



Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011 - 2031

Regulation 14

Public Consultation Draft - May 2015

Regulation 14 Public Consultation Notice

In accordance with Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, Part 5, 14(a)-(c), notice is hereby given that a formal pre-submission **public consultation** on the **Draft Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Development Plan** will start at **9 a.m. on 26th May 2015** for a period of 6 weeks ending at **9 p.m. on 7th July 2015**.

About the Plan

The Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) has been created through listening to the views of the residents of the parish and has been developed to help deliver the local community's requirements and aspirations for the plan period up to 2031. The Plan will provide a means of guiding, promoting and enabling a balanced and sustainable change and growth within the designated area of Weston under Penyard Parish.

The Weston under Penyard Parish Council invites comments on the draft Plan. All responses received will be considered by the Steering Group and the Parish Council to produce a revised version of the Plan, which will then be submitted to Herefordshire Council, as the local planning authority, for examination by an independent examiner.

Viewing the Draft Plan

The draft Plan may be viewed at www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk or can be emailed to residents on request to info@weston-under-penyard.co.uk

Paper copies of the Plan may be borrowed from Linda Dunn, The Olde Shoppe, Weston-under-Penyard (01989 562818) or viewed in The Weston Cross Inn, Weston Village Hall, St Lawrence's Church, Penyard Gardens Community Hall.

Details of the Residents' Survey and the other information that has contributed to the creation of the Plan, can be viewed online at: www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk.

To comment on the draft Plan

To obtain the Representation Form, to be used to comment on this draft Plan, you can either:

1. Download a Representation Form from the Neighbourhood Development Plan website at www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk, or
2. Request a Form by emailing info@weston-under-penyard.co.uk.
3. Request a Form from Linda Dunn (01989 562818)

Public Event to discuss housing sites and the Neighbourhood Plan

A public event will be held at the Penyard Gardens Community Hall on **Friday June 12th 3 - 7 p.m., Saturday June 13th 10 - 3 p.m. and Sunday June 14th 11 - 3 p.m.** The Neighbourhood Plan will be available to view and Representation Forms will be available.

To return the Representation Form

Representation Forms may be

1. Posted to: The Olde Shoppe, Weston-under-Penyard, Ross-on-Wye HR9 7NX
2. Scanned and emailed to info@weston-under-penyard.co.uk or
3. Deposited in the designated boxes at:
The Weston Cross Inn
Penyard Gardens Community Hall
Weston Village Hall
St Lawrence's Church

All comments must be received by 9 p.m. on 7th July 2015.

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Section 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Purpose

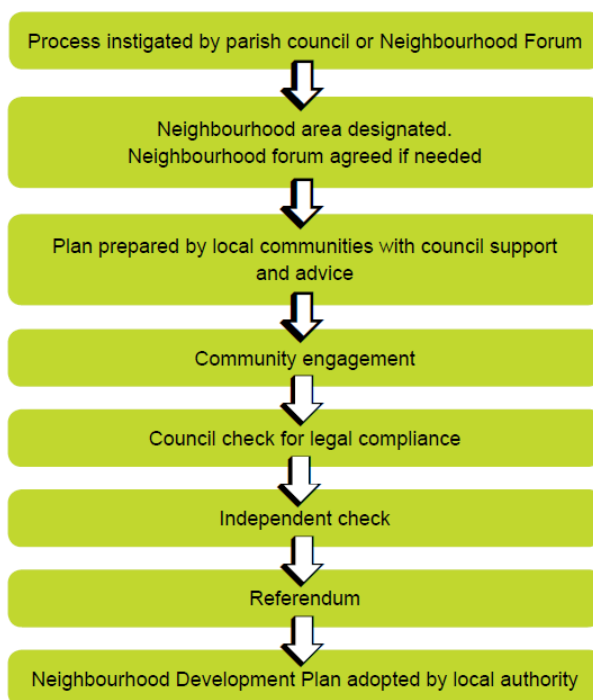
In April 2012 the Localism Act 2011¹ amended the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the Act) introducing new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development in their community by preparing a neighbourhood development plan through which general planning policies for the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area can be established.

The Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) is a new type of planning document based on the views of our local residents, businesses, services and community groups, and on the evidence of survey and statistical information concerning the wider area.

The Plan reflects the enthusiasm of residents, demonstrated throughout the Plan preparation process, for taking the opportunity to make our parish an even better place in which to live.

Once the Plan has been made, following a favourable local referendum, the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan will have force of law and, as an integral part of the Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy,² will become the starting point for deciding what development should and should not take place in the parish.

Neighbourhood Planning: process map



¹ Localism Act 2011 - Which received Royal Assent on 15th November 2011

² The Core Strategy is a key document in Herefordshire's Local Plan, which provides the strategic planning framework for the County's future development needs up to 2031. Herefordshire Council submitted the draft Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 23 September 2014. Public hearing sessions were held from 10 to 25 February 2015, as a result of which some modifications were made. A six week period of consultation was carried out on these modifications between 20 March and 1 May 2015.

1.2 The Context

Because the Neighbourhood Plan will have legal status, the Plan must:

- 1) Comply with requirements of the Localism Act,
- 2) Have appropriate regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)³
- 3) Be in general conformity with Herefordshire's Core Strategy.
- 4) Be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements
- 5) Contribute to sustainable development

The policies in this Plan take account of these requirements, in particular, that the rural settlements of the "Rural Area 1 (RA1) Ross on Wye Housing Market Area"⁴ are required by the Herefordshire Core Strategy to set a minimum housing growth target of 14% between 2011 and 2031.

This draft Plan is submitted by Weston under Penyard Parish Council, which is a "qualifying body" as defined by the Localism Act 2011. The Plan applies only to the parish of Weston under Penyard in Herefordshire.

1.3 Plan Period, Monitoring and Review

The Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Development Plan will run concurrently with the Herefordshire Council Core Strategy and apply until the 31st March 2031. It is, however, a response to the needs and aspirations of the local community as understood today and it is recognised that current challenges and concerns are likely to change over the plan period.

Weston under Penyard Parish Council, as the Neighbourhood Plan authority, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery, as described in Section 14 of the Plan.

1.4 Record of Versions

Version 1:

Draft Neighbourhood Plan issued to Parish Council for review in Parish Council Meeting 13th April 2015.

Version 2:

Revised draft Neighbourhood Plan issued to Parish Council for review in Meeting 30th April 2015.

Version 3:

For pre-submission **public consultation** on the **Draft Neighbourhood Plan under Regulation 14**

³ Issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government in March 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework is a key part of the government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible.

⁴ Part of the Core Strategy relevant to Weston under Penyard

Section 2: Process Summary

2.1 Plan Development Process

In August 2013 Weston under Penyard Parish Council resolved to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish. An application was made to Herefordshire Council who gave approval in their Neighbourhood Area Decision Document⁵ dated 7th November 2013.

The Parish Council asked for volunteers to form a Steering Group⁶, which met for the first time on 26th November 2013. The initial work of the steering group focussed on funding, branding, website creation, communications strategy and the recruitment of a large team of volunteers.

In April 2014 a series of three open days were arranged where the views and concerns of the residents were collected. From this the Steering Group developed a draft set of objectives for the Plan under these main headings:

- Sustainability and Environment
- Roads and Traffic
- Employment
- Housing
- Community Facilities and Services

2.2 Community Engagement

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community plan and must derive its objectives, actions and authority from the community. From the outset the Steering Group were determined that the residents should be kept informed and given every opportunity to tell the Steering Group what they wanted. Communication and consultation, in various forms, played a major role in formulating the Plan.

Communication

A communication strategy was established to achieve:

- Effective communication leading to better feedback and decision-making
- An improved two-way information flow to enable community participation
- An increased awareness and understanding of the neighbourhood plan, its purpose and relevance
- Non-technical, clear language which is easy to understand
- Openness, honesty and approachability with the target audience.

The strategy also defines the methods of communication:

- Website – www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk
- This provides the latest news, holds a record of all documents; Steering Group meeting minutes, notices, consultation material, feedback forms and contact details.
- Email Circular - electronic mail announcements to over 100 people who asked to be included on the Neighbourhood Plan distribution list, advising them of progress and additions to the website
- Newsletter – a report in the Weston News⁷ every month.

⁵ Available on the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

⁶ Terms of Reference and further details about the Steering Group are available on the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

⁷ An independent monthly magazine, run by volunteers, designed to keep the Parishes of Weston-under-Penyard and Hope Mansell informed of local events, services and news.

- Parish Council meetings – The Steering Group issues a monthly report to the Parish Council, which is also represented on the Steering Group. Members of the public can attend both Parish Council and Steering Group meetings.
- Consultation events and presentations – these are used to consult and to gather comment at various stages of the Plan.
- Leaflets and flyers – where necessary these are distributed to every household to advise on coming events and to raise awareness.
- Local Press - press releases in the Ross Gazette⁸ provide publicity for coming special events
- Minutes of meetings – every Steering Group meeting is recorded.
- Notice boards and posters – these are used to advertise events and meetings.

Surveys, Consultations and Workshops

To obtain detailed information on the community's views and concerns, a Residents' Questionnaire⁹ was drawn up containing 44 questions covering the above five Objectives. In August 2014, 37 volunteers visited all 454 households in the parish to discuss the neighbourhood plan and deliver 769 Residents' Questionnaire to residents aged 16 and over.

The volunteers then revisited the households to collect a total of 556 completed questionnaires, giving a response rate of 72% of those delivered. Based on the 2011 census data of 880 adults, 63% of residents in the parish returned a questionnaire.

Three more questionnaires,¹⁰ each of a specific nature, were also distributed as required, with the following numbers of responses being received:

- 27 Housing Needs questionnaires
- 29 Business questionnaires
- 40 Land Availability questionnaires

Public consultations¹¹ were held at strategic times, each over a series of days:

- June 2014 Launch Weekend - to raise awareness, seek views and concerns and to recruit volunteers
- December 2014 Questionnaire Survey Results - to present the results and seek further feedback
- May 2015 Housing Sites Assessment and Selection - to present the recommendations and seek comment and approval

All consultation events were publicised by leaflet drop to every home, local posters, announcements in the Ross Gazette and Weston News, the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Planning website and by email circulars.

2.3 Housing Sites Selection

During March 2015 an independent planning consultant from Data Orchard CIC carried out an assessment of the viability of the sites offered by owners or agents for possible development during the Plan period. The conclusions and the policies arising are provided in Section 8 of the Plan. The full report is available on the Neighbourhood Plan website:- www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk.

⁸ *The Ross Gazette* is an independent family-owned weekly newspaper published on Wednesdays

⁹ See the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

¹⁰ See the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

¹¹ See the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

2.4 Evidence Base Overview

The analysis, objectives and proposals in this Neighbourhood Plan have drawn on a variety of sources:

- Data on population, employment, housing, etc. was obtained largely from the Office of National Statistics;¹²
- General parish information was sourced from the Rural Community Profile for Weston under Penyard Parish (ACRE October 2013).¹³
- Landscape information was obtained from the Housing Site Assessment¹⁴ and the Strategic Environmental Assessment¹⁵ report prepared by Herefordshire Council;
- Flood risk data was obtained from the Strategic Environmental Assessment report prepared by Herefordshire Council.

Various local evidence throughout the Plan is quoted from the 2014 Questionnaire Survey¹⁶ comprising a Residents' Survey, a Housing Survey and Business Survey. More detailed information on this extensive evidence base, including reports on the village consultations and workshops, can be found in the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan documents on the Neighbourhood Plan website:-

www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

¹² The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the UK's largest independent producer of official statistics and is the recognised national statistical institute for the UK. It is responsible for collecting and publishing statistics related to the economy, population and society at national, regional and local levels. It also conducts the census in England and Wales every ten years.

¹³ This report was commissioned by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) and the Rural Community Councils from Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI), www.ocsi.co.uk

¹⁴ Prepared by Data Orchard. See the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

¹⁵ Strategic Environment Assessment. Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Area. Scoping Report, October 2014

¹⁶ See the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

Section 3: Weston under Penyard - Our Parish

Introduction

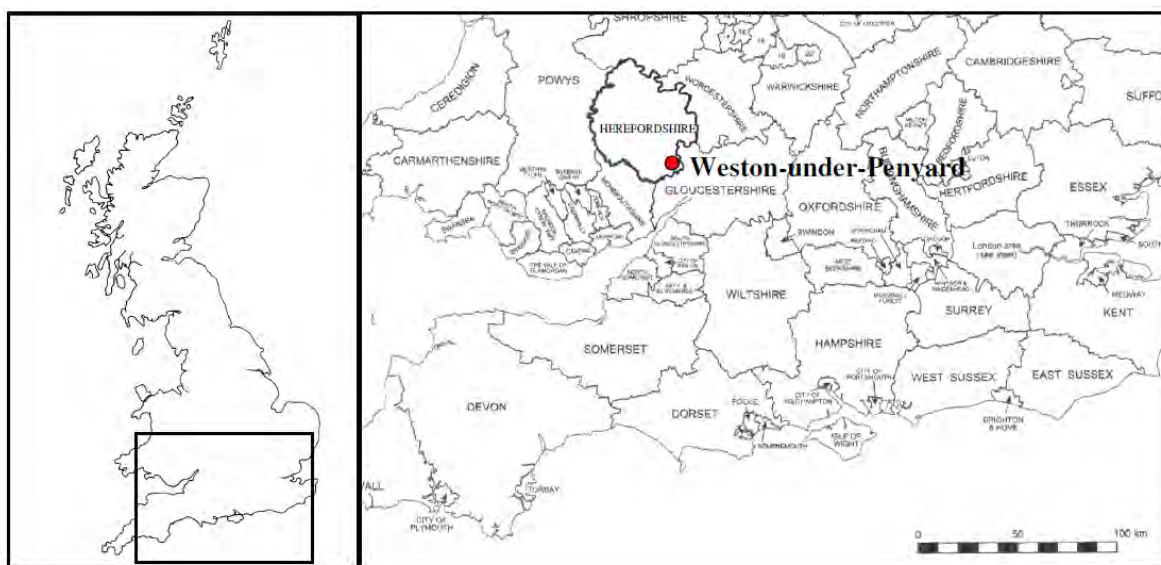
This section of the Plan:

- Provides a brief overview of the Neighbourhood Area;¹⁷ its location, surroundings, size, housing, heritage and a summary of what residents think about life therein;
- Identifies the challenges facing the Neighbourhood Area.

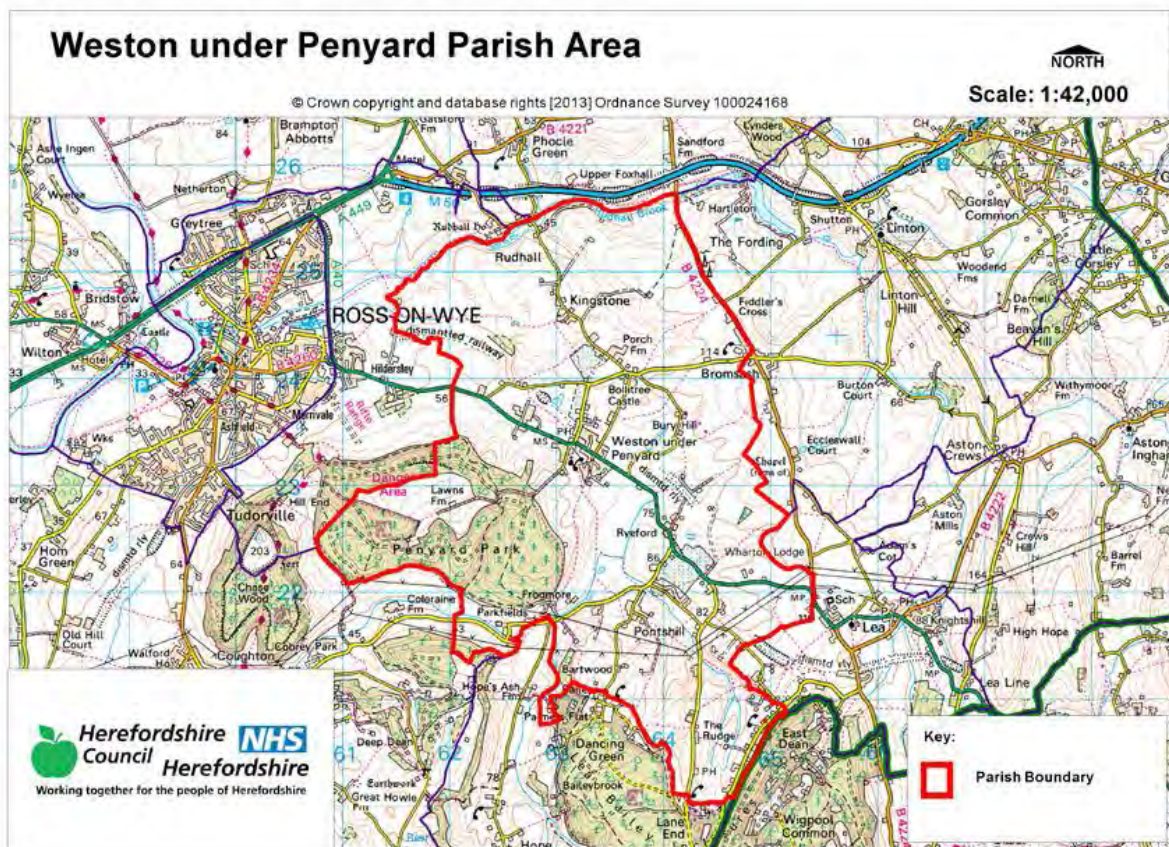
Location

This Neighbourhood Development Plan applies to the Neighbourhood Area which is specifically the parish of Weston under Penyard in Herefordshire.

Weston under Penyard lies 2 miles east of Ross-on-Wye in Herefordshire. The main road running through the parish is the A40. It is approximately 18 miles to Hereford, 14 miles to Ledbury, 14 miles to Monmouth, 15 miles to Gloucester, 60 miles to Birmingham, 48 miles to Bristol, 50 miles to Cardiff and 125 miles to London.



¹⁷ Area to which a proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order will relate. In the case of this Plan this is the parish of Weston under Penyard.



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Landscape

Weston under Penyard parish includes two types of landscape, as defined by the Herefordshire Council Landscape Character Assessment.¹⁸ These are Principle Settled Farmland and Principle Wooded Hills. These landscapes fall into two distinct regional character areas, namely; Archenfield and Forest of Dean. Strategically placed, the parish lies on the western edge of the Forest of Dean and within the catchment area of the Wye Valley SAC.

The undulating nature of the landscape provides numerous points of scenic beauty. From various locations there are magnificent views west across the Wye valley to the Black Mountains in Wales, east to May Hill and southerly over Pontshill towards Lea Bailey, the Forest of Dean and of Penyard Hill. This rich tapestry must be protected and enhanced for everyone to enjoy.



At its highest point the Neighbourhood Area is 200 metres above sea level; at its lowest some 50 metres

Heritage

There are 30 Listed Buildings throughout the parish including two in the Grade One category (See Appendix B). There are two Scheduled Ancient Monuments; the Roman town of Ariconium and Penyard Castle;



¹⁸ A landscape character assessment for Herefordshire, which was adopted as supplementary planning guidance in 2004 and updated in 2009.

Connections

Weston under Penyard is 15 miles from the nearest railway station in Gloucester and 17 miles from the railway station in Hereford.

By car the M50 is 3 miles away, providing a link to the M50. A link to dual carriageways to the M4 and South Wales is also 3 miles away.

A bus service operates between Weston under Penyard and Ross on Wye and Gloucester. The frequency is generally hourly but few buses run in the evening. Reduction in the service is occurring as part of Herefordshire plan to reduce costs through to 2017.

Population¹⁹

The population of the parish in 2011 was 1,005, including 125 children under the age of 16. The population in the 2001 census was 834.

The population had increased by 21% since 2002. The percentage increase in the population between 2001 and 2011 was more than 5 times higher than the percentage change in the population of Herefordshire as a whole and 3 times higher than for England as a whole during that period.

In October 2013 there were 445 households in the parish. These included 60 single pensioner households and 140 pensioner households altogether; this was well above the average for England. 275 people were over 65, double the average percentage for England. There were 5 lone parent families with children, in this case well below the average for England. There were 605 adults of working age. 30 people were from ethnic minorities and 40 people were born outside the UK. Most people in the parish who were born outside England were born in Wales.

Employment²⁰

The largest employment sector for residents in 2011 was retail (85 employees). The next largest employment sectors were health and social work (55 employees) and education (also 55 employees). 140 residents were employed in the public sector.

22% of residents in employment were in managerial occupations. 28% of residents in employment were in professional or associated occupations, 14% worked in skilled trades and only 8% in elementary occupations.

109 residents were in part-time employment, 135 were self-employed and 75 were working from home.

The average weekly household income was above the national average. There were 45 working age benefit claimants in 2012, half the average for England.

315 residents aged 16 and over had degree level qualifications in 2011, over 35% of the over 16s in the parish and well above the average for England. 170 residents over 16 had no academic qualifications, which was below the average for England.

Housing²¹

In 2011 there were 294 detached houses in the parish, representing 62% of the housing stock and well above the average in England of 22%. There were also 100 semi-detached and 60 terraced houses.

¹⁹ ACRE Report www.ocsi.co.uk

²⁰ ACRE Report

²¹ ACRE Report

345 dwellings were owner-occupied, i.e. 78% of households and well above the 64% owner-occupation average across England. 33 homes were privately rented and 49 dwellings were rented from registered housing providers or from the local authority. Owner-occupation declined and private renting went up nationally between 2001 and 2011.

15 households lived in overcrowded conditions and 60 households were estimated to be in 'fuel poverty', which is above average for England. 11 households lacked central heating. In 2011 there were 29 vacant household spaces, equivalent to 6% of households in the parish.

The Natural Environment

There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation, National Nature Reserves or Conservation Target Areas within the Neighbourhood Area.

However there are the following European Sites just outside the parish of Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Area

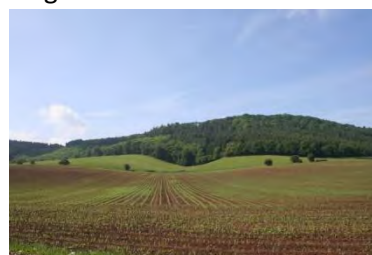
- River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC
- Wye Valley Woodlands SAC
- Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC

Flood Zones run along the Rudhall Brook. There are also Flood Zones along a stream/brook in the south west of the Parish which runs through to Pontshill



Most of Penyard Hill (The Penyard) is within the parish of Weston under Penyard. According to *Parks and Gardens UK*,²² part of Penyard Hill, known as Penyard Park is a former mediaeval hunting ground, part royal forest and part paled park. In mediaeval times the park belonged partly to the Bishops of Hereford and partly to the monarch. The lawn within Penyard Park formerly contained a hunting lodge called Penyard Castle.

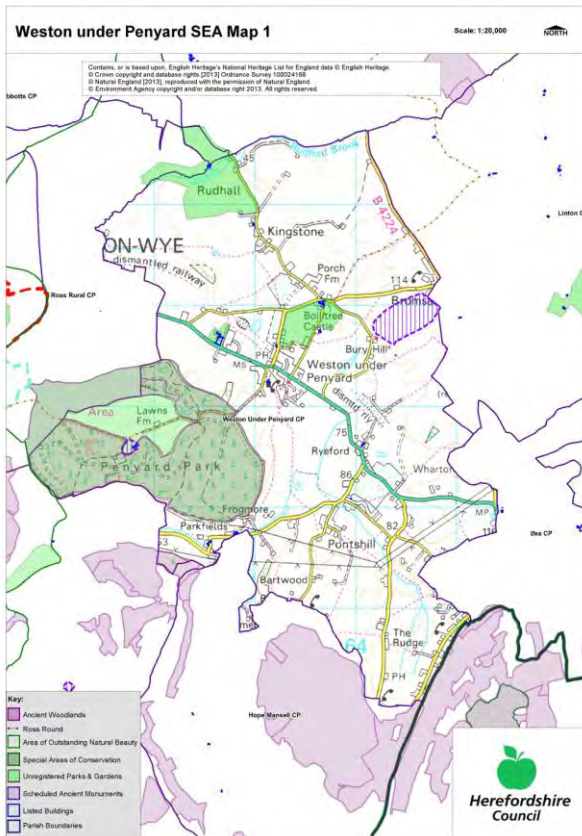
Penyard Hill is made up of the Brownstones Formation with a quartz conglomerate. The rocks were laid down in the Devonian Period (around 400 million years ago) when this area was south of the equator in a hot and arid climate. It is understood that at one time the River Wye flowed through Weston under Penyard and then west to Coughton, carving out the valley to the south of Penyard Hill.



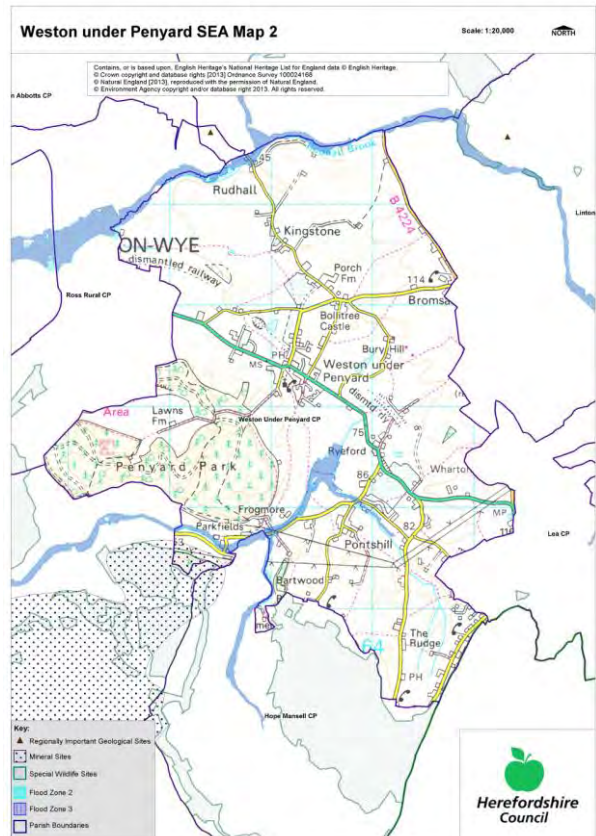
The majority of land within the neighbourhood area was listed Grade 2 (Good) or Grade 3 (Good to Moderate) for its agricultural quality.²³

²² Parks & Gardens UK is managed by the Charity Parks and Gardens Data Services (PGDS). www.parksandgardens.org

²³ Natural England: 2011 West Midland ALC Map.



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Living in the Neighbourhood Area

The historic St Lawrence’s church, a village hall, a recreation ground, a small primary school and the Weston Cross Inn public house are all located in the central village of Weston under Penyard. The last shop closed well over 20 years ago.



The 2006 Parish Plan observed that parishioners of Weston under Penyard considered themselves reasonably comfortable and safe, living in a most pleasant and tranquil rural setting. Parishioners were generally well-informed, caring and committed, many were able to participate in a range of social and other activities organised by diverse groups within the parish, with particular focal points being the village hall, the primary school, the parish church and the Weston Cross Inn.

The 2011 census notes that recorded crime in Herefordshire is only two thirds of the overall level for England.

Comments from the Residents' Survey 2014

Despite the general satisfaction expressed by the parishioners no community is perfect and, as identified in the 2014 Residents' survey report, the parish faces challenges.

Residents generally accepted that additional houses needed to be built, but less than a half of respondents (41%) thought the numbers should exceed 30 during the life of this Plan. Only 19% were agreeable to more than 50 houses. Residents said they did not want large housing developments, with only 11% agreeable to developments with more than 10 houses. Smaller lower cost houses were desirable to encourage younger people to settle in the parish

The design of new houses was important for residents, including scale and style, use of traditional materials, adequate living space, energy conservation and appropriate off-street parking.

Traffic was a major concern for residents, the three most important being, traffic speed, pedestrian safety and the size of vehicles in relation to the size of the roads. Associated with these traffic issues residents wanted to see improved footpaths, new cycleways and better maintenance of roads and footpaths.



Large numbers of residents thought that the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, green spaces, views and historic buildings was very important.

In terms of local services and facilities the top five items needing improvement were broadband, mobile phone coverage, facilities for young people, footpaths and cycleways. The most important aspects of community living to improve the parish as a place to live were considered to be attracting younger people to live in the parish, energy efficient houses and walking, cycling, and bus travel (less driving).

Note for clarity:

In the 2014 Residents Survey, those residents not expressing an opinion are excluded from the stated percentages.

Section 4: Vision and Objectives

The Vision and Objectives were initially derived from the opinions of residents attending the neighbourhood plan Launch Event in June 2014 and later validated by the questionnaire survey and another Open Event in December 2015.

THE VISION				
<i>To be a parish where an excellent quality of life is available to all, where people are valued and where there are homes, businesses and facilities to meet the needs of a sustainable rural community.</i>				
This will mean that by 2031:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is sufficient housing to meet the needs of local people and which is of mixed types, well designed, in keeping with our local character, suitably located and including affordable homes, • Local facilities including, village hall, school, pub, sport and leisure spaces are supported and enhanced, • The development of agriculture as a business is supported and the quality and quantity of agricultural land provision is given due weight when development is considered, • Roads, footpaths and cycle-ways meet the needs of the community and are safe and maintained in good condition, • There are more businesses in the parish providing additional employment opportunities. • We are in control of the future development of our parish, in particular, the boundaries of our villages are respected and any amendments will have been made with care and consideration. • New residents are welcomed, people feel safe and community involvement and spirit is actively encouraged. 				
OBJECTIVES				
1. Housing	2. Opportunities for Employment	3. Environmental Sustainability	4. Roads and Traffic	5. Community Services and Facilities
<p>Policies incorporated in the Plan will ensure that new housing contributes to a sustainable and balanced community, in particular through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing a mix of properties in terms of size and tenure • designs that are sensitive to and in keeping with our respective settlements • satisfying locally identified needs for all life stages, and including affordable homes • controlling the level of new housing such that there are sufficient numbers but without over-provision 	<p>The Plan will include proposals and policies to enable more people to work where they live or closer to their homes through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attracting businesses and employment suitable for a rural area • supporting appropriate development and diversification of agriculture, tourism and hospitality within the rural economy 	<p>The Plan will contribute towards sustainable development through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, especially the parish's heritage, habitats and open spaces • safeguarding agricultural land • maintaining a high quality landscape, built environment and settings of settlements • reducing flood risk • moving towards being carbon neutral 	<p>Within the Plan will be proposals to reduce the effects of traffic on the community so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • residents are safe using local roads, cycleways and footpaths • roads do not create an unreasonable physical barrier between residents • traffic can move freely but without excessive speed • new development does not make road conditions worse • footpaths, cycleways and bridleways are created to provide carbon free transport alternatives 	<p>To foster community spirit by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining and supporting existing services and facilities • enhancing the present educational, leisure and recreational facilities • the introduction of high quality broadband and mobile phone coverage in all parts of the parish

Section 5: The Policies

5.1 Structure of the Policies Sections

The following Sections 6 through 12 contain policies derived from the vision and objectives set out in Section 4. The views of the residents, as expressed in questionnaire surveys and live consultations, were fully taken into account in the development of these objectives.

It is important that development applicants and decision-makers consider the policies as a whole in order to assess whether a proposal would be acceptable. Every policy has been framed in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and the emerging Core Strategy for Herefordshire.

Planning is predominantly about the use of land. However, Herefordshire's draft Core Strategy makes it clear that neighbourhood planning covers all of the aspects of infrastructure necessary to support a sustainable community. Therefore, any matters that cannot be covered by the planning policies themselves will be managed through "*non-statutory enabling policies*" or "*projects*" within Section 13 of this Plan.

To aid identification, policies have been coded as indicated in the Table 5.1 below:

Table 5.1

Policy Area	Code	Section Number
Housing Policies	H	6
Design Policies	D	7
Housing Site Policies	HS	8
Sustainable Development	SD	9
Sustainable Transport Policies	ST	10
Supporting Local Business	SB	11
Sustainable Environment Policies	SE	12

5.2 Policies to Meet the Objectives

OBJECTIVE	POLICIES
<p>1. Housing</p>	<p>Section 6: Housing Policies Section 7: Design Policies Section 8: Housing Sites Policies</p>
<p>Policies incorporated in the Plan will ensure that new housing contributes to a sustainable and balanced community, in particular through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a mix of properties in terms of size and tenure, • Designs that are sensitive to and in keeping with our respective settlements, • Satisfying locally identified needs for all life stages, and including affordable homes, • Controlling the level of new housing such that there are sufficient numbers but without over-provision. 	<p>Policy H1: Number of New Houses Policy H2: Scale of New Development Policy H3: Housing Mix and Tenancy Policy H4: Type of Housing Policy H5: Location of New Developments Policy H6: Provision of Affordable Housing Policy H7: Affordable Housing on Exception Site Policy H8: Allocation of Affordable Homes for Local People Policy D1: Design Appearance Policy D2: Technical Design Policy HS1: Housing Site Policy Policy HS2: Housing Site Policy</p>
<p>2. Opportunities for Employment</p>	<p>Section 11: Supporting Local Business</p>
<p>The Plan will include proposals and policies to enable more people to work where they live or closer to their homes through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracting businesses and employment suitable for a rural area, • Supporting appropriate development and diversification of agriculture, tourism and hospitality within the rural economy. 	<p>Policy SB1: Supporting Local Business Policy SB2: Work Space Development Policy SB3: Change of use Policy SB4: Provision of Broadband and Mobile Telephone Services</p>
<p>3. Environmental Sustainability</p>	<p>Section 12: Sustainable Environment Policies</p>
<p>The Plan will contribute towards sustainable development through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, especially the parish's heritage, habitats and open spaces, • Safeguarding agricultural land, • Maintaining a high quality landscape, built environment and settings of settlements, • Reducing flood risk, • Moving towards being carbon neutral. 	<p>Policy SE1: Sustaining the parish environment and landscape Policy SE2: Sustaining Local Heritage and Character Policy SE3: Sustaining open spaces Policy SE4: Polytunnel Development Policy SE5: Renewable Energy Policy SE6: Surface and Foul Water Drainage</p>
<p>4. Roads and Traffic</p>	<p>Section 10: Sustainable Transport Policies</p>
<p>Within the Plan will be proposals to reduce the effects of traffic on the community so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents are safe using local roads, cycleways and footpaths, • Roads do not create an unreasonable physical barrier between residents, • Traffic can move freely but without excessive speed • New development does not make road conditions worse, • Footpaths, cycleways and bridleways are created to provide carbon free transport alternatives. 	<p>Policy ST1: Accommodating Traffic within the Parish</p>
<p>5. Community Services and Facilities</p>	<p>Section 9: Sustainable Development</p>
<p>To foster community spirit by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining and supporting existing services and facilities, • Enhancing the present educational, leisure and recreational facilities, • The introduction of high quality broadband and mobile phone coverage in all parts of the parish. 	<p>Policy SD1: Promoting a Sustainable Community Policy SD2: Community facilities</p>

Section 6: Housing Policies

6.1 Introduction

The parish of Weston under Penyard lies in rolling countryside approximately two miles to the east of the market town of Ross-On-Wye. The village of Weston under Penyard is at the centre of the parish and is bisected by the A40 which joins Ross with Gloucester. It provides the amenities of school, pub, village hall, recreational playing fields and church. There is no shop. The village is where most new housing has been built since 2001.

Residents living in the parish and other people working here depend on motorcars for transport. Buses do run along the A40 but the service is limited and at best only hourly during peak times.

There are 445 homes (2011 Census)²⁴ spread throughout the parish, in Weston and in several settlements, the largest of which are Pontshill and Bromsash (the majority of Bromsash lies in the neighbouring parish of Linton).

57% of the homes are grouped in the three main settlements:

- Weston village 155 homes
- Pontshill 88 homes
- Bromsash 15 homes (within the parish of Weston under Penyard)

Away from the A40 all the settlements are connected by a network of minor roads. There is a regular but infrequent bus service to Gloucester and to Ross-On-Wye (and on to Hereford) with bus-stops in Weston and Ryeford. In the residents' survey only 2% said they used the bus service daily with another 8% saying they used buses more than once a week. Private transport is essential for many residents and 40% of respondents expressing an opinion said there was nothing that would encourage them to make greater use of public transport.

The population of the parish has increased from 834 in 2002 to 1005 in 2013, an increase of 20.5% which is five times higher than the percentage change in the population of Herefordshire as a whole and three times higher than for England. This population is ageing. In 2013, the number over 65 years was 275, double the average percentage for England. There were 140 pensioner households of which 60 were single pensioner households. The number of young people has fallen.

Regarding housing in the parish, in 2011 there were:

- 294 detached houses, representing 62% of the housing stock, which is nearly three times the average for England of 22%.
- 100 semi-detached houses
- 60 terraced houses
- 345 owner-occupied dwellings, i.e. 78% of the total number of households and well above the average for England of 64%,
- 33 privately rented and
- 49 homes rented from registered housing providers or the local authority.

Housing prices,²⁵ especially of large executive homes, in Weston and other villages around the town of Ross tend to be at the top of the range compared with properties in Ross-On-Wye that offer

²⁴ Report commissioned by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) and the Rural Community Councils from Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI), www.ocsi.co.uk

²⁵ Based on 2014 data from the Land Registry and commercial estate agents

similar levels of accommodation, whereas for terraced and small semis the prices are similar to Ross. There have been approximate 100 property sales since the year 2000, categorised as follows:

- Larger and individually designed properties accounting for more than 60%,
- Small houses (2-bedrooms) just over 30% and
- Family homes (3-bedrooms) less than 10%.

The community has indicated²⁶ that it considers the building of new houses is necessary to meet the needs through to 2031 and to sustain the long term well-being of the village.

Opinions have been expressed that the parish needs more young families to create a better age balance, which in turn would require more homes that are affordable.

When asked what type of housing was needed in the parish, family homes, starter homes, adapted/easy access homes and homes for local people were selected as most needed. Such homes would address the needs of those seeking to downsize and those wishing to start a home in the area where typically they previously lived with their parents.

Most residents would prefer to have limited housing development with the priority given to small sites of three to five houses or six to ten houses on brownfield sites and infilling within the present settlement boundary. In the absence of sufficient suitable land within the present settlement boundary, building needs to be considered on suitable adjacent land.

The strong response to the residents' questionnaires has provided a representative view of the community with respect to housing matters, covering the number, sort, type, style and location. Each of these categories is described in more detail in the following sections.

6.2 Housing Numbers

Background

A large majority of residents do not wish to see major new housing developments in the parish because they feel that this would inevitably lead to a significant change in the character of the village. As described in the Residents' Survey Report respondents stated their views on the number of houses to be permitted, with 59% of respondents saying that the total to be built during the period to 2031 should not exceed 30 and hence there is no approval for new house numbers to exceed the housing target of 36 referred to above.

For the first five year period 31% of respondents said the numbers should not exceed ten houses and 32% said the numbers should not exceed 20 houses. By inference a majority of 63% would want no more than 20 houses in the first five years.

Herefordshire Council's draft Core Strategy for 2011 to 2031 requires a minimum housing growth target of 14% for the Housing Market Area (HMA) of Ross on Wye, which encompasses the parish of Weston under Penyard. Herefordshire Council translate this as a percentage of the total number of households in each parish in 2011, the base reference being the Local Property Gazetteer (April 2011).

In the case of Weston under Penyard the number of dwelling in the parish in 2011 was 465. Hence to meet the 14% requirement, a minimum of 65 additional dwellings must be delivered in the period from 2011 to 2031. This delivery can be through a combination of existing commitments, allocations and windfall development.

²⁶ 2014 Residents' Questionnaire Survey. See the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

In the case of Weston under Penyard, ten commitments have already been delivered as of April 2015. Therefore the total minimum number of houses that must be delivered between April 2015 and 2031 is 55 houses. Windfall development includes non-allocated development that may come forward both within and outside settlement boundaries. For Weston under Penyard windfall development is referred to in Section 8 of this Plan.

It should be noted that in order to become a formalised element of the HC Local Plan, this Plan is required to demonstrate that the housing numbers can be delivered in the timescales described above, as prescribed by the HC Core Strategy.

Policy H1: Number of New Houses

During the period between April 2015 and 31st March 2031, planning permission should be granted for a minimum of 55 houses in the parish.

Supporting Statement

1. This policy sets out the basis for housing development over the plan period that is considered the most appropriate given the level of need, compliance with the Herefordshire Core Strategy policy RA1 including Weston on Penyard HMA 14% growth requirement, site considerations and the aim to achieve an improved population structure
2. 55 houses is the net requirement after 10 commitments have been taken into account for the period 2011 to April 2015.

6.3 Scale of New Development

Background

Large scale development is not acceptable to the community. If new housing is needed in Weston under Penyard the consensus is that it should be delivered through smaller sites.

The most preferred size of each housing development was between three and five houses (39% of responses), followed by between six and ten houses (37 per cent). 13% wanted not more than two houses per development and so in summary a very large majority of 89% of the respondents considered that the ideal size for each development was not more than ten houses.

However, since the Resident's Survey 2014 was carried out, revisions to the draft Core Strategy have led to considerable increases in the total number of houses required to be built within the parish and it is now clear that larger development sites will need to be accepted.

Policy H2: Scale of New Development

- a) Planning permission should be granted for a maximum of 45 new homes on any allocated site, and
- b) Developments will be supported where there is evidence of a current demand for the type and number of houses proposed. Where there is insufficient evidence permission may be granted if the development of the site is phased in a way that avoids any loss of amenity or visual intrusion for residents.

Supporting Statements

1. Residents of Weston under Penyard parish have expressed their view that large-scale developments should be avoided since they are not appropriate in proximity to small local rural settlements with unsystematic patterns of existing buildings, some of which are of historical importance.

2. The number of houses in (a) is in consideration of the preferred site(s) in this Plan and current outline planning applications
3. This policy reflects the desire for smaller developments whilst recognising that sites for new homes must be viable for developers.
4. The policy seeks to prevent one or more sites lying uncompleted for long periods of time.

6.4 Housing Mix and Tenancy

Background

68% of respondents considered that the new homes to be built should be sold at market prices. There was approximately equal support of around 40%, for:

- Self-build homes,
- Homes with shared ownership and
- Homes with live-work potential.
- There was less support, below (30%), for:
- Homes for registered housing providers let and
- Sheltered homes to buy.

The 2014 Residents' Survey confirmed a need for an increase in housing, including some affordable housing.

In addition to the residents' questionnaire an additional more specific questionnaire was issued to all households concerning indicative housing needs. This questionnaire sought an indication of the number of houses required to meet the current need and the needs anticipated within the next five years. 36 residents completed the housing needs questionnaire, less than 10% of those delivered. Nevertheless, the findings clearly indicated a demand for low cost homes to meet the current needs and also a similar demand, to meet housing needs expected within the next five years.

Policy H3: Housing Mix and Tenancy
 Proposals for development should take into account local housing needs and should normally provide a tenure mix of 40% of Affordable Homes being for shared-ownership (intermediate housing) unless viability or other factors show a robust justification for a different mix.

Supporting Statements

1. Residents have expressed a need for affordable homes but the actual demand should be taken into account when a planning application is under consideration.

6.5 Type of Homes

Background

The community has identified a need for new housing to meet a broad range of requirements.

When asked what type of housing should be built, the options most strongly supported were:

- Family homes (3-bedroom),
- Starter homes (2-bedroom),
- Homes for local people and people with local connections
- Adapted/easy access homes

There was a lesser support for the following categories:

- Supported/retirement homes

- Living/working homes
- Executive homes and
- Apartments

Policy H4: Type of Housing

This policy directs that development applications should favour the following types of homes:

- Family homes (three bedrooms or more) and
- Starter homes (two bedrooms) and
- Adapted/easy access homes e.g. bungalows and
- Homes for local people

Supporting Statements

1. This policy seeks to address the needs of those seeking to downsize and those wishing to start a home in the area where typically they previously lived with their parents.
2. "Local People" are defined in Policy H8

6.6 Location of New Development

Core Strategy Requirements

In accordance with policy RA1 of the Core Strategy residential development will be located within or adjacent to the main built up area(s) of the settlements. This will ensure that unnecessary isolated, non-characteristic and discordant dwellings do not arise which would adversely affect the character and setting of a settlement and its local environment. In the case of Weston under Penyard the two "settlements" considered in Policy RA1 of the Core Strategy are Pontshill and the core village of Weston itself. Most of Bromsash is within the neighbouring parish of Linton.

To select specific sites for development the steering group engaged a Planning Consultant to carry out an independent Housing Sites Assessment.²⁷ The selected sites are described in Section 8 of the Plan.



Weston Village

The core village of Weston is expected to be the main focus for housing development because it is the largest centre of population and provides the majority of community amenities and local services.

Weston village has an existing settlement boundary,²⁸ created as part of the earlier Parish Plan 2006.²⁹ In the 2014 Questionnaire Survey 81% of those residents who expressed an opinion said that the settlement boundary should be retained. When asked about the option to allow amendment to the settlement boundary, 57% found this acceptable.

²⁷ Prepared by Data Orchard. See the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

²⁸ Settlement or development boundaries (village envelopes) seek to set clear limits to towns and villages. They are designed to define the existing settlement and to identify areas of land where development may be acceptable in principle, subject to other policies and material planning considerations.

²⁹ Available on the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

In consideration of the settlement boundary and the best location for new homes, there was support for the following two options:

- 49% supported development inside the present settlement boundary of Weston village and
- 63% also supported building adjacent to the edge of the present settlement boundary

Only 11% were in favour of the third option of building at other locations away from the Weston settlement boundary.

More than 300 free text comments were received suggesting specific locations for new housing, including in particular:

- North of A40 adjacent to Hunsdon Manor and
- South of A40 adjacent to Penyard Gardens and
- North of A40 between Penyard House and the Weston Cross public house

Over three quarters of the community preferred new homes to be created by conversion of redundant buildings or by the development of brownfield sites. Less than one quarter favoured building on greenfield land. However, the most popular sites were identified as greenfield sites either side of the A40 to the east of Weston village and both lying adjacent to but outside the present settlement boundary.

Some landowners have indicated that there is land within the parish available for development subject to existing planning legislation. However, the land put forward as available within the Weston settlement boundary is subject to serious planning constraints and is insufficient to meet the proposed level of development. Other land has been put forward by owners on the outside edges of the settlement boundary and it will be necessary to consider development in these locations with an extension to the settlement boundary.

Specific locations considered for development in the Weston village area are detailed in Section 8 of the Plan.

Pontshill

In the residents' questionnaire survey only eight residents identified Pontshill for housing development. Pontshill was also a location where sixteen residents stated that additional houses should not be built

In addition to the apparent lack of demand concerns were expressed about the suitability of Pontshill for further development, including:

- Safety concerns regarding the relatively narrow access roads to Pontshill and the heavy vehicles that use these narrow roads.
- No pedestrian footways
- No public transport
- Limited access to main drainage

Specific locations considered for development in the Pontshill area are detailed in Section 8 of the Plan.

Bromsash

In the residents' survey no residents identified Bromsash for housing development. Bromsash lies mostly within the parish of Linton. The relatively small part of Bromsash that lies within the parish of Weston comprises 15 houses in a single depth development mainly along the B4224 and bordered to the west by agricultural land. Residents have expressed serious concerns with traffic speed and access onto the B4224.

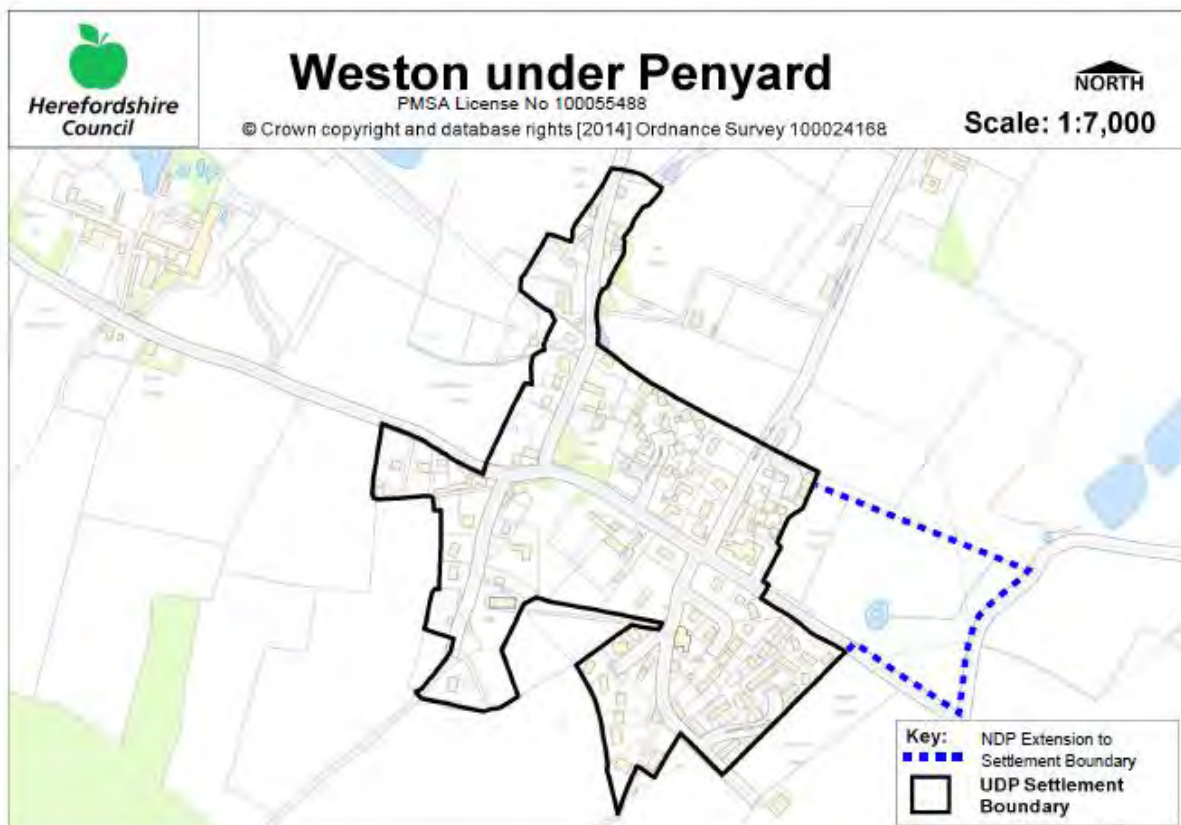
Specific locations considered for development in the Bromsash area are detailed in Section 8 of the Plan.

Policy H5: Location of New Developments

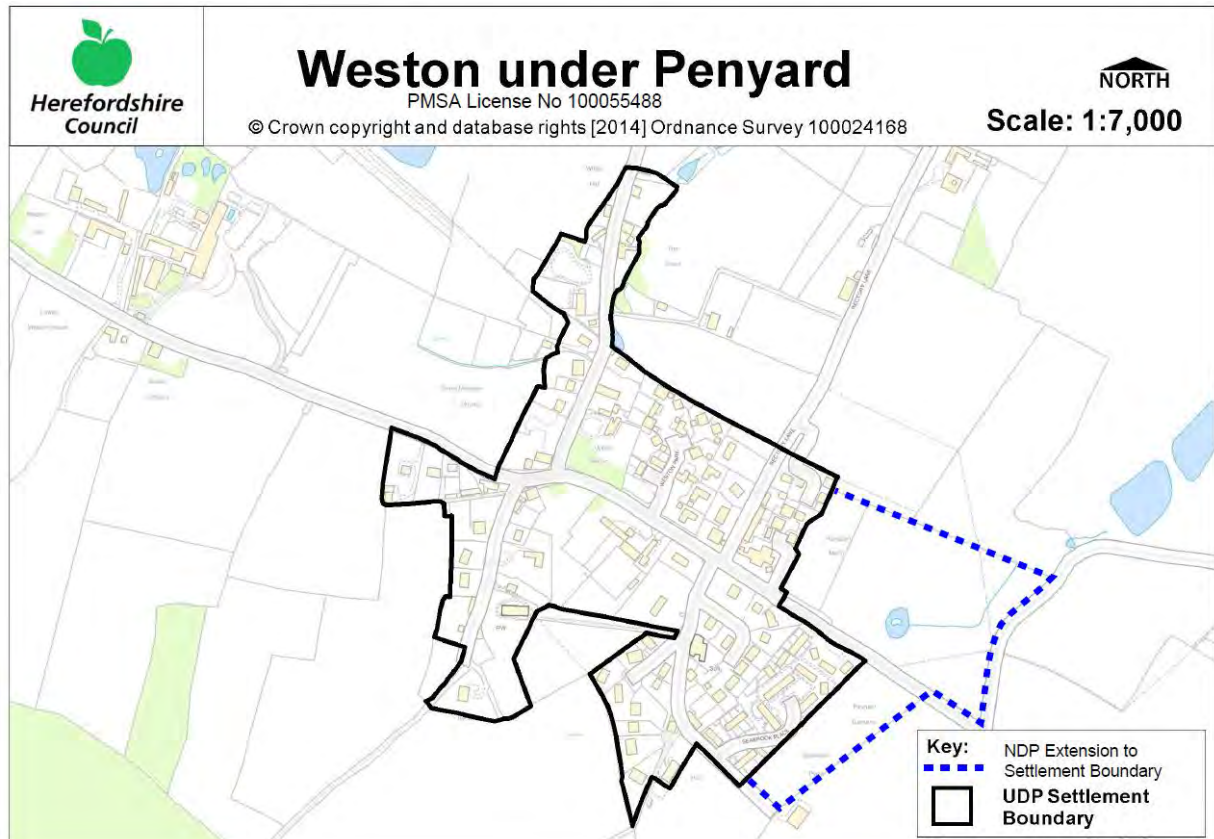
For well-designed proposals that meet all relevant requirements set out in other policies in this plan the approach to the location of residential development will be based upon the following:

- a) Development will be permitted at the locations defined in Section 8 Policies;
- b) To allow for controlled growth in Weston village an extended Settlement Boundary is defined as shown on the Policy Map H5;
- c) Applications should be supported for small residential developments on infill and redevelopment sites within the Weston village settlement boundary, and
- d) Development outside of these villages, particularly for housing relating to business and agriculture, should be considered within the limitations set out in Herefordshire Core Strategy and particularly Policy RA3 covering residential development.

Policy Map H5 for Option A (See Section 8)



Policy Map H5 for Option B (See Section 8)



Supporting Statement

1. Weston village has been selected as the location for development under this plan since the sites considered are ranked highly in the sites assessment. It is also the most appropriate location for development since it contains all the community facilities and provides direct access to the A40 for private and public transport.
2. There are only a few small potentially deliverable plots for development within the settlement boundary and so consideration must be given to some development just outside but adjacent to the boundary.

6.7 Affordable Housing

Background

In the residents' survey family and starter homes were identified as the type of homes most needed now and during the next five years. Of these, the preference was for homes at market prices followed by shared ownership (part rent/part buy) and finally, with relatively low support, homes let by a registered housing provider. However, in the indicative housing needs survey there was significant support for affordable housing

Recent developments in and around the area of Ross-On-Wye provide an indication of the type and style of housing that is currently being offered. The most recent developments in Weston village have been undertaken by private developers and have provided:

- Executive housing only or
- A mix of executive housing and affordable housing or
- A mix of executive housing with farm buildings converted into small family homes.

In the second category the development of Weston Park in Weston village includes seven affordable homes, constructed in 2006/7, as an integral part of a development of 19 red brick faced homes. The affordable homes are arranged on two sides of a courtyard as two terraces, one comprising 2-bedroom houses and one 3-bedroom house and the other having three 2-bedroom houses and one 3-bedroom house. These houses, although smaller, are similar in style and appearance to the executive houses.

In the third category a later development in Weston village, known as Hunsdon Manor Gardens, was also carried out by a private developer and comprises converted stone buildings to provide small family accommodation and new executive style houses that use some local stone as a feature.

Policy H6: Provision of Affordable Housing

The requirement to contribute towards the provision of affordable housing within the parish will be met through the following:

- a) On sites of ten or more dwellings, developers will normally be required to achieve the target of 40% of homes built on any site being affordable homes unless evidence upon the viability of the development indicates otherwise.
- b) The exact balance of tenure types, including intermediate housing, will be determined according to evidence available at the time of any planning application, regarding current and future housing needs in the area.

Supporting Statements

1. If the parish is to thrive, the balance of age has to be redressed and the working age population has to grow again.
2. Consultation has shown that residents want a range of housing which, whilst suiting the needs of an ageing population, also caters for the needs of first young first-time buyers and families.
3. Consultation has also shown a marked preference for increasing provision of affordable homes, particularly low-cost market and shared ownership housing stock to provide homes that enable families to get on the housing ladder.
4. Delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes is a necessary part of growing sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities. In Weston under Penyard a well-balanced population is essential for the ongoing viability of local services and the prosperity of the parish.

6.8 Rural Exception Sites for Affordable Housing

Background

Small rural exception sites may be used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing.

The draft Core Strategy provides for rural exception sites for affordable housing where the development meets an identified need. Subject to proven local need, a limited amount of affordable housing could be provided within the parish on small rural exception sites where proposals for housing would not normally be permitted

Policy H7: Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Site

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, and submitted in accordance with policy H2 of the Herefordshire Core Strategy, will be supported, particularly if they can demonstrate the redevelopment of brownfield land.

Supporting Statement

1. This policy seeks to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have existing family or employment connection.

6.9 Allocation of Affordable Homes for Local People

Preference will be given to people with local connections when allocating affordable homes

Policy H8: Allocation of Affordable Homes for Local People

All new affordable housing in Weston under Penyard provided by the Plan will initially be subject to a local connection, meaning that people with a strong local connection to the Parish and whose needs are not met by the open market will be the first to be offered the tenancy of the home. In this context a strong local connection means an applicant(s):

- a) Having lived in the Parish for five of the last eight years and is currently resident there and who is an existing resident of the parish requiring separate accommodation, or
- b) Having current and long standing links with family who are currently living in the Parish and have at least ten years continuous residency there (immediate family only e.g. parent, sibling or adult child). Grandparents, grandchildren, aunts or uncles will be included only where the council considers it necessary for the applicant to be accommodated within the Parish in order to provide or receive medical or social support to or from a relative, or
- c) Having permanent, full time employment based mainly within the parish.

Supporting Statement

1. This policy seeks to satisfy locally identified needs for all life stages, and including affordable homes

Section 7: Design Policies

7.1 Design Appearance

Background

The parish of Weston under Penyard lies to the east of Ross-on-Wye under the wooded slopes of Penyard hill. The scattered small villages are surrounded by farmland and rolling countryside with distant views to the Black Mountains, May Hill and the Forest of Dean. The A40 runs through Ryeford and Weston village on its way to the Wye valley, an area of outstanding natural beauty, the Brecon Beacons National Park and other popular destinations.

Weston and Pontshill are old villages, recorded in the Domesday Book. The manor of Weston under Penyard dates from the time of the Conquest, several buildings have their origins in the mediaeval period and many houses, cottages and barns date from the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For over eight hundred years a church has stood on the site of the Parish Church of St Lawrence. In total there are 30 Listed Buildings within the parish.

As well as the church, numerous houses and other structures are included in the official list of buildings of special architectural and historical interest. These and other old stone buildings, such as the Weston Cross Inn and the village school from the nineteenth century, dominate Weston village in particular. All the villages are small in this sparsely populated rural parish and, until more recently, modern housing has not intruded much on their traditional appearance.

The older properties typically used sandstone ashlar (finely dressed square masonry), stone or slate roof tiles and rendering. These local materials reflected the style of south Herefordshire construction over the years.

Most developments over the past twenty-five years have been built of brick, block and render, timber facing or tile cladding with tiled roofs. They have not followed the traditional designs used in south Herefordshire. They are more typical of suburban housing estates. They are out of character with the long-established appearance of the villages in the parish. Only a few exceptions amongst the new properties have local stone as facing or as a feature.

The 2014 residents' survey asked for opinions on the following three features:

- Building design that respects the scale and style of existing buildings (99% were in favour)
- The use of traditional local building materials (98% were in favour)
- Modern building styles and materials (62% were against)

Policy D1: Design Appearance

Proposals for all forms of new development should offer a design that seeks to reflect local distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements and buildings found in South Herefordshire.

Development proposals should contain design measures which, in addition to regulatory requirements, will:

- a) Be sympathetic to the existing traditional character of the parish, utilising a mixture of materials and architectural styles and incorporate locally distinctive features, for example, the use of local stone;
- b) Ensure that the design and use of materials is such that affordable homes are visually indistinguishable from market housing;
- c) Respect the scale, density and character of existing properties in the parish;
- d) Provide buildings that relate well to established building heights and bulks. A building height of no more than 2 storeys should normally be used. House designs with three storeys (or "2½" storeys) may be approved subject to location and high class architectural design and choice of materials.
- e) Allow for two-storey terraced housing in appropriate locations with the retention of open space on site for soft landscaping and amenity space;
- f) Not detract from the amenity of adjacent existing properties;
- g) Preserve existing trees, boundary hedges, ponds, orchards and hedgerows and make provision for tree planting with types already found within the parish and
- h) Be set back from the road and well screened by mature trees/shrubs landscaping to maintain a soft edge to the village and blend with the existing landscape.

Supporting Statements

1. The character of the parish and its natural environment is important to residents. Criteria for development are an essential to prevent further damage to our parish.
2. Compromising the appearance of characterful settlements is offensive to residents and is also damaging to tourism and its associated businesses which provide employment in the area.
3. Buildings taller than 2 storeys with poor architectural design are unlikely to be in keeping with the local character and are more likely to have negative effects on the landscape.

7.2 Technical Design

Background

The 2014 residents' survey asked for opinions on the importance of six listed house features. The three most important were:

1. Off-street parking (95% in favour),
2. High levels of energy conservation in new buildings (95% in favour),
3. Minimum standards for living space (79% in favour),

Residents living in the parish depend heavily on motorcars for transport.

Residents have commonly cited a need for adequate external space for each new property and for good accessibility.

Policy D2: Technical Design

All proposals for new development should be accompanied by a design and access statement to demonstrate compliance with the policies in the Core Strategy. Designs should respect the connections between people and places.

The proposal should:

- a) Provide safe and convenient vehicular access to and from any public road;
- b) Provide adequate off-street parking, taking into account local car ownership levels, the availability of public transport and the site-specific circumstances;
- c) Encourage the utilisation of physical sustainability measures associated with buildings that include, in particular, orientation of buildings, the provision of energy and water conservation measures, cycle storage, recycling storage, renewable energy infrastructure and telecommunications;
- d) Include the installation of sustainable drainage systems, and maximum use of permeable surfaces;
- e) Integrate the new homes into the existing neighbourhood and support a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment and
- f) Provide access to local facilities and public transport links via convenient direct paths suitable for those pushing a pushchair, in a wheelchair, walking with a stick or walking frame or using a mobility scooter.

Supporting Statements

1. It has been noted that the housing developments that have taken place over recent years have not always achieved the visual result that the community would have liked to have seen and have not provided the necessary infrastructure to support those developments.
2. While it is essential to move towards the use of other forms of transport, in rural areas like Weston under Penyard where public transport services are poor, cars are still a necessity. Ownership levels are expected to remain high in the future. The NPPF Guidance Note 39 requires that local car ownership levels should be taken into account when setting local parking standards for residential developments.
3. There is a need for careful provision of adequate resident and visitor parking and for pavements in new developments, in order to ensure the safety of all groups of residents.
4. The community would expect a robust application of the above policies in respect of all future developments in the parish.

Section 8: Housing Sites Policies

8.1 Housing Sites Assessment

A 'Call for Sites' was issued as part of the 2014 questionnaire survey carried out during August 2014. The invitation to landowners continued on the NP website from August 2014 through to April 2015. This brought forward 33 possible sites from land owners or their agents.

All these sites were then independently and objectively assessed by a Planning Consultant from specialist company Data Orchard CIC, using a set of criteria agreed by the parish council and in compliance with the policies of the Herefordshire Core Strategy. The criteria used are provided in the full report prepared by Data Orchard which is available at www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

Eight sites could not be considered for various reasons:

- For five of the sites there was lack of contact details for the owner or agent,
- The information submitted for two sites indicated that they are outside the boundary of Weston under Penyard parish,
- One site offered was later put on hold by the owner.

Of the remaining 25 submitted sites 15 were in open countryside away from the main settlements of Weston, Pontshill and Bromsash and could not be allocated within this Neighbourhood Development Plan. They are subject to the National Planning Policy Framework 2011 which states that housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, or they have to comply with Policy H2 for rural exception sites of Herefordshire Council's emerging Core Strategy.

Of the remaining ten sites in the Table 8.1 below, three were rejected since they were considered to have sufficient adverse effects on the village of Weston under Penyard (sites 1, 2 and 7).

At Pontshill there was one potential site (Site 18: Adjacent to Lane End House) but this has not been selected for inclusion in this Plan at this time because:

- The owner has advised that he prefers to accept no more than 5 to 6 houses on the site,
- The results of the 2014 Questionnaire survey indicated that there was little support for new housing in Pontshill (see Section 6.6),
- Weston village has much better infrastructure, facilities and services than Pontshill for new housing development (see Section 6.6) and
- Current planning applications at Weston village, if approved, would already provide more than enough additional housing for the parish for the full period of this Plan though to 2031.

Site 11, east of Rectory Lane, is unlikely to contribute more than marginally to local housing needs or provide any other benefits to the community and has not been considered for inclusion.

In Bromsash, Site 15 at Highfield Farm is a small site which will not have a major effect on meeting parish housing requirements and is distant from community facilities which are located in other villages. Furthermore, since most of the village of Bromsash is in the parish of Linton, it would be prudent to defer consideration of the site until an overall plan for any development of the Bromsash village can be discussed and agreed with Linton Parish Council

The remaining four submitted sites, with the highest rankings at the village of Weston, were taken forward for further consideration and selection of the preferred site(s).

Table 8 1

Rank Number	Site Number	Location	Estimated Housing Potential	Status
1	33	Land east of Penyard Gardens (1.4 ha)	30	Carried forward to final selection.
2	8	Field Next to Hunsdon Manor (4.3 ha)	75	Carried forward to final selection.
3	15	Highfield Farm, Bromsash (0.4 ha)	6	Not Selected
4	12	Field between 'the Street' and 'Rectory Lane' (1.8 ha)	35	Carried forward to final selection.
5	32	Land at Cross Meadow, Weston-under-Penyard (1.25 ha)	30	Carried forward to final selection.
6	18	Pontshill Road, Pontshill (2.2 ha)	20	Not Selected
7	11	Land east of Rectory Lane, north of Hunsdon Manor, (0.3 ha)	4	Not Selected
8	1	OS Plot 9135; Milestone Field, (3.04ha)	60	Rejected
9	2	Brownshill Smallldon (0.88Ha)	15 - 20	Rejected
10	7	Field No SO 6322 4282, South side A40, (13 ha)	60 - 140	Rejected

8.2 Selected Sites for Housing Development

The four potential Weston village sites with the highest rankings (sites 33, 8, 12 and 32) were carried forward from Section 8 1 and then further assessed to determine an option that best complies with the Plan's Vision and Objectives whilst offering the opportunity to provide at least 55 houses in the parish, as required by the draft Core Strategy.

Final Site Selection

A total of seven options A to G were considered, utilising the four sites. These options are described in more detail in Appendix A.

In this draft Consultation Document two options A and B are put forward for comment and discussion, after which a single option will be selected and included in the Plan for submission to Herefordshire Council under the next stage (Regulation 15)

Option A

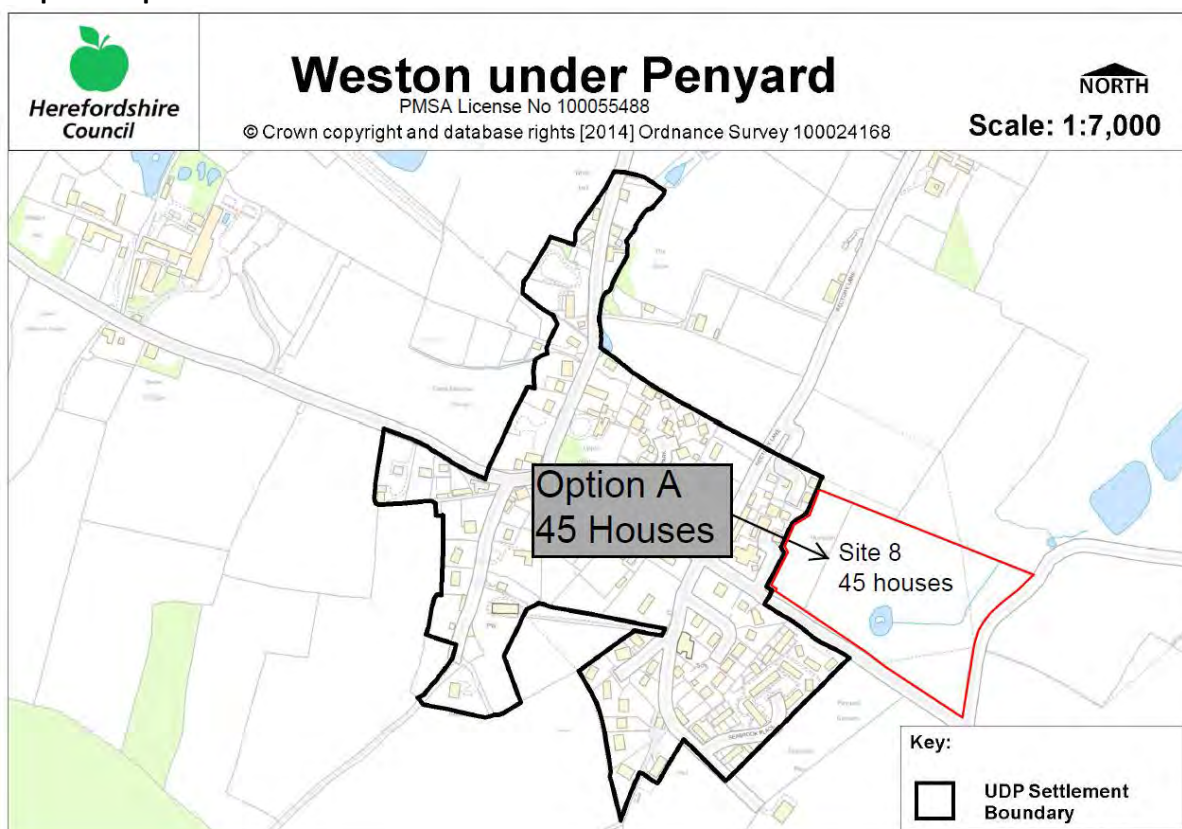
Option A comprising site 8 was selected to deliver up to 45 houses. A further 10 houses will be delivered from windfall developments through to 2031, bringing the total to the required 55 houses. The key factors concerning Option A are:

1. The site 8 was ranked second in the independent Site Assessment carried out by a Planning Consultant from the company Data Orchard CIC. The full assessments of these sites, supporting the rankings, is available on the website at www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk
2. In terms of availability site 8 provides a robust solution for the Plan, since it has already been submitted for outline planning application by the owner,

3. In the Residents Survey 2014 site 8 was one of the two sites preferred by responding residents,
4. The site is located on the eastern side of the village and this provides an opportunity for the parish and Herefordshire Council to create a development plan, including in particular:
 - Landscaping to improve the visual character and appearance of the eastern aspect of the village,
 - Highway improvements including safe vehicular access to and from the A40, combined with measures to promote speed limit compliance within the restricted areas. The expansion of the village to the east will require an extension of the 30mph zone and since this is currently only some 650m distance from the 40mph limit at Ryeford, consideration should be given to the introduction of a reduced speed limit over this short length of road,
 - Improvements in the safety of pedestrians by the provision of new facilities for crossing the A40 and new footways/cycleways on the A40,
 - The linking of pedestrian/cycle routes through the site,
 - The creation of public open spaces adequate for both developments.

An outline application has been submitted for up to 75 houses on site 8. This greatly exceeds the requirement of the Plan, the Core Strategy and the requirements of the residents as strongly expressed by a very large majority. In the event of planning permission being granted for more than 55 new homes on this site, the proposals in this draft plan will be reviewed on the basis that the required housing allocation for the parish has been met.

Map 8.1 - Option A



Site 8 – Looking North from A40



Option B

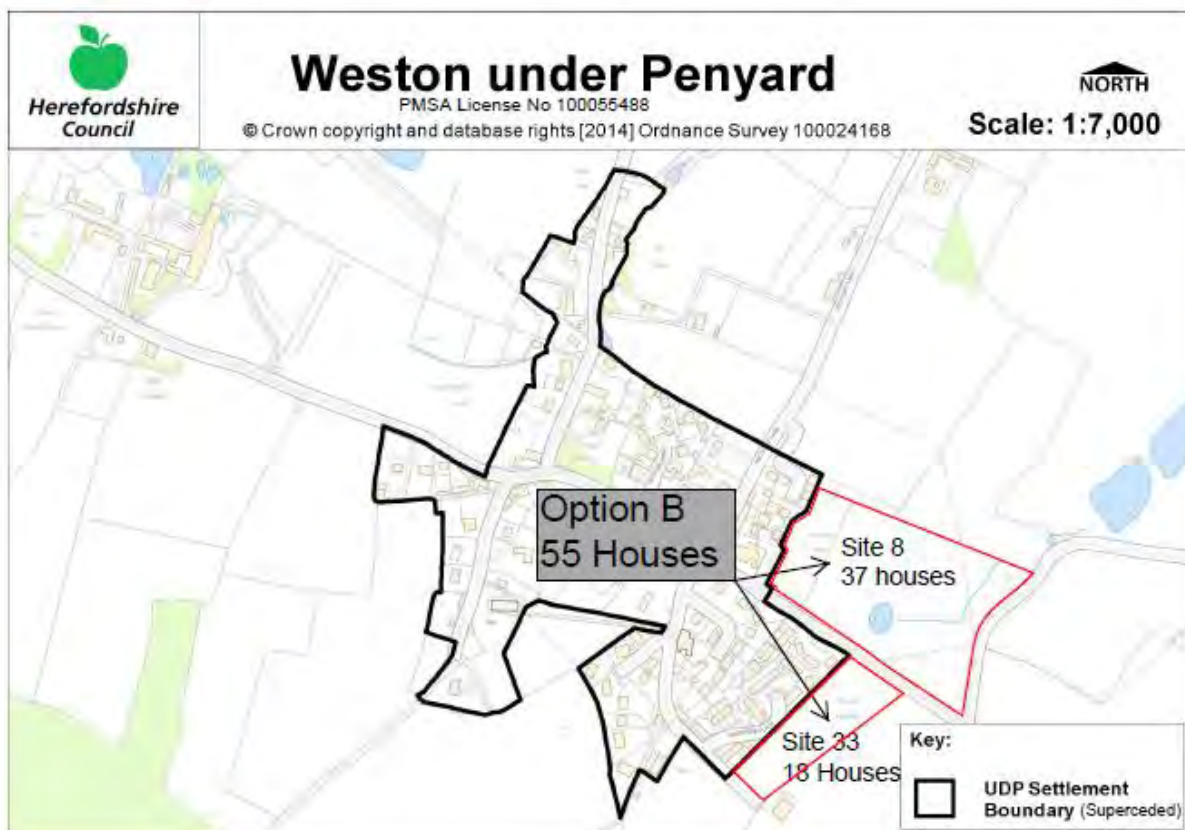
Option B was selected to deliver all 55 houses required under this Plan, the key factors being:

1. The two sites 33 and 8 were ranked first and second respectively in the independent Site Assessment carried out by a Planning Consultant from the company Data Orchard CIC. The full assessments of these sites, supporting the rankings, is available on the website at www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk
2. In terms of availability both sites provide a robust solution for the Plan since they have already been submitted for outline planning application by their owners.
3. In the Residents Survey 2014 these two sites were the preferred sites,
4. The sites are both located on the eastern side of the village and this provides an ideal opportunity for the parish and Herefordshire Council to create a combined development plan, including in particular:
 - Landscaping to improve the visual character and appearance of the eastern aspect of the village,
 - Sympathetic environmental improvements
 - Housing designs so that the two sites complement each other,
 - Highway improvements to serve both sites including safe vehicular access to and from the A40, combined with measures to promote speed limit compliance within the restricted areas. The expansion of the village to the east will require an extension of the 30mph zone and since this is currently only some 600m distance from the 40mph limit at Ryeford, consideration should be given to the introduction of a reduced speed limit over this short length of road,
 - Consideration of a new access road through site 33 to the school, village hall and recreation ground,
 - Improvements in the safety of pedestrians by the provision of new facilities for crossing the A40 and new footways/cycleways on the A40,
 - The linking of pedestrian/cycle routes through the sites
 - The creation of public open spaces adequate for both developments,
 - A combined approach with economies of scale for the enhancement of the infrastructure including water supply, sewerage, power supply, gas supply and fibre optic broadband.

37 houses will be permitted on site 8 and 18 houses on site 33, totalling 55 houses. However, at the time of outline applications, these two applications have been proposed for a combined total of up to 117 houses, which greatly exceeds the requirement of the Plan, the Core Strategy and the

requirements of the residents as strongly expressed a very large majority. In the event of planning permission being granted for more than 55 new homes, the proposals in this draft plan will be reviewed on the basis that the required housing allocation for the parish has been met.

Map 8.2 - Option B



Site 33 – Looking SW from the A40



8.3 Policies for Housing Development Sites

Option A

In addition to the policies in the preceding sections, the following policy applies specifically to the allocated site. These policies respond to the particular characteristics or sensitivities of the development site.

Policy HS1 Land East of Hunsdon Manor, NE of the A40

Site Reference	WNP08
Area to be developed	4.09 ha
Max number of houses	45
Affordable homes	18 (40%)

Site WNP08 is allocated for 45 dwellings within the Settlement Boundary defined in Policy H5 subject to the proposed development conforming to all policies contained in the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan, the Herefordshire Core Strategy and the following site specific requirements:

- a) The opportunity must be taken in the housing design and the site design to significantly enhance the setting of the entrance to the village. This must be complemented by appropriate green spaces, trees and hedgerows;
- b) Provision should be made for pedestrian and cycle access at the NE side of the site to allow for the potential development of a combined footway/cycleway on the route of the disused railway;
- c) Adequate play areas and public green space should be provided as a feature at the centre of the site around the existing pond;
- d) Every possible opportunity should be taken to enhance the safety of all users of the A40 road and footways to the satisfaction of Herefordshire Council and the Parish Council. Particular regard should be paid to vehicular access, traffic calming facilities and pedestrian crossing improvements.
- e) If construction of the required number of houses on the site described in this policy has not begun before 31st March 2027 then the Plan allocation for the site will lapse.

Supporting Statements

1. The policy addresses the positive benefits of the specific development which have formed an integral part of the site selection process.
2. To achieve the target housing growth of 55 houses a further 10 houses will be delivered from windfall developments. Weston under Penyard has a recent record of continuing development throughout the parish. Since 2011 commitment have been approved for 10 houses. In the core village of Weston the last decade has seen a 28% increase in the number of houses in the village. For future windfall developments there are many potential sites within the Weston settlement boundary and adjacent to the settlements of Pontshill and Bromsash.

Option B

In addition to the policies in the preceding sections, the policies that follow apply specifically to each of the two allocated sites. These policies respond to the particular characteristics or sensitivities of each development site.

Policy HS1 Land East of Penyard Garden, SW of A40

Site Reference	WNP33
Area to be developed	1.3 ha
Max number of houses	18
Affordable homes	7 (40%)

Site WNP33 is allocated for 18 dwellings subject to the proposed development conforming to all policies contained in the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan, the Herefordshire Core Strategy and the following site specific requirements:

- a) The opportunity must be taken in the housing design and the site design to significantly enhance the setting of both the entrance to the village and views across to the Parish Church and The Penyard by screening the effect of the existing buildings of Penyard Gardens and Seabrook Place. This must be complemented by appropriate green spaces, trees and hedgerows;
- b) Housing design should comply with the policies of this Plan but should, where possible, be complementary with the design of the nearby development on site WNP08;
- c) A combined footway/cycleway link should be provided from the A40 at the NE side of the development to the existing adopted highways at the SW side of the development;
- d) Adequate public green space and play areas must be provided;
- e) Every possible opportunity should be taken to enhance the safety of all users of the A40 road and footways to the satisfaction of Herefordshire Council and the Parish Council. Particular regard should be paid to vehicular access, traffic calming facilities and pedestrian crossing improvements. These improvements should be designed and constructed in a manner that is complementary with the nearby development on site WNP08, and
- f) If construction of the required number of houses on the site described in this policy has not begun before 31st March 2027 then the Plan allocation for the site will lapse.

Supporting Statements

1. The policy addresses the positive benefits of the specific development which have formed an integral part of the site selection process.
2. The policy requires the developer's design proposal to take full account of the other selected potential development site WPN08, situated nearby.

Policy HS2 Land East of Hunsdon Manor, NE of the A40

Site Reference	WNP08
Area to be developed	4.09 ha
Max number of houses	37
Affordable homes	15 (40%)

Site WNP08 is allocated for 37 dwellings within the Settlement Boundary defined in Policy H5 subject to the proposed development conforming to all policies contained in the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan, the Herefordshire Core Strategy and the following site specific requirements:

- g) The opportunity must be taken in the housing design and the site design to significantly enhance the setting of the entrance to the village. This must be complemented by appropriate green spaces , trees and hedgerows;
- h) Housing design should comply with the policies of this Plan but should, where possible, be complementary with the design of the nearby development on site WNP33;
- i) Provision should be made for pedestrian and cycle access at the NE side of the site to allow for the potential development of a combined footway/cycleway on the route of the disused railway;
- j) Adequate play areas and public green space should be provided as a feature at the centre of the site around the existing pond;
- k) Every possible opportunity should be taken to enhance the safety of all users of the A40 road and footways to the satisfaction of Herefordshire Council and the Parish Council. Particular regard should be paid to vehicular access, traffic calming facilities and pedestrian crossing improvements. These improvements should be designed and constructed in a manner that is complementary with the nearby development on site WNP33
- l) Consideration of a new access road through site 33 to the school, village hall and recreation ground and
- m) If construction of the required number of houses on the site described in this policy has not begun before 31st March 2027 then the Plan allocation for the site will lapse.

Supporting Statements

1. The policy addresses the positive benefits of the specific development which have formed an integral part of the site selection process.
2. The policy requires the developer's design proposal to take full account of the other selected potential development WNP33, situated nearby.

Section 9: Sustainable Development

9.1 Introduction

Sustainable development can be defined as enabling growth that caters for the needs of current generation, whilst ensuring that growth does not mean worse lives for future generations. The purpose of this Neighbourhood Plan is to create social, economic and environmental progress in a sustainable manner.

9.2 Sustainability for the Community

Background

Residents of Weston under Penyard feel that it is a good place to live. They appreciate the special qualities of the parish and have identified several features that they wish to preserve and enhance. To many it offers a place in the country with a good measure of country living and yet close enough to the town of Ross-On-Wye and the M50 motorway with access to the Midlands and the South West and the network of main roads heading towards Hereford, Ledbury, Gloucester and Cheltenham, Monmouth and South Wales.

The parish has an aging population and it is felt necessary to move towards a more balanced population. It will be necessary during the period of the Neighbourhood Plan to work with residents, landowners and developers to create homes that families can afford to buy, employment where they can work and an environment for living, whilst protecting the quality of life that residents value.

Agriculture is the main business within the parish and is the main employer, but for horticulture does rely heavily upon migrant labour. Most residents work outside the parish. A number of small businesses have been established within the parish that, in the main, operate from converted farm buildings and from residences. The business community within the parish is small and feels that it has a low level of support from the community at large. The proximity of Ross-On-Wye with its industrial parks is seen by many as the best place for new businesses to be established. Nevertheless, the desirability of creating opportunities for employment to support the sustainable development of the parish is accepted and embraced.

In the 2014 survey of residents they were asked to grade the importance of certain sustainability factors. The following ranked summary shows the percentages of respondents who considered each factor to be "very important" or "important":

- Attracting younger people to live in our parish (providing homes, employment, etc.) 84%
- Walking, cycling and going by bus more - less driving 81%
- Building homes that exceed government energy-efficiency standards 80%
- Allocating land to enable residents to grow their own food 73%
- Producing local renewable energy by sun, water or biomass 67%
- Producing local renewable energy by wind power 38%

Policy SD1: Promoting a Sustainable Community

Weston under Penyard Parish will support positive measures that promote sustainable development in accordance with the principles and policies set out in this Plan. In particular, development proposals should address the following high level priorities that are considered essential for maintaining a resilient and balanced community, namely, that:

- a. New homes should meet the breadth of needs within the parish in terms of size and tenures and that building of appropriate design occurs in suitable phases over the plan period to maintain a balanced and integrated community;
- b. The development of the local rural economy will be supported by enabling the diversification of businesses and employment opportunities, whilst ensuring that any new development does not detract from the environmental quality of the parish through ensuring its scale, location and appearance is appropriate;
- c. Development should contribute towards creating a resilient and high quality local environment that is adaptable to climate change; safeguards the natural and historic environment; local distinctiveness; and utilises the parish's resources in a sustainable manner;
- d. Measures should be brought forward to reduce the detrimental effects of traffic on the local environment and new development should not result in any increased danger or unacceptable intrusion into residential areas, areas of high quality countryside, or the historic and natural environment;
- e. Community assets and supporting infrastructure should meet day to day modern needs of the expanding community and where enhancements are necessary these should be provided in phase with housing and employment growth and
- f. All existing public footpaths and bridleways should be retained and improved where possible and new cycle ways should be developed to serve existing settlements and new developments

Supporting Statements

1. Development proposals must comply with the policies in this Plan. Where this Plan does not cover a proposal, any decision should reflect, where possible, the community's sustainable development priorities set out above and sustainability policies within Herefordshire Core Strategy, in particular Policy SS1.
2. The provision of new cycleways is to be considered for all new developments³⁰

9.3 Sustaining Community Facilities

Background

With increasing individual mobility the viability of many rural services has declined significantly over the past 50 years. Many local residents have increasingly used the expanded retail services in Ross on Wye and today there is no shop in the parish. However the parish community still has access to five facilities, all centred within the village of Weston under Penyard (ref. "Weston"). They comprise:

- A village hall, with kitchen and changing rooms
- Recreation ground/playing fields/play area adjacent to the village hall

³⁰ Department for Communities and Local Government Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport: first published March 2001, updated January 2011

- A primary school with a capacity for 70 children
- A village pub, the Weston Cross Inn
- The Church of St Lawrence

The questionnaire survey asked residents to state their opinion on the importance of these five facilities.

- 70% or more of residents said that all of these were *very important*.
- 90% or more of residents said that all of these were *very important or fairly important*

To promote the ongoing prosperity of the parish it is essential that Weston under Penyard retains and provides local services that will sustain the vitality of the community. The community also recognises that providing housing to meet current local needs and to attract an acceptable inflow of future residents would be beneficial in sustaining the parish and its facilities.

Policy SD2: Community facilities

Support will be given to well-designed development that enhances and increases community facilities, recreation and local services within the core village of Weston under Penyard.

The retention and creation of new or additional services and facilities will be supported where possible through enabling developments that would enhance their viability. All such proposals should ensure that:

- a) They meet a need identified by the community concerned or by a body with statutory responsibility for a particular service;
- b) They do not create unacceptable noise, fumes, smell or other disturbance to neighbouring residential properties;
- c) They do not cause traffic congestion, adverse traffic impact upon local amenity or adverse impact on traffic flow on local roads and
- d) Access and off-street parking can be satisfactorily provided without harming existing residential and other uses.

Proposals that could result in loss of or harm to an Asset of Community Value, as listed in Appendix B, will be resisted vigorously.

In order to support the proposed level of growth and contribute towards maintaining a resilient and balanced community, developers should contribute towards enhancing these community facilities and other facilities considered necessary as the result of the expansion of the village.

Supporting Statements

1. There is a need for appropriate improvements to the physical condition of existing local facilities in order to make them fit for a growing population, encouraging funding where appropriate.
2. Different funding arrangements will need to be investigated, depending on the purpose of the service or facility, including grant funding, developer contribution, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), partnerships, investors and Herefordshire Council.

9.4 Sustaining the Village Primary School

In terms of sustainability, the village primary school is considered to be the most important of all the five facilities listed above. Following consultation with governors and staff of the village school it is considered that, given the increasing population arising from further housing development and the physical constraints on the existing school site, there could be some consideration of the school's needs in future. Although the school currently had 42 pupils (Oct.2014) and can accommodate a maximum of 70, the school not only serves the communities within the parish, but also takes children from areas outside. It is considered that this would continue or increase in the foreseeable future as housing development increases in neighbouring parishes, particularly in the eastern areas of Ross on Wye, adjacent to Weston parish. Therefore, in the future the school may experience pupil admittance demand which is consistently in excess of the school's maximum 70 places.

The school has been located on its current site for over 150 years. The original building has single storey extensions to the rear and has a playground and a play area with dedicated equipment. The school has no further room for expansion as it is physically constrained on all sides. There is no dedicated onsite parking and congestion in School Lane at pick up and drop off times can pose a road safety issue, particularly for those making their way to the school on foot. Playing field facilities are available next to the village hall but road safety considerations place restrictions on their use due to the narrowness of the School Lane access road.

Potential under capacity of the school could be addressed in a number of ways. For example, by controlling numbers through admission policy changes or moving the school to another site with facilities capable of accommodating the increased numbers.

Both the Head and governors are cognisant of the fact that, in the next few years, the school may have outgrown its present building and, at that point, the Local Authority and Diocese might wish to expand into a larger building with better parking/drop-off area, playground, number of classrooms and overall facilities.

Although this situation has not yet been reached the pupil registrations for September 2015 are seen as large in percentage terms. At this stage it is unknown how quickly the pupil numbers will increase, nor if the present year's registration numbers will continue. At the time of drafting this plan Herefordshire Council is currently undertaking a strategic review of educational assets and this will feed into the potential for new school provision in the parish. It is likely that any proposal for a new school in the parish would be received favourably by the Parish Council and is supported by Policy SD2. However, the building of a new school is a complex business and if the need for a new school is identified, the Local Authority and Diocese will bring forward plans for school provision so that the Parish Council can consider a possible new site at that time.

Note for clarity:

In the 2014 Residents Survey, those residents not expressing an opinion are excluded from the stated percentages.

Section 10: Sustainable Transport Policies

10.1 Introduction

The A40 road runs from east to west through the approximate middle of the parish, bisecting Weston under Penyard village (ref. "Weston") and the settlement at Ryeford. To the south of the A40 lies Pontshill, Bill Mills and Bailey Lane End and to the north lie several settlements including Bromsash, Bollitree, Kingstone and Dairy Cottages. The network of roads within the parish, with the exception of the A40 and B4224, are minor C roads and lanes that serve the settlements and farms and as such have to accommodate vehicles of all sizes.

Background

The first public event, held in June 2014, to promote the development of the Plan, generated a number of concerns about road safety. As a direct consequence a section on Traffic was included within the 2014 survey of residents. Nearly three quarters of respondents cited traffic speed as a road traffic concern in the parish, followed by pedestrian safety (62%) and size of vehicles (54%). Most of the hundreds of comments about traffic volumes, traffic speed, size of vehicles, traffic noise and pedestrian safety related to the A40.

Residents were concerned about traffic speed in many areas of the parish, with 71% of the comments referring to the A40 in general. 39% were about traffic speed in the 30 mph area in Weston and in particular at the eastern end where the A40 is known locally as "the straight". Here vehicles are frequently observed to be travelling at excessive speeds in both directions. The most hazardous location for pedestrians is where School Lane, Rectory Lane and Penyard Gardens meet the A40. This is especially so for those having to cross the A 40 to access the junior school, church, village hall and playing fields or to use the bus stops. The senior citizens residing in Penyard Gardens and children are the most vulnerable.

Another area of concern due to traffic speeds was around the Weston Cross Inn where Church Lane and The Street join the A40 on a double bend with poor line-of-sight visibility, creating a hazard for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders crossing the A40.

In other areas of the parish, Pontshill, Bromsash and Bailey Lane End were identified as areas where traffic travels too quickly for the road conditions and the safety of others.

In addition to the concerns expressed about traffic speed through the parish, the poor condition of the roads and drains drew almost as much adverse comment.

The state of footpaths and verges caused concern because they became overgrown and restricted the passage for pedestrians and cyclists, often "pushing" the pedestrian closer to the traffic. In some cases overgrown verges have restricted motorists' visibility and obscured important warning signs.

Traffic volume was identified by 38% of respondents as a concern. Whilst no historical traffic data has been available during the making of this Plan there are concerns in particular that traffic volumes on the A40 continue to increase and that this will be exacerbated by the building of hundreds of homes to the west of the parish at the edge of Ross on Wye and the possibility of further housing in Lea to the east of the parish.

Policy ST1: Accommodating Traffic within the Parish

Measures will be promoted, in association with Herefordshire Council, to reduce the impact of traffic upon amenity and to address community concerns. The impact of development proposals on the existing environment should be comprehensively reviewed to ensure that they are sustainable in terms of infrastructure, road safety and the standards required for a peaceful and safe rural parish. Development proposals should ensure that:

- a. There will be safe access onto the adjacent roads and adequate off street parking for residents and visitors;
- b. Development in the parish does not create a significant increase in the volume of traffic on roads that do not have sufficient safe capacity;
- c. Residential and environmental amenity is not adversely affected by traffic;
- d. New and improved footpaths are provided, not just within new developments but with appropriate extensions to create safe pedestrian routes to the key locations in the parish;
- e. Roads in new developments should be wide enough to allow vehicles (especially emergency vehicles) to pass each other without either using the pavements;
- f. New development is designed to have positive benefits for the storm-water drainage systems in the adjoining roads and
- g. Cycleways are promoted as a preferred transport method, seeking to provide a safe cycling link with other parts of the parish and with Ross on Wye.

Supporting Statements

1. Road traffic is a matter that greatly concerns most residents. Whilst road safety and the improvement of roads, footways and cycleways is not a matter for policy in this Plan, all new developments should prioritise any possible transport measures which promote positive sustainable impacts for the benefit of residents.³¹
2. In addition to the above policies traffic speed and other transport related matters will be the subject of a Parish Council initiative, as described in Section 13.

Note for clarity:

In the 2014 Residents Survey, those residents not expressing an opinion are excluded from the stated percentages.

³¹ Department for Communities and Local Government Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport: first published March 2001, updated January 2011

Section 11: Supporting Local Business

11.1 Introduction

Figures from the 2011 census show that a third of parish residents over the age of 16 had degree level qualifications, above the national average, whereas approximately one sixth had no qualifications, below the average for England.

79% of working age residents were employed in 2011. Some residents worked within the parish. However most worked outside the parish. Their largest employment sector was retail followed equally by health/social work and education. These occupations account for over half of the working population.

Many are self-employed and a significant number work from home, although slow broadband speeds and poor mobile phone signal is a concern. Employment within the parish is provided by the farms, the Weston Cross Inn and The Leadership Trust who operate from Penyard House.

Within the parish, agriculture and horticulture is seen as the main business and the biggest employer, but horticulture does rely heavily upon migrant labour. This sector includes combinable crops, root crops, potatoes, vegetables and soft and top fruit, poultry, sheep and cattle. This is indicative of an industry with significant range and vitality and within which development needs to be supported subject to the acceptability of any impacts.

Hospitality is well represented in the form of the Weston Cross Inn, Wharton Lodge and cottages, Upper Weston B&B and Penyard House and Parkfields, both of which offer corporate hospitality, and facilities for special events such as conferences and wedding receptions. Rudhall Manor, a Grade1 listed house dating from the 15th Century, is available for renting for special functions.

The future well-being of the parish requires housing development to meet needs identified by the community and, in so doing, sustain the local school and enhance the local amenities.

11.2 Supporting Local Business

Background

The Residents' Questionnaire Survey, asked residents to indicate from a list of 12 types of employment which ones should be encouraged locally. The five categories receiving strongest support were:

1. Agriculture related (95%)
2. Tourism, leisure and craft (88%)
3. Community services (84%)
4. B&B/Holiday accommodation (83%)
5. Pubs, restaurants and cafes (75%)

Clearly agriculture, horticulture and related activities is the main business that residents would like to encourage. Tourism/Leisure/Craft, B&B/Holiday Accommodation and Pubs/Restaurants/Cafes were also strongly supported. Taken together these three closely linked sets of activities are seen by the community to offer opportunities for employment and economic growth.

Tourism throughout Herefordshire is worth £469 million to the local economy (2011).³² Over 4.7 million visitors come to the county for short stays to take advantage of the outstanding countryside, rich heritage and culture. The delivery of services for this industry will be supported where a proposal capitalises on existing assets, develops sustainable walking, cycling or heritage routes, benefits the local community and the economy and is sensitive to the counties natural and built environmental qualities and heritage assets.

The parish is located close to Ross-On-Wye and the Wye Valley and has an opportunity to become a small additional hub in which to stay and from which to enjoy the many visual attractions within the parish and beyond.

Feedback from the community indicates that there is no desire to see new industrial development which it is considered would best be in nearby Ross-On-Wye. Of the 29 businesses who returned the 2014 Business Questionnaire almost 40% represented the agriculture and hospitality businesses, with the balance covering a wide range of small enterprises.

Local businesses have indicated that they would like the Neighbourhood Plan to support development of employment opportunities within the parish. They have identified the factors which would assist and encourage both growth and the setting up of new ventures. Improved communications, especially faster broadband was highlighted as the most desirable improvement. Changes in government policy, a greater level of recognition by Herefordshire Council and support from the community were listed as desirable.

The availability of space for business was not identified as a high priority although the provision of “business space” to encourage working at home did receive strong support. Indications from the business community were divided about land use for business. Those who considered that no more land should be allocated for business use held the majority view by a small margin. In contrast, there was an overwhelming majority, almost 99%, in favour of using existing buildings and brownfield sites. A majority of almost 2:1 were against protecting employment sites from change of use. Most businesses had no plans to change their scale of operation nor the size of their premises.

There was strong support from the business community, over 90% of responders, for the provision of housing that would encourage working from home. This could take the form of integral space, on-site space or workshop on the same site, as provided for by Policy E3 of the Core Strategy

Away from the A40 road the parish is generally served by narrow roads and many residents have commented about safety in respect of heavy traffic using these roads. Improvements to the road network would assist existing businesses and could encourage new ventures to locate in the parish.

³² Herefordshire Core Strategy

Policy SB1: Supporting Local Business

Development proposals which sustain or increase local business activity, offer employment and appropriate skills training in the parish will be supported provided that:

- a) The development can be accommodated within the rural character of the parish;
- b) The development does not adversely affect residential and environmental amenity;
- c) The road network, access and parking provisions should be sufficient for any increase in traffic;
- d) Small scale, light or general industry, in particular craft-based operations or sustainable technologies are encouraged to locate in suitably converted rural buildings, or on brownfield sites;
- e) External storage and paraphernalia should be effectively screened;
- f) Noise and light pollution is minimal and
- g) Proposals for home working, would have no adverse effect on residential amenity, including traffic generation, noise or light pollution.

Supporting Statement

1. Residents would like to encourage the development of existing and new businesses, particularly for agriculture, tourism and their related business opportunities as long as the requirements of Policy SB1 are complied with.

11.3 Work Space Development

Background

Working from home, or in a work space adjacent to home, can promote economic, social and environmental sustainability in terms of:

- Better use of time by reducing travel time
- Lower carbon emissions
- Reduced travel costs
- Opportunities to combine work and family activities

In the 2014 residents' survey 68% responded that local planning policies should encourage working from home.

When asked about the type of houses to be built 64% of respondents were in favour of living / working properties (small scale enterprise located within or adjacent to the home).

Policy SB2: Work Space Development

In order to deliver sustainable economic growth balanced with population growth the following will be supported:

- a) New development that includes linked residential and small scale employment space, including the provision of live/work units, as long as there is no adverse impact on the character of settlements and the amenity of nearby residential areas, and
- b) Proposals for home working, where there is no adverse effect on residential amenity, including traffic generation, noise or light pollution.

Supporting Statement

1. Residents would like to encourage the development of existing and new business and employment opportunities within the parish but there is no desire to see new industrial development.
2. There is strong support from the business community for the provision of housing that would encourage working from home.

11.4 Change of Use

Background

In the Residents' survey there was a small majority in favour of protecting existing employment sites from a change of use. However in the Business survey there was a response of 2:1 against the protection of employment sites from change of use.

Policy SB3: Change of use

Proposals for change of use of existing buildings on existing employment sites will be supported, provided that:

- a) The re-use will strengthen the local economy or
- b) It can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer economically viable i.e. that the site has been marketed at a reasonable price for at least one year for that, or any other suitable employment or service/trade use away from business use and
- c) The change of use can be achieved in compliance with all other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan

Supporting Statement

1. This policy seeks to ensure that the building stock is retained with appropriate re-use in such a way as to support and strengthen the local economy and in sympathy with the character of the parish.

11.5 Provision of Broadband and Mobile Phone Services

Background

The availability of faster broadband and improved mobile phone coverage in the parish has been recognised as highly desirable by the residents and in particular by the business community.

Herefordshire Council working with its counterparts in Gloucestershire as "Fastershire"³³ has set out to bring faster broadband within the reach of all consumers in the county. During 2014, fibre-optic technology was installed as far as the centre of Weston village to allow parts of the parish to request connection to an improved broadband service

³³ Fastershire is a partnership between Herefordshire Council, Gloucestershire County Council and BT to build a future proof world class broadband network across Gloucestershire by the end of 2015 and across Herefordshire by the end of 2016.

Policy SB4: Provision of Broadband and Mobile Telephone Services

Proposals to enhance the present broadband and mobile telephone equipment infrastructure will be supported through:

- a) The introduction of appropriate super-fast broadband and mobile telephone equipment that will provide high quality internet connectivity for business and residential users, and
- b) The requirement for new development proposals to include provision for the connection to high speed broadband by means of suitable ducting within the development site, linked to the local/national network.

Supporting Statement

1. To allow local businesses to operate efficiently, access to the best communication systems should be made available.

Note for clarity:

In the 2014 Residents Survey, those residents not expressing an opinion are excluded from the stated percentages.

Section 12: Sustainable Environment Policies

12.1 Sustaining the Parish Environment

Introduction

As the benefits of a sustainable and robust environment becomes more important to everyone, with the effects of climate change becoming more apparent, communities expect their local environment to be maintained to ensure it is conserved, protected and wherever possible enhanced. This can only be achieved by sustainable land use and development.

The rural landscape of the parish has been shaped by agriculture and forestry but through intensive practices these have become a threat to its biodiversity and sustainability. Increasing levels of regulations, compliance and European directives from government are placing greater responsibility on society to safeguard, improve and expand the natural habitats, which over many years have become fragmented, vulnerable and threatened. In turn, these measures are intended to improve biodiversity, water and soil quality and the long term viability of agriculture and forestry as well as communities and rural businesses.

Opportunities to improve biodiversity and reduce irreparable damage being done to the environment should be explored and be conditional on all future development. Future development should be in scale and sympathetic to its surroundings.

Background

Weston under Penyard parish includes two types of landscape, as defined by the Herefordshire Council landscape Character Assessment. These are Principle Settled Farmland and Principle Wooded Hills. These landscapes fall into two distinct regional character areas; Archenfield and Forest of Dean. Strategically placed, the parish lies on the western edge of the Forest of Dean and within the catchment area of the Wye Valley special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The undulating nature of the landscape provides numerous points of scenic beauty. From various locations there are magnificent views west across the Wye valley to the Black Mountains in Wales, east to May Hill and southerly over Pontshill towards Lea Bailey, the Forest of Dean and of Penyard Hill. This rich tapestry must be protected and enhanced for everyone to enjoy.

In the 2014 survey residents were asked about the importance of the protection and enhancement of the natural environment (e.g. woodlands, wildlife habitats):

- 83% said "Very Important".
- 15% said "Fairly Important"

Policy SE1: Sustaining the parish environment and landscape

Measures to preserve and enhance the landscape of the parish's ecological network, the setting and character of settlements will be promoted wherever possible. Development should contribute positively to the area's rural character and not adversely affect it.

Wherever possible proposals should:

- a) Not adversely affect landscape character but include measures to conserve, restore or enhance the landscape features such as trees, vistas and panoramic views especially primary views into, out of and within the parish including those listed in Appendix C;
- b) Maintain and preferably extend tree distribution and cover;
- c) Retain important landscape assets of the parish such as ancient trees, orchards, hedgerows and open green spaces, and
- d) Contribute towards reconnecting and enhancement of the ecological network of the area with measures, in particular, to enhance the biodiversity value of the parish

Supporting Statements.

1. The community is aware of the need to protect and preserve all that contributes to the parish, its villages and settlements.
2. Most members of the community have indicated that they wish to preserve the green spaces, woods, trees and hedgerows

12.2 Sustaining the Local Character and Heritage

Background

In the 2014 survey residents were asked about the importance of the protection and enhancement of the historic or listed buildings and features:

- 66% said "Very Important".
- 30% said "Fairly Important"

Residents wanted conservation of the many fine historic buildings such as Weston Primary School, Weston Hall, Bollitree Castle, The Old Rectory, Streete House, Rudhall Manor, Hunsdon Manor and the Weston Cross Inn.

There are 30 Listed Buildings throughout the parish including two in the Grade One category.

When asked to nominate any buildings, places or views that should be protected residents, the most commonly cited were

- The Church of St. Lawrence and the Church Field and,
- Penyard Hill and Lea Bailey (views of/from)

The church is a striking landmark throughout the parish and is the focal point from most directions, especially as one approaches the village of Weston under Penyard along the A40 from the east or west. The surroundings to the church and nearby buildings includes significant mature ornamental trees which strengthen a sense of place

Policy SE2: Sustaining Local Heritage and Character

Developments will be supported where they conserve or enhance the parish's historic character and local distinctiveness by:

- a) Retaining its historic landscape character, distinctive features and surrounding countryside, including their settings and
- b) Protecting the character and surroundings of important buildings, monuments and archaeological sites, including all of those listed in Appendix B

Supporting Statement.

1. A large majority of residents feel that it is important to protect the local heritage and character.

12.3 Sustaining Green Spaces and Gardens

In the 2014 survey residents were asked about the importance of the protection and enhancement of green spaces and gardens:

- 69% said "Very Important".
- 19% said "Fairly Important"

Background

Through many years agriculture has created large areas of cultivated fields that surround the village of Weston under Penyard and all the other settlements including Pontshill and Bromsash.

Some extensive gardens exist in the grounds of some of the historic buildings but are not open to the public, with the exception of Weston Hall which opens its gardens once a year. Penyard House also stands in large grounds which extend to the Weston Cross Inn at the centre of Weston under Penyard village, creating the impression of open space, but the only public open space is provided by the community playing fields. There is potential to enhance these open spaces for the benefit of the community and the environment.

Policy SE3: Sustaining open spaces

- a) The land known as Church Field and the parish recreation ground, including the play park and area around the village hall are designated within this Plan as Local Green Space and are therefore protected from development;
- b) Developers will be expected to provide or contribute to the provision of open space in accordance with Herefordshire Council's open space standards requirement, and
- c) Where such space cannot be provided on site, contributions should be made to the provision, improvement/replacement, operation or maintenance of open space and play areas elsewhere within the Parish.

Supporting Statement.

1. A very large majority of residents consider that the protection of open space is important.

12.4 Polyunnel Development

Background

In the 2014 residents' survey the most commonly cited matter of environmental concern was the proliferation of polytunnels.

Policy SE4 : Polytunnel Development

Further polytunnel development should:

- a) Comply with the Herefordshire Council Polytunnels Supplementary Planning Document , December 2008, and
- b) Give due consideration to
 - Economic needs and impact;
 - Landscape and visual impact;
 - Residential amenity;
 - Product transportation and any requirements for increased heavy;
 - Vehicular traffic along narrow country lanes;
 - Surface water run-off and flood risk;
 - Impact on biodiversity, and
 - Public rights of way

Supporting Statement

1. Whilst it is acknowledged that polytunnels are an important part of the agricultural/horticultural economy the parish has become a focus for large areas of permanent and seasonal polytunnel cover which has had a significant impact in terms of the wider landscape and the amenities of local residents
2. It is therefore important that any further development of this kind be accompanied by detailed evidence demonstrating that the criteria in policy SE4 can be satisfied.

12.5 Renewable Energy

Background

When asked if there was a need for a local renewable energy supply, the response from the community was strongly in favour of:

- Ground heat pumps (83% in favour).
- Solar panels on existing public, agricultural and industrial buildings (81%)
- Domestic solar panels to provide power/heating (80%)
- There was a balanced view on Hydro-electric power (58%)

There was a generally negative response for other sources of renewable energy such as:

- Anaerobic digesters (41% in favour)
- Biomass plants (40%)
- Solar panels on dedicated fields (40%)
- Domestic wind turbines (29%),
- Commercial wind turbines (25%)

Policy SE5: Renewable Energy

Renewable energy proposals that will benefit the community and businesses will be encouraged where:

- a) They respect the rural and/or settlement character of the locality;
- b) They do not adversely affect local heritage such as archaeological sites and historic buildings, including their settings;
- c) Local and residential amenity is protected;
- d) Any traffic that is generated can be accommodated safely upon the local road network
- e) Their scale reflects the community's needs, and
- f) They will not adversely affect biodiversity.

Supporting Statements

1. Renewable energy is not considered an important issue for the community in terms of creating sustainable development but is recognised as being beneficial by a significant minority and therefore should receive consideration as part of any new development.

12.6 Flood Protection

Background

Surface water run-off has become more acute as rainfall has become more intense and energetic, causing flash flooding. Much of the surface area on which the rain falls has been engineered to shed water quickly into adjacent streams, overwhelming the watercourses and causing a high risk of flooding to low lying land and vulnerable properties.

Slowing water down to allow water to soak away and be released slowly into the watercourses is considered to be best practice. Mitigating measures can include buffer strips along watercourses, new ephemeral ponds, sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) and tree and hedge planting. These measures also reduce phosphates and other compounds from entering watercourses. Water quality is a threat to the Wye SAC, into which the streams from Weston run.

Other flood prevention measures include:

- Maintaining the existing drainage culverts by employing a lengthsman, particularly after hedge cutting operations,
- Relocating gateways for farm vehicles in order to reduce field run off hot spots where practicable,
- Hard surface farm tracks installed in highly vulnerable areas where farm traffic use is all year.

Comments made by residents indicate that some of the facilities to handle storm water and foul water throughout the parish are inadequate and that this can result in localised flooding in several locations, including low lying land which frequently floods and some sites that have been identified as having potential for development.

Most residents living within the parish have not been affected by flooding in any form. However, a small number of residents have suffered flooding which has been caused mainly by the inability of the drains and ditches to handle surface water running off the fields and the roads. Although those affected are small in number, the misery, damage and inconvenience needs to be addressed and, where practical, every opportunity should be taken to do so within the Plan.

The main sewerage system is not accessible to most homes.

Policy SE6: Surface and Foul Water Drainage

- a) Development should not cause or increase the risk of surface water flooding and the associated risk of pollution. Where such risks are known to exist and have been identified as a potential problem, developers will need to undertake detailed assessments in order to determine appropriate measures to be taken to address the risks and for these measures to be included within the planning applications;
- b) Any risk of pollution arising from inadequate drainage or excessive run-off from fields or roads would need to be handled as above;
- c) Developers will need to establish the capacity required to serve the new housing and work with the appropriate agencies to integrate with and possibly extend the existing network or to propose an alternative sewage disposal facility in accordance with the requirements of Herefordshire Council and the Water Authority, and
- d) Developers should utilise or contribute to sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) where this is practicable, including measures to support biodiversity.

Supporting Statements

Development that takes place in accordance with the above policies would lead to an improvement in the infrastructure that supports the parish community.

Note for clarity:

In the 2014 Residents Survey, those residents not expressing an opinion are excluded from the stated percentages.

Section13: Neighbourhood Planning Projects

13.1 Introduction

Context

Neighbourhood planning policies, such as those contained in Sections 5 to 12 of this Plan, can only influence development that requires a planning application. The consultations with the public have re-iterated the other concerns which the Parishioners have and the projects are designed to address these concerns.

This section of the Neighbourhood Plan provides a structure to bring people together to develop the ideas as projects to enhance and sustain the parish through the life of the Plan.

Issues Raised by Residents

During the consultation process of this Neighbourhood Plan, the residents enthusiastically expressed their views on a wide range of issues, some of which cannot be actioned through planning policies alone. 63% of all residents aged 16 and over returned a questionnaire covering these issues. They also provided some 4,000 written "free text" comments to deliver their individual opinions. Some of the residents said that the Parish Plan 2006 and the Housing Assessment of 2010 were still relevant.

Traffic has predominantly been highlighted by Parishioners as being a concern. This topic cannot exclusively be addressed by the planning policies so will be included within the projects. Some of these traffic issues are matters that cannot be controlled by the Parish Council alone and require action by Herefordshire Council and other agencies.

13.1 Neighbourhood Planning Projects

This section contains the core issues established from the consultation which the Parish Council feel can be reviewed and developed once the plan is confirmed.

The aim is for the Parish Council to work with residents, business and stakeholders to develop a sustainable inclusive parish which will improve on the issues which have been highlighted. To develop these projects. The Parish Council will need parishioners to engage with the Council as a working group. These projects will develop over time and working groups will be set up when necessary to develop the theme.

The Parish Council wants parishioners to drive the projects and actions developed through the projects will need to be evaluated for sustainability and be reasonable in relation to cost and consideration of others within the parish. When projects are developed funding / grant options will be investigated and fund raising will be considered an option. Further details of these working groups is provided in Section 14.

Project 1 Road Safety

Project 1 Road Safety

- a) The Parish Council will continue to work with the parishioners to highlight and increase road safety.
- b) The Parish Council is aware of the concerns about road safety particularly regarding crossing the A40 and the speed of vehicles.
- c) They will work with the Highways Agency and Herefordshire Council to ensure development supports road safety and work with the parishioners and businesses to ensure harmony and sustainability.
- d) The Parish Council will review safety measures in the parish and evaluate options highlighted by parishioners to improve safety.

The Parish Plan 2006 reported a wide range of residents' concerns and some proposed actions regarding road safety. The 2014 questionnaire again highlighted the two main safety issues as traffic speed and pedestrian safety.

Traffic speed and the associated safety issues have been a long standing concern of the residents and in the 2014 survey nearly three quarters of the 556 respondents cited traffic speed as a road traffic concern in the parish. Options for controlling traffic speed should be considered in the project development with the aim of reducing the risk of accidents.

Residents are concerned about pedestrian safety, in particular the footpaths and crossing the A40 at points of high risk such as Penyard Gardens bus stops, School Lane and Church Lane.

To support the development of traffic speed control the working groups should consider the options highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire as shown below:

- i. Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs)
- ii. Improved or extended pavements in the villages
- iii. Village gateways (e.g. signs, marker posts, build-outs, etc. to notify motorists that they are entering a village)
- iv. 3-2-1 warning signs to speed limit sign
- v. Reduced speed limits
- vi. Speed bumps

Options considered will need to be evaluated against effectiveness and cost will need considering when the working group and Parish Council action suggestions.

Pedestrian safety is an area which the previous Highways Agency has evaluated since the Parish Plan 2006 and any solutions will need to take into consideration the fact that the A40 is the main road from Gloucester to Hereford. Solutions should consider ways to link the school, bus routes and village pub.

Project 2 Services and Facilities

Facilities in the village were highlighted as being an area parishioners would like to see improved.

The main problems are

- i. Facilities for young people
- ii. Cycleways
- iii. Broadband
- iv. Mobile phone reception
- v. Access for disabled people
- vi. Leisure and recreational facilities
- vii. Public footpaths

Project 2 Services and Facilities

- a) The Parish Council will work with parishioners to try to improve facilities within the village and support the continuation of the school, pub, church and recreation ground.
- b) Roads will need to be maintained and we will work with the Highways to ensure efficient repairs, including effective use of the Lengthmans Scheme.
- c) Parishioners will be invited to contribute to by bringing forward community projects.

The population of the parish has increased significantly over the past decade and will continue to increase within the duration of the Plan. The Parish is a spread out area and the working group should consider linking areas of the parish effectively in a sustainable manner.

Part of Weston village now has fibre optic broadband and extension to all areas of the parish would be a significant improvement for all residents. Mobile phones are important for communication between residents and businesses and mobile phone coverage is variable, the Parish Council and parishioners need to work together to encourage Mobile phone networks to increase and improve coverage.

Weston village is relatively close to Ross-on-Wye and options to encourage cycling, horse riding and walking will be considered. By encouraging these activities and improved facilities the parishioners may reduce their number of vehicle trips which would have a beneficial impact on carbon footprint and the environment.

Project 3 Sustaining the Rural Environment

The Parish Council understands the importance of the rural environment and understands the need for balance between residents and business; this was re-iterated by the responses to the questionnaire.

Project 3 Sustaining the Rural Environment

- a) The Parish Council will continue to consider the impact of projects and plans on the rural environment and work with parishioners to ensure harmony between residents and businesses.
- b) When planning applications are considered the Parish Council will review the opportunities to develop recreation and open spaces with the plans and make suggestions as appropriate.
- c) Development opportunities will be encouraged to consider minimising impact on the views and vistas within the parish.

The Parish Council will endeavour to ensure the continuation of the recreation field within the parish and promote open spaces within development.

There are some buildings in the parish that are cherished by local people for their architectural and/or historic character. When reviewing plans to develop or change historic buildings the Parish Council will encourage sympathetic changes which retain the core characteristics of the building, however development will be preferable to buildings becoming redundant.

Project 4 Community Right to Bid

In addition to Neighbourhood Planning the Localism Act 2011 introduced a Community Right to Bid (Assets of Community Value) which aims to ensure that buildings and amenities can be kept in public use and remain an integral part of community life, stating that the closure or sale of such buildings or amenities can create lasting damage in communities.

Community organisations and parish councils can nominate an asset to be included in a 'list of assets of community value'. The local authority will then be required to maintain this list. If the owner of a listed asset then wants to sell the asset a moratorium period will be triggered during which the asset cannot be sold to any party (although in some cases a tenant may have a preferential right to bid). This is intended to allow community groups time to develop a proposal and raise the required capital to bid for the property when it comes onto the open market at the end of that period.

In the 2014 questionnaire particularly highlighted the school, recreation ground, village hall, pub and church as facilities they felt were important to the community.

Project 4 - Community Right to Bid

The Parish Council will consider any properties or areas of land to be identified as assets of community value for possible Right to Bid activity (under the Localism Act 2011) and will apply to Herefordshire Council for registration of such assets if it is considered appropriate.

Section 14: Plan Implementation and Monitoring

Use of the Plan

For planning applications the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Development Plan will be implemented primarily through decisions made by Herefordshire Council, in accordance with this Plan and the Core Strategy, unless there are significant material reasons for departing from their provisions. This plan will be used to steer public and private investment in infrastructure by Herefordshire Council and other agencies.

Weston under Penyard Parish Council will also use the Plan as the basis for responding to planning applications and for using any funding that may come to it through planning obligations or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), should a scheme for the latter be brought forward.

Regular Reviews of the Plan

The Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Development Plan is a living document and as such will be reviewed at least every five years. It will be implemented over a long period and by different stakeholders and partners. It is not a rigid “blueprint” but provides a “direction for sustainable change” through its vision, objectives and strategy. Flexibility will be needed as new challenges and opportunities arise over the Plan period. Consultation with the community as circumstances change over time will be necessary. The review period will be crucial.

Implementation of the Plan:

Implementation of the plan will need the co-operation of the Parish Council, Herefordshire Council and be used by developers, agencies and relevant members of the parish to shape the future. The Parish Council will be guided by the parishioners and wants their input into the implementation of plan, parish involvement is key to the success of the Neighbourhood Plan. The projects need to be driven by the parishioners with the support of the Parish Council. As appropriate working groups will be encouraged to support the plan and projects. These groups will be involved in specific elements and projects with the intention of being led by parishioners with Parish Council support. People interested in being involved should contact the Parish Clerk and when specific details/project are being considered the Parish Council will advertise in the minutes, notice boards and Weston News for volunteers to work with the Parish Council to review and implement the details/projects.

Section 15: Conclusion

Weston under Penyard welcomes sustainable development and growth. A steady increase in the built environment, particularly within the main village, has taken place continuously over more recent decades and indeed centuries, as the eclectic mix of housing demonstrates. It is accepted that more housing is needed and this plan sets out to meet the requirements as described in Herefordshire's Core Strategy in a way that reflects the particular housing needs of this community and those who wish to live here.

Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Development Plan aims to allow for appropriate development whilst both protecting and conserving:

- A sustainable community and rural way of life
- The nature of businesses which makes it possible for people to live and work in the parish
- A valuable tourist, heritage and leisure resource for the county and further afield, now and into the future
- An environment which supports a rich and diverse wildlife

Without the criteria for development set out in this plan and the settlement boundary (as revised in this Plan), the parish will not have the protection necessary to allow for the required growth in an appropriate, sustainable manner.

It is with these principles in mind that Weston under Penyard Parish Council commends this neighbourhood plan to the community for approval.

Next Steps

Following this six week consultation with Weston under Penyard Parish residents and businesses, the Plan may be revised to take account of feedback received during the consultation period.

The final version will be submitted to Herefordshire Council. A further six-week consultation by Herefordshire Council will take place. The Plan will then be submitted for Independent Examination and the process will culminate in a local referendum on whether the Plan should be made part of the statutory development plan for Herefordshire.

APPENDICES

Appendix A Housing Site Options

Appendix B Assets of Community Value (Listed Buildings, historically interesting buildings and Monuments)

Appendix C Views and Vista that should be protected

Appendix D Glossary of Planning Terms

Appendix A Housing Site Options

The four potential sites carried forward from Section 8.1 and listed in Table A1 below, were assessed to determine the option that best complies with the Plan's Vision and Objectives whilst offering the opportunity to provide at least 55 houses in the parish, including windfall developments if necessary, as required by the Core Strategy.

Table A1

Rank Number	Site Number	Location and Size	Estimated Housing Potential	Status
1	33	Land east of Penyard Gardens (1.4 ha)	30	Carried forward to final selection.
2	8	Field Next to Hunsdon Manor (4.3 ha)	75	Carried forward to final selection.
4	12	Field between 'the Street' and 'Rectory Lane' (1.8 ha)	35	Carried forward to final selection.
5	32	Land at Cross Meadow, Weston-under-Penyard (1.25 ha)	30	Carried forward to final selection.

A total of seven options were considered, utilising the four sites 8, 12, 32 and 33 and these are described in more detail in the following pages.

Note:

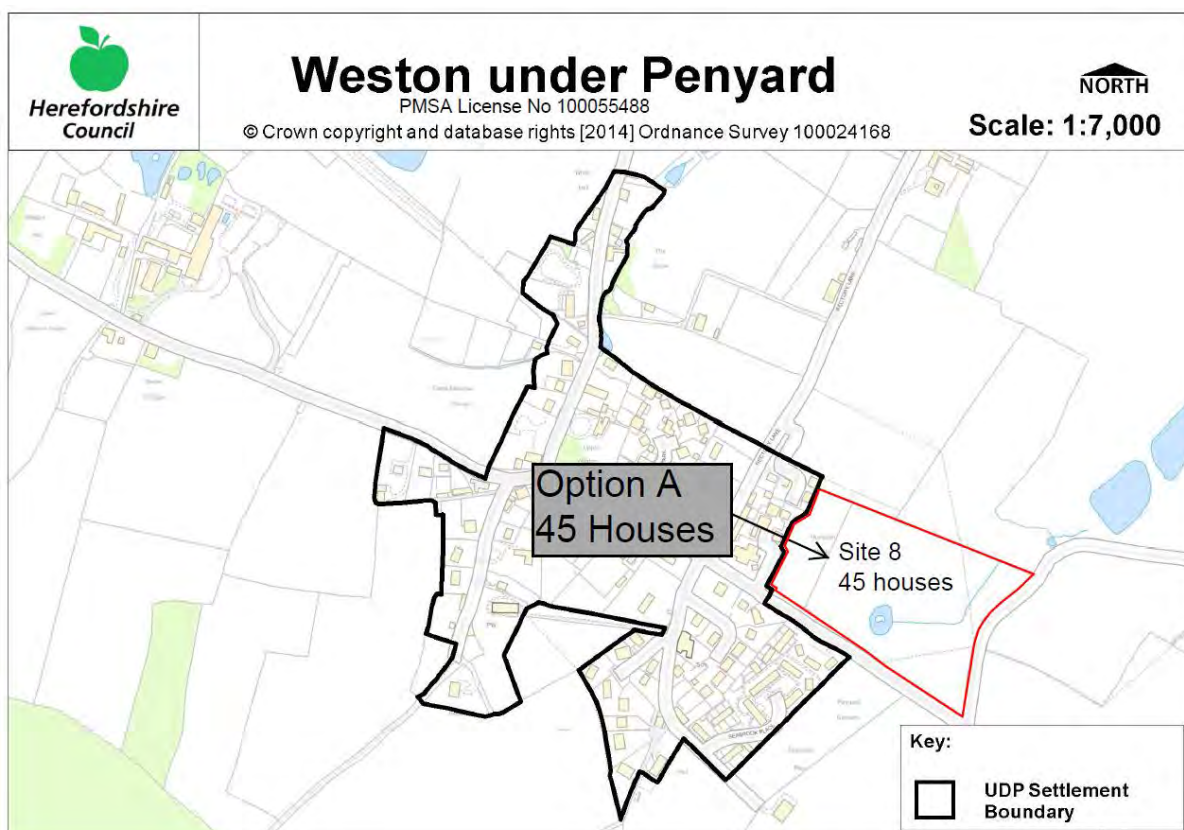
The Housing Sites Assessment Report prepared by consultants Data Orchard CIC can be found on the Website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

Option A

A formal application for 75 houses has been submitted for this site 8 but rejected by the Parish Council, mainly on the grounds that the number of houses proposed would create a single development which is too large to be located as part of the small village of Weston under Penyard.

Policy H2 of this Plan sets a maximum of 45 new homes on any single allocated site and this is therefore the maximum to be applied to this site. Option A, comprising the single site 8, is unacceptable for all 55 houses required and either an additional site would be necessary to support the full numbers required or the additional ten houses would be delivered from windfall developments.

This option can provide a sufficient number of houses required and is considered an acceptable option for the Plan.

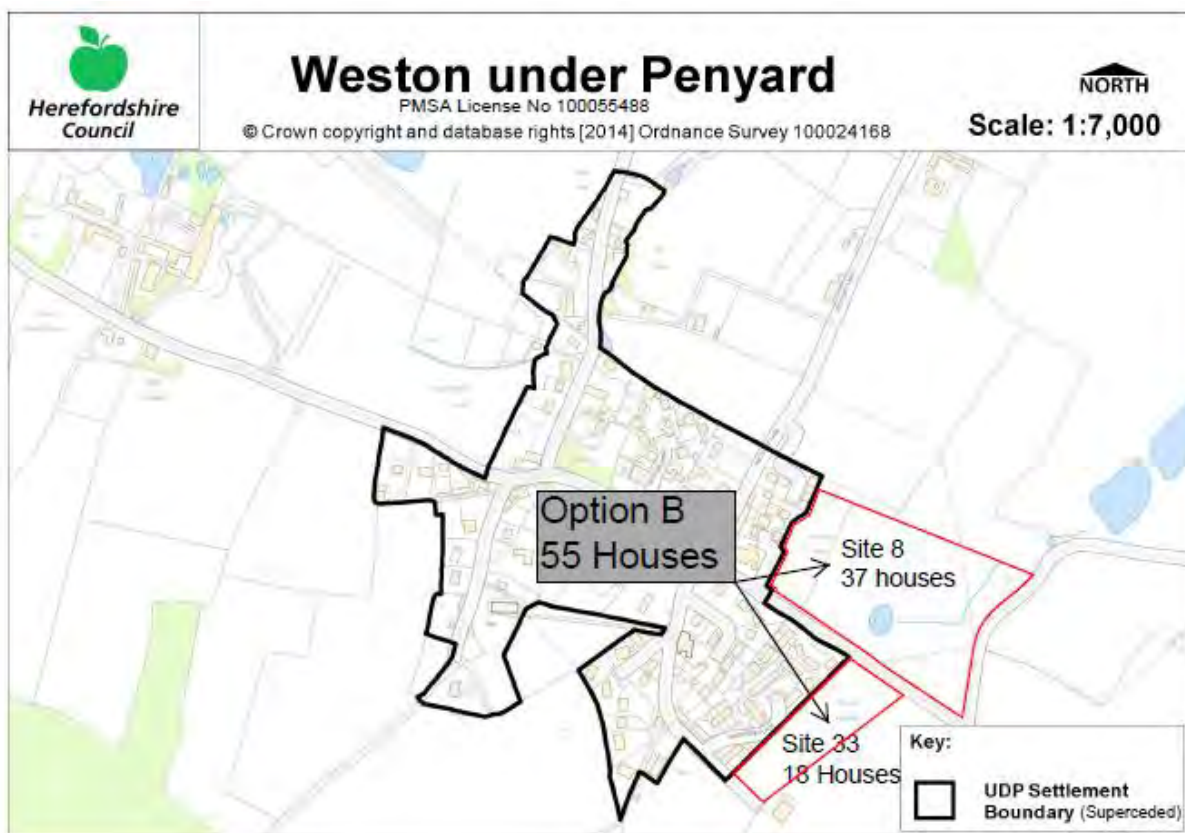


Option B

This option is created by a combination of Sites 33 and 8, together providing a potential for up to 55 houses. Site 33 is considered to be a sensitive site in term of the views from the east towards the Church and The Penyard and only 18 houses is considered acceptable with the proviso that the houses are designed and laid out in manner that screens the existing houses on that approach to the village. 37 houses would be permitted on site 8, bring the total to 55.

These two sites are the highest ranked in the Housing Sites Assessment Report (1 and 2 respectively) and since this option can provide the number of houses required this is considered an acceptable option for the Plan.

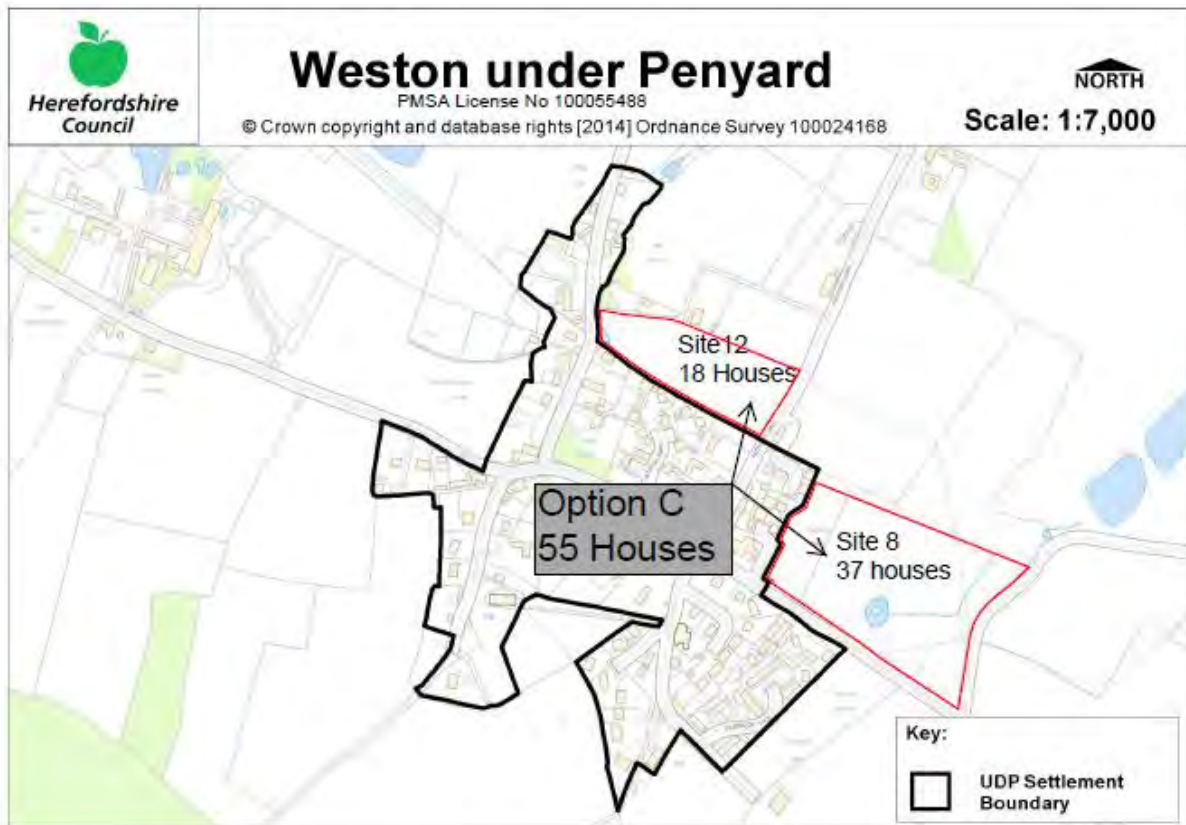
In recognition that the two sites are close to each other, a requirement for Option B would be for a village expansion plan be developed to take full advantage of the redevelopment opportunity for the eastern aspect of the village.



Option C

This option is created by a combination of Sites 8 and 12, together providing a potential for up to 55 houses.

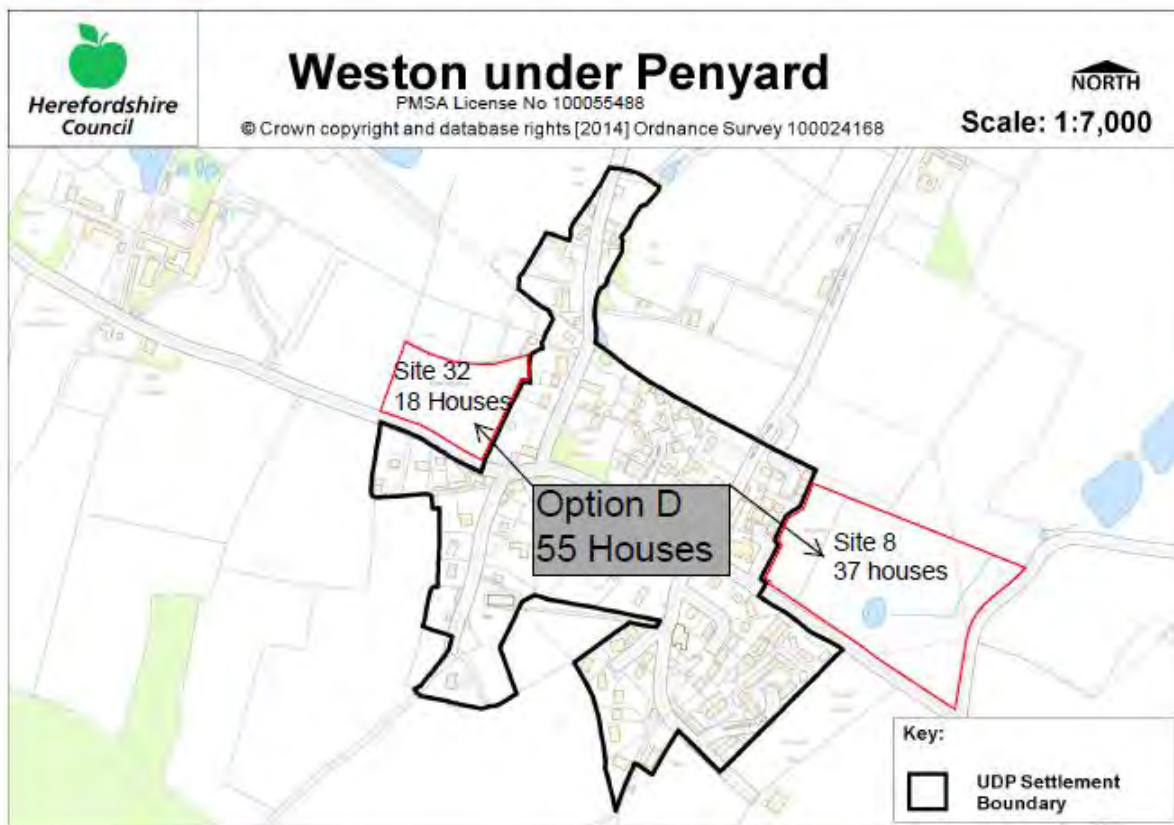
Although this option can provide the required number of houses the two sites are ranked 2 and 4 respectively in the Housing Sites Assessment Report and so is not a preferred option.



Option D

This option is created by a combination of Sites 8 and 32, together providing a potential for up to 55 houses.

Although this option can provide the required number of houses the two sites are ranked 2 and 5 respectively in the Housing Sites Assessment Report and so is not a preferred option.

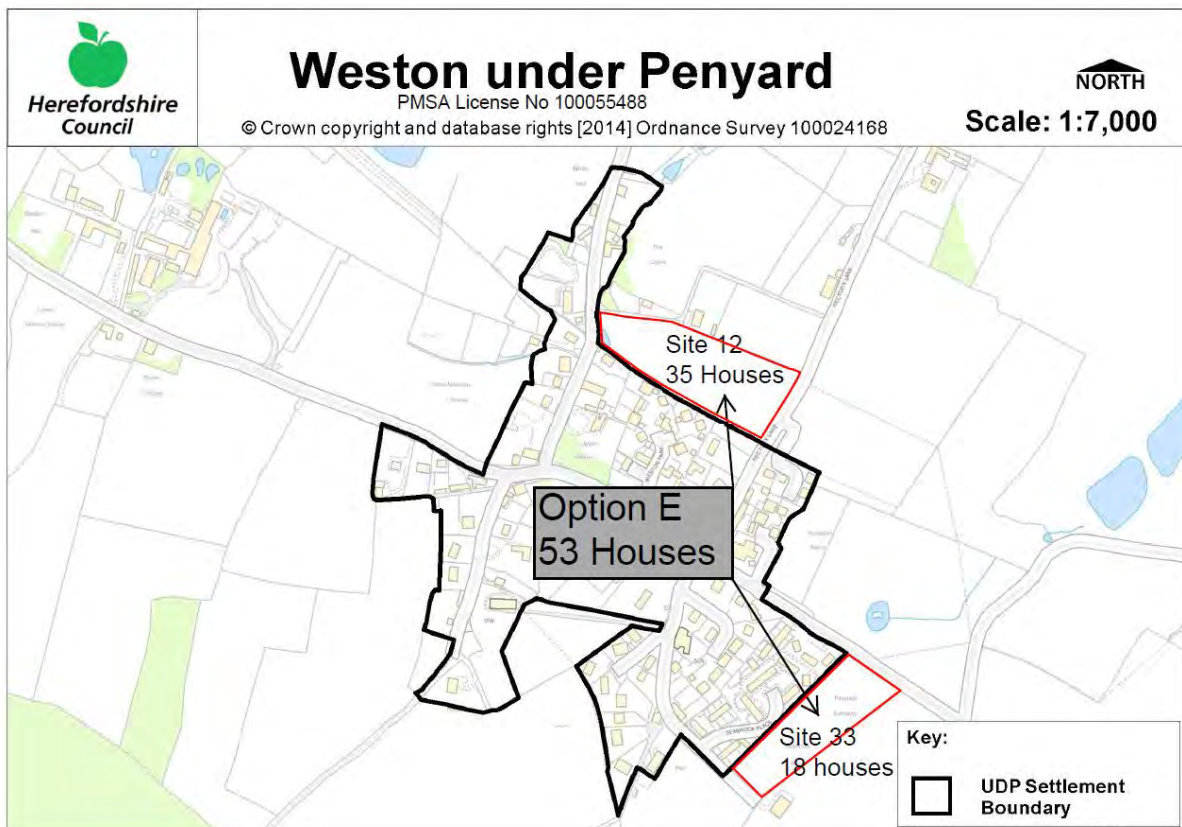


Option E

This option is created by a combination of Sites 12 and 33, together providing a potential for up to 53 houses. A further two houses would be delivered from windfall development to bring the total to 55 houses.

It is considered that Option E is not preferred because:

- a) The combination of these two sites is ranked lower than that of Option B.

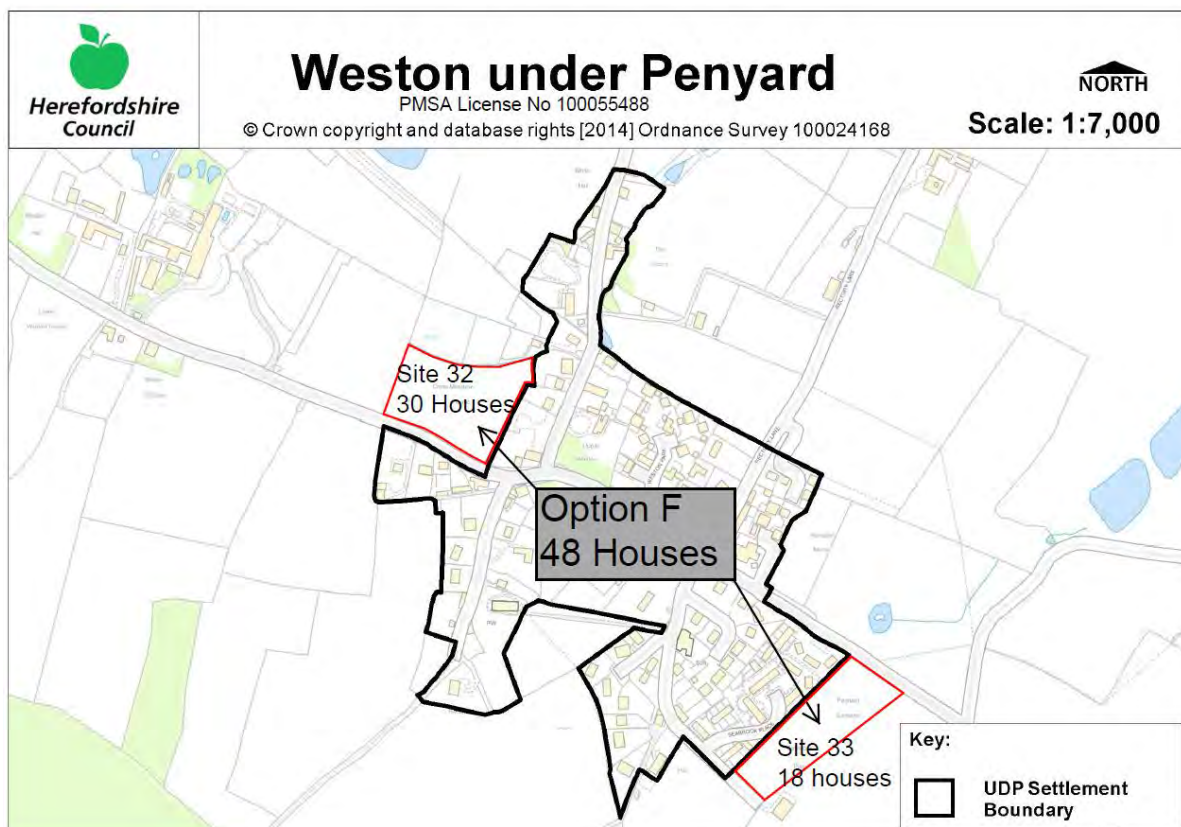


Option F

This option is created by a combination of Sites 32 and 33, together providing a potential for up to 48 houses. A further seven houses would be delivered from windfall development to bring the total to 55.

It is considered that Option F is not preferred because:

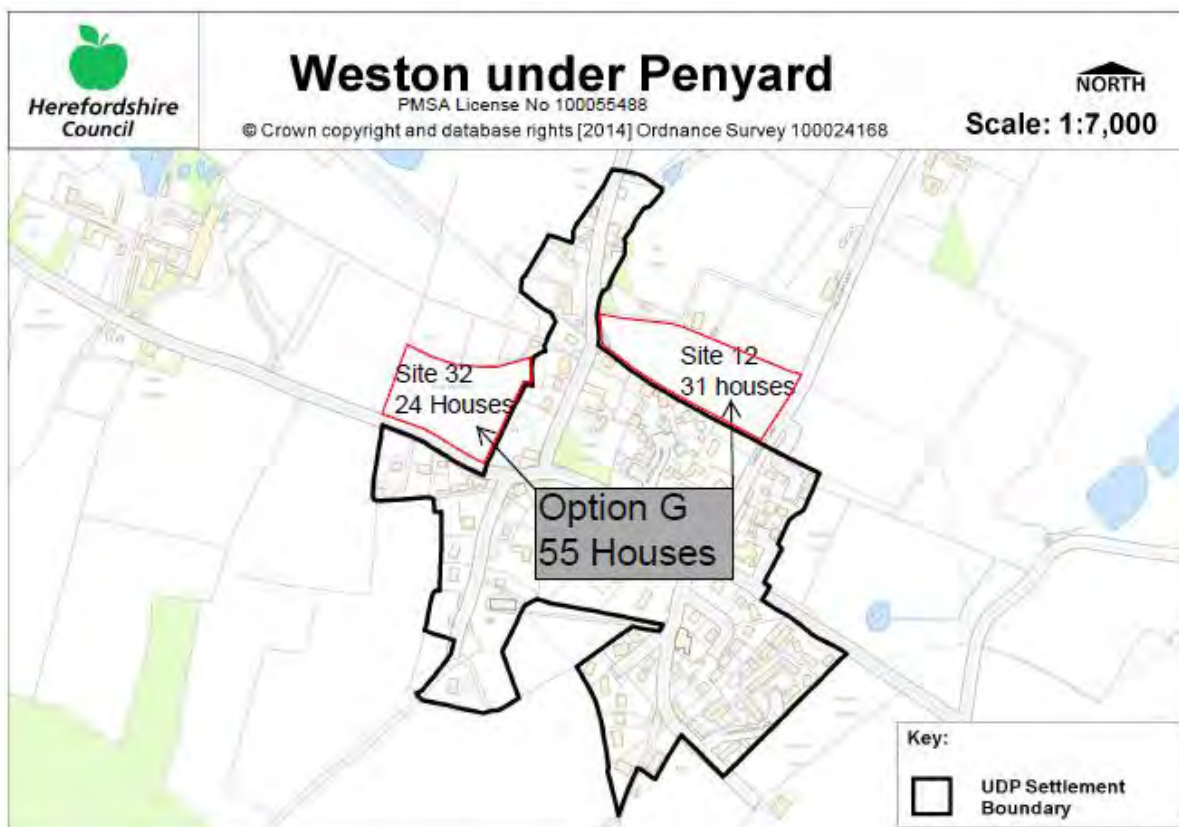
- a) The combination of these two sites is ranked lower than that of Option B.



Option G

This option is created by a combination of Sites 32 and 12, together providing a potential for up to 55 houses.

Although this option can provide the required number of houses the two sites are ranked 5 and 4 respectively in the Housing Sites Assessment Report and so Option B is preferred over Option D.



Conclusions

Having considered the ranking on the sites, the housing capacities of each site and the site preferences stated in the Residents' Survey 2014, the preferred options to form the basis of this Plan are Option A and Option B.

Appendix B Assets of Community Value (Listed Buildings, historically interesting buildings and Monuments)

(A) Listed Buildings

1. **Baptist Church A40, Ryeford**
Grade II
2. **Barn on South Side of Farmyard at Bollitree Castle Farmhouse with Arcaded Farm Building Adjoining to**
Grade II
3. **Barn on West Side of Farmyard and Curtain Wall Enclosing Yard at Bollitree Castle**
Grade I
4. **Bill Mills**
Grade II
5. **Bollitree Castle Farmhouse**
Grade II*
6. **Building Extending to West at South-West Corner of Farmyard at Bollitree Castle**
Grade II
7. **Cherry Orchard**
Grade II
8. **Church of St Lawrence**
Grade II*
9. **Cross Base Approximately 20 Metres South-East of Kingstone Cottages**
Grade II
10. **Cross Base Approximately 75 Metres South-West of Rudhall House**
Grade II
11. **Dovecote Approximately 50 Metres South of Bollitree Castle Farmhouse**
Grade II
12. **Farm Building Approximately 20 Metres North-West of Weston Hall**
Grade II
13. **Farm Building Approximately 5 Metres North of Weston Hall**
Grade II
14. **Font, Approximately One Metre North of Tower of Church of St Lawrence**
Grade DL
15. **Former Baptist Chapel to Rear of Baptist Church**
Grade II
16. **Gates with Flanking Walls and Two Pairs of Piers Approximately 100 Metres South-West of Weston Hall**
Grade II
17. **Gateway in Garden Wall on North Side of Road Approximately 75 Metres North-East of Bollitree Castle**
Grade II
18. **Group of Two Chest Tombs Approximately 7 Metres North of West End of North Aisle of Church of St Lawrence**
Grade II
19. **Group of Two Tomb Chests Approximately 10 Metres North of Tower of Church of St Lawrence**
Grade II
20. **Lower Weston**
21. **Milestone (Cast Iron)**
Grade II

22. **Milestone Approximately 20 Metres East of Weston House**
Grade II
23. **Parkfields**
Grade II
24. **Penyard Castle**
Grade II
25. **Rudhall House (South Walled Gardens)**
Grade I
26. **Street House**
Grade II*
27. **Sunnyside (Bartwood Lane, Pontshill)**
Grade II
28. **The Old Rectory**
Grade II
29. **Tomb Chest Approximately 18 Metres North of Tower of Church of St Lawrence**
Grade II
30. **Two Tomb Chest Approximately 10 Metres North of Tower of Church of St Lawrence**
Grade II
31. **Walls Enclosing Garden South of Weston Hall, with Two Pairs of Gate Piers and Gates**
Grade II
32. **Weston Hall**
Grade II*

(B) Ancient Monument

1. **Ariconium (Roman town)**

(C) Monuments

The following monuments, unless otherwise described, are of the 17th century and of two storeys; the walls are of rubble and the roofs are covered with tiles or slates. Some of the buildings have exposed ceiling-beams and old chimney-stacks.

1. **Cottage on North side of the churchyard**
Part timber-framing which is exposed on the N. and S. sides
2. **Cottage on the W. side of the road, 300 yards N.N.E. of the church**
Partly of timber-framing, which is exposed on the N. and part of the E. wall.
3. **Cottage, two tenements, on the W. side of the road at Kingstone, nearly 1 m. N. of the church**
Is of two storeys with cellars and attics and is dated 1700. The E. front is ashlar-faced and has numerous masons' marks. The roof is of unusual construction, being of a rude hammer-beam type with braces below and struts between the hammer-beams and collar.
4. **Cottage, on the E. side of the road, 40 yards S.W. of the church**
Has a panel in the W. wall, with the initials and date: I. and H. T. 1698.
5. **Cottage, on the N. side of the road at Pontshill Marsh, nearly 1 m. S.E. of the church**

Possibly of medieval origin, but was largely re-built in the 17th century; the roof is thatched. In the W. end is exposed framing showing a late development of the medieval crutch-construction.

6. **House, on the E. side of the road, 160 yards S.W. of (14), has been partly re-built**
The W. half is original and has ashlar dressings and a shaped finial to the gable; the windows have late 17th-century frames with wooden mullions and transoms.

(D) **Important Buildings**

1. **Weston Cross Public House**
2. **Weston under Penyard C of E School (Victorian, built of stone)**
3. **Weston House**
4. **Lower Weston**

Appendix C Views and Vista that should be protected

1. Penyard Hill - views towards and from
2. Lea Bailey - views towards and from
3. St Lawrence's Church - views towards and from
4. Views eastward from Village Hall including May Hill, Lea Bailey and Pontshill
5. Views from Kingstone area towards Ross and Wales(Black Mountains/Skirrid)
6. A40 eastwards over green fields
7. Village as approached from Ross and from Ryeford
8. Village from Bury Hill Lane
9. Parkfields and the valley beyond from Pontshill and Ryeford

Appendix D Glossary of Planning Terms

Adoption - The final confirmation of a development plan by a local planning authority.

Affordable housing- includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Amenity Land - Land which is valued locally for its visual importance and contribution to the character of the area but may also have other uses i.e. formal or informal recreation, environmental, cultural and historical and for wildlife and nature conservation value.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

An area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Together with National Parks, AONB represent the nation's finest landscapes. AONB are designated by the [Natural England](#).

Ancient Woodland - Woodland known to have existed continually in a location since before 1600.

Annual Monitoring Report - A report that assesses the extent to which policies and proposals set out in Development Plan Documents are being achieved.

Aquifer - A layer of rock that can hold a large amount of water, which can be extracted subject to licence.

Archaeological interest - An area which holds or potentially holds evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation.

Best and most versatile Agricultural Land - Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Big Society - Aims to empower local people and communities, building a big society that takes power away from politicians and gives it to the people

Brownfield Land (and Sites) - land that has been previously developed.

Change of Use – a material change in the use of land or buildings that is significant for planning purposes e.g. from retail to residential

Communities and Local Government

'Communities and Local Government' is the Government department with responsibility for planning, housing, urban regeneration and local government ("DCLG").

Code for sustainable homes - The code is a national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. The code aims to reduce our carbon emissions and create homes that are more sustainable.

Community facilities - Land and buildings used to help meet health, educational and social needs in terms of developing and maintaining the health and well-being of everyone in the community

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – allows Local Authorities to raise funds developers undertaking new building projects in their areas. Money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure such as transport schemes, schools, health centres, leisure centres and parks. Parishes with a neighbourhood plan will receive 25% of any community infrastructure levy arising from developments in their area compared to parishes without a neighbourhood plan who will receive 15%.

Community Right to Build Order - An Order which grants planning permission for a site specific development proposal or types of development

Conservation Area – an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which are preserved by local planning policies and guidance.

Core strategy - a Development Plan Document produced by Herefordshire Council in consultation with the community which sets out the strategic policies for the county. This forms part of the Local Development Framework.

Consultation statement - A document which needs to be submitted to Herefordshire Council with a draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. It sets out details of who was consulted, how they were consulted and the main issues and concerns raised and how they were addressed within the plan.

Developer contributions - Contributions required/received from development under a Section 106 agreement to be set aside for future works, services and maintenance directly related to development.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – Includes adopted Herefordshire Local Plan- Core Strategy and Neighbourhood Development Plans which are used to determine planning applications.

Environmental Impact Assessment - Evaluates the likely environmental impacts of the development, together with an assessment of how these impacts could be reduced

Evidence base - The background information that any Development Plan Document is based on and is made up of studies on specific issues, such as play areas or housing mix, facts about an area or views from stakeholders; for example SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments).

Flood Risk Assessment - An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

Greenfield site - Land where there has been no previous development, often in agricultural use

Green infrastructure - A network of green spaces and other environmental features designed and managed as multi-functional resources providing a range of environmental and quality of life benefits for the local community. This can include parks, open spaces, woodlands, nature reserves, playing fields, allotments and private gardens.

Green-space - Those parts of an area which are occupied by natural, designed or agricultural landscape as opposed to built development; open space, parkland, woodland, sports fields, gardens, allotments and the like.

Groundwater protection zone - Areas of underground natural water to be protected to maintain water supplies from aquifer.

Habitats Regulations Assessment - Habitats Regulations Assessment assesses the impact of implementing a plan or policy on international protected sites for nature conservation. In

Herefordshire, this would apply to Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). This is to ensure that plans will not result in significant damage to protected wildlife sites.

Historic park and garden - Gardens, parks and designated landscapes which are of national historical interest and are included in English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of special historical interest in England.

Independent Examination – An assessment of a proposed Neighbourhood Plan carried out by an independent person to consider whether a Neighbourhood Plan meets the required conformity and legal requirements.

Infrastructure - Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

Listed Building - building of special architectural or historic interest.

Local Development Framework (LDF) - The name for the collection of documents which guide the future development in the county.

Herefordshire Local Plan - Core Strategy - A Development Plan Document which is produced by Herefordshire Council in consultation with the community which sets out the strategic policies for the county. This forms part of the Local Development Framework.

Local Planning Authority - Local government body responsible for formulating planning policies and controlling development; a district council, metropolitan council, county council, a unitary authority or national park authority. For Weston under Penyard this is Herefordshire Council.

Local referendum - A direct vote in which communities will be asked to either accept or reject a particular proposal/plan.

Local Transport Plan - Plan that sets out Herefordshire Council's policies on transport on a five yearly basis.

Low cost market housing - Private housing designed to be at a lower cost than open market housing to meet the needs of specific household groups.

Material consideration - Factors which are relevant to planning such as sustainability, design and traffic impacts.

Mitigation - Measures taken to reduce adverse impacts for example changing the way the development is carried out to minimise adverse effects through appropriate methods or timing.

Monitoring - Procedures by which the consequences of policies and proposals are checked on a continuous or periodic basis to assess their effectiveness and impact.

Natural England - A statutory adviser on landscape in England, with responsibility for landscape designations such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coasts. Also concerned with England's future landscapes and involved in planning policy and a range of environmental land management projects.

National Planning Policy Framework - Sets out national planning policy and how these are expected to be applied. Provides a planning policy framework for Local Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Neighbourhood Area - Area to which a proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order will relate.

Neighbourhood Development Order - An Order through which parish councils can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Neighbourhood Development Plan - A local plan prepared by a parish council for a particular Neighbourhood Area, which includes land use topics

Open Space - All space of public value, including public landscaped areas, playing fields, parks and play areas, and also including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which can offer opportunities for sport and recreation or can also act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife.

Parish Plan - Community led plans which contain a wide range of community issues and aspirations. There is no requirement for parish plans to include land use policies. Endorsed Parish Plans can be material consideration in determining planning applications.

N. B. The Weston under Penyard Parish Plan has been endorsed by the Parish Council and Herefordshire Council.

Permitted development - Certain minor building works that do not require a planning application.

Planning condition - A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission or a condition included in a Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning Obligation (section 106) - A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Planning Permission - Formal approval granted by a council (e.g. Herefordshire Council) in allowing a proposed development to proceed

Public Open Space - Open space to which the public has free access.

Registered Housing Providers - Not-for-profit organisations providing homes mainly to those in housing need

Section 106 Agreement – Planning obligation under section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, secured by a local planning authority through negotiations with a developer to offset the public cost of permitting a development proposal. Sometimes developers self-impose obligations to pre-empt objections to planning permission being granted.

Settlement boundary – Settlement or development boundaries (village envelopes) seek to set clear limits to towns and villages. They are designed to define the existing settlement and to identify areas of land where development may be acceptable in principle, subject to other policies and material planning considerations.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - SSSIs are the county's very best wildlife and geological sites. They include some of the most spectacular and beautiful habitats.

Spatial planning - Brings together all policies and programmes which have an impact on the environment in which you work, live or play.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) - SACs are sites designated under the Habitats Directives on the conservation of natural habitats and of fauna and flora

Soundness – The soundness of a statutory local planning document is determined by the planning inspector against three criteria: whether the plan is justified (founded on robust and credible evidence and be the most appropriate strategy), whether the plan is effective (deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored), and whether it is consistent with national and local planning policy.

Stakeholder - People who have an interest in an organisation or process including residents, business owners and national organisations and government departments

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – A formal statement of the process of community consultation undertaken in the preparation of a statutory plan..

Statutory consultee - This is a body that must be consulted on plans and applications which could affect their interests. For example Highways Agency, Environment Agency.

Statutory development plan - The plan(s) which have been adopted by Herefordshire Council and used to determine planning applications and guide future development

Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. This has been in place since the European SEA directive (2001/42/EC)

Sustainable Communities - Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. Communities that meet the needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life.

Sustainable Development - An approach to development that aims to allow economic growth without damaging the environment or natural resources. Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable urban Drainage System (SuDS) - The collection of surface water and its natural drainage back into the ground via soak-away or to existing watercourses using infiltration methods where necessary.

Use Classes Order - The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987(as amended) is the statutory instrument that defines the categories of use of buildings or land for the purposes of planning legislation. Planning permission must be obtained to change the use of a building or land to another class.

Village Design Statement - A document which contains a description and analysis of the distinctive features of an area and outlines design guidance for further development. Endorsed Village Design Statements can form material consideration in determining planning applications.

Vision - An overarching statement or series of statements describing the aspirations of an area in 15/20 years' time.

Windfall sites - Any area of land that is suitable for development within the terms of planning policies, but has not specifically been identified and allocated within a Development Plan Document. The development of these can be unpredictable.

NOTES

1. This glossary is neither a statement of law nor an interpretation of the law, and its status is only an introductory guide to some planning issues and other matters that might be relevant to the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan
2. Herefordshire Council has produced a Glossary of planning terms that can be viewed on its web-site; Herefordshire Council - Neighbourhood Planning – Guidance Note 18