



**STOKE
LACY**
PARISH

Neighbourhood Development Plan

2021 - 2031

Draft Plan

for Informal Public Consultation

Introduction

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 under the direction of Stoke Lacy Parish Council. The document describes the NDP process so far, the vision for our community, the objectives and policies 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 break the document down into sections as a summary for consultation purposes, however this is the latest version of the emerging draft NDP document in its entirety.

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. The summary document is now being sent to all households as an informal consultation on the emerging draft policies which will support the objectives, and the options for site allocations. The policies have been written to reflect all feedback wherever possible but 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 Locality who will visit the area and do a thorough assessment of existing properties and landscapes etc. They will then produce a detailed design document.

The Government uses a monitoring tool, the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) to demonstrate whether local authority areas are building enough homes to meet their need. Councils failing to meet delivery rate targets are required to take appropriate action to address under-delivery. In Herefordshire the HDT measures net additional dwellings provided against homes required.

In January this year the Government published the measurements revealing that our County scored 106%. This seems like good news however, even though we have exceeded the target growth allocation for the County and the Parish, the NDP still has to plan positively as we cannot say no to any future development. 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 new houses you thought should be provided in the Parish up to 2031. The feedback you offered demonstrated a range of between 0 and 20 new builds between now and 2031. Given that some of you may have wanted 0 or 20 or any number in between, we have taken an average of 10 new properties over the next 10 years.

The Call for Sites, conducted in 2020, offered up many sites and all have been assessed by AECOM for suitability regarding access, flood risk, drainage etc together with environmental and heritage considerations. The report has been sent to all landowners who offered up sites and is now available on the NDP website for the community to see. It should be stressed however that assessment is not a recommendation for development. You will see from the map showing the sites offered that there is a disproportionate number in Stoke Cross where there has already been considerable development with more planned to go ahead. We need to hear your views on this and where you see any development being acceptable.

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 drawn tight around bricks and mortar and excluded the church and grounds and known flood areas. You will see that none of the development sites offered are included either at this stage. We have done this to encourage a conversation about where you might like to see any future development, and this will inform the next version of the settlement boundaries.

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 some say on future development in our community. Going forward we will be consulting with you further on individual aspects, including the Design Codes referred to earlier. All feedback will be, where possible, incorporated into the formalised draft plan and circulated for a formal 6 week consultation later in 2021.

It has been frustrating that current restrictions have meant that we cannot 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.

Thank you once again for taking the time to read this document. This is the full version of the emerging draft plan so far. If you are game for a bigger read then go to <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan-1/local-plan-core-strategy/2>. This is the Core Strategy and may put some context to the bigger picture and our part in it.

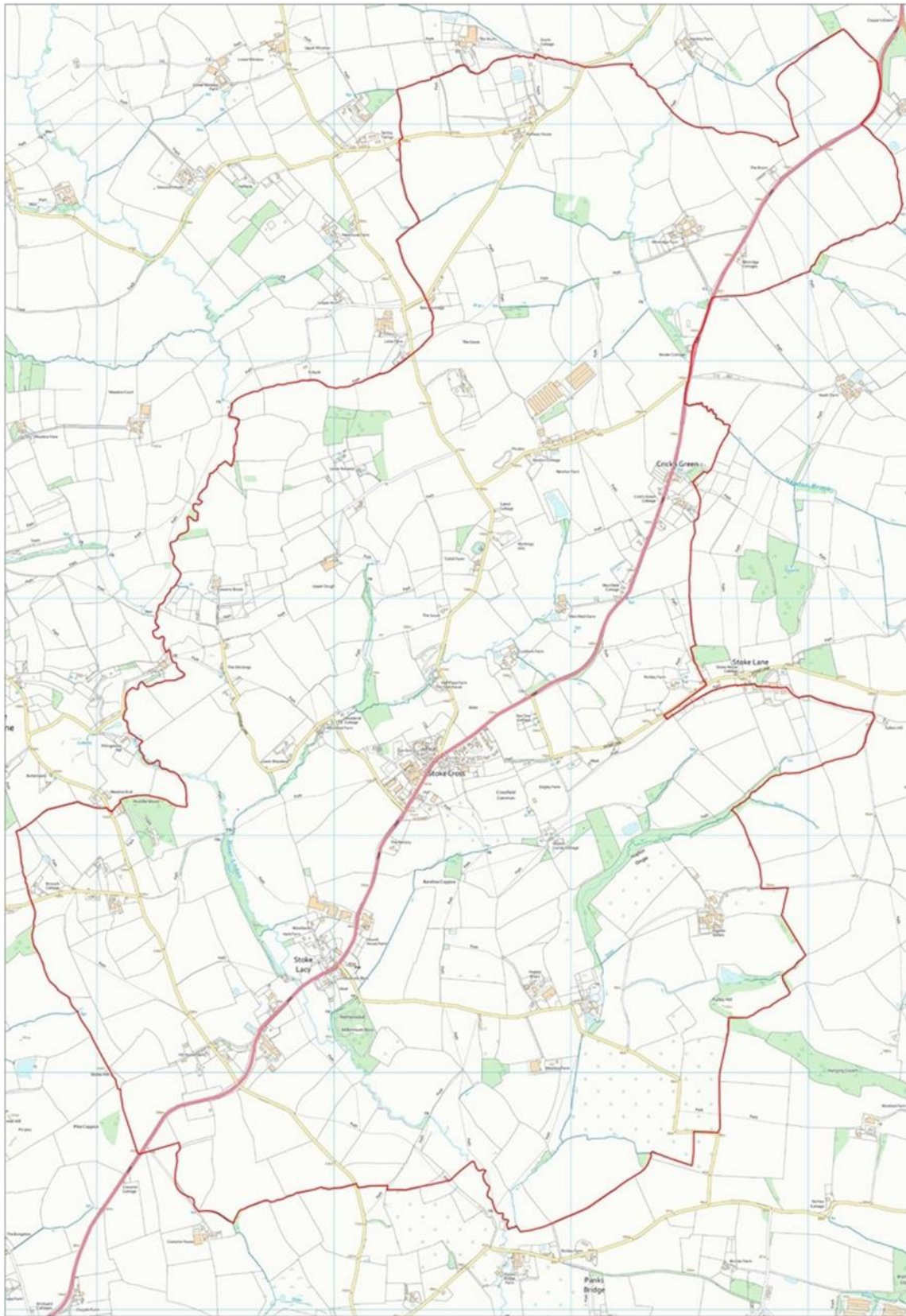
The summary document and short response form have been delivered to local households. Please contact us with your feedback via:

- 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: 7th May 2021.

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

Map 1. Stoke Lacy Parish and Neighbourhood Area



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Aerial view of Stoke Lacy and Stoke Cross

1.0 Background

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,

- 1.3 A diagram setting out the key steps for preparing NDPs is provided in **Appendix 1**. We are at the 'Consultation on Draft Plan with Options for Site Allocations' 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 Framework² 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 will include several further 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.

NDP Process So Far

- 1.5 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.
- 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 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 Council website⁵. During the Covid-19 pandemic meetings are being held online, but members of the public are invited to join by prior arrangement with the Parish Clerk.

together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood Plans that have been 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>

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



Issues and Options

- 1.9 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.
- 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 COVID19 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 have 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) have been considered carefully and used to inform the policies in the 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 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 Council. 12 sites were offered (**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. The AECOM report together with community feedback will inform decisions made by the Steering Group and the Parish Council about site allocations and their possible inclusion in the NDP.

Map 2. All Potential Sites Submitted



- 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.

2.0 Draft Vision and Objectives

- 2.1 The Draft Vision and Objectives for the NDP have been prepared by the Steering Group. The Vision sets out how the parish should look in the future and the Objectives will provide the framework for preparing the NDP planning policies and proposals to achieve the Vision.
- 2.2 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that nearly 94% of respondents (61) supported the Draft Vision and Objectives. There were a number of

detailed comments and these have resulted in several minor changes, see the document 'Community Comments' that can be found on the website.

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. 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: To protect and enhance the natural environment of the parish including local landscape character, important public views, our dark skies, wildlife habitats and biodiversity, and to protect the countryside from inappropriate development.**
- **Objective 2: To ensure all new buildings are designed to be sensitive to local character and the rural area, whilst promoting sustainability, resource efficiency and innovative contemporary designs.**
- **Objective 3: To ensure that there is sufficient housing of mixed types to meet the needs of local residents and to support a sustainable community for the future.**
- **Objective 4: To develop a greater sense of community and identity in the several separate communities that make up Stoke Lacy Parish ensuring new residents feel welcome, and everyone feels safe and valued.**
- **Objective 5: To support and enhance existing local facilities including the Village Hall, Church and Pub, and to actively encourage community involvement and engagement in Parish activities.**
- **Objective 6: To provide a supportive framework for all appropriate local, rural economic development.**

- **Objective 7: To improve accessibility for all so that roads and footpaths, and particularly the A465 will be safer, well maintained and have good signage.**

3.0 A Portrait of Stoke Lacy Parish

- 3.1 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 Loddon meanders through pastures in the south-west corner.
- 3.2 There is slightly more development concentrated in the two 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.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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

- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 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, this increase is due to changes in lifestyle, more commercial vehicles, 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.
- 3.7 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.

Planning Policies

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 possible options for site allocations. The evidence and rationale behind each draft policy is set out in the supporting text. Following this consultation, the planning policies will be revised and the Parish Council will decide which, if any, of the options for site allocations should be carried forward into the Draft Plan.

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.



Bredenbury Road towards Stoke Cross

4.0 Natural Environment



Pond on Netherwoods Estate, 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 Plateau⁶. Detailed descriptions of Sub-Regional Landscape Areas and Local Landscape Types are given in the '**Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document, 2004**⁷ 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. 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. The soil structure is predominantly of strong clay with a limestone subsoil. 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.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

⁷ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2069/landscape_character_assessment_for_herefordshire.pdf

- 4.3 Several streams and waterways flow within the area and the stream from Hopton Dingle flows through the village to the River Lodon.
- 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 and apples are sold to Bulmers in Hereford. 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 wood 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 170 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*'. 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.'*

Issues and Options Responses

- 4.11 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*'.
- 4.12 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 resident⁸.



Comet, July 2020



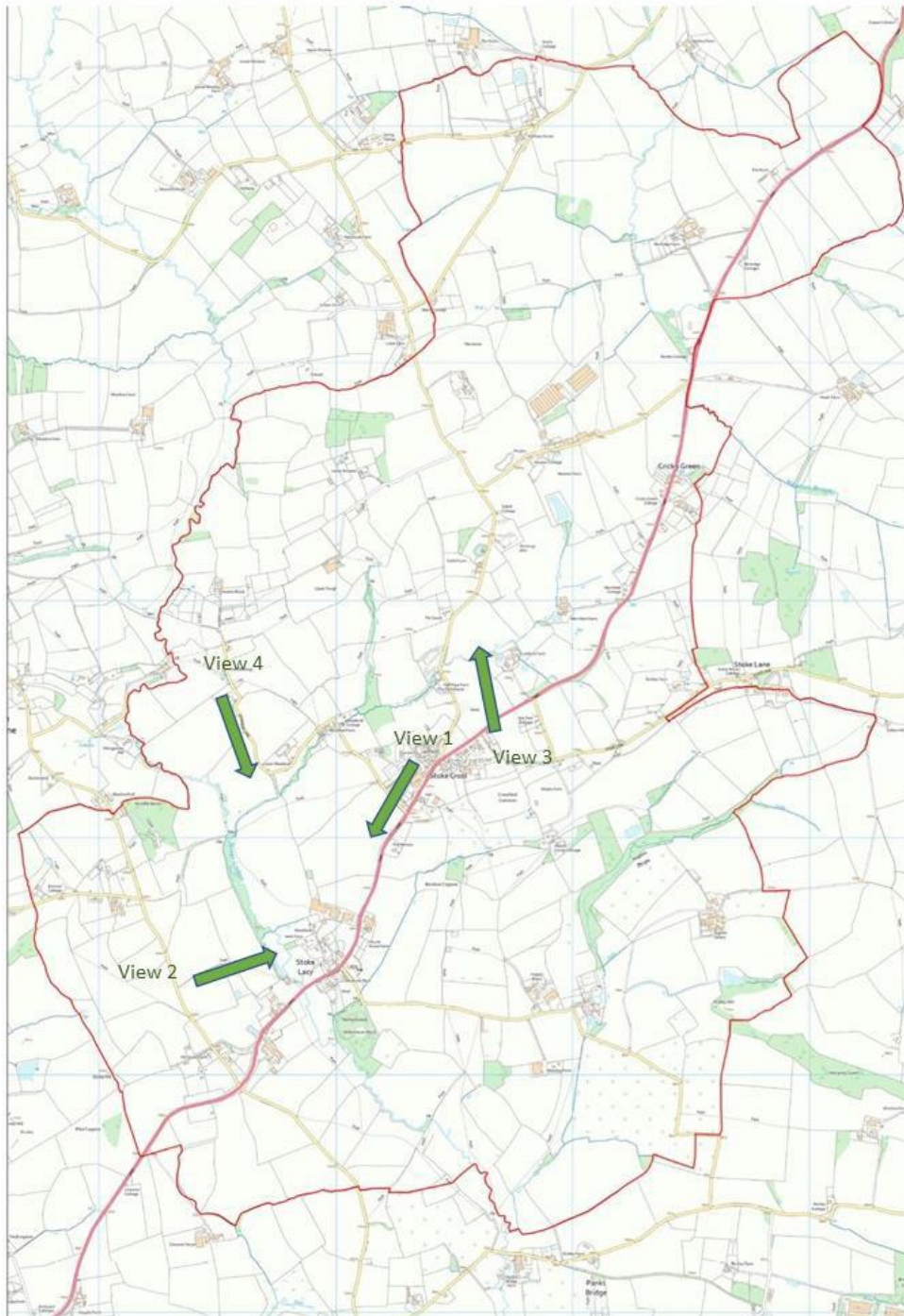
**Andromeda Nebula, 2.5 million light years away,
taken with a telescope**

⁸ Photos kindly provided by kind permission of David Leverington

Key Public Views

- 4.13 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. The Steering Group have considered those views put forward in the consultation responses **and several have been added to the views identified by the Group (still to be checked and added to Map 3).**

Map 3. Key Public Views



- 4.14 Draft Policy SL1 has been prepared to encourage development to protect and enhance key features which contribute to local landscape character and to take into consideration the area's notable dark skies and important Key Public Views. **Descriptions of all views are provided in Appendix 2 (to be added).**

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.
4. Schemes which support 'rewilding' will be particularly encouraged.
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 their 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;
7. Key Public Views are identified on Map 3. 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.

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. Community facilities include the following:
- 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, through grant bodies and in particular a grant from 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 used to be situated 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 with a capacity to seat 80 people. 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 and a Pilates group meets weekly. 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, an annual Burns Night, Drama productions such as pantomimes 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 work a number of related heritage projects took place including a large fete celebrating the Morgan connection to the church and village which took place in July 2019 attended by over 1,000 people and with over 140 local volunteers who contributed towards the success of the event.



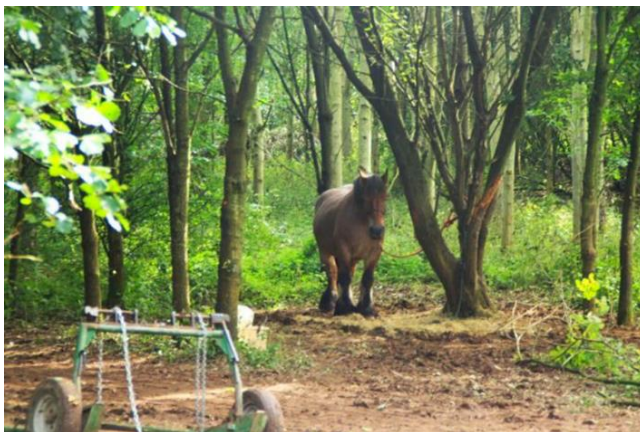
- 5.8 The church itself is administered by the parochial church council and church wardens. Church services take place on the fourth Sunday each month in normal circumstances. The church forms part of the Bromyard benefice and is served by the vicar of St Peter's in Bromyard. Congregations are usually 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. These include an annual fete in the church and churchyard, concerts and lectures, flower and arts festivals and other events which take place in the church, the village hall or in parishioners' homes.

- 5.10 Groups of volunteers help to maintain the building and churchyard with the Stoke Lacy Flower Fairies responsible for cleaning the church and maintaining floral displays. 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 at a socially distance. 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. 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 has been providing a much appreciated take-away service.



- 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 and NPPF

- 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 99 and 100. Paragraph 100 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.'*

Issues and Options 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 NDP Steering Group assessed the suggested candidate Local Green Spaces - see Table 1.

Table 1 (TO BE COMPLETED)

Proposed Local Green Space	Close Proximity to Community	Demonstrably Special	Local in Character

5.20 The Local Green Spaces which meet the criteria in the NPPF are identified on Map 4 and protected in Policy SL2.

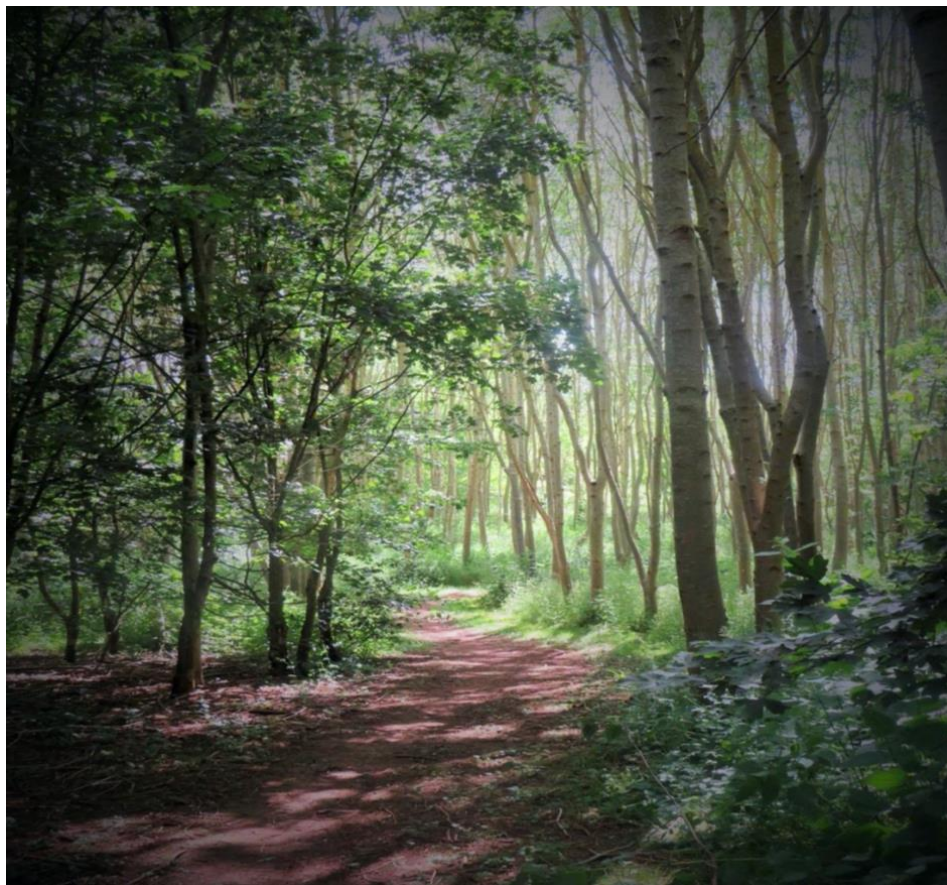
Insert Map 4 Local Green Spaces

Draft Policy SL2. Local Green Space

The following areas as identified on Map 4 are protected as Local Green Spaces:

- Insert any

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 Newlands development.
- 5.22 The Herefordshire Play Facilities Study 2012⁹, 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 91 advises that '*Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: a) promote social interaction,.... b) are safe and accessible and c) enable and support healthy lifestyles.*' 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 ...*'

Issues and Options 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 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 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.

⁹ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/105/play_facilities_study_2012

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.



Woodland and fields near Stoke Lacy

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, several converted Hop Kilns and farm buildings which are now residential.
- 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 of several other small manufacturing and business units. From 1938, Symonds Cider and English Wine Company was based in Stoke Cross. 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 Newlands estate, and the consented proposal for additional development 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.



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, and it has been claimed that prototypes of the first Morgan three-wheeler car were made at the Old Rectory opposite the church, leading to the creation of the iconic, globally famous Morgan Motor Company's range of stylish sports cars. The family graves are in the graveyard.

[Stoke Lacy Conservation Area](#)

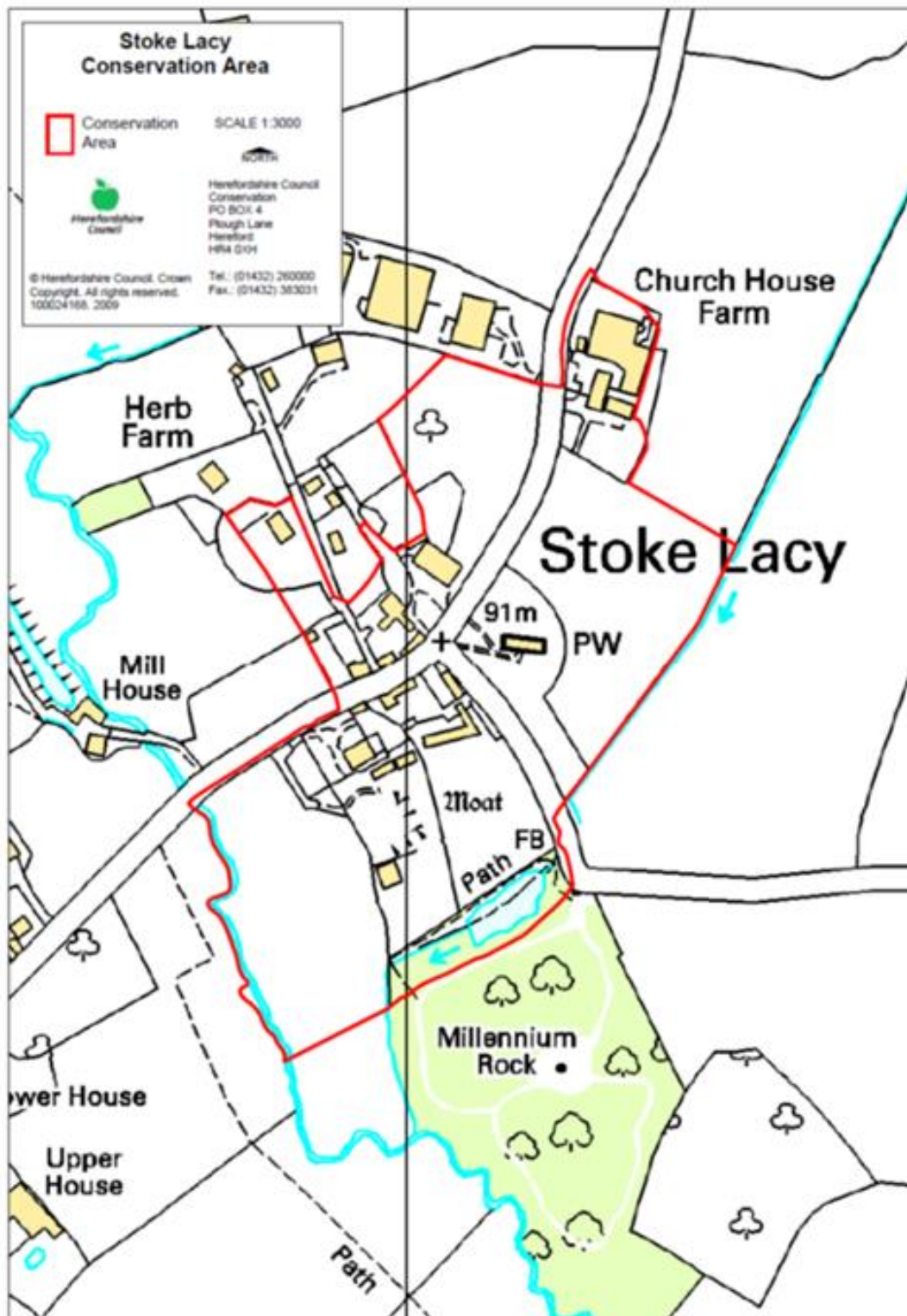
- 6.8 Conservation areas are '*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*'¹⁰. Conservation areas are designated by local planning authorities (here, Herefordshire Council) to protect the special architectural and historic interest of a place – in other words the features that make it 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. Also within

¹⁰ s69(1)(a) Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

this area is the Moat at Nether Court and the Motte at Stoke Cross. Both of these 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”. Also, in recent times metal detectorists are said to have found clues to a site of a medieval settlement in a nearby field.

- 6.10 The area broadly consists of the church, two large farmhouses and their farm buildings and houses and buildings historically associated with the Morgan family.
- 6.11 The extent of the Conservation Area is shown on **Map 5**. Details of the conservation area can be found in **Appendix 3**.
- 6.12 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.
- 6.13 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.

Map 5. Stoke Lacy Conservation Area¹¹



¹¹ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/50/conservation_areas_-_maps



Newton Farmhouse Grade II Listed – late 15th Century

Listed Buildings

- 6.14 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 them*¹².' Some of the individual listed buildings form part of a group of listed buildings, and if so, are grouped together in the descriptions. **Appendix 4** provides **Map 8** 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.

Cricks Green and Rural Area

- 6.15 Cricks Green lies north/west of Stoke Cross towards Bromyard with 15 dwellings, comprises 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.
- 6.16 The remainder of the parish mostly comprises 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 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;*

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/principles-of-selection-for-listing-buildings>

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.*'

Issues and Options Responses

- 6.19 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'.
- 6.20 The Parish Council through the Steering Group has commissioned the preparation of design codes through the Locality Technical Support programme for Neighbourhood Plans. These will be used to inform **Policies SL4. and SL5.** which will address local heritage and built character and sustainable design. The study also considers detailed design codes for any housing sites that may come forward through the NDP.

Insert Policies SL4. and SL5. From Design Codes.

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.

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 at 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 hoppicking 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 83 that in rural areas '*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.

Issues and Options Responses

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

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

8.0 Improving Accessibility for All

- 8.1 Transport and accessibility are important issues for many local residents in the Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Area. 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 encourage 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 abled, disabled, and young children'*.
- 8.2 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. There is a limited daily bus service to Hereford and Worcester via Bromyard that stops at Stoke Lacy, Stoke Cross and Cricks Green. The nearest rail station is Hereford.
- 8.3 Most residents are reliant 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.
- 8.4 The two main settlements are connected by the A465. But, unfortunately not by an official footpath. There is a track next to the A465 which has not been deemed wide enough by the highways department so is unmaintained. There are various other public footpaths linking the settlements to each other and the wider rural area (see **Appendix 5 Map 9**. 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.

Planning Policy

- 8.5 The NPPF promotes more sustainable transport options such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport wherever possible. Paragraph 102 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'* and paragraph 104 sets out that *'planning policies should: d) provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking.'*
- 8.6 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.'*

- 8.7 Additional development in the area may lead to increased pressures on road networks and the NDP could include a policy which encourages development to support movement by means other than the private car and to link to existing walking and cycling networks and to support improvements wherever possible. 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.
- 8.8 The hilly terrain, remote location and the speed and amount of traffic on the A465 means few people use cycles or walk for travel outside the parish. Within the parish, cycling and walking are mainly leisure activities.

Issues and Options Responses

- 8.9 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'*.
- 8.10 Draft Policy SL7 has been prepared to encourage new development to promote more sustainable travel and improved accessibility for all.

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 existing pedestrian and 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.

- 8.11 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.

(SG - to look at suggestions for Q11 and Q12 and provide this, in consultation with the PC)
Stiles/Traffic calming measures/Linked footpath between Stoke Cross and Stoke Lacy

9.0 Housing

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 an ever changing 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 There are 33 Grade II listed properties within the Stoke Lacy Parish boundaries, the majority of which are barns, hop kilns, farmhouses and other farm buildings. This shows the important role that farming has always played in the parish. Farming practises have changed over the years with more mechanisation and demands for different crops, and this is reflected in changes to the built environment. Some farm buildings have been converted and sold for 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, 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 was completed in 2019 and has been slow to sell indicating that it was not built to match the needs of local people. Its style, size and position has caused some dissent in parts of the community and it is unfortunate that some of this has been directed at new residents who understandably feel somewhat unwelcome. This emphasises the need for the NDP to reflect the majority view of the community ensuring that any future development unites rather than divides the community.
- 9.5 Another estate of 10 houses, also in Stoke Cross, has been approved by Herefordshire Council. It is understood that construction is not planned to start in the immediate future. 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 The Herefordshire Core Strategy is currently under review and the parish may experience further pressure for growth and development in future years. The NPPF sets out that there is a presumption of sustainable development and there is an emphasis on housing growth. However, that does not change the statutory status of the development plan as a starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, including any neighbourhood plan that forms part of the development plan, permission should not normally be granted.

Settlement Boundaries

- 9.7 Settlement boundaries show the extent of the built up area of settlements on a map. With neither shop nor school and very limited public transport, truly sustainable living is difficult to achieve in rural areas, therefore the importance of settlement boundaries to encourage

sustainable development has less relevance than the character of a parish. Future developments should be consistent with the character of Stoke Lacy Parish which lies on the border of National Character Area 100 Herefordshire Lowlands and 101 Herefordshire Plateau. Detailed descriptions are given in the 'Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment SPG, 2004. Consistent with this assessment, conversions, in-fill sites and small housing additions would be favoured within settlement boundaries or close to building clusters in rural sites.

Planning Policy

9.8 Rural development outside of settlements will be limited to proposals which satisfy criteria as shown in policy RA3 of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy. Other relevant policies include:

- Policy RA4 refers to Agricultural, Forestry and Rural Enterprise dwellings
- Policy RA5 Re-use of Rural Buildings, see also Para 8.11
- Policy RA6 Rural Economy, see also Para 8.11

Issues and Options Responses

9.9 For the Issues and Options public consultation, the Steering Group prepared two options for settlement boundaries, for each of the two settlements.

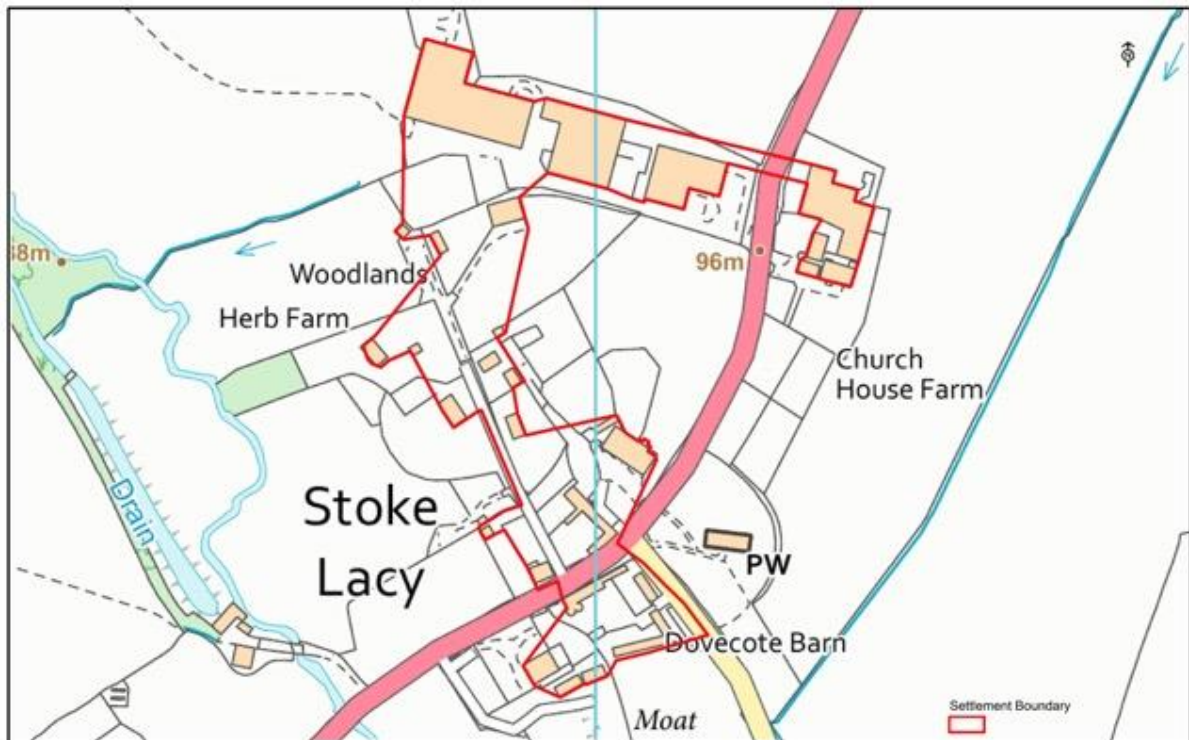
9.10 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that there was a preference for Option A for Stoke Cross, with 72% of respondents (47) supporting this option. Option A was preferred for Stoke Lacy also, with 65% of respondents (49) supporting this option. The two Option As were for relatively 'tight' settlement boundaries where opportunities for new development would be more limited.

9.11 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 have been considered by the steering group and have resulted in the settlement boundaries being drawn tighter around existing housing and excluding the church and graveyard in Stoke Lacy and known flood areas. It should be stressed that these will not be the final boundaries which will be reviewed following this consultation and amended to reflect, where possible, any comments.

9.12 The proposed settlement boundaries are shown on Maps 6 and 7. These do not include any site allocations at the current time, but if, following the consultation on the emerging draft plan, the Parish Council decides to include one or more site allocations, these and other planning policies such as Local Green Spaces will be added to provide Policies Maps for each settlement.

9.13 Policy SL8 has been prepared to guide new housing development within the settlement boundaries.

Map 6. Stoke Lacy Settlement Boundary



Map 7. Stoke Cross Settlement Boundary



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 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; and
5. Design is of a high quality, responding to local character and context whilst
6. incorporating low carbon technologies, resource efficiency measures wherever possible.

Options for Housing Sites

- 9.14 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 can be seen on the website in NDP Site Options and Assessment Report and includes the proposed plan for the site and the reasoning behind the assessment outcome including comment from Herefordshire Council Highways regarding access. The public response to this consultation regarding sites, will inform the Parish Council's decision about which, if any of the options will be carried forward into the Draft Plan for formal consultation.

Issues and Options Responses

- 9.15 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 showed 26% (17 respondents) supporting 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) supporting 20+ new houses. Therefore between now and 2031 the building of up to 10 new houses will be supported in the Draft Plan. As Stoke Lacy has exceeded its quota this number should also include suitable developments which are subsequently submitted in this time frame.
- 9.16 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. This information will be gathered in future public consultations and the NDP will be adjusted accordingly.
- 9.17 **The consultation on the Draft Plan will inform any decisions about possible site allocations in the NDP.**



Newton Farm, late 15th Century



Newlands Estate, completed 2019

House Types and Sizes

- 9.18 Stoke Lacy Parish includes a range of house types and sizes from traditional rural cottages and farmhouses to more modern developments such as Newlands and the Orchards (yet to be developed)
- 9.19 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, there were no affordable rental properties for local families'*.
- 9.20 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.
- 9.21 The **Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment – 2012 Update, November 2013**¹³ 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.'*
- 9.22 **Appendix 6** includes Tables 94 and 95 from the report which give the estimated size and type of dwellings required in the Bromyard HMA.
- 9.23 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.'*
- 9.24 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 under 55 is*

¹³ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory_record/2090/local_housing_market_assessment_2013

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

- 9.25 **Add more detail following community consultation.**

Issues and Options Responses

- 9.26 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 SL9 supports the provision of a suitable housing mix in the Parish. The questionnaire did not differentiate between existing or new houses needed.

Draft Policy SL9. Housing Mix

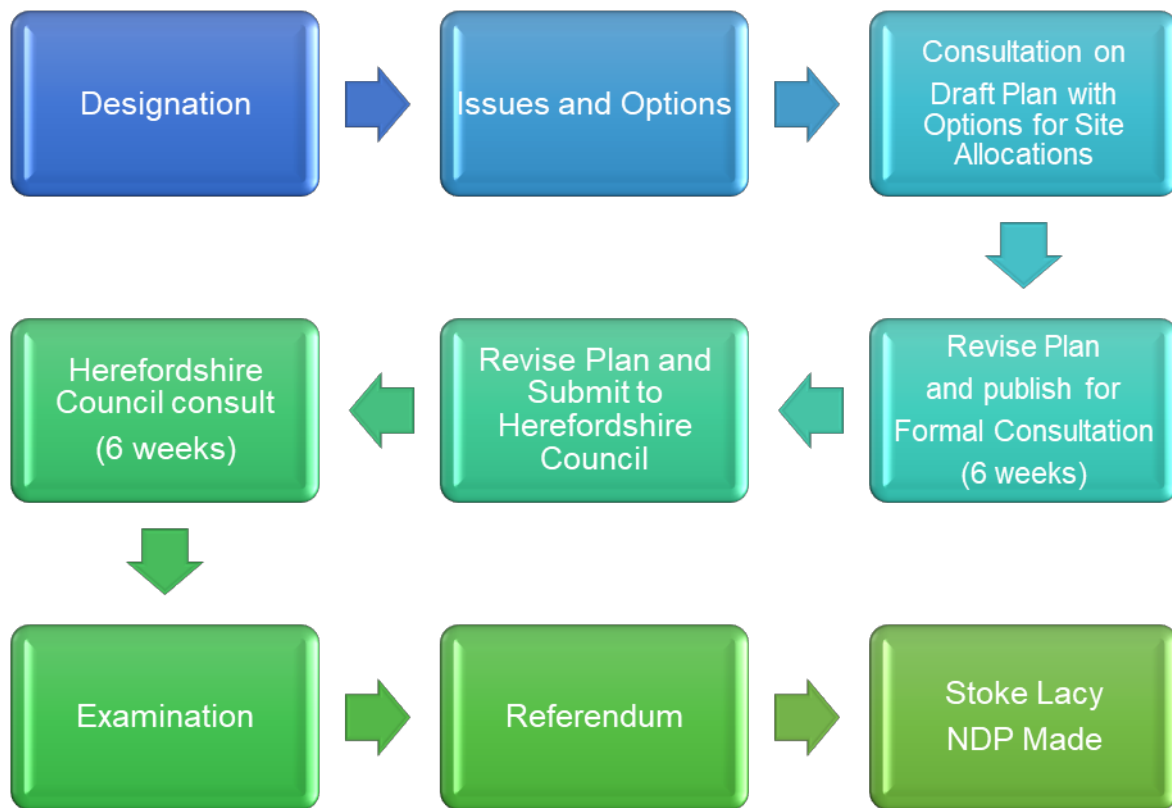
New residential development should demonstrate how it contributes to a suitable mix of tenure, type and size of dwelling across the Stoke Lacy Neighbourhood Area.

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.

10.0 Next Steps


- 10.1 Following this consultation on the Draft Plan and Options for Site Allocations, the Steering Group will carefully consider all responses and finalise the Draft Plan. There will be further informal consultations on details yet to be determined such as important public views, local green spaces and design codes.
- 10.2 Once the Draft Plan has been approved by the Parish Council it will be published for formal consultation for 6 weeks. We hope to do this later in 2021.

Appendix 1. NDP Process Diagram



Appendix 2. Description of Views

Key Public View	Significance
<p>View 1: From Stoke Cross down onto Stoke Lacy</p>  <p>Clearer photo needed</p>	<p>Need to explain why each is important - few sentences please - what is the view showing? (Church / village / landscape character / trees etc - do this for each one)</p>
<p>View 2: From Little Cowarne road down to Stoke Lacy church and conservation area</p> <p>Clearer photo needed.</p> 	
<p>View 3: From Newlands down towards the Bredenbury Road</p> <p>Insert photo</p>	<p>taking in Hall Place and the Hop Kiln and across the valley towards Pencombe</p>
<p>View 4: Of the Loddon Valley down from its source towards Stoke Cross</p>	<p>from the Woodend Lane and particularly near the barn conversion</p>

	
<p>Add any others from consultation</p>	

Appendix 3. Details of Stoke Lacy Conservation Area

On the eastern side of the A465: -

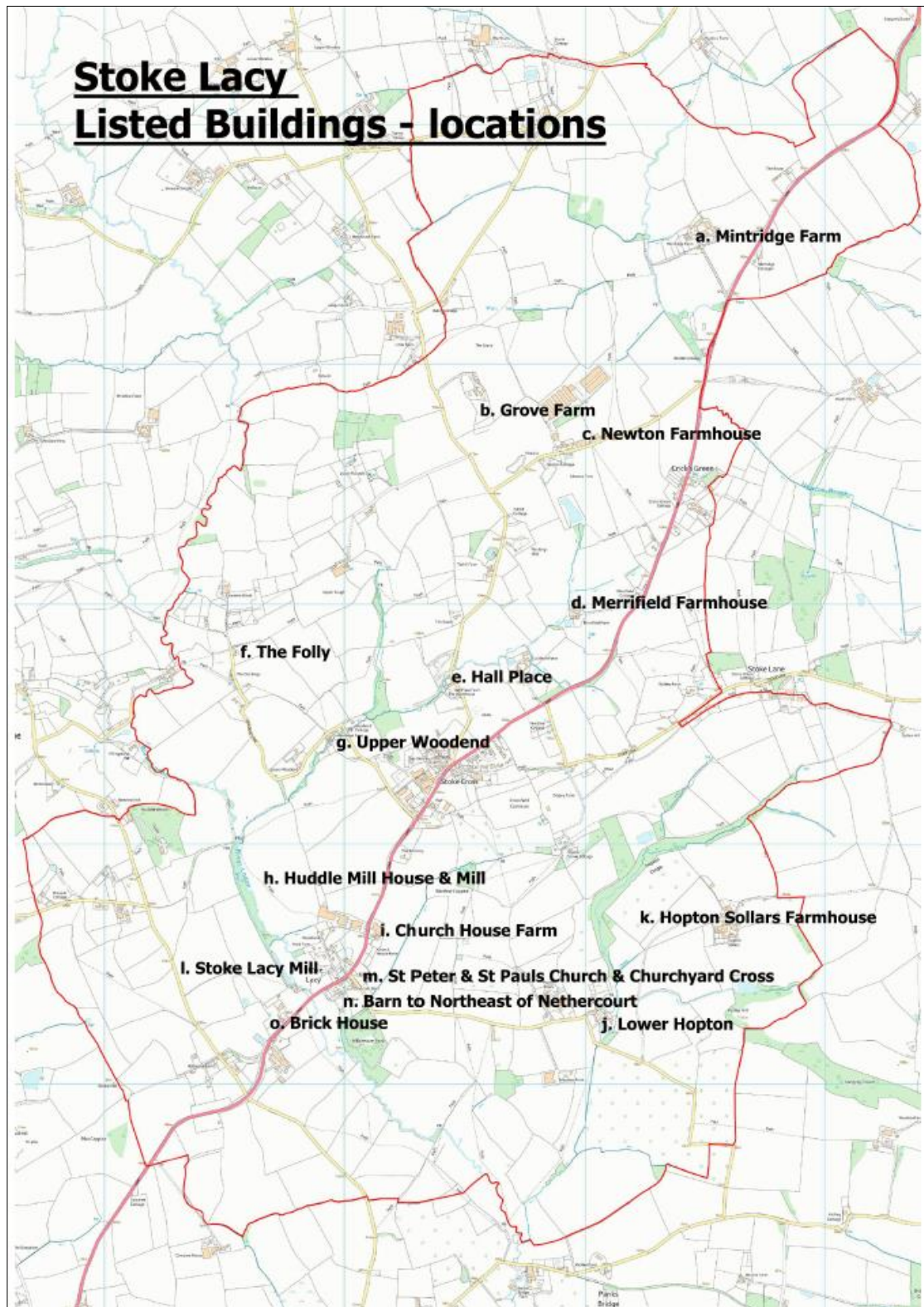
- The Victorian church of St Peter and St Paul and its churchyard
- The land between the church and the 18th Century Church House Farm and its barns.
- The substantial Victorian former farmhouse known as Nether Court and its six barns including two hop kilns, formerly agricultural buildings but since converted to dwellings in the late 1990s.
- Land leading down to the river on the south banks of the river Lodden 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 4. Listed Buildings

Map 8. Location of Listed Buildings in the Parish



Key to Map 8

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. One storey 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 Nethercourt (1276120) – 1 listing

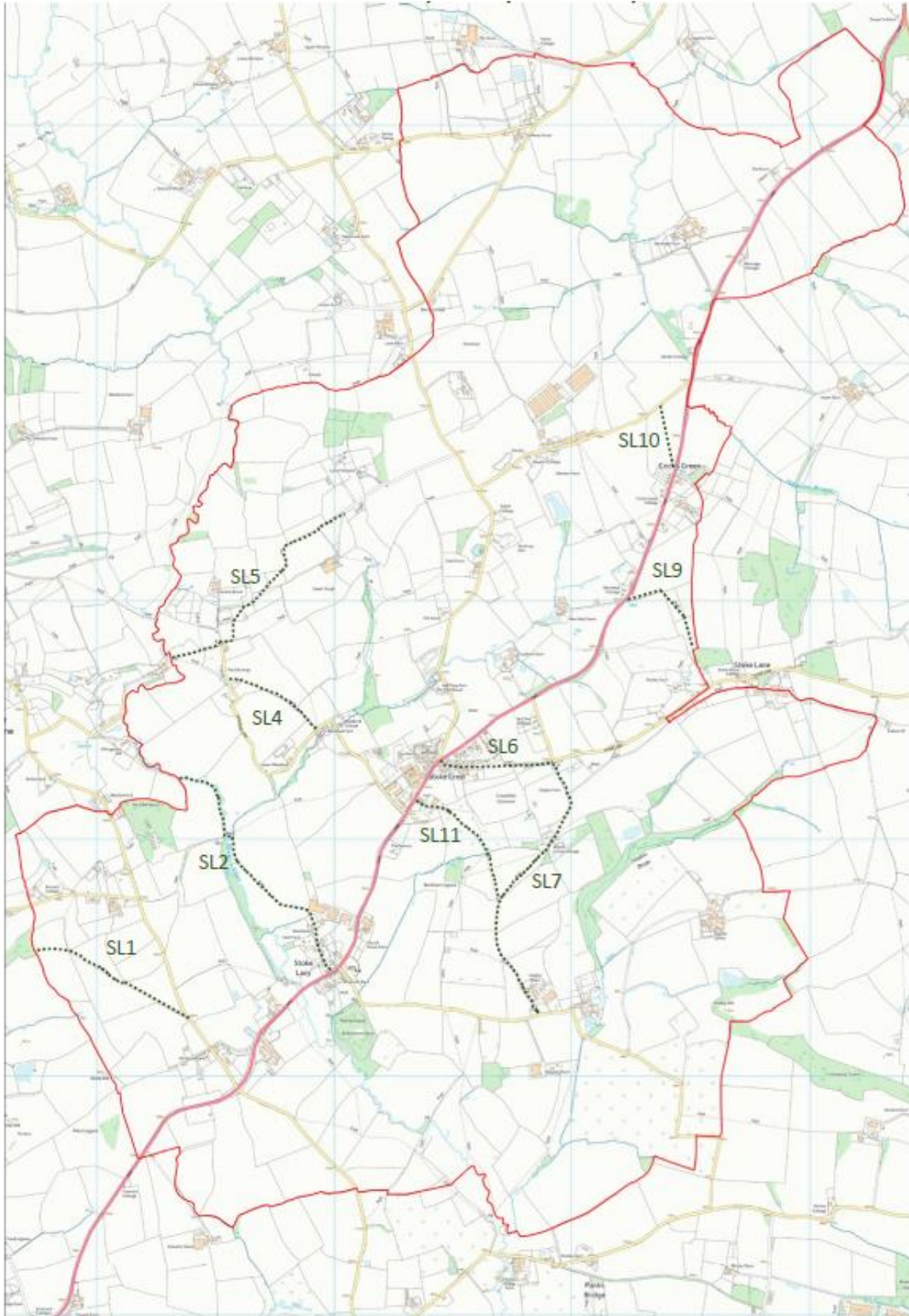
A 17th century timber framed barn with wattle panels. Some panels are open. Partly weather-boarded. Tile roof with gable ends. This barn is in the Stoke Lacy conservation area and is one of several there which have been converted to a dwelling.

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 5. Public Footpaths in Stoke Lacy Parish

Map 9. Public Footpaths



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