

Pyons Group

Review

Neighbourhood Development Plan

2022 - 2041

Submission Version



Pyons Group Parish Council
October 2022

Prepared by Pyons Group NDP Steering Group
On behalf of the Parish Council
With the assistance of



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Foreword

I am delighted to introduce you to the Pyons Group Review NDP for Submission, which has been prepared by Pyons Group Parish Council with the support of a dedicated steering group of members of the public and councillors.

This version of the NDP has been amended following consideration of the comments and representations submitted during the 6-week Regulation 14 public consultation which was undertaken from 1st February 2021 to 15th March 2021. It has also been updated following the new Local Plan 2021-2041 Place Shaping Options consultation in June 2022.

The Parish Council decided to undertake the NDP Review to ensure the plan remains relevant to the people living and working in our group parishes, and for the planning authority to give it full weight and authority when there is an absence of a five year land supply in the county.

The Review NDP builds on a strong evidence base of reports, studies and a community engagement and consultation event led by the steering group and has been informed by the responses to formal consultation.

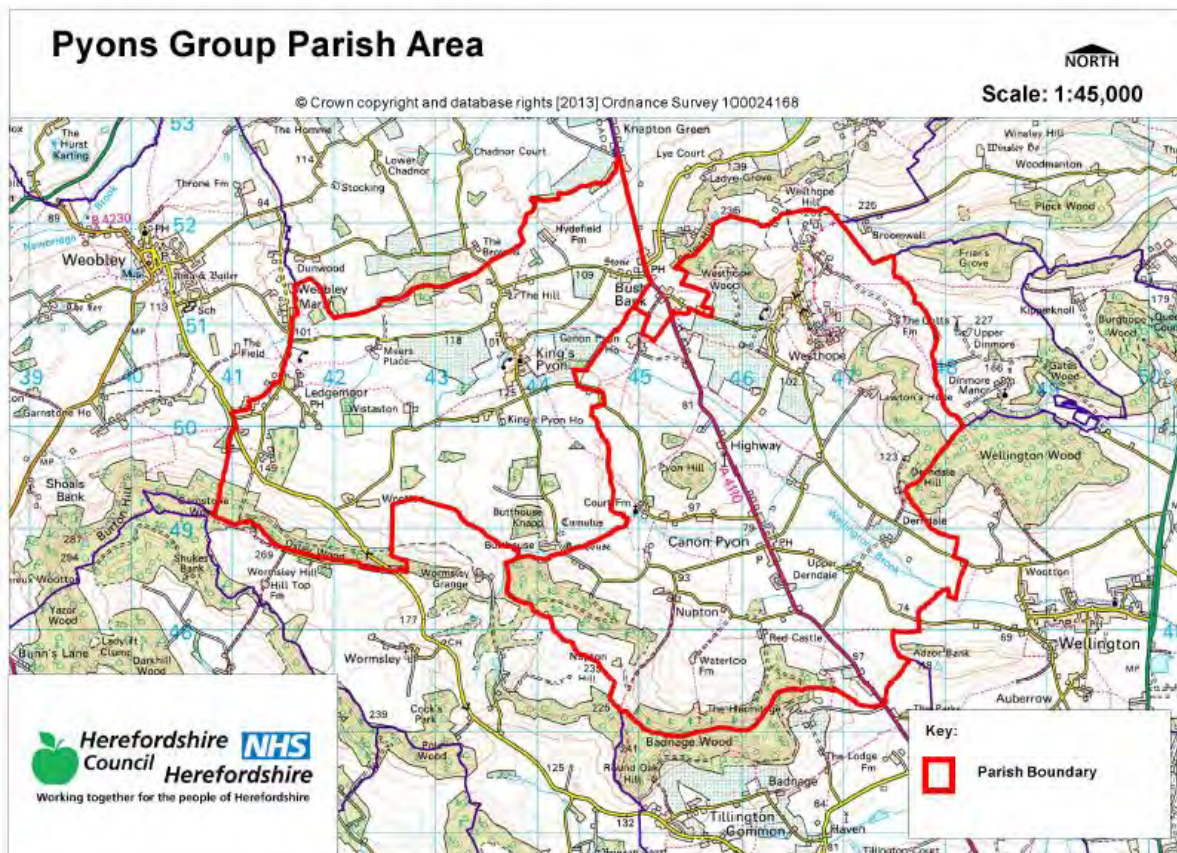
On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to warmly congratulate the steering group for their hard work and commitment in support of the review, particularly given the challenges of doing so in the midst of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Michael Perruzza
Chairman
Pyons Group Parish Council.

1.0 Introduction and Background

Map 1: Pyons Group Neighbourhood Area and Group Parish Boundary



Introduction

- 1.1 Welcome to the Pyons Group Review NDP. The NDP Review updates the previous Pyons Group Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011 - 2031 which was prepared by a steering group on behalf of the Parish Council. The former NDP was examined and subjected to a local referendum and was made (adopted) by Herefordshire Council on 16th June 2017.
- 1.2 In February 2020, the Group Parish Council set up a new Steering Group of parish councillors and local residents to review the NDP. The Review is being undertaken to update the policies and proposals in the previous NDP, and to address any new issues identified through discussions with Herefordshire Council, and responses to the informal public consultation held in March 2020.
- 1.3 Recent housing developments and commitments, primarily in the settlement of Canon Pyon, have meant that the minimum housing target for the neighbourhood area of 18%, as set out in the Herefordshire Council Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031, has been met and significantly exceeded. The NDP Review provides an opportunity for a fresh look at local housing and other planning policies in the light of ongoing development pressures and in the context of the new Herefordshire Local Plan 2021 – 2041, which is at early stage of preparation.

The Development Plan and NDPs

- 1.4 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. NDPs form part of the statutory development plan for their area.
- 1.5 NDPs were introduced through the Localism Act 2011 to give local people a greater say in planning decisions that affect their area. NDPs are neighbourhood level planning policy documents with policies designed to reflect the needs and priorities of local communities. They are prepared by Parish Councils or other relevant bodies (such as Neighbourhood Fora in non-parished areas) to provide locally relevant planning policies and proposals for a designated neighbourhood area. The neighbourhood area for Pyons Group NDP is the same as the Group Parish boundary, and it was designated by Herefordshire Council on 30th July 2013 (see Map 1). The NDP Review has retained the Group Parish boundary as the neighbourhood area.
- 1.6 NDPs can identify where development should take place, set out local design principles so that buildings respond positively to local character, and protect important facilities, historic buildings, the natural environment and open spaces. They can have a wide range of policies, or just set out one single policy for the area.
- 1.7 NDPs are required to have regard to national planning policy and guidance and to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan of the local authority area. These requirements are set out in the 'basic conditions' against which the NDP is tested during the examination process.
- 1.8 Government planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹. Paragraph 29 advises that *'Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.'*
- 1.9 The NPPF goes on to state in paragraph 30 that *'Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.'*
- 1.10 The strategic policies for Herefordshire are set out in the adopted Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031². The key policies for the NDP include Policy RA1 – Rural housing distribution and Policy RA2 – Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns. Policy RA1 sets out the minimum housing targets for the rural Housing Market Areas (HMAs); Hereford has an indicative housing growth target of 18% (and Leominster 14%). Policy RA2 refers to Figure 4.14 which identifies settlements which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development and Figure 4.15 which lists the other settlements where proportionate housing is

¹ NPPF updated 20 July 2021

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

² https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200185/local_plan/137/local_plan_-_core_strategy/2

appropriate. Figure 4.14 includes Canon Pyon and Westhope in Hereford rural HMA and Bush Bank (only part of which lies in Pyons Group Parish) in Leominster rural HMA. Figure 4.15 includes the settlements of King's Pyon and Ledgemoor, both of which are in the Hereford rural HMA.

- 1.11 Herefordshire Council is in the process of updating the current Herefordshire Core Strategy, which was adopted in October 2015. The Local Plan 2021- 2041³ will set out the planning framework for the county for the period to 2041 and will cover issues such as housing provision, the economy, retail and town centres, infrastructure provision and the environment. It will set out policies by which planning applications will be determined, in addition to allocation land for housing, employment and other uses. A public consultation on Placemaking was undertaken in June and July 2022. This set out possible options and/or potential strategic development areas for Hereford, each of the County's market towns together with a range of alternative settlement hierarchies for rural parts of Herefordshire.
- 1.12 Planning Practice Guidance advises that '*A draft neighbourhood plan or Order must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force if it is to meet the basic condition. Although a draft neighbourhood plan or Order is not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. For example, up-to-date housing need evidence is relevant to the question of whether a housing supply policy in a neighbourhood plan or Order contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.*'

Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 41-009-20190509
Revision date: 09 05 2019

- 1.13 Therefore the Review NDP has been prepared to be in general conformity with the policies in the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy, but the process has also taken into consideration the reasoning and evidence informing the new Local Plan, including the Rural Areas Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper, June 2022⁴.

What is an NDP Review?

- 1.14 Planning Practice Guidance for neighbourhood planning sets out when it is considered necessary to review and update a neighbourhood plan⁵. There is no requirement to review or update a neighbourhood plan. However, '*where a policy has been in force for a period of time, other material considerations may be given greater weight in planning decisions as the evidence base for the plan policy becomes less robust. To reduce the likelihood of a neighbourhood plan becoming out of date once a new local plan (or spatial development strategy) is adopted, communities preparing a neighbourhood plan should take account of latest and up-to-date evidence of housing need, as set out in guidance*'. PPG goes on to advise

³ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan-1/local-plan-2021-2041>

⁴ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/2219/rural-settlement-hierarchy-background-paper>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#updating-neighbourhood-plan>

that, *'communities in areas where policies in a neighbourhood plan that is in force have become out of date may decide to update their plan, or part of it.'*

Paragraph: 084 Reference ID: 41-084-20190509

Revision date: 09 05 2019

1.15 PPG also sets out advice about the process for updating an NDP: *'There are 3 types of modification which can be made to a neighbourhood plan or order. The process will depend on the degree of change which the modification involves:*

- *Minor (non-material) modifications to a neighbourhood plan or order are those which would not materially affect the policies in the plan or permission granted by the order. These may include correcting errors, such as a reference to a supporting document, and would not require examination or a referendum.*
- *Material modifications which do not change the nature of the plan or order would require examination but not a referendum. This might, for example, entail the addition of a design code that builds on a pre-existing design policy, or the addition of a site or sites which, subject to the decision of the independent examiner, are not so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the plan.*
- *Material modifications which do change the nature of the plan or order would require examination and a referendum. This might, for example, involve allocating significant new sites for development.'*

Paragraph: 106 Reference ID: 41-106-20190509

Revision date: 09 05 2019

1.16 The Review NDP is considered to comprise material modifications. The process for preparing the NDP Review has followed PPG for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and as set out in The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)⁶. This is very similar to the process for preparing an NDP but depending upon the degree of change, an examination and referendum may not be required.

1.17 The Parish Council considers that the modifications are so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the plan and this is set out in the accompanying Statement of Modifications which is provided as one of the accompanying Submission documents. It is because the Review NDP includes significant amendments to former planning policies and sets out new planning policies including for development in identified settlement boundaries, the rural economy, and climate change and resilience. However this will be considered as part of the examination process. Provided the examiner is satisfied that the NDP Review meets the required basic conditions (subject to any recommended modifications), it is likely that the independent examiner will recommend that the NDP Review should proceed to a local referendum.

1.18 The NDP Review has been informed by the following:

- Informal advice and discussions with Herefordshire Council;
- Pyons Group Neighbourhood Development Plan Review Public Consultation (14th to 15th March 2020);

⁶ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/637/contents/made>

- Technical Site Assessments for former NDP Housing and School Site Allocations undertaken by AECOM under the Locality Technical Support Programme;
- Consideration of the updated NPPF (July 2021) and Planning Practice Guidance;
- Technical background documents supporting Herefordshire's planning policies;
- Climate change, including its potential impact on the local economy which is dominated by agriculture;
- The COVID-19 pandemic, as well as animal diseases such as bovine tuberculosis, foot and mouth and avian flu;
- Flooding events, both historic and recent, which are increasing in frequency;
- Concerns over local infrastructure including, but not exclusive to the condition of local rural lanes, the village school, bus service and the capacity of the sewerage works;
- The impact of development on the local ecology and environment;
- Consultation responses to the Regulation 14 consultation process;
- Issues related to phosphates and nutrient neutrality in the River Lugg catchment;
- Input from residents during Steering Group meetings; and
- The new emerging Herefordshire Local Plan 2021- 2041.

Regulation 14 Public Consultation

- 1.19 The Draft NDP Review was published for 6 weeks formal consultation from Monday 1st February until Monday 15th March 2021. Copies of the Draft Plan and supporting documents were provided on the NDP pages of the Parish Council website www.pyongroup.co.uk. A number of printed versions were made available for residents on request from the Clerk to the Parish Council. Due to Government restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic face to face meetings were not held but consultees were invited to request a telephone call from a member of the Steering Group, to send an email, or to join one of two online NDP Forum meetings, if they had any queries. Details of all these methods of contact and engagement were provided on a leaflet / notice delivered to all households and on the website.
- 1.20 Complete details of the responses, how these have been considered by the Parish Council, and how the Draft Plan Review has been amended, are provided in the Consultation Tables in Appendix 10 of the Consultation Statement which is published on the NDP pages of the Parish Council website.

2.0 A Portrait of Pyons Group of Parishes

- 2.1 The Pyons Group of Parishes is located approximately 6 miles north of Hereford in the local authority area of Herefordshire Council. The Group was formed by the amalgamation of the civil parishes of Canon Pyon and King's Pyon in the mid-1970s. Within the two parishes are the main settlements of Canon Pyon, King's Pyon, Ledgemoor, Westhope and part of Bush Bank, as well as a number of scattered hamlets, farms and individual houses. The Group Parish had a population of 816 in 2011 and is thought to be around 1300 in 2022. The Parish extends over 2,700 hectares and has a low population density of 0.3 persons per hectare.

Canon Pyon



Traditional cottages in Canon Pyon

- 2.2 The modern village of Canon Pyon straddles the line of the A4110, although historically the village would have centred on the church, Court Farm and the Great House, which lie a mile or so to the west of the village. Here there were also a small number of cottages which have now disappeared. The Dean and Chapter of Hereford Cathedral were the Lords of the Manor. The village which grew up along the main road was formerly called New End and is marked as such on Ordnance Survey maps.
- 2.3 The outstanding landmark in the parish is the tree covered, cone shaped Pyon Hill, which is privately owned and has a derelict summer-house on the top.
- 2.4 Until the late 1950s the village had changed little and there were few houses on the west side of the main road until Canon Pyon Stores and the adjacent bungalows were built in the late 1950s. Later the Meadow Drive development extended the village to the south. The former council house estate of Brookside was built in 1963. More recently (2017-2018) there have been two housing developments in Canon Pyon; Watling Close with 27 units, and Pyons Close with 30 units.



Watling Close (Former NDP Site B)

- 2.5 The Parish is in a primarily agricultural area and traditionally many of the men were employed as labourers on the local farms or worked in agricultural related industries as blacksmiths, wheelwrights, and carpenters. During the 1920s the Yeomans Bus Company started up at the Crown and remained in Canon Pyon for almost 50 years. Until the 1970s Yeomans Garage was an important element in the local economy, giving employment to many local people and providing business for the local shop and post office.
- 2.6 Canon Pyon formerly had two pubs, The Plough and the Nags Head. The latter also served as the local shop for many years and is still being run now as a public house. The Plough was converted to residential accommodation a few years ago.
- 2.7 Village amenities now include a shop and post office, a village hall, and a playing field with facilities for football, cricket and tennis, a BMX track and a children's play area.
- 2.8 The school (Canon Pyon Church of England Academy) was established in 1873 on land given in perpetuity by the Yeomans family at a time when each village had its own school.
- 2.9 During the last century the other village schools have declined leaving Canon Pyon to serve the whole parish. The school lies about 500m to the north of the village, directly on the A4110. It is still a popular village school, attracting pupils from surrounding villages and beyond, as well as local children.

Westhope



The Croft

- 2.10 The hamlet of Westhope lies within a wooded valley to the north east of Canon Pyon, leading up to the flat plain of Westhope Common from where there are fine panoramic views extending from the Malverns to the Black Mountains and beyond. The small cottages scattered around Westhope Hill and in the village were again mainly occupied by agricultural labourers, many of whom worked at Upper House Farm, owned initially by the Plevy family and then later by the Yeomans family.
- 2.11 During the 1930s – 50s Mr Yeomans grew hops which he sold to a brewery in Warrington and during the hop picking season the village would, for a month or so, be home to hundreds of Welsh hop pickers and their families. Many were housed in buildings situated in the orchard and what is now called 'Summerlease', remaining there until the early 1980s. The farm was sold in the 1970s and the land was bought by Bulmers and planted up as cider orchards.



Lower House



Bowkers Cottage

- 2.12 Most of the small cottages at Westhope have now been enlarged and converted into family homes. The old farm buildings have been demolished and replaced with large Border Oak homes, as have the old Hop Kilns. There is a small, corrugated iron mission church in Westhope, which was built in 1888. Regular Sunday services are still held there, and it also now serves as a community room for meetings and social activities.

Bush Bank



The Bush Inn, Bush Bank

- 2.13 The Group Parish boundary includes part of the settlement of Bush Bank. The focal point is now the Bush Inn but previously Bush Bank had a thriving shop and garage and was at one time the residence of the local policeman, the District Nurse and the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages. The former garage has now been developed into a second-hand car business.

King's Pyon



Brook House

- 2.14 The village of King's Pyon is clustered mainly around the parish church, but the parish extends as far as the A4110 to include part of Bush Bank. The area still has close links with the Tomkins family and the Hereford breed of cattle. There was formerly a village school, which has been closed for some years, and a shop and post office. There are two main farms within the village – Blackhall Farm and Brook House Farm. There are no community facilities; the village hall having been demolished in the early 1960s. The small housing association development at Cuckoo Penn was rebuilt in recent years.

Ledgemoor



Victoria Cottage

- 2.15 Ledgemoor is a small community with a stone mission church and a club room. Many of the men used to work on the Garnstone estate, which still owns some of the houses in the village. Historically the residents of Ledgemoor have gravitated more towards the large village of Weobley, some three miles away. There has been very little development in Ledgemoor apart from the rebuilding of some small derelict cottages to provide affordable housing.

Transport and Access

- 2.16 The A4110 connects Canon Pyon and Bush Bank with Hereford to the south and Leominster to the north. Other roads are predominantly single track, and many are liable to surface water flooding or flooding from nearby watercourses. There is an extensive network of public rights of way (footpaths and bridleways). This includes a section of the Wyche Way long-distance path. There are no cycle routes although the rural lanes are popular with cyclists. However, the A4110 is on one of the cycle routes from Land's End to John O'Groats with cyclists often taking a rest stop at the village shop in Canon Pyon.



- 2.17 Canon Pyon and Bush Bank have a limited bus service to Hereford and Leominster. There is also a market day service connecting Westhope to Hereford on Wednesdays. There is no bus service to King's Pyon and Ledgemoor. The nearest GP and dentist are in Weobley and residents are reliant on private cars to access these services.

Local Infrastructure

- 2.18 There is no mains gas in Pyons Group. The area is served by mains electricity distributed through the area using overhead cables. This system can lead to outages during bad weather.
- 2.19 Whilst a small number of properties rely on private wells, the overwhelming majority of dwellings in the area are served by mains potable water. In addition, it is believed that Welsh Water have no plans to increase mains water capacity for the foreseeable future. Whilst Canon Pyon has mains sewerage most of the Group still relies on 'On Site Sewerage Systems' (i.e. septic tanks etc), including their associated seepage fields. There is a collection and settlement tank in King's Pyon serving a limited number of properties. In the case of the Waste water Treatment Works (WwTW) in Canon Pyon, this has limited capacity to support any new development connected to this system.

Natural Heritage

- 2.20 The neighbourhood area boasts many natural heritage assets. There is 1 Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Wellington Wood, 12 Special Wildlife Sites (SWS) and 10 areas of ancient woodland - see Appendix 1.

Built Heritage

- 2.21 There are 53 listed buildings in the Group Parish including the Church of St Lawrence and Church of St Mary (both Grade I), Grade II* Black Hall and the Gatehouse near Butthouse, and a Motte Castle which is a Scheduled Monument, 150m north east of Butthouse. There is a registered park and garden at Foxley (border) and 5 unregistered parks and gardens.
- 2.22 The natural and built heritage assets are shown on SEA Map 1 and SEA Map 2 from the Environmental Report and are re-produced in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 also includes a full list of Listed Buildings in the Group Parish and the registered and unregistered parks and gardens.

3.0 Key Issues for the Pyons Group Review NDP

- 3.1 There are a number of key issues which have been identified as part of the Review process. These have been drawn from discussions with Herefordshire Council at a Steering Group meeting on 22nd January 2020, and the responses from parishioners and stakeholders to the informal questionnaire and public consultation drop in events on 14th - 15th March 2020 held at Canon Pyon Parish Hall. There were 70 attendees across the 2 days and 51 questionnaires were completed and submitted.
- 3.2 A full report detailing the consultation process, summarising responses and setting out recommendations for the NDP review is incorporated into the Consultation Statement and the report is also published on the NDP website.⁷
- 3.3 The identified key issues for the NDP Review are:
1. The need to review and update the Canon Pyon Policies Map, particularly in relation to drawing the correct boundary of the playing field, and amending the former housing site allocations (A, B, C and D) to reflect recent developments.
 2. To consider the suitability and viability of former housing site allocation Site D and the site allocated for the relocation of the school, through a technical site assessment to be undertaken through the Locality Technical Support Programme.
 3. The need to identify settlement boundaries for the other settlements of Westhope, Bush Bank (part), King's Pyon and Ledgemoor.
 4. To review and update the housing policy, to refer to 'defined local need', and to consider the needs of older residents.
 5. To consider the capacity of local infrastructure, and in particular sewerage, through consultation with Welsh Water.
 6. To review and update policies relating to traffic and access, including walking and cycling.
 7. To update the NDP to reflect recent Government advice and policy in relation to climate change and the need to incorporate resource efficiency and low carbon technologies.
 8. To consider the inclusion of a range of new policies to address issues such as design and character, the local economy (tourism, agriculture, polytunnels etc), biodiversity, built heritage assets and protection of local community facilities.

⁷ Pyons Group Neighbourhood Development Plan Review, Public Consultation (14-15 March 2020) <https://pyongroup.co.uk/neighbourhood-development-plan-review/>

4.0 NDP Review Vision and Objectives

Presumption of Sustainable Development

- 4.1 In considering future development in the group there should be a presumption for sustainability as described in the NPPF (paragraph 8):

‘Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

*a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

*b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*

*c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.’*

NDP Vision Statement

- 4.2 The NDP Vision statement is set out below.

Vision Statement
<p>Canon Pyon remains the centre within the Group where public services, community facilities and potential employment opportunities that contribute to the evolution of the Parish as a whole are concentrated.</p>
<p>Development within the Group will be supported where it meets identified local needs.</p>
<p>The distinct rural character of the Group is maintained.</p>

- 4.3 To achieve the NDP Vision Statement the NDP will:

- Build a firm foundation for the ongoing sustainable development of the village communities in terms of their individual environment, biodiversity, economy, population and age balance; and

- Deliver this through the establishment of inclusive and democratic means that encourages, plans and steers positive and constructive change throughout the Parish.

NDP Objectives

- 4.4 To deliver the NDP Review Vision Statement, the following Objectives have been identified:

Objective 1: To Focus Primary Development in Canon Pyon

Housing in Canon Pyon should emphasise the centre of the village as defined by the Village Hall, the Playing Field and adjacent car park, bus stop and proposed pedestrian crossing; these representing the natural social hub for the village and surrounding communities. This will also capture the adjacent Brookside and Patrick Orchard, the more recent Pyons Close and the proposed development on the former Yeomans site, as well as the site reserved for a new school.

Development of a "Village Hub" will help to promote the establishment of youth groups, as well as continue to support other social activities centred on the village hall and playing field. Establishing family-oriented facilities within the 'Hub' is a major consideration in the community development. It is also important to plan for small business/craft units and homeworking in any development as this would be complementary to a mixed development.

Objective 2: To Support Secondary Development in Other Villages

Opportunities will be identified that will allow for other smaller developments across the Parish, in particular Westhope and Ledgemoor, making use of available sites that would add to sustainability and the rural nature of the Parish; this would be taken on a case-by-case basis with some local sanction on design.

Secondary development in the form of converting redundant buildings, use of existing brown field sites is also seen as a viable option to meet local housing needs. There needs to be encouragement from Herefordshire Council to landowners for self-build and such small developments in the knowledge that the Parish Council would expect any development to be in line with the Parish and Neighbourhood Plans.

Objective 3: To Support Longer Term Development in Canon Pyon

Other locations for development in and around Canon Pyon will be considered to ensure development applications are made within the scope and considerations of the Neighbourhood Plan. It is essential to pursue ongoing agreement with residents on the shape of any future development, once the 'Village Hub' has been effectively secured. A further development to this would be the building of a new Primary School in the 'Hub' as suggested in the strong response from residents on this issue, and in the short-term securing a safe walking and cycling route linking the existing school site to the village.

Objective 4: To Promote "Added Value Requirements"

The density of the two recent developments in Canon Pyon has been identified by residents as a sensitive issue, in particular Watling Close. Whilst accepting that the design of any development will be subjective and a reflection of residents' views, maintaining the rural character of the communities within the group is seen as important. The density and building profile of any development needs to take this into consideration.

Achieving the best possible design and financial contribution from any developer is essential in meeting the aims of the plan. This is to be pursued as cases arise, however prior consideration is to be given to identifying need in principle. Any approval will therefore be subject to these considerations and the Parish Council will, therefore, provide guidance in this respect.

A list of projects to be supported through agreements with developers is an essential part of delivering this Plan; the current priorities are listed below:

1. Traffic Light controlled pedestrian crossing in the 'hub'.
2. Sheltered bus stops on both sides of road in the 'hub'.
3. Improved safer pedestrian access to school and throughout village.
4. Improved health and leisure facilities/playing field/village hall
5. Availability of 'Speed Indicator Devices'.

Pyons Group Review NDP Planning Policies

An NDP has the same legal status as the Local Plan once it has been agreed at a referendum and is made (brought into legal force) by the local planning authority. At this point it becomes part of the statutory development plan⁸ for the Neighbourhood Area. Applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

This section sets out the Planning Policies. The evidence and rationale behind each Policy is set out in the supporting text. The Review NDP planning policies include both policies carried forward from the previous NDP and a number of new policies.

The NDP policies are necessarily wide ranging in their scope, and taken together, should help to deliver sustainable development within the Pyons Group Parish.



The Great House, Canon Pyon

⁸ **Development Plan:** Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

5.0 Development Strategy



Watling Close (Former NDP Site B)

Background

- 5.1 The previous Pyons Group NDP set out a development strategy in Policy PG1: Development Strategy. This Policy identified the settlements of Canon Pyon, Westhope, King's Pyon and Ledgemoor as the focus for housing development in the Group Parish and set out that the main focus for community facilities and services would be Canon Pyon, with limited other provision in other villages. Limited small-scale employment, community and infrastructure development would be supported in the four main villages, subject to mitigating any adverse impacts on amenity and the environment. The villages of King's Pyon, Ledgemoor and Bush Bank (part) were identified as suitable for local needs housing.
- 5.2 The former Canon Pyon Policy Map identified a settlement boundary for Canon Pyon. The settlement boundary included four site allocations for new housing, a potential site for a new primary school and a Local Green Space. Since then:
- Two of the housing sites (A and B) have been developed;
 - Site C has planning consent for 10 new houses and is therefore considered a commitment; and
 - Site D remains undeveloped.
- 5.3 Site D and the site allocated for the relocation of the school were subjected to a technical assessment by consultants AECOM in summer 2020 (Pyons Group Neighbourhood Plan Site Options and Assessment Report, Pyons Group Parish Council, September 2020⁹). The Conclusions set out:

'5.1 The site assessment has found that of the two sites considered, PGNP01 [the school site] is potentially suitable for both residential and educational

⁹ Pyons Group Neighbourhood Plan Site Options and Assessment Report, AECOM for Pyons Group Parish Council, October 2020

pyongroup.co.uk/neighbourhood-development-plan-review/

development, subject to constraints in relation to flooding, utilities and heritage being resolved or mitigated, and would be appropriate for allocation subject to confirmation of land availability. PGNP02 [Site D] is found to be not suitable at present for residential development due to the lack of sustainable access and visual sensitivity, and therefore not appropriate for allocation in the Plan.'

- 5.4 Site D was not carried forward into the Review Draft Plan and at the Regulation 14 consultation stage, objections were submitted by the landowner of Site D and their agent. Various background reports and supporting information were provided which sought to address the various constraints, and this information is included in the Consultation Statement.
- 5.5 A planning application (P213332/F) for the proposed erection of 33 new affordable dwellings, new access and visibility splays, internal roads and new drainage infrastructure was submitted to Herefordshire Council in September 2021¹⁰. The Parish Council objected to the application on the grounds of access, safety, flooding, light pollution, and overdevelopment of Canon Pyon. Other objections were also submitted. The Parish Council has decided that Site D should not be re-instated as a site allocation for housing into the submission version of the Review NDP and the planning application will be determined in due course through the development management process.

Settlement Boundaries

- 5.6 The previous NDP did not identify settlement boundaries on Policies Maps for Westhope, Bush Bank (for that part in the Group Parish), King's Pyon and Ledgemoor.
- 5.7 The indicative housing growth target of 18% for Hereford rural Housing Market Area in the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy equates to 68 new dwellings in the Group Parish up to 2031. The AECOM Site Assessment report sets out that *'Pyons Group Parish has already exceeded its housing target of 68 dwellings for the Plan Period 2011-2031, set in the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policies RA1 and RA2 a total of 97 dwellings are committed or under construction in the Parish area, including two large developments in Canon Pyon.* (Para 1.4). At the time of writing (June 2022) the number of dwellings built, committed or under construction is estimated to be 120. Moreover, the Review process has also identified the potential for a further 7 dwellings being considered by local landowners.
- 5.8 The informal public consultation for the Pyons Group NDP Review in March 2020 included detailed consideration of settlement boundaries and development. The responses to the consultation informed the updated development strategy and each of the proposed new settlement boundaries identified in the Draft Plan Review.
- 5.9 It is important to note that the NPPF sets out in paragraph 16 b) that plans should be *'prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable.'* Para 29 goes on to

10

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200142/planning_services/planning_application_search/details?id=213332&search-term=P213332/F

say that '*neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.*'

5.10 It would not be appropriate therefore for the NDP Review to resist new development completely; rather the NDP policies should provide a positive planning framework which supports some continued growth, which meets the local community's needs and aspirations and which is targeted to a site allocation and areas within defined settlement boundaries.

5.11 The new emerging Herefordshire Local Plan 2021 – 2041 preferred spatial option indicates that there is a need for around 2,500 new dwellings in the rural area in addition to around 2,700 existing commitments. The Place Shaping Options Consultation – Rural Areas, June 2022 sets out that:

'the preferred strategy for the rural areas will be a hybrid of options. It will seek to focus growth within the most sustainable settlements and be responsive to the desire to reduce the amount of growth within settlements containing a conservation area or within an AONBs. There will also be a reduced number of settlements from those current listed within the Core Strategy.

The selected settlements will be based on their range of services; facilities; connectivity (in terms of public transport, main road network and broadband); infrastructure; employment provision and environmental constraints. This will be supported by evidence gathered by an audit of rural settlements entitled Rural Settlement Services and Environmental Survey.'

5.12 Two of the options for the distribution of rural housing include the settlement of Canon Pyon and none of the options identify any of the other settlements in the Pyons Group neighbourhood area for housing growth. The two options which identify Canon Pyon are:

- Option 1a - Housing distributed through the most sustainable settlements in the county. The rural growth would be directed primarily to those settlements. Outside these settlements would be classified as 'open countryside' where only limited housing growth would be permitted.
- Option 2a Countywide Settlements – Focus growth only within sustainable settlements outside of the AONBs and Conservation Areas. This will effectively make those settlements removed from the lists 'open countryside' and limit development to only specific circumstances.

5.13 The Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031 identifies all 5 of the main settlements in the Group Parish as suitable for sustainable housing growth in Policy RA2 - Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns. Figures 4.14 and 4.15 identify the suitable settlements.

- Figure 4.14 - Settlements which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development include Canon Pyon and Westhope in Hereford rural HMA, and Bush Bank (only part of which lies in Pyons Group Parish) in Leominster rural HMA.
- Figure 4.15 - Other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate include King's Pyon and Ledgemoor, both of which are in the Hereford rural HMA.

- 5.14 Paragraph 4.8.21 of the Core Strategy sets out that *'in parishes which have more than one settlement listed in Figure 4.14 and 4.15 the relevant Neighbourhood Development Plan will have appropriate flexibility to apportion the minimum housing requirement between the settlements concerned. This will allow for a locally flexible approach that will respect settlement characteristics, the distribution of local facilities and other local factors.'*
- 5.15 As the Review NDP is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted Core Strategy, the NDP includes settlement boundaries for all 5 settlements. Following the adoption of the new Local Plan, it may be appropriate to undertake a further review of the NDP.
- 5.16 The Settlement Boundaries are identified on the NDP Review Policies Maps. In response to the comments submitted during the first Regulation 14 consultation, there have been further amendments to some of the Draft Plan settlement boundaries and Policies maps.
- 5.17 These changes are:
- Map 2: Canon Pyon Policies Map – inclusion of a new commitment and a green space.
 - Map 3: Westhope Policies Map - minor amendment to correct the location of the community facility (5. St Francis' Church / Meeting Room);
 - Map 4: Bush Bank Policies Map – amendment to the settlement boundary to include a recent commitment;
 - Map 5: King's Pyon Policies Map - amendment of the settlement boundary to include a recently built bungalow;
 - Map 6: Ledgemoor Policies Map - addition of a new Community Facility (9. The Mission Chapel), inclusion of an additional area within the settlement boundary and removal of Marshpools Inn (which is no longer a public house).

Development Strategy

- 5.18 NDP Review Policy PG1: Development Strategy sets out the revised proposed development strategy for the Group Parish. The Policy has been prepared taking into account the detailed responses to the informal public consultation and concerns about further large-scale housing development in the Group Parish. Small scale new residential development (such as 1 to 2 units or slightly more when a well-designed scheme justifies a slightly larger development) and development on brownfield (previously developed) sites will continue to be supported, as will business development that supports home working such as extensions and garden studios to provide office space or a workshop. Concerns about access and flooding (both surface and river) are also addressed but are considered in more detail in other NDP Review Policies and the Core Strategy.

Policy PG1: Development Strategy

Proposals for development will be supported within the defined settlement boundaries of Canon Pyon, Westhope, Bush Bank (that part within the Group Parish), King's Pyon and Ledgemoor as shown on the NDP Review Policies Maps where they:

1. Are for new small scale residential or employment related development such as offices, workshops or other business accommodation; or
2. Comprise the conversion of redundant / disused buildings or re-use brownfield (previously developed) land.

Proposals which support home working, such as residential extensions and new office or workshop accommodation in rear gardens should be subordinate in scale and subsidiary in use to the main building and not have an adverse effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

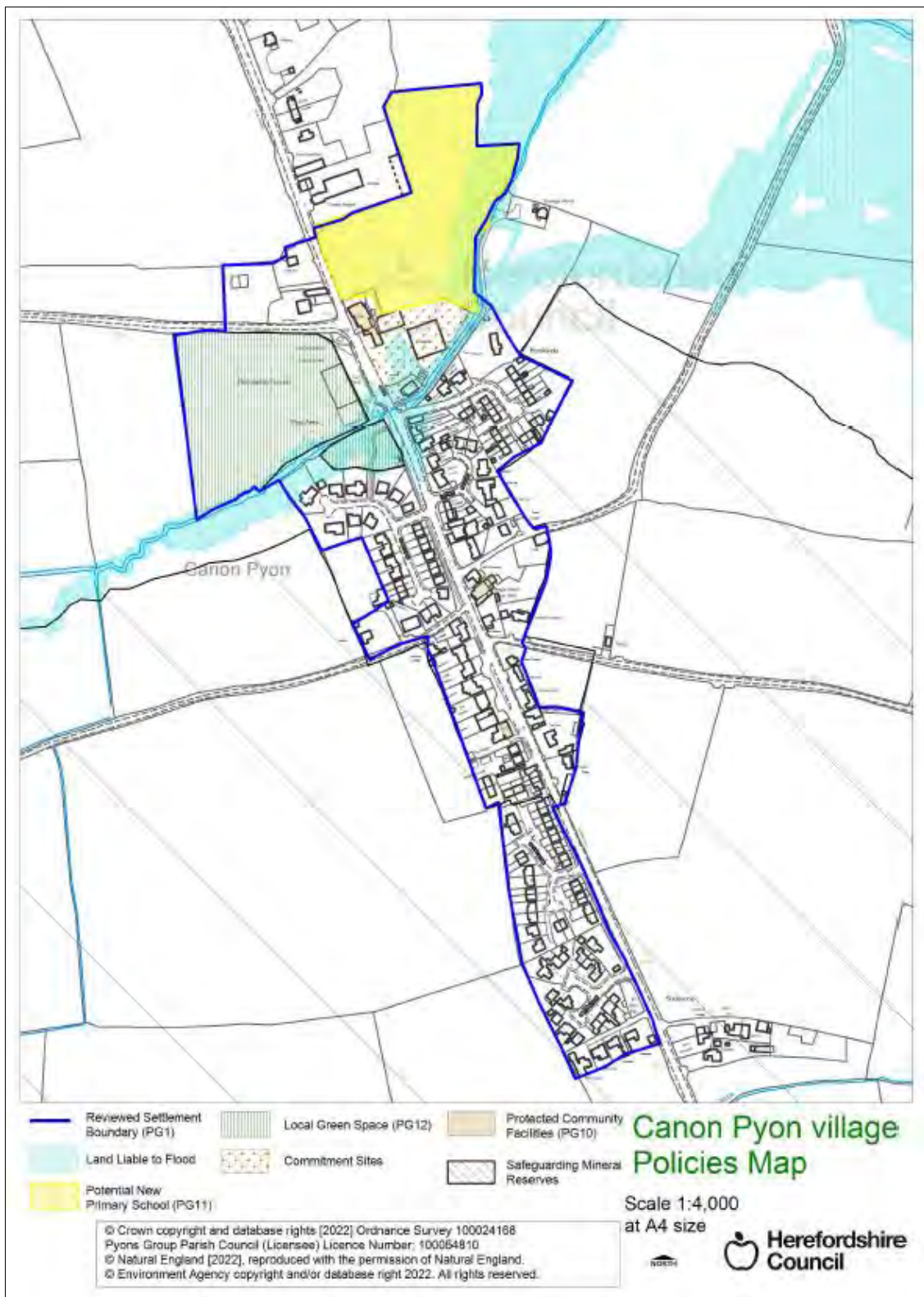
All schemes should demonstrate that suitable and safe access is achievable. The impact of additional traffic from development proposals on existing rural roadworks should be carefully considered and suitable measures should be proposed to encourage appropriate traffic speeds.

Development of the site must not exacerbate flood risk, and where possible should provide a betterment.

Canon Pyon will continue to be the main focus for new residential and community facilities development within the Group Parish, taking into account the existing commitment for 10 new houses on the former Yeomans site adjacent to the Parish Hall, and the potential relocation of the primary school to the proposed new site to the north of the village (NDP Policy PG11).

Development should avoid using higher quality agricultural land to support the local economy and protect national food security.

Map 2: NDP Review Policies Map - Canon Pyon



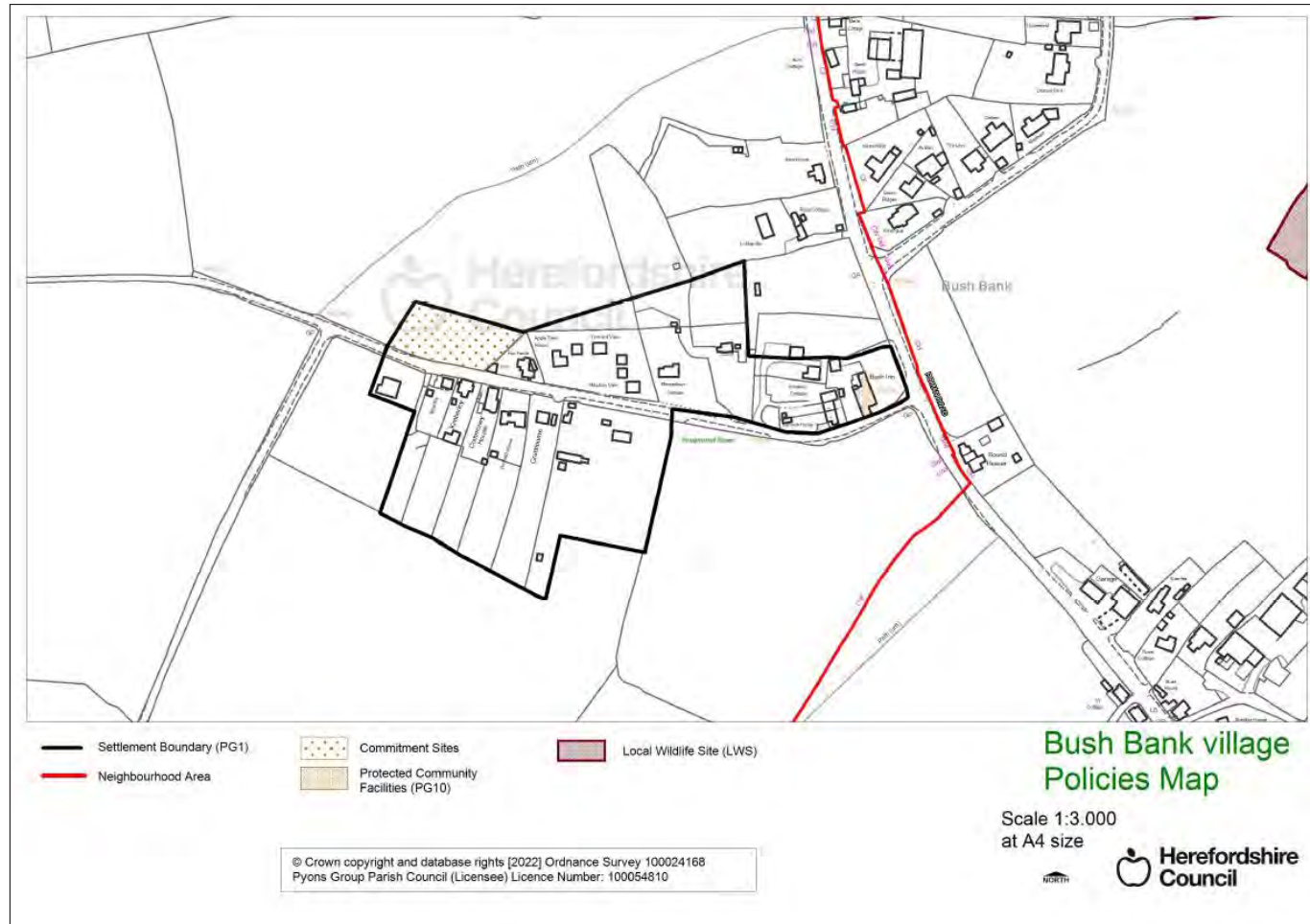
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Map 3: NDP Review Polices Map - Westhope



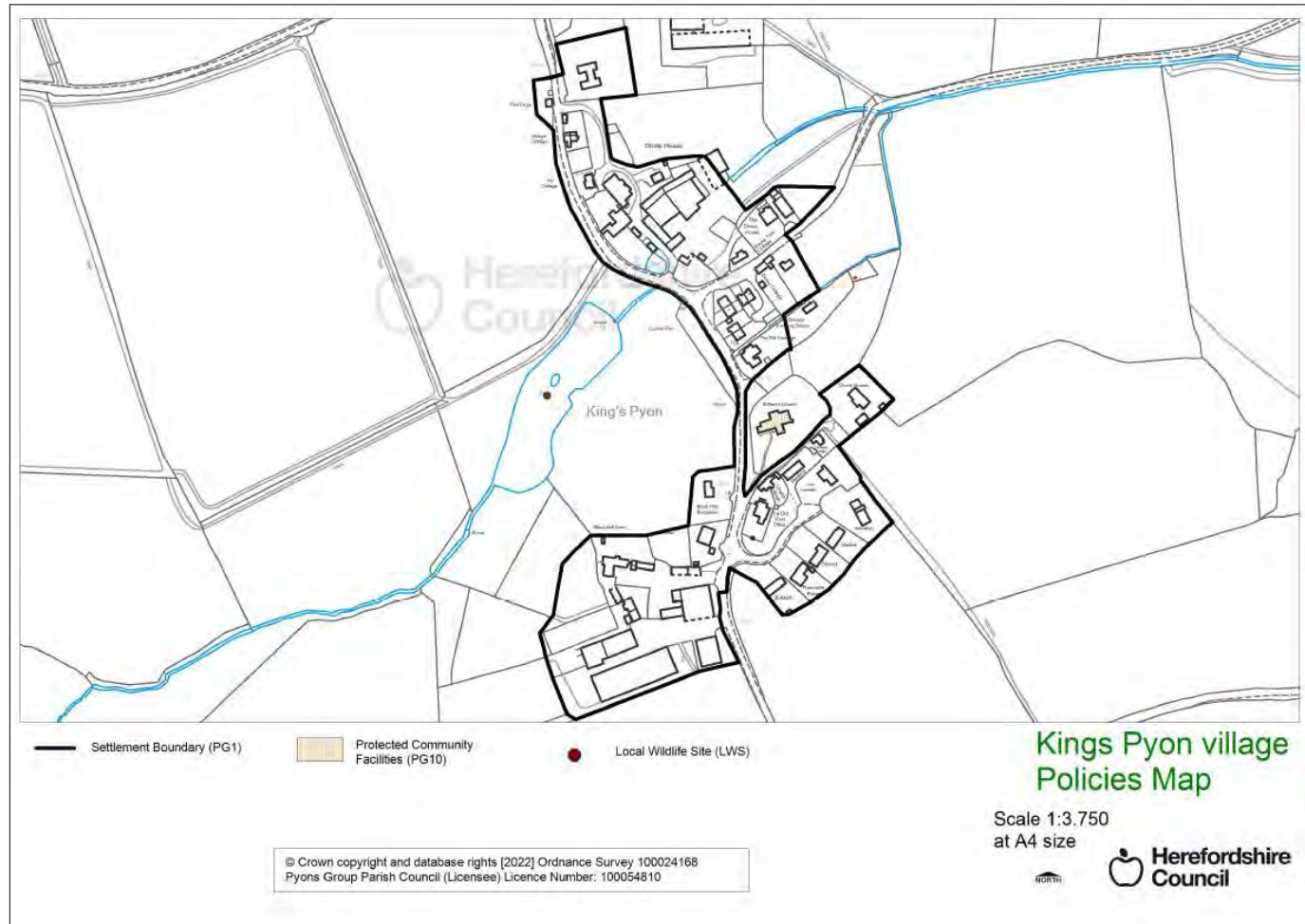
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Map 4: NDP Review Policies Map - Bush Bank (that part within the Group Parish)



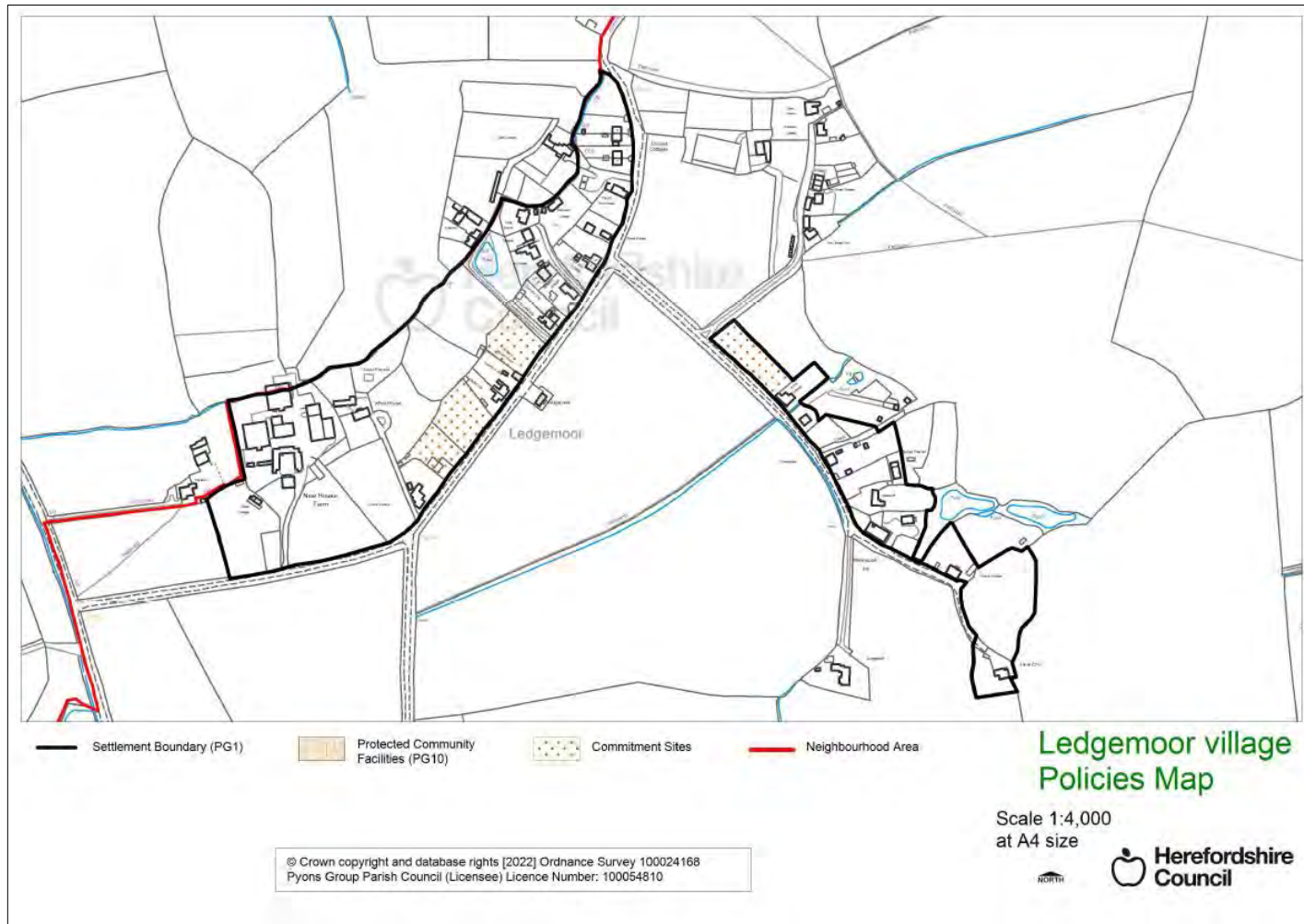
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Map 5: NDP Review Policies Map - King's Pyon



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Map 6: NDP Review Policies Map - Ledgemoor



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6.0 Housing



Pyon Close

- 6.1 The previous version of the NDP supported housing in Canon Pyon which provided a mix of house types and tenures, with an emphasis on family accommodation for young people and bungalows for the elderly (Former Policy PG3: New homes in Canon Pyon). However, as the NDP Review does not include any site allocations for major development, further proposals for further new market housing in the Group Parish are likely to be more limited over the Plan period up to 2031, in line with NDP Review Policy PG1: Development Strategy.
- 6.2 Where proposals do come forward however, it is important that they meet defined local needs in terms of house types, sizes and tenure.
- 6.3 Herefordshire has an ageing population. Advice on the Herefordshire Council website¹¹ sets out that *'Numbers in the older age groups have been growing at a disproportionately high rate in Herefordshire and people aged 65 and over currently account for around a quarter of the county's total population. This age group is expected to continue growing at a high rate with numbers aged 85+ rising even more rapidly.'*
- 6.4 The report 'The future population of Herefordshire, Version 0.1, Herefordshire Council Intelligence Unit, June 2019'¹² sets out in the Main Points that *'Herefordshire has an ageing population; in the absence of any housing development, the numbers of children would be expected to remain relatively static, the working age population is predicted to decrease slightly, and the numbers of people aged 65 and over would*

¹¹ <https://understanding.herefordshire.gov.uk/population/ageing-population/>

¹² <https://understanding.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/1617/future-population-of-herefordshire.pdf>

increase. Assuming that housing growth targets will be met, all age groups are forecast to increase; however, the county will still have a similarly ageing profile.'

- 6.5 The Group Parish falls into the Weobley Locality in Figure A1. Herefordshire's sub-county areas. The Report notes in section 2.2. Around The County, that *'If recent trends in births, deaths and migration were to continue, most areas of Herefordshire are projected to increase in population over the next 15 years, as shown in Figure 5. Exceptions include the rural areas of Weobley, Leominster rural and Bromyard rural, which are expected to yield small decreases in population of just one or two per cent. The numbers of births and the net numbers of people moving into these areas would not be sufficient to offset the numbers of deaths; furthermore, Weobley also has a net outward flow of migration, the only other area in Herefordshire to have a net outward flow of people is Hereford South.'*
- 6.6 The two recent residential developments in Canon Pyon have provided a range of new housing suitable for families and younger households.
- 6.7 The NPPF sets out in paragraph 78, *'In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs'*. Paragraph 79 goes on to say *'To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.'*
- 6.8 Core Strategy Policy RA2 – Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns includes criteria for new housing development. Criterion 4 sets out that proposals should *'result in the delivery of schemes that generate the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular settlements, reflecting local demand.'* The Policy goes on to advise *'Specific proposals for the delivery of local need housing will be particularly supported where they meet an identified need and their long-term retention as local needs housing is secured as such.'*
- 6.9 Pyons Group Review NDP Policy PG2: Housing has been prepared to support the future sustainability of communities in the Group Parish's settlements by encouraging a suitable mix of housing.

Policy PG2: Housing

Proposals for new housing development should contribute to a suitable mix of house sizes, types and tenures in order to support a sustainable future for the local communities in each of the 5 settlements in the Group Parish.

Proposals should meet the defined local need as set out in the most up to date housing market assessment. In particular, schemes will be encouraged which provide family accommodation, housing suitable for young people and first-time buyers, and accommodation which meets the needs of older residents and those with mobility impairments, such as bungalows.

Proposals for Self-Build housing projects in the Parish will be encouraged.

Proposals for the conversion of a disused building, or the redevelopment of an abandoned building in the countryside to provide an equivalent replacement residential dwelling, will be supported where they meet the criteria set out in Core Strategy Policies RA3 - Herefordshire's Countryside and RA5 - Re-use of rural buildings.

7.0 Accessibility and Infrastructure



Busy traffic on A4110, Canon Pyon

Introduction and Background

- 7.1 The Pyons Group of Parishes is located in a very rural, sparsely populated part of Herefordshire. Accessibility to local services and employment opportunities is a significant issue for many residents, as public transport is limited, and many rely on private cars. Local roads are often busy with heavy agricultural machinery, heavy goods vehicles and vans, and residents have concerns about increases in traffic on rural roads and conflicts between different user groups such as vehicle drivers, walkers, horse riders and cyclists and possible adverse impacts on highway safety. The speed of traffic along the A4110 is a particular concern, in particular through Canon Pyon and outside the village school.



Speeding traffic on the A4110

- 7.2 The village school is approximately 0.5 miles (0.8 km) north of the Village Hall. However, the school is not connected to the village by a route which encourages walking and cycling. There is a school bus service connecting Westhope and Canon Pyon to the school. For those children living in other areas, parents will be reliant on private transport. However, the timings of the school bus do not coincide with before and after school activities. Children attending these, as well as those attending pre-school, will rely on private transport. This can lead to traffic congestion outside the school in the morning and afternoon.
- 7.3 Policies in the previous Pyons Group NDP required development to consider impacts on the road network, including capacity and noise, to take opportunities for improving access to and the use of public transport, and to address provision and improvement of pedestrian and cycle routes and links.
- 7.4 The village of Canon Pyon is connected to mains sewerage, with a Primary WwTW plant located in the village. This was built in the 1960s and relies on settlement tanks from which oils, grease and solids are extracted and taken away by tankers for further treatment. Otherwise, the majority of properties across the Group Parish rely on 'On Site Sewerage Systems' (septic tanks etc).

Public Transport



Bus Stop, Canon Pyon

- 7.5 Canon Pyon and Bush Bank are served by a bus service connecting to Hereford (in the south) and Leominster. This service is limited, with no service in the evenings or on Sundays. For residents in King's Pyon and Ledgemoor, the nearest bus services are at Bush Bank (1.9 km) and Weobley (2.3 km) respectively. In the case of Westhope there is a very limited service on market day each week where services connecting Hereford, Canon Pyon and Leominster diverted through the village. On other days of the week residents have to walk to Bush Bank (just over 1 km).
- 7.6 From a community perspective, there is a lack of public transport connectivity between the Group Parish's various villages and hamlets, and to the neighbouring larger settlements of Wellington and Weobley. Wellington is part of the parochial group parish, and doctor and dentist surgeries serving the area are located in

Weobley. There is therefore a high reliance on private transport to access these local facilities.

- 7.7 In the consultation responses in March 2020, there were suggestions that the current service at Canon Pyon and Bush Bank meets the needs of residents (regular and occasional users comprised 21% of respondents). However, 47% of respondents to the consultation indicated that they would consider using the service more if it ran more frequently, and if there was a better service in the evening. Currently the last bus from Hereford on weekdays leaves the city at 17:49, a service that, for example, would not meet the needs of anyone working until 18:00 or later. Another supporting theme from respondents at a personal level was that with retirement or approaching retirement, the need for a bus service as an essential service is likely to increase.

Transport Actions

- 7.8 Taking into consideration the views expressed by residents, the ageing population and the desire to reduce traffic, the Parish Council will progress the following actions to support public transport improvements:
1. Given the apparent support, explore with service providers the viability of a service through Canon Pyon and Bush Bank that ran later into the evening.
 2. In order to provide a service to the smaller communities, explore the possibility of a community bus. This service could in theory provide a school service linking in the outlying communities and thereby helping to reduce traffic outside the school, as well as provide a link for residents to services such as the surgeries in Weobley, as well as nearby retail outlets, and support for local organisations.
- 7.9 In addition the Pyons Group Environment and Ecology Report¹³ includes the following Key Actions for Transport:
- Pressure the local authority to address road repair, including establishing formal passing places.
 - Promote cycling and walking within the community by installing secure cycle parking in community venues and amenities as well as in new developments.
 - Investigate options to promote car sharing, park and ride and community bus schemes in order to help reduce the carbon footprint of the community.
 - Encourage use of low emission, hybrid, and electric vehicles (one option to achieve this would be to allow the installation of domestic and public charging points).
 - Encourage car sharing schemes (for example through promotion and by providing parking).
 - Encourage the use of public transport.

¹³ Pyons Group Environment and Ecology Report, Pyons Group Parish Council, 2020
<https://pyongroup.co.uk/neighbourhood-development-plan-review/>

Public Rights of Way (PRoW), Walking and Cycling

- 7.10 The group is well served with footpaths and bridleways covering a total distance of approximately 35km. Moreover, the majority link into the rural lanes. However, some of these routes cross the A4110, and several crossing points are staggered resulting in the need to negotiate sections of the main road that do not benefit from a footpath, or any substantive verge. This can expose the walker to hazards from vehicular traffic and in addition, presents a significant hazard for the young or less mobile walker.
- 7.11 The Wyche Way long-distance path connects Offa's Dyke with the Cotswold Way covering a distance of 80 miles (129 km) from Kington to Broadway. In the Pyons Group area the route passes through the northern part of the parish, running from just north of Ledgemoor, through King's Pyon and Bush Bank before climbing up to Westhope Hill then towards Bodenham.
- 7.12 At Bush Bank, the Wyche Way crosses the A4110 approximately 70m south of the Bush Bank Public House. Unfortunately, the lack of a separated footpath along the main road will probably deter any walkers using this Public House as a rest stop, reducing local economic benefits to the community.
- 7.13 As part of the Group Parish's environment, these footpaths and bridleways provide an important cultural benefit for the community. They also have the potential to provide an economic benefit, for example through tourism.
- 7.14 Of the respondents to the consultation in March 2020, (all age groups), 33% indicated that they used the local roads for cycling, either on a regular basis or occasionally. However, there were comments that they found cycling in the area hazardous due to the narrowness and condition of local lanes, the amount of traffic, and lack of passing places. Of those that did not cycle, 65% also mentioned the same reasons as why they did not take part in such activity. Respondents (cyclist and non-cyclists) suggested that cycling as an activity could be improved by:
- Putting pressure on the local authority to improve the condition of the roads;
 - Mounting road safety programmes and awareness campaigns;
 - Using signage (ie 'beware of cyclists') to increase the awareness of drivers; and
 - Ensuring that new dwellings in the community include storage space for cycles
- 7.15 The respondents to the consultation clearly indicated that walking as a form of exercise played an important role in the lives of the respondents (only three respondents, all in the over 65 age bracket indicated that they did not go walking). Walking is therefore a very popular activity. Several respondents raised concerns over access to footpaths commenting on paths being obstructed by crops, electric fences, cultivation right up to the edge of fields etc. Several also commented on the desire to have stiles replaced by gates, reflecting on the issue of mobility in an ageing population. In addition, the level of traffic on the side lanes was also given as a safety concern. This reflects the similar comments made by those who cycled.
- 7.16 The Parish Council would support the provision of a pavement from Canon Pyon to the primary school, as suggested in responses to the consultation. This would be attractive not only to those with children at the school, but would also help open up

some longer circular walking routes, as well as connecting dwellings north of the parish hall, and those around the school with the rest of the village.

Walking and Cycling Actions

- 7.17 There were a number of common themes from the questionnaire that the Parish Council will progress as actions to improve access to PRow. These are to:
1. Carry out a survey of footpaths and bridleways in the Group's area in order to identify missing signs, stiles, gates etc. This is in order to identify a plan of action to address any shortcomings;
 2. Liaise with local landowners to ensure that footpaths are kept clear, for example ensuring that paths are not blocked by crops, stock fence/electric fences, cultivation up to the edge of the field etc;
 3. Improve access by adopting a programme of replacing stiles with gates where practicable. In this, it would be recommended that this programme radiates outwards from the five main centres of population;
 4. Encourage more walkers through publicity; maps, guides, better signage, waymarking, and information on places of interest and local history;
 5. Investigate the extension of the pedestrian footpath from the village hall to the school;
 6. Provide more publicity material to encourage walkers from outside the Group Parish and support local tourism; and
 7. Promote use of bridleways for cycling and improve accessibility to public transport for longer journeys if suitable interchange facilities are available.



Hill Road, Westhope



Westhope Hill Byway

- 7.18 The NPPF supports sustainable transport alternatives, recognising the health benefits of increased walking and cycling, and the contribution both can make to improved air quality and reduced carbon emissions. Paragraph 104 sets out that *'transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed; ... and c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued.'* Paragraph 106 goes on to say, *'planning policies should: d) provide for attractive and well-designed walking and*

cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans).’

- 7.19 Core Strategy Policy SS4 - Movement and transportation advises that ‘*where practicable, development proposals should be accessible by and facilitate a genuine choice of modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.*’ Policy MT1 – Traffic management, highway safety and promoting active travel goes to say that development proposals should demonstrate that the local highway network can absorb the traffic impacts without adversely affecting the safe and efficient flow of traffic or that traffic impacts can be managed to acceptable levels and promote and incorporate integrated transport connections and supporting infrastructure including access by means other than private motorised transport.
- 7.20 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) came into force in April 2010 and allows local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area, to help fund infrastructure. In areas where CIL has been adopted, a proportion of the funds raised is provided to the Parish Council to fund local infrastructure projects. Community Infrastructure Levy is on hold in Herefordshire, but there may be opportunities in the future to use CIL to support local infrastructure improvements.
- 7.21 Review NDP Policy PG3: Improving Accessibility for All requires development proposals to support sustainable transport alternatives and to promote walking and cycling and use of public transport wherever possible. The Policy also encourages developments to provide charging points in recognition of the increasing use of electric or hybrid cars and electric bikes as part of measures to move towards a zero carbon economy by 2050 - see Section 11 Responding to Climate Change and Promoting Sustainable and Resilient Development.

Policy PG3: Improving Accessibility for All

Development proposals should be located and designed to provide improved accessibility for all, and to reduce reliance on private cars. Schemes will be supported where they:

1. Demonstrate connectivity to the network of footpaths and other PRow across the Group Parish and, wherever feasible, support improvements to routes linking the development site to local services and facilities;
2. Are located, wherever possible, within reasonable walking distance of bus routes and services, and where developments are not within reasonable walking distance of public transport, provide measures that encourage interchange for cyclists;
3. Do not have any detrimental impacts on highway safety. Measures such as traffic calming, improved signage, and awareness raising of different user groups on the highway, including walkers, horse riders and cyclists, will be encouraged.

Developers may be required to support improvements in local infrastructure through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), once adopted by Herefordshire Council. Such improvements could include, for example,

enhancements to public footpaths, provision of safer on-road and new off-road cycling routes, and a footpath or off-road walking and cycling route linking the primary school to the settlement of Canon Pyon.

Developments should also include safe and secure cycle storage and charging points to facilitate charging of electric cycles, and support interchange facilities and amenities.

Other Infrastructure

- 7.21 The Group Parish has limited utilities, with no mains gas, and a somewhat patchy mobile phone coverage. The lack of mains gas increases dependency on more expensive electricity, oil and solid fuels for heating, cooking and power. Few houses in the community have solar panels. Electricity supplies are also of a low grade, using overhead cables which are vulnerable to outages during bad weather. NDP Review Policies in Section 11 Responding to Climate Change and Promoting Sustainable and Resilient Development address the need to provide more sustainable and resilient alternatives to carbon heavy heating and power in new development.
- 7.22 As part of the NDP Review process, the NDP Steering Group contacted Welsh Water about waste water capacity in the area. Welsh Water advised that they recently supported two windfall developments through the planning process within Canon Pyon at 'Land south of Meadow Drive' (10 units) and 'Land opposite Watling Close' (10 units). They also previously supported three of the made Neighbourhood Development Plan allocations via the planning process, namely 'Land west of Patrick Orchard – Site A' (27 units), 'Land at Watling Meadow – Site B' (25 units) and 'Land at Yeomans Depot – Site C' (10 units).
- 7.23 Welsh Water went on to advise that there is currently limited capacity available at the Canon Pyon WwTW. Therefore, any further developments will be assessed on a case by case basis. There is no scheme planned at the WwTW within the current Capital Investment Programme (AMP7 – 2020-2025). With regard to phosphates, the Canon Pyon WwTW does not currently have a phosphorous consent. Welsh Water are part of the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) group, along with other stakeholders including Herefordshire Council, Environment Agency and Natural England and via this forum Welsh Water have advised that as part of the National Environmental Programme (NEP), they are undertaking phosphorous removal at 11 Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) that discharge to the Wye or Lugg, including at Leominster.
- 7.24 In the Site Assessment Report, AECOM noted (paragraph 5.7) that *'the Parish Council has expressed significant concern over the capacity of existing infrastructure to support new development as it is believed that even current levels of development have pushed some infrastructure over capacity. To address this it is advised that the neighbourhood plan revision could include policies that require new development proposals in the new Neighbourhood Development Plan and any unimplemented allocations from the made Neighbourhood Development Plan to only come forward when the capacity of sewage works and drainage and any other infrastructure has*

been sufficiently upgraded to a) support new development and b) service new housing developments that has already come forward.'

- 7.25 Core Strategy Policy SD4 - Waste water treatment and river water quality sets out that *'development should not undermine the achievement of water quality targets for rivers within the county, in particular through the treatment of wastewater.'*
- 7.26 NDP Review Policy PG4: Waste water and Sewerage addresses the particular local issues related to managing waste water in Pyons Group.

Policy PG4: Waste water and Sewerage

New development proposals will be assessed on a case-by-case basis in relation to waste water management and drainage.

New development in Canon Pyon and King's Pyon which rely on the Waste water Treatment Works will only be supported where the capacity of existing sewage works and any other drainage is sufficient, or where the WwTW have been sufficiently upgraded to a) support new development and b) service new housing developments that have already come forward.

Where connection to the wastewater infrastructure network is not practical, alternative foul drainage will be required in accordance with Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031 Policy SD4 - Wastewater treatment and river water quality.

River Lugg Catchment and Nutrient Neutrality

- 7.27 Pyons Group Parish lies within the River Lugg catchment. On the western and northern edges of the neighbourhood area, water drainage is via the Stretford Brook and Honeylake Brook which join the River Arrow at Ivington, to the north of the Group Parish. The River Arrow then flows into the River Lugg near Stoke Prior, to the south of Leominster. However, most of the Group's area is drained by Wellington Brook and its tributaries, flowing through the neighbouring Parish of Wellington to the east and joining the River Lugg near Marden.
- 7.28 Both the Wye and Lugg are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and the Wye and part of the Lugg are a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), recognised as being of international importance for the aquatic flora and fauna they support. Phosphate levels in the River Lugg exceed water quality objectives such that it is in an unfavourable condition. The high level of protection afforded to the SAC and case law mean that there is only limited scope for approving development in the River Lugg catchment which could lead to additional damaging effects by increasing phosphate levels.
- 7.29 The relevant strategic policy is Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SD4 Wastewater treatment and river water quality. This requires that development does not undermine the achievement of water quality targets for the County's rivers, particularly through the treatment of wastewater. Herefordshire Council has issued guidance for

developers seeking to provide nutrient neutral developments. The Interim Phosphate Delivery Plan Stage 1 report¹⁴ provides guidance on calculating the phosphate budget for new development, using a Phosphate Budget Calculator Tool¹⁵. The Interim Phosphate Delivery Plan Stage 2¹⁶ report provides a range of potential mitigation options which may be used by developers to achieve nutrient neutrality for new housing developments. Regular position statements are provided on Herefordshire Council's website to update applicants for planning permission on the requirements to demonstrate nutrient neutrality and the options available¹⁷. Policy SD4 also supports delivery of Water Framework Directive objectives, together with Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SD3 Sustainable water management and water resources.

- 7.30 Policy PG5 provides wording to help ensure development will not have an adverse effect on the conservation objectives of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and species of European importance.

Policy PG5: River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Proposals for development must demonstrate that they protect, conserve and enhance the natural environment in accordance with the principles in Local Plan Core Strategy policies SD3, SD4, LD1, LD2 and LD3 or their replacements. This includes the following requirements:

1. The development would not have an adverse effect on the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and species of European importance. In particular, planning permission will only be granted if clear and convincing evidence is provided which shows that the proposed development would not increase nutrient inputs to the SAC. This could include through the delivery of mitigation measures to make a proposal nutrient neutral; and
2. Reference should be made to Herefordshire Council's Phosphate calculator and associated guidance.

¹⁴ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/23965/interim-phosphate-delivery-plan-stage-1-report>

¹⁵ Phosphate budget calculator <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/2039/development-in-the-river-lugg-catchment>

¹⁶ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/2222/river-lugg-catchment-development---archive-documents>

¹⁷ Latest updates and guidance for development in the River Lugg catchment - June 2022: <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/2039/development-in-the-river-lugg-catchment>

8.0 Protecting the Natural Environment and Local Character



Black Hall Farm, King's Pyon

Landscape Character and Wildlife

- 8.1 Pyons Group has a distinctive rural character. The neighbourhood area lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 100 Herefordshire Lowlands¹⁸. This area is described as:

'Largely tranquil and rural in character but does include the larger settlements of Hereford and Leominster. There are small dispersed settlements of hamlets and villages, many of which contain older buildings with the local vernacular of black-and-white timber-framed buildings. Restored cider barns with characteristic double doors and historic farmsteads are also common.'

The landscape is gently undulating with steep-sided cornstone hills in the central area dominated by ancient woodland of ash and field maple or oak and bracken. Woodland within the area is a significant landscape feature, typically on the hill tops and valley sides. Many of these woodlands are actively managed (commercially) to produce quality timber. The NCA is an important area for commercial agricultural supported by the fertile and high-grade agricultural soils; the farming is mixed arable and livestock. Traditional orchards are still to be found, though suffering decline, with new orchards and dwarf varieties of trees also common. The area is also important for commercial production of soft fruit under polytunnels, supplying much of the UK.'

- 8.2 The Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance 2004, updated 2009¹⁹, provides more detailed descriptions of local landscape types. Pyons Group includes the following landscape types: wooded

¹⁸ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4827527503675392?category=587130>

¹⁹ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2069/landscape_character_assessment_for_herefordshire.pdf

estatelands, wet pasture meadows, ancient border farmlands and principal timbered farmlands.

8.3 The Group Parish also includes a number of important habitats for wildlife with a SSSI at Wellington Wood and 12 Special Wildlife Sites. Overall the land use²⁰ of Pyons Group comprises:

- Built up Area: 1%
- Traditional Orchard: 1%
- Bush Orchard: 8%
- Woodland: 9%
- Agricultural/Other: 81% (i.e. all the rest).

8.4 In the March 2020 public consultation there was very strong support for maintaining biodiversity and habitats in the community and protecting the rural character. There was also strong concern expressed over increased light pollution, both current and any increase that any new builds would bring. This concern was also reflected in support for reducing, or controlling, external security and flood lighting.

8.5 The responses also showed support for the concept of biodiversity off-set being kept within the community, as well as requiring developers to plant trees and hedgerows as compensation for any habitat loss. A desire for additional tree planting throughout the community was also expressed, as well as the wilding of green space to improve habitat.

8.6 The Pyons Group Environment and Ecology Report 2020²¹ provides a detailed overview of the environmental and ecological issues affecting the Pyons Group of Parishes. It was prepared to inform the NDP Review and forms part of the evidence base. Key issues considered in relation to the natural environment include:

- Light pollution and impacts on wildlife;
- Noise pollution;
- Watercourses and drainage;
- Designated wildlife sites in the parish (SSSI and LWS); and
- Habitats including grasslands, woodland, traditional orchards and hedgerows.

8.7 The report includes a number of key actions to support wildlife, some of which have been brought forward into NDP Review Policy PG5. These key actions are:

Key Actions to tackle light pollution:

- Ensure that future developments do not extend light pollution in overall area or intensity.
- Protect areas that provide habitat or foraging areas for nocturnal species.
- Encourage parish residents to control domestic light pollution, for example by:
 - Drawing curtains and blinds during the hours of darkness.
 - Minimising external lighting including using movement activated lighting in order to reduce unnecessary light.
 - Only using the amount of light that is necessary.

²⁰ See Magic <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

²¹ Pyons Group Environment and Ecology Report, Pyons Group Parish Council, 2020 <https://pyongroup.co.uk/neighbourhood-development-plan-review/>

Key Actions for woodlands and trees:

- Conduct local surveys to identify high value trees and add them to the audit of natural assets.
- Catalogue trees of historic value in order to add them to the cultural records of the parish. In King's Pyon the Wellingtonia below the church is a tree of historic importance having been planted for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. There is another historic tree in Ledgemoor and one on Westhope Common.
- Ensure that ancient woodlands and trees listed in the biodiversity audit are protected from development.
- Where trees are not ancient in nature and permission is granted to remove them as part of a development, they should be replaced at a ratio of three new trees of suitable local native species for each tree felled.
- Future tree planting and woodland creation should focus on screening, expanding and connecting existing ancient woodland sites.
- Seek management of important Ancient Woodland sites through development mitigation, particularly where there are public rights of way.
- Seek protection of high value and established ornamental trees including arboretum.

Key Actions for traditional orchards are:

- Identify where traditional orchards have been removed within the Parish (to be identified from old maps and aerial imagery) with a view towards restoring the historic landscape.
- Protect/encourage maintenance on land where orchards enhance habitat connectivity, particularly linking woodland and other orchard sites.
- Explore the possibility for fruit collection on a small scale commercial or cooperative basis.

Key Actions for hedgerows are:

Development should be subject to the following actions:

- Further scrutiny of aerial imagery to assess hedgerow condition, identification of significant in-field and hedgerow trees, farm ponds etc. Identify priority areas for field surveys.
- There should be a presumption to protect and retain all hedgerows within development proposals particularly species rich and ancient hedgerows as defined in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Where hedgerows are destroyed as part of a development, they should be replaced at a ratio of 1:1.5 using native species.
- New hedgerows need to consist of at least 5 different species native to the locality.
- New hedgerows should be suitably protected with appropriate aftercare to ensure establishment.
- To help mitigate the loss of habitat.

- Where gaps have occurred in local hedgerows landowners should be encouraged to replant with local native species.
- New hedgerows should be planted in the following areas (in order of priority):
- Within the curtilage of the development area, including being used as screening or,
- where hedgerows have been historically removed within the Parish (to be identified from old maps and aerial imagery) with a view towards restoring historic landscape and field patterns or,
- on land where hedgerows will enhance habitat connectivity in the countryside, particularly linking ancient woodland sites by creating wildlife corridors or,
- where further benefits can be realised e.g. where strategic planting may reduce erosion and overland flow of water and protect water courses including filtering pollutants.

Key actions for local wildlife are:

- The Parish should obtain a species data record from the Herefordshire Biological Records Centre in order to provide a baseline record for the parish.
- Local wildlife sites should be surveyed in order to confirm their current status and condition.
- A community wide wildlife survey should be undertaken in order to provide a more up to date snapshot of the area, including filling in gaps between the formal surveys. This would also encourage community engagement.
- All development should be supported by an independent ecological survey. This survey should be checked against local records.
- Any offset for the loss of wildlife habitat should be sympathetic and proportionate to that loss. In addition, the offset should be within the community.

- 8.8 The NPPF promotes well designed places and paragraph 126 advises that *'The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.'* Paragraph 127 goes on to say *'Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers.'*
- 8.9 Core Strategy Policy LD1 – Landscape and townscape sets out that *'development proposals should demonstrate that character of the landscape and townscape has positively influenced the design, scale, nature and site selection, protection and enhancement of the setting of settlements and designated areas'* as well as incorporating new landscape schemes and their management to ensure development integrates appropriately into its surroundings and to maintain and to extend tree cover. Policy LD2 - Biodiversity and geodiversity advises that *'Development proposals should conserve, restore and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity assets of Herefordshire.'*

- 8.10 Review NDP Policies PG6 and PG7 build on the design policies from the previous NDP and provide more detail in terms of local context and character, to help ensure new development protects and enhances the natural environment, is sensitive to built character and is of high design quality.

Policy PG6: Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Development proposals should demonstrate a high standard of design which responds positively to the local context as described in the National Character Area 100 Herefordshire Lowlands, relevant local landscape types in the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment SPG 2004 (updated in 2009), and the local character descriptions of the settlements and wider rural area as set out in the character descriptions in the NDP Review (see Appendix 3).

Schemes should protect and enhance the distinctive local landscape character and wildlife of Pyons Group by incorporating the following design principles in landscaping schemes wherever possible:

1. Light Pollution

Light pollution should be minimised to protect dark skies and local wildlife. Developments should seek to minimise light pollution in terms of either the extent of the lit area or the intensity and luminosity. Low level lighting and reduced times for night lighting will be encouraged on subsidiary residential streets within the built up area. Security lighting should have movement detectors. Lighting schemes should be avoided altogether in natural or semi natural areas that provide habitats or foraging areas for nocturnal species.

2. Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

Mature trees and hedgerows should be retained, and traditional native species should be used in new hedgerow and tree planting schemes. Tree planting and woodland creation should focus on screening, expanding and connecting existing ancient woodland sites. High value and established ornamental trees should be protected.

3. Traditional Orchards

Traditional orchards should be retained and where possible restored using traditional local varieties.

4. Local Landscape Features

Other important local landscape features such as ponds, watercourses, grasslands and hay meadows should be protected and enhanced. Ponds and watercourses should be re-naturalised wherever possible.

As a principle, there should be a measurable net gain enhancement of biodiversity assets. A biodiversity net gain should be achieved within the development site wherever possible through measures 1-4 above. Otherwise, where this is not feasible or practicable, local off-site habitat management will be sought to provide an overall benefit.

Built Character and Heritage



Barn conversion, Westhope

- 8.11 Pyons Group does not include any conservation areas, but there are 53 listed buildings in the Group Parish. Most are Grade II but the Church of St Lawrence and Church of St Mary are both Grade I, and Grade II* buildings include Black Hall and the Gatehouse near Butthouse. There is also a Scheduled Monument at Motte Castle 150m northeast of Butthouse. The Group Parish also includes a registered park and garden at Foxley (border) and 6 unregistered parks and gardens. See Appendices 1 and 2 for more detail.
- 8.12 The previous NDP included design criteria in the housing policies for each of the settlements in the neighbourhood area and a general design policy, PG9: Design Criteria for Housing and Sites. The NDP Review provides an opportunity to provide a greater level of detail about local character to help ensure new development responds positively to its context and is sensitive to the relevant settlement's pattern, density and layout, height, scale and use of traditional materials and detailing.
- 8.13 The local character of each of the 5 main settlements and the wider rural area is described in Appendix 3.
- 8.14 The NDP does not seek to stifle high quality contemporary designs and the Parish Council will support designs which are resource and energy efficient in line with climate change and sustainable development objectives (see Section 11). However, it is important that contemporary designs are integrated successfully into the local context, through the use of appropriate scale, layout and use of appropriate detailing and materials; this will help to ensure the attractive rural character of the area is protected and enhanced wherever possible.

Policy PG7: Protecting and Enhancing Built Character

Development proposals should respond positively to the local context and protect and enhance the built character of the surrounding area. In particular schemes should:

1. Be of an appropriate density, scale and height and not dominate the existing street scene and neighbouring buildings;
2. Incorporate traditional local materials and detailing in innovative and interesting ways so that designs respond positively to the local vernacular but avoid pastiche and poor and unnecessary reproduction of older styles; and
3. Not adversely affect the significance of any heritage assets, including their setting.

Proposals for extensions should be proportionate to the existing building, subservient in scale, and respond positively to local built character.

In addition, proposals should, where relevant, address the following detailed design criteria for each of the following settlements and the wider rural area:

Canon Pyon

4. In Canon Pyon developments should respect the form and layout of the settlement and aspirations to develop a village hub;
5. Building lines should be set back from the pavement or street frontage, behind front gardens or green spaces; and
6. Use of local materials is encouraged including rendered concrete block and Herefordshire red brick and slate or clay tiled roofs.

Westhope

7. In Westhope designs should complement the existing village character by retaining the informal layout of low-density development set in large garden plots;
8. Building lines should follow those of neighbouring buildings which are generally set back from the road frontage with front gardens;
9. Development should not result in the loss of the small front gardens and green spaces that contribute to the unique character of the village; and
10. Use of local materials is encouraged including traditional timber frames, local stone, Herefordshire brick or rendered brick construction with Welsh slate or clay tile roofs and timber windows and doors.

Bush Bank (that part in the Pyons Group of Parishes)

11. In Bush Bank development should reflect the existing very low density of the settlement;

12. Buildings should be well spaced with generous garden areas and set back from the road;
13. Trees and hedges should be retained and used in landscaping and boundary treatments; and
14. Use of local materials is encouraged including Herefordshire red brick or rendered brick and slate roofs and timber frames with rendered in-fill.

King's Pyon

15. In King's Pyon development should reflect the existing low density and dispersed character of buildings;
16. Residential development should include garden areas and retain and enhance local landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows; and
17. Use of local materials is encouraged including timber frames with stone or rubble plastered infill, dressed stone, Herefordshire brick and slate roofs.

Ledgemoor

18. In Ledgemoor development should respond to the existing very low density and residential properties should be set in large gardens;
19. Buildings should be set back from the roads;
20. Existing mature trees and hedgerows should be protected and used in landscaping and boundary schemes; and
21. Use of local materials is encouraged including traditional timber frames, local stone, and more modern brick or rendered brick construction with slate or clay tile roofs.

Wider Rural Area

22. In the wider rural area development will be much more limited. Sensitive conversion of former agricultural buildings for new business and residential uses is supported, provided that designs are sensitive to the existing character and use traditional local materials and detailing wherever possible.

9.0 The Local Economy



Brook House, King's Pyon

Introduction and Background

- 9.1 Agriculture dominates the local economy. It is estimated that approximately 81% of the land within Pyons Group's area is used for agriculture; a mix of arable, soft-fruit and livestock, including some dairy. In addition, there is some poultry (eggs and meat). Using Natural England's land classification system most of the land within Pyons Group is classed as Grade 1 or Grade 2 (Excellent/Very Good quality). The majority of farmers in the Group belong to Stewardship schemes.
- 9.2 It is estimated that some 8% of Pyons Group consists of commercial "bush" orchards, a significant proportion of this supporting cider production. Although some woodlands, which make up approximately 9% of land use, are used commercially, this is not at a significant scale. This sector is supported by a small number of agricultural suppliers, such as L Evans and the Canon Pyon Grain Store, contractors, and specialist consultancies and services.
- 9.3 Whilst there are a small number of B&B and holiday letting businesses within the Group, tourism does not represent a significant employer. Otherwise, the leisure industry in the area is represented by its two pubs, both of which also serve food. The pub in Canon Pyon also runs a small café. Although the Wyche Way LDP passes through Pyons Group, its route does not pass by any of the local hostelries; the route crosses the A4110 approximately 70m south of the Bush Bank Inn, but with no connecting pavement, this inhibits walkers visiting this Public House.



The Nags Head Pub, Canon Pyon

- 9.4 Throughout Pyons Group there are micro-businesses based primarily on services. These include agriculture, horticulture, and technical consultancies. In addition, there are a number of small artisan and other skills-based businesses, including sole-trader and self-employed.
- 9.5 The number of people employed locally within Pyons Group is not believed significant; the majority of those of working age typically commute to nearby centres of employment such as Hereford or Leominster. The exception in terms of scale are the seasonal workers working in some of the arable and fruit farms during the growing and harvest seasons, the majority of these coming from outside the UK.
- 9.6 The former NDP did not include many policies relating to the local economy. Former Policy PG1: Development Strategy set out that *'limited small scale employment opportunities ... will continue to be supported both inside and outside the parish's four villages where they have no adverse effect upon amenity and the environment, especially the landscape and biodiversity.'* The NDP Review provides an opportunity to consider issues such as the rural economy and tourism in more detail.

Rural Enterprise and Tourism

- 9.7 The informal consultation in March 2020 included a section on agriculture with three main areas suggested for residents to consider:
- Small-scale commercial enterprises on farms (diversity);
 - Conversion of redundant farm buildings;
 - Polytunnels.
- 9.8 In the case of small-scale enterprises on local farms there was strong support (from 68% of respondents) to encourage this form of diversification. A majority of respondents also supported the conversion of derelict farm building for housing. However, several respondents voiced concern over the potential for increased traffic, noise and other pollution. It was recommended that the NDP includes a policy of encouraging small-scale enterprises on local farms, as well as barn conversions

through the planning process, taking into consideration the potential impact on the local community.

- 9.9 The Report set out that in terms of responses, Tourism did not attract much attention in the consultation questionnaire; 20 responses out of 51. Of these, half were negative, citing issues such as traffic and poor infrastructure (roads, public transport) as reasons why tourism would not be a viable prospect. The other half ranged from continuing with the current mix of B&B and holiday lets, to more positive comments. These comments ranged from ideas such as promoting camping including glamping, having craft-based workshops to attract visitors, and advertising the area with promotional material.
- 9.10 Given the lack of a strong response it was recommended that the NDP includes a policy of supporting tourism on an as and when basis through the planning process. This should take into consideration issues such as the potential impact on traffic, and on other residents.
- 9.11 NPPF paragraph 84 sets out that *'Planning policies and decisions should enable: a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.'*
- 9.12 Core Strategy Policy RA5 – Re-use of rural buildings supports *'the sustainable re-use of individual and groups of redundant or disused buildings, including farmsteads in rural areas, which will make a positive contribution to rural businesses and enterprise and support the local economy'* subject to criteria. Policy RA6 - Rural economy advises that *'A range of economic activities will be supported, including proposals which: promote sustainable tourism proposals of an appropriate scale in accordance with Policy E4 - Tourism'*. Policy E4 Tourism sets out that *'the tourist industry will be supported by a number of measures including: (amongst other things) 2. the development of sustainable tourism opportunities, capitalising on assets such as the county's landscape, rivers, other waterways and attractive rural settlements, where there is no detrimental impact on the county's varied natural and heritage assets or on the overall character and quality of the environment. Particular regard will be had to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty in the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; 3. retaining and enhancing existing, and encouraging new, accommodation and attractions throughout the county, which will help to diversify the tourist provision, extend the tourist season and increase the number of visitors staying overnight.'*
- 9.13 Review NDP Policy PG8: Rural Enterprise and Tourism supports proposals for sustainable tourism and rural enterprise provided that local criteria are met.

Policy PG8: Rural Enterprise and Tourism

Proposals for rural diversification schemes will be supported where they strengthen the local economy by providing small-scale business accommodation appropriate to the rural area. Schemes which strengthen the local tourism and hospitality industry by providing overnight

accommodation, and/or food and drink establishments also will be encouraged in the Group Parish.

All such proposals should:

1. Include the sensitive conversion and re-use of traditional agricultural buildings in the wider rural area, or comprise small scale new development or the conversion of existing buildings within the identified settlement boundaries in accordance with Policy PG1: Development Strategy;
2. Not lead to a detrimental impact on the local road network in terms of additional vehicular traffic; and
3. Not have an unacceptable adverse impact on local residential amenity.

Polytunnels

- 9.14 The use of polytunnels offers significant advantages for food production. Their use can lead to less use of fungicides, insecticides and other chemicals, as well as creating a more controlled growing environment, along with cutting food miles by reducing the need to import out of season crops; factors that have wider benefits in managing the impact of climate change.
- 9.15 In response to the informal consultation in March 2020, just over 20% of respondents stated their opposition to polytunnels, principally due to their visual impact. Some 60% indicated support for polytunnels, albeit that this was qualified by being subject to careful siting and with full consideration given to neighbours, with the remainder preferring small-scale projects. A suggested policy on polytunnels was set out in Appendix 1 to Annex A of the questionnaire.
- 9.16 Other concerns are related to increased levels of noise from machinery, the use of artificial lighting, and generally increased disturbance and disruption. Polytunnels can have adverse impacts on biodiversity and the natural environment through loss of habitat. In order to manage the use of polytunnels each application will be considered on an individual basis taking into consideration its merits, as well as the views of local residents.
- 9.17 NDP Review Policy PG9: Polytunnels has been prepared building on the Polytunnels Planning Guide, June 2018 prepared by Herefordshire Council²². This notes that there is a continued increase in the use of polytunnels for agricultural soft fruit production in the county and that the planning guide was prepared to help with planning applications and decisions.
- 9.18 Policy PG9 applies to polytunnels of significant size which require planning consent for commercial growing, and which have a substantial degree of permanence and are physically secured to the ground. The Policy does not apply to small scale proposals for domestic use.

²² see https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory_record/5602/polytunnels_planning_guide_2018

Policy PG9: Polytunnels

The benefits of polytunnels to agriculture and food production in terms of crop protection, the ability to grow a wider variety of crops and for extended periods, and some protection against pests and diseases are recognised.

Proposals will be supported where the following issues are considered and effectively addressed:

1. The proposal and any supporting infrastructure, are of a suitable scale and size and do not have an unacceptable impact on the character of the landscape;
2. Adverse visual impacts are minimised through careful siting and effective landscaping and screening;
3. The proposal does not exacerbate flood risk, and protects local watercourse from pollution;
4. Habitats and biodiversity are protected and appropriate measures are taken to avoid any habitat loss and to provide a biodiversity net gain such as through enhancement of existing hedgerows and planting of new hedging and trees in boundary treatments;
5. Existing rights of way are protected; and
6. Suitable measures are taken to mitigate potential nuisance and any adverse impacts on local residential amenity including from noise, artificial lighting and traffic.

10.0 Community Facilities and Local Green Space



Village Hall, Canon Pyon



Mission Chapel, Ledgemoor

Introduction and Background

- 10.1 Local community facilities in Pyons Group are concentrated in Canon Pyon. The settlement has a shop and post office (Canon Pyon Stores), a parish hall, and a playing field with facilities for football, cricket and tennis, a BMX track and a children's play area. There is also a public house, The Nag's Head. The village primary school (Canon Pyon Church of England Academy) lies to the north of the village, directly on the A4110 and attracts pupils from surrounding villages and beyond, as well as local children. The Church of St Lawrence is located to the west, sited away from the centre of the village.
- 10.2 There is a small, corrugated iron mission church in Westhope, which was built in 1888. Regular Sunday services are still held there and it also now serves as a community room for meetings and social activities. Bush Bank has a public house - the Bush Inn. There are no community facilities at King's Pyon. Ledgemoor has a stone mission church and a club room for community meetings.



Ledgemoor Club Room

- 10.3 The previous NDP set out an approach to concentrate development and community facilities in a village hub or centre in Canon Pyon:

'Development of the 'Village Hub' will include commercial community facilities such as a Café and Youth Club, for instance, both of which would need to be financially sustainable within the Parish. Facilities are to be made available for the young and to make provision for the establishment of more organised activities such as Cub and Guide troops. Establishing family oriented facilities within the 'Hub' is to be a major consideration in the community development; this will also help improve links with the Church.'

- 10.4 In addition the NDP included an area of safeguarded land for a new primary school to enable the existing school to be relocated to a more accessible site, closer to the built up area of the village (former Policy PG4).

- 10.5 Former Policy PG2: Integrated Community Facilities in Canon Pyon set out that *'Community facilities which are particularly encouraged include a café/youth club building and other facilities for children and younger people, family oriented facilities, a new primary school, improvements to the playing fields and a water catchment/wildlife pond that will also act as a sustainable drainage system close to Wellington Brook.'*

- 10.6 None of these proposals have been provided to date. The re-formed Playing Field Committee is making improvements to the Playing Fields using monies raised from fund raising and grants.

Community Facilities



Canon Pyon Stores

- 10.7 NPPF paragraph 93 advises that *' To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.'* In addition, the importance of open spaces and recreation facilities are recognised. Paragraph 98 goes on to say, *'Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of*

communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.'

- 10.8 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SC1 – Social and community facilities advises that *'Development proposals which protect, retain or enhance existing social and community infrastructure or ensure that new facilities are available as locally as possible will be supported. Such proposals should be in or close to settlements, have considered the potential for co-location of facilities and where possible be safely accessible by foot, by cycle and public transport.'* The Policy goes on to say that existing facilities will be retained, unless certain circumstances can be demonstrated.



Church of St Lawrence, Canon Pyon



Westhope Church

- 10.9 The approach in Review NDP Policy PG10: Community Facilities is to identify and protect existing community facilities in line with Core Strategy Policy SC1 - Social and community facilities.

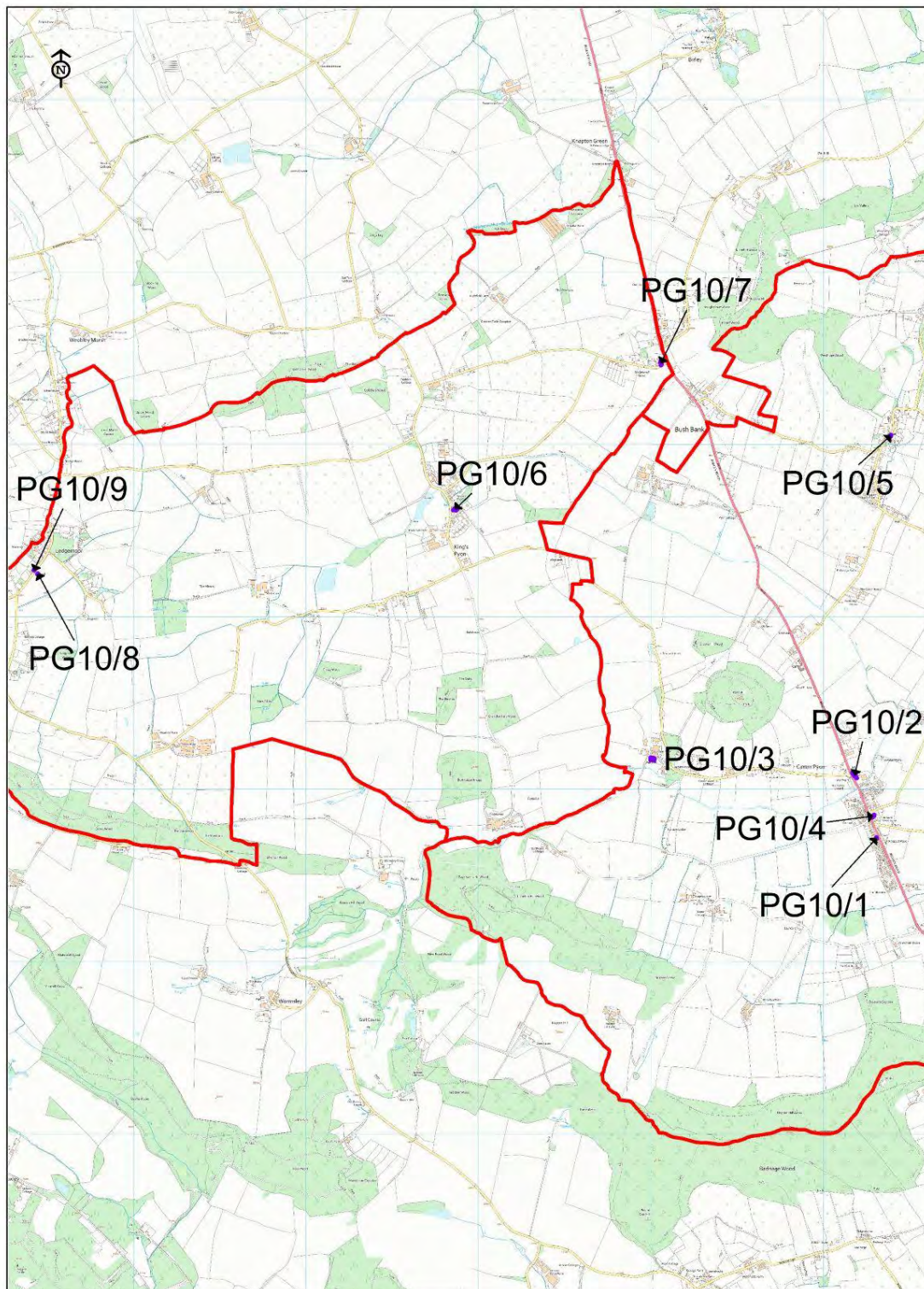
Policy PG10: Community Facilities

The following local facilities in the Group Parish are identified as existing community and recreational facilities on Map 7 and the NDP Review Policies Maps.

These facilities will be retained wherever possible, in accordance with Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SC1 - Social and community facilities:

1. Canon Pyon Stores
2. Parish Hall, Canon Pyon
3. Church of St Lawrence
4. The Nag's Head Public House, Canon Pyon
5. St Francis' Church / Meeting Room, Westhope
6. Church of St Marys, King's Pyon
7. The Bush Inn Public House, Bush Bank
8. The Club Room, Ledgemoor
9. The Mission Chapel, Ledgemoor

Map 7: Community Facilities



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Safeguarded Land for the Proposed Relocation of the Primary School

- 10.10 NDP Review Policy PG10 carries forward the previous Policy PG4: Safeguarding Land For Potential Primary School. The Policy seeks to protect a site that is considered most suitable for a new primary school and supports the approach to strengthen the village hub. It remains the aspiration of the landowners that the site by the hall is developed for new school. Canon Pyon Primary school is located outside of the village and does not have safe pedestrian access from the village, which is where a significant number of pupils currently live. The recent major housing schemes in the village are likely to lead to additional local pupils from Canon Pyon, exacerbating existing transport pressures.
- 10.11 Relocating to a site within the village will afford easier access for a significant number of pupils and in turn provide better access to the playing field used by the school, provided a safe crossing facility is put in place. This site offers significant advantages in terms of proximity to many facilities and the village footpath network.
- 10.12 The AECOM Site Assessment Report concluded that '*site PGNP01 [the school site] is potentially suitable for both residential and educational development, subject to constraints in relation to flooding, utilities and heritage being resolved or mitigated, and would be appropriate for allocation subject to confirmation of land availability.*'
- 10.13 The site is included within the settlement boundary on the NDP Review Policies Map - Canon Pyon (Map 2). Existing commitments and recent developments mean that the indicative housing target has been met and significantly exceeded and therefore there is no need to support further significant housing on this site, although a small-scale scheme may be appropriate to support the viability of a new school. However, a number of issues will need to be resolved that might affect whether, and if so how, and when, a proposal might be brought forward on this site. A decision to proceed has not yet been taken by the relevant bodies but it has been indicated that it may be made during the plan period.
- 10.14 Furthermore there may not be sufficient capacity of the Waste water Treatment Works without further investment and early discussions should be undertaken with Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru. Part of the site falls within the area at risk of flooding, although much of the site lies within Flood Zone 1. A flood risk assessment will be needed to determine the most appropriate location for any buildings in accordance with Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SD3. In addition, a location at the western part of the school site should enable an appropriate distance to be maintained between the school and the Waste water Treatment Works, subject to discussions with Herefordshire Council and Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru.

Policy PG11: Safeguarded Land for Proposed Relocation of Canon Pyon Church of England Academy Primary School

Land amounting to 2.47 hectares to the north of the village and adjacent to the brownfield site and the village hall, as shown on Map 2 NDP Review Policies Map - Canon Pyon, is identified as the preferred site for the relocation of Canon Pyon Primary School and is safeguarded for future educational use. To support the viability of a new school, the site could also accommodate a small scale housing development (up to 2 houses).

Development would be subject to resolving or mitigating constraints in relation to flooding, utilities and heritage.

Planning permission will not be granted for any permanent development upon this site which would prejudice the potential of this land to accommodate a new primary school at a future date, unless an alternative site has been identified that meets this need or the need is no longer considered necessary.

Community Aspirations for 'Added Value'

- 10.15 The following community aspirations for 'Added Value' have been carried forward from the 'added value requirements' identified in the former NDP. This list set out the priorities for projects which could be brought forward through CIL and other developer contributions where thresholds are met, but other funding may also be secured by local bodies including the Parish Council to support projects as development is likely to be limited. The list has been reviewed and updated by the NDP Steering Group.

Projects will be encouraged to support existing community facilities and local services to facilitate the consolidation of a village centre / hub. The following proposed local community facilities and projects will be encouraged:

- A new primary school;
- A café/youth club building and other facilities for children and younger people;
- Family oriented facilities;
- Improved health and leisure facilities / playing field / village hall;
- Improvements to the playing fields and a water catchment/wildlife pond that will also act as a sustainable drainage system close to Wellington Brook;
- A traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing in the community hub;
- Bus shelters on both sides of the road in the hub;
- Improved pedestrian and cycle access to the school and throughout Canon Pyon village;
- Installation of speed indicators;
- Secure cycle parking and charging points at Community Facilities; and
- Allotments.

Local Green Space

- 10.16 Two areas of land were protected as Local Green Space in the former NDP. Both are carried forward into the NDP Review.

- 10.17 Local Green Space is a relatively new designation. NDPs and Local Plans can identify Local Green Space for protection, provided they meet the criteria set out in the NPPF. Paragraph 102 sets out that ' *The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:*

a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.'

10.18 The first Local Green Space in Canon Pyon is the Recreational Playing Field. This area meets the above criteria in the NPPF because:

- a) It is located in the village centre, close to the Parish Hall and is accessible to local residential areas. It is also used by the village school.
- b) It has a recreational value as a playing field with pitches for football and cricket, tennis courts, a BMX track and a children's play area.
- c) It is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. The boundary has been amended in the NDP Review to reflect the correct extent of the playing field.

10.19 The second Local Green Space is the area known as Parish Council Land at Westhope. This area meets the above criteria in the NPPF because:

- a) The site is located close to the village community of Westhope. The land was acquired from the Church Commissioners in the 1870s, and is maintained by the local community on behalf of the parish.
- b) Once partly a quarry, the Local Green Space is now a largely wooded area and is a haven for wildlife. It is crossed by ancient lanes and trackways and is open to public access.
- c) The area extends over about 6.5 acres but is not considered to comprise an extensive tract of land.

10.20 The third Local Green Space in Canon Pyon is a new area adjacent to Pyons Close which is in the process of being adopted by the Parish Council. This area meets the above criteria in the NPPF because:

- a) It is located in the village centre, close to the Parish Hall and is accessible to local residents.
- b) It is used by the community for open air meetings and events and therefore has recreational value.
- c) It is a small site bounded by fencing and newly planted hedgerows and therefore is local in character and due to flood risk, is not suitable for development.

Policy PG12: Local Green Space

The following are designated as Local Green Spaces:

1. Recreational Playing Field, Canon Pyon
2. Parish Council Land at Westhope
3. Open space north of Pyons Close, Canon Pyon

These are shown on Map 2 NDP Review Policies Map - Canon Pyon and Map 3 NDP Review Policies Map – Westhope.

The NPPF advises that proposals to develop local green space will be considered in relation to green belt policy. This establishes a presumption against development in order to protect the landscape character and openness of these areas. Development is only allowed in very special circumstances. This means that these areas will be retained as local green space unless there are special circumstances to allow development or it is considered as appropriate ancillary development, which does not reduce the openness or character of the green space.

Proposals for the Playing Field at Canon Pyon which enable it to be used more effectively for recreational use will be supported, provided there is no significant adverse effect on residential amenity or biodiversity. Opportunities to enhance the biodiversity value of the site should be taken where possible, in particular along Wellington Brook.

Development of the Parish Council Land at Westhope which would result in the loss of the area's biodiversity value will not be permitted. Proposals which enhance the area's biodiversity or improve public access will be encouraged.

Local Green Space 1. Recreational Playing Field, Canon Pyon



Local Green Space 2. Parish Council Land at Westhope



Local Green Space 3. Land north of Pyons Close in Canon Pyon



11.0 Responding to Climate Change and Promoting Sustainable and Resilient Development



A4110 Knapton Bridge – February 2014



A4110 Canon Pyon – February 2020



Mill Road, Canon Pyon - October 2019



Mill Road, Kinford – February 2020

Introduction and Background

- 11.1 The NDP Review has been prepared during a time of unprecedented, extraordinary and rapid change, locally and globally. There is increased awareness of the climate emergency and the need for Plans to promote more sustainable development which minimises resource consumption and carbon emissions and is climate resilient. The Group Parish's natural environment and biodiversity are under pressure, with development, intensification of land use and climate change all contributing to loss of habitats and species. Climate change is leading to more frequent, extreme weather events such as storms, flooding and periods of high temperatures and drought.
- 11.2 During 2019 Pyons Group experienced a prolonged spell of dry, warm weather from April to early June, followed by storms and heavy rainfall in late June to July. In the winter of 2019 - 20 there were three significant flooding events in October, December and February.²³ This flooding affected a number of properties and businesses throughout the Group, with a handful of dwellings still being unoccupied as late as

²³ Flooding, both surface and fluvial is a persistent issue within the Group, especially in the built-up areas of Canon Pyon and King's Pyon.

August 2020. More detailed information is provided in the report 'Flooding in Canon Pyon', which was agreed by the Parish Council on 1st Sept 2020.

- 11.3 In addition the Covid-19 Pandemic had a significant impact on local residents in terms of health, wellbeing, employment and access to services and facilities. The Pandemic and its consequences have led to new ways of thinking about our homes, working and leisure environments and how we use them.
- 11.4 The previous Pyons Group NDP did not include a specific policy on climate change and resource efficiency, but former Policy PG9: Design Criteria for housing and sites required 'the maximum possible reduction in the carbon footprint of any development' as well as various other more detailed requirements including consideration of building orientation, energy and water conservation, cycle and recycling storage and inclusion of renewable energy technologies. In addition, the planting of trees to provide shade and shelter, and use of SuDS was included in the Policy. As the Policy was focussed on housing, the criteria did not apply to other forms of development.
- 11.5 The former NDP was prepared long before the Covid-19 Crisis and so was silent on this issue.

Tackling Climate Change and Promoting Sustainability

- 11.6 In response to international climate change objectives and the need to promote low carbon technologies, improved security of supply, and greater energy efficiency in the UK, it is likely that proposals for renewable energy schemes will continue to come forward over the next plan period. In addition, there is an increased urgency to promote low carbon technologies in new development and to maximise energy and resource efficiency. There is also a need to encourage the use of these technologies in existing properties.
- 11.7 Many properties in Pyons Group rely on oil and propane gas for heating, and many older properties do not have the benefit of double glazing. As with many other rural communities, there is no provision of mains gas. In addition, the spatial distribution of dwellings makes any networked infrastructure more expensive, harder to maintain, challenge network capacity, and in the case of electricity, more vulnerable to disruption during bad weather due to reliance on overhead cables. In addition, the age of many buildings can significantly reduce choice of energy and make modernising expensive.
- 11.8 The Government's Committee on Climate Change has published a number of reports²⁴, including 'Net Zero – The UK's contribution to stopping global warming', May 2019, which recommends a new emissions target for the UK: net-zero greenhouse gases by 2050. Chapter 5: Reaching net-zero emissions in the UK, sets out various recommendations, including for Heating in Buildings. In terms of Heating, currently less than 5% of energy used for heating homes and buildings comes from low-carbon sources. The report advises that to meet '*Further ambition options*' (as required to help meet the 2050 target), there would need to be a '*roll-out of technologies such as heat pumps, hybrid heat pumps and district heating in conjunction with hydrogen, and new smart storage heating, combined with high levels of energy efficiency. New homes should not be connected to the gas grid from 2025.*

²⁴ See <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publicationtype/0-report/01-net-zero-reports/>

By 2035 almost all replacement heating systems for existing homes must be low-carbon or ready for hydrogen.' (Note - there is no mains gas in the Group.)

- 11.9 The public consultation in March 2020 included questions about renewable energy and energy saving. The Report of the consultation set out that there was very low support in the community for large scale solar farms, although smaller scale carefully sited installations had some (albeit limited) support. Domestic use of solar panels has strong support, including this approach being part of any new build. There was also strong support for group buying and information schemes for both renewables, and energy saving schemes. This included information on grants and other financial support. In addition, there were concerns about flooding events, which have increased in frequency and other risks associated with extreme weather, such as storm damage. Such events have led to power cuts and blocked roads.
- 11.10 The Report recommended that in terms of addressing climate change, development proposals (including those where planning permission is required for renovations or conversions) should take into consideration the effects of climate change. In particular, planning proposals should take measures to support effective and sustainable drainage and in addition not exacerbate the conditions at known flooding hotspots.
- 11.11 In summary:
- The design of new developments should encompass energy saving and renewable technology, use sustainable materials and be appropriate to the rural character.
 - Due to the lack of support it would be recommended that the building of large-scale solar farms within Pyons Group is not supported.
 - As a principle, the installation of solar panels on new-builds, and as retro-fits to existing buildings should be encouraged, subject to planning regulations.
 - Given the indicated support, the possibility of group buying schemes for renewables and energy saving, as well as the provision of information is explored.
- 11.12 The NPPF recognises the role that planning can make towards tackling climate change. Paragraph 152 sets out that *'The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.'* Paragraph 156 goes on to advise that *'Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.'*
- 11.13 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SD1 – Sustainable design and energy efficiency sets out that *'Development proposals should create safe, sustainable, well integrated environments for all members of the community.'* The Policy goes on to say that development proposals, should, amongst other things, *'utilise physical sustainability measures that include, in particular, orientation of buildings, the provision of water conservation measures, storage for bicycles and waste including*

provision for recycling, and enabling renewable energy and energy conservation infrastructure; and where possible, onsite renewable energy generation should also be incorporated.' Policy SD2 – Renewable and low carbon energy generation advises that *'development proposals that seek to deliver renewable and low carbon energy will be supported'* where they meet various criteria.

- 11.14 Review NDP Policy PG13: Promoting Sustainable Design and Resilience sets out local criteria for ensuring new development is as energy and resource efficient as possible and promotes the use of low carbon technologies for heating and power. It is recognised that following the COVID-19 pandemic, there will be changes in work patterns, including an increase in home-working. Moreover, with an ageing population, it is also recognised that within the time-span of home occupancy, there will be a need to adapt properties to meet the changing needs of the occupants.
- 11.15 This Policy builds on the previous NDP Policy PG9: Design Criteria for Housing and Sites.

Policy PG13: Promoting Sustainable Design and Resilience

All development proposals should be designed to maximise energy and resource efficiency and to minimise carbon emissions both during the construction phase and over the lifetime of the building.

In addition, developments should incorporate principles of flexibility and adaptability so that buildings and spaces are capable of meeting occupiers' changing needs over their lifetimes. In particular, residential developments are encouraged wherever possible to:

1. Be designed to be climate resilient and to incorporate solutions which provide good natural lighting, ventilation and temperature regulation to keep occupiers cool and comfortable during extended periods of high summer temperatures, and warm and dry during extreme colder and wetter weather events;
2. Orientate and site buildings within sites to maximise energy efficiency and consider opportunities from trees, landform and any on site infrastructure to provide shelter from prevailing winds and shade;
3. Have provision for some form of private outside space, such as a garden, patio or balcony large enough to provide a seating area;
4. Include internal living space which is capable of accommodating indoor exercise and physical activity;
5. Support homeworking through provision of suitable office space or flexible live / work areas.
6. Provide access to broadband and mobile communication technologies;
7. Include measures which maximise water efficiency, such as recycling of grey water, and where practicable incorporate green and blue roofs and sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water and reduce flood risk;

8. Use low or zero carbon technologies including solar panels, heat pumps and biomass boilers as alternatives to oil and gas heating and connections to the National Grid for electricity supplies;
9. Take opportunities for energy supply from on-site, decentralised renewable or low carbon energy systems; and
10. Provide suitable secure storage space for recycling containers and bicycles.
11. Be capable of supporting recharging points for electric vehicles.

Community Energy Schemes

11.16 Small scale community led renewable energy schemes can help to improve security of energy supply and often provide an income stream to support other community projects. Community energy projects have an emphasis on local engagement, local leadership and control and the local community benefiting collectively from the outcomes. Examples of community energy projects include:

- Community-owned renewable electricity installations such as solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, wind turbines or hydroelectric generation;
- Members of the community jointly switching to a renewable heat source such as a heat pump or biomass boiler;
- A community group supporting energy saving measures such as the installation of cavity wall or solid wall insulation;
- Working in partnership with the local Distribution Network Operator (DNO) to pilot smart technologies (although these often rely on mobile phone signals which are unreliable in some areas of the Group Parish);
- Collective purchasing of heating oil and LPG for off grid communities;
- Collective switching of electricity suppliers.²⁵

11.17 Some of the above projects are not related to the use and development of land and buildings and so fall outside the control of the planning system.

11.18 NDP Review Policy PG14: Community Energy Schemes supports suitable community led low carbon energy schemes in Pyons Group, subject to avoiding adverse impacts on local biodiversity and landscape character. The Policy resists large scale solar farms in line with the objections to such schemes in the informal consultation in March 2020.

Policy PG14: Community Energy Schemes and Solar Farms

Small scale community-led renewable energy schemes will be supported in Pyons Group Parish, where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the local landscape character and biodiversity and any adverse impacts are avoided or mitigated by siting, design and landscaping.

²⁵ See Community Energy and What is Community Energy? A guide aimed at local groups who are interested in setting up a community energy project.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-energy#what-is-community-energy>

Proposals for large scale commercially led renewable energy schemes will be supported within the Parish only where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the local landscape character and biodiversity.

Community Resilience

- 11.19 Whilst there was no specific question included in the consultation in March 2020, the issue of community resilience was a subject that was frequently mentioned in responses.
- 11.20 Concerns included flooding, heavy snowfall, power outages and storm damage during adverse weather events. In addition, the coronavirus pandemic as well as the risks to the community from animal diseases, for example avian influenza and foot and mouth also need to be considered.²⁶ Moreover, recently when these events have occurred, recovery from them has often relied on self-help and the informal efforts of members of the community.
- 11.21 The Community Resilience Development Framework published by HMG states that “community resilience is enabled when the public are empowered to harness local resources and expertise to help themselves and their community to:
- Prepare, respond and recover from disruptive challenges in a way that complements the activity of Category 1 and 2 emergency responders (i.e. blue light, government and local government agencies);
 - Plan and adapt to long term social and environmental changes to ensure their future prosperity and resilience.”
- 11.22 The promotion of community resilience is part of the government’s National Security Strategy. This strategy promotes a “whole society” approach with responsibility for developing community resilience passed to local government bodies under Section 4 of the Civil Contingencies Act (2004). Local government is responsible for providing a framework, which is normally exercised through Local Resilience Forums. The approach depends on the expertise of the emergency services as well as national and local government (described as Category 1 and 2 Emergency Responders) including government agencies and support from the third sector. At a more local level, this strategy cascades down to relying on support from the informal networks based on businesses, communities including community, voluntary, and social groups, as well as individual members of the public.
- 11.23 With events such as COVID-19 (and extreme weather) likely to continue and increase in frequency, existing informal social networks would benefit from a greater level of support from the Parish Council. However, it is also accepted that the resources available to the Parish Council are very limited. Notwithstanding this, resilience can be improved by providing information to businesses, residents and organisations within Pyons Group, as well as helping to facilitate their activities. The

²⁶ When such events occur, they can lead to areas, including public rights of way being closed and areas quarantined.

key advantages of this approach are to help mitigate the impact of high-impact events, as well as aid a faster recovery, minimising any personal or economic impact.

- 11.24 As a first step, it is recommended that Pyons Group develops a top-level Risk Register. This is in order to help identify and quantify the types of potential risks that could affect the Group, and to inform decision makers. This should be followed by a Group wide Community Resilience Plan. This plan should be produced in cooperation with the local authority and community organisations. Taking into consideration the very limited resources available to the Parish Council, this report should focus informing and enabling local businesses, organisations and residents.
- 11.25 The following Community Resilience Actions have been prepared to help develop and improve community resilience within Pyons Group. This is in order to help mitigate the effect of high impact events and aid faster recovery.

Community Resilience Actions

The Parish Council will promote community resilience by:

1. Compiling a top-level register of potential risks within the Groups' area as they relate to community resilience.
 2. Produce a Community Resilience Plan based on providing information to emergency responders, local businesses, organisations and residents.
 3. Provide a liaison resource with the local authority and other Category 1 and 2 emergency responders.
 4. Help to facilitate the work of local community organisations.
- 11.26 Resilience is "the capacity to recover quickly". Community resilience is the sustained ability of a community to use available resources (energy, communication, transportation, food, etc) to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations (e.g. economic collapse, adverse natural events, to global catastrophic risks).
- 11.27 As Pyons Group has very few resources, any strategy will have to be based on supporting self-help, mutual neighbourly support and community spirit. There is also the issue of liability. If Pyons Group were to take on the responsibility for taking any positive/organising action it could also be held responsible. Therefore, any strategy should be based on approaches that enable the community to take action, not a detailed list of who and what to do. It has to be flexible, and broad based and whilst learning from the past, should not be a "how to deal with past events" - yesterday's foot and mouth is today's coronavirus and tomorrow is an unknown.
- 11.28 The "Plan" must be both simple to implement and to maintain, aimed at supporting and facilitating the initiative of individuals. It has to be advertised and accessible to all residents.

Community Website

- 11.29 In addition the responses to the March 2020 consultation indicated strong local support for the concept of a community website (91% of those who commented), albeit several respondents indicated that this should not be in competition with the

Pyonear community magazine. There was also a comment about who would actually manage and maintain the site.

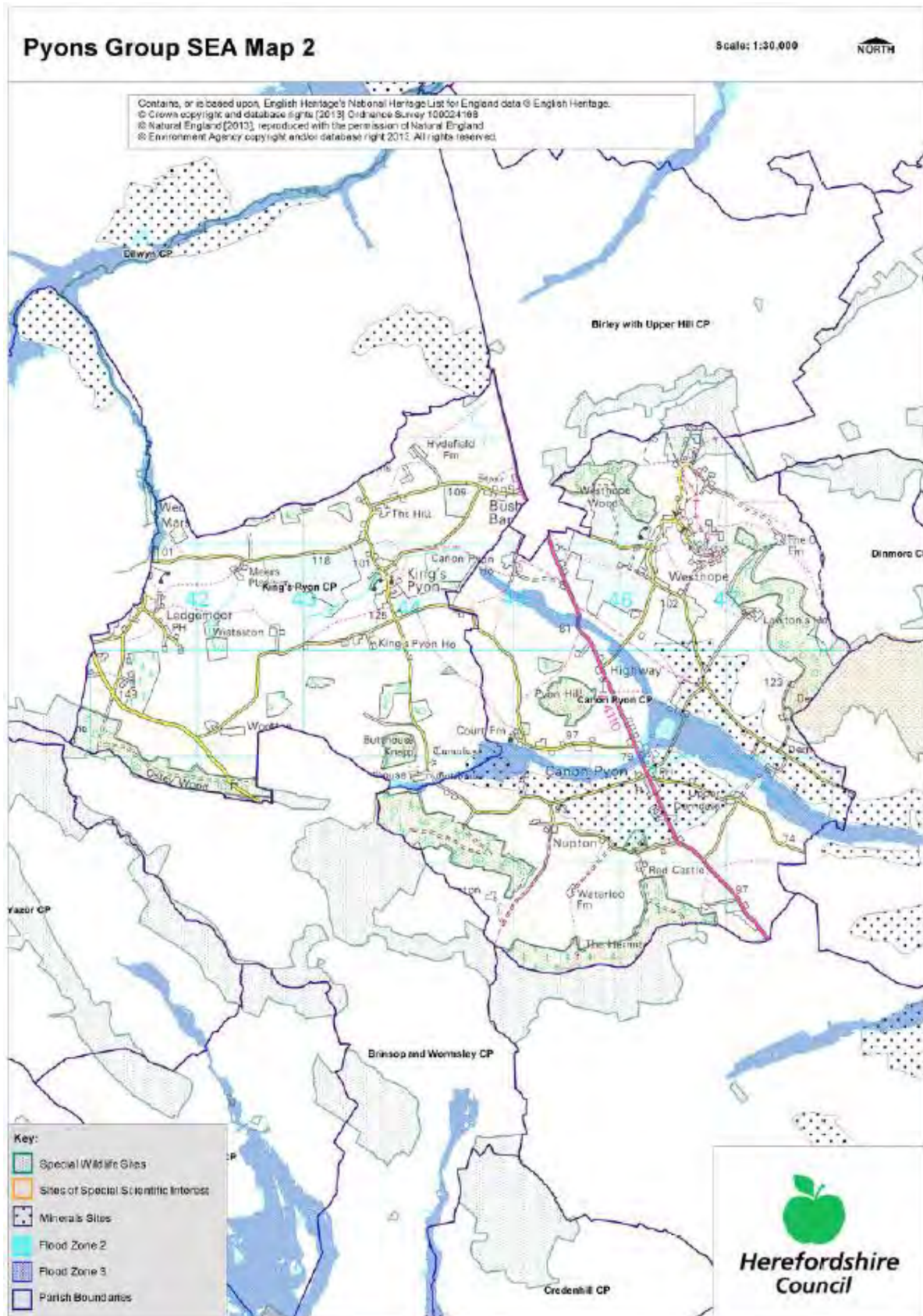
- 11.30 Whilst there was strong support for the concept of a community website, the comments that this should not be in competition with the Pyonear should be noted. It was recommended that the concept of a community website is explored with the aim of acting as a portal for local organisations and businesses. In addition, the site could be used for wider community information. Also some respondents made reference to having a community social media site. However, this would require a higher level of maintenance than a website acting as a portal or depository of community information.

12.0 Next Steps

- 12.1 Herefordshire Council will check the Review NDP and publish it for a further 6 weeks formal public consultation.
- 12.2 The Review Plan will then progress to examination and, subject to the examiner's recommendations, a local referendum.

Appendix 1 - Pyons Group SEA Maps (Extracts from Environmental Report, Pyons Group Neighbourhood Area, March 2017)





Natural Heritage Assets in the Pyons Group Parish

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

There is 1 Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Wellington Wood.

Special Wildlife Sites (SWS)

There are 12 Special Wildlife Sites (SWS):

- Land at Knapton Green (border);
- Pool near Black Hall;
- Weobley Marsh Common (border);
- Field near Weobley Marsh Common;
- Butthouse Knapp;
- Woods converging on Burton Hill;
- Woodlands & Golf Course around Nupton Hill;
- Westhope Hill and surrounding woodlands;
- Wellington Wood and adjoining woodland;
- Woodland near Hope Under Dinmore (border);
- Pyon Hill; and
- Red Castle Marsh Wood.

Ancient Woodlands

The area also has 10 ancient woodlands:

- Chadnor Hill Wood;
- Upper Marsh Covert;
- Garnstone Wood;
- Butthouse Knapp;
- Shernall Wood (border);
- Baynhams Hill Wood;
- Great Wood;
- Badnage Wood;
- Wellington Wood; and
- Westhope Wood.

Appendix 2 - Listed Buildings

See Historic England website - <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Canon Pyon (Parish)

CHURCH OF ST LAWRENCE

List Entry Number: 1081974, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: I, Location: CHURCH OF ST LAWRENCE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

POUND ABOUT 120 YARDS EAST SOUTH EAST OF THE CHURCH OF ST LAWRENCE

List Entry Number: 1081975, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: POUND ABOUT 120 YARDS EAST SOUTH EAST OF THE CHURCH OF ST LAWRENCE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

DERNDALE AND ATTACHED OUTBUILDINGS

List Entry Number: 1081976, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: DERNDALE AND ATTACHED OUTBUILDINGS, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN AND FORMER COACH HOUSE ABOUT 45 YARDS NORTH-WEST OF DERNDALE

List Entry Number: 1081977, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN AND FORMER COACH HOUSE ABOUT 45 YARDS NORTH-WEST OF DERNDALE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN, HOPROOMS AND COWHOUSE ABOUT 50 YARDS NORTH OF DERNDALE

List Entry Number: 1081978, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN, HOPROOMS AND COWHOUSE ABOUT 50 YARDS NORTH OF DERNDALE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BRIDGE ABOUT 30 YARDS WEST OF DERNDALE

List Entry Number: 1081979, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BRIDGE ABOUT 30 YARDS WEST OF DERNDALE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

GATE PIERS, GATES AND STEPS ABOUT 35 YARDS SOUTH OF GREAT HOUSE

List Entry Number: 1081980, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: GATE PIERS, GATES AND STEPS ABOUT 35 YARDS SOUTH OF GREAT HOUSE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

STABLES AND HAYLOFT ABOUT 10 YARDS WEST OF KINFORD FARMHOUSE

List Entry Number: 1081981, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: STABLES AND HAYLOFT ABOUT 10 YARDS WEST OF KINFORD FARMHOUSE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN ABOUT 90 YARDS WEST NORTH WEST OF LAWTON'S HOPE

List Entry Number: 1081982, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN ABOUT 90 YARDS WEST NORTH WEST OF LAWTON'S HOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

WEST VIEW

List Entry Number: 1081983, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: WEST VIEW, A4110, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

NUPTON COTTAGE

List Entry Number: 1081984, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: NUPTON COTTAGE, NUPTON, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BIRCHES KNOLL

List Entry Number: 1081985, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BIRCHES KNOLL, WESTHOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

LOWER HOUSE

List Entry Number: 1081986, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: LOWER HOUSE, WESTHOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN AND STABLES ABOUT 25 YARDS SOUTH EAST OF UPPER HOUSE

List Entry Number: 1081987, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN AND STABLES ABOUT 25 YARDS SOUTH EAST OF UPPER HOUSE, WESTHOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

SUN DIAL ABOUT 80 YARDS NORTH NORTH WEST OF GREAT HOUSE

List Entry Number: 1179889, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: SUN DIAL ABOUT 80 YARDS NORTH NORTH WEST OF GREAT HOUSE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN ABOUT 40 YARDS SOUTH OF KINFORD FARMHOUSE

List Entry Number: 1179893, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN ABOUT 40 YARDS SOUTH OF KINFORD FARMHOUSE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

LAWTON'S HOPE

List Entry Number: 1179896, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: LAWTON'S HOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN ABOUT 15 YARDS NORTH-EAST OF THE COTTAGE

List Entry Number: 1179915, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN ABOUT 15 YARDS NORTH-EAST OF THE COTTAGE, A4110, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN ABOUT 15 YARDS NORTH NORTH WEST OF LOWER HOUSE

List Entry Number: 1179966, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN ABOUT 15 YARDS NORTH NORTH WEST OF LOWER HOUSE, WESTHOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

UPPER HOUSE

List Entry Number: 1179967, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: UPPER HOUSE, WESTHOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

CAMELOT

List Entry Number: 1301714, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: CAMELOT, WESTHOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

CIDERHOUSE AND WALL ATTACHED TO SOUTH WEST ABOUT 30 YARDS SOUTH EAST OF GREEN PLOCK

List Entry Number: 1301717, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: CIDERHOUSE AND WALL ATTACHED TO SOUTH WEST ABOUT 30 YARDS SOUTH EAST OF GREEN PLOCK, WESTHOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

GREAT HOUSE AND FLANKING WALLS ATTACHED TO NORTH AND SOUTH

List Entry Number: 1301736, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: GREAT HOUSE AND FLANKING WALLS ATTACHED TO NORTH AND SOUTH, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

COWHOUSE, STABLES AND GRANARY ABOUT 50 YARDS NORTH OF LAWTON'S HOPE

List Entry Number: 1301743, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: COWHOUSE, STABLES AND GRANARY ABOUT 50 YARDS NORTH OF LAWTON'S HOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

HOME COTTAGE

List Entry Number: 1301747, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: HOME COTTAGE, A4110, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

THE NAG'S HEAD

List Entry Number: 1301748, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: THE NAG'S HEAD, A4110, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

KINFORD FARMHOUSE

List Entry Number: 1349794, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: KINFORD FARMHOUSE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN AND ATTACHED STORE ABOUT 30 YARDS NORTH-WEST OF SHIRE GLAT FARMHOUSE

List Entry Number: 1349795, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN AND ATTACHED STORE ABOUT 30 YARDS NORTH-WEST OF SHIRE GLAT FARMHOUSE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

THE COTTAGE

List Entry Number: 1349796, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: THE COTTAGE, A4110, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

GREEN PLOCK

List Entry Number: 1349797, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: GREEN PLOCK, WESTHOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

THE RAFTERS

List Entry Number: 1349798, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: THE RAFTERS, WESTHOPE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

Canon Pyon War Memorial

List Entry Number: 1459897, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: Junction of A4110 and Kings Road, Canon Pyon, Hereford, HR4 8PE, Canon Pyon, County of Herefordshire

King's Pyon (Parish)

WOOTTON

List Entry Number: 1081949, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: WOOTTON, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN AND ATTACHED BYRE ABOUT 150 YARDS EAST SOUTH EAST OF WOOTTON

List Entry Number: 1081950, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN AND ATTACHED BYRE ABOUT 150 YARDS EAST SOUTH EAST OF WOOTTON, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BROOK HOUSE AND ATTACHED GARDEN WALLS, RAILINGS, GATES AND BRIDGE

List Entry Number: 1081988, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BROOK HOUSE AND ATTACHED GARDEN WALLS, RAILINGS, GATES AND BRIDGE, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BUTTHOUSE

List Entry Number: 1081989, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BUTTHOUSE, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

THE HILL AND GARDEN WALLS ATTACHED TO EAST AND WEST

List Entry Number: 1081990, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: THE HILL AND GARDEN WALLS ATTACHED TO EAST AND WEST, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

STOCKS TREE COTTAGE

List Entry Number: 1081991, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: STOCKS TREE COTTAGE, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

BARN ABOUT 60 METRES EAST NORTH EAST OF CHURCH OF ST MARY

List Entry Number: 1111810, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: BARN ABOUT 60 METRES EAST NORTH EAST OF CHURCH OF ST MARY, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

CHURCH OF ST MARY

List Entry Number: 1179970, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: I, Location: CHURCH OF ST MARY, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[IVY COTTAGE](#)

List Entry Number: 1180023, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: IVY COTTAGE, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[DOWER COTTAGE](#)

List Entry Number: 1180034, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: DOWER COTTAGE, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[WHITE HOUSE](#)

List Entry Number: 1180059, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: WHITE HOUSE, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[HYDE FIELD](#)

List Entry Number: 1301665, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: HYDE FIELD, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[BLACK HALL](#)

List Entry Number: 1301676, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II*, Location: BLACK HALL, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[GRANARY AND STABLES ABOUT 20 YARDS EAST OF BLACK HALL](#)

List Entry Number: 1301680, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: GRANARY AND STABLES ABOUT 20 YARDS EAST OF BLACK HALL, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[GATEHOUSE ABOUT 25 YARDS NORTH-NORTH-WEST OF BUTTHOUSE](#)

List Entry Number: 1301690, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II*, Location: GATEHOUSE ABOUT 25 YARDS NORTH-NORTH-WEST OF BUTTHOUSE, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[CLARKE MONUMENT ABOUT 12 YARDS SOUTH OF THE SOUTH TRANSEPT OF THE CHURCH OF ST MARY](#)

List Entry Number: 1349799, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: CLARKE MONUMENT ABOUT 12 YARDS SOUTH OF THE SOUTH TRANSEPT OF THE CHURCH OF ST MARY, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[DOVECOT ABOUT 50 YARDS SOUTH EAST OF BROOK HOUSE](#)

List Entry Number: 1349800, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: DOVECOT ABOUT 50 YARDS SOUTH EAST OF BROOK HOUSE, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[GRANARY AND STABLES ABOUT 20 YARDS WEST SOUTH WEST OF BUTTHOUSE](#)

List Entry Number: 1349801, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: GRANARY AND STABLES ABOUT 20 YARDS WEST SOUTH WEST OF BUTTHOUSE, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[PUMP ABOUT 10 YARDS SOUTH OF WOOTTON](#)

List Entry Number: 1349823, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: PUMP ABOUT 10 YARDS SOUTH OF WOOTTON, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[King's Pyon War Memorial](#)

List Entry Number: 1455123, Heritage Category: Listing Grade: II, Location: Churchyard of the Church of St Mary, King's Pyon, Herefordshire, HR4 8PS, King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

[Motte castle 150m north east of Butthouse](#)

List Entry Number: 1013642, Heritage Category: Scheduling, Location: King's Pyon, County of Herefordshire

Registered and Unregistered Parks and Gardens in Pyons Group Parish

There is a registered park and garden at Foxley (border).

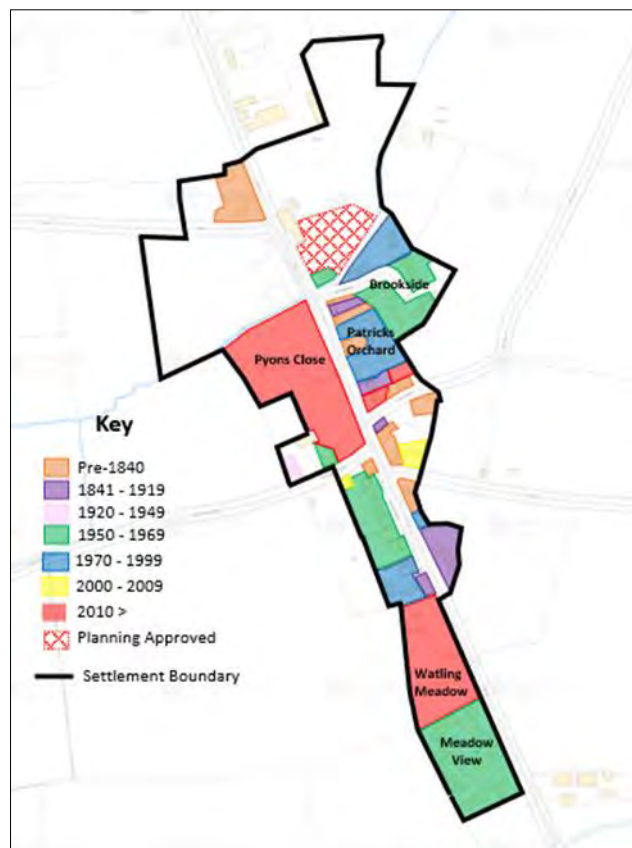
The Group Parish has 5 unregistered parks and gardens. These are:

- Wormsley Ridge (border);
- Canon Pyon House;
- The Great House, Canon Pyon;
- The Hermitage (border); and
- Dinmore Manor (border).

is now an agricultural merchants. The Nags Head Inn in the centre is still a public house. Some of the other buildings remain, whilst others have been demolished and replaced. One other notable feature is the line of the brook which in 1840 headed north-north-east after it passed under the main road. This was to help provide sufficient water to run the mill at Kinford. Today, the brook heads north-east joining Wellington Brook at Kinford.

After the 1840s the village grew slowly with a handful of new properties appearing in the late Victorian to inter-war years. Post WWII witnessed the development of the village shop and adjacent bungalows, as well as Meadow Drive to the south, and Brookside to the north-east. This was followed in the 1990s by Patricks Orchard.

This century, the village has seen the development of Watling Close and Pyons Close, as well as a small number of individual houses. The map below illustrates how the village has grown since 1840 (bordered by the Settlement Boundary).



Development in Canon Pyon – 1840 to present day

As the village has developed, housing density has increased from an estimated 17 dwellings per hectare (dph) in 1950, to an estimated 26 dph today (the two recent developments at Pyons Close and Watling Close are estimated at 30 dph).



Grade II Listed West View Cottage (circa 18th Century), Canon Pyon

The way the village has evolved has resulted in fairly wide variety of designs, matching the construction style of their time. To this can be added building conversions such as the Old Brewery, now a family home, as well as modernisation and extensions of older dwellings. The houses in Canon Pyon are predominantly two-storey or bungalows. There is a small number of listed buildings.

Early construction in the village will have included traditional timber frame with brick or stone plastered infill. From the Victorian era onwards construction focused on brick, or more recently rendered concrete block and brick. Buildings typically have slate or clay tile roofs. Most dwellings have gardens, older properties tending to have larger gardens when compared with those more recent design. In addition, most are set back from the road with front gardens, and these add to the greenery of the village. However, in the case of the more recent developments the gardens are much smaller.



Canon Pyon – Mix of building styles

On the left, a mix of Pre-Victorian, Victorian and Post WWII houses. On the right, the more recent Pyons Close Development (2017) located opposite.

Westhope

Set on the western slopes of West Hope Hill, the hamlet of Westhope is the second largest community in the Group. The community is not served by major roads, being linked via narrow rural lanes to the A4110 at Bush Bank (Westhope Lane), Highway (via Fullbridge Road), or Canon Pyon (via Lower Derndale and Mill Road). The Westhope Hill (road) leads up to Westhope Common where the metalled surfaces end. The hamlet is surrounded by woods, orchards, the majority owned by the famous cider maker Bulmers, and a mix of arable and pasture farmland. The area also includes local green space, of approximately 6.5 acres, and is owned by the parish.

Evidence of human settlement in the Westhope area dates back to the pre-historic era. On the top of West Hope Hill there is the reputed site of the settlement of Smithlee (or Smurlu), believed to have been depopulated during the Black Death, as well as evidence of medieval strip fields. In addition, on the western slope of Westhope Hill, in the area of The Cottis, was the site of a former Nunnery, reputedly dating back to the 14th C and with links to France.

To the east of Westhope is the farm of Lawton's Hope, the current buildings dating back to the 1600s. Local legend has it that Owain Glyndwr (Owen Glendower), the last Welsh Prince of Wales is buried in the woods behind the farm. However, there are several other stories linked to the final resting place of the Welsh Prince, who is believed to have died around 1415.

Today, the edges of the common, and the wooded western slopes of West Hope Hill hosts scattered dwellings, some dating back several hundred years, as well as more modern barn conversions and contemporary designs. These are connected by numerous byways and tracks.



Typical Byway – West Hope Hill

Over the centuries, the focus of settlement in Westhope has moved from West Hope Hill, down the hill to an area that today, is centred between the junctions of Westhope Hill and Chapel Lane, and Lower Derndale and Westhope Lane. Dwellings, which include several listed buildings dating back to the 17th and 18th C, are a mix of construction including stone, timber-framed with infill, with more modern houses using brick.



Lower House, Westhope (Built 1736)

Circa 1960, witnessed a more substantive development with modern brick-built houses and bungalows below the Lower Derndale and Westhope Lane road junction. Over the intervening years there have been other "infill" projects, as well as barn and cider house conversions. Bungalows have been built in Westhope and there is outline planning permission for four flat roofed dwellings at Summerlease.



Lower Derndale Road – Circa 1960 Development

Due to the hilly terrain the dwellings are more dispersed, typically detached, with most having large gardens and being set back from the road. This has allowed a low housing density, which in the central part of Westhope is estimated at 12 dph.

Apart from the Church of St Francis, there are no other built community assets in the hamlet. St Francis's is a small, corrugated iron building dating back to 1888. The former Tabernacle church is also used as a meeting room and community facility.

Bush Bank (that part in the Group Parish)

The hamlet of Bush Bank lies on the norther edge of the Group Parish and is bisected by the A4110. Only a small portion of the hamlet is within the Pyons Group, the rest of the settlement forms part of the neighbouring parish of Birley with Upper Hill. The majority of the private dwellings within the Pyons Group part of the settlement are located on either side of the C1094 running from the junction with the A4110, then westwards towards King's Pyon. This road is wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass, is unlit and does not have a separated pedestrian walkway.



Remains of Medieval Stone Cross, Bush Bank

One feature of this part of Bush Bank is the remains of a medieval stone cross set on the southern edge of the C1094.

Residential buildings are a mix two-storey detached and semi-detached houses, plus a few bungalows. Construction is predominately red-brick or rendered brick with slate roofs. In addition, there are a few older properties with timber frames with rendered in-fill. The majority of properties are well spaced, set back from the road, bordered by fields, trees and hedges and most have large gardens, adding to the rural feel of the area. This gives this part of the Group a low housing density estimated at approximately 6 dph.



Bush Bank: Properties are typically set back from the road and bordered by hedges and fields



Bush Bank: A few Older Properties are of Infilled Timber Frame Construction

King's Pyon

King's Pyon is set in a small valley with the Norman parish church, St Mary the Virgin, acting as a natural centre of the community. The village pre-dates the Norman Invasion and is mentioned in the Domesday Book.

The village is served by the C1092 and Lower Bush Road, which connects Canon Pyon (2.7 miles) and Weobley (2.5 miles), and Bush Bank. The nearest bus service, 1.4 miles distant is at Bush Bank. The roads are narrow, and although usually wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass in the main part of the village, they are predominantly single-lane. There are no separated pedestrian walkways or street lighting.



St Mary's Church, King's Pyon

Other than the church, there are no community facilities in the village. Properties in the village are in two clusters; those in the immediate vicinity and to the south of the church, and the second centred concentrated around the junction between the C1092 and Lower Bush Road. In addition, within the main area of the village are two farms, both of which include listed buildings; Black Hall Farm which dates back to at least the 15th Century, and Brook House Farm with a farm house dating back to the 18th Century.

Houses in King's Pyon are widely spread, detached or semi-detached and are predominantly two-storey, but with some bungalows. All have gardens and are interspersed with mature trees and hedgerows, areas of woodland, fields and paddocks, emphasising the rural setting. Building density is low and estimated at 12 dph.

Houses in the King's Pyon vary from the original timber frame with stone or rubble plastered infill, through Georgian, Victorian and early 20th Century dressed stone and brick with slate roofs.

Post war development in King's Pyon includes the rendered brick cul-de-sac to the south of the church which dates from the 1960s, and the small Cuckoo Pen development where modern brick-built houses have replaced much older dwellings.



An example of traditional timber frame construction where the house is built on top of a stone plinth

Traditionally, and certainly up to WWII, the majority of the older dwellings in King's Pyon will have primarily served the needs of local farm workers, or those involved in other agricultural trades. Nowadays, with the post-war increase in the number of houses and greater personal mobility, the occupations of the residents are more diverse. In addition, due to the quiet rural nature of the village, it is attractive to retirees.

Ledgemoor

The hamlet of Ledgemoor is located on the western edge of the Group Parish. It is served by the Ledgemoor Road, a rural lane that links the locality to nearby Weobley (1.3 miles), King's Pyon (1.9 miles), and Hereford (10 miles). Ledgemoor Road is a narrow, single lane in places, and does not have a separated pedestrian walkway, or street-lighting. The homes in the hamlet are in two main areas; those dwellings along Ledgemoor Road, and a secondary and more dispersed settlement, centred on the cul-de-sac serving the Marshpools public house.

The rural character of the hamlet comprises properties with gardens, interspersed with mature trees and hedgerows, areas of woodland, and fields. Moreover, many properties are set back from the roads. This character almost creates an impression of the houses being “tucked away”, emphasising the rural feel of the community.



Ledgemoor - Small cul-de-sac development (Circa 1960s)

Houses are widely spread, with an estimated density of just 15 dph and comprise a mix of detached and semi-detached properties. These are predominantly two-storey with a small number of bungalows. Their construction is a variety of traditional timber frame, stone, and more modern brick or rendered brick construction with slate or clay tile roofs. These include a few building conversions. An example of a building conversion is the former Primitive Methodist Chapel which has been converted into a family home.



The Former Primitive Methodist Chapel (Built 1856) - Ledgemoor

The age of the buildings is equally diverse, including those with origins dating back to the Tudor era, along with Georgian, Victorian, early and mid-to late 20th Century, as well as a few dwellings built post 2000.

Traditionally, the majority of dwellings will have served local farms and nearby estates; several houses in the hamlet are part of the nearby Garnstone Estate.

Wider Rural Area

The Pyons Group is approximately 6 miles north of Hereford city and 8 miles from Leominster. The area is bisected by the A4110 which runs roughly south-south-east to north-north-west through Canon Pyon and Bush Bank.

The Parish is predominantly rural with most of the land given over to agriculture including commercial orchards, and some wooded hills at Westhope and Wellington. The cone shaped Pyon Hill is wooded and has a derelict summer house at the top. There are approximately a dozen farms in the area, who have maintained a significant number of hedges and large trees, making it a picturesque landscape. The land is mainly Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land, capable of growing a wide variety of crops, as well as good grassland for beef, sheep and dairy. There are two farms with poultry units, and one dairy farm remaining in the area. There is also an area of wetland designated for conservation.

Some of the farmhouses, such as The Buttas, date back to medieval times, and The Great House in Canon Pyon is a typical Georgian mansion. There are many examples of 'black and white' timbered farm houses built as early as 1600. There is very little modern housing in the wider rural area as most of the new housing has been centred around Canon Pyon village.

