



YARKHILL NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2017 - 2031

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



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Public Consultation

How to Comment on this Document

Welcome to the Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Yarkhill Parish. We need your help in preparing the Plan and your views on this Draft Plan are a key part of this process.

This consultation will run for 8 weeks from Friday 21st July 2017 until 5pm Friday 15th September 2017*.

This document and an accompanying response form are available online at <https://sites.google.com/site/yarkhillneighbourhoodplan/>

Hard copies are available on request from the parish clerk at: yarkhill@live.co.uk

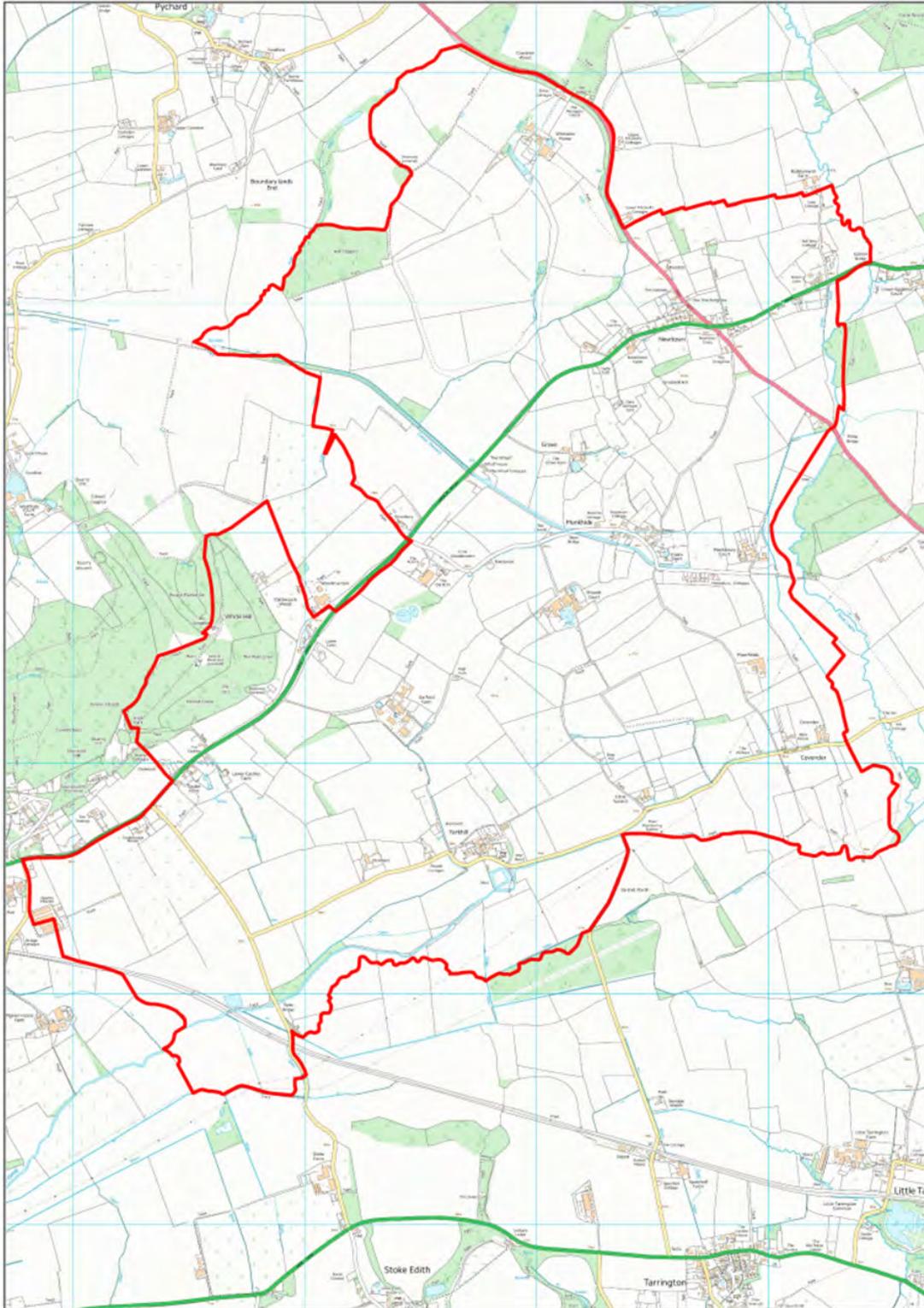
Please email your completed response form or written representations to Yarkhillplan@gmail.com

or leave them in the reply boxes provided at the village hall and church.

Thank you very much for your time and interest. Your comments will help us with the next stage of our Plan – the Submission version of the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Yarkhill.

* The closing date has been extended until 5pm Friday 22nd September 2017. This is due to a technical glitch related to Herefordshire Council's IT protocol resulting in a delay to the provision of the necessary SEA and HRA documents.

Map 1 Yarkhill Neighbourhood Plan Area and Parish Boundary



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Executive Summary

This is the Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Yarkhill Neighbourhood Area. The Plan has been prepared by a Steering Group of local residents and Parish Councillors taking into consideration the results of residents and business questionnaires, a technical site assessment of proposed housing sites put forward following a Call for Sites process, and a public consultation on the emerging Preferred Options Plan in Spring 2017.

The Plan has a draft vision and objectives and sets out proposed site allocations for new housing. The Plan also includes draft planning policies for guiding new development in the Parish up to 2031. The planning policies have been prepared under the themes of Housing, Employment, Transport and Infrastructure, Local Community Facilities and Agriculture and the Rural Area.

Following this formal consultation, the Draft Plan will be amended and submitted to Herefordshire Council. Following a further 6 weeks consultation, the Plan will be subjected to an examination by an independent examiner. If the examiner recommends that the Plan meets the basic conditions (probably subject to various modifications), there will be a local referendum on the final version of the Plan. A simple majority “Yes” vote (50% of turnout +1) will mean that the NDP will be used to help determine planning applications alongside the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy and national planning policies.

1.0 Introduction and Background



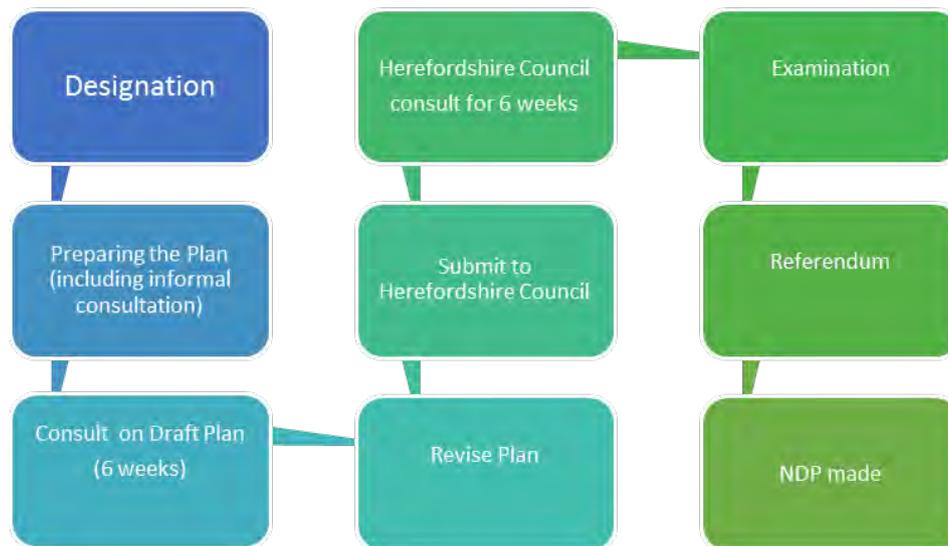
Village Hall

About this Document

- 1.1 This is the Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Yarkhill Parish and neighbourhood area (as shown on Map 1). The document sets out the proposed site allocations for new housing and draft planning policies to guide new development in the Parish up to 2031.

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

- 1.2 Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) are a new type of planning policy document which are prepared by Parish Councils (and other relevant bodies) to guide new development within a defined area such as a parish, alongside local authority (here, Herefordshire Council) and national planning policy documents. Yarkhill Parish Council has decided to prepare a NDP for this area, and this document has been prepared for public consultation as part of the process.
- 1.3 NDPs have to be in general conformity with the local strategic planning framework (in this area provided by Herefordshire Council) and take account of national planning policies provided in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). They have to plan positively and promote sustainable development.
- 1.4 The preparation of a NDP is a complex and lengthy process, and usually takes around 1 ½ to 2 years. The main steps are set out in Figure 1 below and Yarkhill is near the beginning of this process (Consult on Draft Plan for a minimum of 6 weeks). Preparing the Draft Plan is a very important stage and requires a lot of work and informal and formal public consultation to ensure the emerging document reflects the local community's views. Hopefully then it will be supported by local residents at the referendum.

Figure 1 Neighbourhood Plan Process**Work on Preparing our Plan So Far**

- 1.5 This is the Draft Yarkhill Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). The document has been prepared building on the results of all the informal and formal consultation and engagement activity undertaken to date.

Designation

- 1.6 The Parish Council applied to Herefordshire Council for designation as a neighbourhood area for the proposed NDP on 20th May 2016. The neighbourhood area was designated by Herefordshire Council on 5th July 2016 and is shown on Map 1. The designated neighbourhood area is the same as the Parish Boundary.

Setting up a Steering Group

- 1.7 A Steering Group of interested local residents and Parish Councillors was set up to oversee the preparation of the NDP on behalf of the Parish Council on 18th August 2016. The Steering Group meets regularly (usually monthly) in the village hall and meetings are open to the public. Minutes and agendas are placed on the NDP website: <https://sites.google.com/site/yarkhillneighbourhoodplan/home>.

Questionnaire Survey

- 1.8 A Questionnaire survey was delivered to all households in the Parish in November 2016 and copies were also made available on the NDP website. 55 completed questionnaires were returned. This represents 23.4% of the number of people registered on the electoral roll.

Questionnaire Results

- 1.9 The methodology used to establish the overall position was to count a positive response as 1 and a negative response as minus 1. Where there was a choice to give an order of importance, the scores for each choice were divided by the number of choices multiplied by the response level. The resulting score was then divided by 0.55 to give the value as a

percentage of the total return. A response of “no opinion” had no value assigned to it. The results are set out below:

Q1. What type of housing do you think is needed in Yarkhill?

The most popular choice was for family homes (63.6%) followed by affordable homes (50.45%). Rental was in third place with 11.8% whereas there was a slight majority against retirement homes (-5.9%)

Q2. Herefordshire Council’s Core Strategy identifies the main focus for new housing as Newtown Cross (table 4.14) and Monkhide (table 4.15) Where would you like to see any new homes built?

The most favoured option was for adjacent to existing settlements (34.5%) followed by within (25.45%). There was a majority against isolated homes (-3.6%).

Q3. In meeting demand for additional homes what preferences do you have for how they are grouped together?

The most positive response was for groups of up to 3 houses (78%) closely followed by single dwellings (61%). 3-10 was on the borderline of support vs objection and 10 plus saw a majority rejection (-56%)

Q4. Do you have an opinion on the design of new houses?

In keeping with local tradition was by far the most popular choice (87%) with Eco design finding favour with 56.4%. Contemporary design was rejected by the majority (-16.3%).

Q5. Do you consider that there is a need for more local employment?

50.9% were of the opinion that more local employment would be needed.

Q6. Which transport issues would need addressing to support additional housing?

Safer roads were the preferred answer (82%) closely followed by a better bus service (73.9%) with much less support for cycle routes (33.32%).

Q7. Which community facilities would need improving to support new housing development?

Apart from the top answer, roads (78.8%), the survey was generally much closer across the choices for this question. Access to healthcare and additional shops scored 43% and 41.3% respectively. Then came public open space (35.9%), the village hall (31.3%), a play area (30.45%) and footpath improvements (30.27%). The least favoured options were child care and a schools both scoring 17.7%.

Q8. Are there any special features that you believe should be protected from development? (Please identify)

Comments included:

- Large trees
- The moat and its island

- Those areas likely to have flooding
- The antique orchard at Whitchurch Manor
- The canal and its bridges
- Land with good views, views of countryside
- Productive agricultural land
- Countryside, wildlife, trees, hedges
- Open land next to heritage sites
- Prevent overcrowding of houses to preserve rural area
- Traditional orchards, farm buildings, old school / village hall
- Line of sight around Yarkhill church and moat /river
- Conservation areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Note - None in Parish)
- River Frome
- View corridors to Woolhope and Shucknall
- Walkways and footpaths
- Open fields along roadsides
- Wrong approach – Hereford needs a bypass.

Q9. Agriculture: Please give your opinions on the following:

Removal of hedgerows and woods were the least favoured options with over 70% against in both cases. Broiler sheds and polytunnels on a large scale also met with disapproval with over 30% being not in favour of either. Indoor cattle rearing sheds drew a more neutral response with just under 4% being against.

Q10. Would you support the development of tourism?

There is a lot of support for B&B (84.65%) and food premises (63.73%). An activity centre also drew a majority in favour albeit at a much lower level (13.24%). Chalets, holiday homes and camping all had a majority against.

Q11. Renewable energy: Would you support any of the following?

The most popular form of renewable energy by some margin was hydropower (46.2%). Some way behind there was support for anaerobic digesters (19.6%) and solar panel farms (11.6%). Wind power had a small majority in favour at 4.73%. The only negative reaction was to biomass burners (-14.6%).

Q12. Infrastructure: What do you think will need urgent attention to support additional development?

The top responses were for fast broadband (75.27%), a mains water supply (70.55%) followed by improved mobile phone reception (63.27%). Main sewers and mains gas also had a majority support albeit at a much lower level (48% and 29% respectively).

Q13. Your comments: Please feel free to raise any additional issues that you consider to be relevant.

- Move Parish Council meetings to Saturdays to enable participation from busy business people and householders

- Broadband urgent and key
- Turn in from main road to Monkhide Lane – provide space for traffic turning and reduce speed limit. Already too much traffic on Monkhide Lane so it is unsafe for pedestrians. Traffic too fast. Not enough passing places. Possibly restrict development to top end (near Pallisers) where road is wider.
- If new houses are built in areas away from community facilities it will only increase traffic on our roads and make it a less safe place to live. We should be able to walk / cycle to our local amenities.
- Yarkhill is not a traditional village with an obvious focal point. There are 3 or 4 developments (Watery Lane, Monkhide Lane, Newtown Cross – Village Hall) and no direct road link between all of them. Thus needs of some parts are not needs of others.

Open Event, December 2016

- 1.10 At the village hall Christmas event on Sunday 11 December 2016 an opportunity was given for people to view on a map the proposed housing sites that had been put forward to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group following the Call for Sites. The map attracted a lot of interest with people looking at the map for some time.

The main comments we received were

1. There is a preference for 1 or 2 house developments rather than large developments.
2. There is a need for improvement in road access for any developments that take place in Monkhide or in Watery Lane near Yarkhill Church.

Business Survey

- 1.11 A survey of local businesses was undertaken in early 2017. All local businesses were invited to complete a form and the response rate was 50%. The responses are provided below:

NDP Business results

Responses

Q1 What attracted you to Yarkhill as a place to run your business from

I took over an existing established business	2
I live locally	4
Property on market suitable for business expansion	1
Suitable site	1
National customer base could operate without restrictions	1

Q2 Which geographical area does your business serve

Local Area	3
The West Midlands	1
National	3

Q3 Would you say that your business is

Maintaining an existing customer base	4
Steadily growing	4

Q4 What challenges does your business currently face

Premises too small	2
Supply chain issues	1
Poor broadband reception	2
Business rates too high	2
Accessibility transport links	1
Retirement in 2-5 years	1

Q5 What are your plans for the foreseeable future

To maintain your business within the Parish at the current level	5
To expand your business within the Parish	3
To permanently close the business	1

Q6 What would help any future plans that you may have to remain

Adjacent land to expand premises	3
Superfast broadband	2
Improved mobile phone reception	3

Call for Sites and Site Assessments - Summer 2016 to Spring 2017

- 1.12 The NDP Steering Group decided that to assist in achieving the Core Strategy's target of new houses it would be appropriate to locate potential development sites through a "Call for Sites."
- 1.13 The Call for Sites was publicised in the July 2016 and September 2016 editions of the village magazine "Yarkhill News", which was circulated to all households in Yarkhill Parish. The Chair of the Steering Group, in his update on NDP progress, invited developers with proposals in Yarkhill to contact him by email. 12 potential sites were put forward varying from 1 house to 8. A number of proposals were outside the two identified settlements for housing growth in the Herefordshire Core Strategy (Newtown and Monkhide), however it was decided that all submitted sites should be included in the technical assessments of potential sites to be carried out by independent planning consultants. Each landowner / developer was asked to prepare a plan showing the location of the development and to complete a Herefordshire Council SHLAA form. They were advised by email to read the Core Strategy and that the process did not prevent them from submitting a planning proposal to Herefordshire Council. All the landowners / developers co-operated and returned the relevant documents which were submitted to the Consultants for assessment. A further site was submitted for consideration in March 2017.

- 1.14 In total therefore 13 sites were submitted for assessment; 7 located were in and around Yarkhill village, 2 sites were at Newtown, 3 sites were in the area around Monkhide, and a further site was close to the canal just off the A4103.
- 1.15 The submitted sites were assessed by Kirkwells Planning Consultants in April 2017. The Site Assessment Report sets out the planning constraints for each submitted site and scores each site according to technical criteria. The highest scoring sites, and those considered to be most appropriate for new housing development in the Parish are set out in this First Draft Plan as Preferred Option sites.

Emerging Preferred Options Draft Plan

Yarkhill NDP village consultation 20 May 2017

- 1.16 The Yarkhill Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held a Village Consultation in the village hall on 20 May 2017. The event was advertised by a flyer in Yarkhill News circulated to all households and posters were put in prominent positions in the village and at the village shop. Forty villagers attended and were given a presentation by the Chair of the Steering Group during which he invited the village to comment on the draft NDP copies of which were available at the meeting. The presentation covered
- What is an NDP and why should the village have one
 - What happens if we don't have an NDP
 - Key Considerations
 - The Process of Developing an NDP
 - Progress on the Yarkhill NDP
 - Plan summary
 - Next steps
 - Questions and comments from the floor.
- 1.17 Following the presentation the people attending the consultation were invited to see large scale maps highlighting the proposed settlement boundaries and proposed developments together with the outcome of the call for sites and the Consultant's assessment of those sites. Members of the steering group were available to answer any questions. Cards were made available for people to make comments and these were then logged. The Steering Group has amended the NDP to take account of comments made including an adjustment to the settlement boundary in Monkhide.
- 1.18 The emerging Preferred Options Plan was also placed on the neighbourhood plan website and hard copies were made available on request from the Chair of the Steering Group and Parish Clerk. Submitted comments are set out below:
- The Wharf – not a greenfield site. Developed in connection with canal. Long barn cider store. No trees on one side of canal.

- Excellent proposals which do not damage our Parish. However Monksbury Court private road should not form part of the settlement boundary as it can never form part of the highways. Thank you. Job well done. Don't forget we need a new pub!
- Why is the private road from Court end to Monksbury Court included in the settlement boundary? It seems to suggest a public roadway rather than a bridleway / footpath. Beyond the Council houses has a definite feel of "open Country". Any development down the lane in Monkhide will have serious impact in terms of traffic making it too dangerous to walk.
- Please consider working farm in Monkhide which already has a lot of traffic to contend with as they drive their machinery to the fields.

1.19 The information provided at all these stages of plan preparation has been carefully considered and used to inform the scope and content of this document.

2.0 A Portrait of Yarkhill Parish



- 2.1 Yarkhill Parish is located about 9 miles (14km) east of the City of Hereford and 9 miles (14 km) north west of Ledbury. The Parish area covers 914 hectares. The River Loddon flows along much of the eastern boundary of the Parish, and the River Frome flows past the village of Yarkhill to the south and south west. The Parish extends to White Hill to the west and Whitwick Manor in the north. The Hereford to Birmingham rail line clips the Parish to the south and the A4103 road bisects the Parish south west to north east.

Historical Development of Yarkhill Parish¹

- 2.2 The Herefordshire Historical Environment Record Database² lists 66 historical finds for Yarkhill. The earliest of these dates back to the Iron Age and there are also recorded finds from the Roman period. Clearly, Yarkhill, located within the fertile Frome valley, has attracted settlements throughout history.
- 2.3 The general area of this part of Herefordshire was important to the Romans as a frontier outpost. Their presence also had the effect of changing the landscape as greater land clearance was required for cultivation to pay the Roman Tribute Tax. The Romans left by AD 409 and the area was progressively taken over by the Saxons. It was during the Saxon period that the village of Yarkhill was established. There are a couple of theories on the origin of the name. One theory is that it was named after a Saxon Knight called Arkell. Another is that it got its name from “yarcle”, the Saxon word for a slope. Hereford’s defences became more robust to fend off attacks from Welsh and Viking invaders during the Saxon period. Despite this, settled communities began to become established with Yarkhill being one of them.
- 2.4 There are a number of medieval moats recorded in Yarkhill. Yarkhill Church was built in its original form during the early part of the 13th century. Later on, Yarkhill Church also became notable, particularly to campanologists, for Fabian Stedman who invented change ringing in 17th century (the art of ringing a set of tuned bells in a series of mathematical patterns

¹ See Yarkhill Parish Plan, 2014

² <http://htt.herefordshire.gov.uk/her-search/>

called "changes"). There is also evidence of both watermills and a windmill in different parts of the village. In terms of building material, as oak was in abundance, many houses were framed using this material. However, in the surrounding countryside, castles and monasteries were being replaced by large country houses, many estates of which still exist today. Local sandstone had become the favoured building material with imported bricks being used for detailing chimneys etc. There is evidence of a former brickworks at Newtown just to the north of the cross roads. This closed in 1886.

- 2.5 The industrial revolution largely passed Herefordshire by due to its poor communications and transport capability. The River Wye was never a reliable means of transport. During the latter part of the 18th century part of the ill-fated Hereford - Gloucester Canal was routed through Yarkhill. Broadly, rising construction costs and the advent of the railways led to its premature closure. The railway finally arrived in 1853, Hereford being the last cathedral city to gain a service.
- 2.6 The landscape of Yarkhill is classified as Herefordshire Lowland. The Old Red Sandstone bedrock comprises beds of red and greenish-grey silts and locally calcareous mudstone, and this gives rise to the area's rich red soils. In past times the fertile undulating open character of the valley was broken only by orchards and hop fields. The valley bottom meadows are now under pressure from agricultural intensification.
- 2.7 Cider orchards have been a significant part of the local economy since 14th century. Although much of the county is now dominated by modern bush orchards, in Yarkhill a number of old variety standard orchards remain. Hops have also played a major role in Yarkhill's farming history. The market for hops was initially generated by immigrant workers from Flanders who came during the 15th century to work in the woollen industry. The Frome Valley was well suited to hop growing and this is evidenced by the hop kilns on local farms that are now largely converted to accommodation. For many farmers and their workforce hop growing was a way of life which culminated in September with the picking season when large numbers of seasonal workers; typically, families from the Midlands and South Wales, gypsies and travellers arrived to work with the local population. Until the 1950s hops were hand-picked and the start of the school term was often delayed for the completion of picking. During picking the local population increased by up to a third with communities springing up in makeshift accommodation on the farms. Mechanised picking developed during the 1950s, thus reducing the labour requirement. Production reached its height in the second half of 19th century. By 1883, 81 parishes in the county, including Yarkhill, were producing hops on an area of over 12,000 acres. Production declined during the late 20th century due in a large part to cheaper imports. More recently the consumer's taste for lager has also affected the industry. By 1985 the area of production had reduced to 650 acres. The advent of the specialist micro-brewery is maintaining a level of production on a reduced scale.
- 2.8 The distinctive white-faced, red coated breed of Hereford cattle is one of the oldest British native bred cattle, originating in Herefordshire in the mid-1700s, and famous throughout the world for producing high quality meat from grass, these have long been a familiar sight grazing the fertile pastures of the Frome Valley and Yarkhill.

- 2.9 Census information for Herefordshire indicates a significant migration of population during the 19th century as people left the land to seek employment in factories and coal mines. It is likely that Yarkhill would have followed this trend. This decline in population continued until the last part of the 20th century with an influx of people as a more mobile population sought space and a better quality of life in the countryside.

Yarkhill Parish Today

- 2.10 Today, the three main settlements are Yarkhill, Monkhide and Newtown and there are several smaller farmsteads and settlements scattered across the Parish such as Green Lane and Covender. A network of footpaths and bridleways link the settlements and provide access to the attractive rolling countryside.
- 2.11 The trend of a declining population has continued into the 21st century and since 2005 has been more acute in Yarkhill than in Herefordshire generally. The change in the number of people of pensionable age has risen slightly over this period, much in line with the remainder of the County but by less than the national average. The population density (persons per hectare) for Yarkhill is about half that of the County as a whole and a tenth of the national average.
- 2.12 The population of the Parish was recorded as 326 in the 2011 Census³. In 2011 there were 127 households living in 130 dwellings in the Parish. The resident population was on average slightly younger than that for Herefordshire as a whole; the mean age of residents was 41.9 years in Yarkhill compared to 43.0 years in the County, although this is higher than the mean age for England (39.3 years). 20.2% of residents in Yarkhill were aged 65 years or older compared to 21.3% in Herefordshire, both significantly higher than the figure for England (16.4%).
- 2.13 In 2011 32.4% of residents aged 16-74 years were economically active in full time employment - a lower figure than that for Herefordshire (36.0%) and England (38.6%). A higher proportion of economically active residents were self-employed in Yarkhill Parish – 19.7% compared to 14.4% in Herefordshire and 9.8% in England. The most common types of industry providing employment were Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing with 10.5% of residents aged 16-74 years in employment in Yarkhill, compared to 5.4% in Herefordshire and 0.8% in England, Manufacturing (11.1%) and Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motor Cycles (21.6%).

Housing

- 2.14 Housing in the Parish is predominantly owner occupied, with 40.2% of households owning their houses outright (no mortgage), 32.3% owning their property with a mortgage or loan and 6.3% of households in social rented accommodation (other than council housing) in 2011. 15.7% of households were in houses which were Private Rented; Private Landlord or Letting Agency.

³ Neighbourhood Statistics – see <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/>

Built Heritage



Skew Bridge, Monkhide

- 2.15 The historic Hereford and Gloucester Canal bisects the Parish north west / south east. The Yarkhill section of the canal is being restored by the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust and runs from a point 314 metres west of the A4103, westwards for around 900 metres to the site of the former Barr's Lock and Cottage. The cottage was demolished many years ago, and no traces now remain. Similarly, no signs of the lock can be seen, although preliminary excavations to try to locate any remains have been started.
- 2.16 There are 13 Listed Buildings in the Parish (all Grade II) and a Scheduled Monument - a Moated Site at Yarkhill. St John the Baptist Church at Yarkhill is the oldest intact building in the village. Close to the river but high enough to be safe from flooding, it dates from circa 1200 with many extensions, alterations and repairs. The church is typical in design with a nave, chancel, vestry, and western tower and seats about 120 people at full capacity. In the churchyard there is an ancient and very large yew tree and a war memorial.

Natural Heritage

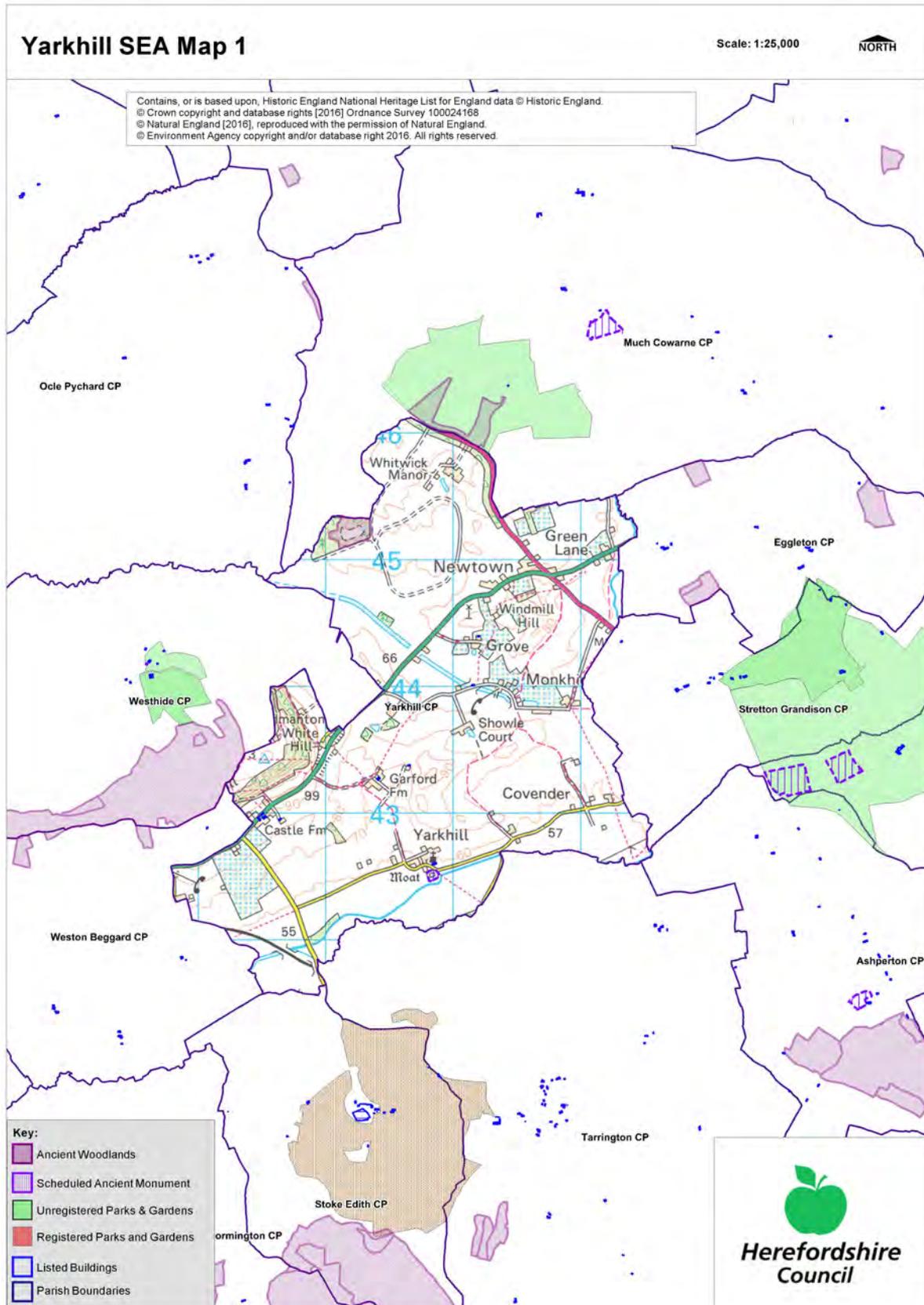
- 2.17 There are 4 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in the Parish:
- River Frome
 - Woodland on Shucknall
 - Old Canal at Monkhide
 - Ash Coppice.
- 2.18 There is one area of ancient woodland in Yarkhill at Ash Coppice.
- 2.19 Table 1 sets out a summary of the key environmental issues identified by the steering group which the NDP should aim to address.

Table 1 Summary of Environmental Issues

Issue	Objective	Policy
Loss of habitat	Minimise or mitigate	Retain or replace habitat i.e. retain hedgerows and established managed banks of nest boxes/ bug hotels. Create linked wildlife pathways/corridors. Patches of wildflowers.
Additional pollution to river	Healthy fish and wildlife population	Robust technical solutions to manage waste. Only treated run-off permitted. WW to regularly monitor.
Increased risk of flooding	Attenuate surface water run-off	SUD design/ permeable surfacing/on site retention for controlled rate of flow
Listed buildings and monuments	Protect access and views of these	Consider view corridors, preserve and enhance bridleways and footpaths
Increased traffic volumes	Minimise or mitigate	Encourage cycling/ car sharing etc. via a travel plan. Upgrade bridle paths to accommodate cyclists as well. Speed restrictions to create safe environments.
Illegal dumping of waste	Minimise	CCTV monitoring and signage. Secure gates to unobserved entrances.

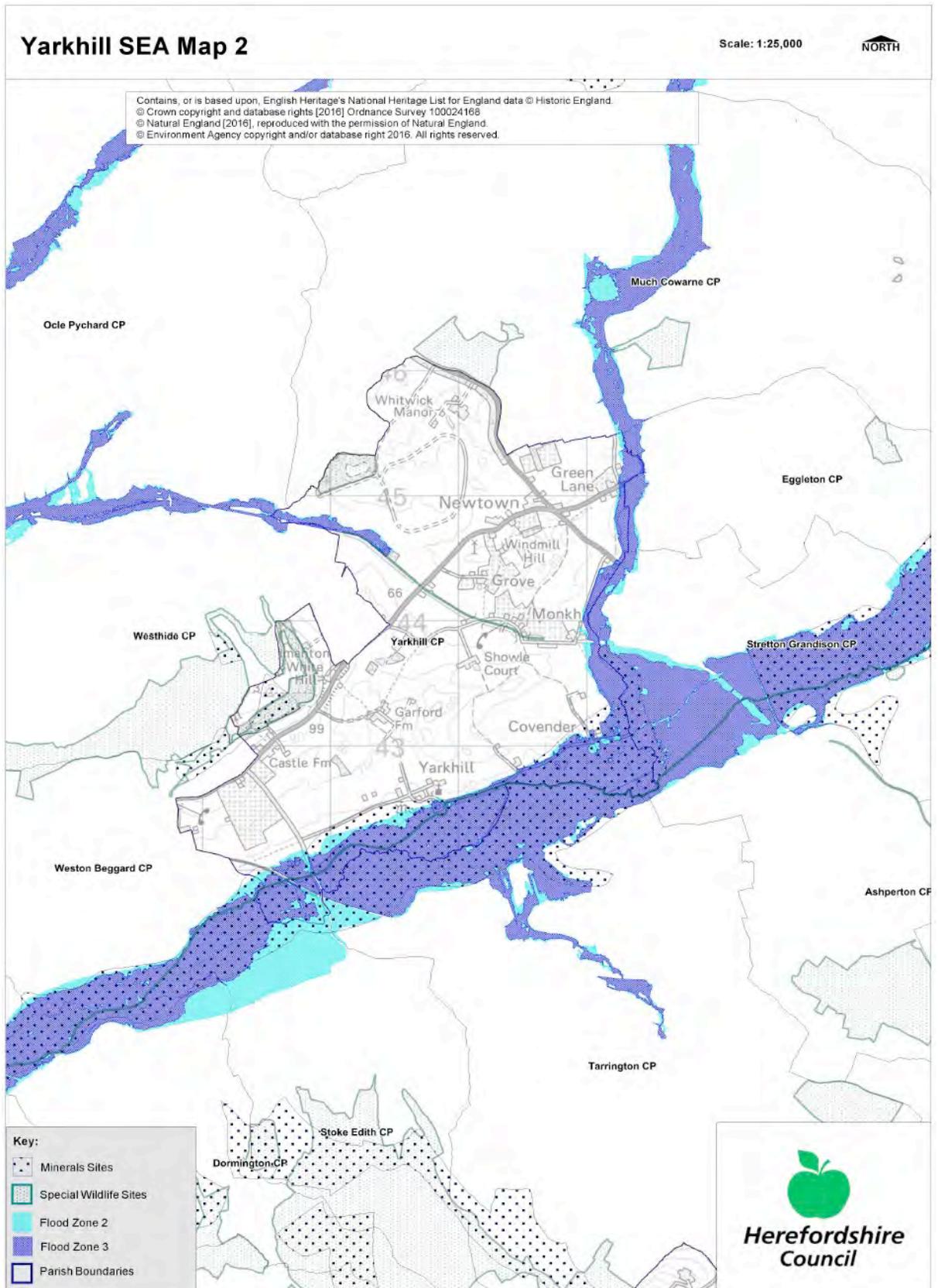
2.20 Environmental constraints and designations are shown on Maps 2 and 3, which are taken from the Yarkhill Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) work undertaken by Herefordshire Council.

Map 2 SEA Map 1



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Map 3 SEA Map 2



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3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 The NDP for Yarkhill must have regard to national policies and be in general conformity with strategic policies in the Local Plan. The key policy documents which are relevant to the area are: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁴, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)⁵ and Herefordshire Adopted Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031⁶.

3.2 National planning policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012. This advises in paragraphs 6 and 7 that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and that the planning system has to perform an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.

3.3 Paragraph 6 sets out that *the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*. Paragraph 7 advises that *there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental*.

3.4 Paragraphs 183 – 185 provide more detailed advice about Neighbourhood Plans.

183. *Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes and neighbourhood forums can use neighbourhood planning to:*

- *set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications; and*
- *grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order.*

184. *Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.*

185. *Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid*

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

⁶ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ldf>

duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation.

- 3.5 Planning Practice Guidance is a web based resource that provides additional guidance on the application and implementation of the Framework's approach. There is a section on neighbourhood planning which includes key stages and decisions such as deciding neighbourhood areas, the legal tests for neighbourhood plans, and the process of independent examination and referendum.
- 3.6 The adopted Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 – 2031 provides the strategic planning framework for the county's future development needs up to 2031. A range of policies sets out how these needs can be met while at the same time achieving social and environmental objectives. Planning policies support housing and economic growth, protect and enhance wildlife and special landscapes, and protect community facilities. Overall the Core Strategy aims to promote sustainable development across the county.
- 3.7 Yarkhill neighbourhood area falls within the Ledbury Rural Housing Market Area which is required to grow by 14% over the Plan period up to 2031 (see Local Plan Core Strategy Policy RA1 Rural housing distribution). In April 2011, there were 130 houses in the Parish, meaning that a proportionate growth rate of 14% would require at least 18 new houses in total up to 2031. However there have been 4 completions since 2011 and 2 commitments, giving **a net requirement of at least 12 new houses in the Parish up to 2031.**
- 3.8 Lower Eggleton/ Newtown is identified in the Core Strategy as a settlement which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development (Fig 4.14). (Lower Eggleton is in the neighbouring Group Parish of Stretton Grandison and so is outside the neighbourhood area for Yarkhill - planning policies and site allocations for Lower Eggleton are therefore outside the Yarkhill NDP.) Monkhide is identified in Fig 4.15 as one of the other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate.
- 3.9 Apart from Newtown and Monkhide there are no other settlements in the neighbourhood area identified as suitable for growth in the Herefordshire Core Strategy, and therefore everywhere outside these two settlements (including Yarkhill village) will be considered to be the wider rural area and Policies RA3 Herefordshire's Countryside, RA4 Agricultural, forestry and rural enterprise dwellings, RA5 Re-use of rural buildings, and RA6 Rural Economy will apply.
- 3.10 The NDP for Yarkhill has a role in providing the local detail for these higher level policies; providing more information about the Parish context to inform planning policies such as the location of development, house types, sizes and design, employment, transport and infrastructure, community facilities and identifying those special features in the wider rural area which should be protected and enhanced. These themes have emerged from the results of the residents Questionnaire, and generally confirmed through the informal consultation carried out on the Preferred Options Draft Plan.

4.0 Draft Vision and Objectives



- 4.1 The Draft Vision and Objectives have been prepared by the Steering Group based on the responses to the Questionnaire.

Draft Vision for the Yarkhill NDP

By 2031 Yarkhill Parish will have grown by at least 14% to meet the requirements of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy.

New development respects and enhances the historical and rural character of Yarkhill Parish and is designed to integrate successfully with the existing built form and the wider landscape.

Residents in Yarkhill Parish enjoy a high quality of life. Increases in local population growth are supported by a commensurate level of development of employment opportunities, improved access to community facilities, and investment in infrastructure to ensure the future sustainability of our community.

The Parish should continue to retain its own identity as a very rural community of small scattered settlements set within attractive Herefordshire countryside.

- 4.2 This Draft Vision will be delivered through the following Draft Objectives for Planning Policies. The Objectives have been prepared under the key planning themes identified in the Questionnaire.

Housing Objectives

Objective 1 – To support suitable residential development which provides family homes or affordable housing for local people.

(Through Draft NDP Policy Y1)

Objective 2 – To ensure new homes are sited adjacent to the settlements of Newtown and Monkhide as defined in the Herefordshire Core Strategy.

(Through Draft NDP Policies Y1 and Y2)

Objective 3 – To encourage small scale housing schemes which are appropriate to the scattered layout of existing settlements with developments of no more than 6⁷ houses on any one site.

(Through Draft NDP Policies Y1 and Y3)

Objective 4 – To encourage the design of new houses to reflect local materials and traditions, as well as environmentally friendly “Eco designs” which maximise energy and resource efficiency.

(Through Draft NDP Policies Y3 and Y4)

Employment Objectives

Objective 1 – To protect existing employment areas such as those at Acorn Park, Newtown Cross, Baddy Marsh Farm and Whitwick Manor and to encourage investment in new business premises in these areas to provide new employment opportunities for local residents.

(Through Draft NDP Policy Y5)

Objective 2 – To support appropriate rural diversification schemes which use redundant former agricultural buildings for new business development.

(Through Draft NDP Policy Y6)

Objective 3 – To support the development of tourism for ventures that would

⁷ Note – in the emerging Preferred Options Draft Plan a maximum figure of 4 houses on any one site was proposed in the housing objectives. This figure has been revised to a figure of 6 following consideration of the results of the call for sites process and further discussions with local landowners – see Section 6 below.

not have a major visual impact on the landscape, i.e. B&B and food premises rather than camping or holiday chalets.

(Through Draft NDP Policy Y7)

Transport and Infrastructure Objectives

Objective 1 – To make local roads safer through managing additional traffic volumes from new developments and supporting improvements in bus services and safe cycle routes to encourage alternative modes of transport.

(Through Draft NDP Policy Y8)

Objective 2 - To support improvements in fast broadband and mobile phone reception to attract people to the area and allow existing and proposed businesses to operate effectively.

(Through Draft NDP Policy Y5)

Objective 3 – To work towards improving mains water supplies to all properties whether existing or proposed.

(Through Draft NDP Policies Y9, Y10)

Community Facilities

Objective 1 - To create public open space and maintain and protect the existing village hall facility to support a growing and potentially younger population.

(Through Draft NDP Policy Y11)

Rural Area Objectives

Objective 1 – To recognise that whilst farms are an essential part of the rural character of Yarkhill, any intensification of farming practices should not be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area.

Through Draft NDP Policies Y12, Y13)

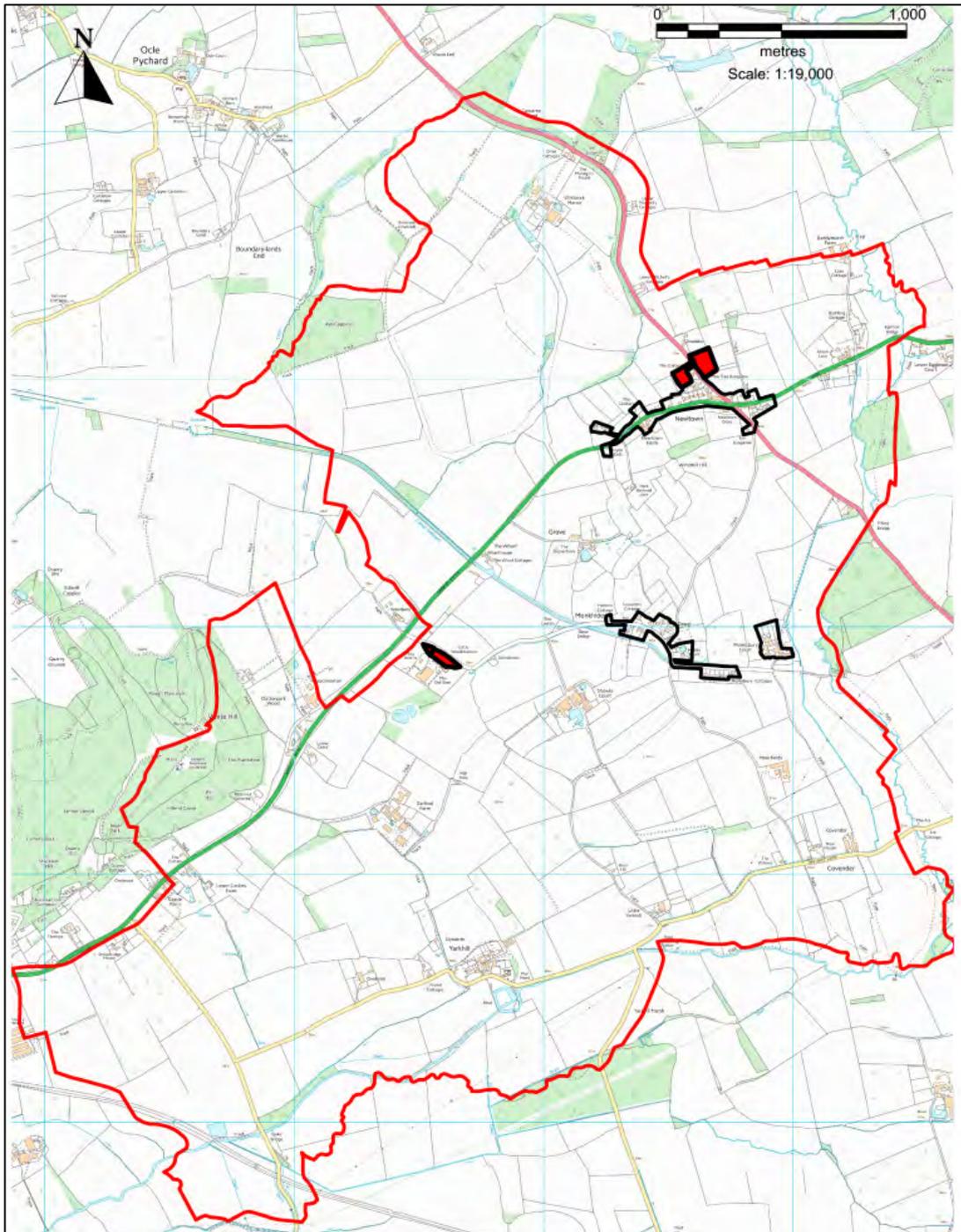
Objective 2 – To support renewable energy schemes that minimise any adverse impacts on the landscape and ecosystems. In particular, small scale hydro-power will be supported if a viable scheme can be established.

(Through Draft NDP Policy Y14)

5.0 Yarkhill NDP Planning Policies

- 5.1 The policies in this section will be applied in the consideration of any planning applications submitted within the designated NDP area of Yarkhill Parish. These policies are necessarily wide ranging in their scope, and taken together, should help to deliver sustainable development within the Parish.
- 5.2 A NDP has the same legal status as the Local Plan once it has been approved at a referendum and is made (brought into legal force) by the local planning authority. At this point it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.3 The NDP Policies Map showing the Parish boundary and designated neighbourhood area, proposed site allocations and proposed settlement boundaries is provided as Map 4.

Map 4 Policies Map



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Key

-  Yarkhill Parish and Neighbourhood Area Boundary
-  Site Allocation
-  Settlement Boundary

6.0 Housing



A house in Yarkhill Village

- 6.1 A key area for consideration in the NDP is providing a positive planning framework to support appropriate housing growth in the neighbourhood area. The minimum housing growth required in the Parish is set out in the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policies RA1 and RA2. Policy RA1 sets the housing growth figure for Ledbury rural Housing Market Area (within which Yarkhill lies) as 14% of the number of dwellings in the Parish. This equates to at least 18 new dwellings over the Plan period from 2011 – 2031. Taking into account existing commitments (planning consents and development which has started or been completed) since 2011, the net requirement for the NDP will be for **at least 12 new houses**.
- 6.2 Policy RA2 identifies the settlements in Herefordshire where growth should be focused (in Figures 4.14 and 4.15). Newtown is identified in Figure 4.14 as one of the Settlements which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development. Monkhide is identified in Fig 4.15 as one of the other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate.
- 6.3 Policy RA2 sets out that “*Neighbourhood Development Plans will allocate land for new housing or otherwise demonstrate delivery to provide levels of housing to meet the various targets, by indicating levels of suitable and available capacity.*”

Housing proposals will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- 1. Their design and layout should reflect the size, role and function of each settlement and be located within or adjacent to the main built up area. In relation to smaller settlements identified in Fig 4.15 proposals will be expected to demonstrate particular attention to the form, layout, character and setting of the site and its location in that settlement and/or they result in development that contributes to or is essential to the social well-being of the settlement concerned;*
- 2. Their locations make best and full use of suitable brownfield sites wherever possible;*

3. They result in the development of high quality, sustainable schemes which are appropriate to their context and make a positive contribution to the surrounding environment and its landscape setting; and

4. They result in the delivery of schemes that generate the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular settlements, reflecting local demand.

Specific proposals for the delivery of local need housing will be particularly supported where they meet an identified need and their long-term retention as local needs housing is secured as such.”

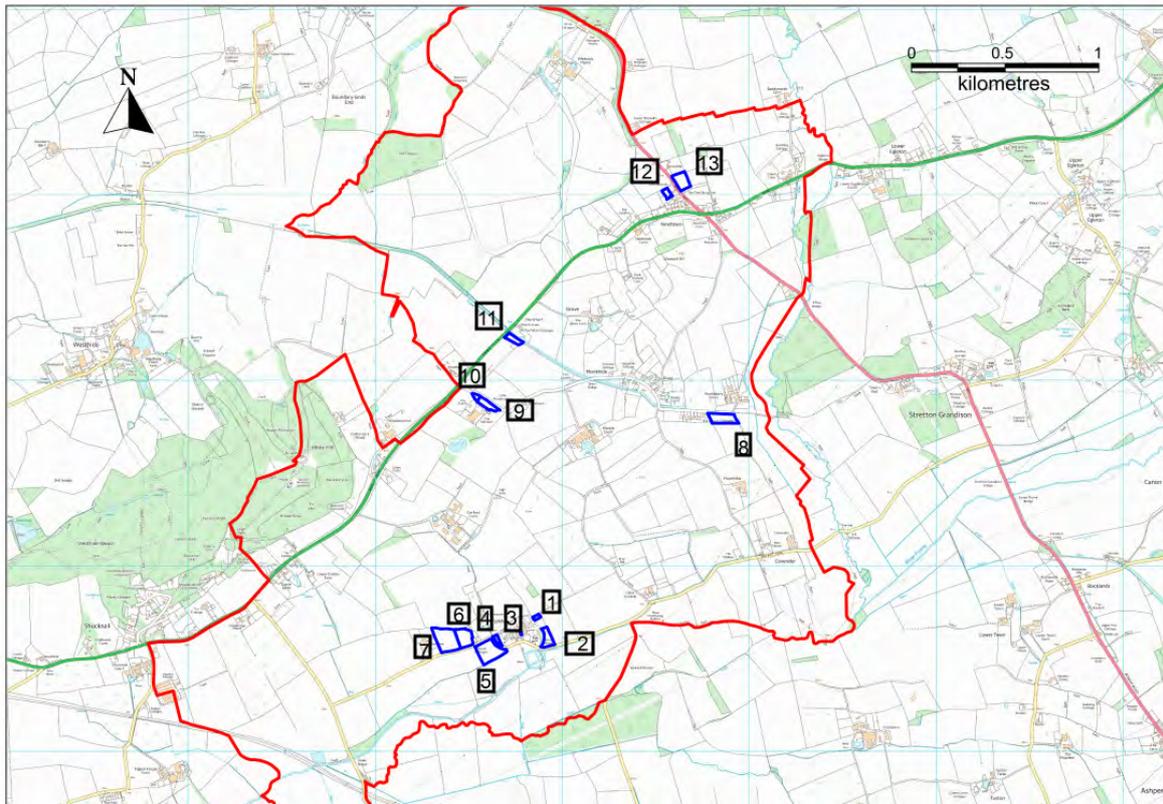
Options for Site Allocations for New Housing

6.4 The Questionnaire consultation undertaken in Autumn 2016 showed that the most favoured option for the focus of new development was for housing to be located adjacent to existing settlements or within settlements. Isolated homes in the countryside were not supported.

6.5 13 sites were submitted for consideration during the Call for Sites process undertaken in Winter 2016/2017. The submitted sites are shown on Map 5 and were:

- Site 1 Yarkhill Court, Watery Lane, Yarkhill
- Site 2 Yarkhill Court 2, Watery Lane, Yarkhill
- Site 3 Yarkhill Court 3, Watery Lane, Yarkhill
- Site 4 Old Orchard Cottage, Yarkhill
- Site 5 Land at Yarkhill
- Site 6 One Pound Cottage, Yarkhill
- Site 7 2 Pound Cottage, Yarkhill
- Site 8 1 Monksbury Cottages, Monkhide
- Site 9 Little Woodmanton, Yarkhill
- Site 10 The Acorns, Yarkhill
- Site 11 The Wharf, Yarkhill
- Site 12 Squirrels Nest, Newtown
- Site 13 Rosedale, Newtown.

Map 5 Submitted Sites



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- 6.6 The Site Assessment Report (April 2017) sets out the methodology for assessing the sites and provides a ranking of sites in order of suitability in planning terms. Based on the sites as they were submitted, of the 13 put forward, 4 achieved scores of 58 or above in the site assessment process, and therefore came out as the most suitable sites.
- 6.7 The dwelling capacity for each of these sites was based on that indicated on the site submission forms or, otherwise indicated by the landowner. These are generally considered appropriate for the rural character of the area but, if the density was increased, the potential capacity would clearly be increased.
- 6.8 Based on the site assessments, the Site Assessment Report recommended that the following sites could be brought forward:

Site 9 – Little Woodmanton, Yarkhill

Site Area – 0.37 hectares

Potential Capacity - 1 dwelling

Site 10 – The Acorns, Yarkhill

Site Area – 0.1 hectares

Potential Capacity - 2 dwellings

Site 12 – Squirrels Nest, Newtown

Site Area – 0.16 hectares

Potential Capacity - 4/6 dwellings

Site 13 – Rosedale, Newtown

Site Area – 0.59 hectares

Potential Capacity - 8 dwellings

Total Potential Dwelling Capacity: 17

These sites were all accepted as Preferred Options and consulted upon during the Preferred Options Draft Plan consultation in Spring 2017.

Proposed Site Allocations

- 6.9 **Site 13** - The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had some concerns about the potential figure of 8 dwellings at Site 13; this figure is considerably higher than the threshold of up to 3 houses most widely supported by local residents in their responses to the questionnaire. Objective H3 proposed in earlier versions of the Plan to limit development of individual sites to 4 houses in response to the questionnaire results. However, the results of the questionnaire also indicated a 50/50 split for support / objections to sites with 3 to 10 houses. Therefore, following further consideration, this Objective has been revised in the Draft Plan and now proposes that individual sites should be limited to no more than 6 houses. It is considered that such sites are still fairly modest in scale, whilst allowing for increased economic viability. Overall the development of several sites across the Parish with 1 to 6 units on each site should help to maintain the local character of scattered individual and small groups of properties across the Parish and within the settlements. Therefore, it is proposed that only part of Site 13 should be developed, and that housing on the site should be for a maximum of 6 units. The landowner for Site 13 has agreed by email correspondence with the Steering Group (see Appendix IV) that the site should be developed for no more than 6 houses.
- 6.10 **Site 12** – Also during the informal consultation on the Preferred Option plan further discussions were held with the landowner of Site 12. The boundary of this site has been amended in response to a proposed change to the access across land to the north of the site, which the Steering Group understands has been agreed in principle with the landowner of the access strip. The landowner of Site 12 has also advised that 6 houses will need to be delivered on the site in order for the site to be viable.
- 6.11 **Sites 9 and 10** are located a short distance away from the main concentration of houses at Monkhide. However, the Site Assessment Report notes that for Sites 9 and 10 there is access to some infrastructure and potential access to an adopted highway, and, although they are both outside the previously defined settlement boundary for Monkhide, the

dispersed nature of housing in Monkhide means that development could be reasonably well integrated with existing development in the vicinity.

6.12 It is therefore proposed that these 2 sites should be included as site allocations and a settlement boundary for Monkhide is included in the NDP just around the boundaries of Sites 9 and 10.

6.13 **The total number of houses to be delivered through site allocations is therefore proposed to be 14 – 15.**

Site Allocation	Former Preferred Options Site Number	Number of houses
Site 1 Squirrels Nest	Site 12	6
Site 2 Rosedale	Site 13	6
Site 3 Little Woodmanton	Site 9	1
Site 10 The Acorns	Site 10	1-2
		Total 14 - 15

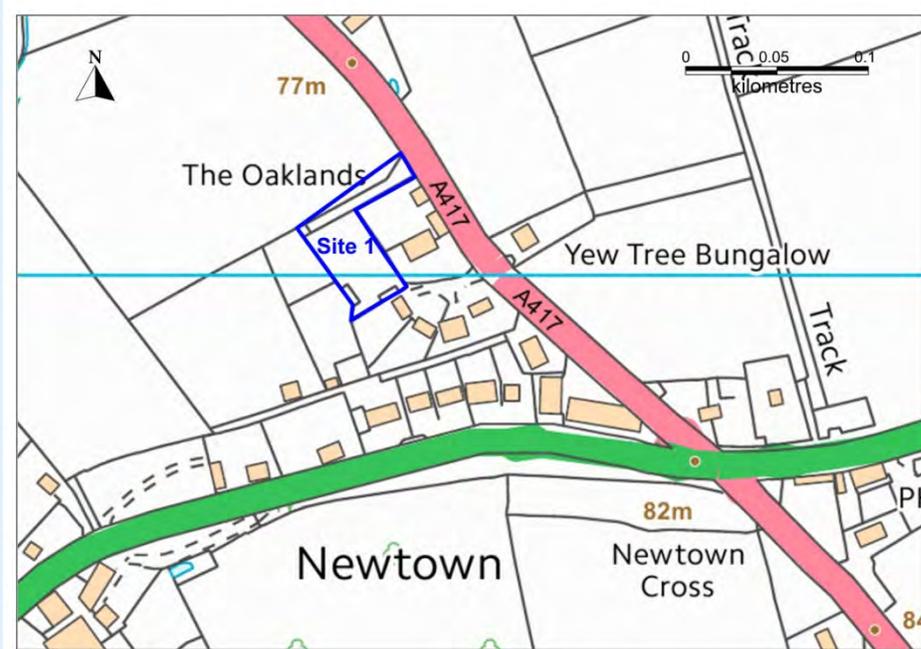
6.14 In addition, 6 houses to date since 2011 have been provided through windfalls and it is likely that over the Plan period windfall development will continue, both within the settlement boundaries of Newtown and Monkhide and possibly from conversions of former agricultural buildings in the wider countryside. As at July 2017, current planning applications in the Parish could deliver up to three further dwellings if granted consent. Therefore, the Draft NDP can demonstrate that the Core Strategy housing growth target of at least 12 new houses over the Plan period should be achievable.

Draft Policy Y1 Site Allocations for New Housing

The following sites are identified as Site Allocations for new housing up to 2031:

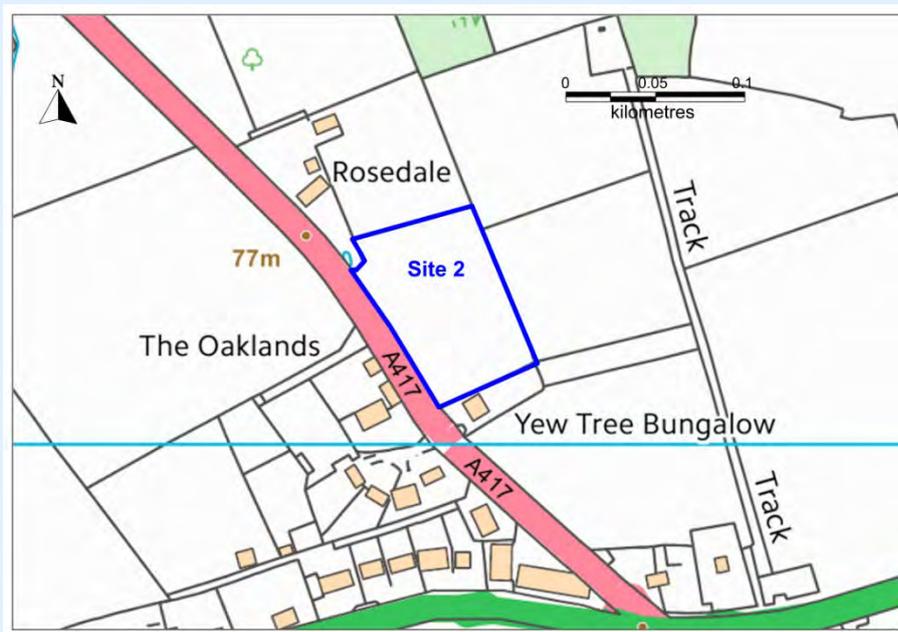
Site 1 Squirrels Nest, Lower Eggleton (Newtown) 6 houses

Map 6a



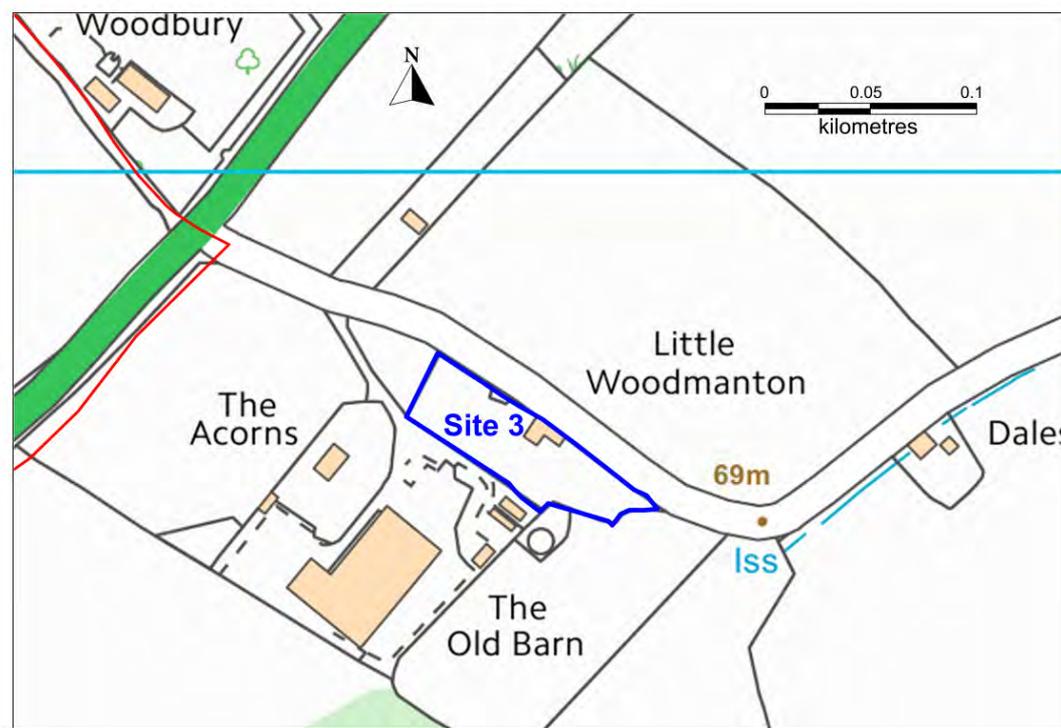
Site 2 Rosedale, Lower Eggleton (Newtown) 6 houses

Map 6b



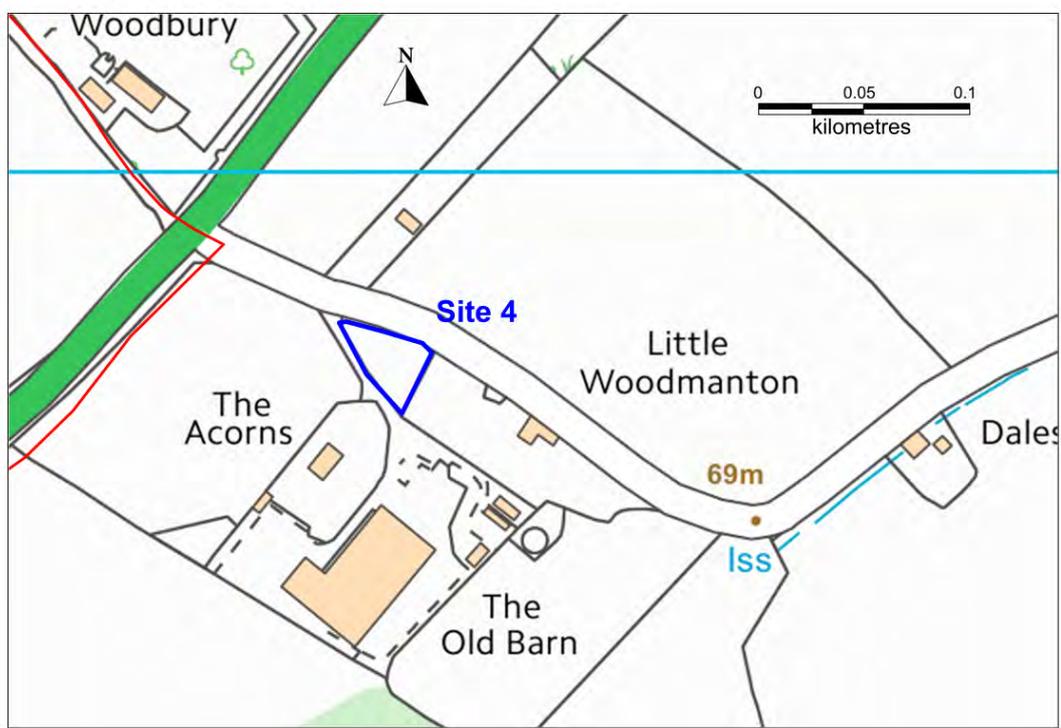
Site 3 Little Woodmanton, Yarkhill (Monkhide) 1 house

Map 6c



Site 4 The Acorns, Yarkhill (Monkhide) 1 – 2 houses

Map 6d



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Settlement Boundaries

- 6.15 Settlement boundaries will be identified for Newtown and Monkhide settlements in order to identify the extent of the built-up area, and where other infill development may be appropriate. Outside the identified settlement boundaries for these two settlements, the Parish area is regarded as open countryside for the purposes of planning and residential development opportunities will be very limited – see Core Strategy Policy RA3 Herefordshire’s countryside.
- 6.16 The identification of the Settlement Boundaries takes into consideration Herefordshire Council’s Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20 Guide to settlement boundaries, April 2013 - Revised June 2015. Criteria should include consideration of the following:
- *Lines of communication - The boundaries trace the edge of the built up area, therefore excluding roads, paths, railways and other lines of communications.*
 - *Physical features - Wherever possible try to allow the boundaries to follow physical features, such as: buildings, field boundaries or curtilages. However, in order to conserve the character and to limit expansion, settlement boundaries can exclude large gardens, orchards and other areas. This may mean that occasionally the boundaries do not relate fully to the physical features surrounding the village.*
 - *Planning History - Consider existing commenced planning permissions, recent refusals, planning appeal decisions and previous Local Plan inspector’s comments concerning areas on the edge of the village.*
 - *Village enhancements - Settlement boundaries should include buildings and associated land that make up the village form. In some edge of village areas, boundaries may need to include small areas of land and/or buildings which offer the opportunity for improvements to the entrance of the village or ensure infrastructure improvements or a general enhancement to the village.*
 - *Recent development - Where appropriate, settlement boundaries should include new developments which may have occurred recently. It is also advisable to include sites that have received planning permission within the settlement boundary.*
 - *Important amenity areas - These form part of the character of the settlement and could be identified and protected by policy and included in the settlement boundary due to their contribution to built form.*
 - *If you choose to allocate land within your Neighbourhood Development Plan for housing, employment or other uses, this should be included within the boundary.*
 - *Your settlement boundaries should be drawn to facilitate an appropriate level of proportional growth within the plan period. If land within the boundary is not formally allocated, there will be a requirement to demonstrate that there is enough available capacity within the boundary to enable development to take place.*
- 6.17 Newtown and Monkhide have grown incrementally over many years.

Newtown

- 6.18 Newton has a clustered form centered around and radiating from the crossroads where the Leominster to Gloucester Road (A417) and the Hereford to Worcester road (A4103) bisect. This is a busy intersection for both small and large commercial vehicles as well as being the main route for local residents. Until traffic lights were erected in 2004, it was a notorious Herefordshire accident black spot. The crossroads is dominated by the Spar shop and Texaco petrol station that sit on the North Western corner. This is widely used by local and long distance callers being the only facility of its type for many miles.
- 6.19 Housing in Newtown is a combination of older and more modern properties of varying sizes including one small cul de sac development just to the North of the Spar shop immediately off the A417. Travelling away from the crossroads, housing quickly becomes more sporadic. Aside from the shop, there are no facilities to support the local population with the village pub closing down a few years ago.

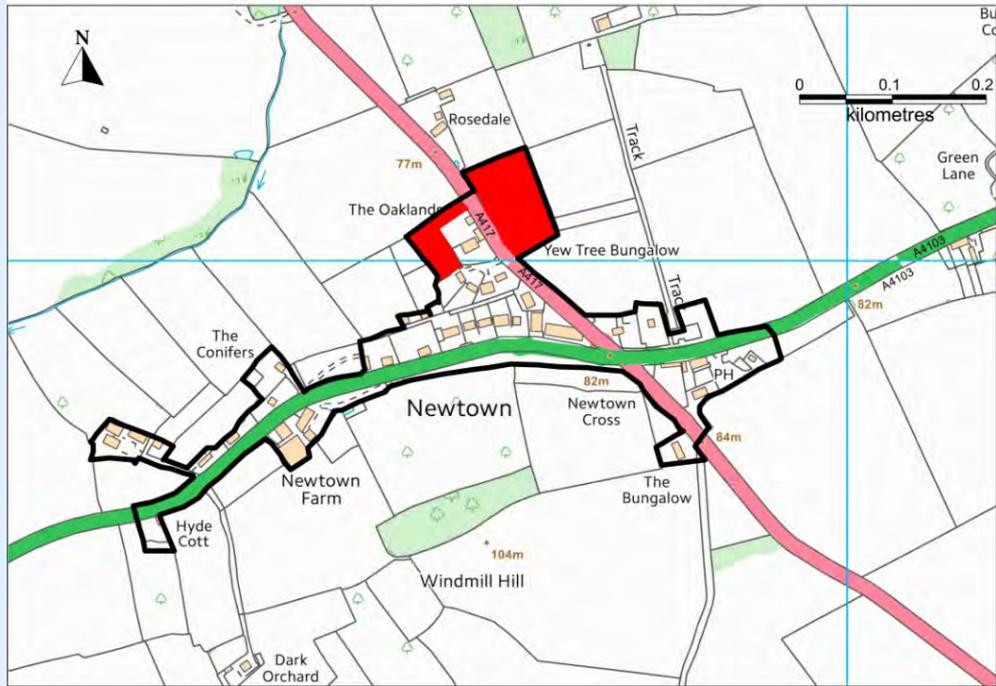
Monkhide

- 6.20 Monkhide sits $\frac{3}{4}$ mile off the A4103 on the Monkhide Village road. It is a single twisting lane with poor sighting in places and ends in a private drive at Monksbury Court. From this point, there is footpath access through to the A417 at Newtown, but this is not open to vehicles. Monkhide is characterised by linear development of low density, detached properties set within large plots. Houses are individual in nature and older in style with many being improved and extended over the years. The exception to this profile is the group of similar semi-detached ex-council houses sited on the outskirts of the village approaching Monksbury Court. Most have, over time, transferred into private ownership.
- 6.21 Aside from conversion work, there has been no new house building in the village since the last century with the only notable development being the part conversion of redundant agricultural buildings adjacent to Monksbury Court. Planning permission was granted in 2005 for a number of residential units, but to date, only one has been completed. The remaining properties are partly converted or barely started and the state of the site is untidy with some evidence of deterioration.
- 6.22 The Herefordshire & Gloucester canal bisects the village from the A4103 through to the outskirts of Monksbury Court and is traversed in two locations by road bridges one of which, the Skew Bridge, has listed status. The one mile section of waterway through Monkhide was renovated by the Canal Trust in 1995, but it has since become silted and overgrown and is no longer navigable. The adjacent towpath is inaccessible being largely privately owned by residential properties along its route. The canal is, however, an important feature of the community as a diverse wildlife habitat and must be protected from the impact of any new development to preserve its integrity.
- 6.23 The proposed settlement boundaries were first identified by the Steering Group. Following comments submitted during the Preferred Options public consultation, the Newtown Settlement Boundary was amended taking into account a proposed boundary change to a housing site (former Site 12) and Monkhide Settlement Boundary was amended so that

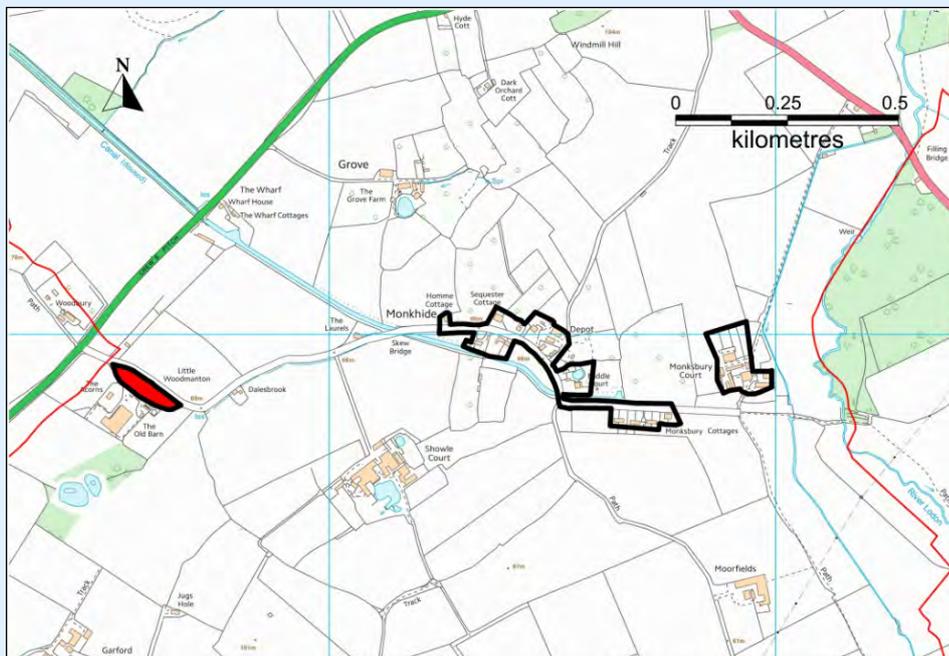
Monkhide Court is within a separate, discrete boundary area. The proposed settlement boundaries are shown in Draft Policy Y2.

Draft Policy Y2 Settlement Boundaries

Map 7 Newtown Settlement Boundary



Map 8 Monkhide Settlement Boundary



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Key

- Settlement Boundary
- Site Allocation

Development within the Settlement Boundaries

- 6.24 In addition to the proposed site allocations it is likely that other development proposals will come forward over the next 14 years or so (ie the Plan period up to 2031).
- 6.25 The preparation of locally relevant policies provides an opportunity to set out local planning concerns and ensure development is sensitive to its rural village context. The results of the Questionnaire showed that overall there was a clear preference for several smaller schemes (up to 3 houses) or for single dwellings rather than for development to be concentrated in large schemes. There were significant objections to schemes of 10 or more houses. The most popular choice for housing was for family sized accommodation and affordable homes. However, affordable homes can only be required in schemes of more than 10 units (in line with Core Strategy Policy H1 Affordable housing – thresholds and targets), and therefore it is unlikely that affordable houses can be brought forward, unless they are on exception sites in the wider countryside (under Core Strategy Policies RA3 Herefordshire’s countryside and H2 Rural exception sites).
- 6.26 The Questionnaire results also showed that there was support for traditional designs in new housing and Eco-housing. There were also concerns about traffic and the need to ensure new development should be supported by improvements in local infrastructure such as water supply and sewerage
- 6.27 The Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) 2013⁸ identified that, in rural parts of Ledbury LHMA, between 2011-2031 there is a need for 339 market houses and 226 affordable houses. The study highlights that within the Ledbury HMA the overall estimated housing need by size 2012-2017 is as follows:
- 1 Bed - 46.8%,
 - 2 bed -22.3%,
 - 3 bed – 22.7%,
 - 4 bed - 8.2%.
- 6.28 The Herefordshire Local Housing Requirements Study 2012 (updated in 2014)⁹ advised that forecasts predict that growth in the population of the rural areas is likely to be primarily through an increase in those aged over 75. Moderate growth is expected in the 30-44 and 60-74 age brackets. The Local Housing Requirements Study¹⁰ anticipates continuing improvements in life expectancy; significant growth is expected of those in their 80s, with the existing population in their 40s and 50s moving into retirement. As a consequence, the rural areas will face an increasing urgency to provide more 3 bedroom homes, with more 1 and 2 bed homes required in the affordable sector.

⁸ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

- 6.29 The Questionnaire survey results indicated that there was very little support for constructing new homes for the elderly. Yarkhill already has a fairly large community of elderly people who appear to be settled in their current homes and have in some cases adapted them to suit their personal circumstances. Others would not plan to stay in Yarkhill if access to facilities became an issue for them but would seek to move to a larger less rural area where services were readily available locally. It would arguably be irresponsible to plan for homes specifically designed for the elderly with the knowledge that the necessary changes to infrastructure are unlikely to be viable in a community the size of Yarkhill.
- 6.30 There was more support in the survey for affordable housing. Whilst the survey responses would not favour larger developments, some of those who have proposed smaller numbers of houses via the “call for sites” exercise have also stated an intention to include an affordable element which would be welcomed.
- 6.31 However it should be recognised that the general trend is that the children who live in the community leave to follow education and careers elsewhere. It is unlikely that Yarkhill would ever be able to develop the type of employment that would attract large numbers of young people and for that reason any housing provision should be proportionate to the likely low demand but should at least provide some opportunity for young people from the area to afford a home in the Parish.
- 6.32 The following Draft Policy provides an opportunity to guide new housing development in Newtown and Monkhide to help ensure it is sited and designed appropriately and provides the types of housing needed.

Draft Policy Y3 Housing Development within the Settlement Boundaries of Newtown and Monkhide

**Proposals for new housing development within the identified Settlement
Boundaries for Newtown and Monkhide (as shown on Maps 7 and 8) will be
supported, provided that:**

- 1. New development is designed sensitively to respond to the setting of the site, and reflects the rural character of neighbouring buildings, using traditional materials such Herefordshire sandstone, timber frames, local red brick and slate roof materials where possible;**
- 2. Properties and extensions are restricted to two storeys in height and reflect the character of the village and its surroundings in terms of size, scale, density, layout and landscaping;**
- 3. Development is designed to be sensitive to any nearby built heritage assets such as Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments;**

- 4. New developments retain and incorporate natural features such as trees and hedgerows, and where appropriate ameliorate any loss of habitat for wildlife;**
- 5. Renewable energy installations if proposed are integrated into the design;**
- 6. Sites have suitable access. The impacts of additional traffic from development proposals on existing rural roadworks should be carefully considered and suitable measures should be proposed to encourage appropriate traffic speeds and civilised driver behaviours;**
- 7. Sufficient provision should be made for adequate off street parking;**
- 8. Development is small in scale (preferably up to 3 dwellings), on small infill sites, and where possible on brownfield sites;**
- 9. Schemes provide smaller and family accommodation (2 - 3 bedrooms) to meet the needs of young families. Affordable housing is encouraged where viable and possible;**
- 10. Development is in accordance with other Yarkhill Neighbourhood Development Plan policies.**

Housing in the Wider Countryside

- 6.33 The Call for Sites process resulted in a number of sites being put forward in the area of the Parish regarded in planning terms as the wider countryside or rural area ie not within or adjacent to Newtown or Monkhide. A number of the submitted sites were clustered around the village of Yarkhill and some concerned the re-use of redundant agricultural buildings (ie Sites 1 and 3).
- 6.34 New development in Yarkhill village and the rural area would fall within the Core Strategy Policy RA3, which sets out criteria for new residential development. Development is very restricted in these areas, but Policy RA3 criteria 4 sets out that development may be acceptable where it would result in the sustainable re-use of a redundant or disused building(s) where it complies with Policy RA5 and leads to an enhancement of its immediate setting. Policy RA5 supports, subject to criteria, the sustainable re-use of individual and groups of redundant or disused buildings, including farmsteads in rural areas, which will make a positive contribution to rural businesses and enterprise and

support the local economy (including live work units) or which otherwise contributes to residential development, or is essential to the social well-being of the countryside.

Policy Y4 Conversion of Former Agricultural Buildings for Residential Use

The sustainable re-use of redundant or disused former agricultural buildings, including farmsteads, for residential accommodation will be supported.

The development should be designed to be of a high quality and respect the character and significance of the building and its setting in accordance with Local Plan Core Strategy Policy RA5.

In particular, appropriate conversions will be encouraged where redundant buildings are adjoining, or located in close to proximity to, existing clusters of buildings and settlements, such as the village of Yarkhill or smaller hamlets in the wider Parish.

7.0 Employment



Newtown Cross Shop and Services

- 7.1 An action group took forward the theme of employment at the end of the Parish Plan. This led to a number of local companies offering employment opportunities and in some cases apprenticeships, IT skills training and CV writing support. Despite all these efforts there was minimal interest from the community. Possible reasons for this is that the sort of jobs on offer were not attractive to locals and that the training offered duplicated what was already available in schools and colleges.
- 7.2 The Census statistics for 2011 (see section 2.0 above) indicate that a relatively high proportion of Yarkhill's residents are self-employed. At the time of the Parish Plan, 65% of the population were employed or self-employed, 32% retired and 3% unemployed. Of those in employment 46% worked within a 20 mile radius with 13% of those people working from home. The remainder either work further away or have no fixed place of employment. In terms of occupations, a relatively high proportion of residents aged 16 to 74 years in employment are Managers, Directors and Senior Officials; 19.3% compared to 11.6% in Herefordshire and 10.9% in England. Also a relatively high proportion are in Skilled Trades Occupations; 20.5% compared to 16.3% in Herefordshire and 11.4% in England.
- 7.3 The results of the Residents Questionnaire in November 2016 indicated that just over half of respondents (50.9%) were of the opinion that more local employment was needed, and there was support for more tourism related facilities such as Bed and Breakfast accommodation and food premises.
- 7.4 The results of the business survey showed that small premises and poor broadband reception were included as challenges local businesses face. Most businesses who responded were aiming to maintain business in the Parish at the current level or expand. Adjacent land for expansion, superfast broadband and improved mobile phone reception would support businesses' plans to remain in the area.

Existing Employment Areas

- 7.5 The main employment areas in Yarkhill are Acorn Park just off the A4013 at Crew’s Pitch, Newtown Cross and Baddy Marsh Farm which is just east of the crossing of the A4013 and A417. There is also a unit operating from Whitwick Manor North of the crossroads on the A417. The units used are either for retail purposes or provision of services such as mechanical engineering, welding and joinery. There are also a number of units let to a specialist school for training purposes. Newtown Cross offers the only convenience store and petrol station in the Parish. It formerly included a well-used post office which was closed in the last consolidation exercise. The units in use appear to be either purpose built industrial units or converted agricultural buildings.
- 7.6 Whitwick Manor and Baddy Marsh Farm both appear to have space on site to expand if there is a demand. Anecdotal evidence from one of the landlords together with some responses to the business survey would suggest that there is currently a demand for more space.
- 7.7 The Core Strategy Policy RA6 - Rural economy supports proposals which involve the small scale extension of existing businesses and Policy E2 – Redevelopment of existing employment land and buildings protects existing employment land. The existing commercial / industrial estates in the Parish are relatively modest in scale and are not identified in the Employment Land Study 2012¹¹. Nevertheless, they provide much needed local commercial premises which support local employment and therefore the sustainability of the Parish.
- 7.8 Economic growth is dependent on access to good communication networks. When asked about the need for investment in local infrastructure in the Residents Questionnaire, 75.27% of respondents identified the need for fast broadband and 63.27% suggested there was a need for improved mobile phone reception.
- 7.9 Draft Policy Y5 aims to support investment in appropriate economic development to enhance local employment opportunities and protect existing employment provision.

Draft Policy Y5 Protecting Existing Areas of Employment and Encouraging Investment in Business Opportunities

New small scale employment development of B1, B2, B8¹² and other employment uses of an appropriate scale and type will be supported at Acorn

¹¹ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/employment-land-study-2012>

¹² The [Town and Country Planning \(Use Classes\) Order 1987](#) (as amended)

B1 Business - Offices (other than those that fall within A2), research and development of products and processes, light industry appropriate in a residential area.

B2 General industrial - Use for industrial process other than one falling within class B1 (excluding incineration purposes, chemical treatment or landfill or hazardous waste).

B8 Storage or distribution - This class includes open air storage.

Park, and other employment areas at Newtown Cross, Baddy Marsh Farm and Whitwick Manor in order to support and enhance local employment opportunities.

Any proposals that would result in the loss of employment land and buildings in these areas should be considered against the provisions of Local Plan Core Strategy Policy E2.

All new employment development in these and other areas will be required to make provision for high speed broadband and other relevant communication networks.

Rural Diversification

- 7.10 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy sets out in Policy RA5 – Re-use of rural buildings that subject to criteria the sustainable re-use of individual and groups of redundant or disused buildings, including farmsteads in rural areas, which will make a positive contribution to rural businesses and enterprise and support the local economy (including live work units) or which otherwise contributes to residential development, or is essential to the social well-being of the countryside, will be permitted.
- 7.11 Policy RA6 - Rural economy advises that employment generating proposals which help diversify the rural economy such as knowledge based creative industries, environmental technologies, business diversification projects and home working will be supported.
- 7.12 As farming practices continue to change, old and redundant agricultural buildings may offer opportunities for sensitive conversion to provide employment opportunities.
- 7.13 Comments from the residents' Questionnaire showed support for protecting farm buildings, and finding new economically viable uses for traditional buildings is one way of helping to secure their future.

Draft Policy Y6 Supporting Rural Diversification

Employment development that would help to diversify the rural economy will be supported on sites outside existing industrial estates and the settlement boundaries where it meets the requirements of Local Plan Core Strategy Policies RA5 and RA6.

The re-use of redundant farm buildings is encouraged for appropriate small scale

rural business uses such as workshops, offices, artisan activities and creative industries which do not generate unacceptable levels of traffic on the rural road network.

Conversions should be designed sensitively and respond positively to the local context in terms of materials, scale and height.

Adequate car parking should be provided on site.

Tourism

- 7.14 Yarkhill Parish is not a natural haven for tourism but it does have a number of specific points of interest that draw in visitors. These include the Hereford & Gloucester Canal and Skew Bridge in Monkhide and the village church and moated site in Yarkhill village. The archeological dig at the site of the old watermill adjoining the now dried up canal bed to the east of Monksbury court in Monkhide is a further draw for historians and canal enthusiasts who visit the area. Numerous footpaths for walkers traverse the Parish many of which enjoy views towards the Welsh Mountains in the west and the Malvern Hills in the East. However, paths are generally poorly maintained and have become overgrown while some have become difficult to navigate where they cross private land. The Parish does not have any leisure amenities of its own and the only refreshment facilities available are at the Spar shop at Newtown crossroads which offers take away drinks and food.
- 7.15 Local residents are supportive of an increase in tourism and would look favourably on any reasonable increase in B&B accommodation. However, there is a prevalent view that anything which would have a visual impact on the Parish such as a campsite or caravan park would be totally out of keeping and detrimental to the rural nature of the area.
- 7.16 The Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy supports tourism in rural areas in Policy E4 Tourism.

Draft Policy Y7 Tourism

Development for small scale tourism related activities such as bed and breakfast accommodation, self-catering holiday cottages, and cafes / restaurants will be supported where:

- 1. New development and conversions of former agricultural buildings are appropriate to Yarkhill's character in terms of scale, design and materials; and**

- 2. Proposals demonstrate consideration of traffic impacts on the road network and existing infrastructure, and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures to minimise any adverse impacts; and**
- 3. Adequate car parking is provided for employees and visitors; and**
- 4. Proposals support local tourism linked to the quiet enjoyment of the countryside.**

8.0 Transport and Infrastructure



Traffic at Newtown Cross

Update on Traffic Report in Parish Plan

- 8.1 Traffic and transport are significant issues across Yarkhill Parish. The busy A4103 is a major route between Hereford and Worcester, and while this provides good car access to both centres as well as Ledbury and Leominster, traffic frequently exceeds the designated 50mph and 60mph speed limits causing danger to vehicles waiting to turn off right to either Yarkhill village or Monkhide despite the warning signs.
- 8.2 The Stockbridge Road cut through between the A4103 and A438 is also of concern given the volume of heavy vehicles that use it at speed despite hidden dips, corners and narrow bridges. Traffic approaching Newtown, where the speed limit falls suddenly from 60mph to 40mph also frequently fails to slow down significantly until the traffic lights at the crossroads. The Monkhide Village Road is narrow with sharp bends and there are few passing places and while residents are respectful of the dangers, commercial vehicles often ignore them causing oncoming traffic to brake sharply or swerve which is clearly evident from the level of damage to the grass verges. There are no dedicated cycle lanes in any areas of the Parish and the dangerous nature of the main roads is such that this method of transport is little used except by cycling enthusiasts.
- 8.3 Yarkhill Parish Plan contained a section on traffic issues in the village based on an assessment of local knowledge of hazardous accident locations.
- 8.4 The Parish Council has continued to make representations to Herefordshire Council, especially regarding the traffic issue on the A4103 / A438 cut through, but a lack of resources has made it clear that this would have to compete with more urgent priorities meaning a short to medium term resolution would be unlikely. In any event, simply reducing 60mph speed limits throughout the Parish to 50mph would solve little, with larger and more varied cuts being needed to have any demonstrable impact. In addition, calming measures, better warnings and enforcement would act as restraints serving to improve Parish road safety for adults and children alike.

- 8.5 The traffic report was sent to the Highways Engineer with a photograph showing a car nearly in the hedge when passing a HGV travelling in the opposite direction. Assistance was received from a retired Herefordshire County Councillor who persuaded both the Chair of the Transport Committee and the local ward councillor to visit the site. Both agreed the road was unsafe and that efforts should be made to make road safer. Unfortunately, no action has been taken to date although there is a suggestion that additional signage may be installed by Herefordshire Council. Yarkhill Parish Council does not have the resources to finance progress on a Traffic Order.
- 8.6 With the assistance of The Yarkhill Field to Fork Festival community funds, two new signs were installed either side of the houses and Church on Watery Lane where there is a likelihood of children and families walking along the road, which has no speed restriction and no pavements. Unfortunately, no other proposals from the Parish Plan have been progressed by the Parish Council due to lack of resources other than attempt to make the collection of children by the school bus safer, with the financial support of the Field to Fork Festival, which was rejected by the bus company and Herefordshire County Council.
- 8.7 Public transport is severely limited forcing people into private vehicles for even short journeys, including those to and from work, especially to Hereford and Ledbury. There are bus services that run along the A4103 stopping at Newtown and also the A438 outside the Parish boundary at Tarrington, but these operate mainly at school times so do not provide local residents with meaningful access to Hereford, Ledbury or, further afield, Worcester and Gloucester. A walking time of 25 minutes from Monkhide village to Newtown to catch a bus and a 35 minute walk from Yarkhill village to the bus stop at Tarrington are also deterrents to using local transport.
- 8.8 The Hereford to Ledbury rail line passes just to the South of Yarkhill, but there is no station within the Parish or within a reasonable distance again forcing people to drive to either Hereford or Ledbury if they wish to use a train service to travel further afield.
- 8.9 The lack of public transport, increased car usage and the rise of commercial traffic across Yarkhill, Newton and Monkhide in recent years are all areas of concern to residents who believe that these will be critical points to address in the development of housing within the Parish.
- 8.10 The results of the Questionnaire showed that safer roads are a priority for local residents, closely followed by a better bus service, and less support for cycle routes. There was an identified need for improved access to healthcare and shops.
- 8.11 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy MT1 -Traffic management, highway safety and promoting active travel requires development proposals to incorporate various requirements covering movement and transportation.
- 8.12 The NDP can do little in terms of transport planning, but it can encourage developer contributions related to improved traffic management and which encourage walking and cycling as alternatives to the private car. Draft Policy Y8 aims to support proposals which

will address the concerns about traffic through the Parish, and encourage movement by means other than the private car.

Draft Policy Y8 Traffic and Transport

Developer contributions and other sources of funding will be sought wherever possible to support and improve existing public transport links to local towns and facilities, and to improve local routes and networks for walking and cycling.

Priorities for the expenditure to improve traffic management and safety in Yarkhill Parish include the following:

- **Measures which achieve and maintain appropriate traffic speeds and civilised driver behaviours within the neighbourhood area, particularly on the A4103; and**
- **Enhancements to the public realm to support walking and cycling as modes of choice, particularly for local trips.**

Water Supply and Sewerage

- 8.13 Mains water is not available to every property in the Parish. While supplies are provided to the villages of Yarkhill and Newtown, the same is not true of Monkhide where a majority of properties extract water from private wells or boreholes. There is however a feed pipe from the mains supplying Yarkhill village on Watery Lane that runs under fields and a footpath to supply the council houses at the end of Monkhide Village Road as well as Monksbury Court. One other property on the road taps into the supply, but this was paid for privately by the owner and is an exception. While Monkhide residents would like access to mains water, the costs of providing it would need to be shared between households and many consider the initiative too costly. Unfortunately, the existing feed from Watery Lane is not believed to be capable of any significant expansion given it runs through a smaller diameter pipe where capacity is constricted. Clearly this has implications for any future development in Monkhide.
- 8.14 Mains sewerage is not available within the Parish and disposal is to septic tanks or bio treatment facilities that service single or small groups of properties. Welsh Water does operate a treatment facility serving the council houses in Monkhide, but village residents are already concerned with the frequency of breakdowns and the plant's inability to cope such that this is unlikely to be capable of supporting any additional development. Typically in Yarkhill, outflow water, be it bio treated or otherwise, discharges into local streams, the two main rivers or, in the case of much of Monkhide, directly into the canal basin.

- 8.15 Given the lack of mains facilities and reliance on the use of native water courses for discharge, any new development would need to satisfy stringent conditions regarding treatment and waste water discharge and, especially in Monkhide, demonstrate that there would be no deterioration in the quality of groundwater from which residents draw supplies for their daily domestic needs.
- 8.16 Advice has been sought from local water company Dwr Cymru Welsh Water regarding local water and sewerage infrastructure and capacity. Dwr Cymru Welsh Water only supply water in Yarkhill and Newtown. Dwr Cymru Welsh Water serve the village of Monkhide with public sewerage and suggested the inclusion of a policy in line with Core Strategy Policy SD4 on the capabilities of the public sewerage system or wastewater treatment works (WwTw) to accept foul flows from new development.

Draft Policy Y9 Water Supply and Drainage

New development will be required to provide adequate treatment of waste water discharge in line with Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policies SD3 – Sustainable water management and water resources. And SD4 – Waste water treatment and river water quality. Development will only be permitted where the capacity of the public sewerage system or waste water treatment works (WwTW) allows, or a suitable private waste water treatment system is installed.

Development should not cause an unacceptable risk to the availability or quality of water resources of neighbouring properties, particularly in areas where there is no mains supply and properties are dependent upon groundwater supplies.

Development that may result in the capacity of the public sewerage system and / or the Monkhide waste water treatment works becoming overloaded will not be permitted. In either of these instances, development should be phased or delayed until capacity becomes available, either through the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water CWW regulatory investment, or in advance of this through the developer funding the improvements themselves.

Flooding



Flooding on Watery Lane

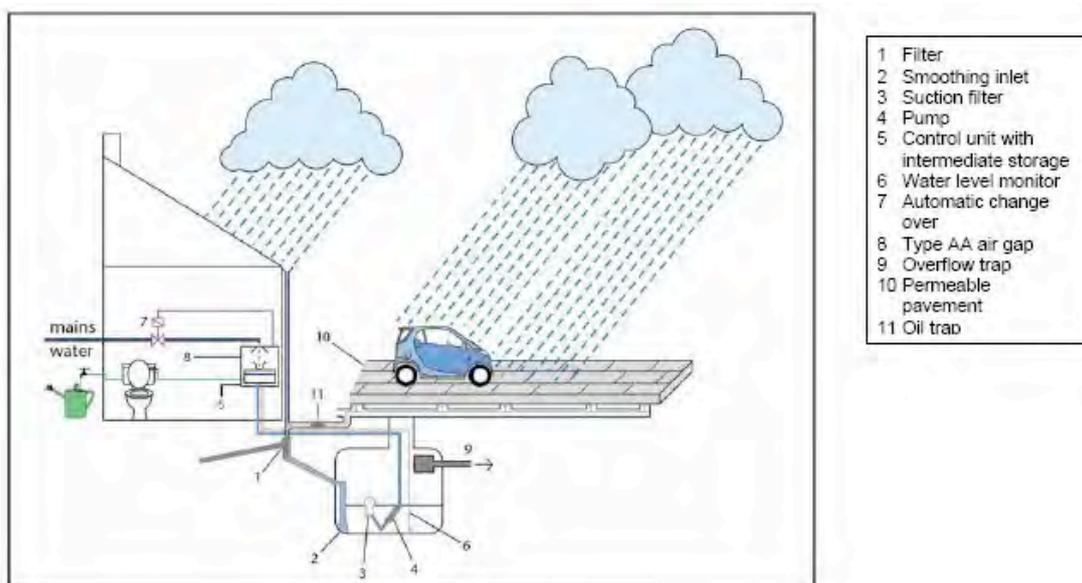
- 8.17 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2009¹³ provides a summary of flood risk in Herefordshire to inform the location of future development. The Water Cycle Study examines how water resources and water supply infrastructure, wastewater treatment, water quality, sewerage and flood risk could constrain growth across Herefordshire. Yarkhill is in the Middle Frome river catchment. The Middle Frome is classified as one of the highest areas at risk for flood reports in the county. The SFRA study states that: Middle Frome has a 35-40% standard run percentage run off by sub catchment. This is potentially highly unsuitable for infiltration source control. Middle Frome has a moderately slow flood response (Tp-time to peak) time at around 9-11 hours. The WCS states that the River Frome is identified as in poor ecological status especially upstream of Bromyard. (Classed as one of the rivers in the worst ecological state). Therefore, development will require specific mitigation measures (such as on-site retention of storm water and treated effluent to attenuate any off-site flows) if new housing is required in these sub-catchments.
- 8.18 The SFRA indicates that the Middle Frome area, which includes Yarkhill, is ranked 14th out of 46 in terms of flood risk with 44 properties being considered at risk. Clearly any new development should not add to that number. Yarkhill is in the highest category for Standard Percentage Run off. This makes the area unsuitable for infiltration source control means that devices like soakaways will not work effectively. Developers may well have to consider on site facilities. The Water Cycle study shows that the long term prediction (by 2050) is of considerable water shortage with summer rainfall reducing by up to 40% during the summer months and 30-50% in the autumn. There are already government targets for the reduction of water extraction by businesses and the building regulations have been changed to try and reduced household consumption: *“More development means that more water is abstracted from the environment; therefore more water is treated, stored and consumed. More*

¹³ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/strategic-flood-risk-assessment-and-water-cycle-study>

wastewater flows to sewage treatment works, thence discharges back to the environment with potentially increased pollutant loads. There is also a greater risk of flooding from reduced permeable areas and increased surface water runoff. Development planners need to liaise with the Environment Agency and appropriate water and wastewater providers at the earliest opportunity so that all parties understand and take account of each other's processes, practices and issues in order to promote the efficient and sustainable delivery of infrastructure. Building new homes to higher water efficiency standards offers substantial water savings (see 5.4)."

- 8.19 Figure 1 below illustrates how new developments can reduce water consumption and run off (see www.waterwise.org which contains a lot of design guidance).

Figure 1 – Improving Water Efficiency in New Development



Flooding in Yarkhill Parish

- 8.20 Newtown, Monkhide and Yarkhill have all suffered from flooding during exceptionally inclement weather. 2014, 2012 and 2007 are the most recent events with the general cycle being approximately every 4-5 years. The EA flood map indicates where the Frome and Lodon have areas categorised as flood zone 2 & 3. The existing housing stock is generally built on higher ground although some roads, Watery Lane in particular, can become impassable. However the more significant problem during the most recent events has occurred as a result of surface water run-off. This has led to a number of houses being damaged and insurance claims being made. There are a number of reasons why this has deteriorated over recent times. These include the removal of ditches to combine fields, the culverting of open ditches with inadequately sized pipes and the poor maintenance of some of the ditches that remain. There are also issues of poor maintenance by the Council of the storm drainage system that serves Monkhide. Other issues relate to the general slow absorption of the indigenous terrain, the high water table in some areas, the type of crop (some leading to less permeability of the ground) and even the direction of ploughing a sloping field has had an effect (i.e. down slope in lieu of across).

- 8.21 Whilst it is unlikely that any significant improvements can be made it is essential that any new development does not make the situation worse. To support this endeavour any future development proposals should include a flood risk assessment and if possible demonstrate that a technical solution is available to prevent the flooding of new homes. Measures could include providing cut off drainage on areas below adjacent elevated ground, porous surfacing, rainwater harvesting and attenuated discharge. These measures should be coupled with efforts to improve maintenance either via Herefordshire Council or the Parish council controlled lengthsman and to pursue reported issues where landowners actions have made the situation worse.
- 8.22 Core Strategy Policy SD3 – Sustainable water management and water resources sets out that measures for sustainable water management will be required to be an integral element of new development in order to reduce flood risk; to avoid an adverse impact on water quantity; to protect and enhance groundwater resources and to provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity, health and recreation. This includes ensuring that “...9. *development should not cause an unacceptable risk to the availability or quality of water resources; 10. and in particular, proposals do not adversely affect water quality, either directly through unacceptable pollution of surface water or groundwater, or indirectly through overloading of Wastewater Treatment Works.*”

Draft Policy Y10 Reducing Flood Risk and Supporting Sustainability

Proposals for new residential development should be in Flood Zone 1 low risk. Development proposals will be required to provide effective surface water drainage measures to protect existing and future residential areas from flooding.

Opportunities will be sought to reduce the overall level of flood risk in the area through the layout and form of the development, and the appropriate application of sustainable drainage systems. New development must be designed to maximise the retention of surface water on the development site and to minimise runoff.

In addition, development is encouraged to be energy efficient and to incorporate principles of sustainable design.

Phasing and Infrastructure

Where possible, new housing development should be phased evenly across the Plan period to allow for suitable investment in local infrastructure as required. Adequate sewerage infrastructure and water supplies should be provided.

9.0 Community Facilities



Yarkhill Church

- 9.1 Yarkhill is composed of three separate hamlets and the village hall is located in the old school building close to the A4103 and a considerable distance from all three hamlets. Anyone wishing to visit the hall has either to travel by car or face a long walk or bicycle ride which would in part require the negotiation of the busy A4103. The village hall is old fashioned and is underutilised which is in part due to its spatial limitations. Its main uses being for dog training, coffee mornings, a monthly produce sale and Parish Council meetings with the occasional event held at Christmas and Easter. The village hall committee has succeeded in increasing usage and more than doubled the income over the last 2-3 years. Despite this increased usage, it has proved very difficult competing with a modern village hall in Tarrington which provides better facilities.
- 9.2 The village hall is currently breaking even and the Village Hall Committee believe that they can raise sufficient funds to make improvements which will include new windows, French doors and rewiring. They also plan to create a children's play area providing they can obtain a grant. The location of the village hall remains a difficult issue because of the three separate hamlets and there is also a view that the traditional village hall is not the sort of building the village requires because needs have changed and there are a number of good quality village halls in surrounding villages. The village hall is a registered charity and is run by a Committee and has two Trustees from the Parish Council. The possibility of selling the hall and the attached house to fund a new building has been informally considered. However this would require the negotiation for the release of a restricted covenant preventing the sale of part of the site for residential use.
- 9.3 Yarkhill has recently lost its pub and post office but still has a thriving petrol station and shop at Newtown Cross roads.

- 9.4 The church has a regular congregation of 17 to 25 worshippers with good turnouts at the festivals of Easter, Christmas and Harvest. The father of change ringing was born and baptised in the village and visitors come to the church to ring the bells.
- 9.5 Yarkhill has no formal play provision or playing pitches. A proposal was put forward in the Parish Plan for a play area of some kind for children but this did not prove practical because no landowners came forward with the offer of a site despite numerous appeals. Location is also an issue because in whichever hamlet the play area is sited it will prove difficult for children from the other two hamlets to get there unless they are taken by car. The proposal by the village hall to create a children's play area is however welcome.
- 9.6 There is no school in the Parish. In terms of primary schools, Withinton Primary School is the catchment school for the whole of Yarkhill. Intake is 25 per class, and the school currently has 70 pupils between 4 mixed age classes (Nursery and Reception, Year 1/2, Year 3/4, and Year 5/6). It is believed to be undersubscribed at the current time. Ashperton Primary Academy catchment is south of Yarkhill, and the boundary is the River Frome / Watery Lane. Although it is outside the catchment, a number of children have been given places there. It has an intake of approximately 25 per year but will go to a maximum of 30. Reception intake is usually over-subscribed, but there is little or no waiting list. Currently the school has a few spaces in all years except Year 4 and Reception, but this fluctuates all of the time.
- 9.7 For secondary schools, Yarkhill students can attend St Marys RC High School, Lugwardine. This is the closest school. However, as it is a Faith School there is no automatic entry because of catchment. Intake is approximately 150 and most years there is a 100-strong waiting list. Bishops of Bluecoat School is the second closest, but again is a Faith school, so no there is no automatic entry. John Masefield in Ledbury is the catchment High School for the whole of Yarkhill, but because it is not the closest, students would have to pay for transport. They should get automatic entry because of catchment. Herefordshire Council provides free school transport to the nearest school for children living more than 3 miles (or over 2 miles if aged under 8 years) from their nearest school.
- 9.8 The medical centre for the Yarkhill area is in Fownhope, although strictly residents should be allowed to join any surgery that has space in Ledbury or Hereford. The Fownhope medical centre is seven miles from Yarkhill and in practice is only accessible by car as the alternative route is by two buses which run infrequently. The Fownhope medical centre does have its own pharmacy and provides a delivery service on a monthly basis for repeat prescriptions. The nearest hospital is Hereford General Hospital which has an accident and emergency unit and is also seven miles from Yarkhill. It is accessible by bus but houses near to the church and in Monkhide have a long walk to the bus stop at Tarrington nearly two miles away. Very serious cases are treated at Worcester or Gloucester or even Birmingham Queen Elizabeth Hospital because of the more advanced facilities at those hospitals. Dentists and other medical service are available in Hereford and Ledbury both seven miles from Yarkhill Village. There are NHS dentists in Hereford and also in Malvern. Inevitably as people in the village reach an age when it is no longer possible for them to drive they seriously have to consider moving so that they have access to the shops and medical facilities they require.

- 9.9 The village pub known as the “Newtown Inn” was situated at the crossroads in the centre of Newtown at the junction of the A417 Gloucester-Leominster Road and the A4103 Hereford-Worcester Road. The pub was quite popular with local residents but was sold to a couple who did not run it as a pub but converted it into a private home removing the bar pub kitchen and toilets. They did not obtain “change of use” and the current position is that they have been taken to court and fined for not complying with Herefordshire Council’s requirements and will return to Court again if the matter is not settled. Yarkhill Parish Council has registered the property as a community asset.
- 9.10 The results of the Questionnaire indicated that there is a need to improve access to healthcare and shops and there was support for improvements to the village hall and public open space and a play area.

Draft Policy Y11 Community Facilities

Yarkhill village hall is protected for community use. There will be a presumption in favour of the re-use of Yarkhill village hall for recreational, health, and community type uses. The change of use of the village hall to other uses will not be permitted unless the following can be demonstrated:

- 1. The proposal includes alternative provision, on a site within the locality, of equivalent or enhanced facilities. Such sites should be accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and have adequate car parking; or**
- 2. There is no longer a need for the facility.**

Development which contributes towards the improvement of existing, or provision of new recreational, community and educational facilities will be encouraged.

10.0 Agriculture and the Rural Area



Field to Fork Festival

Landscape Character

- 10.1 The local landscape character of Yarkhill is one of the Parish's key attributes and is highly valued by local residents. The results of the Questionnaire showed that over 70% of respondents were against the removal of hedgerows and woods. Broiler sheds and polytunnels on a large scale also met with disapproval with over 30% being not in favour of either. Indoor cattle rearing sheds drew a more neutral response with just under 4% being against.
- 10.2 Yarkhill lies within Natural England's Herefordshire Lowlands National Character Area (NCA)¹⁴. This is described as largely tranquil and rural in character. There are small dispersed settlements of hamlets and villages, many of which contain older buildings with the local vernacular of black-and white timber-framed buildings. Restored cider barns with characteristic double doors and historic farmsteads are also common.
- 10.3 The landscape is gently undulating with steep-sided cornstone hills in the central area dominated by ancient woodland of ash and field maple or oak and bracken. Woodland within the area is a significant landscape feature, typically on the hill tops and valley sides. The area is important for commercial agricultural supported by the fertile and high-grade agricultural soils; the farming is mixed arable and livestock. Traditional orchards are still to be found, though suffering decline, with new orchards and dwarf varieties of trees also common. The area is also important for commercial production of soft fruit under polytunnels, supplying much of the UK. There are many rivers in the area, flowing through

¹⁴ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4827527503675392?category=587130>

wide, fertile mudstone valleys. Old Red Sandstone is commonly found in the west and east of the area and here the soils take on a distinctive red colour.

- 10.4 Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document 2004, Updated 2009¹⁵ describes a number of more detailed landscape types across Herefordshire. The Parish Area of Yarkhill has the following landscape types: Principle settled farmlands to the north and south and riverside meadows in the centre.
- 10.5 Principal settled farmlands are settled agricultural landscapes of dispersed, scattered farms, relic commons and small villages and hamlets. The mixed farming land use reflects the good soils on which they are typically found. Networks of small winding lanes nestling within a matrix of hedged fields are characteristic. Tree cover is largely restricted to thinly scattered hedgerow trees, groups of trees around dwellings and trees along stream sides and other watercourses. This is a landscape with a notably domestic character, defined chiefly by the scale of its field pattern, the nature and density of its settlement and its traditional land uses. Hop fields, orchards, grazed pastures and arable fields, together make up a rich patchwork.
- 10.6 Riverside meadows are linear, riverine landscapes associated with a flat, generally well defined, alluvial floodplain, in places framed by steeply rising ground. They are secluded pastoral landscapes, characterised by meandering tree lined rivers, flanked by riverside meadows which are defined by hedge and ditch boundaries. Settlement is typically absent. Throughout these landscapes, the presence of extensive areas of seasonally grazed waterside meadows has in the past provided a strong sense of visual and ecological unity. These are landscapes that accommodate a degree of annual flooding, a factor which has been reflected in the traditional patterns of land use, the lack of settlement and development (except for the occasional water mill), and the representation of species and habitats tolerant of such waterlogged conditions. The natural fertility of Riverside Meadows has often been maximised by employing devices such as sluices to control and direct the silt laden flood waters.
- 10.7 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy LD1 – Landscape and townscape sets out that development proposals should demonstrate that character of the landscape and townscape has positively influenced the design, scale, nature and site selection, protection and enhancement of the setting of settlements and designated areas. conserve and enhance the natural, historic and scenic beauty of important landscapes and features, and maintain and extend tree cover. Herefordshire is also noted for its dark skies. Dark night skies contribute to residential amenity and light pollution can have an adverse impact on local wildlife.
- 10.8 Draft Policy Y12 seeks to protect those features of the local landscape which make a positive contribution to the local identity and character of Yarkhill Parish.

¹⁵ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/5787595/LCA_2009_V1_sec.pdf

Draft Policy Y12 Protecting Landscape Character

New development should be sited and designed to protect and enhance features which contribute towards the special landscape character of the Yarkhill Parish area.

Landscaping schemes should protect existing hedgerows and use locally appropriate native species such as ash and field maple or oak in new planting schemes. Mature trees should be protected, and used positively to enhance landscaping schemes wherever possible. Tree planting along watercourses is encouraged. Traditional fruit orchards should be protected.

Proposals should give careful consideration to lighting designs in order to minimise light pollution and protect the area's dark skies for the benefit of wildlife and residents' local wellbeing.

Large Agricultural Buildings

- 10.9 Farming practices across Herefordshire and nationally continue to undergo rapid change and in recent years there have been pressures for larger, industrial sized agricultural units for intensive livestock rearing and increases in the extent and size of polytunnels and glass houses. Not all such development requires planning permission (ie new development under given size thresholds) but the NDP could provide a policy for assessing new development when planning consent is required. At the same time older, traditional farm buildings have become disused and redundant and offer opportunities for sensitive re-use and conversion to small workshops and offices etc.
- 10.10 The NDP has a role in seeking to manage these changes and to ensure that the re-use of existing agricultural buildings and the development of new large scale buildings are undertaken sensitively.
- 10.11 Draft Policy Y13 provides design guidelines for large agricultural buildings and polytunnels in the rural area, when planning consent is required. Herefordshire Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document on Polytunnels¹⁶ has been used to help inform the content of this policy.

Draft Policy Y13 Large Agricultural Buildings

Any proposals for new poly-tunnels and large agricultural buildings and other rural business buildings which require planning consent will be required to take into consideration any adverse impact on landscape features and habitats as identified

¹⁶ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/5450290/polytunnels_spddec_08.pdf .

in Draft Policy Y12 above and to demonstrate provision of suitable measures for mitigation.

Development proposals should give careful consideration to noise, odour and light, which might be detrimental to the enjoyment of the area by neighbouring residents. Light pollution should be minimised wherever possible and security lighting should be appropriate, unobtrusive and energy efficient.

Development proposals should protect or lessen any impacts on protected species and habitats and the creation, restoration and enhancement of local habitats will be encouraged as part of landscaping schemes.

Poly-tunnels and large agricultural buildings and other rural business buildings will be supported in fields and agricultural holdings where there would not be significant visual intrusion within the landscape, and any impacts are satisfactorily reduced by landscaping schemes in the short term comprising indigenous species.

Poly-tunnel developments and large agricultural buildings and other rural business buildings that adversely affect the setting of listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered or unregistered historic parks and gardens or other local heritage assets will not be permitted.

The siting of poly-tunnels, agricultural units and associated developments should be sited so that they do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of residents of nearby dwellings.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate that the vehicular means of access and local highway network (in terms of design and capacity) are adequate to cater for increases in traffic generation in terms of numbers and types of vehicles.

Poly-tunnels and large agricultural buildings and other rural business buildings will not be permitted on sites within the fluvial floodplain i.e. Flood Zone 3.

Local Renewable Energy Schemes

- 10.12 The Yarkhill NDP could support sustainable development and action to tackle climate change by supporting renewable energy schemes which are of an appropriate scale and design sensitive to the rural area and landscape.
- 10.13 In the responses to the Questionnaire there was some limited support for renewable energy schemes. The most popular form of renewable energy by some margin was hydropower (46.2%). Some way behind there was support for anaerobic digesters (19.6%) and solar panel farms (11.6%). Wind power had a small majority in favour at 4.73%. The only negative reaction was to biomass burners (-14.6%).
- 10.14 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy SD2 – Renewable and low carbon energy generation supports development proposals that seek to deliver renewable and low carbon energy provided they (amongst other criteria) do not adversely affect residential amenity and do not result in any significant detrimental impact upon the character of the landscape.

Draft Policy Y14 Local Energy Schemes

Small scale renewable energy schemes and community energy schemes will be supported in Yarkhill Parish where any adverse impacts on landscape character and built heritage are mitigated by siting, design and landscaping / screening.

11.0 Timescales and Next Steps

- 11.1 The Yarkhill Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan is published for consultation **until 16th September 2017**.
- 11.2 Following this, the Steering Group will consider all comments and completed responses forms very carefully and amend the Plan.
- 11.3 The Steering Group will then submit the amended Plan to Herefordshire Council – hopefully by the end of November 2017.
- 11.4 Herefordshire Council will check the Plan and publish it for a further 6 weeks consultation, hopefully from November to December 2017.
- 11.5 If all goes well, the NDP will be Examined in early 2018 by an independent Examiner, before proceeding to a local referendum. All on the electoral register in Yarkhill Parish will be invited to vote and a majority Yes vote will mean that the NDP will be used to help determine planning applications in the Parish.

Appendix I

Listed Buildings – Historic England List¹⁷

There are 13 Listed Buildings and one Scheduled Monument in Yarkhill Parish.
These are:

Name	Location	Grade
Grove Cottage	Crew's Pitch, Grove, Yarkhill	II
Barn approximately 20 metres north of Castle Farmhouse	A4103, Yarkhill	II
Cow shed approximately 30 metres north west of Castle Farmhouse	A4103, Yarkhill	II
Jugs Hole Cottage approximately 100 metres north east of Garford	Yarkhill	II
Mann Memorial approximately 2 metres south east of east end of Church of St John the Baptist	Yarkhill	II
Vevers Memorial approximately 2 metres south east of east end of Church of St John the Baptist	Yarkhill	II
Milestone ST SO603438	A 4103, Yarkhill	II
Garford	Yarkhill	II
Church of St John the Baptist	Yarkhill	II
Castle Farmhouse and adjoining granary with hop kiln	A4103, Yarkhill	II
Lower Castle	A4103, Yarkhill	II
Barn approximately 30 metres south west of Castle Farmhouse	A4103, Yarkhill	II
Canal Bridge	Monkhide	II
Scheduled Monuments		
Moated Site, Yarkhill		

¹⁷ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/results?searchtype=nhle>

Appendix II

NDP timeline Yarkhill Parish Council (as at July 2017)

NDP TIMELINE - YARKHILL PARISH COUNCIL	DATE
Question and briefing circulated to all households re NDP returns 100% in favour	01 April 2016
Parish Council authorises NDP	10 May 2016
Area designation applied for	01 June 2016
Designated area approved	05 July 2016
Members of NDP Steering Group requested in Yarkhill News. Communication to village at	17 July 2016
First Call for Sites in Yarkhill News	17 July 2016
First meeting of Steering Group. Officers appointed. Project Plan approved	18 August 2016
Second meeting of Steering Group. Terms of Reference agreed	20 September 2016
Yarkhill News second briefing to village and call for sites	29 September 2016
Service Agreement with Herefordshire Council signed	08 October 2016
Third meeting of Steering Group. Consultants Kirkwells appointed. Household questionnaire	20 October 2016
Website established	21 October 2016
Proposed development sites followed up seeking further information for consultants	End October 2016
Fourth Meeting of Steering Group. Business questionnaire approved	22 November 2016
Yarkhill News third briefing to village on NDP Questionnaire circulated to every household	End November 2016
Proposed developments consultation Yarkhill Village Hall	11 December 2016
Results of consultation on proposed developments posted on website	12 December 2016
Grant application approved	13 December 2016
Yarkhill News NDP briefing including results of Questionnaire	Mid January 2017
Fifth meeting of Steering Group	31 January 2017
Business Questionnaire posted	09 February 2017
Contract with consultants Kirkwells signed	12 February 2017
Draft plan prepared	13 February 2017
Responses to draft plan submitted to Kirkwells	End March 2017
NDP stall in Village Hall with map of proposed developments and answering villagers que	15 April 2017
Second Grant application approved	08 May 2017
Village informal consultation	20 May 2017
Plan revised for formal consultation	28 June 2017
Plan submitted to Herefordshire Council	30 June 2017
Plan submitted to Yarkhill Parish Council for approval	11 July 2017
Regulation 14 commences (after notification issued with Yarkhill News)	21 July 2017
Regulation 14 Ends	15 September 2017

Appendix III

Considerate Constructors

The Parish Council would like to ensure that disturbance to neighbouring residents from new development is minimised. Therefore, the Parish Council will be promoting the Considerate Constructors scheme, through planning conditions attached to planning permissions for new development schemes.

This Scheme is a national initiative, set up by the construction industry. The developer, architect or contractor registers a site on the Scheme, which is then monitored against a Code of Considerate Practice. The Scheme has no involvement with the site unless a complaint is made to them by the public, after which they will seek to resolve the problem through mediation and if no solution can be found they will be removed from the list of members. If the development is not registered on the Scheme, the person carrying out the development or the person with control of the land may be in breach of the planning condition.

Further information on the Considerate Constructors Scheme can found at:

www.considerateconstructorsscheme.org.uk .

Appendix IV - Emails relating to Site 13

From: <ian@realtp.co.uk>
Date: 9 June 2017 at 17:02:27 BST
To: "Tom Misselbrook" <tommisselbrook@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Proposed Development

Hi Tom,

Thank you for your mail, I can confirm that I would like to return to the original proposal of six houses.
If you are going to the Field to Fork Festival then hopefully I will see you there.

Best Regards

Ian

-----Original Message-----

From: Tom Misselbrook [<mailto:tommisselbrook@gmail.com>]
Sent: 07 June 2017 09:50
To: ian@realtp.co.uk
Subject: Proposed Development

Hi Ian

A discussion took place at the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group yesterday evening when a decision was taken to be more flexible over the size of developments in Newtown Cross following representations from another developer and accept a development of six houses. In view of this we would be grateful if you could let us know if you would like to return to your original proposal of six houses or whether you wish to remain with the revised development of four houses?

The approval of planning applications for any development is however a matter for Herefordshire County Council although the Yarkhill NDP will acknowledge developments of up to six houses.

Kind regards

Tom Misselbrook

Yarkhill Parish Council

July 2017