



# STOKE LACY PARISH

## Neighbourhood Development Plan

2021 - 2031

**YOUR FEEDBACK IS NEEDED**

- Progress so far
- NDP - What is possible
- Draft Policies
- Settlement Boundaries
- Options for Sites
- Questionnaire

## Summary for Informal Public Consultation



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the summary version of the emerging draft neighbourhood plan for Stoke Lacy Parish which is published for informal consultation until 30<sup>th</sup>. April 2021. A show of hands at the public meeting in February 2020, demonstrated that the majority of those that attended were in favour of developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (hereafter referred to as NDP). The Draft Plan is being prepared by Stoke Lacy NDP Steering Group on behalf of Stoke Lacy Parish Council. The full document describes the NDP process so far, the vision for our community, the objectives and draft policies with justification and much more. It is a long and complex document which will continue to evolve as we consult with you regarding the important issues within it. We have chosen to summarise the main areas for consultation purposes, however the latest version of the draft NDP document in its entirety can be viewed on the NDP website ([www.stokelacy.co.uk](http://www.stokelacy.co.uk)). Please note that this is very much a working draft, and it will continue to be amended and updated as we move forward.

In the Autumn of 2020 you were asked to participate in an Issues & Options survey which included, among others, questions about objectives, future housing requirement and settlement boundaries. The responses revealed that 93.85% agreed with the objectives that we had proposed. Even though we have exceeded the Herefordshire Core Strategy minimum housing target for the Parish of 15% or 24 dwellings up to 2031, the NDP still has to plan positively - we cannot say no to any future development or put a cap on numbers. So, it is still appropriate to offer up some capacity for future need. In Q3 of the Issues & Options survey you were asked how many more new houses you thought should be provided in the Parish up to 2031. An average figure taken from your feedback suggests that a modest increase of about 10 new properties over the next 10 years would have community support.

The 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. The LCA shows that 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 both at the public meeting and in the feedback from the survey 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.

In the Issues & Options survey, two options of outline settlement boundaries (A&B) were offered, for both Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross. It should be stressed that these are work in progress and were initially drawn to reflect historic settlement boundaries and to start a conversation about how they should look. In both cases Option A, which was slightly tighter, was selected however there were many comments. Some felt that they should be even tighter, others felt that the church and churchyard should be excluded together with known flood areas. For the purpose of this consultation, the boundaries in both Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross have been revised and drawn tight around bricks and mortar and excluded the church and grounds and known flood areas.

The Steering Group and the Parish Council urge local residents and stakeholders to continue to share their views on the emerging policies together with all aspects covered by this summary. This is your opportunity to have a say on future development in our community. Going forward we will be consulting with you further on individual aspects, including the Design Codes, which you will see reference to in the policies, and Open Spaces and Public Spaces. All feedback will be considered carefully, and where possible, incorporated into the final draft plan and circulated for a formal 6 week consultation later in 2021. It has been frustrating that current restrictions have meant that we could not have the public meetings that were planned as there is no doubt that optimal communication is face to face. However, in case Covid-19 restrictions are not lifted in time, we are currently looking at how we can hold a public Zoom meeting and more information will be shared as and when it is deemed to be our only option in the timeframes we have. Please be assured that the Steering Group and Parish Council are absolutely committed to engaging with and listening to as many residents and stakeholders as possible in the preparation of our plan for the Parish. We will continue to work hard to give everyone the opportunity to be involved at all stages. Thank you once again for taking the time to read this document. The full emerging Draft Plan is on the NDP website ([www.stokelacy.co.uk](http://www.stokelacy.co.uk)) together with the full reports of the Issues and Options Consultation, AECOM Site Options and Assessment Report, Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment and other background evidence.

If you are game for a bigger read then go to the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan-1/local-plan-core-strategy/2> for some context to the bigger picture and our part in it.

**Please express your opinion by completing the questionnaire on the final page, an NDP should reflect the views of the whole community.**

## **What Neighbourhood Plans Can and Can't Do**

Neighbourhood Plans are statutory planning documents. They are used to help determine planning applications for development and changes of use, where planning permission is required. This is because planning law requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and neighbourhood plans form part of the 'development plan'.

Please note planning applications are determined by the local planning authority (here, Herefordshire Council) or by the Government's Planning Inspectors where there is an appeal. The Parish Council is a consultee.

The process for preparing a neighbourhood plan is lengthy and complex and has to follow Government regulations and guidance.

### **Neighbourhood Plans can:**

1. Include locally relevant and detailed planning policies to guide development within the defined neighbourhood area (here, the Parish);
2. Include site allocations for new housing and other types of development;
3. Protect important local green spaces from development;
4. Identify community and recreation facilities;
5. Describe the character of the area;
6. Encourage development to be of a high quality design which responds to local character and / or which is resource and energy efficient (sustainable);
7. Include policies which encourage development to support walking and cycling by being located close to and linking to public transport routes, footpaths etc.

### **Neighbourhood Plans can't:**

1. Stop development or give a limit/threshold on development - they have to plan positively for at least some growth;
2. Require bus and transport companies to provide better and more frequent services;
3. Tackle dog mess and litter problems;
4. Stop speeding traffic or high volumes of traffic on rural roads;
5. Require improvements to local education, health and community facilities (although they can include proposals for improvements to local community infrastructure, subject to funding);
6. Address strategic matters such as minerals and waste and major transport schemes;
7. Stop local facilities such as shops and pubs closing (although they can include policies with criteria requiring proof that the facilities have been marketed etc and are no longer viable before they can be converted to other uses);
8. Include technical specifications / requirements (these are addressed through building control, environmental health etc).

### **Neighbourhood Plans have to:**

1. Have regard to national planning policy (National Planning Policy Framework) and other government guidance and advice;
2. Contribute to sustainable development;
3. Be in general conformity with strategic planning policies (as set out in the adopted Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031);
4. Not breach EU Regulations (such as environmental and human rights).

Therefore a neighbourhood plan will not solve all the various problems in the parish, but it can be used to guide decisions on new development and conversions as and when proposals come forward.



## Draft Policies

The policies have been written to reflect feedback wherever possible but are mindful that the NDP also needs to conform generally with Hereford Council's Core Strategy. You will see that some policies refer to design codes. We are in the process of commissioning this service from AECOM via Locality Technical Support. AECOM will visit the area and do a thorough assessment of existing properties and landscapes etc. They will then produce a detailed design document which we will publish for consultation and feedback and then use to inform our NDP policies on design.

### **Draft Policy SL1: Protecting and Enhancing Local Landscape Character**

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 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. Schemes which support 'rewilding' will be particularly encouraged.
4. 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 their setting, be unobtrusive and energy efficient and have consideration for neighbouring amenity.
5. Existing public rights of way should be protected, and schemes should provide safe and accessible linkages to nearby walking routes and bridleways;
6. Key Public Views are being identified 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.

### **Draft Policy SL2: Local Green Spaces**

These are being identified, the policy written and it will be consulted upon at a later date.

### **Draft Policy SL3: Public Open Spaces**

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.

All schemes should protect local residential amenity and be designed to minimise future maintenance costs.

### **Draft Policy SL4: Protecting Heritage and Local Built Character**

This will be addressed in the Design Codes and consulted upon at a later date.

### **Draft Policy SL5: Promoting Innovative and Sustainable Design**

This will be addressed in the Design Codes and consulted upon at a later date.

### **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; and
4. The amenity of any neighbouring residential areas is protected.

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



### **Draft Policy SL7: 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 pedestrian, cycle routes and bus stops;
2. Provide suitable and secure storage provision for bicycles; and
3. Include external electric charging points for vehicles and bicycles.

The impact of additional traffic from development proposals on existing rural road networks should be carefully considered and suitable measures should be provided to encourage appropriate traffic speeds.

Developer contributions may be sought to support the provision of a safe and accessible walking route linking the two settlements of Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross.

### **Draft Policy SL8: 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 where:

1. Proposals are small in scale to protect local landscape character and setting;
2. Development of infill and backland sites does not have an adverse impact on local character;
3. Suitable and safe access is provided;
4. The amenity of neighbouring residents is protected; and
5. Design is of a high quality, responding to local character and context whilst incorporating low carbon technologies, resource efficiency measures wherever possible.

Proposals for new housing will also be supported on sites identified as site allocations in the NDP.

### **Draft Policy SL9: Housing Mix**

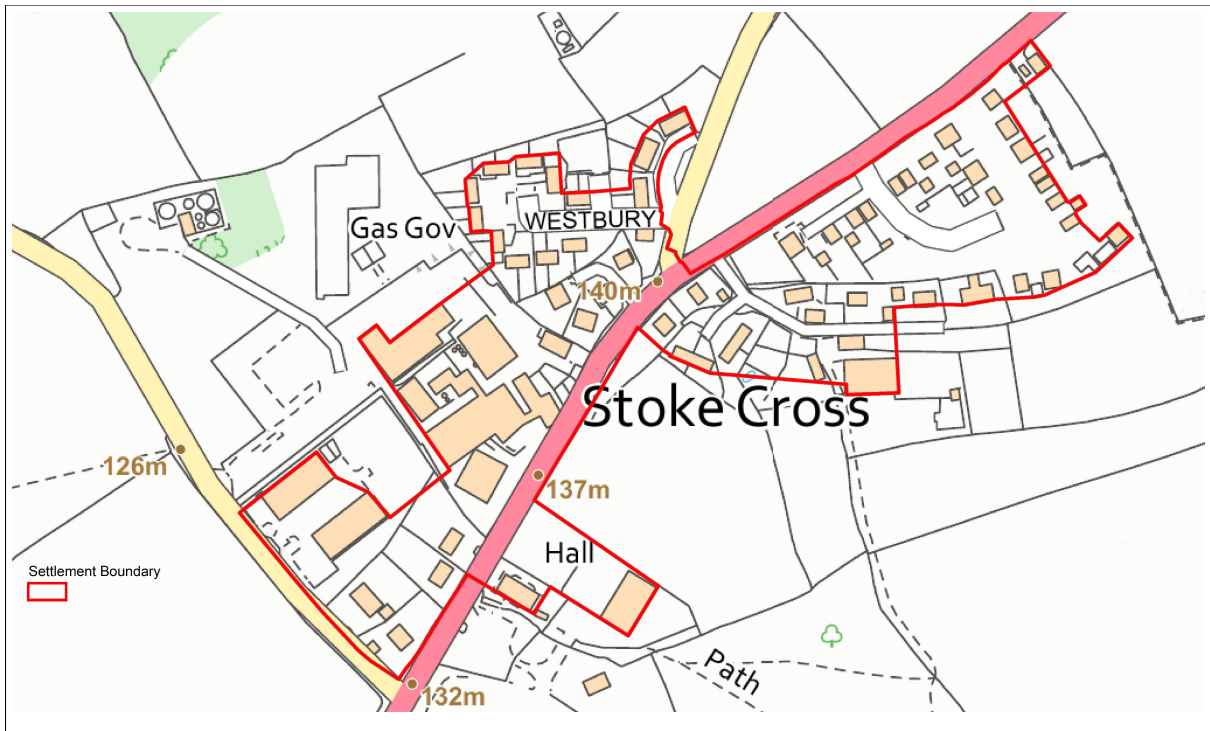
New residential development should demonstrate how it contributes to a suitable mix of tenure, type and size of dwelling across the Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Area.

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.

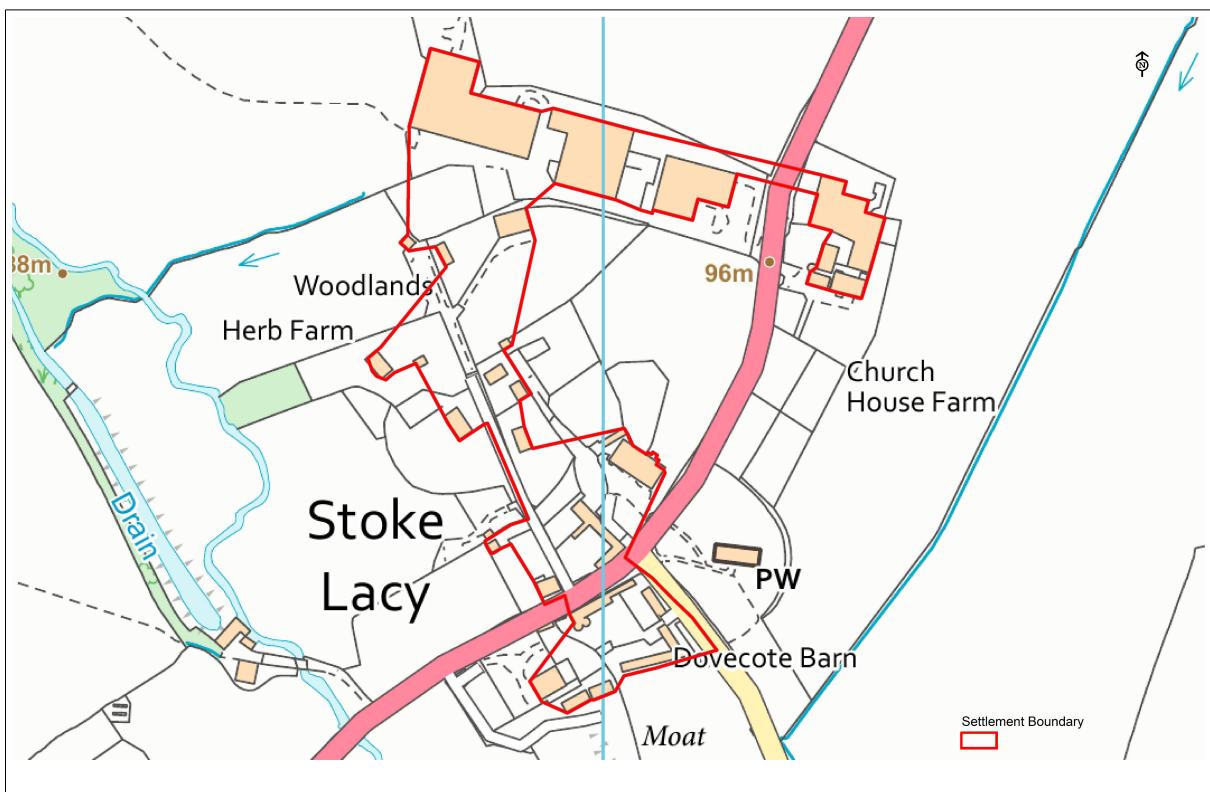
## Settlement Boundaries

For the purpose of this consultation, the boundaries in both Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross have been revised and drawn tight around bricks and mortar and excluded the church and grounds and known flood areas. We have also included a map showing where the possible options for housing sites are located in relation to the proposed settlement boundaries. If the Parish Council decides to include any sites in the NDP then the settlement boundary will go around and include the site(s).

Stoke Cross Settlement Boundary



Stoke Lacy Settlement Boundary





## Options for Site Allocations

The NDP could include site allocations for new housing. The following options for site allocations are published for informal consultation and the responses will be considered and used to inform the Parish Council's decisions about whether any of the sites should be included in the Draft Plan.

These sites were all assessed by AECOM as suitable for new housing or potentially suitable subject to the mitigation of minor constraints and/or consultation with Herefordshire Council. The site numbering (Sites 3, 4, 5 and 6) refers to the site numbers in the AECOM Site Options and Assessment Draft Report, 2021.

**It should be stressed that the results of the assessment is not a recommendation for development.**

Any site allocations in the Draft NDP will have criteria to guide their development. In addition, the Design Codes may provide detailed design criteria for individual sites to help ensure high quality design in new development.

## Potential Sites submitted by landowners for New Housing

The following options for site allocations for new housing are published for consultation: to see more detail about each site go to the full AECOM report which is posted on the website. **Location of sites are shown on the map on the following page.**

**Option 1 - Site 3** Crossfield House, Stoke Cross could be allocated for housing development for up to **8 houses**. (AECOM Report page 30.)

**Option 2 - Site 4** to the north of Westbury Road, Stoke Cross could be allocated for housing development for up to **7 houses**. (AECOM Report page 30.)

**Option 3 - Site 5** OS 5041 to the east of Westbury Road and north of A465, Stoke Cross could be allocated for housing development for up to **10 houses**. (AECOM Report page 31.)

**Option 4 - Site 6** OS 4420, Site to the east of the Parish Hall, Stoke Cross could be allocated for housing development for up to **6 houses**. (AECOM Report page 32.)

## Potential Site submitted by landowner for business use.

**Option 5 - Site 9** (Barn Conversion at Hopton Court Farm) could be allocated for employment uses. (AECOM Report page 33.)



**Please encourage every member of a household  
living in Stoke Lacy to have their say,  
an NDP should reflect the views  
of the whole community.**

**(if needed, extra response forms can be found at the NDP mail boxes)**

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**Return your response form and any additional comments to:**

the NDP mail boxes located at the Village Hall or the Church porch

by email: [parishclerk@stokelacyparishcouncil.org](mailto:parishclerk@stokelacyparishcouncil.org)

or online on the NDP website: **[www.stokelacy.co.uk](http://www.stokelacy.co.uk)**

**By: 30th. April 2021.**

Thank you very much for taking the time and interest to respond to this consultation. Your responses and comments will be used to inform decisions about the policies and any site allocations in the Draft Plan. Other comments about the emerging Draft NDP will also be considered.

*Note: All personal details will remain strictly confidential and will only be viewed by the NDP Steering Group and will not be distributed or published. All answers to the questions and comments will remain anonymous in any analysis of the completed results. Your contact details will be kept until 3 months after the final NDP referendum after which they will be destroyed.'*