



**Ballingham,  
Bolstone and**



**Hentland Group  
Neighbourhood Plan  
2019-2031**



**Referendum Version**

**January 2019**

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View east over the Wye towards Capler Camp in the distance.

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A 17th century coaching inn strategically placed at the crossroads of the A4137 and the B4521.

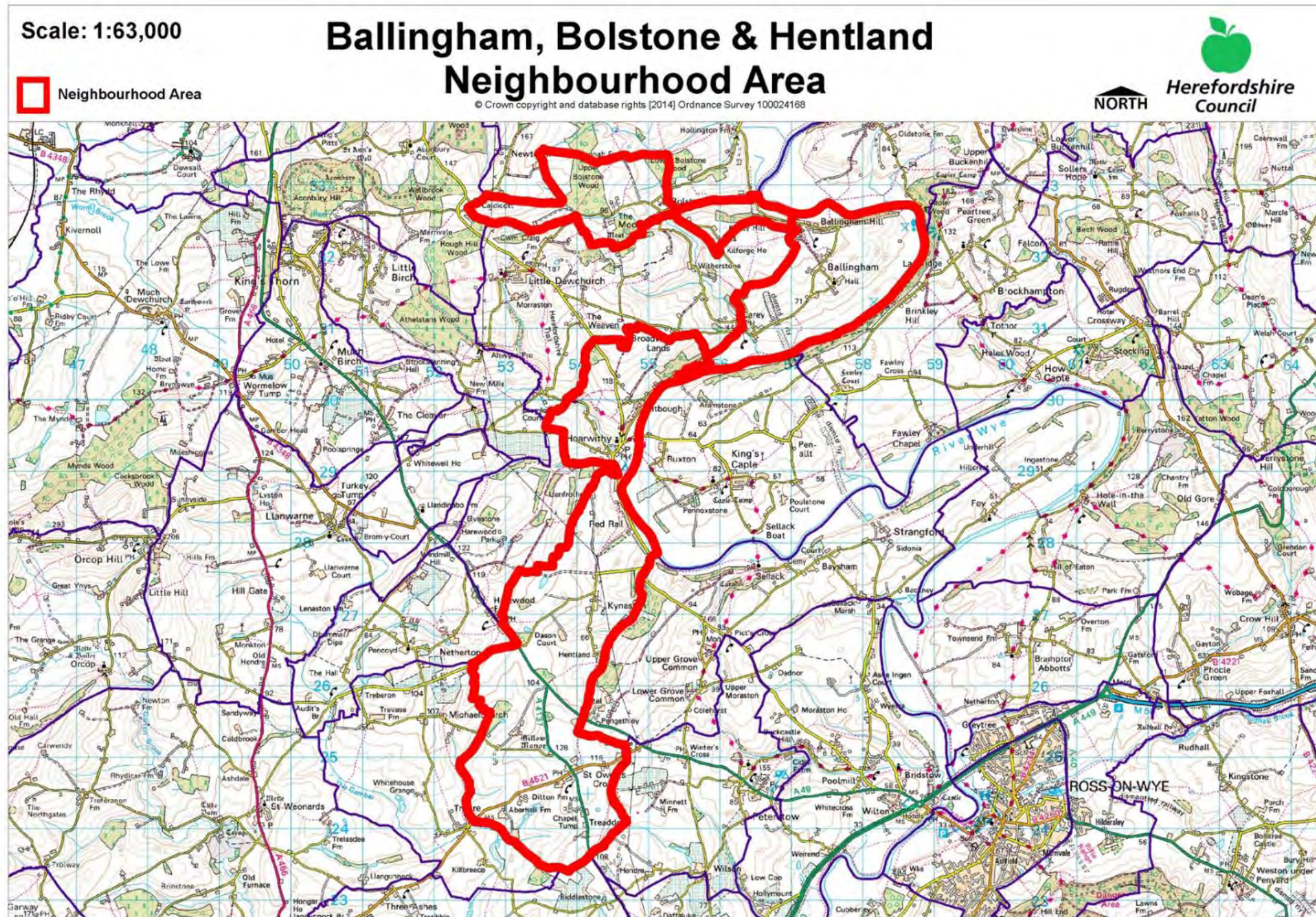
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*"Our vision for Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland is for them to be home to strong and thriving communities, working together to maintain and celebrate our history, preserve our beautiful rural setting and unique character while embracing sustainable development"*

# Contents

Chapter	Page Number
1 Introduction	5
2 Why are we preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland?	7
3 How long will it take to prepare the neighbourhood plan?	8
4 Background to the area	10
5 Key Issues, Vision and Objectives	16
6 Policies and Proposals	23
7 Monitoring and Review	39

Figure 1 – The Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Neighbourhood Plan Area (Licence Number 100055552)



# 1

## Introduction

- 1.1 In early 2014 the Group Parish Council for the separate parishes of Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland decided to work on a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the three parishes. Taking advantage of the new powers available to parish councils granted through the Localism Act 2011, the Group Parish Council as a qualifying body applied for the area to be designated as a neighbourhood planning area (see Figure 1). This application was approved by Herefordshire Council in April 2014.
- 1.2 This is the Referendum Version of the NDP and is now published in the run up to the public vote that will decide if the NDP should be made. If made the plan will give local people more say in the future development of the area by helping to guide, control and promote development.
- 1.3 The NDP is structured in the following way:

*Chapter 2 - Why are we preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland?*

Sets out the background to the NDP and describes why the Parish Council thinks it important we use this new power.

*Chapter 3 - How long will it take to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan?*

Sets out the NDP preparation process defined by government that we must follow to prepare a NDP; and shows our intended timetable for getting through this process.

Chapter 4– *Background to the area*

This chapter sets out the background to the group of parishes: their key features and what makes them distinct.

Chapter 5– *Key Issues, Vision and Objectives*

In this chapter, we identify the key issues the NDP will seek to address; our overall vision for the future of the neighbourhood area and individual objectives.

Chapter 6– *Policies and Proposals*

This is the real “heart” of the document and sets out our draft planning policies and proposals for the three parishes.

Chapter 7 – *Monitoring and Review*

This chapter explains how the progress on the implementation of the NDP will be monitored and if things change how, and when, it will be reviewed.

# 2

## Why are we preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Parishes?

- 2.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans are a new part of the development planning system. Just as local authorities, such as Herefordshire, can produce development plans to promote, guide and control development of houses, businesses, open spaces and other uses of land, so, too, now, by preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, can parish councils.
- 2.2 Neighbourhood Development Plans, when complete, form part of the statutory development plan for an area. They will be used to promote and guide what goes where; and, importantly, will be used to help determine planning applications.
- 2.3 The Group Parish Council thinks this is an important right to exercise, and in early 2014 the Group Parish Council applied for the whole area covered by the parishes, see Figure 1, to be designated a neighbourhood planning area. Herefordshire Council approved this application in April 2014. Since designation, the Parish Council's Steering Group has been preparing this Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. This plan, when finalised, will give local people more say in the future development of the parishes.

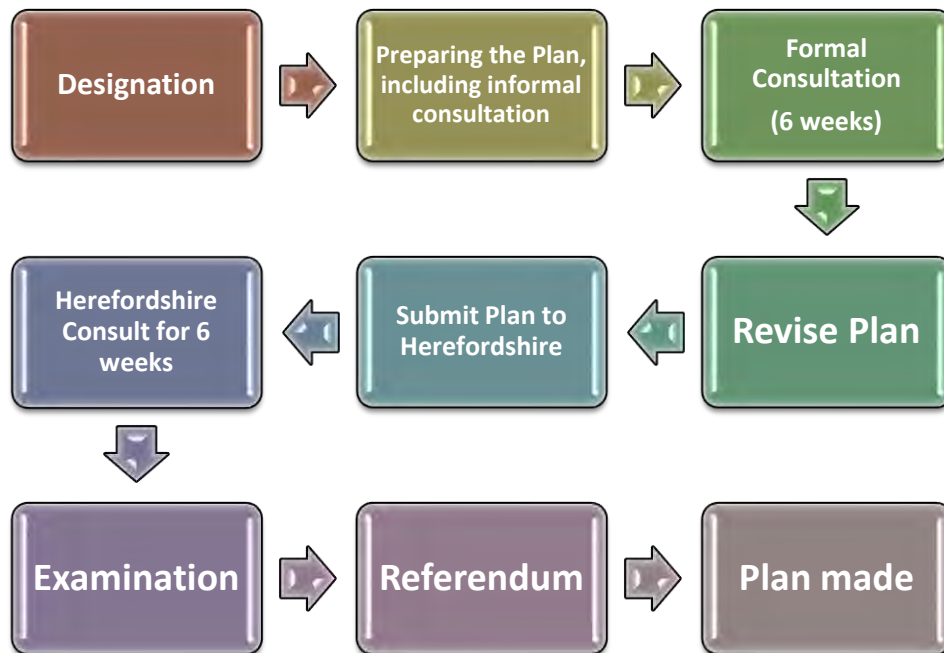


# 3

## How long will it take to prepare the Neighbourhood Development Plan?

- 3.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans must be prepared following a procedure set by government (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2 – The Neighbourhood Planning Process**



- 3.2 This procedure includes two six week periods of consultation on the Draft Plan. These are followed by a referendum, of all those eligible to vote in the neighbourhood area, on whether the plan should be made part of the statutory development plan for Herefordshire. The full process is shown above in Figure 2. The Ballingham, Bolstone

and Hentland Neighbourhood Plan has now reached the referendum stage.

- 3.3 If the vote is “yes” at the referendum the NDP will be made part of the statutory development plan for Herefordshire.
- 3.4 Neighbourhood plans must be screened for the purposes of Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations. Herefordshire Council have carried out such work at various stages since neighbourhood area designation. This work is contained in an Environment Report that is being consulted upon at the same time as this Regulation 16 Draft Plan. Copies of the Environment Report are available at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-areas-and-plans>

# 4

## Background to the area

### **Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Parishes**

- 4.1 The Group Parish Council represents the three rural parishes of Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland. Bounded by the River Wye, it is mostly farmland with small areas of mixed woodland. It offers a peaceful, rural life but with access to good amenities lying midway between the market town of Ross-On-Wye and the cathedral city of Hereford. Both offer a range of independent shops, supermarkets, primary and secondary schools, health and leisure facilities.
- 4.2 Proximity to the A49 trunk road provides good communication links via the A40 dual carriageway to the M50, M4 and M5. These give fast access to South Wales, Bristol and the Midlands. Hereford, Gloucester, Ledbury and Newport have mainline railway stations and nearby international airports include Birmingham, Cardiff and Bristol.

### **Parish of Hentland**

- 4.3 The Parish of Hentland, the largest of the three, has a population of 443 (2011 Census) and incorporates the two main settlements in the group parish, Hoarwithy and St Owen's Cross.

### **Hoarwithy**

- 4.4 Hoarwithy is a picturesque riverside village that lies within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The River Wye is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In 1976, the core of the village was designated a conservation area. There are 23 listed buildings and structures in Hoarwithy and Hentland including Llanfrother, St Catherine's Church, Church House, Tresseck, and the Old Mill.
- 4.5 St Catherine's Church in the heart of the village is recognised by

architectural historians as a remarkable Victorian building. Built in Romanesque style it is quite unlike any other Herefordshire church. It attracts over 4,500 visitors a year.

- 4.6 The original church was a simple brick structure and is the chapel of ease to Hentland Parish church. This modest chapel was transformed between the late 1870s and 1904 into its present Italianate style. Dedicated to St Catherine, it provides a unique landscape feature in the Wye Valley.
- 4.7 Hoarwithy is a linear village built along a steep red sandstone escarpment on the west bank of the river Wye and includes settlements at Altbough, Tresseck, Llanfrother, Red Rail and Shepponhill. The river meadows that border the village flood annually and are mainly used for grazing cattle and sheep. Many buildings in the village are constructed from red sandstone cut from local quarries. Development has been restricted by this topography.
- 4.8 At one time the village had a general store, post office, a Brethren chapel and as many as five inns or cider houses. Only the New Harp Inn has survived. The village pub has a small shop attached to it and provides a post office service once a week. A bus service runs four times daily (except Sundays) from Ross-On-Wye to King's Thorn where it connects with a service to Hereford.
- 4.9 The church of St Catherine's holds two services a month and is used at other times for concerts and by the community for secular events. There is no village hall, but the Parish room provides a small public meeting place used for Parish Council meetings during the summer months. A weekly singing group meets at the church. Hoarwithy has an active community, and village events are well-attended.
- 4.10 Hoarwithy's riverside location and extensive network of footpaths make it a popular destination for walkers, cyclists, horse riders, canoeists and fishermen. The Herefordshire Trail passes through the village. Hoarwithy is the first launch and retrieval site for canoes after Fownhope. Tresseck campsite, open from Easter to the end of September, is a popular stop off point for canoeists. There are three guest houses in the village as well as a number of properties for holiday lets.

## **Hoarwithy – historical context**

- 4.11 The hamlet of Hoarwithy is first recorded in the late 13th or early 14th century. The road through Hoarwithy is an early route and formed an important thoroughfare from Ross to Hereford. A ford was recorded in 1347 and a horse ferry in 1581. Both were in operation until a wooden bridge was built in 1857. The ferry conveyed livestock and vehicles to Kings Caple, and a smaller boat carried foot passengers and lighter loads.
- 4.12 The River Wye provided a means of transporting goods up and down the river, and the two tributaries Wriggle Brook and Red Brook were an important source of power for the village. A corn mill was recorded at Tresseck in 1595. Later it was turned into a paper mill and was last used as a bone mill. In all, there were five working mills in Hoarwithy. In the past, the village had seen great activity on the riverside with barges loading and unloading at four different sites.
- 4.13 By the mid-19th century, a third of the parish lived in Hoarwithy mainly occupying a settlement of cottages on Wye Hill. The local traders included fishermen, stone masons, millers, blacksmiths, carpenters, timber merchants, shopkeepers and innkeepers. Employment up to the early 1900s was mainly on the farms or, for the women, in service at the big houses.
- 4.14 The opening of Hereford to Gloucester canal in 1845 and the Ross to Hereford railway in 1855 took trade away from the river. As industry declined and road links improved tourism to the Wye Valley increased and began to grow in importance for the local economy.

## **St Owen's Cross**

- 4.15 St. Owen's Cross is located at the crossroads of the A4137 and the B4521 roads. The A4137 being the main route for heavy goods vehicles travelling between Monmouth and Hereford and the B4521 is the cross-country route from Ross on Wye to Abergavenny. St Owen's Cross takes its name from the medieval cross which can be found at the south-east corner of the crossroads which now comprises a relatively modern timber cross set upon a mediæval stone base half embedded in a modern wall. The base is square and has a socket for an octagonal shaft.
- 4.16 The area is predominantly intensive agricultural in nature with a small number of home based enterprises.

- 4.17 The New Inn at St. Owen's Cross is a Grade II listed building which dates from the 17th century and it serves as the social hub of the village. The housing in the immediate vicinity of the crossroads is a mix of styles varying from 17th century stone properties to the more recent traditionally built housing.
- 4.18 There are no other facilities in the village and the bus route, which used to serve the village, was rerouted in 2012 on the A49 approximately 800m away. The local population relies heavily on the use of private vehicles as a means of transportation.

## **Hentland**

- 4.19 Hentland is a hamlet of a dozen or so houses accessed by a no through road that leads to Hentland Church. Dedicated to St Dubricius, who established a monastery at Llanfrother, the church dates from 13th and 14th century. There is strong evidence that there had been a thriving community in Hentland in the 4th and 5th centuries and excavations have revealed evidence of a medieval village site. At one time, at least five roads radiated from Hentland linking it to Monmouth, Ross, Hereford and the river crossing at Red Rail.
- 4.20 Hentland school served the local community until the late 1950s when it was converted into a residential dwelling.
- 4.21 The listed buildings in Hentland include Gillow Manor – a 14th-century manor house with part of its old moat still surviving and Great Treaddow.

## **Parishes of Ballingham and Bolstone**

- 4.22 The parishes of Ballingham and Bolstone are sparsely populated with 181 inhabitants according to the 2011 census. There is no village shop or bus service serving either parish. Ballingham and Bolstone have both had a long association with the Scudamore family of Holme Lacy. Maps dating back to 1695 indicate that large areas of the two parishes formed part of the Holme Lacy estates. Ballingham Hall was built by William Scudamore in 1602.

## **Ballingham**

- 4.23 Ballingham is a settlement of farms and dwellings almost encircled by a loop of the River Wye. The parish is predominantly farmland. The parish church, dedicated to St. Dubricius, dates from the Anglo-Saxon times. It was refurbished in the late Victorian era, but the 14th-century roof and tower and 13th-century nave remain. The church is now closed. The old primary school was converted into a village hall in the 1960s and was extensively refurbished in time for the Millennium in 2000. The hall stands by the green and pond which was reclaimed in 1977 by the Ballingham District WI.
- 4.24 About a mile south in the hamlet of Carey is The Cottage of Content, a pub formerly known as The Mynors or Miners' Arms Inn. The building dates from the 17th century and was converted from three tenements to form a beer house.
- 4.25 Ballingham Parish has seven listed buildings or structures including Ballingham Hall, which dates from 1642 and its red brick barn, the Church of St Dubricius and the Cottage of Content.

## **Bolstone**

- 4.26 Bolstone is a small settlement of little more than 650 acres of scattered farms and cottages lying west of the River Wye.
- 4.27 A mixture of woodland and farmland, Bolstone is one of the most wooded parishes in the area. A large part of Upper and Lower Bolstone Wood was converted to farmland in the mid-19th century. The remaining woodland has been designated a county wildlife site and is now managed by rotational coppicing.
- 4.28 Bolstone belonged to the Knights Hospitallers from the 12th century until the Dissolution, when the manors and the riches passed to the Scudamores of Holme Lacy. The tiny church of St John dates to the 11th century and stands in the middle of a farmyard. It was restored in 1877 and deconsecrated in 2005. Bolstone Court dates from 17th century and is one of ten listed buildings or structures in Bolstone including Gannah Farmhouse and the Church of St John of Jerusalem.

## **Changes in the Parishes**

- 4.29 Increased mechanisation of farming in the 1950 and 60s reduced the employment opportunities for agriculture workers. Many redundant farmhouses, tied cottages and farm buildings in the parishes have been sold off and converted into residential dwellings, stables or light industrial units.
- 4.30 Increasing car ownership has enabled people to seek work further afield. The opening of the M50 and A40 dual carriageway gave access to the Midlands, Bristol, Newport and Cardiff.
- 4.31 According to the 2011 Census, 6.5% of the population are employed in agriculture. 54% have professional or associate professional occupations. Advances in communication technology have enabled the number of home-based workers to increase. Over half of those in employment work mainly from or at home (2011 Census).
- 4.32 Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland parishes continue to retain their rural feel, and the Neighbourhood Development Plan seeks to maintain this while ensuring that the parishes continue to be a good place to live, work and bring up a family.



# 5

## Key Issues, Vision and Objectives

- 5.1 There are a number of planning issues that affect all the parishes. This section of the plan sets out those issues, and what we intend to do about them. This will help us to achieve our overall vision for the area by 2031.

*"Our vision for Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland is for them to be home to strong and thriving communities, working together to maintain and celebrate our history, preserve our beautiful rural setting and unique character while embracing sustainable development"*

### What are the key planning issues facing the area?

- 5.2 The Steering Group has identified the following key issues as facing the area in the next twenty years. These are listed in no particular order:

- ❖ **Housing** – this includes needing to consider the level of new housing, its location, size and type. Under planning policy in Herefordshire’s Core Strategy our NDP must be prepared to be in general conformity with the housing policies of this document (see Box 1)
- ❖ **Poor public transport** – given the area’s rural location public transport is limited and infrequent.
- ❖ **Traffic and road safety** – the main traffic issues in Ballingham, Bolstone and Hoarwithy are considered to be heavy goods traffic on very narrow roads. There is a specific problem, with an above number of accidents at the crossroads, at St. Owen’s Cross.
- ❖ **Tourism** - the need to exploit the area’s assets in a more integrated way to encourage the growth of tourism in the area.
- ❖ **Maintaining community** – the area’s dispersed rural nature and changes in lifestyles are a key challenge in maintaining a sense of community.

### Box 1 – How the Core Strategy Affects Planning for Housing in the Parishes

The area is identified as part of the rural area and within the Ross on Wye housing market area.

Within this housing market area certain villages have been identified that could contribute to meeting the county’s housing needs. In the Ross on Wye housing market area these villages have been given an indicative growth target of 14%, (27 new dwellings) by 2031.

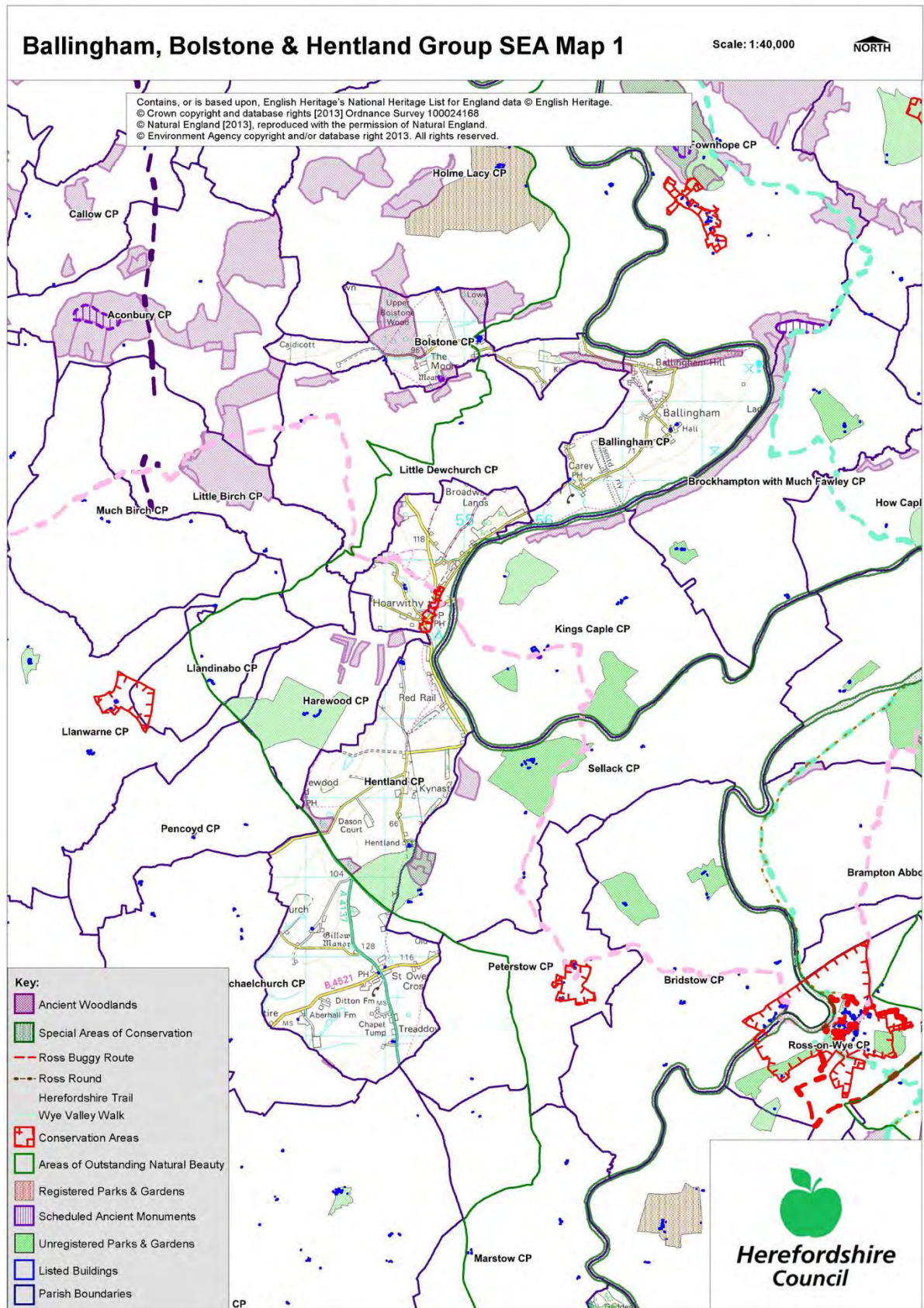
The identified villages in the neighbourhood plan area are Hoarwithy and St Owen’s Cross.

Hoarwithy is identified as a village that should be the “main focus of proportionate housing development”. St Owen’s Cross as a smaller village where “proportionate” housing may also be appropriate”.

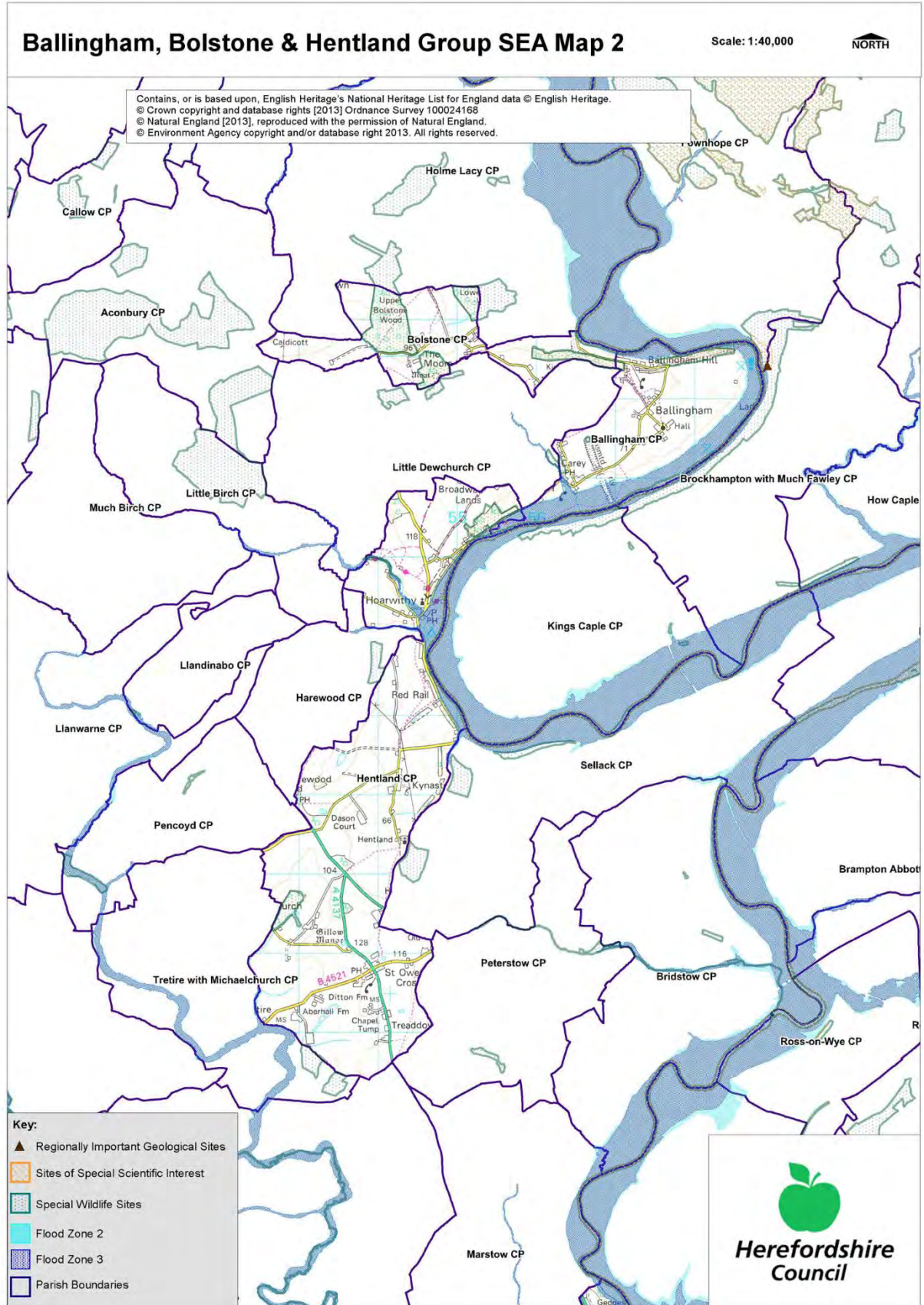
All the other settlements in the area, including Ballingham, are treated as countryside and development for new housing will be strictly controlled.

- ❖ **Business growth** – growth of the local economy, including working from home, is a key issue to address.
- ❖ **Flooding** – with the River Wye forming the eastern boundary of the NDP area parts of Ballingham and Hoarwithy are in areas most at Risk of Flooding (Flood Zone 3, on Figure 4).
- ❖ **Communications** – being rural the area is usually one of the last to benefit from improvements in communication technologies.
- ❖ **Renewable energy** - to reduce our energy consumption and output of greenhouse gases appropriate renewable energy technologies should be considered.
- ❖ **Landscape** – conserving and enhancing the areas landscape including those areas in the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Hoarwithy Conservation Area and other important attributes such as ancient woodland will be a key concern of the NDP, see Figure 3.
- ❖ **Natural heritage** –the area has significant natural heritage and this should be conserved and enhanced.
- ❖ **Historic assets** – conserving and enhancing our heritage, both statutorily protected and not, will help retain the character of the area.
- ❖ **Footpaths/Cycleways/Bridleways/Car Parking** – the main issue here is the need to enhance the network of existing footpaths, cycleways and bridleways and to identify potential car parking areas to help support their use.
- ❖ **Leisure and Recreation Facilities** – such facilities should be protected and enhanced to increase opportunities for residents and visitors.
- ❖ **Things for young people to do** – the range of things for young people to do are limited and this is made worse by the lack of public transport provision.

**Figure 3 – Strategic Environmental Assessment Map 1 for the Group** ((Licence Number 100055552)

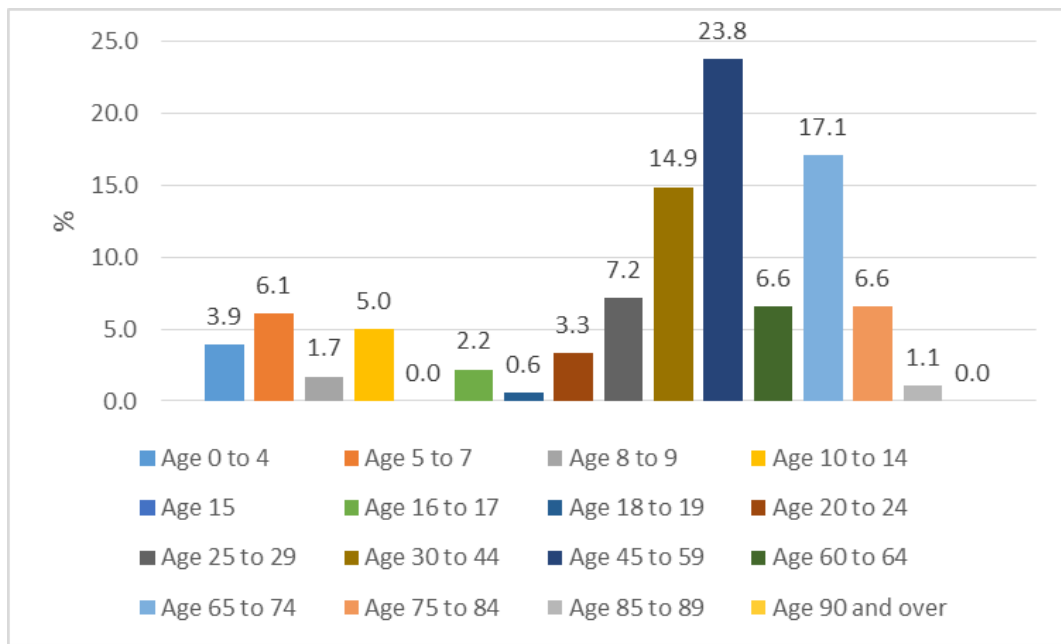


**Figure 4 – Strategic Environmental Assessment Map 2 for the Group** (Licence Number 100055552)

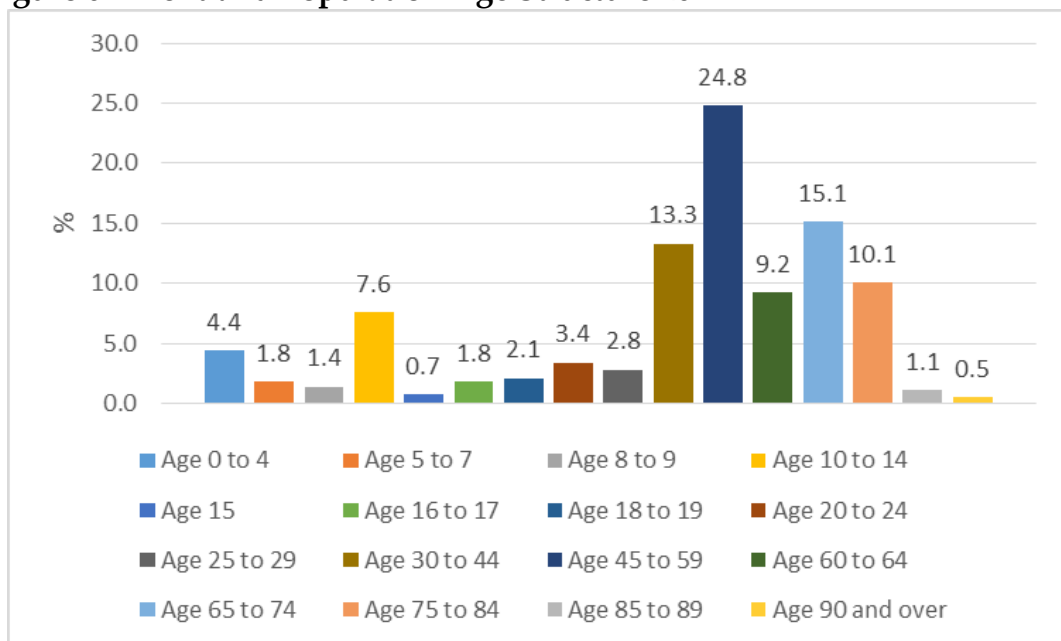


❖ **The age profile of residents in the area** – 2011 Census data is only available for Ballingham and Hentland (the population in Bolstone being so small that Census data is not released for confidentiality reasons). The average age of residents in Ballingham is 44.5 years and Hentland 47.1 years. The age structure for the two parishes is shown in Figures 5 and 6 below.

**Figure 5 – Ballingham Population Age Structure 2011**



**Figure 6 – Hentland Population Age Structure 2011**



## Objectives

- 5.3 So, what do we intend to do about addressing these key issues?  
Having considered these issues carefully, and having looked at a wide range of evidence, we have identified several objectives for our NDP. These are:

**Objective 1 - To encourage phased growth appropriate to the area's different settlements to maintain the area's vitality and community.**

**Objective 2 - To encourage improvements in public transport, road safety, traffic, footpaths, cycleways and bridleways.**

**Objective 3 - To encourage outdoor tourist activity and improvements in recreation and leisure facilities.**

**Objective 4 - To support business growth and access to job opportunities.**

**Objective 5 - To improve communications infrastructure.**

**Objective 6 - To protect and enhance the area's landscape.**

**Objective 7 - To conserve and enhance the area's natural heritage and historic assets.**

**Objective 8 - To protect and enhance community facilities.**

**Objective 9 - To address the needs of the area's different age groups.**

# 6

## Policies and Proposals

- 6.1 This chapter of the NDP sets out the planning policies and proposals that will be used to help us achieve our vision and objectives. Each policy is set out under the appropriate objective. So, for example under the objective – *“To encourage phased growth appropriate to the area’s different settlements to maintain the area’s vitality and community.”* we have different policies to guide the rate of housing development in the settlements of the parishes.

### Objective 1 - To encourage phased growth appropriate to the area’s different settlements to maintain the area’s vitality and community.

- 6.2 Strategic planning policy for Herefordshire is now set out in the adopted Herefordshire Core Strategy Local Plan (HCSLP). In the HCSLP, Policy RA1 “Rural Housing Distribution” sets an “indicative housing growth target” for each of the County’s seven housing market areas. Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Group are part of the Ross on Wye Rural Housing Market Area (RHMA). In this RHMA the “indicative housing growth target” is 14% additional growth across the RHMA over the period 2011 to 2031. That will mean approximately 1,150 new houses in the RHMA.
- 6.3 National planning policy supports a sustainable approach to development in rural areas. As part of the work on the HCSLP each RHMA was evaluated and a series of settlements were identified to be the main focus of proportionate housing development in the RHMA. The identified settlements in Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland are Hoarwithy and St Owen’s Cross. Hoarwithy is identified as a settlement which will be the main focus of



proportionate housing development. St Owen's Cross is identified as a smaller settlement where "proportionate" housing is also appropriate. All other areas, including Ballingham, are treated in the HCSP as countryside and, therefore, new housing development will be strictly limited.

## **POLICY BBH1 – PROMOTING NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE SETTLEMENTS OF HOARWITHY AND ST OWEN'S CROSS**

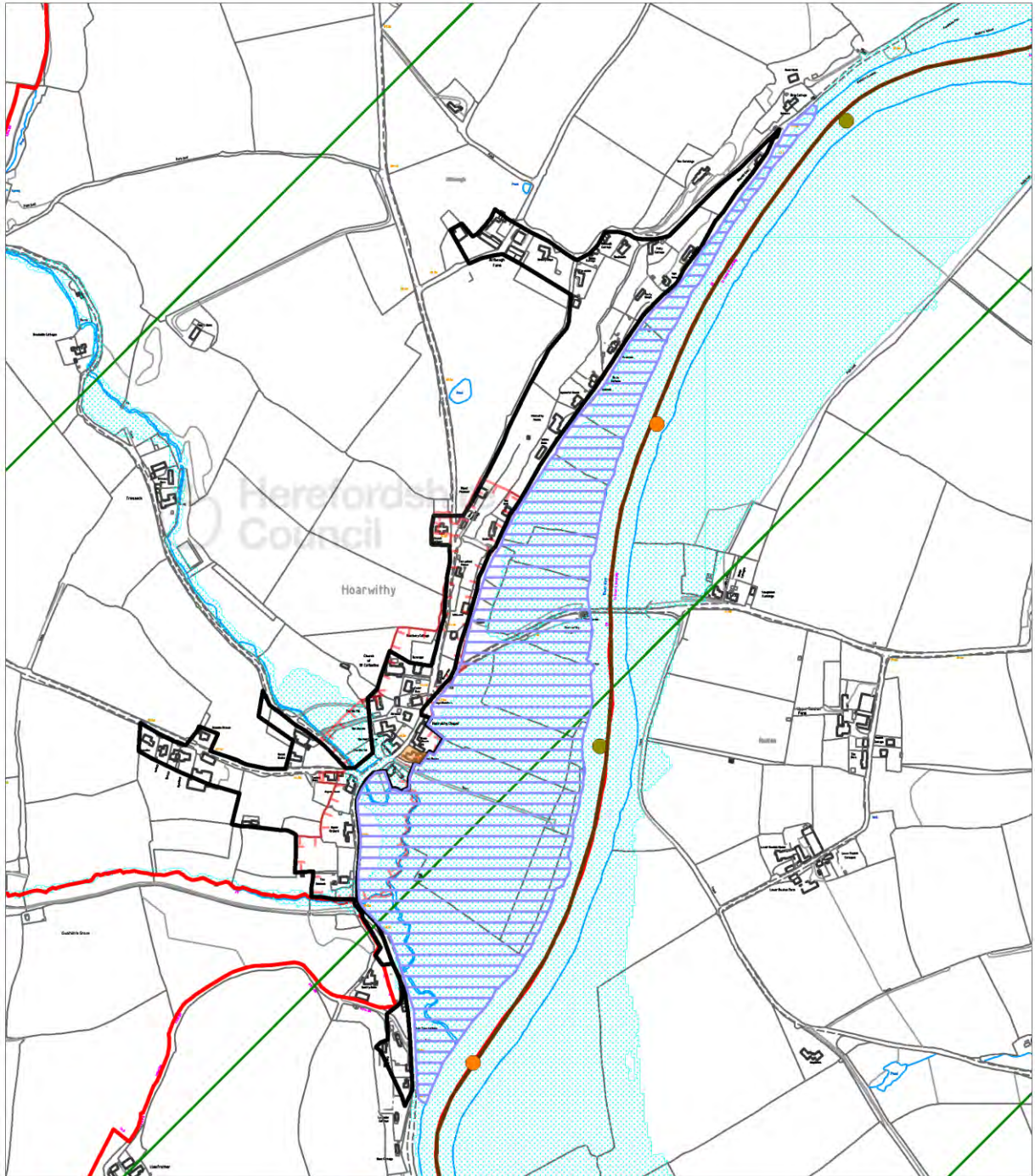
The settlement boundaries of Hoarwithy and St Owen's Cross are identified on the Policies Map (Maps 1 and Map 2). Sustainable housing growth within the settlement boundaries of Hoarwithy and St Owen's Cross will be supported. Proposals must also be in accordance with Herefordshire Core Strategy Local Plan Policy RA2 and the following locally set criteria:











- a. The design and layout of individual proposals is suitable in terms of its location, size, role and function to the settlement within which it is to be located.
- b. Proposals should result in infill development;
- c. Such proposals would not lead to development that is disproportionate to the size of the existing settlement or fails to take account of its needs;
- d. They would not result in isolated, non-characteristic and discordant dwellings but take account of existing built forms; and
- e. They take account, by suitable regard to their significance, of heritage assets and their setting, in particular, Hoarwithy Conservation Area.

Development that may result in the capacity of the public sewerage network and/or the St Owen's Cross Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW) becoming overloaded will not be permitted.

In either of these instances, development will need to be phased or delayed until capacity becomes available, either through Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) regulatory investment or, in advance of this through the developer funding the improvements themselves via the provisions of the Water Industry Act (1991) and/or section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).

**Policies Map 1: Hoarwithy** (OS Licence Number 100055552)



- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  Local Wildlife Site (LWS)                 |  Special Area for Conservation                               |
|  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty        |  Site of Special Scientific Interest                         |
|  Protected Community Facilities (BBH11)    |  Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Neighbourhood Area Boundary |
|  Area for recreation and leisure (BBH5)    |  Land Liable to Flood  |
|  St Owens Cross Settlement Boundary (BBH1) |  Conservation Area (PTS5)                                    |

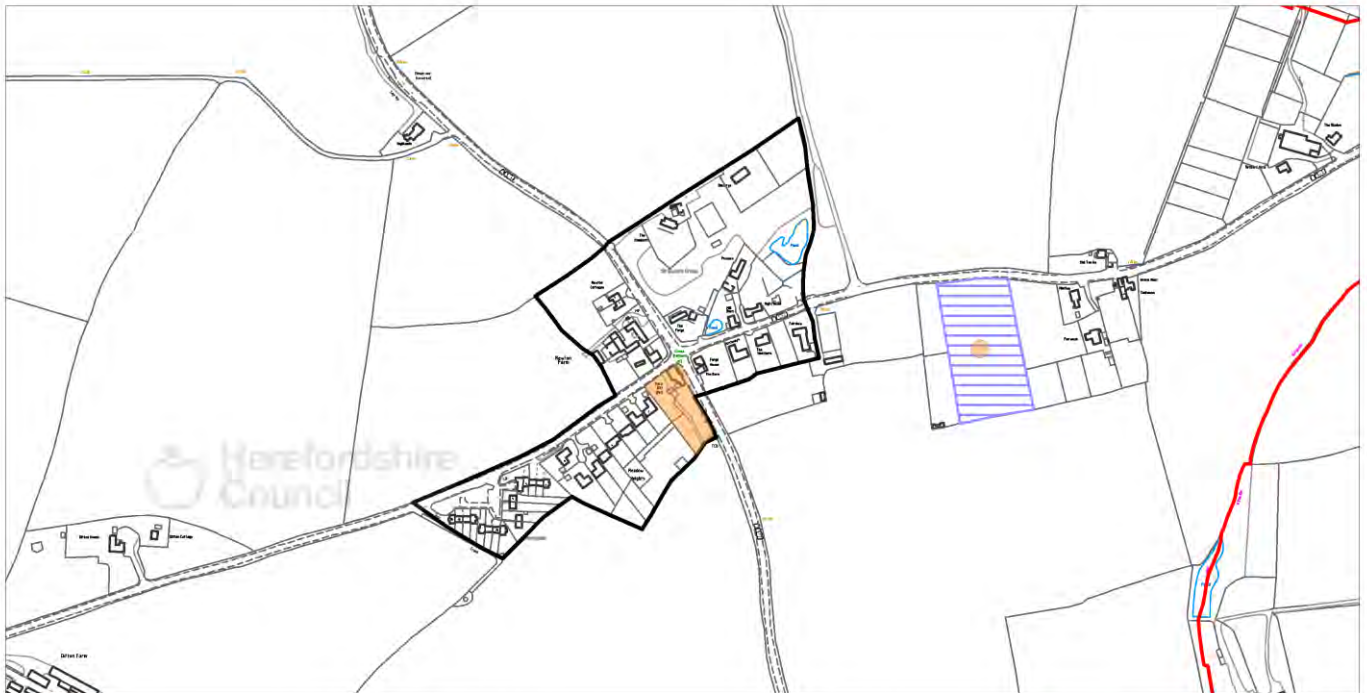
# Hoarwithy Policies Map

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Scale 1:7,000  
 at A4 size



## Policies Map 2: St Owen's Cross (OS Licence Number 100055552)



-  Protected Community Facilities (BBH11)
-  St Owens Cross Settlement Boundary (BBH1)
-  Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Neighbourhood Area Boundary
-  Area for recreation and leisure (BBH5)

## St Owens Cross Policies Map

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at A4 size



**Policies Map 3: Ballingham** (OS Licence Number 100055552)



Protected Community Facilities (BBH11)
  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
  Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Neighbourhood Area Boundary

**Ballingham Policies Map**

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**Background/Justification**

- 6.4 Advice from Herefordshire Council, sets out in greater detail, the potential impact of the RHMA indicative 14% housing growth target for Hoarwithy and St Owen’s Cross. Based on this advice a further 27 new homes would be required over the period 2011-2031 in the neighbourhood area.
- 6.5 To encourage such growth Policy BBH1 supports proportionate growth within the existing settlements of Hoarwithy and St Owen’s Cross, within the defined settlement boundaries. Such growth as well as meeting strategic planning policy set in Policy RA2 of the HCSLP will also be supported when it meets the locally set criteria in Policy BBH1. In line with the HCSLP such growth will be promoted, equally, in Hoarwithy and St Owen’s Cross as this will allow sufficient flexibility to meet the indicative RHMA target given the acknowledged environmental constraints, such as flooding, topography and heritage in Hoarwithy.

- 6.6 HCSLP Policy RA2 requires neighbourhood plans to allocate sites for new housing or “otherwise demonstrate delivery to provide levels of housing to meet” the RHMA indicative growth target of 14%, or 27 homes 2011-2031. As of April 2017, 13 new homes had been built in the neighbourhood area, and a further 9 new homes had planning permission. This leaves only 5 new homes to be identified up to the end of the plan period in 2031, or 1 home every two to three years. Given the past performance, 22 completions and commitments coming forward over the last six years, it is reasonable to expect further development to come forward in the neighbourhood area and within the settlement boundaries without the need to allocate sites. In addition, in Hoarwithy, the significant policy constraints (heritage and flood risk) are best considered, as, and when, planning applications are made, so that a detailed assessment of any impact can be made.
- 6.7 The positive, policy based approach of Policy BBH1 meets this requirement by offering a wide scope to land owners and developers to bring forward new housing sites during the plan period, whilst at the same time protecting key environmental assets and the essential characteristics (form, size, role and function) of the two settlements. The HCSLP acknowledges at para. 4.8.9 that *“much rural housing has come forward on small sites, often for individual dwellings, being allowed through the application of planning policy rather than the allocation of housing sites.”* In developing Policy BBH1 various options were considered including making site allocations and defining settlement boundaries. Settlement boundaries have, therefore been defined for Hoarwithy and St Owen’s Cross that encompass the built form of the existing villages. New housing development that meets Policy BBH1 and Core Strategy Policy RA2 will be supported within these settlement boundaries.
- 6.8 The settlement boundaries for both villages have been drawn around the existing built form whilst taking account of physical and environmental constraints. In the case of Hoarwithy these includes the village’s topography, flood risk issue, listed buildings and Conservation Area.
- 6.9 Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) have identified a specific issue in relation to wastewater treatment at St Owen’s Cross. The village is currently served by a small Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW). This should be able to accommodate the “proportionate” housing

growth proposed, but, dependent on the on the location of development proposal, some level of off-site sewers provision may be required.

- 6.10 Away from the two main villages, housing development will be managed using Policy RA3 of the HCSP. Limiting new homes in the countryside is in “general conformity” with the Herefordshire Core Strategy and in line with national planning policy, paragraph 55 of NPPF which states: “*Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances*”.

## **Objective 2 - To encourage improvements in public transport, road safety, traffic, footpaths, cycleways and bridleways.**

### **POLICY BBH2 – PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**Where appropriate new development should contribute to improvements to public transport.**

**New development should seek to be sited as close as possible to the area’s limited public transport network. Where it is not possible to locate a development in reasonable proximity to the public transport network proposals should make use of existing links, or create new links, to the area’s footpath network where it can help provide better access to public transport.**

### **POLICY BBH3 – TRAFFIC AND ROAD SAFETY**

**Development will only be supported where it can be satisfactorily shown that any increase in traffic will not have a detrimental impact on road safety at St Owen’s Cross.**

### **POLICY BBH4 – FOOTPATHS, CYCLEWAYS AND BRIDLEWAYS**

**The network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways will be protected and enhanced. Development proposals will only be supported when it can be demonstrated they have taken account of the identified network, and, where possible, sought to enhance and**

**extend this network.**

**Development proposals leading to loss or breaks in this network of routes will not be supported, unless adequate or better replacement is provided.**

### **Background and Justification**

- 6.11 Given the area's rural nature and very limited public transport people are very much reliant on the private car. This becomes a particular issue for anyone who does not have access to a car, especially the young. It is acknowledged that the opportunity to make significant improvements to public transport are limited nevertheless Policy BBH2 of the plan seeks to maximise the opportunities for using the public transport that does exist through siting of new development and by making use of existing, or creating new links to public transport by using walking and cycling routes.
- 6.12 To further support this aim the network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways will be protected and enhanced. These routes will also be crucial to supporting the further development of outdoor tourism and recreation in the area.
- 6.13 A particular problem in the area is the traffic issues at St Owen's Cross. Development proposals generating significant traffic levels that may impact on this area will only be supported where they include suitable mitigation measures.

**Objective 3 - To encourage outdoor tourist activity and improvements in recreation and leisure facilities.**

### **POLICY BBH5 - PROMOTING OUTDOOR TOURISM, LEISURE AND RECREATION**

**Development for new outdoor tourist and recreation uses will be supported where they do not have an adverse impact on the rural character, residential amenity, natural heritage and historic assets of the area.**

**All such proposals should consider the need for:**

- a. Suitable access and car parking;**
- b. Signage;**
- c. The opportunity to create new and enhanced links to other tourist, leisure and recreation facilities; and**
- d. The potential to create new or improved footpaths and bridleways.**

**The following sites, shown on Policies Maps 1 and 2, are allocated for outdoor tourism and recreation uses:**

- Site A: Land between footpaths C1261/C1267 and River Wye, Hoarwithy**
- Site B: Football field, St Owen's Cross**

**These sites will be protected for outdoor tourism, leisure and recreational uses. Development of these sites will not be supported, unless as part of a development proposal which would provide alternative provision of equal or improved community benefit elsewhere within the neighbourhood area and in a location accessible to the community it is intended to serve by active modes of travel and by private car.**

### **Background and Justification**

- 6.14 There is potential to improve facilities for outdoor tourism, leisure and recreation. This will help to diversify the rural economy and support the growth of local pubs and accommodation providers. To foster this growth such uses should look to provide suitable car parking and, where possible, create links to other tourist and recreation facilities in the area and new and enhanced links to the existing network of footpaths and bridleways, including the Herefordshire Trail. Two key sites in the neighbourhood plan area are specifically allocated for outdoor recreation and tourism uses. The area of land immediately to the east of Hoarwithy village that runs up to the River Wye. This area is already popular with walkers, cyclists, fishermen and canoeists. The area includes a well-established campsite, footpaths (including a section of the Herefordshire Trail), a canoe launch site and offers fine views, especially from Hoarwithy Bridge. The visitors and tourists attracted to this area provide invaluable support to the village pub and local bed and breakfast. The second site allocation is the existing football



field at St Owen's Cross. The loss of these two sites to other uses will be resisted unless as part of a development proposal the site is to be replaced to a standard that provides an equal community benefit to the site being replaced and the location of the new site is in a location accessible to the community the site is intended to serve by active modes of travel (including walking and cycling) and by private car.

### **Objective 4 - To support business growth and access to job opportunities.**

#### **POLICY BBH6 - EMPLOYMENT GROWTH AND JOBS**

**Proposals for the following new employment generating uses will be supported provided they do not adversely affect the rural character of the area, or existing, and future, residential amenity:**

- a) The conversion or re-use of an existing building for an employment creating use;**
- b) Homeworking proposals;**
- c) Live/work units;**
- d) Local food production and sales; and**
- e) Other forms of diversification of an existing rural enterprise or business.**

**Planning application should:**

- i. Ensure that the development is of a scale appropriate to its location and setting; and**
- ii. Generate traffic movements that can be safely accommodated within the road network.**

#### **Background/Justification**

- 6.15 To foster the economic growth of the area, whilst at the same time maintaining the area's rural character, and not impacting on existing and future residential amenity, new proposals for business development will be supported.

## **Objective 5 - To improve communications infrastructure.**

### **POLICY BBH7 - COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

**New communications infrastructure development will be supported when it does not have a detrimental impact on the landscape and character of the area.**

#### **Background/Justification**

- 6.16 The rural nature of the area means that the communications infrastructure is relatively poor. This impacts on daily life and business. Whilst the need to address this issue is recognised, it must be dealt with within the constraints of the rural nature of the area and landscape, particularly that within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Our plan, therefore, encourages improvements in communications infrastructure providing it will not have a detrimental impact on the landscape and character of the area.

## **Objective 6 - To protect and enhance the area's landscape.**

### **POLICY BBH8 - PROTECTING AND ENHANCING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

**To protect and enhance the landscape of the area development proposals will have to demonstrate that:**

- a. The character of the local landscape has influenced the design, scale, form and siting of the development proposed;**
- b. They protect and enhance the differing settings of the various settlements in this part of the Wye Valley;**
- c. They protect and enhance the Wye Valley AONB, the Wye Valley SAC and other designated areas such as wildlife sites, listed buildings, conservation areas and ancient monuments;**
- d. They retain and enhance any non-designated assets such as**

- stone walls and wildlife sites;
- e. They protect and enhance the natural, historic and scenic beauty of the Wye Valley;
- f. They incorporate appropriate landscaping schemes and future on-going management to ensure the proposal integrates in to the surrounding landscape;
- g. They maintain and extend native tree species, hedgerows, and other important vegetation; and
- h. They do not have an adverse impact on the environmental quality of the area's rivers, streams and brooks.

### **Background/Justification**

- 6.17 The landscape of the area will be conserved and enhanced. The significant value of the landscape in the area is acknowledged by the fact that most of the NDP area lies within the Wye Valley AONB and the Wye Valley SAC. The primary purpose of this designation is to conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty. In pursuing this primary purpose, account has to be taken of the needs of rural industries, including agriculture, and the economic and social needs of local communities. The Countryside and Public Rights of Way Act 2000 requires parish councils to have regard to the purpose of AONBs. Our plan seeks to encourage the right type of development in the right location.
- 6.18 In preparing our plan we have had regard to the Wye Valley AONB Management Plan.

### **Objective 7 - To conserve and enhance the area's natural heritage and historic assets.**

### **POLICY BBH9 – HIGH QUALITY DESIGN**

**All new development proposals within the neighbourhood plan area will be expected to demonstrate the following.**

- a) that it exploits existing infrastructure, or provides adequate new services so as to ensure the development does not have a negative impact on existing infrastructure;
- b) does not have a detrimental effect on residential amenity by reason of noise, dust, odours or general nuisance to existing

- and future occupants;
- c) does not have a detrimental effect on the safe and efficient operation of the existing transport and road infrastructure; and
- d) does not result in the loss of an area which makes a significant contribution to public amenity by virtue of its open space character, appearance and function.

The plan area has a distinctive and special character. Development will be supported which would make a positive contribution to that distinctive character and be of good design and quality. In seeking to protect and enhance the unique identity of the area, all development will also have to have regard to the following:

- e. contribution to local identity, and sense of place;
- f. suitability of the overall design and appearance of the proposed development (including size, scale, density, layout, access, lighting, street furniture and signage) when assessed in relationship with surrounding buildings, spaces, vegetation, water areas and other features of the street scene;
- g. use, and where appropriate, re-use of local and traditional materials or suitable artificial alternatives. Standardised materials and products should be avoided;
- h. use of space and landscape design;
- i. protection and enhancement of ancient woodland, other woodland areas, trees, hedgerows, rivers, ditches and ponds;
- j. movement to, within, around, and through the development;
- k. originality, innovation and initiative;
- l. inclusion of energy efficiency and conservation measures; and
- m. use of Sustainable Drainage Systems.

## **POLICY BBH10 – PROTECTING LOCAL LANDSCAPE AND LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS**

“Development proposals should be designed in such a way that they conserve and enhance the local landscape and local heritage assets listed in Appendix 1.” Add to end of paragraph 6.20 “These assets are listed in Appendix 1 and mapped on the Historic Environment Record website

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200177/conservation/95/archaeology-and-the-historic-environment> -

advice and information/

**Background/Justification**

- 6.19 To enhance the character of the area and maintain local distinctiveness Policy BBH10 will be used to ensure all proposals incorporate high quality design. Good design is a key requirement of sustainable development (para. 56) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and neighbourhood plans should set out “robust and comprehensive” policies to indicate what is expected in an area (para. 57, NPPF).
- 6.20 The area has significant protected heritage assets – Hoarwithy Conservation Area and over 40 listed buildings. These assets are protected. However, the area also has a significant number of heritage assets that do not benefit from any formal protection. This policy identifies these assets and seeks to conserve and enhance them. This will help to maintain the rich cultural environment in the area and retain a strong, distinctive local identity.

**Objective 8 - To protect and enhance community facilities.**

**POLICY BBH11 – PROTECTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES, SHOPS AND PUBS**

**The community facilities listed below and shown on Policies Maps 1, 2 and 3 will be protected:**

**The New Inn, St Owen’s Cross  
Football field, St Owen’s Cross  
The New Harp, Hoarwithy  
Ballingham Old School Hall (BOSH)**

**Development to enhance or improve these facilities will be supported when it preserves local character and distinctiveness, and does not harm the landscape or residential amenity.**

**Development leading to the loss of these facilities will only be**

**supported when equivalent, or better, provision is made elsewhere in the area; or after an extended period of active marketing there is no longer a viable community, retail, food and drink or commercial use for the site.**

### **Background/Justification**

- 6.21 Community facilities such as halls, pubs and shops are the glue that hold a community together. The facilities identified in Policy BBH11 will be protected for community uses. Their loss will only be supported when equivalent, or better, provision is made elsewhere in the area; or it can be clearly demonstrated, after active marketing, over an extended period of time (a minimum of 12 months) that no viable community, retail, food and drink or commercial use is forthcoming for the site.

### **Objective 9 - To address the needs of the area's different age groups.**

### **POLICY BBH12 – A VIBRANT AND THRIVING COMMUNITY**

**To ensure that communities in the area remain vibrant and thrive, the focal points for development of social and community facilities will be Ballingham, Hoarwithy and St Owen's Cross.**

**In particular, under-provision of such facilities will be addressed in St Owen's Cross and Hoarwithy by supporting proposals for new community centres.**

**To ensure such development meets the needs of all age groups it should incorporate design features that meet the needs of all ages and be designed to be easily adaptable to meet future changes in lifestyle.**

## **Background/Justification**

- 6.22 Figures 5 and 6 show the area's relatively older population and small proportion of people under 20. There is a danger that this imbalance could become much worse with an ageing population, and as young people leave the area to study, work, or because they cannot find or afford a home locally. This could lead to a loss of the local workforce, skills, and the social and family networks that will be needed for support and care. Our housing policies seek to promote proportionate growth in the area that could allow us to tackle this issue. This policy will be used so as to ensure that scope is made to secure a range of local facilities for people of all ages.

# 7

## Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 Plans are only valuable when kept up to date. The Group Parish Council will monitor the policies and proposals in the plan on an annual basis. A monitoring report will be prepared on the plan and presented to the Annual General Meeting in May each year.
- 7.2 Where the need for change is identified, we will work with Herefordshire Council to produce updates and amendments where necessary.
- 7.3 Should significant sections of the plan become out of date we will look to review the whole document by producing a new plan following the Neighbourhood Development Planning procedure.



## **Appendix 1. List of Local Landscape and Heritage Assets**

### **Commons**

Shop Common Biblett's Common Biblett's Island Rocks Common North Rocks  
Common South Parson's Common

### **Sites of historical interest**

Red Rail wharf & river crossing Spring/well in Well Lane Spring/well on  
Wyehill Chapel Tumps Gaer Cop Tresseck paper mill site Hoarwithy Corn  
Mill Middle Mill

### **Abandoned routes**

Sandpit Lane Bierless Lane Colys Lane Hell's Ditch part

### **Paths to be added to definitive map**

Well Lane Altbough Lane Llanfrother Lane Hells Ditch

### **Buildings (some listed)**

Hentland Church Hoarwithy Church Hoarwithy Chapel Toll House Gillow  
Manor Treaddow Little Treaddow New Inn New Inn Cross Llanfrother  
Tresseck New Harp Upper Orchard (Old Harp) Wye Meadows (Prussia Inn)



