a part-earth dwelling on land immediately adjacent to the site, although this does not appear to have been implemented and may have lapsed. While this may indicate that the principle of development is acceptable on Site 13, the approved scheme was sited immediately north of the earthworks, further downhill and in a less open part of the field. This is likely to have led to a reduced impact on landscape character, whereas Site 13 lies at the top of the slope and is therefore more visible from further afield.

The site is considered unsuitable for development given the potential impact on landscape, heritage assets, locally important views and settlement character.

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