



**STOKE
LACY**
PARISH

**Neighbourhood
Development Plan**
2022 - 2031

Draft Plan
for Regulation 14
Public Consultation

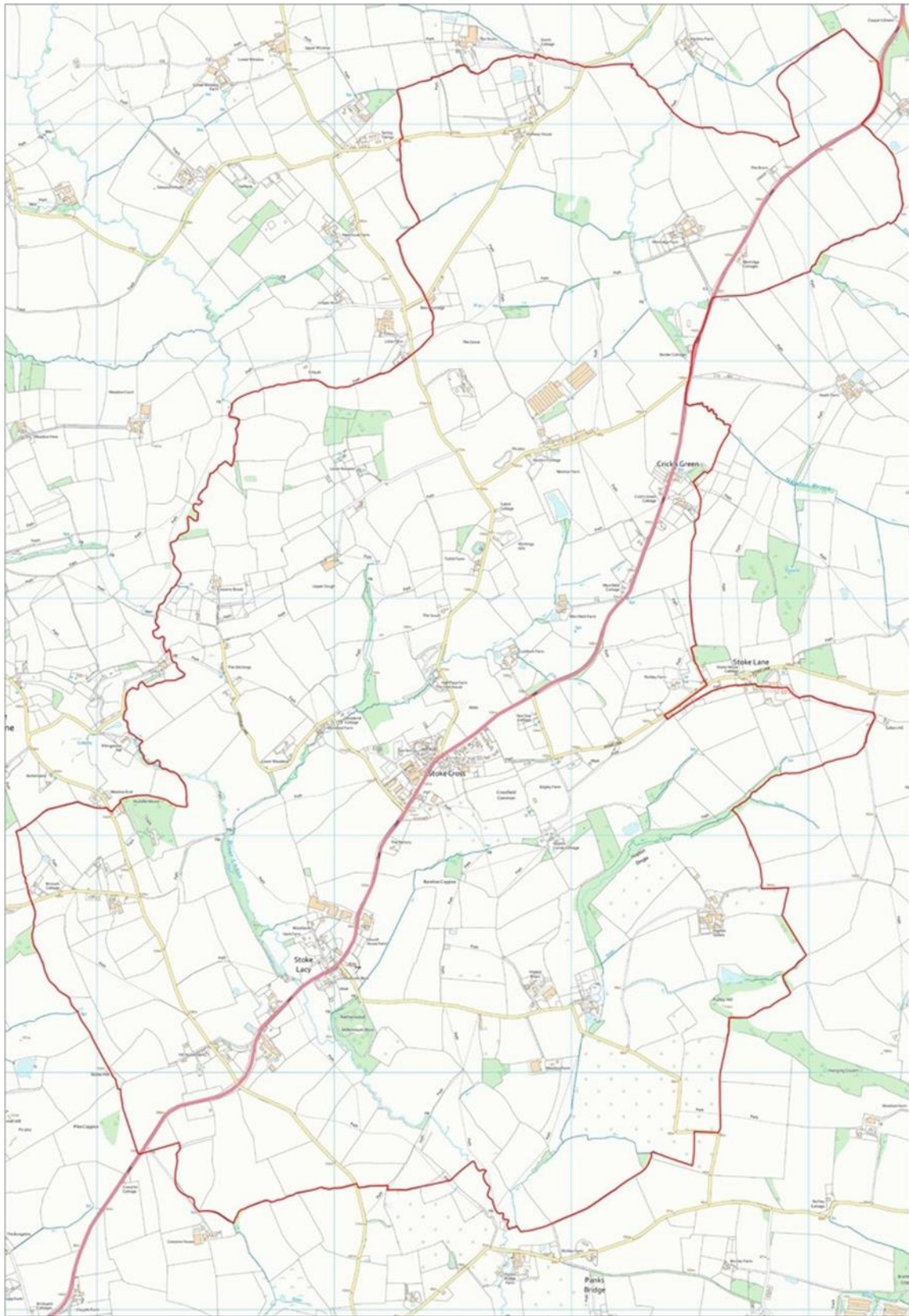
Prepared by the Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Development Plan
Steering Group on behalf of the Parish Council with assistance from



Cover image by Colin Simmonds (local artist)

Note - Unless otherwise stated, all maps have been prepared @Crown copyright and database rights
[2019] Ordnance Survey Stoke Lacy Parish Council (Licensee) License number OS PSMA number
0100061610

Map 1: Stoke Lacy Parish and Neighbourhood Area



Contents

Introduction and Public Consultation	6
1.0 Background	7
What are NDPs?	7
NDP Process So Far	8
Issues and Options	9
Call for Sites and Technical Assessment	9
Consultation on Emerging Draft Plan and Options for Site Allocations.....	10
2.0 A Portrait of Stoke Lacy Parish	11
3.0 Draft Vision and Objectives.....	13
Planning Policies	15
Map 3A: Stoke Lacy Policies Map.....	16
Map 3B: Stoke Cross Policies Map.....	17
4.0 Natural Environment.....	18
Landscape Character and Wildlife	18
Planning Policy	20
Consultation Responses	20
Key Public Views	21
5.0 Community Facilities.....	25
Village Hall and Church	25
Netherwood.....	27
Plough Inn Public House	28
Education	28
Local Green Space	28
Public Open Space.....	30
Planning Policy	30
Consultation Responses	30
6.0 Built Character	32
Introduction	32
Stoke Lacy Conservation Area.....	33
Listed Buildings and Other Built Heritage.....	36
Cricks Green and Rural Area	36
Planning Policy	36
Public Consultation	37
Stoke Lacy Design Guidance and Codes.....	37
7.0 Business and Tourism	42

Local Businesses.....	42
Farming in Stoke Lacy	43
Home working.....	44
Planning Policy	44
Public Consultation	45
Site Allocation	46
8.0 Accessibility and Transport	48
Planning Policy	49
Public Consultation	50
9.0 Housing	51
Introduction and Context.....	51
Settlement Boundaries and Planning Policy	52
Public Consultation	53
Options for Housing Sites.....	54
Public Consultation	54
House Types and Sizes	57
Public Consultation	58
10.0 Next Steps	59
Appendix 1 NDP Process Diagram.....	60
Appendix 2 Details of Stoke Lacy Conservation Area	61
Appendix 3 Listed Buildings	62
Appendix 4 Public Footpaths in Stoke Lacy Parish.....	67
Appendix 5 Public Consultation Responses to Options for Site Allocations, Spring 2021.....	68
Appendix 6 Extracts from Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment – 2012 Update, 2013...	69

Introduction and Public Consultation

Regulation 14 Public Consultation from Monday 17th January 2022 to 5pm Monday 7th March 2022

The Draft NDP has reached the formal consultation stage, and responses will be sought from statutory bodies as well as local residents and stakeholders, over a seven week period.

This version of the Draft Plan has been prepared following careful consideration of the responses to the informal consultation, further work by the Steering Group on matters such as views, Local Green Spaces and settlement boundaries and consideration of the Stoke Lacy Design Guidance and Codes, commissioned through the Locality Technical Support Programme. The complete Stoke Lacy Design Guidance and Codes document is published as a background document on the NDP website. This document has been developed with direction from AECOM and has been drafted over a process taking several months. It is an important background, evidence-based document and has been used to inform NDP Policies on design.

The policies have been written to reflect feedback wherever possible but are mindful that the NDP also needs to conform generally with Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy Local Plan 2011 - 2031 and have regard to national planning policies.

The Steering Group and the Parish Council urge local residents and stakeholders to continue to share their views on the Draft Plan. The responses will be considered carefully again and used to shape and inform the submission version of the Plan which will be submitted to Herefordshire Council, consulted upon again and examined by an independent examiner.

The Regulation 14 consultation public meetings with the Parish are due to take place on the following dates:

- **Wednesday 19th January 2022 between 19:00 and 21:00 and**
- **Saturday 22nd January 2022 between 14:00 and 16:00.**

A summary document and short response form have been delivered to local households and are published on the NDP website together with the Regulation 14 Draft Plan.

Please contact us with your feedback via:

- the NDP mail boxes located at the Village Hall or in the Church porch, or
 - by email: parishclerk@stokelacyparishcouncil.org, or
 - online on the NDP website: www.stokelacy.co.uk
- By: 5pm Monday 7th March 2022.**

1.0 Background



Aerial view of Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross

What are NDPs?

- 1.1 NDP's were introduced through the Localism Act 2011 to give local people a greater say in planning decisions that affect their area. NDPs are neighbourhood level planning policy documents designed to reflect the needs and priorities of local communities. Eventually the NDP will be used to help determine planning applications in Stoke Lacy Parish.
- 1.2 NDPs can identify where development should take place, set out local design principles so that buildings respond positively to local character, and protect important facilities, historic buildings, the natural environment and open spaces. They are an important part of our planning system because planning applications will be determined in accordance with the development plan¹ unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Made (adopted) NDPs are part of the local statutory development plan for their area.

¹ **Development Plan:** Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been

- 1.3 A diagram setting out the key steps for preparing NDPs is provided in Appendix 1. We are at the Regulation 14 formal public consultation stage.
- 1.4 The NDP cannot be prepared in isolation. It has to have regard to national planning policies, which are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (revised on 20th July 2021)² and explained in Planning Practice Guidance³, and it has to be in general conformity with the adopted Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031⁴. Policies should not duplicate or conflict with those set out in national or local planning policies. The NDP has to be supported by a robust technical evidence base and the process involves several phases of informal and formal public consultation, an examination and eventually a local referendum. Local people will be able to vote whether their NDP should be used by Herefordshire Council to help determine planning applications in their parish and if there is a majority 'Yes' vote (50% of turnout + 1) Herefordshire Council will adopt the NDP.

NDP Process So Far

- 1.5 A show of hands at the public meeting in February 2020 (with 60 attendees), demonstrated that the majority of those that attended were in favour of developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (hereafter referred to as NDP).
- 1.6 On 20th November 2019 the Parish Council applied to Herefordshire Council for designation as a neighbourhood area (as shown on Map 1) and this was approved on 8th January 2020.
- 1.7 The Parish Council held two public meetings to begin work on the NDP. The first was held on 6th October 2019 to establish whether there was interest in developing a Neighbourhood Plan. At that meeting a representative from Herefordshire Council introduced the subject and provided information about NDPs. After a discussion, a vote was held, and it was agreed that a Steering Group should be formed to move forward with a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish. A further parish meeting was held on 5th February 2020 and stakeholders were invited to sign up to receive emails about progress on the NDP. More than 60 people attended, and the meeting was a first chance to think about the priorities for the vision of Stoke Lacy's future. A transcript of the Q & A session can be viewed on the website in the document 'Community Comments'.



- 1.8 The NDP Steering Group was formed on 30th October 2019 and holds working meetings at least once a month. Details and minutes are provided on the NDP pages of the Parish

approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made (NPPF Glossary).

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

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

⁴ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan-1/local-plan-core-strategy/2>

Council website⁵. During the Covid-19 pandemic most meetings have been held online, but members of the public are invited to join by prior arrangement with the Parish Clerk. When restrictions allowed the meetings were held at the Plough Inn or Village Hall.

Issues and Options

- 1.9 In the Autumn of 2020 residents were asked to participate in an Issues & Options consultation. An Issues and Options document was prepared by the Steering Group in Summer / Autumn 2020. This set out a draft vision and objectives for the NDP and explained the various planning issues the Steering Group had identified, which could be addressed in the NDP through planning policies, and proposals such as site allocations. The questions addressed objectives, future housing development and settlement boundaries. The responses revealed that 93.85% agreed with the objectives.
- 1.10 The complete document was published on the NDP website <https://www.stokelacy.co.uk/> and a summary version and questionnaire were delivered to all households. The consultation took place from 18th October 2020 until 21st November 2020 (although late responses were accepted).
- 1.11 Residents and stakeholders were invited to respond by email or in writing and could leave completed questionnaires and written comments at dedicated NDP post boxes at the Village Hall or the Church. They could also comment on the NDP website forum: comments@stokelacy.co.uk.
- 1.12 Unfortunately planned public events at the Village Hall could not take place due to Covid-19 restrictions but publicity included an email address and telephone number for anyone wishing to talk to a member of the NDP Steering Group by phone or face to face in a socially distanced meeting.
- 1.13 The full report on the responses to the consultation ('Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020-2031 Issues and Options, Autumn 2020 – Survey Results') is published on the NDP website. There was a good response rate with 65 completed response forms returned from 201 households, this includes households that responded as a couple, representing a response rate of 40%. The responses to the questionnaire and comments from the community at the Public Meeting (on 5th February 2020) were considered carefully and used to inform the policies in the emerging first Draft Plan. (Percentages of responses have been rounded in the NDP.) There were also a large number of comments about other parish issues which have been considered by the Parish Council and where appropriate are included as proposed actions. A record of the comments can be seen in the document 'Community Comments' on the website.

Call for Sites and Technical Assessment

- 1.14 A key issue for the Draft NDP consultation was the consideration of potential sites for future housing. NDPs provide a stronger, more robust planning framework for determining future planning applications for housing if they include at least one site allocation for new housing.
- 1.15 The Parish has exceeded its current target growth figure by 21 units. To explore possibilities in case of future need for development before 2031 a Call for Sites was undertaken by the Parish Council in August 2020. Landowners and their agents were invited to submit potential sites for consideration. Herefordshire Council also undertook a Call for Sites in summer 2020 but this did not produce any additional sites to those submitted to the Parish

⁵ <https://stokelacyparishcouncil.org.uk/neighbourhood-development-plan-ndp/>

Council. 12 sites were put forward (see Map 2) and subjected to a technical site assessment undertaken by independent consultants AECOM (see 'Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Plan Site Options and Assessment Report, January 2021' published on the NDP website).

Map 2: All Submitted Sites



- 1.15 The Steering Group invited Herefordshire Council Highways Department to comment on the options for site allocation and these are included at the end of the NDP Site Options and Assessment Report on the website.

Consultation on Emerging Draft Plan and Options for Site Allocations

- 1.16 In Spring 2021, a first draft of the Plan was published for informal public consultation. The emerging Draft Plan and options for site allocations were published for informal consultation over 4 weeks from 5th April until 7th May 2021. Covid-19 restrictions continued during this period and so face to face meetings could not take place. A summary document was delivered to all households in the Parish and the full version was available on the NDP web pages with hard copies available on request. There were 65 responses which represents 40% of local households. Overall, there was support for the Vision, Objectives and emerging Draft Policies and a large number of detailed comments were provided, which have been used to inform amendments to the Draft Plan. The full report of the consultation results ('Responses to the Issues and Options Document') is published on the NDP website (<https://www.stokelacy.co.uk/>).
- 1.17 The questionnaire invited residents to tell us whether they supported or objected to, each of the 3 possible sites considered technically suitable, or suitable subject to constraints being overcome. Responses were invited by leaving completed forms in the NDP mailboxes located at the Village Hall or in the Church porch, or by email to: parishclerk@stokelacyparishcouncil.org, or by submitting responses directly to the NDP website. 65 responses were submitted.
- 1.18 The full report of the consultation 'NDP Responses to Call for Sites Options' is published on the NDP website <https://www.stokelacy.co.uk>. The responses showed that a higher proportion objected to all the possible housing sites than supported them, although a significant number were neutral or did not answer. Comments from a number of residents

showed continued support for development on smaller sites and therefore the Steering Group liaised with the landowners to explore options for reducing the proposed size and scale of development. Following discussions with Herefordshire Council the Steering Group recommended the inclusion of one small site allocation for 2 houses within the settlement boundary of Stoke Cross.

- 1.19 Information to the responses is provided in the supporting text in the relevant sections. The NDP Steering Group has endeavoured to capture as many of the comments and concerns of residents as possible in the Draft Plan, to help ensure the document continues to reflect local peoples' aspirations and ideas and remains relevant to our community.
- 1.20 It is important to note that the Herefordshire Core Strategy refers to the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) 2009. This provides guidance necessary to comply with landscape policies of the Local Plan and is intended to promote the use of landscape assessment to increase awareness of the countryside's character and ensure future development is compatible with that character. Stoke Lacy falls within Timbered Plateau Farmlands Landscape type. The LCA notes this type is one of the best preserved in the County and in order to retain its character, it is recommended that densities remain low and development takes the form of modest additions to existing settlements or individual dwellings. This reflects many opinions expressed in the consultations and therefore it is essential that it drives the content of our plan and that any development proposals conserve and enhance the environmental assets that contribute towards the distinctiveness of this area.

2.0 A Portrait of Stoke Lacy Parish

- 2.1 Stoke Lacy Parish is in the north-east of Herefordshire, about 4 miles south-west of Bromyard, 10 miles north-east of Hereford and 18 miles west of Worcester. The Parish is rural in character, with an agricultural landscape of orchards, hedged fields, scattered farms and cottages, woods and wooded valleys. The River Lodon meanders through pastures in the south-west corner.
- 2.2 Development is concentrated in the settlements of Stoke Cross and Stoke Lacy. The A465 runs through the Parish approximately north-east / south-west with scattered dwellings along its route. From the main road a network of single track lanes leads to farms and individual houses in the wider rural area.
- 2.3 The neighbourhood development plan area covers 1,094 hectares. The population of the Parish was recorded as 364 in the 2011 Census. It fell to 339 in mid-2018, and of these 95 were aged over 65 years, echoing the ageing population trend in much of rural Herefordshire.
- 2.4 In recent years the community has come together to support three major local projects, the building of a Village Hall, the planting of Netherwood to celebrate the Millennium and the repair of the church spire with its ongoing 'Harvesting our Heritage' project - see <https://www.stokelacyheritage.co.uk>.



Stained glass window showing Morgan car

- 2.5 There are two memorial stained glass windows in the church porch featuring Morgan cars. In the early 1900s Henry Morgan built his first car in The Rectory opposite the church where his father was the vicar. The Morgan Car company has always supported village activities, and members of the family are buried in the churchyard.
- 2.6 There is a daily bus service connecting Stoke Lacy to Hereford and Worcester via Bromyard. As this service has declined in frequency it has become less convenient and so is less well used. Traffic on the A465 has greatly increased in recent years with changes in lifestyle, more commercial vehicles, a reduction in rural bus services and an increase in local as well as through traffic. The A465 is the main road link between Bromyard and Hereford. This is a national as well as an individual issue and parishes should play their part by considering ways to reverse this trend.
- 2.7 The community is mixed, made up of families who have lived in the area for generations as well as people who have settled more recently. Employment and working patterns include commuting, working locally or from home. With an ageing population there is an increasing number of retired people living in the Parish. Despite this diversity there is a strong sense of community; in times of trouble such as recent flooding or the Covid-19 pandemic, people have come together for mutual support. With no school or shop, the three main places where people can gather are the Village Hall, the church and the pub - these are the places where activities and events take place, and they are appreciated and well supported by local people.

3.0 Draft Vision and Objectives

- 3.1 The Draft Vision and Objectives for the NDP have been prepared by the Steering Group, taking into account comments made during the consultations. The Vision sets out how the Parish should look in the future and the Objectives provide the framework for preparing the NDP planning policies and proposals to achieve the Vision.
- 3.2 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that nearly 94% of respondents (61) supported the Draft Vision and Objectives. The Steering Group reviewed them again in the light of the comments and this resulted in several minor changes.

Draft Vision for Stoke Lacy NDP

Stoke Lacy is a rural community which wishes to retain its distinctive character of historic and heritage assets while allowing the community to flourish and develop. Development should be sustainable thereby meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Emphasis should be on Climate Smart Choices and resource efficiency. It should be recognised that to meet community need, sites may have to be found adjacent to or beyond settlement boundaries. By 2031, residents of Stoke Lacy will continue to enjoy a high quality of life with good access to local facilities and to the exceptional countryside around the Parish.

Draft Objectives for Stoke Lacy NDP

Objective 1: Objective 1: To protect and enhance valued landscapes and views and the intrinsic character and beauty of our countryside; to recognise the wider benefits including those of the best and most versatile agricultural land and of the trees and woodlands; to protect our dark skies, wildlife habitats and biodiversity; to protect the countryside from inappropriate development.

(See NDP Policies SL1: Protecting and Enhancing Local Landscape Character and Biodiversity and SL2: Local Green Space)

Objective 2: To develop a greater sense of community and identity and improve the cohesion between the several separate communities that make up Stoke Lacy Parish ensuring new residents feel welcome, and everyone feels safe and valued.

(See NDP Policy SL3: Public Open Space)

Objective 3: To support and enhance existing local facilities including the Village Hall, Church and Plough Inn Public House, and to actively encourage community involvement and engagement in Parish activities.

(Through the preparation of the NDP and other Parish Council activities)

Objective 4: To ensure all new buildings make a positive contribution to local character and distinction whilst embracing innovative and contemporary design, with resource efficiency very much in the foreground. Design codes should be used to ensure land is

used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places which maintain the area's prevailing character and setting including rural gardens.

(See NDP Policies SL4: Protecting Heritage and Local Built Character and SL5: Promoting Innovative and Sustainable Design)

Objective 5: To provide a supportive framework for all appropriate local, rural economic development.

(See NDP Policy SL6: Tourism and Rural Enterprise and Site Allocation SL7/1: Barn Conversion for Employment Use at Hopton Court Farm)

Objective 6: To improve accessibility for all so that roads and footpaths, and particularly the A465 will be safer, well maintained and have good signage.

(See NDP Policy SL8: Improving Accessibility and Sustainable Travel)

Objective 7: To sustain age diversity in the community by ensuring the availability of affordable property for the younger generation and suitable property for an ageing population. This will enable them to remain in the community that they know and by which they are supported as their housing needs change. New housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of our community.

(See NDP Policy SL9: Development within the Settlement Boundaries, Site Allocation SL9/1: Crossfield House, Stoke Cross and Policy SL10: Housing Mix).

Planning Policies



Bredenbury Road towards Stoke Cross

An NDP has the same legal status as the Local Plan once it has been agreed at a referendum and is made (brought into legal force) by the local planning authority. At this point it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the Neighbourhood Area. Applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The following chapters set out the draft planning policies and site allocations.

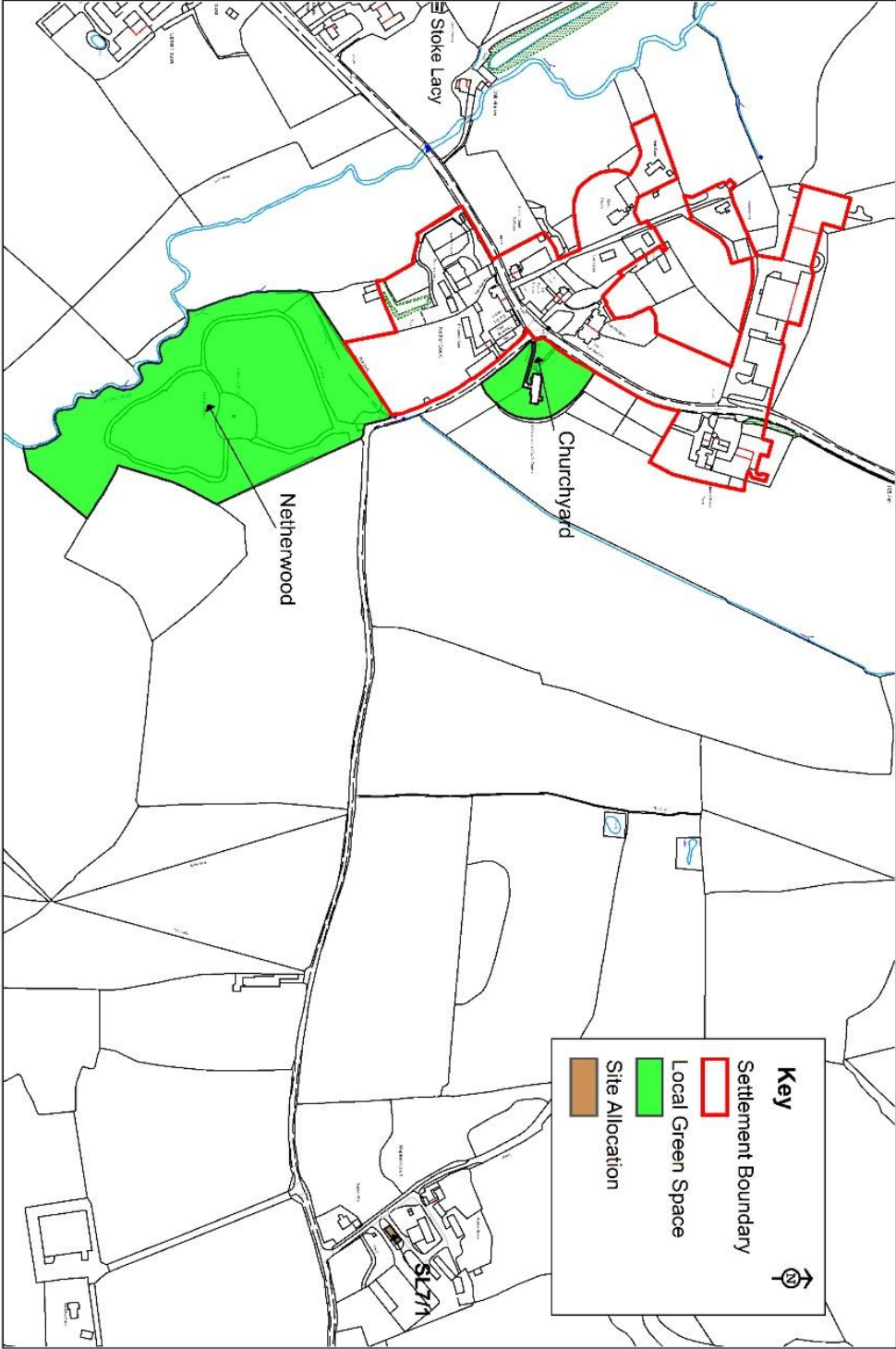
The Policies Maps (Maps 3A and 3B) for Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross show the location of the Local Green Spaces, settlement boundaries, site allocations and commitments⁶ and these are provided at the beginning of the policies section.

The evidence and rationale behind each Draft Policy is set out in the supporting text.

The policies are necessarily wide ranging in their scope and taken together, should help to deliver the future development within the Parish which is both sustainable and appropriate.

⁶ A commitment is a proposal which has planning consent or which is currently being developed.

Map 3A: Stoke Lacy Policies Map



4.0 Natural Environment



Pond at Netherwood, Stoke Lacy

Landscape Character and Wildlife

- 4.1 Stoke Lacy Parish lies on the border of National Character Area 100 Herefordshire Lowlands and 101 Herefordshire Plateau⁷. Detailed descriptions of Sub-Regional Landscape Areas and Local Landscape Types are given in the 'Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document', 2004⁸ and the landscape character type for Stoke Lacy is Timbered Plateau Farmlands, described as 'varied, agricultural landscapes of hedged fields, scattered farms, woods and wooded valleys associated with undulating relief. The dominant landform is one of the most prominent characteristics and tends to override the patterns of tree cover and field shape. Variations in topography within this landscape create a changing sequence of visual perspectives, ranging from open vistas on plateau summits to more secluded scenes along valley bottoms.'
- 4.2 The Parish has a very rural character but there are few places where a house is not within sight. The hilly nature of the landscape means it is best suited for mixed farming, cattle, sheep and arable farming and scattered throughout are paddocks with horses for private use. The majority of fields are enclosed by ancient hedges: some of these have been removed to enlarge the fields, leaving individual trees marking the line where the hedge used to run. The rolling terrain provides small pockets of wild spaces and wooded corners where wildlife flourishes and there are many areas of oak woodland, some of which have been established for a hundred years or more. There are two areas of ancient woodland at Hopton Dingle and Huddle Wood and other areas of woodland include Netherwood and Huddle Mill. The soil structure is predominantly of strong clay with a limestone subsoil.
- 4.3 Several streams and waterways flow within the area and the stream from Hopton Dingle flows through the village to the River Lodon.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

⁸ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2069/landscape_character_assessment_for_herefordshire.pdf

- 4.4 The roads are bordered by mixed hedges rich in wild flowers and plants of interest throughout the year, framing the ever changing views around each corner.
- 4.5 Hops are being reintroduced into the area to supply the Wye Valley Brewery at Stoke Cross. Old cider orchards are gradually being rooted out to make way for development. New cider apple orchards have been planted which are better suited for mechanical picking. There are a few old, traditional orchards in the area and the apples from these are sold to Oliver's, a small cider-maker based down the road in Ocle Pychard. Damson trees were originally planted around orchards to attract bees for fertilising the apple crop. In the early part of the year their delicate froth of white blossom can still be enjoyed. In the autumn the fruit is picked to make jam, preserves and wine.
- 4.6 The settlement pattern of Timbered Plateau Farmlands is described as 'a dispersed settlement pattern of individual farms and hamlets. There are also occasional wayside dwellings and villages, which contribute to a rather varied settlement character, but always of a dispersed nature. New housing could therefore be accommodated as modest additions to existing village or hamlet clusters or as individual dwellings. The density of development must remain low if the dispersed nature of the settlement pattern is to be respected.'



Local Field – Stoke Lacy

- 4.7 Management guidelines suggest conservation and enhancement of existing hedgerows and woodland is important, including replacing the lost hedgerow oaks and using broadleaved native species. The linear pattern of woodland, following steeply incised stream dingles is a particular feature that should be protected.
- 4.8 The openness of the terrain surrounding Stoke Lacy is a haven for wildlife and the many ponds in gardens and farms support a myriad of species including frogs, toads, newts and especially Great Crested Newts, a protected species. Most of these species will migrate from pond to pond and hibernate during the winter months away from these ponds. Therefore, consideration must be given to these habitats when considering development needs.
- 4.9 The woods, forests and open farmland provide a wide variety of habitats for much of our wildlife. Birds such as raptors require these open spaces for hunting and nesting. Owls such as the Tawny, which sometimes nest on the ground, require the protection of dense woods to hide their nests. The Red Kite once extinct in Britain is now making a comeback in our area. Streams that flow through the village to the River Lodon supports Kingfishers who require clear flowing water to survive.

Planning Policy

- 4.10 The NPPF advises in paragraph 174 that 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes ...
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.'
- 4.11 Core Strategy Policy LD1 – Landscape and townscape sets out that 'Development proposals should:
- demonstrate that character of the landscape and townscape has positively influenced the design, scale, nature and site selection, protection and enhancement of the setting of settlements and designated areas;
 - conserve and enhance the natural, historic and scenic beauty of important landscapes and features ... incorporate new landscape schemes and their management to ensure development integrates appropriately into its surroundings; and
 - maintain and extend tree cover where important to amenity, through the retention of important trees, appropriate replacement of trees lost through development and new planting to support green infrastructure.'

Consultation Responses

- 4.12 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation demonstrated strong local support for the NDP to include a policy to protect and enhance local landscape character. 98% of respondents (64) supported such a policy. Respondents listed a range of local landscape features which were considered important in the Parish including 'watercourses, fields, trees, hedgerows and woodlands, views, footpaths, farming and historic buildings'.
- 4.13 The area's dark skies were also noted as significant. Herefordshire is one of the best areas of the country for dark skies and Stoke Lacy is known to be one of the best areas in Herefordshire. The following photographs were taken by a local resident⁹.



Comet, July 2020



**Andromeda Nebula, 2.5 million light years away,
taken with a telescope**

⁹ Photos provided by kind permission of David Leverington.

- 4.14 The Issues and Options consultation also invited residents to comment on whether the NDP should identify and protect key important public views. 98% of respondents (46) agreed that the NDP should protect the views identified by the Steering Group and a number of other important views were also suggested.
- 4.15 In the consultation on the emerging Draft Plan, 85% of respondents supported the policy on local landscape character. Comments referred to the need to protect local character and to limit development to smaller scale schemes (see Housing section). There were also concerns about the need for permissions for any new footpath routes on private land.

Key Public Views

- 4.16 Views throughout the Parish are critically important to its character. Stoke Lacy is a hilly, rural, agricultural parish. It is blessed with extraordinary views across a colourful patchwork of hedged fields of pasture interspersed with crops and woods. Throughout the landscape homes, in clusters or individually, nestle amongst traditional Herefordshire farm houses and their redolent ranges of outbuildings and hop kilns, blending into the tints and textures of the rural fabric. A curtain of AONBs and National Parks encircle the parish: to the south/east the Malvern Hills, to the north/west the Shropshire Hills and to the south/west the Brecon Beacons with smaller hills such as Marcle Ridge in the middle distance. Seen from every road, lane and footpath, they encapsulate the character of the parish. These vistas are precious to everyone who lives and works in them as well as those who have time to stand and stare.

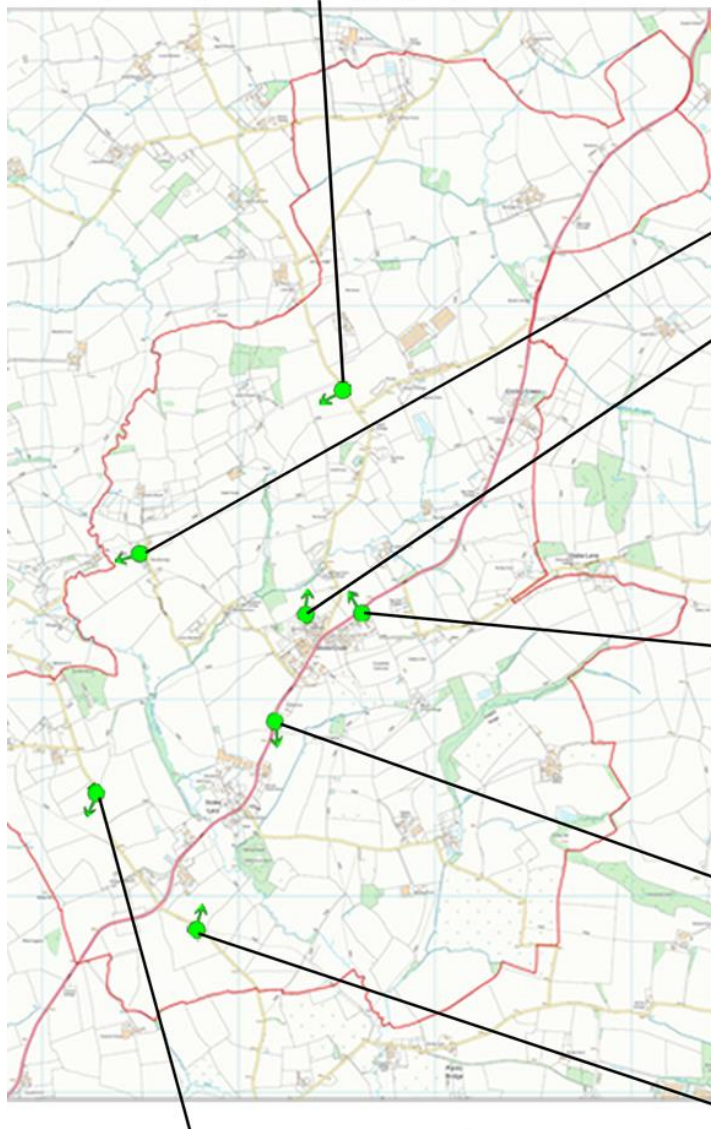
‘Views are very subjective and individual for a variety of reasons and memories. What they all have in common is the rural setting and the unspoilt nature of the village.’ (A comment by one of many respondents to the Autumn 2020 survey).

- 4.17 Views change with the weather, the seasons and the rotation of crops. It is impossible to select individual views, it is the character of the whole landscape that is special and should be protected for future generations. The scale and location of new homes should be carefully considered to minimise any negative impact they would have on the character of the area and should respecting the way the parish has evolved over time.
- 4.18 The key public views are identified in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Key Public Views



1. From Roxpole looking SW across a newly ploughed potato field to the Brecon Beacons



2. Looking W/SW from Woodend Lane across hedged undulating pastureland and mature trees



3. From Westbury carpark looking north over mixed agricultural land with hedgeline trees



4. The view N/W over a hedge on the A465 with agricultural land stretching to the horizon



5. Looking down the road from Stoke Cross south to Stoke Lacy, across the fields the church is just visible



6. The view from Little Cowarne Road S/W across a landscape where farms and cottages nestle among fields and woods and the Brecon Beacons loom in the distance



7. Looking through the trees on Much Cowarne Road north to Netherwood and Stoke Lacy Parish church

- 4.19 Draft Policy SL1 has been prepared to encourage development to protect and enhance those key features which contribute to local landscape character and biodiversity and to protect the area's nationally significant dark skies and important Key Public Views. The Policy draws on Design Code 02 Green infrastructure, active travel and open space which provides advice on providing enhancements to buildings to support wildlife and includes wording to help ensure development will not have an adverse effect on the conservation objectives of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and to species of European importance.

Draft Policy SL1: Protecting and Enhancing Local Landscape Character and Biodiversity

Proposals should have regard to Design Code 03 Views and landmarks and the area wide and character area specific design principles.

The design of any new build should minimise any adverse visual impacts on the local landscape character of Stoke Lacy Parish, and incorporate the following landscape design and biodiversity principles where they are applicable to the site concerned:

1. Any new building within the settlements of Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross should protect important local landscape features which enhance the character of the built-up area and link it to the open countryside. These include the following: watercourses, ponds, veteran / ancient trees, traditional hedgerows, woodland and traditional orchards. These features should be incorporated into landscaping designs wherever it is practicable to do so.
2. Landscaping schemes should incorporate the planting of native broadleaved woodland species where possible, and plant new traditional species hedgerows in boundary schemes.
3. Landscaping schemes should be used to enhance local wildlife, providing new and restored habitats and contributing to biodiversity net gain.
4. Buildings should incorporate features to enhance biodiversity including bat bricks, bird boxes and hedgehog gravel boards;
5. Lighting schemes should be designed to minimise light pollution and protect the area's dark skies. Security lighting should be operated by intruder switching, be appropriate to the setting, be unobtrusive and energy efficient and have consideration for neighbouring amenity.
6. Existing public rights of way should be protected, and schemes should provide safe and accessible linkages to nearby walking routes and bridleways wherever possible.
7. Key Public Views are identified in Figure 1 and proposals should respect these views. Where a proposal impacts on an identified Key Public View, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment or similar study should be carried out to ensure that the scheme is designed and sited sensitively and appropriately to mitigate any adverse impacts.

All proposals must demonstrate that they protect, conserve and enhance the natural environment in accordance with the principles in Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policies SD3, SD4, LD1, LD2 and LD3. This includes demonstrating to a high standard, so that the competent authority may be sure, that the proposal will not have an adverse effect on the conservation objectives of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and to species of European importance. In particular, planning permission will only be granted if it is shown so that the planning authority can be certain that the proposal, with mitigation, will not increase nutrient inputs to the SAC.

5.0 Community Facilities



Village Hall

Village Hall and Church

- 5.1 The relatively low population and rural character of the Parish mean that community facilities are limited.
- 5.2 A new Village Hall is situated in Stoke Cross on the A465 opposite the Plough Inn and Wye Valley Brewery. It was completed in 2000 with funds raised locally and through grant bodies, in particular the National Lottery. The current building was constructed on a parcel of land donated by a local benefactor, the late Bill Symonds, founder of Symonds Cider, and the new hall replaced the former school and Village Hall which were previously sited on the land where the tarmacked car park now stands.
- 5.3 The hall is built from red brick with a tiled roof and wooden windows. The facilities consist of one large multi-purpose room for the 80 people capacity. There is a semi-permanent stage and a proscenium arch with curtains and permanent stage lighting in position. The kitchen is well-equipped with cooking facilities and sufficient crockery, cutlery and serving dishes for the 80 person capacity. A public footpath crosses the ground between the car park and the Village Hall. The car park has 22 parking spaces.
- 5.4 Stoke Lacy Village Hall is a registered charity (1082078) and is administered by a board of trustees. The hall is used regularly by a number of interest groups. Monthly meetings take place there of the Parish Council, the Women's Institute, Friendship Club and Gardening Club. There are also private bookings for small business conferences and training days, children's parties, parties, funeral wakes and exhibitions of local artists work. The hall is used as a polling station for elections.



Stoke Lacy Harvest Lunch – Village Hall



Village Hall sign

- 5.5 To supplement the hall's income the trustees hold a number of fundraising events in the hall during the year which are also a means of promoting community involvement. There are twice yearly village breakfasts held in the hall, plays and murder mystery evenings, quizzes, Bingo, skittles, and plant sales. In addition, the local parochial church council holds their Christmas Bazaar and their harvest lunch in the hall.

- 5.6 The Village Hall boasts a sign designed by noted local artist Colin Simmonds as well as a large ceramic field map of the village on the western side of the hall constructed by local ceramicist Mark de la Torre.

- 5.7 The parish church of St Peter & St Paul is located in Stoke Lacy. Improvements to the church were made at the beginning of the 21st century when a new kitchen and toilet facilities were installed. Most recently with the help of a £100,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund a major refurbishment of the shingle tower and the north nave roof was successfully undertaken. This was the first major work done to the fabric of the building since 1863. Along with the building renovations a number of related heritage projects took place including a large fete in July 2019 celebrating the church and village's connection to the Morgan family. It was attended by over 1,000 people and engaged over 100 local volunteers who contributed towards the success of the event.



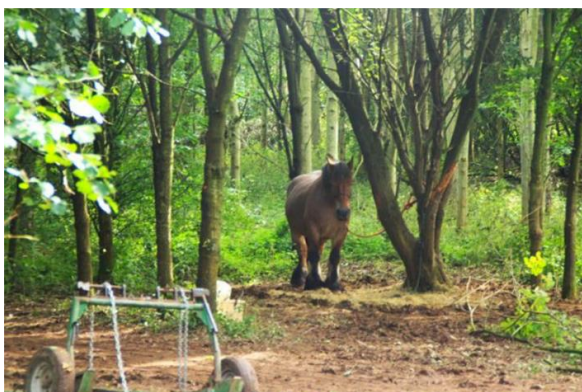
- 5.8 The church itself is administered by the parochial church council. Church services take place each Sunday. The major Christian festivals of Easter, Harvest Festival and Christmas as well as Remembrance Sunday are also celebrated. The church forms part of the Bromyard Benefice and shares a vicar with St Peter's in Bromyard. Congregations are usually small consisting of fewer than twenty people but the major Christian festivals of Easter, Harvest festival and Christmas as well as Remembrance Sunday see congregations of fifty or more attendees.

- 5.9 In order to maintain the fabric of the building and to ensure enough funds to pay the Parish share to the diocese of Hereford, the PCC hold a number of fundraising events throughout the year including:

- an annual fete in the church and churchyard,
 - concerts and lectures,
 - flower and arts festivals
 - community coffee mornings.
- 5.10 Groups of volunteers help to clean and maintain the building and churchyard with Stoke Lacy's 'Flower Fairies' creating outstanding floral displays for special occasions. At least twice a year a major churchyard 'tidy-up' takes place, and the churchyard is mown regularly.
- 5.11 The churchyard offers a quiet public place for contemplation and for relatives to tend the graves of their loved ones. During the Covid-19 lockdowns it has been used as an outdoor space where local people can meet friends in a socially distanced environment. To facilitate this plastic seating, tables and a gazebo have been provided. It has proved to be very popular and very clearly demonstrates the importance of open spaces for social interaction which is vital for our mental as well as physical health. There are a number of well-established trees in the churchyard, large conifers, and some ancient yew trees. The stone lychgate was erected in memory of the Reverend Henry Morgan and the cast iron kissing gate at the entrance to the graveyard originally came from the site of the school and the old Village Hall.
- 5.12 There are ongoing community projects to explore the oral history of the Parish, the history of the church and its rectors as well as the revival of the Stoke Lacy Flower Show which had been established by the Morgan rectors. A project has recently been completed exploring the history of the Parish, the church and its rectors as well as the revival of the Stoke Lacy Flower Show which had been established by the Morgan rectors. There is a wildlife project to attract more species and to manage 'God's Acre'.

Netherwood

- 5.13 A few hundred yards to the south of the church is a nine-acre area of woodland with full public access. The site, known as Netherwood, was acquired in 1999 and is managed by the Woodland Trust as one of the 'Woods on your doorstep' created to commemorate the millennium. Within the woodland is an open space for picnicking, play and recreation as well as pathways for woodland walkers.



Woodland maintenance at Netherwood using traditional methods



Netherwood Sign – Stoke Lacy

Plough Inn Public House

- 5.14 The Plough Inn at Stoke Cross is a popular family run pub with a bar, lounge, restaurant and function room for weddings and parties. During the Covid-19 pandemic it provided a much appreciated take-away service.



Plough Inn

Education

- 5.15 There are no schools or nurseries in Stoke Lacy; the primary school closed in 1967, which means that all children have to be transported by car or bus some distance. Primary aged children travel to school in various locations such as Burley Gate (2 miles), St Peters in Bromyard (4 miles), Pencombe (3.5 miles), Brockhampton (5 miles), Bredenbury (6 miles) and some travel as far as Hereford (10 miles) and beyond. Similarly, secondary age children must travel to Queen Elizabeth in Bromyard or to a number of schools in Hereford, for example Bishop's School, St Mary's, Lugwardine and Hereford Sixth Form College as well as other schools and colleges further afield.

Local Green Space

- 5.16 It is a characteristic of the Parish of Stoke Lacy that dwellings are interspersed with agricultural land, woods and green spaces.
- 5.17 The NPPF includes a relatively new provision - the designation of Local Green Space to protect locally significant areas from development. This is set out in paragraphs 101 to 103. Paragraph 102 sets out the criteria for such designations: 'The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:
- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
 - b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
 - c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.'

Consultation Responses

- 5.18 The Issues and Options consultation provided an opportunity to ask residents whether they considered the NDP should identify any Local Green Spaces for protection. 98% of

respondents (64) agreed that the NDP should include one or more Local Green Spaces. Several suggestions were put forward including Netherwood, the green space and traditional orchard near the Village Hall and the churchyard.

5.19 The justifications for the candidate Local Green Spaces are set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Local Green Spaces

Proposed Local Green Space	Close Proximity to Community	Demonstrably Special	Local in Character
Netherwood	Several yards from Church and Stoke Lacy village.	Walking and exercise area. Well used and regarded woodland. Netherwood was acquired in 1999 and is managed by the Woodland Trust as one of the 'Woods on your doorstep' created to commemorate the millennium. Within the woodland is an open space for picnicking, play and recreation as well as pathways for woodland walkers.	Nine-acre area of woodland with full public access.
Churchyard	Within Stoke Lacy village – very prominent	Use for Village Fayres, events and functions. Also used as a meeting place for Parishioners. Heritage significance as it forms part of the setting of the Grade II listed church and is an important open space within the conservation area.	Integral part of Stoke Lacy community and an important small space in the heart of the village.

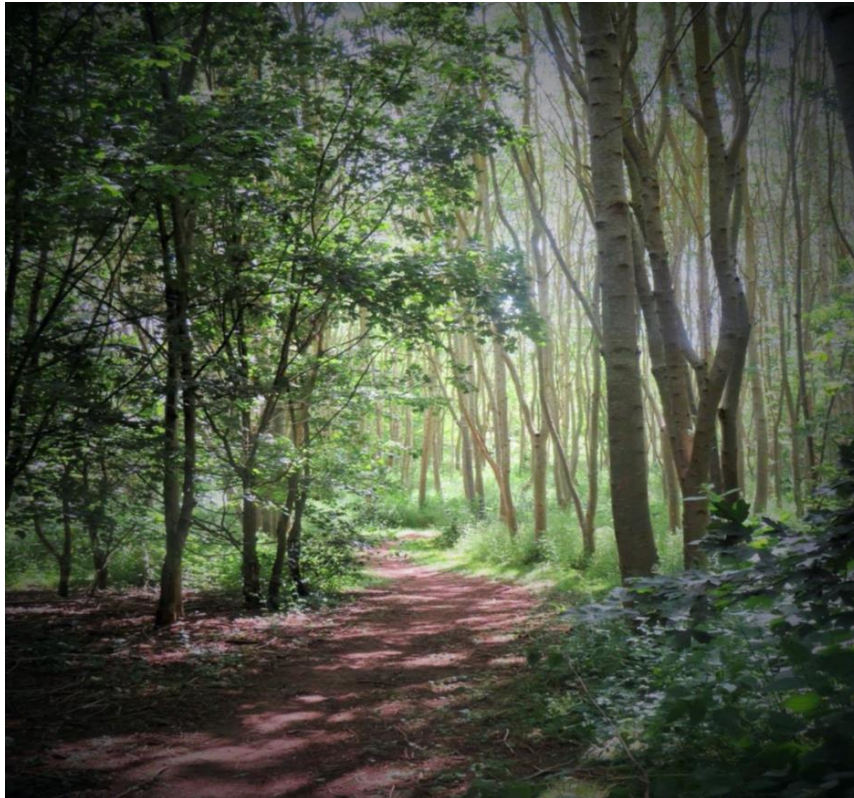
5.20 The Local Green Spaces which meet the criteria in the NPPF are identified on the Policies Map for Stoke Lacy (Map 3A) and protected in Policy SL2.

Draft Policy SL2: Local Green Space

The following areas as identified on the Stoke Lacy Policies Map (Map 3A) are protected as Local Green Spaces:

- Netherwood
- Churchyard.

Proposals for inappropriate development will only be allowed in very special circumstances.



Netherwood – Stoke Lacy

Public Open Space

- 5.21 The Parish has very limited play areas and no playing pitches. There are two small areas of public space which have been incorporated into the Woodland View development.
- 5.22 The Herefordshire Play Facilities Study 2012¹⁰, in the Rural Action Plans notes that Burley Gate Primary School catchment includes Stoke Lacy (population under 500) which has no formal play provision. This lack of local facilities was noted at the NDP parish meeting on 5th February 2020 when a member of the public commented on the lack of accessible green space for youngsters and that given the number of family houses in the new development there should be a children's playground.

Planning Policy

- 5.23 The NPPF paragraph 92 advises that 'Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which a) promote social interaction ... and c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs.' Core Strategy Policy OS1 - Requirement for open space, sports and recreation facilities sets out that 'The provision of appropriate open space, sports and recreation facilities will arise in the following proposals for planning applications: 1. all new residential dwellings ...'

Consultation Responses

- 5.24 The responses to the Issues and Options showed that there was strong support for the provision of a new public open space in the Parish with 88% (57 respondents) agreeing that this should be included in the NDP, if sufficient funding could be identified and secured. The

¹⁰ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/105/play_facilities_study_2012

consultation also asked which facilities should be included and a range of suggestions were put forward including 'woods, trees, seating, play area, picnic area, dog walking, provision for children, teenagers, and the elderly'. There were suggestions 'to improve existing facilities at Netherwood, to provide a new space between the two settlements of Stoke Cross and Stoke Lacy and to provide separate spaces for each settlement'.

- 5.25 The consultation responses to the emerging Draft Plan showed that 75% of respondents supported the Draft Policy. There were a number of comments, including concerns about possible disturbance, recognition that spaces may provide opportunities for bringing the community together, and that local people should be involved in identifying and maintaining any open spaces. There was also a suggestion that proposals for a play area should be centrally located to reduce the requirement for car parking.
- 5.26 Draft Policy SL3 supports the provision of a new public open space in the Parish and encourages developers to include contributions to help provide a suitable new space for the benefit of local people. When recreational green spaces are considered, it is important that on-going maintenance is taken into account.

Draft Policy SL3: Public Open Space

Proposals for new public open spaces to meet local recreational and community needs or improvements to existing spaces will be supported where they include one or more of the following:

- Areas of woodland, trees and wildflower planting to support local biodiversity;
- Planting of herbs and local traditional fruit trees and bushes;
- Seating and picnic areas;
- A play area for young children;
- Facilities for teenagers; and
- Accessible and safe provision for older people and those with mobility problems.

Designs should ensure accessibility for all through provision of adequate car and cycle parking and safe pedestrian and cycle access and paths. Preferably proposals should be centrally located, within walking distance of residential areas but sited and designed to minimise disturbance and protect residential amenity.

All schemes should be designed to minimise future maintenance costs and be designed in consultation with the local community.

6.0 Built Character

Introduction

- 6.1 Development in the Parish of Stoke Lacy is concentrated in the two small villages of Stoke Cross almost in the centre of the Parish, and Stoke Lacy just to the south. These two settlements include fields and orchards. They are linked by the A465 and separated by more open fields.
- 6.2 The settlement of Stoke Lacy includes the parish church of St Peters & St Pauls, the Old Rectory, a farm, fields, small-holdings, and several converted Hop Kilns and farm buildings which are now in residential use.
- 6.3 Stoke Cross includes the Village Hall, the Plough Inn (the only local pub), Wye Valley Brewery (the main employer of the area) and a small industrial estate. From 1938, Symonds Cider and English Wine Company was based in Stoke Cross and orchards were planted to supply apples for the cider. This company operated as a family firm until it was taken over by Greenall & Whitley in 1984, and then Bulmers in 1989. The plant in Stoke Lacy closed in 2000. Wye Valley Brewery is now located in the village on the Symonds site and produces real ale. Housing at Stoke Cross includes a mix of houses along Woodend Lane, including the Grade II Listed Folly. Most of the new development in the Parish has been concentrated in Stoke Cross including some former council housing, the more recent Woodland View, and there is planning permission for a further housing development (a 'commitment' shown on Map 3B Policies Map for Stoke Cross) at the Orchard.
- 6.4 The Parish also includes a small hamlet of 15 houses at Cricks Green, other scattered outlying farms, small holdings and cottages, with a slightly greater concentration along Woodend Lane and Stokes Lane.



Stoke Lacy and Church of St Peter & St Paul

- 6.5 The settlement of Stoke Lacy is concentrated around the church of St Peter & St Paul (a Grade II Listed Building) which dates back to Norman times, on what is believed to be a much older Celtic/Saxon site. The list of rectors indicates the earliest incumbent was John of Bristol in 1279. The current building dates from 1863 when a major renovation took place designed by architect F R Kempson whose father had been Rector of the church 1839 -1858. The church was remodelled and renovated, leaving only the Norman arch with a screen and leaf frieze on the cornice. It is constructed of stone with slate roofs and a shingle spire and consists of a nave and chancel with a stone bell-tower. There are six bells, the oldest of which dates to 1350.



Lead Bell Ringer in the bell-tower

- 6.6 The oldest part of the church is the chancel arch which dates from the 12th century when the manor was held by the De Lacy family. The church also boasts a 16th century carved oak screen and some well-carved Victorian choir stalls as well as a plain medieval font and a Victorian pulpit. The stained glass and memorials are largely 19th century.
- 6.7 The church porch contains two stained glass windows one of which is dedicated to Peter Morgan whose father HFS Morgan was founder of the Morgan Motor Company. HFS Morgan's father and grandfather were Rectors of the church between 1887 and 1937. The family graves are in the graveyard.

Stoke Lacy Conservation Area

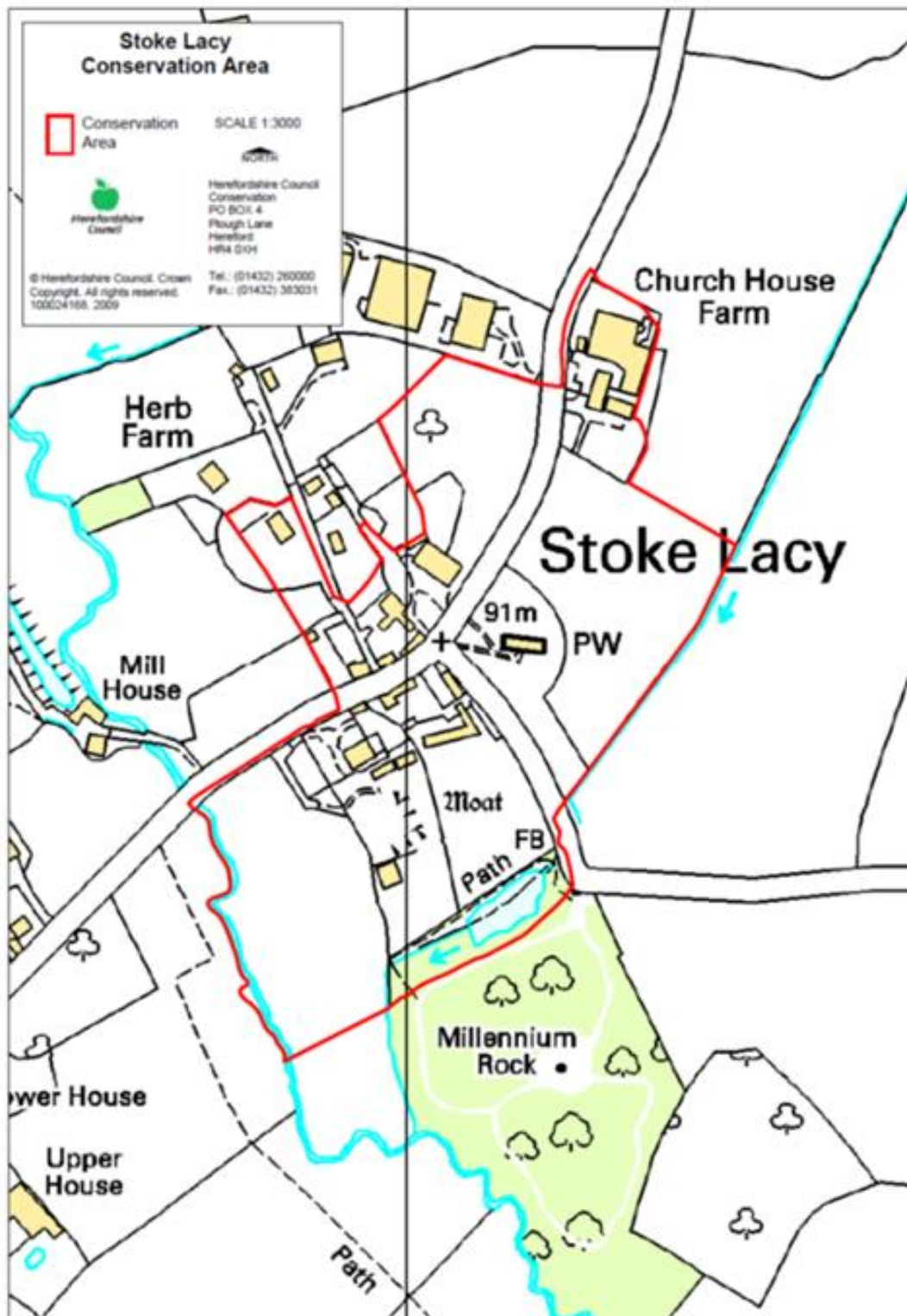
- 6.8 Conservation areas are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'¹¹. Conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities (here, Herefordshire Council) to protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place – in other words the features that make it

¹¹ s69(1)(a) Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

unique and distinctive. Although conservation area designation may mean some additional planning controls and considerations, these exist to protect the elements which make the place special. Unsympathetic changes can erode the special character of the area over time.

- 6.9 Stoke Lacy conservation area was designated in 1993 and is located in the centre of the settlement, around the church and built heritage linked to the Morgan family. The conservation area also includes two large farmhouses and their farm buildings.
- 6.10 The extent of the Conservation Area is shown on Map 4. Details of the conservation area can be found in Appendix 2.
- 6.11 Buildings within the conservation area, like others in the village, are of a mix of materials and styles; the church is built with stone and its nave and chancel roofs are of slate with the tower being roofed with oak shingles. The other buildings in the conservation area are variously built with brick, stone and painted render and are roofed with slate or tiles. The Design Guidance and Codes document provides more detail about local architecture in the conservation area and village which is defined as Character Area 1. The church is in rock-faced red-grey sandstone with buff dressing and quoins with grey sandstone chancel and slate roofs in the Early-English style. The Old Rectory is constructed of red sandstone rubble and sandstone ashlar with a pitched slate roof and windows are sash. Upper House is constructed in red brick in Flemish Bond, with sash windows, stone lintels a central doorway, two gable ends and a double pitched roof. The original farmhouse includes an ornate cast iron veranda roofed in slate along the full length of the western elevation. The character area also includes some post-war bungalows on Herb Lane and on the access to Little Cowarne.
- 6.12 A number of buildings have been converted to dwellings within the conservation area, including the six barns at Nether Court, Hop Kilns as well as the former stabling at the Old Rectory now known as The Old Coach House. These structures are constructed in red brick mainly in Flemish Bond, rubble masonry and with hipped slate roofs. The former stable at the Old Rectory has also been converted and is known as The Old Coach House.

Map 4: Stoke Lacy Conservation Area¹²



¹² https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/50/conservation_areas_-_maps



Newton Farmhouse Grade II Listed – late 15th Century

Listed Buildings and Other Built Heritage

- 6.13 Stoke Lacy parish has 33 Grade II Listed Buildings including the church, houses, farmhouses, barns, hop kilns, a wall and a churchyard cross. A Grade II listing indicates buildings are 'of special interest warranting every effort to preserve them¹³.' Some of the individual listed buildings form part of a group of listed buildings, and if so, are grouped together in the descriptions. Appendix 3 includes Map 5 with the location of all the listed buildings in the Parish and excerpts taken from the original listings. Where possible detail of subsequent changes and conversions to buildings have been outlined.
- 6.14 The Moat at Nether Court and the Motte at Stoke Cross have had recent excavations and the existence of the moat is proven and we are advised by a local landscape historian that Laser Imaging using LIDAR confirms the presence of the Motte as well. Hall Place Farm, within the area of the Motte, may be of significant interest as it is believed to have been built over a medieval settlement once known as “la Halle”. In recent times metal detectorists are said to have found clues to a site of a medieval settlement in a nearby field.

Cricks Green and Rural Area

- 6.15 Cricks Green lies northwest of Stoke Cross towards Bromyard with 15 dwellings comprising small holdings and private homes. The A465 runs through the centre of the settlement connecting it with Stoke Cross, Stoke Lacy and Bromyard. Speed is restricted to 50mph through Cricks Green, however it is awaiting a decision on a possible change to 40mph.
- 6.16 Development in the remainder of the Parish comprises scattered cottages, small holdings and farms.

Planning Policy

- 6.17 Core Strategy Policy LD1 – Landscape and townscape sets out that 'Development proposals should: demonstrate that character of the landscape and townscape has positively influenced the design, scale, nature and site selection, protection and enhancement of the

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/principles-of-selection-for-listing-buildings>

setting of settlements and designated area.' Core Strategy Policy LD4 Historic environment and heritage assets requires development proposals affecting heritage assets and the wider historic to:

1. Protect, conserve, and where possible enhance heritage assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance through appropriate management, uses and sympathetic design, in particular emphasising the original form and function where possible;
2. where opportunities exist, contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the townscape or wider environment, especially within conservation areas.

Policy SD1 – Sustainable design and energy efficiency sets out that 'Development proposals should create safe, sustainable, well integrated environments for all members of the community.'

Public Consultation

- 6.18 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that there is strong local support for the NDP to address design. 91% (59 respondents) agreed that the NDP should include detailed policies on design. Comments included concerns that 'local materials should be used such as Herefordshire stone, oak framing, rather than modern red brick to reflect local character and large estates of generic designs should be avoided'. There were also a number of comments 'supporting innovative modern designs which incorporate green technologies, permeable surfaces to manage rainwater and use of solar power and heat pumps'.
- 6.19 The informal consultation on the emerging Draft Plan did not include specific questions about design as the Steering Group was in the process of procuring design codes. However, in the general comments there were concerns that development should not comprise large estates, housing development should be attractive and not urbanise the area, and should be of high-quality sustainable design with an emphasis on sustainably sourced materials and energy efficiency. In addition, developments should have safe access to public highway and take account of local drainage, sewage and flooding issues.

Stoke Lacy Design Guidance and Codes

- 6.20 The Parish Council commissioned the preparation of design codes by AECOM through the Locality Technical Support programme for Neighbourhood Plans.
- 6.21 The Stoke Lacy Design Guidance and Codes document was produced to inform new pocket development proposed in the area. It presents a summary of the key characteristics as a 'character assessment' of the Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Plan Area which make the neighbourhood area a special place to live in and visit. This information was then used to inform a specific Design Guide to promote sustainable, representable development and guide best practice across the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The document has been used to inform NDP Policies SL4 and SL5.

Draft Policy SL4: Protecting Heritage and Local Built Character

1. Development proposals should have regard to Design Code 01 Pattern and layout of buildings. In particular designs for development across the neighbourhood area should:
 - a. Reflect local spatial character by adopting similar development layouts;
 - b. Have a density and scale which respond to the local character of low density and small scale developments;
 - c. Be designed to be permeable, providing vehicular and non-vehicular connections to the existing settlement;
 - d. Provide street connections to enhance connectivity within and through the development and parish, particularly by improving pedestrian connectivity along the A465, to existing Public Rights of Way, and to the countryside;
 - e. Integrate opportunities for contextual views, habitat corridors, and active travel;
 - f. Use layouts which respond to site specific micro-climates to increase the environmental comfort for building users, both internally and externally; and
 - g. Support passive surveillance for enhanced security, particularly relating to streets, pedestrian/bicycle access, play and parking areas.
2. Development proposals should have regard to Design Code 02 Green infrastructure, active travel and open space. In particular designs for development across the neighbourhood area should:
 - a. Retain mature trees and hedges and ensure new planting is appropriate to the local microclimate and soil type, and species are climate resilient;
 - b. Include orchards and hop planting where possible;
 - c. Incorporate green infrastructure to provide interconnectivity between existing green infrastructure networks;
 - d. Use SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) where appropriate; and
 - e. Include active travel infrastructure where development is close to bus stops.
3. Designs should demonstrate how they have incorporated the neighbourhood area-wide Design Principles set out in Design Code 04 Architecture and details. In particular schemes should:
 - a. Maintain the traditional vernacular of two story pitched roofed houses, although bungalows may be acceptable to provide variation in house types particularly where the local context includes single storey conversions of former farm buildings;

- b. Use perpendicular sited buildings to mark boundaries and create a sense of enclosure;
 - c. Include detailing such as pitched porches, dormers and chimneys. Decorative bricks such as Flemish Bond and contrasting lintels and string courses are encouraged where they accord with settlement character;
 - d. Incorporate generous eave and verge overhangs and traditional, natural or sustainably sourced innovative materials in soffits or verge cappings; and
 - e. Include innovation such as green/brown roofs or standing seam where appropriate to the local context. Flat roofs for buildings, extensions, garages and dormer windows should be avoided.
- 4. Designs should demonstrate how they have incorporated the neighbourhood area-wide Design Principles set out in Design Code 05 Materials. In particular schemes should:
 - a. Use suitable materials and façade treatments where building elevations are exposed and subject to prevailing winds and rain, taking into account sustainability and longevity. The preference is for locally sourced materials such as Herefordshire brick and stone which is aligned with local geological character;
 - b. Give careful attention to matching the tonal attributes and variation across facades;
 - c. Consider timber frame construction sourced from local suppliers;
 - d. Use slate or terracotta tiles in roofs. Standing-seam and timber shingles roofs may offer an innovative alternative to slate or terracotta;
 - e. Avoid low quality concrete tiles; and
 - f. Use brick or stone walls or native planted hedge in boundary treatments.
- 5. Designs should demonstrate how they have incorporated the neighbourhood area-wide Design Principles set out in Design Code 06 Building modifications, extension, conversion and plot infill. In particular extension schemes should:
 - a. Use suitable bricks of similar appearance and size to the host building.
 - b. Be subordinate to the existing building: the original building should remain the dominant element of the property regardless of the number of extensions;
 - c. Not cause unacceptable detriment to the privacy of neighbouring dwellings;
 - d. Incorporate an architectural style which accords with the host building, by using the same or innovative complimentary design language, character and fenestration rhythm;
 - e. Consider modern designs with contrasting high-quality materials

- for extensions to listed or heritage buildings of significance, with clear definition between old and new;
- f. Be thermally efficient, secure and provide enough natural light, where external office spaces are provided for working from home;
- 6. Infill plot development should respect the scale, massing and architectural details of the character area within which it sits.
- 7. The detailed Character Area Specific Design Codes should also be considered in proposals. In particular:
 - In CA1 - Stoke Lacy Conservation Area and Village**
 - a. The quantity of roadside facing development should be restricted to ones or twos; and
 - b. Communal access and development that extends further than one plot back is supported.
 - In CA2 - Stoke Cross**
 - c. The number of dwellings in a scheme should be restricted to five or less;
 - d. Centrally located new development could support sensitive mixed-uses; and
 - e. New developments should have not more than two dwellings facing the A465 with a primary elevation.
 - In CA3 - Outer Neighbourhood Plan Area**
 - f. Small-scale farm conversions which respect the original farm building layouts are supported; and
 - g. High-quality, sensitively sited new houses on single plots could be suitable subject to Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 – 2031 Policy RA3 – Herefordshire’s countryside.

Draft Policy SL5: Promoting Innovative and Sustainable Design

All development proposals should demonstrate how designs have incorporated high standards of resource and energy efficiency as recommended in the guidance set out in Design Code 07 Waste, recycling and utilities and Design Code 08 Sustainability and building performance.

1. Waste, Recycling and Utilities

Developments should integrate the following into designs wherever possible:

- a. Appropriately designed storage for waste and recycling;
- b. Renewable energy technologies where site conditions provide sustainable advantages;

- c. Simple rainwater harvesting facilities such as water butts to reduce water consumption and provide opportunities for water storage and re-use of grey water;
- d. Sensitive lighting design in accordance with NDP Policy SL1. Lighting design should also consider ambient lighting levels and identify sensitive receptors to artificial lighting; and
- e. Electric vehicle charging, mobility vehicle charging, cycle charging and secure storage.

2. Sustainability and building performance

Developments should include the following wherever possible:

- a. High levels of air tightness through insulation, draught proofing and glazing;
 - b. Use of low carbon heating and energy technologies;
 - c. Consideration of increased occurrence of future adverse weather events such as extreme heat, cold and storm events which increase flood risk; buildings should be designed to be well ventilated and cool in summer, warm in winter, and flood resilient; and
 - d. Landscaping of gardens and green spaces to reduce flood risk and provide shading and shelter.
3. Renewable technologies should be well integrated to protect the existing character of the building in accordance with Design Code 06. PV, solar thermal or other building mounted services should be located discretely. Where new technologies are proposed for listed buildings or other heritage assets, installation should respect the key elevations.
4. Developments which aim to renovate, upgrade and enhance derelict or degrading properties should be encouraged as re-use is more sustainable.
5. Overall developers should aim to go above and beyond current building regulations to future proof development where viability and deliverability allow.

7.0 Business and Tourism



Wye Valley Brewery and the Plough – Stoke Cross

Local Businesses

7.1 The principle local employers in the Parish are listed below:

- **Wye Valley Brewery** which produces, bottles and distributes real ale it has a small shop on the premises selling beer and Wye Valley related products – employs 60 approx. <https://www.wyevalleybrewery.co.uk> .
- **wcm+a** (West Country Marketing) which produces name and promotional badges and merchandise – employs 60 approx. <https://www.wcma.co.uk> .
- **The Plough Inn** which is the local Pub, Restaurant and functions facility – employs around 5 approx. <http://www.ploughinnstokelacy.co.uk> .
- **Local Hire Services Plant**, Machinery Hire, Tool, Plant, Access, Welfare and toilets. <https://www.localhireservices.co.uk>.
- **W J Fenn Electrical Services Ltd.**, electrical services including domestic, commercial, industrial, agricultural and testing – employs 6. <https://www.wjfennelectricalservices.co.uk>

7.2 Smaller operations include a range of businesses such as fireworks, carpentry and joinery, tyres, jewellery design and manufacture, a blacksmith, photography, artist, writer, garden machinery sales and service, and drone and video photography.

7.3 There is a growing tourist / visitor economy with accommodation provided by the Plough Inn (which also has a restaurant) and in several self-catering holiday cottages and houses that offer Air B&B including holiday accommodation at Mintridge, the Oast and Chaff House.

Farming in Stoke Lacy



Harvesting potatoes – Newton Farm, Cricks Green

- 7.4 Stoke Lacy is home to a number of different farm businesses, covering crops, livestock, dairy, poultry, apples, and renewables. From smaller enterprises to business passing the million-pound turnover mark, future housing developments should allow these well-established farms to continue the efficient production of high quality food.
- 7.5 There are a number of small holdings and highly efficient farms, some still run by families whose predecessors have worked the local soil for centuries. Four of the farming families in Stoke Lacy have farmed some part of their farm for the whole of the Queen's reign, with the oldest family being able to trace its roots in the area back to 1864. Throughout the sixties and seventies, hundreds of seasonal workers would descend on the Parish to help local families with hop picking or current picking. Some of these workers have taking up permanent positions in the area where they remain today.
- 7.6 Although farming practices have changed, many of the farms in Stoke Lacy run the same enterprises as they did many years ago, including beef, sheep, cereals, and apples. The biggest changes have been the decline in top fruit, hops and dairy herds. However, as some

of these traditional farming practices declined, the Parish has embraced diversifications into more modern farming methods. As well as this, many farms have seen the addition of renewable energy and more sustainable practices so that they can continue producing food to world leading standards while caring for the environment.

- 7.7 In addition to farms, the Parish is also home to a number of people involved in full-time agricultural support businesses. These include machinery businesses, equestrian centres, and an agricultural recruitment company.



Apple orchard, Stoke Lacy

Home working

- 7.8 Home working has become more common in recent years, and the Covid-19 pandemic has led to increased pressures for many more people to work from home. Access to high speed broadband and reliable mobile signals are essential for rural businesses and those working from home.
- 7.9 Although Stoke Lacy and the surrounding area has been part of the government led 'Fastershire' project, not all houses yet have access to high speed broadband and still rely on other service providers such as BT, 3 and Sky. Gradually, the old copper lines are being upgraded to optical technology and BT are planning to convert the PSTN Network to an IP Core by 2025. Mobile signals in the area of Stoke Lacy are poor and the most prominent signal is provided by EE.

Planning Policy

- 7.10 The NPPF sets out in paragraph 84 that 'Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

- 7.11 Core Strategy Policy RA5 – Re-use of rural buildings advises that 'the sustainable re-use of individual and groups of redundant or disused buildings, including farmsteads in rural areas, which will make a positive contribution to rural businesses and enterprise and support the local economy (including live work units) or which otherwise contributes to residential development, or is essential to the social well-being of the countryside, will be permitted', subject to criteria. Policy RA6 - Rural economy sets out that 'employment generating proposals which help diversify the rural economy such as knowledge based creative industries, environmental technologies, business diversification projects and home working will be supported' subject to criteria.

Public Consultation

- 7.12 In the Issues and Options consultation 98% of respondents (64) supported a policy on local business growth and tourism in the NDP. There were a number of suggestions linked to tourism including 'support for tourist accommodation including conversions', although some comments were against this, for instance 'due to the narrow width of roads and the lack of infrastructure', there were concerns about 'caravan parks, static homes, and camping'. There were suggestions 'for exploring opportunities linked to footpaths, wildlife, and local heritage'. Comments also noted 'the need to support local traders, suggestions for small start-up units, extending Woodend business park and a farm/local shop'. There were also a number of suggestions for actions including 'improving signage and footpaths, and provision of electric charging points at the Village Hall'. These will be considered by the Parish Council.
- 7.13 The responses to the consultation on the emerging Draft Plan were largely supportive of the Draft Policy, with 75% of respondents supporting the Policy. However, comments included concerns about tourism, the need to limit proposals to small scale schemes, and potential impacts of development on the rural area, particularly from traffic on rural roads, access issues, noise and light.
- 7.14 Draft Policy SL6 has been prepared to support appropriate and small scale tourism and local business related development in Stoke Lacy.

Draft Policy SL6: Tourism and Rural Enterprise

Development proposals for small scale tourism and rural enterprise will be supported in Stoke Lacy Parish where:

1. Development comprises the sensitive conversion of former agricultural buildings or where new development is proposed, development is of a high

design quality which is sensitive to the character of the surrounding rural area;

2. Schemes provide visitor accommodation or small business units to support local rural diversification and employment opportunities;
3. Suitable and safe access is provided, and there is adequate on site car and cycle parking for visitors and occupants;
4. Applicants can demonstrate that the local highway network is adequate in terms of design and capacity to cater for any increases in traffic generation; and
5. The amenity of any neighbouring residential areas is protected, and noise and light pollution are minimised.

Proposals for farm/village shops and cafes will be encouraged.

Site Allocation

- 7.15 In response to the Call for Sites, a site at Hopton Court Farm was put forward for consideration for employment uses. The Technical Site Assessment Report set out that Site 9 (Barn Conversion at Hopton Court Farm) is potentially suitable, subject to the mitigation of minor constraints. Therefore, this site was included in the consultation on the emerging draft plan as an option for a site allocation for rural employment.
- 7.16 The responses from residents to the proposal were mixed: 29% strongly supported or supported the proposal, 43% were neutral, 21% objected or strongly objected and 8% did not answer.
- 7.17 The comments set out a number of concerns, particularly about the unsuitability of rural, single track roads such as Hopton Lane to accommodate more traffic, noise and disturbance. However, comments in support of the proposal included that the scheme would provide opportunities for business and employment in the area, give new uses for existing, redundant buildings and bring old buildings back into use. There was also support for business ventures, small business start-ups and employment in the area.
- 7.18 Site Allocation SL7/1 supports the conversion of a barn at Hopton Court Farm for employment uses subject to criteria.

Site Allocation SL7/1: Barn Conversion for Employment Use at Hopton Court Farm



The conversion of the barn at Hopton Court Farm as shown on the Policies Map (Map 3A) is supported where:

1. Proposals are for the conversion of the building to workshops and employment uses;
2. Suitable mitigation measures are provided to protect and enhance the area of Traditional Orchards (a Priority Habitat) which is adjacent to the site;
3. The septic tank on the site is removed and any ground contamination is made safe;
4. Development is of a suitable scale taking into account the location close to a dwelling and other farm buildings;
5. Development does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of nearby residents, particularly in terms of noise and disturbance; and
6. Traffic movements can be accommodated safely within the rural road network.

8.0 Accessibility and Transport

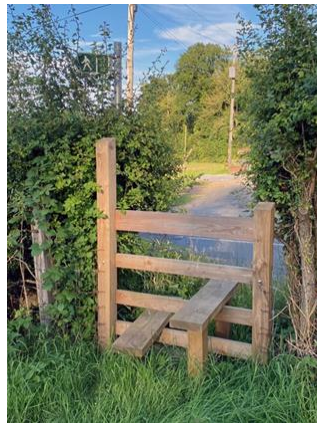


Bus Stop

- 8.1 Transport and accessibility are important issues for many local residents in the Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Area. The A465 runs through the Parish connecting the two main settlements of Stoke Cross and Stoke Lacy to Hereford, Bromyard, and via the A44, to Worcester and Leominster. For only 6 days per week there is an infrequent bus service to Hereford and Worcester via Bromyard that stops at Stoke Lacy, Stoke Cross and Cricks Green. The bus service provides poor connectivity to other towns. On the 7th day there is not a bus service. Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross do not even have a mention in the current bus timetable!! The nearest rail station is Hereford.
- 8.2 Enforced, as a result of poor public transport, most residents rely on private cars to access education, employment opportunities, shops and local facilities. The 2011 Census showed that car ownership was relatively high with 76.2% of households having access to 1 or 2 vehicles. It is likely that this figure has increased in recent years in line with national trends, and it may continue to do so, possibly with greater reliance on electric vehicles which require provision of suitable charging points.
- 8.3 Whilst the two main settlements are connected by the A465 they are not connected by an official, or safe, footpath. There is a very narrow track next to the A465 which has been deemed to not be wide enough by the highways department and is not maintained and which, dangerously, does not run the length of the road between the settlements. Only on one side of the road is there a footpath that links most of the houses of Stoke Cross along the A465. There is not a safe designated crossing area.
- 8.4 There are various other indirect public footpaths linking the settlements to each other and the wider rural area (see Appendix 4 Map 6). Public Footpaths in Stoke Lacy Parish). A new parish council footpaths officer has provided a comprehensive review of the 9 public rights

of way around the Parish. It is hoped that repairs will be made to some of the bridges which are currently closed to public access.

- 8.5 At the public meeting on 5th February 2020, residents advised they 'would like to see public rights of way well maintained and improved. Some paths are currently closed or obstructed. Landowners should be made aware of their responsibilities and encouraged to install gates and dog-friendly stiles so that there is accessibility for the public to exercise their dogs and improved accessibility for the less able, disabled, and young children'. (These points are being promoted by our Parish Footpaths Officer.)



Planning Policy

- 8.6 The NPPF promotes more sustainable transport options such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport wherever possible. Paragraph 104 sets out that 'Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued. Paragraph 106 advises that 'Planning policies should: d) provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans).'
- 8.7 Core Strategy Policy MT1 – Traffic management, highway safety and promoting active travel advises that 'Development proposals should incorporate the following principle requirements covering movement and transportation: 2. promote and, where possible, incorporate integrated transport connections and supporting infrastructure (depending on the nature and location of the site), including access to services by means other than private motorised transport; 3. Encourage active travel behaviour to reduce numbers of short distance car journeys through the use of travel plans and other promotional and awareness raising activities; and 5. protect existing local and long distance footways, cycleways and bridleways unless an alternative route of at least equal utility value can be used, and facilitate improvements to existing or provide new connections to these routes.'
- 8.8 Additional development in the area may lead to increased pressures on road networks. Development should support movement by means other than the private car wherever possible, as well as linking to existing walking and cycling networks and supporting improvements wherever feasible. Reduced reliance on the private car, particularly for short journeys would have a number of benefits for the Parish including lower carbon emissions and improved air quality, reduced noise pollution and improved health and wellbeing. Support for electric vehicles (cars and cycles, and possibly scooters) could also form part of the measures to reduce carbon consumption and emissions locally.

- 8.9 The hilly terrain, remote location and the speed and amount of traffic on the A465 mean few people use cycles or walk for travel outside the Parish and cycling and walking are mainly seen as leisure activities. However, there may be opportunities over the next few years to promote walking and cycling as sustainable transport alternatives, particularly for short and local journeys.

Public Consultation

- 8.10 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that local people considered that the NDP should promote sustainable travel with 91% of respondents (59) supporting such a policy. There were a number of suggestions for possible actions for the Parish Council to progress in partnership with other organisations, including improvements to bus services. Comments related to planning policies included the suggestion that 'new houses should have vehicle charging points, there was a need to link new development to footpaths and improvements to accessibility and safety for cycling should be supported. There were also concerns that cycle lanes (eg on the A465) would require road widening'.
- 8.11 77% of respondents to the consultation on the emerging Draft Plan supported the Draft Policy. Negative comments included concerns that the expectations are unrealistic and pointless but there were also suggestions that there is a need to be flexible to allow for changes to vehicles and travel in the future, sites should not rely on cars or be in remote areas and the provision of a safe pedestrian pathway between 'up' and 'down' areas of the village is a high priority.
- 8.12 Draft Policy SL8 has been prepared to encourage new development to promote more sustainable travel and improved accessibility for all.

Draft Policy SL8: Improving Accessibility and Sustainable Travel

Proposals for new development and conversions should promote walking and cycling and use of public transport.

Wherever possible, schemes for new housing and employment related development should:

1. Link to existing pedestrian and cycle routes and bus stops;
2. Provide suitable and secure storage provision for bicycles;
3. Include external electric charging points for vehicles and bicycles; and
4. Contribute towards improved pedestrian and cycle linkages between Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross and enhancements to paths which provide access to the site.

- 8.12 The NDP cannot include measures such as traffic management as part of planning policies but can include separate 'Actions for the Parish Council' to help address issues that fall outside a planning policy document. The NDP Steering Group has considered the various suggestions put forward during the Issues and Options consultation and a number of proposed actions are set out in document 'Community Comments' that can be found on the website, for possible progression by the Parish Council working with other organisations and local people.

9.0 Housing



Housing at Stoke Lacy

Introduction and Context

- 9.1 Stoke Lacy has a particular character of scattered dwellings amid hedged fields and wooded areas. A few buildings dominate but most nestle into the surrounding landscape. Houses have been built in ones and twos over the centuries to meet the needs of the community, though there is now a slightly greater density of housing within the two settlements of Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross. A diverse mix of style, materials and size, has given Stoke Lacy an informal character.
- 9.2 Some farm buildings have been converted to domestic dwellings as the need for labourers has dwindled and farm sizes have increased. Cottages and rooms are increasingly being used as holiday lets.
- 9.3 Small groups of council houses were built at Westbury, Stoke Cross and Cricks Green, but most are now in private ownership. There were 24 properties within the Parish which were described as 'social housing' in the 2011 Census.
- 9.4 An estate of 28 houses in Stoke Cross, Woodland View, was completed in 2019. Its scale, density and location has led to criticism from some parts of the community. This development has served to illustrate the importance of ensuring that housing policies and proposals in the NDP are informed by extensive community consultation and engagement.
- 9.5 Another estate of 10 houses also in Stoke Cross, has outline planning consent (Ref: P172292/O Erection of 10 dwellings including 2 x 3 bedroomed bungalows, new vehicular access and associated works including area for Village Hall on Land adjoining Stoke Lacy Village Hall Stoke Lacy Herefordshire). An application for approval of Reserved Matters has been made to Herefordshire Council. At an open meeting in February 2020, members of the

community expressed no objection to new people moving into the area - their objection was to estates with questionable environmental standards and inappropriate specifications. Young people who wish to remain in the area and an increasing ageing population have had difficulty finding appropriately sized homes in the area and so have had to move away.

- 9.6 Windfall is a site that has not been specifically identified within a Local Plan. Therefore all of the previous development within the parish during the plan period is defined as windfall, including the Woodland View development, and this affects the average figures. Table 2 provides information about past windfall figures for the parish during the current plan period since 2011.

Table 2: Windfall Development

	Completions, all windfalls
2011-2012	0
2012-2013	0
2013-2014	0
2014-2015	1
2015-2016	0
2016-2017	0
2017-2018	3
2018-2019	0
2019-2020	28
2020-2021	0

- 9.7 The Parish may experience further pressure for growth and development in future years. By law planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise¹⁴. The Herefordshire Core Strategy Local Plan is currently being reviewed and if the County does not have an up to date Local Plan and a 5 year supply of housing land, it is very difficult for Herefordshire planners to resist new proposals. NDPs have to plan positively for new development.
- 9.8 NPPF paragraph 29 sets out that 'Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies'. Paragraph 70 notes that 'Neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 69a) suitable for housing in their area.' Paragraph 78 goes on to say 'In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs' and paragraph 79 advises 'To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.'

Settlement Boundaries and Planning Policy

- 9.9 Settlement boundaries show the extent of the built up area of settlements on a map and are used to direct development so that it is concentrated within or adjoins existing built form.

¹⁴ See NPPF footnotes 2 and 3. Footnote 2: The development plan includes local and neighbourhood plans that have been brought into force and any spatial development strategies produced by combined authorities or elected Mayors. Footnote 3: 3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

This supports a more sustainable pattern of development which supports local use of facilities and services such as the Village Hall, pub and bus stops and local employment opportunities. Conversions, in-fill sites and small scale development proposals are acceptable within the identified Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross settlement boundaries in principle, subject to meeting the requirements of other planning policies.

- 9.10 Outside the settlement boundaries opportunities for new development are much more limited. Rural development proposals should satisfy criteria set out in Policy RA3 Herefordshire's Countryside and H2 Rural exception sites in the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy and other relevant policies including:

- Policy RA4 Agricultural, forestry and rural enterprise dwellings
- Policy RA5 Re-use of rural buildings, and
- Policy RA6 Rural economy.

Public Consultation

- 9.11 For the Issues and Options public consultation, the Steering Group prepared two options for settlement boundaries, for each of the two settlements.
- 9.12 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that there was a preference for Option A for Stoke Cross, with 72% of respondents (47) supporting this option. Option A was preferred for Stoke Lacy also, with 65% of respondents (49) supporting this option. The two Option As were for relatively 'tight' settlement boundaries where opportunities for new development would be more limited.
- 9.13 There were a number of detailed comments in response to the questionnaire with concerns that 'the proposed boundaries were not tight enough and would allow for too much development, that greater flexibility in the rural area is needed, there is a need to protect rural identity, the consultation was too narrow and did not consider 'no development', and the church and graveyard should be removed. The settlement boundaries should protect the individual identities of the two settlements and protect them from merging'. These comments were considered by the Steering Group and resulted in the settlement boundaries being drawn tighter around existing housing and excluding the church and churchyard in Stoke Lacy and known flood areas.
- 9.14 The responses to the consultation on the emerging Draft Plan showed that there was support for the proposed settlement boundaries with 75% of respondents supporting Policy SL8. Comments included general support, that development proposals (site allocations) were outside the boundary, there is a lack of space to develop and that the lack of local facilities makes development difficult to justify. The Steering Group considered the comments and made some changes to the settlement boundaries in the Draft Plan and to former Draft Policy SL8. The commitment for 10 houses at the Orchard and Site allocation SL9/1 are also now included on the Policies Map (Map 3B).
- 9.15 Policy SL9 has been prepared to guide new housing development within the settlement boundaries. The settlement boundaries are shown on the Policies Maps, Map 3A and 3B. Residents are concerned that developments should be small in scale and infill rather than

comprising major development.¹⁵ 'Small in scale' should be taken to mean developments comprising 1 -3 houses, or slightly more where the proposal can demonstrate high-quality design which responds positively to the local context and design policies in the NDP. Infill development is development that goes in the gaps between existing buildings and such proposals also should be small in scale.

Draft Policy SL9: Development within the Settlement Boundaries

Proposals for new housing and other development will be supported within the identified Settlement Boundaries of Stoke Cross and Stoke Lacy as shown on the Policies Maps (Maps 3A and 3B) where:

1. Proposals are small in scale to protect local landscape character and setting;
2. Development of infill and backland sites does not lead to unacceptably high densities which would have an adverse impact on local character;
3. Suitable and safe access is provided;
4. The amenity of neighbouring residents is protected;
5. Design is of a high quality, responding to local character and context whilst incorporating low carbon technologies, resource efficiency measures wherever possible;
6. Development does not exacerbate flood risk and where possible provides a betterment; and
7. Suitable drainage and wastewater treatment is provided in line with Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SD4 Wastewater treatment and river water quality

Options for Housing Sites

- 9.16 The Parish Council undertook a Call for Sites in 2020 and 12 proposals were put forward. These were subjected to a technical assessment undertaken by consultants AECOM. The outcome of this assessment is published on the NDP website - see Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Plan Site Options and Assessment Report, February 2021.

Public Consultation

- 9.17 The Issues and Options survey also asked the Community about the number of new houses that should be provided in the Parish up to 2031. Responses were split. 26% (17 respondents) supported each of the options for 0-5, 6-10 and 11-15 new houses. 17% of respondents (11) supported 16-20 houses and 5% (3) supported 20+ new houses.
- 9.18 Comments included concerns about '*larger estate type development*' and preferences for '*smaller sites*', with suggestions that '*there should be more development in the Stoke Lacy settlement in the future*'. A question of the density and location of developments was not clearly covered in the questionnaire.

¹⁵ Major development is defined in the glossary of the NPPF as: 'For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more.'

- 9.19 The consultation on the emerging Draft Plan asked residents and stakeholders for their opinions on the sites identified in the AECOM Technical report as suitable for housing or suitable subject to constraints being overcome. These were:
- Site 3 (Crossfield House) for 8 houses
 - Site 4 (to the north of Westbury Road, Stoke Cross) for 7 houses
 - Site 5 (to the east of Westbury Road, Stoke Cross) for 10 houses and
 - Site 6 (to the east of the Parish Hall, Stoke Cross) for 6 houses.
- 9.20 A Table showing the responses is provided in Appendix 5. There were also a large number of comments, both in support of and objecting to each site. Overall, there were more objections than support for each site, although a significant proportion of respondents (ranging from 23% - 30%) were neutral or did not answer. Comments included concerns about the scale of development proposals, urban creep, traffic and access issues, negative impacts on local wildlife and other residents, and flooding and drainage / sewage issues.
- 9.21 The following site allocation is therefore identified in the Draft Plan.

Draft Site Allocation SL9/1: Crossfield House, Stoke Cross

The part of the garden at Crossfield House, Stoke Cross as shown on the Policies Map (Map 3B) is allocated for housing development for up to 2 dwellings.



Development will be supported where:

1. Suitable and safe access for all modes is provided to the A465 from the existing narrow road south of Woodland View;
2. Existing hedgerows and the pond on the site are retained where possible; and if removed mitigation measures include replacement / relocation and planting schemes use appropriate local native species; and
3. Suitable mitigation measures are provided to protect and enhance the Priority Habitat area of Traditional Orchards to the south of the site.



Newton Farm, late 15th Century



Woodland View, completed 2019

House Types and Sizes

- 9.21 Stoke Lacy Parish includes a range of house types and sizes from traditional rural cottages and farmhouses to more modern developments such as Woodland View and the Orchards (yet to be developed)
- 9.22 At the Parish NDP meeting on 5th February 2020, concerns were expressed that '*although local people had been able to buy houses on the new development at Newlands [Woodland View], there were no affordable rental properties for local families*'.
- 9.23 The 2011 Census recorded 167 dwellings in the Parish. Of these 113 or 67.7% were detached whole houses or bungalows and 42 (25.1%) were semi-detached whole houses or bungalows, showing that the Parish has a relatively high proportion of larger housing. In terms of tenure, of the 151 households, 116 (76.8%) owned their properties, none were in shared ownership (part owned and part rented), 22 (14.6%) were in social rented accommodation and 12 (7.9%) were in private rented housing.
- 9.24 The **Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment – 2012 Update, November 2013**¹⁶ identifies a number of housing market areas and Stoke Lacy falls within the Bromyard HMA. Detail is provided in Section 11. Paragraph 11.20 sets out that 'It is estimated that 57% of all households in this HMA cannot afford market housing without subsidy compared to 56% across Herefordshire. The proportion of newly-forming households, who are typically younger, unable to buy or rent without support is however considerably higher at 69% of households aged under 45.'
- 9.25 Appendix 6 includes Tables 94 and 95 from the report which give the estimated size and type of dwellings required in the Bromyard HMA.
- 9.26 The study also notes that 'within the Bromyard (and Kington) HMAs in particular there is a stronger requirement for delivery of intermediate affordable housing. The housing needs analysis indicates that around 40% of additional provision should be intermediate housing with about 24% requiring social rent and 36% affordable rent.'
- 9.27 In terms of the ageing population, the study sets out that 'projecting forward we see that the older person population is expected to increase significantly with 27% more people aged 55 and over expected to be living in the HMA in 2031 when compared with 2011. The population aged 85 and over is expected to more than double whilst the population aged

¹⁶ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory_record/2090/local_housing_market_assessment_2013

under 55 is expected to see a small decrease in population (the population aged 55 to 64 is also expected to drop noticeably).'

Public Consultation

- 9.28 In the Issues and Options consultation, residents were asked about what type of house types and sizes were needed in Stoke Lacy Parish. Family houses had the highest level of support with 72% of respondents (47) ticking this choice, followed by starter homes, affordable homes, and housing for older people. A number of detailed comments were also submitted including "suggestions for larger detached homes with gardens, smaller houses, high quality and attractive housing, a mix of house sizes, housing for young families, the need for more technical information to understand need better, individual homes, and homes for local people only". NDP Draft Policy SL10 supports the provision of a suitable housing mix in the Parish. The questionnaire did not differentiate between existing or new houses needed.
- 9.29 The responses to the consultation on the emerging Draft Plan showed that 74% of respondents supported the Policy. Comments included concerns that larger houses are needed for people working from home, support for houses for young people and self-build schemes but also concerns that starter homes should not be provided when there is a lack of facilities. There was also support for more housing for older people and family housing and for infill / garden development.
- 9.30 Policy SL10 sets out the preferred house types in the Parish.

Draft Policy SL10: Housing Mix

New residential development should demonstrate how it contributes to a suitable mix of tenure, type and size of dwelling across the Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Area.

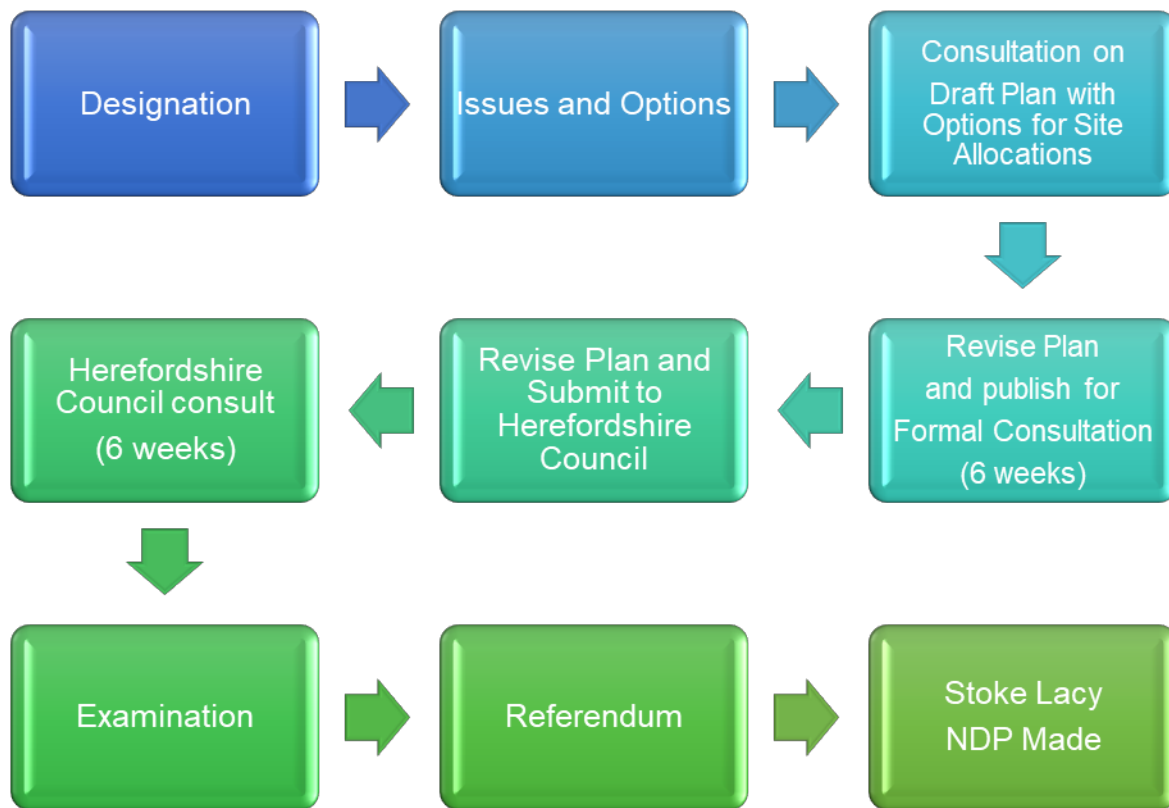
Proposals should demonstrate how they respond to local needs for medium sized family housing (up to three bedrooms) with gardens, starter homes of two bedrooms, and housing designed for older people.

Schemes for larger housing which provide flexible space for homeworking and self-build schemes will also be supported.

10.0 Next Steps

- 10.1 Following this consultation on the Draft Plan, the Steering Group will carefully consider all responses and finalise the Draft Plan for submission to Herefordshire Council.

Appendix 1 NDP Process Diagram



Appendix 2 Details of Stoke Lacy Conservation Area

On the eastern side of the A465: -

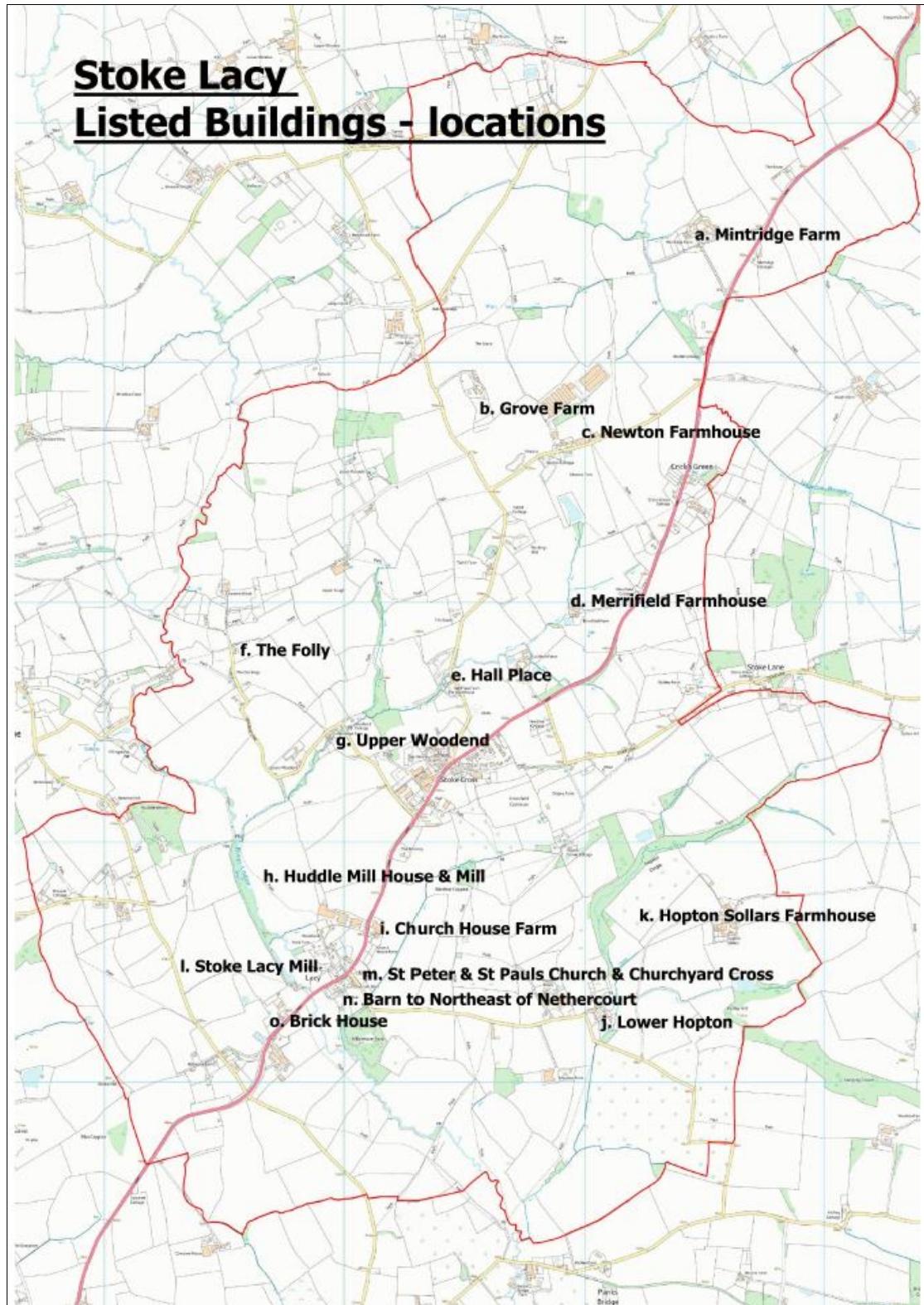
- The Victorian church of St Peter and St Paul and its churchyard
- The land between the church and the 18th Century Church House Farm and its barns.
- The substantial Victorian former farmhouse known as Nether Court and its six barns including two hop kilns, formerly agricultural buildings but since converted to dwellings in the late 1990s.
- Land leading down to the river on the south banks of the river Lodon and surrounding the Nether Court barns, running parallel with Hopton Lane including a pond adjacent to Nether Wood, the community woodland.
- In the grounds of what is now known as Orchard Barn is the remains of a moat construction.

On the western side of the A465: -

- Two Victorian red-brick farm cottages previously associated with Nether Court.
- The Old Rectory, including the large garden and grounds of this building which has now been divided into three separate dwellings.
- Stoke House and grounds, a large detached 1930s house, built by the Morgan family for their daughter Dorothy.
- The Old Coach House converted stabling and garden buildings formerly associated with the Old Rectory.
- Old Rectory Cottage, the former dwelling of the coachman and later chauffeurs of the Morgan family when living at the Rectory.

Appendix 3 Listed Buildings ¹⁷

Map 5: Location of Listed Buildings in the Parish



¹⁷See <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/advanced-search>

Key to Map 5

a. Mintridge Farm (1234687) – 4 listings

Mintridge dates from the late 16th or early 17th century, the farmhouse is timber framed with painted noggin and a tile roof, together with barns, one to the north east of the farmhouse, a 17th century stone, timber frame with red brick noggin and weather boarded range on sloping ground with stone ramp up to doors in an L-shaped plan with vertical lights in the stone wall and a brick built early 18th century barn with steps up to the loft. Also, a late 17th century stable buildings of stone rubble and machine tiles.

b. Grove Farmhouse (1275981)- 1 listing

The Grove farmhouse is a late 16th century timber frame and red brick noggin house. Two storeys. Casements. Slate roof with gable ends. Stone foundations. Large early C20 red brick addition.

c. Newton Farmhouse (1234685) - 3 listings

Newton farmhouse is a late 15th century timber framed building with other parts dating from the 16th and 17th centuries. It is on a T shaped plan with a cross wing at the south. Associated with the farmhouse are two barns, to the east is a stone rubble 18th century barn with narrow window slits and a machine tiled roof. To the south east is a stone rubble 18th century barn with steps up to the loft.

d. Merrifield Farmhouse (1234682) – 2 listings

Merrifield Farmhouse is a mid-18th century house of stone rubble. Two storeys. Three windows, sashes with glazing bars. Two canted bays on ground floor with glazing bars. Central door with modern porch. Square plan. Hipped slate roof with steep pitch. Associated with this house are a 17th and 18th century stone rubble barn with timber frame and brick in gable end. Corrugated iron roof. Adjoining twin-roundel hop kilns without roofs.

e. Hall Place (1234679) – 5 listings

Situated in the Stoke Cross area Hall Place and dating from around 1600, it is a T-shaped plan with cross-wing at the west end. There is an exposed timber frame, partly rendered, painted brick noggin. Two storeys. Four windows, casements. Slate roof. Together with its barns it forms a group. There is one barn to the north and another to the north west of the house, both made of stone rubble and dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. There is a barn and hop kiln to the south west of the property, the hop kiln has since been converted to a dwelling. To the south west of the site is a wall built from stone rubble with stone coping dating from the 18th century.

f. The Folly (1276016) – 1 listing

The Folly is an early 17th century timber frame house. Two storeys. Three windows, casements. Tall gable end has barge boards moulded and enriched with dentials and finial.

g. Upper Woodend – 4 listings

Upper Woodend is a Late 16th century house with timber frame and plaster panels. It has slate roof with gable ends. Two storeys and attics. Three windows, casements. Gabled dormer. Diagonal rubble chimneys. Associated with this property are three barns and a hop kiln, one to the north is a 17th century timber frame barn, partly weather boarded, with a stone plinth and a stone rubble 17th century barn to the west. To the south there is a stone barn and round brick built 17th or 18th century hop kiln. The barn and hop kiln are now converted into dwellings.

h. Huddle Mill house and mill (1234409) – 2 listings

This house and mill have largely fallen into disrepair but in 1962 the buildings were listed as 17th century cottage. Timber frame. One storey and attic. Casements. Slate roof with gable ends. Red brick and rubble. Slate roof with gable ends. Adjoining hop kiln, square with pyramid slate roof. Most of the slates have fallen.

i. Church House Farm (1234406) – 3 listings

Church House Farm is a brick built 18th century farm house with 19th century alterations and features. Stucco partly tile hung. Two storeys. Four windows. Gabled porch wing with shaped bargeboards. Tile roof with gable ends. In this group of buildings, a 17th or 18th century barn and hop kiln. Stone rubble barn. Machine tile roof with gable ends. Adjoining red. brick round hop kiln with slate conical roof and to the north a 17th century timber frame and wattle panelled barn, some panels are open, partly weather boarded. Tile roof with gable ends. Church House farmhouse is in the conservation area.

j. Lower Hopton (1234410) 1 listing

Lower Hopton is a Late 18th century roughcast house. Three storeys. Three windows, sashes with glazing bars. Central panelled door, porch with slender columns. Slate hipped roof.

k. Hopton Sollars Farmhouse (1176353) – 2 listings

Hopton Sollars is a 18th century painted stone rubble house with slate hipped roof. 2 storeys casements. C17 timber frame cross-wing with painted brick noggin, slate roof with gable ends, easements. There is also to the north an 18th century long stone range barn with tile roof and gable-ends.

l. Stoke Lacy Mill (1234407) – 1 listing

The mill is an 18th century red brick building with stone plinth. Casements with segmental heads. Brick dentil eaves. Tile roof with gable ends.

m. St Peter & St Paul Church Stoke Lacy and Churchyard Cross (1276172) – 2 listings

Parish church of 1863 by F.R. Kempson, incorporating some fittings from a previous church.

MATERIALS: Rock-faced red-grey sandstone with buff dressings and quoins; different grey sandstone for the chancel. Slate roofs

PLAN: Nave, lower and narrower chancel, south porch, west tower and spire, north vestry.

EXTERIOR: An Early-English style parish church of which the heavy 3-stage tower is prominent. It has clasping buttresses and semi-circular north-east turret that turns polygonal

in the second stage. The west window is a single cusped light. Paired bell-stage windows have a central column and are superimposed by an arch with solid tympanum. An arcaded frieze at eaves level is below the splay-foot shingled spire. The nave has 2-light windows and corbel table to cast-iron rainwater goods. A stack on the east verge has a round shaft. The porch has a simple pointed entrance and the south nave doorway is similar. The chancel has a single-light south window and east window of 3 stepped lancets.

INTERIOR: The broad tower arch has a continuous chamfer. The chancel arch, a reconstruction of the arch in the old church, is Norman in style with semi-circular responds, scalloped capitals and stepped arch. The nave has a trussed rafter roof, the chancel a plastered barrel ceiling on corbelled shafts, and an elaborate cinquefoil piscina. Walls are plastered. Floors are C19 tiles, with wood floors beneath pews.

PRINCIPAL FIXTURES: A chancel screen is made up from parts of a C16 screen, and includes delicate openwork tracery and foliage cornice. The octagonal tapering tub font is medieval. Other fittings are 1863 or later. The round stone pulpit has rich diaper work. Benches are simple but the choir stalls have Gothic panels to ends and fronts. There are several stained-glass windows, of different dates. They include the east window, showing the life of Christ, post 1886, and in the nave Christ preaching, post 1887, and the marriage at Cana by Kempe & Co, post 1929. There are several wall monuments of the late C18 and C19, including a sarcophagus to John Lilly (d 1825) in the nave and, in the chancel, an oval tablet with an awkward-looking mourning putto leaning on an urn, to Thomas Griffith (d 1800). In the tower base is a benefaction board of 1837.

HISTORY: Parish church built in 1863 by F.R. Kempson (1837/8-1923), whose father had been rector of the church. Kempson started his career in London but moved his practice to Hereford in 1861 and received many commissions in the county. Kempson reconstructed the chancel arch of the previous church, from which some of the fittings (screen, font, wall monuments) were reinstated in the new church.

SOURCES: N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Herefordshire*, 1963, p 293.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION: The church of St Peter and St Paul, Stoke Lacy, is listed Grade II for the following principal reasons: * It is a C19 Gothic-revival church retaining original character and detail. * It retains its medieval font and parts of a medieval screen, and C19 detail including some good stained-glass windows.

To the south of the church is 14th century base of churchyard cross.

The church and churchyard cross are in the conservation area.

n. Barn to North East of Nether Court (1276120) – 1 listing

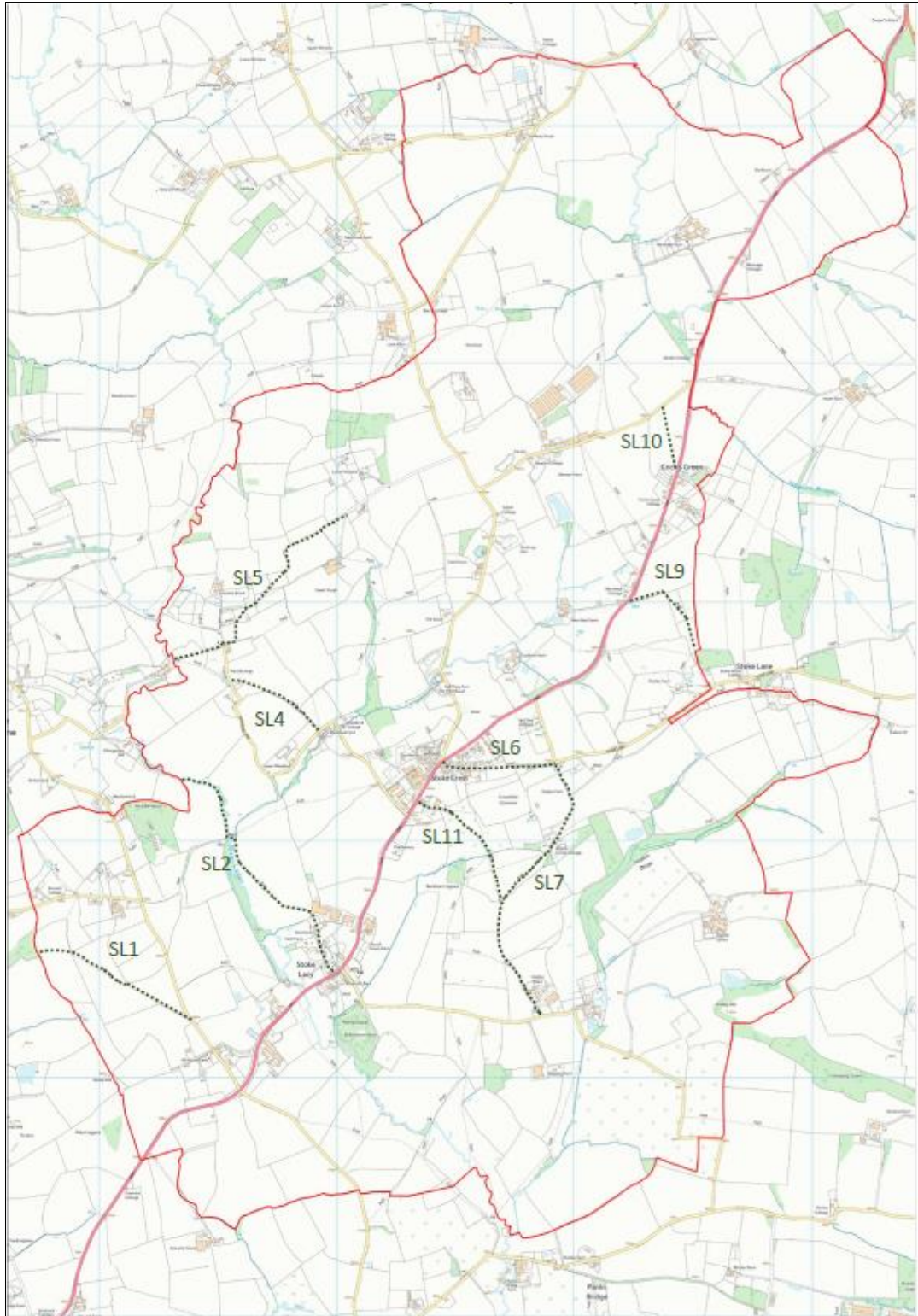
A 17th century timber framed barn with wattle panels. Some panels are open. Partly weather-boarded. Tile roof with gable ends. This barn is in the Stoke Lacy conservation area and is one of several there which have been converted to a dwelling.

o. Brick House (1276011) – 1 listing

Brick House is an 18th century red brick house. Two storeys. Three windows, sashes without glazing bars, ground floor right French window. Central door with moulded case. Band on first floor level. Brick dentil eaves. Modern tile roof with cope gable ends. Modern porch.

Appendix 4 Public Footpaths in Stoke Lacy Parish

Map 6: Public Footpaths



Appendix 5 Public Consultation Responses to Options for Site Allocations, Spring 2021

	Strongly Support	Support	Rolling Total support	Neutral	Object	Strongly Object	Rolling Total Object	Did not Answer	Total number of responses
Option 1 - Site 3 Crossfield House, Stoke Cross (8 Houses)	3	12	15	14	8	23	31	5	65
Percentage	5%	18%	23%	22%	12%	35%	47%	8%	100%
Option 2 - Site 4 North of Westbury Road, Stoke Cross (7 houses)	2	9	11	13	10	29	39	2	65
Percentage	3%	14%	17%	20%	15%	45%	60%	3%	100%
Option 3 - Site 5 East of Westbury Road, Stoke Cross (10 Houses)	2	6	8	13	8	34	42	2	65
Percentage	3%	9%	12%	20%	12%	52%	67%	3%	100%
Option 4 - Site 6 East of the Parish Hall, Stoke Cross (6 Houses)	6	8	14	13	9	24	33	5	65
Percentage	9%	12%	21%	20%	14%	37%	51%	8%	100%
Site 9 Barn Conversion at Hopton Court Farm (Business opportunity)	2	17	19	28	1	12	13	5	65
Percentage	3%	26%	29%	43%	2%	18%	20%	8%	100%

Appendix 6 Extracts from Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment – 2012 Update, 2013

Tables 94 and 95 give the estimated size and type of dwellings required.

Table 94: Estimated Size and Type of Dwellings Required 2011 to 2031 – Market Housing (Bromyard HMA) (Extract)

Type/size	Bromyard Rural	
	Number	%
1 bedroom	1	0.5%
2 bedroom	73	33.3%
3 bedroom	166	75.8%
4+ bedroom	-21	-9.6%
Total	219	100.0%
Houses	224	102.6%
Flats	-6	-2.6%
Total	219	100.0%

Table 95: Estimated Size and Type of Dwellings Required 2011 to 2031 – Affordable Housing (Bromyard HMA) (Extract)

Type/size	Bromyard Rural	
	Number	%
1 bedroom	35	23.7%
2 bedroom	55	37.9%
3 bedroom	50	34.5%
4+ bedroom	6	3.8%
Total	146	100.0%
Houses	120	82.3%
Flats	26	17.7%
Total	146	100.0%

Source: Housing Market Model



Kirkwells
The Planning People

cover image - Colin Simmonds