

Stretton Grandison NDP
Issues and Options Discussion Paper
Summer 2016

Kirkwells

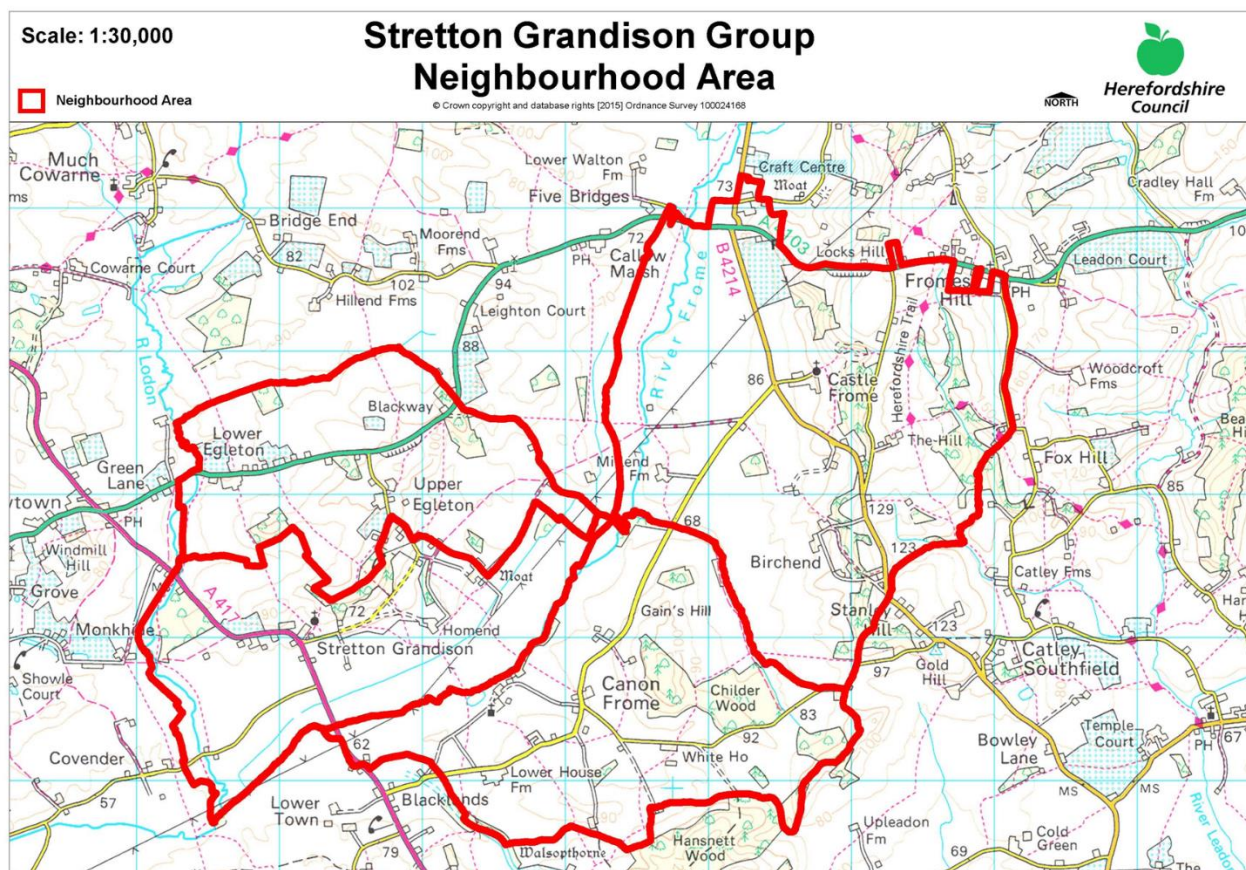
The Planning People

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 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. Stretton Grandison Group Parish Council has decided to prepare a NDP for this area, and this document has been prepared for public consultation as a first step in the process.
- 1.2 The neighbourhood area for the proposed NDP was designated by Herefordshire Council on 21st September 2015 and is shown on Map 1 below. 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 in **early 2016**.

Map 1 Stretton Grandison Neighbourhood Area

Insert psma number



- 1.3 Stretton Grandison Group Parish comprises the parishes of Castle Frome, Eggleton, Stretton Grandison and Canon Frome. The Group Parish extends over 1697 ha and had a combined population of 360 in 2011 (see Census 2011 Neighbourhood Statistics¹). The area lies about 10 miles to the north east of the City of Hereford, and 8 miles north west of Ledbury.

¹ <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination>

- 1.4 The neighbourhood area is very rural in character with several scattered settlements including Stretton Grandison, Canon Frome, Castle Frome, Upper Eggleton and Lower Eggleton. The River Frome flows roughly north east to south west through the area and parts of the area are at risk of flooding (Middle Frome Catchment).
- 1.5 There are a number of sites of wildlife interest and a number of built heritage assets including Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments and a Conservation Area in Stretton Grandison.
- 1.6 The key policy documents which are relevant to the area are: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and Herefordshire Adopted Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031.
- 1.7 The NPPF sets out the national planning policy framework within which NDPs have to sit. 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*.
- 1.8 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:*

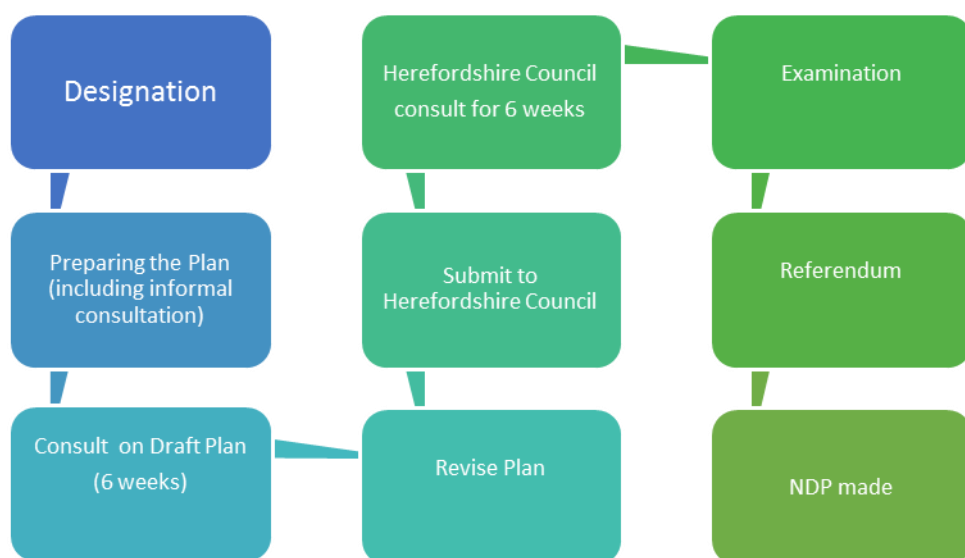
 - *set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications; and*
 - *grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order.*

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 duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation.*
- 1.9 In the Herefordshire Core Strategy Local Plan, Stretton Grandison Group Parish falls within the Ledbury Rural Housing Market Area which is required to grow by 14% over the Plan period up to 2031.
- 1.10 Lower Eggleton and Fromes Hill (both on the edge of the neighbourhood area, and partly within other parishes) are identified as settlements which will be the main focus of

proportionate housing development (Fig 4.14). Stretton Grandison, Canon Frome and Eggleton are identified as other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate in Fig 4.15 of the Core Strategy.

- 1.11 The Core Strategy sets the local strategic planning framework for the Group Parish with a range of planning policies which support limited housing and economic growth, protect and enhance wildlife and special landscapes, and protects community facilities. Overall the Core Strategy aims to promote sustainable development across the County.
- 1.12 The NDP for Stretton Grandison has a role in providing the local detail for these higher level policies; providing more information about the Group Parish context to inform planning policies possibly relating to the location of development, house types, sizes and design, and identifying those special features in settlements and the local landscape which should be protected and enhanced.
- 1.13 The preparation of a NDP is a complex and lengthy process, taking around 2 years. The Group Parish is at the very beginning of this process (Preparing the Plan), and the main steps are set out below.



- 1.14 This “Issues and Options” document explains more about the key planning issues identified by the Steering group

2.0 Draft Vision and Objectives

2.1 The Draft Vision and Objectives have been prepared by the Steering Group.

Draft Vision for Stretton Grandison

To maintain the rural environment and character of the Group Parish.

To support the provision of affordable housing as part of an overall increase in housing stock of 14% across the area.

To promote energy efficiency.

To support local businesses and employment opportunities.

Note – these read a bit like objectives. Perhaps put into sentences eg:

“The attractive rural environment and character of the Group Parish will be maintained and enhanced, whilst some sustainable, energy efficient growth will be supported to meet local housing and employment needs.”

Draft Objectives for Housing

HO1. To identify the scale of housing growth across the identified settlements in the Core Strategy.

HO2. To work closely with neighbouring parishes to promote a joint approach to growth at Fromes Hill and Lower Eggleton.

HO3. To identify a range of suitable sites through a Call for Sites and Site Assessment process.

Draft Objectives for the Environment

ENO1. To conserve and enhance Homend Park.

ENO2. To protect and enhance local natural environmental assets such as wildlife, hedgerows, water courses and ponds, traditional orchards, ancient woodlands, the line of the old canal and important views such as to Woolhope Dome.

ENO3. To ensure development is guided towards areas of lowest flood risk and to promote designs and layout which do not exacerbate flood risk eg from surface water.

ENO4. To ensure new agricultural development such as poly tunnels and large agricultural buildings are designed and sited sensitively within the landscape.

Draft Objectives for the Economy

ECO1. To support the sensitive conversion of redundant farm buildings to create more local employment opportunities.

ECO2. To support investment in local infrastructure eg broadband and transport.

ECO3. To encourage the use of renewable energy schemes, for instance through community heating schemes.

Q1

DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT VISION AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE NDP?

3.0 Options for NDP Planning Policies

3.1 Housing

3.1.1 A key area for consideration in the NDP will be providing a positive planning framework to support limited housing growth in the neighbourhood area. The minimum housing growth required in the Group Parish is set out in the Core Strategy Policies RA1 and RA2. Policy RA1 sets the housing growth figure for Ledbury rural Housing Market Area (within which Stretton Grandison lies) as 14% of the number of dwellings in the Parish. This equates to 18 dwellings over the Plan period from 2011 – 2031.

3.1.2 Policy RA2 identifies the settlements where growth should be focussed (in Figures 4.14 and 4.15). The Policy 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.”

3.1.3 In Stretton Grandison Group Parish the identified settlements for new housing growth are:

Fig 4.14 Settlements which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development

- Lower Eggleton and
- Fromes Hill

Fig 4.15 Other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate

- Stretton Grandison,
- Canon Frome, and
- Eggleton

3.1.4 There are several options for preparing a planning policy framework which require consideration.

Policy Options - Housing

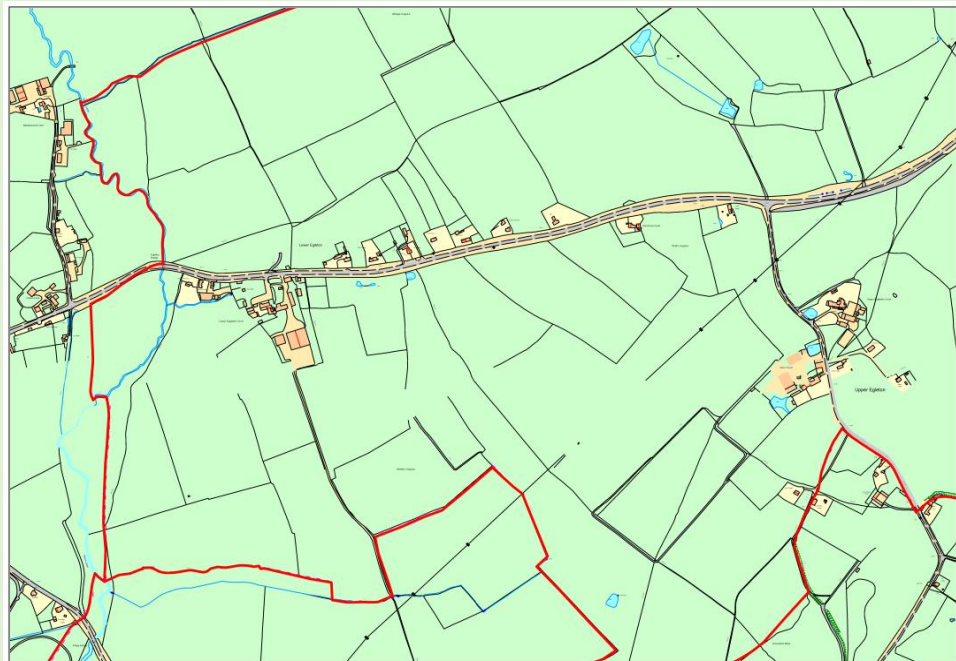
Policy Option 1 - Identification of a settlement boundary for all identified settlements in the Core Strategy.

This would be a line on a map, identifying where new development would be acceptable in a settlement. It is usually drawn quite tightly around the existing built form, but may include identified site allocations for new development.

Outside this line, the area is considered to be wider countryside and new development will only be acceptable where it is “exception housing”.

The Core Strategy identifies Lower Egleton and Fromes Hill as the focus for new housing.

- Lower Egleton



- **Fromes Hill**



Note for SG – this settlement is largely within the adjoining parish of Bishop’s Frome but you need to consider the area around the small area of houses in your neighbourhood area and work together on this.

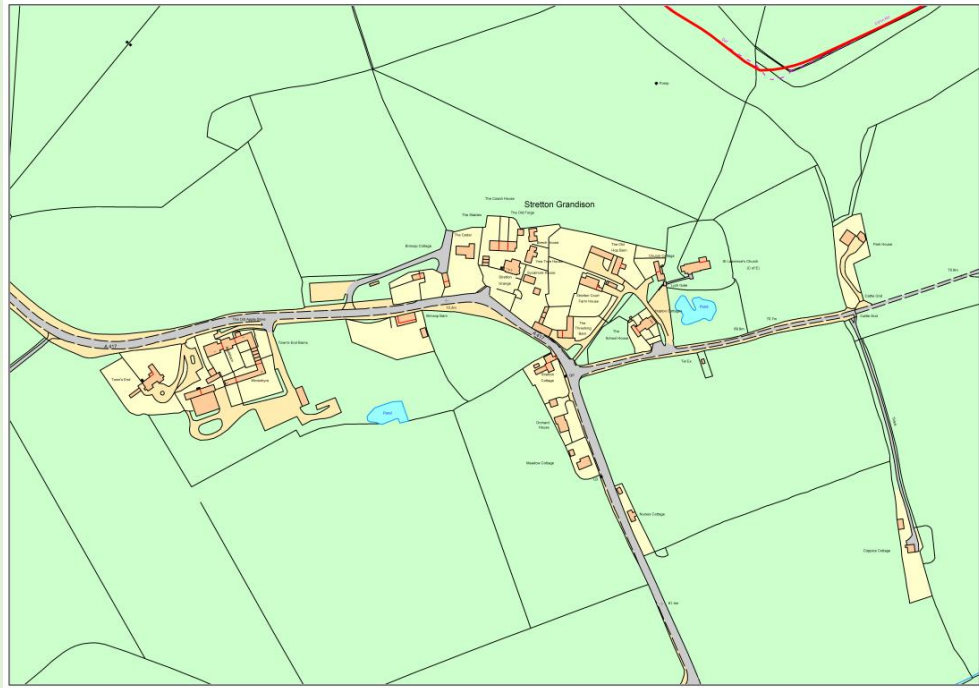
Note - Bishops Frome NDP is at Reg 14 consultation stage – see https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/4793146/reg_14_final_a3_draft_plan_july_2016.pdf

Representations should be made by 15th August.

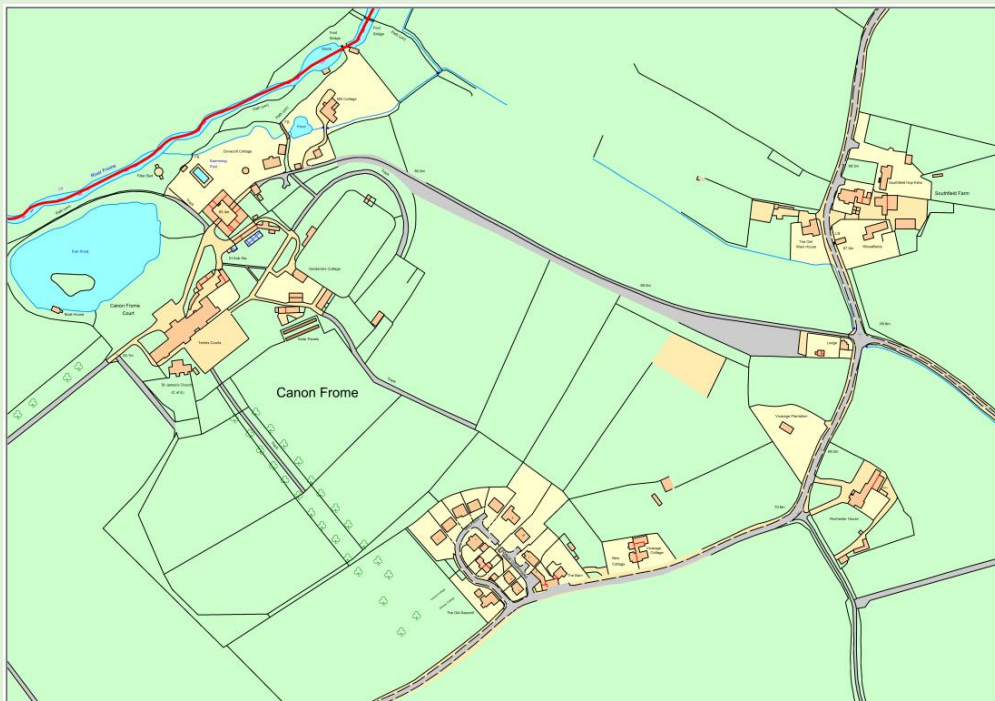
The proposed settlement boundary includes part of this NDP area and would not allow for much housing growth in the Stretton Grandison neighbourhood area.

The NDP could also consider how growth should be proportioned across Stretton Grandison, Canon Frome and Eggleton / Lower Eggleton as “other settlements” identified in the Core Strategy.

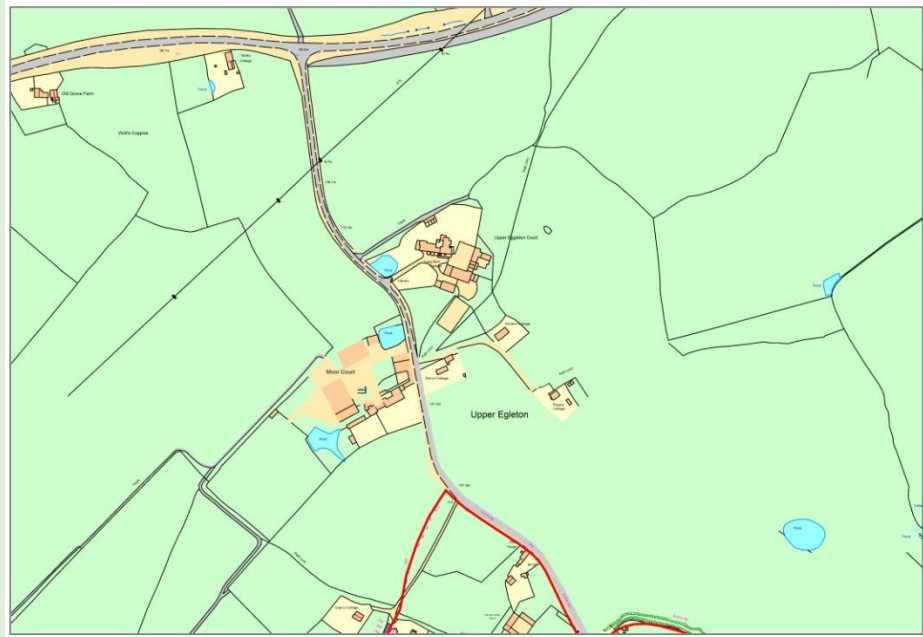
- **Stretton Grandison**



- **Canon Frome**



- Eggleton (note - does this mean “Upper Eggleton” as per map below?)



As some of these are quite scattered settlements, drawing a settlement boundary may be challenging.

The NDP could advise that some areas are less suitable for new housing than others ie identify which areas are the priority for local growth.

Q2

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES FOR ALL OR SOME OF THE ABOVE SETTLEMENTS AND GUIDE DEVELOPMENT PROPORTIONATELY TO THE MOST APPROPRIATE SETTLEMENTS?

- 3.1.5 The summary schedule and maps for the rural settlements from the 2012 SHLAA does not include any sites identified in the Group Parish. In order to allocate sites, the NDP process should include a local call for sites and site assessment.

Policy Option 2 – Site Allocations

The NDP could allocate one or more new housing sites.

This is usually done through a Call for Sites process and then a technical Site Assessment based on an agreed set of criteria. This provides a ranking of possible sites, with some suggested as Preferred Options for informal consultation and then possibly taken forward into the Draft Plan as proposed Site Allocations.

In terms of Fromes Hill there should be a joint approach with Bishops Frome NDP.

You may wish to focus development on 1 or more of the above settlements and limit development in other, eg smaller settlements. To some extent this may be determined by the sites put forward through the Call for Sites process eg if no sites come forward at a given settlement then it would be difficult to allocate a site(s) there.

Q3

SHOULD THE PARISH COUNCIL UNDERTAKE A CALL FOR SITES PROCESS TO SUPPORT SITE ALLOCATIONS IN THE NDP FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN OR ADJOINING THE ABOVE SETTLEMENTS?

Policy Option 3 Criteria for New Housing Development

Instead of, or in addition to, identifying new housing sites, the NDP could set out in a planning policy the criteria against which planning applications for new housing may be considered.

Each identified settlement could have its own policy or paragraph in a policy, reflecting the particular characteristics and needs of that community.

The policies could include for instance requiring new housing to be infill development within a settlement boundary, on brownfield sites, and of a scale and design that responds to the distinctive character of the surrounding area.

Q4

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY OR POLICIES SETTING OUT CRITERIA FOR NEW HOUSING WITHIN THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY / BOUNDARIES?

- 3.1.6 Beyond these identified settlements, the Group Parish is considered to be “open countryside” and only exception housing under Core Strategy policies RA3, RA4, H2 or H4 will be acceptable.

Policy Option 4 Housing in the Wider Countryside

The Core Strategy allows for some limited housing in the wider countryside eg Affordable Housing, or housing required by agricultural workers or related to other rural industries which is required to be close to the work place eg forestry, charcoal burning etc.

One of the draft objectives seeks to conserve and enhance Homeend Park. This area would be considered to be wider countryside. The NDP could include a policy to guide any new development in this location.



Q5

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE WIDER COUNTRYSIDE OR LEAVE IT TO THE HEREFORDSHIRE CORE STRATEGY?

Q6

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A SPECIFIC POLICY TO GUIDE ANY PROPOSALS COMING FORWARD AT HOMEEND?

- 3.1.7 There are concerns that recent housing development has tended to provide larger, family sized or “executive style” housing which is beyond the reach of many local residents or does not meet their needs. At the same time there is an argument that more housing is needed in the local area for residents with a local connection, such as starter homes / homes for first time buyers and housing for older residents who may wish to down size / re-size to relocate and stay within the community. NDPs can include policies to guide housing types and sizes etc but must include the evidence showing that need eg through the NDP consultation responses or local housing needs surveys.
- 3.1.8 In terms of Affordable Housing, a Ministerial Statement has set out that for sites of 10 units or less and which have a maximum combined gross floor space of 1,000 square metres, affordable housing and tariff style contributions should not be sought. Therefore, if the NDP proposes site allocations for developments comprising less than 10 house, then the sites cannot be required to include Affordable Housing.

Policy Option 5 Housing Mix

The NDP could encourage particular house sizes or types eg starter homes, housing designed for older people etc where there is evidence of local need.

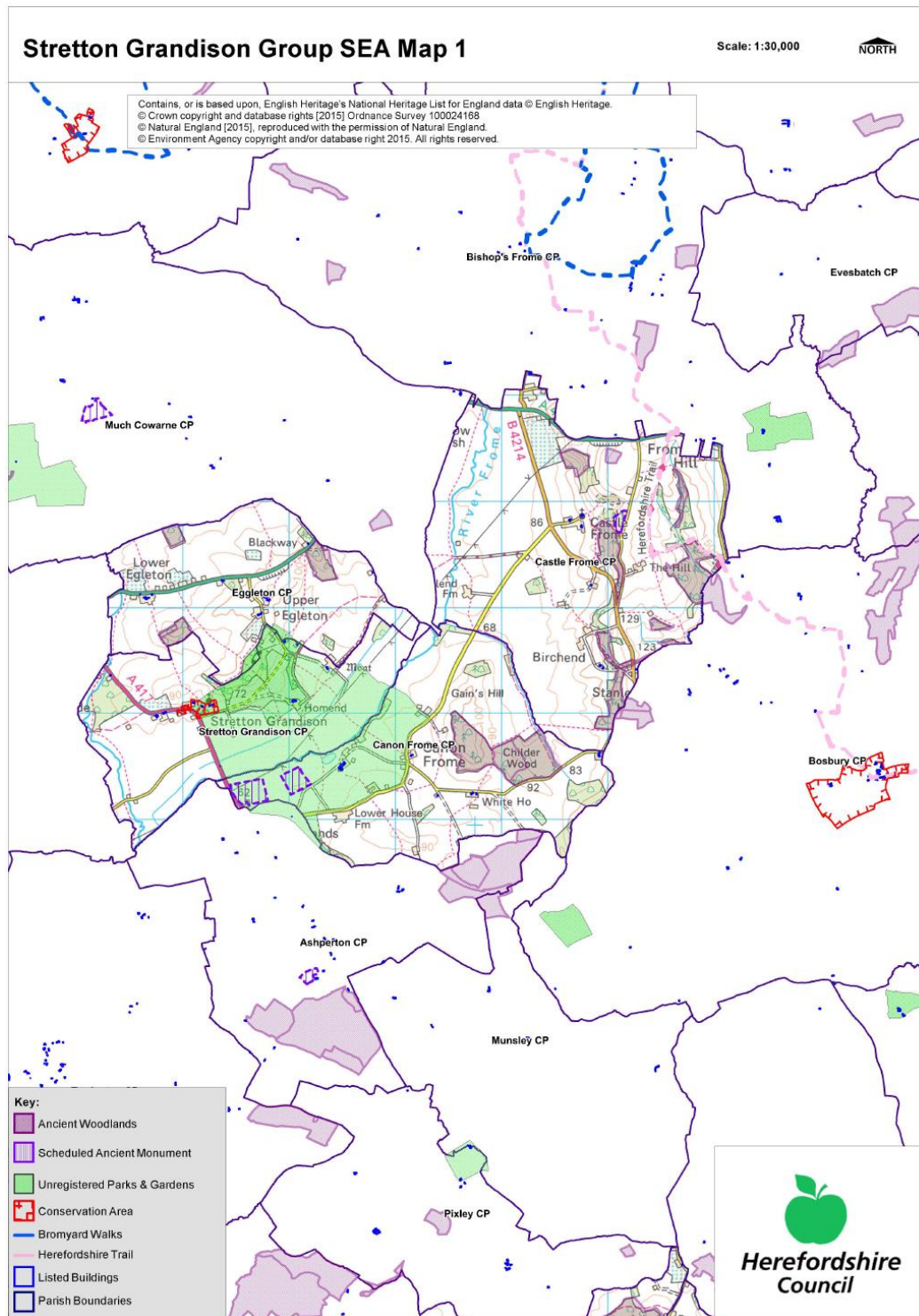
Q7

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY ENCOURAGING PARTICULAR HOUSE TYPES AND SIZES WITHIN THE GROUP PARISH TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL AREA?

3.2 Environment

3.2.1 The Group Parish is located within a very rural area, with a high quality natural and built environment. These are shown on Map 2 below.

Map 2 SEA Map 1
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Natural Environment

- 3.2.2 SG – describe the local landscape character. Eg Small scattered farmsteads and clustered settlements are set within a rolling landscape of orchards, pasture, arable land and woodland. The patchwork of fields is defined by field boundaries of mature hedgerows rich with native species. The River Frome flows through the area and is fed by other smaller water courses such as XX. Look at Eaton Bishop Draft NDP – this section was all written by members of the SG. Take photos to illustrate your points.
- 3.2.3 Stretton Grandison has 7 areas of ancient woodland in the Group Parish, 1 Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Birchend and 11 Special Wildlife Sites (SWS).
- 3.2.4 The NDP could include a planning policy aimed at protecting and enhancing this special landscape character and local biodiversity.

Policy Option 6 Protecting Local Landscape Character and Biodiversity

A landscaping policy could be prepared which identifies those features which contribute towards the special landscape character of the area and encourages development to protect and enhance them.

Such a policy could require new development to protect important features and incorporate appropriate local species and landscape design to enhance local biodiversity eg planting hedgerows, using native tree species, incorporating ponds and bat boxes etc.

The NDP could also identify locally important views and require development to be sited and designed to ensure such views are protected.

Q8

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY WHICH DEFINES LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND SEEKS TO PROTECT IT BY ENSURING NEW DEVELOPMENT PROTECTS AND ENHANCES THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE?

- 3.2.5 NDPs can also identify areas of land known as Local Green Space which is of particular local significance and which should be protected from new development in a similar way to Green Belt. The NDP has to set out clearly the justification for such areas if you wish to include them, and this is set out in the NPPF:

76. Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

77. The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Policy Option 7 Local Green Space

Are there areas of land within the identified settlements which the local community wish to see protected from development and which meet the above criteria?

Q9

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY WHICH IDENTIFIES 1 OR MORE AREAS OF LOCAL GREEN SPACE FOR PROTECTION FROM DEVELOPMENT?

IF SO PLEASE IDENTIFY THEM AND EXPLAIN WHY THEY ARE IMPORTANT.

Built Environment

- 3.2.6 The Group Parish also has a wealth of built heritage assets. There are a 17 Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments in Stretton Grandison and 10 in Canon Frome. Stretton Grandison also has a Conservation Area.
- 3.2.7 SG - describe the local built character eg of each settlement. What are the materials (eg Herefordshire sandstone, traditional red brick, black and white timber frames etc, roofs, describe height, modern and older buildings, detached farmhouses, smaller cottages etc) Take photos to illustrate your points. You may also want to think about undertaking a series of mini character appraisals— see Clifton upon Teme Draft NDP. <http://clifton-upon-teme-pc.org.uk/index.php/neighbourhood-plan/formal-public-consultation/np-formal-public-consultation> - ie one for each settlement.
- 3.2.8 The NDP could include a design policy to help ensure new development is sensitively sited and designed so that it compliments existing settlements. The NDP should not stifle new / contemporary designs, but should provide a positive policy framework to ensure that new development is appropriate and enhances the local character of this very rural area.

Policy Option 8 Protecting and Enhancing the Built Environment

A design policy could be prepared which identifies those features and materials which contribute to the local distinctiveness of the area (eg in each settlement) and encourages new development to incorporate them.

For example, the NDP could set out height, scale and massing of new development and identify preferred materials such as traditional red brick, slate roofs etc.

Q10

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE ONE OR MORE POLICIES TO ENCOURAGE LOCALLY DISTINCTIVE DESIGN IN NEW DEVELOPMENT?

3.2.9 Stretton Grandison includes a Conservation Area.

Map 3 Stretton Grandison Conservation Area

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Policy Option 9 Stretton Grandison Conservation Area

The NDP could include a detailed description of the conservation area and include a detailed design policy to encourage new development to be designed sympathetically to protect its distinctive character including materials, scale, height, siting and protecting important views eg to the church.

Q11

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY TO PROTECT THE SPECIAL FEATURES OF THE CONSERVATION AREA?

3.3 Economy

- 3.3.1 The Group Parish has a number of local businesses which provide a diverse range of employment opportunities. Local employers include (list and describe eg farms, tourist accommodation, small businesses run from home etc – say where these are, and if possible the numbers and types of jobs there)
- 3.3.2 There is a need to support investment in local businesses to help provide increased employment opportunities in the area so that it continues to be a thriving living and working environment.
- 3.3.3 Farming practices 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.
- 3.3.4 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.
- 3.3.5 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.

Policy Option 10 Supporting Economic Re-Use of Redundant Agricultural Buildings

A policy could be prepared which supports the sensitive re-use of disused agricultural buildings for new appropriate economic activity eg workshops, offices etc.

Q12

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY WHICH GUIDES THE RE-USE OF EXISTING DISUSED FARM BUILDINGS FOR EMPLOYMENT USES?

Policy Option 11 New Agricultural Buildings

A policy could be prepared which requires new large agricultural buildings to be sited and designed as sensitively as possible to reduce industrialisation of the landscape.

Q13

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY WHICH GUIDES NEW AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF LARGE FARM BUILDINGS WHEN PLANNING CONSENT IS REQUIRED?

- 3.3.6 Herefordshire Council already has an adopted Supplementary Planning Document on Polytunnels – see https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/5450290/polytunnels_spddec_08.pdf . The principles set out in this could be brought forward into the NDP which will have more weight in planning decisions than an SPD.

Policy Option 12 Polytunnels

A policy could be prepared which requires new large poly tunnels to be sited and designed as sensitively as possible to protect sensitive landscapes.

Q14

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY WHICH GUIDES NEW POLYTUNNELS WHEN PLANNING CONSENT IS REQUIRED?

- 3.3.6 **SG – insert something about community energy schemes. Is there a local demand? What are the opportunities? Are you thinking about wind? Solar?**
- 3.3.7 A Ministerial Statement has set out that suitable areas for wind energy development will need to have been allocated clearly in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. A site allocation for wind turbines could prove controversial, but a criteria based policy which supports other forms of community energy schemes, subject to sensitive siting, landscaping and design may be appropriate.

Policy Option 13 Supporting Community Energy Schemes

A policy could be prepared which provides criteria to guide proposals for community based energy schemes.

Q15

SHOULD THE NDP INCLUDE A POLICY WHICH GUIDES COMMUNITY BASED ENERGY SCHEMES?

3.4 Anything Else?

Q16

IS THERE ANYTHING MISSING THAT THE NDP NEEDS TO ADDRESS?

Eg Flooding? This was not mentioned at the Inception Meeting but clearly there are areas at risk of flooding in the Group Parish.



4.0 Timescales and Next Steps

Stretton Grandison NDP - Proposed Timetable

Target Date	Action
Summer – Autumn 2016	Preparation and Consultation on Issues and Options paper
Autumn 2016	Call for Sites and Site Assessment Process
End 2016	First Draft Plan published for informal consultation
Spring 2017	Reg 14 formal 6 weeks consultation on Draft NDP
Summer 2017	Revise NDP
Autumn 2017	Submit NDP to Herefordshire Council
Winter 2017	Herefordshire Council consult for 6 weeks
Spring 2018	Examination
Summer 2018	Referendum and Plan Made.

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