



HOPE - UNDER - DINMORE
& NEWTON

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011-2031

Hope-under-Dinmore Group Parish Council

May 2018

Prepared by DJN Planning Ltd. for Hope under Dinmore Group Parish Council

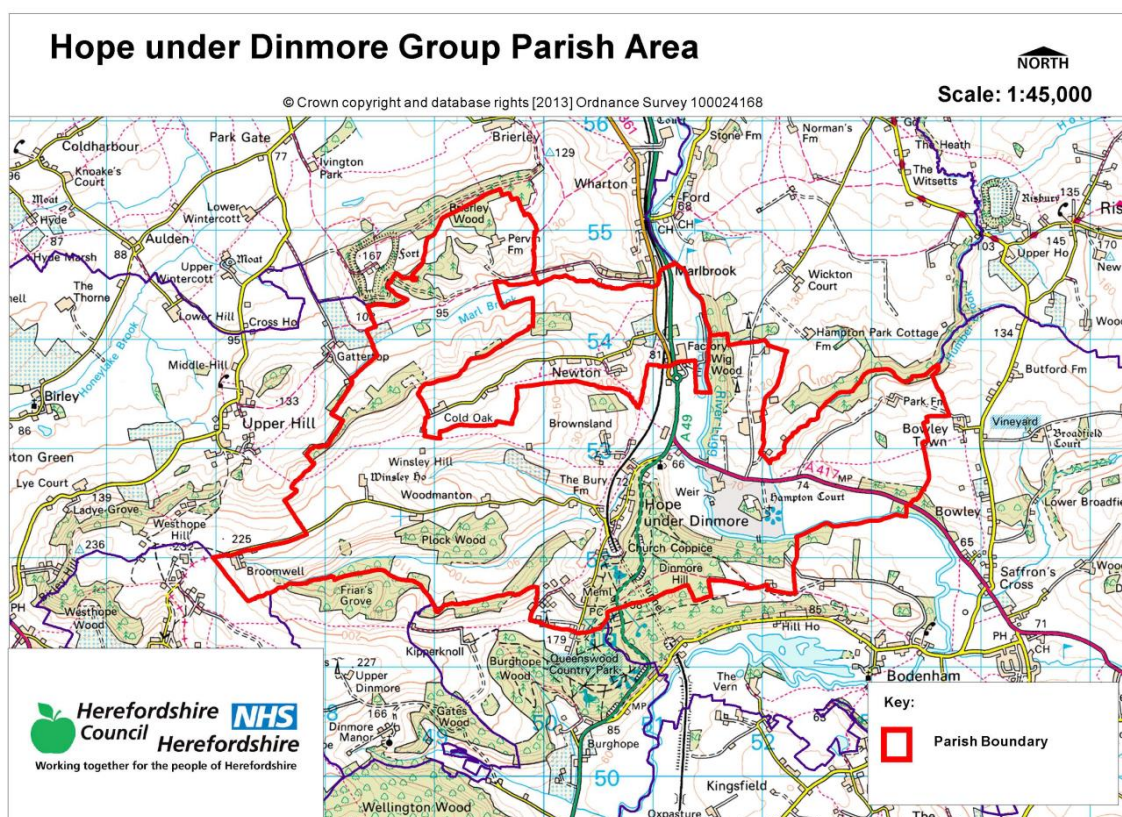
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1. SETTING THE SCENE

Introduction

- 1.1 New planning powers were given to local communities by the Localism Act 2011. These include the ability to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans, as part of the statutory planning framework guiding development in the area. When planning applications are made, they must be determined in accordance with this framework unless there are overriding circumstances to the contrary.
- 1.2 Hope-under-Dinmore Group Parish Council considers that such a Plan should be prepared for the area, to make use of the new planning powers and help ensure that decisions on future development are guided locally. Application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area – the first step in preparing the Plan – was made to Herefordshire Council in July 2013 and approved on 28 August 2013. The designated area follows the group parish boundary comprising the parishes of Hope-under-Dinmore and Newton (Plan 1).
- 1.3 The Plan has been prepared by a project group comprising parish councillors and local volunteers. Grant aid has allowed use of the services of a planning consultant to guide the project group through the plan-making process and undertake necessary technical work. The group carried out a survey of local residents in early 2015, and this has produced much useful



Plan 1: Hope-under-Dinmore and Newton Neighbourhood Area

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information referred to in the Plan. The survey findings have been written up in the Results Report.¹ Regard has also been had to a range of other published documents forming the Plan's 'evidence base', and these are listed at Appendix A.

- 1.4 The project group has sought to work with local landowners to investigate the scope for land to be brought forward for development. An Assessment of possible housing sites was carried out for the Project Group in summer 2015,² and forms the basis of the village boundary and housing policies of the Plan.

Format of the Plan

- 1.5 The Plan seeks to contribute to sustainable development through its social, environmental and economic aspects. The local planning concerns of residents have been grouped into three chapters, dealing in turn with social and community matters (chapter 4), including housing and a settlement boundary for Hope-under-Dinmore; environment and heritage (chapter 5), and economy and employment (chapter 6).
- 1.6 An important underlying concern for the Plan is to ensure that environmental aspects are given due weight in the overall planning balance between providing for development and protecting the local environment. Chapter 2 addresses the local planning context and reviews the environmental and other issues to be addressed if development within the Area is to be considered truly sustainable.
- 1.7 The Plan's policies make various site-specific proposals and provisions. These, together with other County-level policies, are illustrated on the accompanying Policies Maps for the Neighbourhood Area and the village.
- 1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan has been supported by the production of an Environmental Statement. A Strategic Environmental Assessment and a Habitat Regulations Assessment were carried out as part of this.

National and local planning policy context

- 1.9 The Neighbourhood Development Plan sets out a number of planning policies to govern land use and development. These policies need to be read alongside existing national and County planning policies which also apply within the area.
- 1.10 National planning policy is set out within the **National Planning Policy Framework**. Companion **Planning Practice Guidance** provides practical advice as to how national policy is to be implemented.
- 1.11 Herefordshire Council is responsible for the production of the **Local Plan**, which includes strategic planning policies governing development in the County for the period 2011 to 2031.

¹ A full analysis of the survey can be found in the Results Report, published as part of the Plan's evidence base at <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbnoxob3BlldW5kZXJkaW5tb3JlYW5kbmV3dG9ufGd4Oic0MzAzODEyMzU1MWZkY2I>.

² Housing Site Assessment, 2015.

The first document to be produced as part of the Local Plan is the Core Strategy. This sets out the immediate context for the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans, notably housing requirements, as well as many other policies on relevant issues such as employment, open space and infrastructure.

1.12 The Neighbourhood Development Plan has been written to complement rather than duplicate these existing policies, which are listed in more detail at Appendix B. Reference is made to relevant policies in the text of the Plan as appropriate.

1.13 The Plan covers the period 2011 to 2031, coterminous with the Core Strategy.

2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

- 2.1 This part of the Plan describes the Neighbourhood Area in terms of the social, economic and environmental aspects which contribute to sustainability. It draws on information within Herefordshire Council's Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report for the NDP. Plans 2 and 3 at the end of this chapter are reproduced from this Report.³
- 2.2 Hope-under-Dinmore Neighbourhood Area comprises the two parishes of Hope-under-Dinmore and Newton and lies between Hereford and Leominster in north Herefordshire. It is bisected north-south by the A49 trunk road and the Cardiff – Crewe railway line, which run parallel to each other. The A417 joins the A49 to the north of the village of Hope-under-Dinmore.
- 2.3 The main areas of settlement are in Hope-under-Dinmore parish. In 2011, the parish population was 412 residents within 153 households.⁴ The population profile is younger than elsewhere within the County, with 16.2% of residents aged over 65 years compared to 20.8% in the County. However, the proportion of those aged 0-15 (17.2%) is similar to the County average.
- 2.4 Housing tenure in the parish reflects the presence of the housing association scheme at Cherrybrook Close. Social rented housing accounts for 25% of dwellings, compared to 14% at County level, with a similar difference in terms of owner occupation (55% in the parish, 68% in the County).
- 2.5 The population density is noticeably low, with only 0.3 persons per hectare compared to 0.8 at County level and 4.3 in the West Midlands, reflecting the extensive open countryside away from the village.
- 2.6 Local employment is focussed on the A49 corridor, including the Cadbury site at Marlbrook and smaller enterprises. Other businesses in the Plan Area are typically based on agriculture or are otherwise linked to the rural environs, for instance through small-scale food and drink processing, and make use of existing farm and other buildings (including home-based businesses). There are no established industrial estates or other employment areas. The three most significant types of employment of local residents are construction (16% of those aged 16 to 74 years in employment, compared to 8.7% at the County level); wholesale and retail trade (15.6 % locally, 16.7% at County level) and agriculture, forestry and fishing (11.6%, 5.4% for Herefordshire). Self-employment is a notable feature, accounting for 18.7% of residents aged 16 to 74 (14.4% at County level).
- 2.7 The village of Hope-under-Dinmore is situated hard against the northern foot of Dinmore Hill, and its character is defined by the distinctive local topography, the surrounding woodland and the road and rail transport corridors which run immediately adjacent. The main part of the village lies between the A49 and the railway line and is as a result linear in form, with a

³ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/1281443/Hope_under_Dinmore_SEA_Scoping_Report_v2.pdf (October 2014).

⁴ Census 2011, all figures for Hope-under-Dinmore parish only.

historic core and modern development to the north. The existing pattern of village development is most typically as dwellings fronting directly onto the village road, save for Cherrybrook which extends as a cul-de-sac to the west. Woodland descends steeply to the village road from the east, forming a continuous frontage bordering and overhanging the highway, broken only for access to detached residential properties, and as such makes a significant contribution to local distinctiveness. There is some limited development outside the principal transport corridors.

- 2.8 To the north of the village, a petrol filling station accessed from the A49 provides some local shopping facilities for the village, including cash withdrawals. There is also a village hall, which is home to local groups and activities. The church of St Mary the Virgin lies to the east of the A49. The nearest post office is outside the Plan Area, in the neighbouring village of Bodenham some 5.5 km to the east. The village primary school closed in 2004. There is no public open space within the village itself. The Queenswood Country Park to the south, which lies partly within the Plan Area, offers countryside access and a play area.
- 2.9 Away from the village, there are significant tracts of open countryside and woodland, with farmsteads and scattered dwellings notably at Newton and on the northern slopes of Dinmore Hill. In the east is the Hampton Court Estate, based around Hampton Court house and historic park and garden.
- 2.10 Vehicle access away from the A49 and the A417 is limited. The unclassified adopted highways to the west of the A49 are narrow country lanes. All are no through routes, giving access to the village and other local properties only. Access is further limited by the severance effect of the railway line, with a 13' 6" height restriction on the village road underpass. The A49 also introduces local severance although this is mitigated by a pedestrian subway, affording access from the principal housing areas to the church and to a south-bound bus stop at a lay-by on the trunk road. Bus services allow journeys to work in Hereford and Leominster, with a limited service outside normal working hours.
- 2.11 The River Lugg flows south through the Plan Area, turning eastwards when it passes under Hampton Court Bridge on the A417. Land either side of the Lugg and its tributary watercourses the Marl and Cherry Brooks is liable to flood, as illustrated on Plan 3. Hope-under-Dinmore village experiences regular flooding from the Cherry Brook, exacerbated by highway run off from the trunk road, affecting both property and the highway.
- 2.12 The Area includes a number of sites which are variously designated at international, national and local levels for their nature conservation interest. The River Lugg south of Hampton Court Bridge is part of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a European-level designation. There are recognised water quality issues in this section of the SAC, associated principally with elevated levels of phosphate where targets are currently being exceeded. Waste water discharges to the tributary Cherry Brook arising from new village development will need to be assessed against the prevailing situation and the conservation objectives for the SAC. The River Lugg is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in its entirety.

2.13 There are 4 SSSI's within the Plan Area, in whole or in part:

- The Bury Farm SSSI comprises 76 ha extending west of the railway line, notified for the special interest of its grasslands and with a complementary overall diversity of habitat.
- Dinmore Hill Woods SSSI is 152 ha of mixed native broadleaved woodland, one of the largest continuous blocks of deciduous woodland in this part of Herefordshire. The notified Site lies both sides of the trunk road on Dinmore Hill and descends to the edge of the village, whilst also extending outside the Area to the south.
- River Lugg SSSI comprises the watercourse from source in Wales to its confluence with the Wye at Mordiford (101 km). The Site was notified because it is a largely unpolluted natural river which supports river plant communities and other populations of special interest including otter.
- Hill Hole Dingle SSSI is 36 ha of ancient natural woodland straddling the north eastern boundary of the Neighbourhood Area.

2.14 The Plan Area also includes a number of locations designated locally as Special Wildlife Sites (SWS) and ancient woodland. These overlap in part with the national and international designations above. Part of the rising land east of the village road is both SWS and ancient woodland, the latter extending down to the highway opposite Cherrybrook Close.

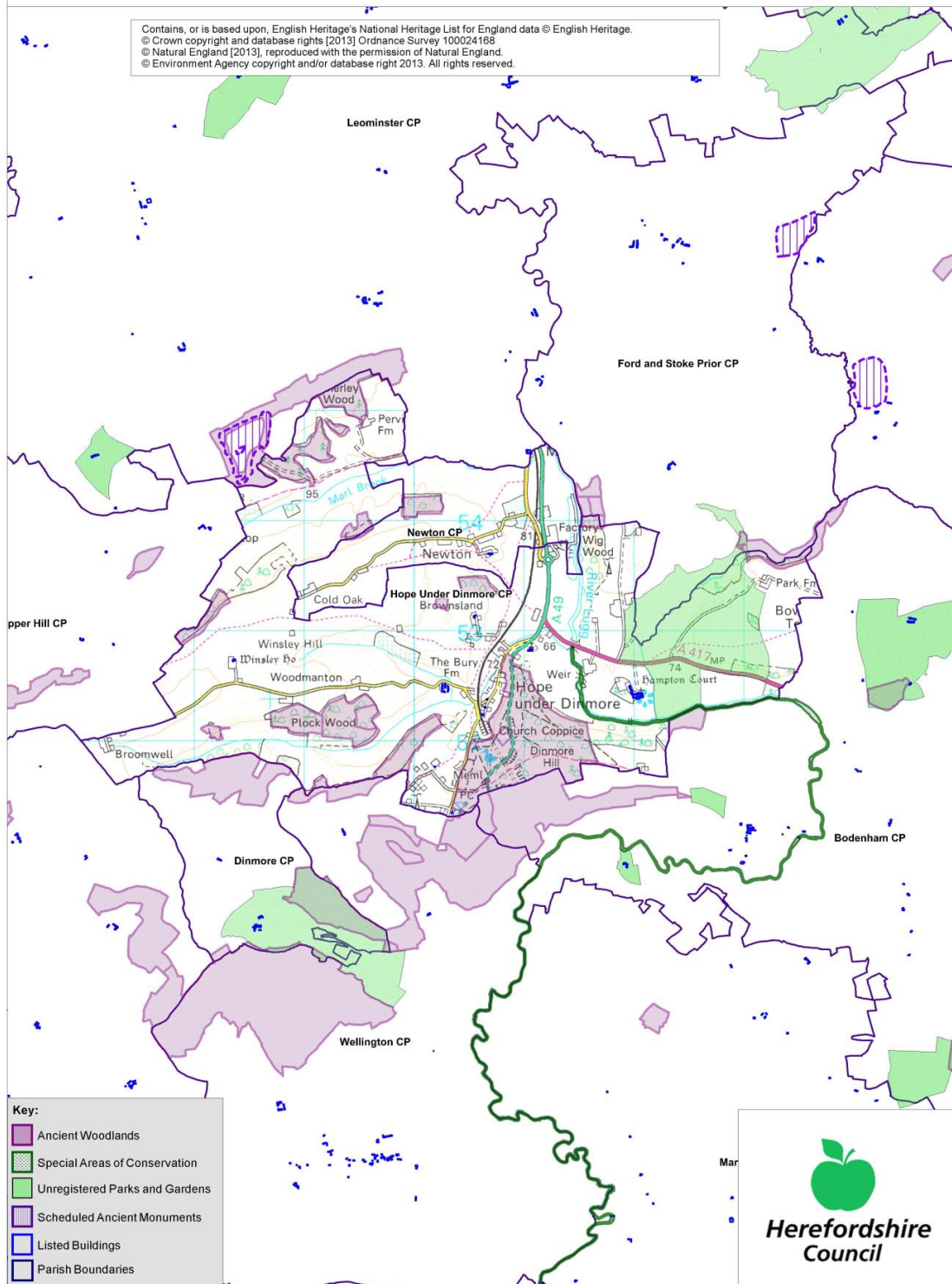
2.15 Hampton Court House is a grade I listed building set within a grade II registered park and garden. There are several other listed buildings, including the church (grade II*), in the village itself and at the Bury Farm. There are no Conservation Areas in the Neighbourhood Area.

Hope under Dinmore Group SEA Map 1

Scale: 1:30,000



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Plan 2: SEA Map 1: Heritage assets

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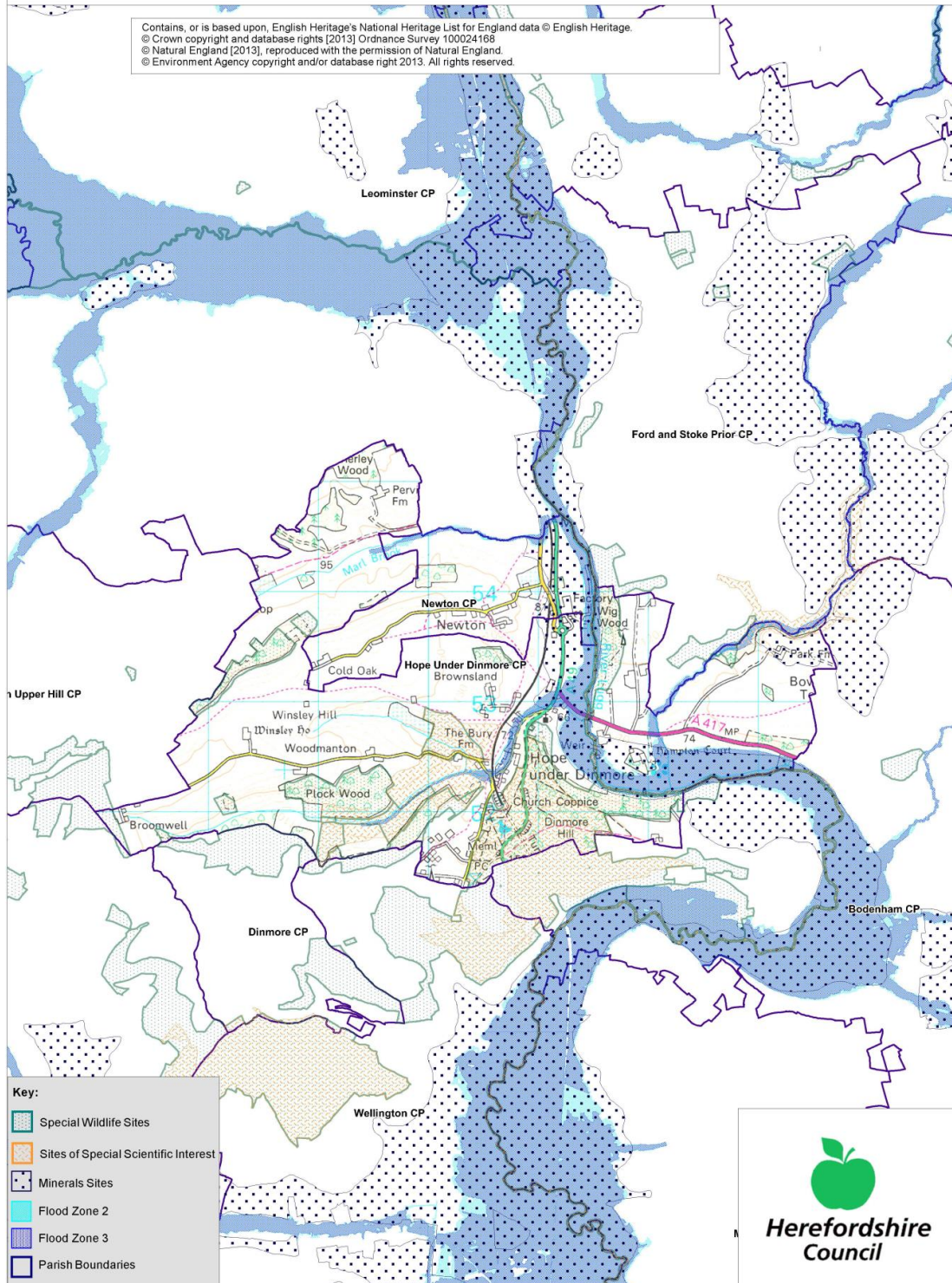
Source: Hope-under-Dinmore Group Neighbourhood Area, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Scoping Report, 2014.

Hope under Dinmore Group SEA Map 2

Scale: 1:30,000



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Plan 3: SEA Map 2: Biodiversity and flood risk

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Source: Hope-under-Dinmore Group Neighbourhood Area, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Scoping Report, 2014.

3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The Plan proposes the following vision for the Plan Area in 2031:

That Hope-under-Dinmore and Newton retain their natural beauty and rural character and that residents feel safe, happy and part of a thriving open community.

3.2 To help achieve the Vision, the Project Group has formulated a series of objectives to guide the detailed planning policies in the next chapters. They are grouped around the three elements of sustainable development: social, environment and economic:

Social and community (chapter 4)

- New homes will be built in small numbers, in a style and setting sympathetic to the nature of the village and surrounding countryside. Any developments must not have an adverse impact on flooding.
- Local infrastructure will be improved to reduce flood risk, and roads and footpaths kept safe and well maintained.
- Community facilities such as the church and village hall will be looked after and respected.

Environment and heritage (chapter 5)

- New development will be in keeping with the distinctive landscape and respect the setting of the village.
- Residents will be able to appreciate and enjoy local open spaces for amenity and leisure.
- Queenswood Country Park will be preserved and open access maintained.
- Natural and historic features will be safeguarded, and their role in the green infrastructure network recognised.
- Renewable energy will be promoted, provided any adverse impacts can be managed.

Economy and employment (chapter 6)

- Local small businesses including farming will be encouraged and supported.
- Improvements to mobile and broadband communications will be actively sought.

4. SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY

4.1 This chapter of the Plan sets out planning policies to address the following matters:

- Housing development
- Village settlement boundary
- Flood risk
- Community facilities

Housing requirement

4.2 Herefordshire Council has identified Hope-under-Dinmore as one of a number of settlements within the County that are to be the main focus of proportionate housing development in the rural areas (Local Plan policy RA2). The Local Plan also sets an indicative level of potential housing development at group parish level, based on a percentage level of growth (policy RA1). The delivery of this target is to be considered against local factors and environmental constraints in preparing Neighbourhood Plans; this process will determine the appropriate scale of development. Housing is to be located within or adjacent to the main built-up area of the village. Neighbourhood Plans are to define settlement boundaries. In rural locations outside settlements, new housing is restricted to those proposals which meet specified criteria, set in policy RA3, in order to avoid unsustainable patterns of development. Policy RA3 refers to a number of other Local Plan policies which set out these criteria in further detail, including in respect of agricultural, forestry and rural enterprise dwellings (policy RA4) and the re-use of rural buildings (policy RA5).

4.3 The target set for the Plan is 26 new houses to be provided during the plan period – 2011 to 2031. Dwelling completions since 2011, and existing planning permissions for new housing which have not yet been implemented, contribute to meeting the target. The position is summarised below in Table 1.

Number of households in parish	% growth in Core Strategy	Number of new houses required to 2031	Housing completions 2011 to April 2017	Housing commitments at April 2017	Housing remaining to be delivered
170	15%	26	1	21	4

TABLE 1: Indicative housing growth requirement, Hope-under-Dinmore Group, 2011-2031

Housing strategy

- 4.4 A local Housing Site Assessment has been carried out for the NDP Group, to determine how best to address the indicative target and to gather evidence on the potential or otherwise for site allocation.⁵ Such an assessment was particularly required since no County-level housing land availability survey had been undertaken at the time.⁶ Sites which were thought to have the potential to deliver new housing growth were identified through public consultation, the residents' questionnaire survey and landowner engagement. Details can be found in the Assessment report. Taking account of this work and having regard to local environmental factors, the Assessment focussed on land between the railway line and the A49. This area contains the main built form of the village. Four sites were identified for assessment, as listed below.
- 4.5 Sites HUD1 and HUD2 are closely related to the village, lying between and to the rear of areas of residential development. HUD3 has a less close relationship but was identified for assessment as it lies between developed areas. HUD4 was identified despite its poor relationship with the village as it is relatively unconstrained and to ensure all potential areas between the railway line and A49 were considered.

Ref	Name
HUD1	Land between Tavern Meadow – Cherrybrook Close
HUD2	Land rear of Tavern Meadow
HUD3	Land between Cherrybrook Close - Northside Park
HUD4	Land north of Northside Park

TABLE 2: Sites for assessment

- 4.6 Open land to the east of the village road (north of Panbury Cottage) was considered for assessment but rejected. This is a steeply sloping block of land with mature planting to the roadside, the largely unbroken nature of which throughout the village contributes greatly to the prevailing rural and wooded character. The site makes a significant contribution to village character in a sensitive location and for this reason was not taken further.
- 4.7 Land west of the railway line and east of the trunk road was also considered for assessment but rejected. Both areas have a poor relationship with the main built form of the village, and a number of constraints were considered to render them unsuitable for identification for development through a Plan allocation, summarised below:

West of the railway line

- Severance created by the railway line and underpass width/height restrictions, particularly at the adopted highway underpass

⁵ Housing Site Assessment, 2015.

⁶ Herefordshire Council publishes assessments of housing land availability, as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan – the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). It is a useful starting point for NDP preparation where available. The SHLAA assessment for Hope-under-Dinmore was published after the draft Plan had been prepared.

- Lack of available alternative access from the west
- Flood Zone 3 affecting the highway, including the access through and to the underpasses, and adjacent land
- Presence of designated biodiversity interests (The Bury Farm SSSI)
- Topography

East of the A49

- Severance created by the A49 trunk road
- Flood Zone 3 both north and south of the A49/A417 junction, with an extensive area affected on Lugg flood plain to the north
- Presence of designated biodiversity interests (Dinmore Hill Woods SSSI, SWS and ancient woodland)
- Topography in south

4.8 The Assessment demonstrates that the four assessed sites are significantly constrained, to the extent that it would not be appropriate to promote their allocation for development within the NDP. The principal issues arising are flood risk and access. These factors particularly affect the sites which have the closest relationship with the built form of the village. Where they are less severe, to the north, the assessed locations demonstrate a poor relationship with the village form, because of their relatively remote situation. In sum, no sites are considered suitable for allocation for housing development in the Plan. This conclusion is echoed in respect of HUD1, HUD2 and HUD3 by Herefordshire Council's November 2015 assessment of land with housing potential in the village. This found no potential on all three sites (HUD4 was not assessed in this study). Finally, representations in respect of the suitability of land at HUD2 and HUD3 for residential development have been carefully considered. No change has been made to the Plan as a result. The reasons for this are set out in the Consultation Statement.

4.9 The Assessment also considers the scope for windfall development in the Plan Area. Windfalls are new dwellings arising on sites which are not specifically identified (i.e., allocated) in the Plan, but which nonetheless become available for development and achieve a planning permission. These may be smaller sites within the village settlement boundary, or those which meet the planning policy criteria for residential development outside of settlements, such as the conversion of redundant buildings.

4.10 The Assessment identifies that windfall supply has not been significant in the recent past in the Plan Area. However, planning permission for the conversion of former agricultural buildings at Hampton Court Estate to create 21 residential units was granted in March 2016.⁷

4.11 The residents' survey shows that windfall provision is the preferred means for new home provision in the village. Almost two-thirds of respondents (64%) preferred new housing to take the form of single dwellings set within the existing housing areas, compared to smaller

⁷ Planning application P140817/F, Conversion of the former agricultural buildings and farmhouse to create 21 residential units at Hampton Court Estate Cottages, granted planning permission on 7 March 2016.

developments of 3-5 houses (60%) or a single development of in the order of 10-15 houses (24%).⁸

- 4.12 In arriving at the proposed approach to housing delivery, local evidence, including consultation responses, has been taken into account. In particular, the site assessments undertaken have ensured a range of planning and environmental factors have been addressed. Issues relating to access, transport severance, flood risk, landscape, biodiversity, relationship to village form, local distinctiveness and character have been identified. In short, the cumulative impact of these constraints is such that no sites can be demonstrated to be suitable for development or for allocation in the Plan.
- 4.13 In this situation, the likelihood of supply arising through windfalls comes under closer scrutiny. The deliverable housing units at Hampton Court Estate will alone meet the majority of the minimum indicative target. As well as new housing coming forward within the village, other windfall units may be expected to arise in the rural area where these can be shown to meet the requirements of Local Plan policy RA3 and allied Local Plan policies. Whilst it is in the nature of windfall supply to retain an element of uncertainty, the above position gives confidence that the housing requirement can be met without site allocation.

POLICY HUD1: HOUSING STRATEGY

A MINIMUM OF 26 NEW DWELLINGS WILL BE PROVIDED IN THE PLAN AREA UP TO 2031. THE HOUSING REQUIREMENT WILL BE MET THROUGH WINDFALL SCHEMES.

Settlement boundary

- 4.14 Local plan policy RA3 *Herefordshire's countryside* gives emphasis to the definition of settlement boundaries for named settlements such as Hope-under-Dinmore. Such boundaries serve to define the extent of settlements for the purposes of applying Local Plan policies RA2 and RA3. In the 2015 residents' survey, 71% of respondents supported the identification of a village planning boundary.⁹
- 4.15 A settlement boundary is shown on the village Policies Map. The boundary has been drawn having regard to criteria within Herefordshire Council guidance.¹⁰ It serves to delineate the main built-up areas of the village. It also serves to protect its character and setting by excluding open areas of land which make a positive contribution in this regard.

POLICY HUD2: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

A SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY IS DEFINED FOR HOPE-UNDER-DINMORE, AS SHOWN ON THE VILLAGE POLICIES MAP.

⁸ Residents questionnaire survey, Results Report, 2015, responses to Q3, page 7.

⁹ Ibid., responses to Q7, page 9.

¹⁰ Herefordshire Council, Guide to settlement boundaries, Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20, rev. June 2015.

Criteria for new housing development

- 4.16 Local Plan policies already set out planning requirements for new housing development. These include policies on affordable housing (H1), housing types (H3), sustainable design and energy efficiency (policy SD1), meeting open space requirements (OS1) and traffic and transport (MT1). Policy RA2 *Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns* emphasises the role of village development in bolstering existing service provision, improving facilities and infrastructure, and meeting local housing needs.
- 4.17 Within this framework, policy HUD3 deals with matters of particular local relevance to housing development coming forward throughout the Plan area in accordance with policies HUD1 and HUD2. This local perspective is intended to supplement, not duplicate Local Plan policies.

Character and design

- 4.18 Hope-under-Dinmore village and environs have a distinctive rural character derived from the low density of development, the presence of open spaces and the mature woodland on the settlement edge. It is important that new development respects and is in harmony with the established local village and rural area character. In the residents' survey, the requirement that new development be in keeping with its surroundings was the most favoured means of protecting and enhancing the local environment, with 84% of respondents considering this to be very or quite important.¹¹ The requirement embraces a range of planning matters including building scale, design, access, layout, density and landscaping. Policy HUD6 provides for the protection and enhancement of the landscape setting of the village.

Affordable housing

- 4.19 Local Plan policy H1 *Affordable housing* sets an indicative target that 40% of housing units in the Northern Rural 'housing value area' (which includes Hope-under-Dinmore) should be 'affordable' – that is, housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market. The requirement applies to all new open market housing proposals on sites above a minimum threshold.
- 4.20 Affordable housing can be provided either as social- or affordable rented dwellings, usually by a housing association, or through various other forms of 'intermediate' homes for sale and rent below market levels, such as shared ownership. Current evidence indicates affordable tenure requirements for the Bromyard Housing Market Area as follows: social rent 24%; affordable rent 36%; and intermediate tenures 40%.¹²
- 4.21 Where affordable homes come forward, the specific mix of affordable tenures to be provided will need to be validated at application. Affordable dwellings should be presented 'tenure blind', so that they cannot be distinguished from market units by virtue of either their location or appearance.

¹¹ Residents questionnaire survey, Results Report, 2015, responses to Q16, page 14.

¹² Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment 2013, paragraph 11.33.

Water quality

4.22 Suitable management of waste water arising from development is particularly important because of the proximity of the River Lugg to the east, a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation, and into which the Cherry Brook flows. Conservation objectives for the Lugg are presently at risk because of excessive nutrient levels, principally phosphate. To address these issues, a Nutrient Management Plan has been produced by the Environment Agency and Natural England with other stakeholders.¹³ There is no public sewerage within the Plan area. Local Plan policy SD4 *Waste water treatment and river water quality* sets out the alternative foul drainage options and related planning requirements in respect of water quality and implications for the Special Area of Conservation, and which are reflected here.

POLICY HUD3: CRITERIA FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING PROPOSALS SHOULD:

- 1 BE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THEIR SURROUNDINGS BY VIRTUE OF THEIR SITING AND LAYOUT, DENSITY, SCALE, MASSING, DESIGN, LANDSCAPING AND CHOICE OF TRADITIONAL MATERIALS; AND**
- 2 HAVE REGARD TO RESIDENTIAL AMENITY; AND**
- 3 INCLUDE PROPOSALS FOR THE TREATMENT OF WASTEWATER TO MEET WATER QUALITY REQUIREMENTS, AND FOR SUSTAINABLE SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE; AND**
- 4 PROVIDE FOR RECYCLING AND CYCLE STORAGE; AND**
- 5 ENSURE SUITABLE AND SAFE ACCESS TO THE HIGHWAY BY PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND VEHICLES.**

Flood risk

4.23 Flooding is a significant social and community issue in the Plan Area, particularly for the village of Hope-under-Dinmore. A corridor of Flood Zone 3 runs through the village associated with the Cherry Brook. The 2011 Herefordshire Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment identified the village location as a flooding 'hotspot', with residential and non-residential buildings at high risk and critical infrastructure at significant risk from surface water flooding.¹⁴ A more detailed Flood Study was carried out in 2014.¹⁵ This concluded that flooding is largely due to flood flows in the Cherry Brook exceeding the capacity of the highway culvert upstream of the railway embankment, with overtopping flows subsequently flowing northwards along the village road. This is exacerbated by highway runoff from the rural lanes to the west of the village and the trunk road to the east. This combination of flooding mechanisms is supported by replies to the residents' survey where principal causes identified are road run-off (30 replies), river/stream overflow (22) and field run-off (21).¹⁶

¹³ Environment Agency and Natural England, River Wye SAC, Nutrient Management Plan, 2014.

¹⁴ Herefordshire Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment, Preliminary Assessment Report, May 2011, JBA Consulting for Herefordshire Council, figs.5.1-5.4.

¹⁵ Hope-under-Dinmore Flood Study, November 2014, Parsons Brinckerhoff for Herefordshire Council.

¹⁶ Residents questionnaire survey, Results Report, 2015, responses to Q15, page 14.

4.24 The Study reports that flooding to property occurred in 1998 and 2007. The village road is reported to have flooded every year since 2007, with water ponding at the entrance to Cherrybrook Close, preventing access to the Close and to other properties. The Study identifies the following impacts in terms of the three dimensions of sustainability:

- Economic: principally arising from flood damage to property and estimated at £112,000 per year or valued as £2.12 million over a 30 year period. Social housing at Cherry Brook Close is most at risk. There are also impacts on farms and businesses when highway access through the village is impassable, affecting employees travelling to and from work and the movement of goods and services, and implications for emergency services access.
- Environmental: impacts on water quality due to flooding of foul sewers and subsequent discharge to Cherry Brook/River Lugg.
- Social: principally associated with the stress of frequent flood events and their anticipation. Flooding is seen to prevent access on a regular basis, isolating residents and those who need to use the village road from the wider community.
- Future impacts: climate change is expected to lead to an increase in flooding to the village road, potentially preventing access and egress several times a year. Internal flooding of property in the village may also occur more frequently and be more widespread.

4.25 The Study goes on to review possible flood alleviation options and identifies a number of possible improvements which in combination could form part of a preferred solution. Whilst this work is ongoing, the partnership funding for the final scheme should include developer contributions.

4.26 The Study rightly warns that future development in the village may increase the numbers of people and properties at risk. The planning system has a part to play in managing the risks associated with flooding, by not allocating or allowing development which would be at an unacceptable risk from flooding itself, or which would increase flood risk to third parties, such as other properties downstream. Work undertaken in drawing up the Plan has assessed the indicative growth targets against the known flood risk, and has concluded that there are no sites within or adjacent to the village suitable for allocation. A similar precautionary approach also needs to be taken in respect of windfall housing development. National planning policy and Local Plan policy SD3 *Sustainable water management and water resources* set out steps to be taken when flood risk considerations arise, to ensure that development is safe at times of flood, including in respect of pedestrian and vehicular access; and that such development does not increase flood risk elsewhere. Policy HUD4 draws attention to particular aspects of that approach which are relevant in the local context. Given the flood risk issues associated with development in the village, a Flood Risk Assessment will generally be required with planning applications. The fact that the village road is known to be rendered impassable on an annual basis is of particular significance because it provides the only means of access and egress to the village and other property west of the railway.

POLICY HUD4: FLOOD RISK

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS GIVING RISE TO FLOOD RISK IMPLICATIONS SHOULD:

- 1 DEMONSTRATE THAT FLOOD RISK WILL NOT BE INCREASED ELSEWHERE; AND**
- 2 DEMONSTRATE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT IS SUITABLY FLOOD RESILIENT AND RESISTANT, INCLUDING SAFE ACCESS AND EGRESS ROUTES, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE FLOOD RISK TO THE ADOPTED HIGHWAY IN THE VILLAGE OF HOPE-UNDER-DINMORE; AND**
- 3 ENSURE THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE THAT THE EXISTING RATE OF SURFACE WATER RUN-OFF IS NOT EXCEEDED AND THAT BETTERMENT IS ACHIEVED WHEREVER POSSIBLE; AND**
- 4 REDUCE FLOOD RISK BY INCORPORATING FLOOD STORAGE COMPENSATION MEASURES OR OTHER BETTERMENT TO DELIVER POSITIVE ENHANCEMENT TO THE LOCAL FLOOD RISK REGIME, HAVING REGARD TO ASSESSED OPTIONS.**

CULVERTING PROPOSALS, PARTICULARLY IN RESPECT OF THE CHERRY BROOK WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE OF HOPE-UNDER-DINMORE, SHOULD BE AVOIDED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN TO BE NECESSARY FOR ACCESS.

Community facilities

- 4.27 Local community facilities are limited but well-regarded. The survey identified notably high levels of satisfaction with the village hall (74% of respondents thought this satisfactory or good) and Queenswood Country Park (77%). Proposals for new provision will be supported in line with Local Plan policy SC1 *Social and community facilities*. Access to enable a genuine choice of modes of travel will also be sought.

POLICY HUD5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

PROPOSALS FOR NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN AND ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE WILL BE SUPPORTED WHERE THEY ARE ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF TRANSPORT MODES AND DO NOT COMPROMISE RESIDENTIAL AMENITY.

- 4.28 Local Plan policy ID1 *Infrastructure delivery* proposes a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of infrastructure to support development and sustainable communities. This is to be undertaken by securing developer contributions through section 106 agreements and/or Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 4.29 The survey highlighted concerns around road safety, traffic speed and highway maintenance. Significant levels of respondents – at or above 60% - thought that issues of main road safety, traffic speed, pedestrian safety and road maintenance were very important. These topics recorded levels in the order of 80% or above for the quite important and very important ratings combined. The maintenance of ditches, drains and verges was seen as a particular priority. Almost three-quarters of respondents thought this was very important. This echoes local concerns over flooding and the potential contribution of regular highway maintenance to

reducing flood risk.¹⁷ There is also scope for improved pedestrian provision within the village, particularly between the village hall and the bus stops on the trunk road.

- 4.30 Local requirements for new and improved community facilities and infrastructure are identified below in a Community Action. A Community Action is not a land use planning policy but enables the Neighbourhood Plan to capture local aspirations. Where appropriate, developer contributions will be sought to deliver, or support the delivery, of improvements to these aspects of village life.

Community Action

Where appropriate, the Parish Council will seek funding, including from developer contributions, to meet the following identified community needs:

- 1 flood alleviation schemes;**
- 2 a continuous footpath and street lighting between the village hall and the A49 bus stops;**
- 3 continued use of the lengthsman scheme for minor highway works and maintenance;**
- 4 traffic speed monitoring and enforcement;**
- 5 village hall maintenance and improvements.**

¹⁷ Ibid., responses to Q9, page 10.

5. ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

5.1 This chapter of the Plan sets out planning policies to address the following matters:

- Landscape character
- Biodiversity and heritage
- Renewable energy

Landscape character

5.2 The Plan Area has a distinctive and diverse landscape character, which is described in both national and County-level studies. The Area falls largely within the Herefordshire Lowlands National Character Area defined by Natural England.¹⁸ This is typified by a gently undulating tranquil and rural landscape, with steep sided hills, wide river valleys such as that of the Lugg, and small, dispersed settlements. Farming is mixed arable and livestock. In the north-east, the landscape begins a transition to the Herefordshire Plateau National Character Area, whose characteristics emphasise remoteness, a historic and continuing sparsity of settlement and population, and tranquillity.¹⁹

5.3 The County Landscape Character Assessment identifies and describes several landscape types within the Plan Area: Principal Wooded Hills, Principal Settled Farmlands and Plateau Estate Farmlands.²⁰ Principal Wooded Hills are upstanding, densely wooded, and hilly landscapes with a steeply sloping topography. The pronounced relief has inhibited clearance for agricultural purposes in the past, leaving a retained and significant cover of ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland; the settlement pattern of farmsteads and wayside cottages is sparse and scattered. This is the landscape west of the A49 and south of the A417, such as at Dinmore Hill and Queenswood. Principal Settled Farmlands comprise the rolling lowlands of central Herefordshire. These are settled agricultural landscapes made up from a patchwork of hop fields, traditional orchards, grazed pastures and arable fields with restricted tree cover and field boundaries formed by hedgerow. This describes the landscape of the river and brook valleys within the Area. Finally, Plateau Estate Farmlands describes an ordered landscape of regularly shaped, medium size fields; tree cover of small woods with a significant proportion of specimen trees, often conifers, within the parkland and grounds of larger country houses; mixed farming, predominantly arable; and settlement restricted to discrete clusters of dwellings, the larger country houses, and associated estate properties. This is the landscape associated with Hampton Court and the rising land north of the A417 in the east of the Area.

5.4 All these landscape types, and the distinctive differences between them, are readily apparent in the Plan Area and around the settlement of Hope-under-Dinmore. The village character is derived in large part from the steep topography of Dinmore Hill and its woodland; these have a dominant presence and are important features in defining the landscape setting of the

¹⁸ Natural England, National Character Area 100: Herefordshire Lowlands, 2013

¹⁹ Natural England, National Character Area 101: Herefordshire Plateau, 2013

²⁰ Landscape Character Assessment, 2009.

settlement. The character of the historic core of the village is essentially that of an accumulation of wayside dwellings, linear in form, at the foot of the Hill, and this is still evident today, some of the modern development in depth notwithstanding. Elsewhere in the Plan Area, the rural landscape is more open, with the mixed, small-scale pattern of farming, scattered farmsteads and wayside dwellings contributing greatly to landscape character. Notably, the historic park and garden at Hampton Court includes gardens and pleasure grounds, park and kitchen garden, in a setting which takes in land north of the A417 and the dramatic backdrop afforded by the steep, wooded northern slopes of Dinmore Hill (Church Coppice and Ashen Grove).

- 5.5 Local Plan policy LD1 *Landscape and townscape* provides for landscape character to be considered in planning decisions. Landscape character should positively influence development, including the protection and enhancement of the setting of settlements; designated parks and gardens should be conserved and enhanced; and tree cover should be maintained and extended. Survey responses give weight to the protection of important views and local features of significance, such as orchards.²¹

POLICY HUD6: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

PROPOSALS IN OR ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE OF HOPE-UNDER-DINMORE SHOULD PROTECT AND ENHANCE ITS LANDSCAPE SETTING AND CHARACTER, PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO SETTLEMENT PATTERN, TOPOGRAPHY AND THE EXTENT OF ESTABLISHED WOODLAND COVER.

Biodiversity and heritage assets

- 5.6 As highlighted in chapter 2, the Plan Area is rich in heritage assets and biodiversity. These sites and features are variously identified under statutes other than the Planning Acts and are protected on that basis. Notable examples include the grade I listed Hampton Court House, and the River Wye Special Area of Conservation, which includes part of the River Lugg and is of European importance. Extensive tracts of the Area are of national significance as SSSI. Other features such as ancient woodland are designated locally, at a County level.
- 5.7 National and Local Plan planning policies establish suitable levels of protection for these designations and features, commensurate with their importance. Local Plan policy LD2 *Biodiversity and geodiversity* requires development proposals to conserve, restore and enhance the County's biodiversity and geodiversity assets, whilst policy LD4 *Historic environment and heritage assets* similarly protects heritage assets.
- 5.8 Local Plan policy LD3 *Green infrastructure* requires proposals to foster valued landscapes, trees and hedgerows, woodland, watercourses and associated corridors. Part of the Plan Area lies within a strategic green infrastructure corridor linking Hereford and Leominster, identified in the County Green Infrastructure Strategy.²² This incorporates the River Lugg, the main road

²¹ Residents questionnaire survey, Results Report, 2015, responses to Q16, page 14.

²² Green Infrastructure Strategy, District Strategic Corridor 1, p.103 and District Enhancement Zone 3, p. 108.

and railway transport corridors, as well as a number of sites and woodland areas designated for their natural and heritage significance, such as Hampton Court. Queenswood Country Park has a pivotal role in enabling public countryside access midway between Hereford and Leominster, the County's largest centres of population. The County Green Infrastructure Strategy includes enhancement proposals in the locality which support the appropriate extension of native broadleaf woodland on upper slopes; improved access, and improved connection between diverse sites, assets and habitats. Land use and management proposals to help deliver these ambitions and which promote links between assets will be welcomed.

POLICY HUD7: BIODIVERSITY

THE CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF BIODIVERSITY WILL BE SUPPORTED, ESPECIALLY WHERE THIS CONTRIBUTES TO LOCAL CHARACTER AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE.

POLICY HUD8: HERITAGE ASSETS

THE CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF HERITAGE ASSETS, IN A MANNER APPROPRIATE TO THEIR SIGNIFICANCE, WILL BE SUPPORTED.

Renewable energy

- 5.9 National planning policy and guidance supports positively expressed and balanced policies in Neighbourhood Plans that allow the need for renewable or low carbon energy to be considered alongside environmental factors, cumulative impacts and the implications for heritage assets and local amenity. Local Plan policy SD2 *Renewable and low carbon energy* sets out the County-level approach.
- 5.10 The residents' survey canvassed opinion about the scope for local renewable energy schemes. Greatest support was shown for solar power (77% of respondents) and ground heat pumps (50%) above biomass (40%) and wind turbines (26%), whilst recognising the need to balance any such schemes against their impacts. Highway safety and capacity will be a particular concern where schemes may give rise to significant traffic movements on the narrow rural lanes, for instance through the movement or import of fuel. In respect of wind energy and taking into account the results of the survey consultation and the lack of backing for wind energy from the local community, the Plan does not identify sites or areas as suitable for wind energy development. Renewable energy micro-generation, through for instance photo-voltaic panels, should be included within new development as part of the overall approach to a scheme's sustainability.

POLICY HUD9: RENEWABLE ENERGY

PROPOSALS FOR SMALL-SCALE RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION WILL BE SUPPORTED. PROPOSALS ARE ENCOURAGED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT:

- 1 HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SETTINGS, INCLUDING ASSOCIATED VIEWS; AND**

-
- 2 LANDSCAPE AND SETTLEMENT CHARACTER, INCLUDING SETTING OF THE VILLAGE;
AND
 - 3 BIODIVERSITY; AND
 - 4 LOCAL AND RESIDENTIAL AMENITY; AND
 - 5 HIGHWAY SAFETY AND CAPACITY.

COMMUNITY-LED RENEWABLE ENERGY PROPOSALS WHERE BENEFITS CAN BE
DEMONSTRATED ARE ENCOURAGED.

6. ECONOMY AND EMPLOYMENT

Employment development

- 6.1 As well as farming and related enterprises such as cider production, other local employment is provided at Hampton Court and by businesses of various scales alongside the A49. Self-employment is significant, including businesses based at home. The Local Plan recognises the role of the rural economy, with policy RA6 *Rural economy* giving support for a wide range of employment uses in the County's rural areas including through the re-use of redundant rural buildings (policy RA5), homeworking (policy E3) and tourism projects (policy E4). Local Plan policy E2 *Redevelopment of existing employment land and buildings* provides protection for the existing supply.
- 6.2 Reflecting the rural nature of the Plan Area, survey respondents thought that the Plan should mainly encourage a range of types of small-scale employment, particularly in agriculture and related activities, livery and stabling, and tourism, leisure and crafts. There was also support for services, such as a shop, pubs, restaurant and cafes, to support the local economy. Larger-scale types of employment, such as light industry or storage and distribution, were seen as less likely to have a part to play.
- 6.3 In making provision for jobs and the local economy, survey replies favoured the conversion of existing buildings, homeworking and protecting existing sites from change of use, with limited support for allocating land for new employment development.²³
- 6.4 The larger-scale employment uses within the A49 corridor (A417 junction to B4361) relate more to the passing trade and accessibility offered by the trunk and main roads than the rural characteristics of the wider area. These employment uses have clear and well-defined boundaries with the surrounding farmland, avoiding the flood risk areas associated with the River Lugg and Cherry Brook. Local Plan policy directs new larger employment proposals to existing strategic employment land in Hereford and the market towns, such as Leominster. There is no intent therefore that the present employment uses alongside the A49 will be expanded outside their present boundaries or that new larger-scale proposals requiring further use of agricultural land would be supported. Instead, such proposals are directed to the larger and more accessible centres of population and their associated employment areas, such as the nearby Leominster Enterprise Park which lies 5.6 km to the north.

POLICY HUD10: EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT LAND AND PREMISES WILL BE REQUIRED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE EXISTING USE IS NO LONGER ECONOMICALLY VIABLE.

²³ Residents questionnaire survey, Results Report, 2015, responses to Q12, page 12.

Communications infrastructure

6.5 The residents' survey highlighted concerns over broadband services and mobile phone reception. Some 79% and 51% of respondents respectively thought these services needed improving. Broadband services are subject to a County-wide investment programme under the Fastershire project, with work in the Plan Area commencing in 2016. Such infrastructure improvements will support the Plan policy on local business and economic activity, including enabling working from home, as well as many other aspects of village and community life, and are welcomed as such. New residential and business development should be future-proofed by making advance provision for connectivity, such as ducting. Where planning permission is required, the following policy will seek to ensure that development comprising new infrastructure and requiring planning permission is provided in keeping with the rural environment and character of the village and countryside.

POLICY HUD11: COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

PROPOSALS FOR THE PROVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE WILL BE SUPPORTED BY ENSURING:

- 1 THAT DEVELOPMENT REQUIRED FOR BROADBAND AND COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES IS WELL-DESIGNED AND SITED, CONSISTENT WITH TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND THE DELIVERY OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS; AND**
- 2 THAT NEW DEVELOPMENTS INCORPORATE SUITABLE ADVANCE PROVISION FOR SUCH TECHNOLOGY.**

7. DELIVERING THE PLAN

7.1 The Plan is a long-term planning document, which will be implemented in the period to 2031 primarily via decisions on planning applications but also by the actions and investments of other agencies and parties. The Group Parish Council will seek to implement the objectives and policies of the Plan as follows in delivering the sustainable development of the Plan Area.

Social and community

- Working with Herefordshire Council to secure decisions on planning applications in accordance with the Plan. This will include decisions in favour of development which meets Plan objectives and policies, including the delivery of housing growth through appropriate windfall housing development; and against proposals which would conflict with the Plan, including in respect of the setting of the village and the wider countryside.
- Providing a parish-level perspective on proposals giving rise to flooding implications, records and information relating to flood events, and supporting appropriate flood alleviation schemes.
- Working with Herefordshire Council and local community and voluntary organisations to protect, retain and enhance facilities, including Queenswood Country Park.
- Seeking the use of infrastructure monies including developer contributions to meet local needs including for flood alleviation, the upkeep of the village hall, the lengthsman scheme, and other highway and traffic measures.

Environment and heritage

- Working with Herefordshire Council to secure decisions on planning applications in accordance with the Plan so as to protect and enhance landscape character, biodiversity and heritage assets.
- Supporting proposals which through their land use or management serve to provide better integration and access to green infrastructure.

Economy and employment

- Working with businesses to improve local employment opportunities in line with the objectives and policies of the Plan.
- Supporting improvements to communications infrastructure advanced by partnerships and network operators.

APPENDIX A: EVIDENCE BASE

A.1 The following planning policy documents, reports and survey material have been used in drawing up the draft Plan.

National level evidence

Department for Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

Census 2011 at <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/>

Natural England, National Character Area profiles, 100: Herefordshire Lowlands, 101: Herefordshire plateau, 2013.

Environment Agency and Natural England, River Wye SAC, Nutrient Management Plan, Evidence base and options appraisal, Action Plan, 2014.

County level evidence (Herefordshire Council)

Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan, 2007.

Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2004 updated 2009.

Green Infrastructure Strategy, 2010.

Herefordshire Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment, Preliminary Assessment Report, May 2011, JBA Consulting.

Herefordshire Local Plan, Core Strategy, Rural housing background paper, 2013.

Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment, 2013.

Herefordshire Local Plan, Core Strategy 2011-2031, 2015.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Rural Report, Assessment of land with housing potential at Hope-under Dinmore, 2015.

Parish and local level evidence

HC Research Team, Local Affordable Housing Needs Survey for Hope-under-Dinmore Parish, 2013.

Strategic Environmental Assessment, Scoping Report, 2014; Environmental Report, 2015.

Habitats Regulations Assessment, 2015.

Hope-under-Dinmore Neighbourhood Plan Group, Open day events 2014.

Hope-under-Dinmore Flood Study, November 2014, Parsons Brinckerhoff.

Hope-under-Dinmore Neighbourhood Plan Group, Residents questionnaire survey, Results report, 2015.

Hope-under-Dinmore Neighbourhood Plan Group, Housing Site Assessment, 2015.

Hope-under-Dinmore Neighbourhood Plan Group, Local Green Space to rear of Tavern Meadow, 2017.

Residential commitments, completions and planning applications data for Hope-under-Dinmore, 2017.

Hope-under-Dinmore Parish Council, Consultation Statement, 2017.

APPENDIX B: NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

B.1 A number of planning policies apply to the Neighbourhood Area, courtesy of the National Planning Policy Framework and County-level plans. The principal documents and their provisions are summarised below.

National Planning Policy Framework

B.2 The Framework sets out national policy statements on the full range of planning matters, including both development and environmental protection. Relevant chapters are:

- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (Chapter 3)
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (6)
- Requiring good design (7)
- Promoting healthy communities (8)
- Meeting the challenge of flooding (10)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment (11,12)

B.3 The Framework is supported by Planning Practice Guidance which sets out more detail on how the national policies should be implemented, for instance with regard to flood risk.

Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007

B.4 Though the bulk of the Unitary Development Plan policies have been superseded by those set out in the Local Plan, the following policy continues in force and applies within the Plan Area (Lugg valley):

- M5, Safeguarding mineral reserves

Herefordshire Local Plan, Core Strategy 2011-2031, 2015

B.5 This sets out a County-level spatial strategy and policies on a wide range of planning matters, with the following of particular relevance and importance to the Neighbourhood Development Plan:

- SS1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- RA1 Rural housing distribution
- RA2 Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns
- RA3 Herefordshire's countryside
- RA4 Agricultural, forestry and rural enterprise dwellings
- RA5 Re-use of rural buildings
- RA6 Rural economy
- H3 Ensuring an appropriate range and mix of housing
- SC1 Social and community facilities
- OS1 Requirement for open space, sports and recreational facilities
- MT1 Traffic management, highway safety and promoting active travel

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- E3 Home working
 - E4 Tourism
 - LD1 Landscape and townscape
 - LD2 Biodiversity and geodiversity
 - LD3 Green infrastructure
 - LD4 Historic environment and heritage assets
 - SD1 Sustainable design and energy efficiency
 - SD2 Renewable and low carbon energy generation
 - SD3 Sustainable water management and water resources
 - SD4 Wastewater treatment and river water quality
 - ID1 Infrastructure delivery