

Allensmore Neighbourhood Development Plan

2011 – 2031

April 2020



Contents

Foreword	4
1. What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?	5
2. A Neighbourhood Development Plan for Allensmore.....	7
3. A Portrait of Allensmore	10
4. Vision and Objectives	13
5. Planning Policies and Proposals	15
5.1 Environment and Biodiversity	15
5.2 Housing	20
5.3 The Economy of Allensmore, Cobhall, and Winnal	36
5.4 Improving Local Accessibility and Infrastructure	39
5.5 Community Facilities	45
Appendices	47
Appendix 1: Listed Buildings in Allensmore Parish.....	47
Appendix 2: Definition of Affordable Housing.....	48
Appendix 3: Non Planning Actions for the Parish Council.....	49
Appendix 4: Allensmore Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group Members	51

Foreword

Welcome to the Final version of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for Allensmore Parish. This document has been prepared by the NDP steering group of local residents and parish councillors with the help of Kirkwells consultants and support from Herefordshire Council.

The Plan has been prepared following consideration of the representations submitted during the formal (Regulation 14) public consultation on the Draft NDP from 27th May 2019 to 12th July 2019 and the formal (Regulation 16) public consultation from 2nd October 2019 to 18th November 2019.

The Plan was sent for examination on 27th November 2019 and the examiner's report was received on 20th March 2020.

The Final Plan has been updated in accordance with the examiner's modifications and the Allensmore Parish Council have confirmed their intention to continue to progress the Plan through to the referendum.

The NDP is accompanied by a Consultation Statement. This document sets out in detail the various stages of public consultation undertaken during the preparation of the Plan since 2017 and provides information about how local residents and stakeholders have helped to shape the Plan's policies and proposals, including site allocations for new housing. We have also prepared a Basic Conditions Statement which details how the Allensmore NDP meets the required basic conditions. Both documents have been tested at examination.

1. What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) are a new type of planning policy document, prepared by parish councils and some other bodies to guide new development within a defined area, such as a parish. They are used alongside local authority (here, Herefordshire Council) and national planning policy documents, to help determine planning applications. NDPs are powerful tools and present significant opportunities for local people to have a real say in how, and where, development should happen within their local area.
- 1.2 An NDP can cover a range of planning related issues, or just have one, single policy. This document has been prepared taking into account:
- The launch event held at the village hall in July 2017,
 - the responses to the Issues and Options consultation in January 2018,
 - the responses to the First Draft Plan's draft planning policies and proposed preferred options for site allocations for new housing in early 2019,
 - the responses to the Regulation 14 public consultation in summer 2019,
 - the responses to the Regulation 16 public consultation in Autumn 2019,
 - modifications requested by the examiner in March 2020.
- 1.3 It is important to remember that NDPs cannot be prepared in isolation. They have to be in general conformity with local strategic planning policies. These are currently the strategic policies in Herefordshire's adopted Local Plan Core Strategy ¹.
- 1.4 NDPs are also required to have regard to national planning policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)², Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)³ and other guidance.
- 1.5 All NDP planning policies and proposals have to be underpinned by a clear and robust evidence base of local opinion and technical resources, and overall the Plan has to meet a set of “basic conditions” set out in national guidance.

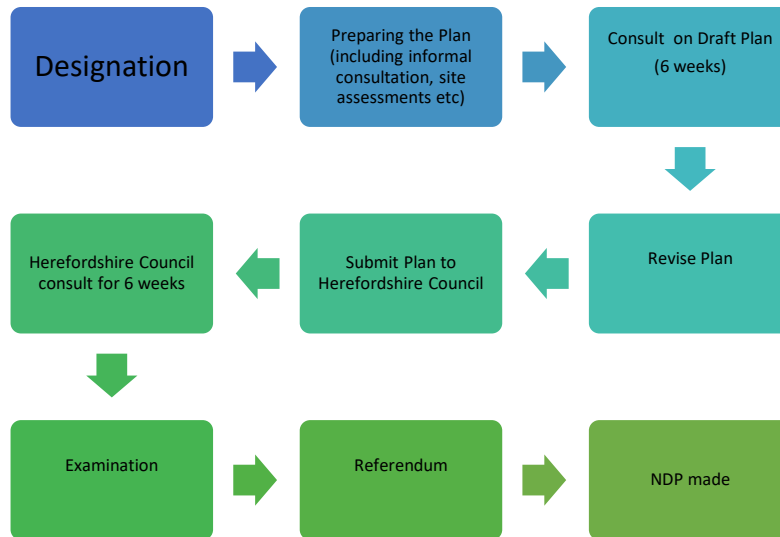
¹ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/123/adopted_core_strategy

² NPPF - Revised February 2019 see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

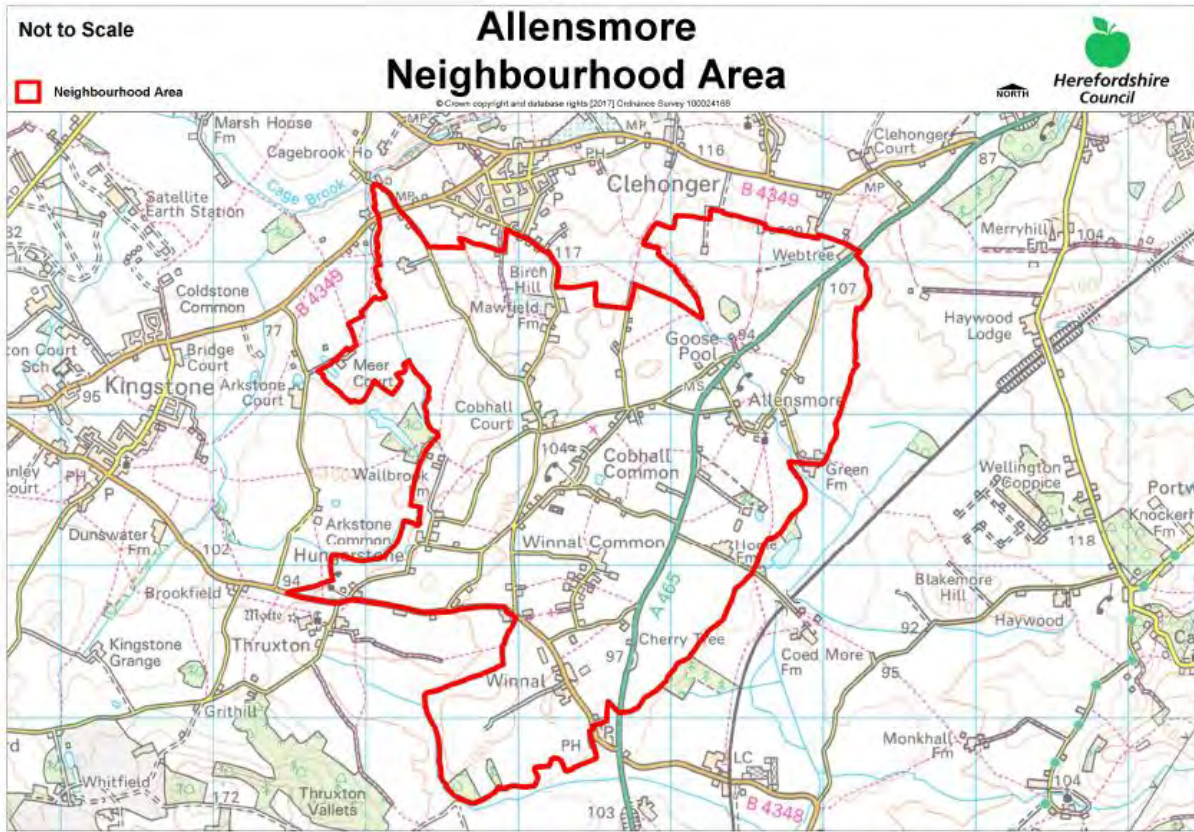
1.6 Preparing an NDP is a complex and lengthy process – see Figure 1.

Figure 1 NDP Process



2. A Neighbourhood Development Plan for Allensmore

Map 1 Designated Neighbourhood Area



- 2.1. Allensmore neighbourhood area lies approximately 5 miles south west of the City of Hereford, and about 15½ miles north west of Ross-on-Wye, in rural Herefordshire. The A465 cuts north / south through the eastern side of the area. The NDP area is slightly smaller than the parish as it excludes a small area of the parish south of Clehonger which has been included in the Clehonger neighbourhood area.
- 2.2. The neighbourhood area extends across 820 hectares and the population of the parish (including the area south of Clehonger) was recorded as 566 in the 2011 Census.

Preparing our Plan

- 2.3. The NDP is being prepared by a steering group of local residents and parish councillors on behalf of the parish council. Steering group meetings are publicised on the parish council website <http://allensmore.org.uk/> and the village email circulation. The meetings are open to the public - all are welcome to attend. Technical assistance and professional fees will be funded largely from Government grants available for NDPs. The NDP includes planning policies for development in the whole of the neighbourhood area and site allocations for new housing in the settlement areas. Full details about the various consultation stages and process are provided in the accompanying Consultation Statement.

Designation

- 2.4. The parish council applied for area designation on 7th April 2017 and the area shown on Map 1 was designated as a neighbourhood area by Herefordshire Council on 26th May 2017. The neighbourhood area is different from the parish boundary in that it excludes an area within Allensmore parish to the north. This area adjoins the built up area of Clehonger, and lies within another designated neighbourhood area - Clehonger.

Launch Event 29th July 2017

- 2.5. A launch event to promote the NDP and encourage local residents to become involved was held at the village hall on Saturday 29th July 2017. Around 64 people attended the event and were invited to write their comments about the neighbourhood area on post-it notes. Comments were collected on what residents liked about living in Allensmore, as well as another 51 post-it notes on what were felt to be 'issues and options' for the future. These comments are transcribed and grouped in tables and published in the neighbourhood plan section of the parish council website: <http://allensmore.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Development-Plan.php>
- 2.6. The comments were considered carefully by the steering group and used to inform the Issues and Options document which was published for informal consultation in January 2018.

Issues and Options Consultation, January 2018

- 2.7. The Issues and Options document was published on the parish council website (Allensmore.org.uk) on 9th January 2018 and hard copies were made available in several public places and on request from any member of the steering group. A drop-in event was held in the village hall on 28th January 2018 at which residents could discuss and feedback their views to members of the steering group. In addition, a response form was prepared which provided a very limited summary of the document and all the questions contained in it. These were delivered to every household in the designated area and provided a mechanism for every resident to comment on the document.
- 2.8. A report was prepared setting out the results of the consultation on Issues and Options and this is available on the neighbourhood plan page of the parish council website: <http://allensmore.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Development-Plan.php>.

First Draft Plan (Preferred Options) Consultation, January 2019

- 2.9. The First Draft Plan for Allensmore was published for informal public consultation for 4 weeks in January 2019 which extended into February 2019 because of bad weather. The First Draft Plan document was placed on the Parish Council website and hard copies were made available in several public places and on request from any member of the steering group. A Drop In event was held on Monday 21st January 2019 from 7pm to 9pm at which residents could discuss and feedback their views to members of the steering group.
- 2.10. By the close of the survey 90 responses had been returned, which included 8 emailed responses and 3 online responses. There was one further contact with the steering group asking for advice regarding their particular property and its inclusion in the sites allocated. The 90 returned responses was 21% of the number of people aged 16 and over usually resident in the parish in 2011.

Regulation 14 Public Consultation, 27th May 2019 to 12th July 2019

- 2.11 The Allensmore Draft Neighbourhood Plan was published for formal consultation for just over 6 weeks from 27th May 2019 until 12th July 2019.
- 2.12 As the formal consultation was taking place shortly after the informal consultation on the First Draft Plan, it was decided not to hold a further public event but to publicise the consultation using the website, posters, Hereford Times, Tracking the News and by direct email to residents and stakeholders on the consultation database and to consultation bodies. A leaflet was also delivered to every house in the designated area.
- 2.13 Responses were received from a number of consultation bodies including Herefordshire Council, Historic England, Environment Agency and Welsh Water. In addition representations were received from 16 local residents and landowners, and included proposals to amend the settlement boundaries. Full details of the Steering Group's / Parish Council's responses to these comments are provided in the accompanying Response Tables to the Consultation Statement.

Regulation 16 Public Consultation, 7th October 2019 to 18th November 2019

- 2.14 The Allensmore Draft Neighbourhood Plan was published for formal consultation for 6 weeks from 7th October 2019 until 18th November 2019.
- 2.15 The Regulation 16 stage resulted in 11 representations including a representation received late from Natural England. The examiner considered all of the representations made and has taken them into account in preparing the Independent Examiner's Report.

Examination, November 2019 to March 2020

- 2.16 The Allensmore Neighbourhood Development Plan was sent for examination on 27 November 2019. We received the examiner's report on 20 March 2020.
- 2.17 The examiner recommended some modifications in the main to ensure that the Plan's application and clarity provides a practical framework for decision making. Reasoning is set out in detail in the Examiner's Report. The modifications did not significantly or substantially alter the intention or overall nature of the Plan.
- 2.18 Subject to those modifications (which have now been applied), the examiner concluded that the Plan does meet the basic conditions and all the other requirements she was obliged to examine. The examiner therefore recommended to Herefordshire Council that the Allensmore Neighbourhood Development Plan can go forward to a referendum.

3. A Portrait of Allensmore



- 3.1. The neighbourhood area of Allensmore is made up of three main settlements: Allensmore itself, along with Cobhall Common and Winnal. These small settlements are interspersed with working farms and smaller groups of houses. The settlements of Cobhall Common and Winnal are documented in the Domesday Book of 1086 with the former having thirteen households and the latter eight. At that time, the Allensmore settlement was a wasteland on the edge of Haywood Forest and did not come into being until Alan de Plukenet, who held the manor of Kilpeck started to drain the land for agricultural purposes in the late 13th Century.
- 3.2. Over the centuries, agriculture was, and still is, at the heart of parish life with the Pateshall family owning the manor and its tenant farms from 1725 to 1958. The family also provided the village school which is now used as a community hall and renamed The Pateshall Hall in their honour. When Allensmore Court – the ‘big house’ – was demolished in 1958, a number of the farms came into the ownership of estate workers whose descendants still farm in the area today, some having recollections of life on the estate.
- 3.3. Parishioners value the rural way of life and the green tapestry of fields and small areas of woodland that link the settlement areas. They enjoy the listed buildings across the area along with a wide variety of more modern property. Housing has evolved over the years with the 1891 census recording around 142 houses and 520 residents to 1981 when there were around 156 houses and 446 residents. In 2011 there were about 230 houses concentrated in the three settlements and dispersed over a wider area, with a population of 566. There is no street lighting in any part of the parish giving dark skies valued by residents.

- 3.4. The village of Allensmore lies to the east of the A465 and is linear in nature. It has as its focal point the church of St Andrew. Whilst the south doorway of the church is Norman, most of the church today dates from the 14th century with a 15th century tower which has a peal of 6 bells and a band of enthusiastic bell ringers. The vestry window depicts the Pateshall family crest. The housing in this part of the neighbourhood area has a rich and varied mix of styles including 15th century listed buildings, Georgian farms edging the settlement, converted barns and 20th century bungalows and



houses. Most of the housing stock is detached. There are no other services in this part of the village, including at present broadband.

- 3.5. The hamlet of Cobhall Common lies to the west of the A465 and the settlement is linear in nature with buildings set back and lining the narrow lanes. Much of the housing is fragmented by fields belonging to farming families, some of whom have worked the land for several generations. Like the Allensmore settlement, Cobhall Common has a variety of housing styles, including the oldest house in the area (Little Cobhall Farm which has a cruck roof). Most



of the housing stock in Cobhall Common is detached with single and two storey dwellings. On the fringes of Cobhall Common are working farms and small holdings together with allotments provided by a local farmer for the use of villagers. A bus runs through Cobhall Common once a week. The decommissioned telephone box has recently been converted into a mini community library called 'Books in a Box'. Superfast broadband arrived in parts of Cobhall Common in 2017.

- 3.6. The medieval settlement of Winnal is believed to have developed on land associated with Winnal Farm. Housing stock is derived from four original farm houses, one of which is no longer a farm house. The oldest of these buildings is Winnal Court, parts of which date from the 17th century. Other housing in Winnal includes a cottage, a bungalow and some 1980s dwellings.

- 3.7. Winnal Common has two farm houses interspersed with cottages, bungalows and more recent residences. Winnal Common is separated from Cobhall Common by Winnal Common Farm.



- 3.8. Other small settlements in the area are Webtree, Mawfield, Hungerstone and Goosepool. More dispersed dwellings in the parish include farms, small holdings and cottages together with a few more modern individual houses.

- 3.9. Community buildings are limited to the village hall and church. Although the village hall does not lie within any of the three main settlement areas, being situated on the east side of the A465, it provides an excellent resource for the area, including bringing economic benefits. Keep fit, ballet, Women's Institute meetings and other events are run from the hall, providing an additional income opportunity for those organizing some of the events, as well as providing local classes for the community.

- 3.10. As well as its regular weekly congregation of worshippers, the church has been used over the years for coffee mornings and for secular events, Barn Dances, a Ceilidh and Morris Dancing: a large open space being created by removing the pews. The absence of basic facilities, such as a toilet and kitchen, and indeed any running water other than at the church gate, together with a lack of car parking, hamper more extensive use of what is the largest public covered space available in the parish.

3.11. There are 23 statutorily listed buildings in the parish including the Grade II* Church of St Andrew, and the remainder Grade II, including various farm houses, a milestone and a water pump (the full list is provided in Appendix 1).

3.12. Allensmore is in National Character Area 100 Herefordshire Lowlands⁴ which has a tranquil and rural character with a generally flat and low-lying landscape of mixed arable farming and livestock surrounded by more distant hills such as The Black Mountains. There is still evidence of traditional orchards in the area. Smaller domestic sized orchards are in evidence across the parish. Surrounding hills are dominated by ancient woodland of ash and field



maple or oak and bracken and small-scale woodland is a prized landscape feature due to its aesthetic impact and benefits for drainage and wildlife. There is a dispersed rural settlement pattern with traditional timber framed black and white buildings, and stone and red brick are widespread as local building materials. More locally, the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment 2004, updated 2009⁵ identifies the following landscape types in Allensmore: Principal Settled Farmlands (across almost the entire area), with an area of Wet Pasture Meadow to the south east and Wooded Estate Land to the north.

3.13. A number of ponds can be found across the parish and these support wildlife and aid drainage.

3.14. In terms of local wildlife interest there are a number of traditional orchards all around the area and an area of ancient woodland in the south western corner.

3.15. 83% of respondents supported the description of the local context in the Issues and Options consultation. The responses also demonstrated that there are significant local concerns about poor drainage and flooding in the area due to a high water table and lack of mains drainage, and this should be taken into consideration in any proposals for new development.

⁴ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4827527503675392>

⁵ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2069/landscape-character-assessment-for-herefordshire>

4. Vision and Objectives



- 4.1. An NDP is required to have a vision and a clear set of objectives. The planning policies should be designed to meet the identified objectives.
- 4.2. The Vision and Objectives were prepared by the steering group and are set out below.

Vision for Allensmore

To protect and enhance the parish's rural character through gradual evolution and appropriate development, which improves the quality of life for current and future generations of residents by creating a sustainable environment, enhancing wellbeing and promoting community cohesion.

Objectives for the NDP

OBJECTIVE 1: HOUSING

To develop policies, within the framework of Herefordshire's Core Strategy, which deliver proportionate growth, and which ensure that new housing development preserves and enhances aspects that people value, and makes optimum use of sustainable technologies whilst meeting the current and future needs of both residents and businesses.

OBJECTIVE 2: THE ENVIRONMENT

To ensure that all housing and business development preserves, and, where possible, enriches the character of the parish and protects the landscape, so that its impact on the environment is minimised, with particular reference to water, sewage and soil management, as well as energy and water conservation.

OBJECTIVE 3: FARMING AND OTHER BUSINESS

To encourage new business initiatives which promote the economic wellbeing of the parish provided that they are in scale with, and sensitive to, the rural character of the locality and any adverse effect on residents' wellbeing or the environment is minimal.

OBJECTIVE 4: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

To sustain and enhance existing community facilities whilst supporting investment in safe and appropriate new infrastructure as needed and desired by residents and businesses.

5. Planning Policies and Proposals

5.1 Environment and Biodiversity



- 5.1.1. Allensmore neighbourhood area is essentially agricultural with small to medium size farms shaping the landscape. Open countryside is chequered by many hedges, small coppices and trees, particularly oak. There is only one medium sized orchard of significance, but a number of small orchards can be found. There are no large woods except Courtlands Plantation which is an old bluebell wood.
- 5.1.2. The whole area is low lying and prone to bogginess and flooding. Streams and drainage channels criss-cross the land and flow sluggishly to the River Monnow some distance away. What contiguous areas of housing there are, are small and well embedded in the natural landscape. Old farming buildings and pre-nineteenth century dwellings can be found throughout.
- 5.1.3. There are several significant views within the parish from publicly accessible viewpoints such as footpaths. The Issues and Options consultation included comments suggesting the following key views should be protected:
- All views;
 - Views towards Cobhall Common, Hay Bluff and Garway Hill;
 - Views towards Black Mountains;
 - Views towards bluebell woods;
 - Views towards Breinton;
 - Views towards and from the Church
 - Views from Upper Mawfield
- 5.1.4. The NDP steering group has considered these suggestions in more detail, but decided that due to the distance and extensive nature of the many attractive views around Allensmore, specific views should not be identified on a map.

- 5.1.5. The NDP has a role in protecting the open nature of the countryside and supporting small scale development which is sympathetic to the rural character. Any renovation of older buildings should be done in a sympathetic way, retaining their character and place in the landscape. It is also proposed that the importance of hedges, small scale woodland, orchards and ponds should be given weight in any development in order to enhance local landscape character. The comments provided at the Launch event showed that local people value the beautiful rural area, open countryside and peace and quiet.
- 5.1.6. The responses to the Issues and Options consultation supported this approach with 88% of respondents wanting the NDP to include a policy to protect the local landscape character. The comments showed it was clear that people particularly value the local flora and fauna, hedgerows, trees and dispersed buildings.
- 5.1.7. Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Policy LD1 Landscape and Townscape protects landscape character at a strategic level across the county, but Allensmore NDP adds more local detail at a neighbourhood level.
- 5.1.8. Policy A1 aims to protect local landscape character, taking into account those local characteristics and features that residents value.

Policy A1 – Protecting and Enhancing Local Landscape Character

Development proposals will be required to provide a proportional statement and/or plan to demonstrate how siting and design have taken into consideration local landscape character.

Significant Views

Residents value the green spaces within the settlement areas as well as the sweeping nature of views to the outlying hills, both of which make an important contribution to the landscape character of the parish.

Development proposals should therefore respect the open nature that green spaces provide within the settlements as well as sustaining the widespread views over fields to surrounding hills such as Garway, Hay Bluff and the Black Mountains.

Where necessary, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment or similar studies may need to be carried out to ensure that any scheme is designed and sited sensitively and appropriately.

Landscaping Schemes

Development proposals should include landscaping schemes which protect and enhance the distinctive rural landscape character of the Parish. Hedgerows, mature trees, woodlands, ponds and traditional orchards are important local landscape features and should be retained wherever possible and incorporated into designs.

Local Built Character (see also Policy A4, Criteria for Development)

Development should respond to the dispersed local settlement pattern, with buildings provided at low densities in large plots and set back from the road side with front gardens and on-site parking areas.

Traditional materials such as red brick or sandstone should be used in new development, conversions and extensions to ensure development is sympathetic to the local vernacular and surrounding rural character of buildings.

Wildlife



- 5.1.9. Allensmore neighbourhood area has one designated local wildlife site (the pond at Allensmore Court – Herefordshire Core Strategy Appendix 8I ref SO43/14) and a number of areas of ancient woodland. The flora and fauna of the Allensmore neighbourhood area has been influenced largely by the farming activities and the soils of mainly medium loams. The old barns and buildings support a significant population of bats and birds such as house martins, swallows, swifts, owls and sparrows. In the winter the hedgerows and scattered woodland provide shelter for migrating birds such as starlings, redwings and fieldfare. The responses to the Issues and Options consultation indicated that barn owls and tawny owls, green and spotted woodpeckers, cuckoos, jays, herons, long tailed tits, buzzards, butterflies and bees are all seen locally. The abundance of small water courses and ponds provide habitat for many birds including all wagtail species, kingfishers, heron, moorhens, curlew and ducks. An area known as the Lawns, land which used to surround the old Allensmore Court, is an area of permanent pasture and therefore relatively undisturbed land with associated grass species. In addition, comments indicated that there is evidence of small mammals such as dormice, harvest mice, bank voles and hedgehogs and amphibians (newts, toads and frogs).
- 5.1.10. Wild flowers edge the many lanes. In the Spring, snowdrops can be found in the banks as well as pockets of bluebells, cowslips and wild cyclamen. Meadowsweet, rosebay and great willow-herb and cow parsley appear in profusion in the Summer. Water courses and ponds should be retained, and special attention given to maintaining and indeed improving their quality and character.
- 5.1.11. The comments provided at the Launch event showed that local people value wildlife. The responses to the Issues and Options consultation also showed clear support for the NDP to help protect local biodiversity with 82% agreeing that Allensmore NDP should include such a policy. In addition to comments identifying various species seen locally, it was noted that all wildlife should be protected, and habitats such as mature trees, bluebell woods and hedgerows are significant. Bat roosts are already provided in existing outbuildings. In addition, there was overwhelming opposition to street lighting in order to minimise light pollution.
- 5.1.12. Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy LD2 protects biodiversity at a strategic level but the NDP Policy A2 provides more detail relevant to the Allensmore area.

Policy A2 – Protecting and Enhancing Local Wildlife

New development should avoid harmful impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains for biodiversity. Where significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, then mitigation or compensation should be considered in exceptional circumstances. Where this cannot satisfactorily occur, permission should be refused.

Development proposals should demonstrate how biodiversity will be protected and enhanced, including wildlife in the neighbourhood area as set out in paragraphs 5.1.9 and 5.1.10, ecological networks along water courses and hedgerows, and statutory and non-statutory locally designated wildlife sites and habitats.

Landscaping

Landscaping schemes should include wildlife enhancements to provide a net gain for biodiversity, for example incorporating ponds, retaining existing areas of woodland and hedgerows, and planting new tracts using locally appropriate native species. Where appropriate, planting of wildflower meadows is supported.

Buildings

Development must protect and encourage wildlife which may be using the building(s) as habitats, such as barn owls which are known to nest locally.

Lighting

Lighting schemes should be designed sensitively to reduce any adverse impact on wildlife and to protect the dark skies which are characteristic of this rural area.

5.2 Housing



Background

- 5.2.1 Planning for new housing is a major part of the work on the NDP. Allensmore NDP has to demonstrate that the delivery of an appropriate amount, type and style of new housing over the plan period (up to 2031) is supported, in order to be in general conformity with the strategic planning policies set out in the adopted Core Strategy.
- 5.2.2. Allensmore is a very rural area with a low density of population (0.7 persons per hectare). Housing is concentrated in the three main settlements Allensmore, Cobhall and Winnal and in scattered single dwellings or small clusters in the open countryside. The 2011 Census recorded 230 dwellings in the parish with the vast majority concentrated in the three main settlements.
- 5.2.3. The 2011 Census also shows that a large majority (78%) of the properties are detached and 18% semi-detached. Over half (54%) of the properties are owned outright and a further 29% with a mortgage, while 15% are rented, almost all in the private sector. Most (84%) of properties have an occupancy of less than 1 person per bedroom, while 16% have more than 1 person. A quarter of households comprise 1 or more occupants of whom all are aged 65 or over.
- 5.2.4. A housing needs study conducted by Herefordshire Council in 2012 found that 7 households in the parish needed affordable accommodation within the parish in the next 3 years (six 1 bedroomed homes and one with 2 bedrooms). A further 5 households in the parish also indicated a need for affordable accommodation but did not specify that this would be within the parish. More broadly, the Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) 2013⁶ identified that 55% of households in the Ross-on-Wye Rural Housing Market Area are unable to



⁶ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/directory_record/2090/local_housing_market_assessment_2013

afford market housing and there is an annual requirement for 58 affordable dwellings between 2012 and 2017 across the housing market area.

- 5.2.5. The NDP can only include policies and proposals for the designated neighbourhood area. The area of Allensmore designated for the NDP excludes properties in part of Poplar Road as these have been included in the area designated for Clehonger NDP. This area includes around 22 properties, meaning that the Allensmore NDP area comprises around 90% of the dwellings in the parish as a whole.
- 5.2.6. There is a wide range of housing styles within the neighbourhood area, including a number of listed buildings some of which date to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a number of Georgian and Victorian properties, as well as early to late twentieth century and recent new buildings.



Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy requirements

- 5.2.7. Allensmore is in the Ross-on-Wye rural Housing Market Area (HMA). The Core Strategy sets out that this HMA has a 14% indicative housing growth target over the plan period up to 2031. This equates to 32 additional homes in Allensmore parish as a whole. This target has been exceeded in Allensmore NDP area through recent developments and existing commitments and the net housing target as at February 2020 leaves a net housing requirement of minus 12.
- 5.2.8. Herefordshire Core Strategy Policy RA2 identifies Winnal as one of the settlements which will be the "main focus for proportionate housing development" (Table 4.14). The Herefordshire Council Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2012 Schedule of Sites⁷ noted just one possible suitable site, albeit with some constraints. Furthermore, sites in Winnal were not considered in the updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2015. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2019 identified one further site in Winnal, however this falls outside the settlement boundary.
- 5.2.9. The settlements of Allensmore and Cobhall Common are identified as "Other areas where proportionate development is appropriate" (Table 4.15). No strategic assessment of suitable sites has been conducted by Herefordshire Council in either the 2012 or 2015 SHLAA for these two settlements. Both these settlements were subsequently assessed in the 2019 SHLAA. Seven

⁷ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/5323/summary_schedules_for_rscs_and_hubs

sites in the Allensmore settlement were evaluated, one of which has since been granted outline planning permission and has been included within the settlement boundary. The remaining six sites of varying potential are all outside the settlement boundary; one has since had a planning application refused (February 2020). Three potential sites were identified in Cobhall Common, all outside the settlement boundary and all with low potential; one of these has also had a planning application refused (February 2020).

Call for Sites and Site Assessment Process

- 5.2.10. The Parish Council undertook a Call for Sites in March 2018. 23 sites were submitted by landowners and agents for consideration, and these were all subjected to a technical site assessment process undertaken by consultants AECOM. AECOM are the nationally appointed consultants engaged to carry out technical site assessments under the Locality Technical Support Programme for neighbourhood plans. The full report (Site Assessment Report for the Allensmore Neighbourhood Development Plan, September 2018) is published on the NDP website.
- 5.2.11. The methodology included an initial desk top study to consider constraints and opportunities for each site. The desk top study identified various issues which could be explored in further detail in a site visit. Site visits to all sites were undertaken in August 2018. Following the site visits further desk based research was undertaken to validate the findings of the site visits and to consolidate the site appraisals.
- 5.2.12. For the purposes of calculating potential housing capacity of each site, a density of 30 dwellings per hectare was used, with a sliding scale of ratios of developable to non-developable areas, depending on the size of each site. Residents should note that 30 dwellings per hectare is commonly used and accepted as a benchmark for density across England; this does not take account of local contextual factors such as existing low densities in the settlements, the high water table and lack of mains drainage in the Allensmore NDP area. In the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (2011 – 2031), page 152, para 5.3.34, it states that “appropriate density will primarily be informed by the local context as well as site opportunities and constraints”. In Table 1 below, the notional housing capacity based on 30 dwellings per hectare is retained for information; alongside this, potential capacity using the actual local density is shown which is likely to be more appropriate.
- 5.2.13. The calculations for existing densities of the settlements are shown below. Note that for these purposes, we have only included garden space that lies within our proposed settlement boundaries which are drawn quite tightly against the housing line. Given that many properties are set within sizeable plots, the actual density, notwithstanding settlement boundaries, is in reality much lower. However, the figures below provide a reasonable compromise between the current characteristics and the notional benchmark.

Winnal Common

Total area of settlement boundary 3.22ha

Less proposed sites:

Site 1: 0.07ha

Site 4: 0.25ha

Net area = 2.9ha

Number of houses currently within settlement boundary: 15

Therefore, average density: $15/2.9 = 5.2\text{dph}$ (dwellings per hectare)

Winnal

Total area of settlement boundary: 4.63ha

Less proposed site:

Site 14: 1.48ha

Net area = 3.15ha

Number of houses currently within settlement boundary: 10

Therefore, average density: $10/3.15 = 3.2\text{dph}$

Allensmore

Total area of settlement boundary: 3.18ha

Less proposed site:

Site 6: 0.24ha

Net area = 2.94ha

Number of houses currently within settlement boundary: 26

Therefore, average density: 26/2.94 = 8.8 dph**Cobhall Common**

Total area of settlement boundary: 7.86ha

Less proposed sites:

Site 15: 0.56ha

Site 20: 1.07ha

Net area = 6.23ha

Number of houses currently within settlement boundary: 51

Therefore, average density: 51/6.23 = 8.2 dph

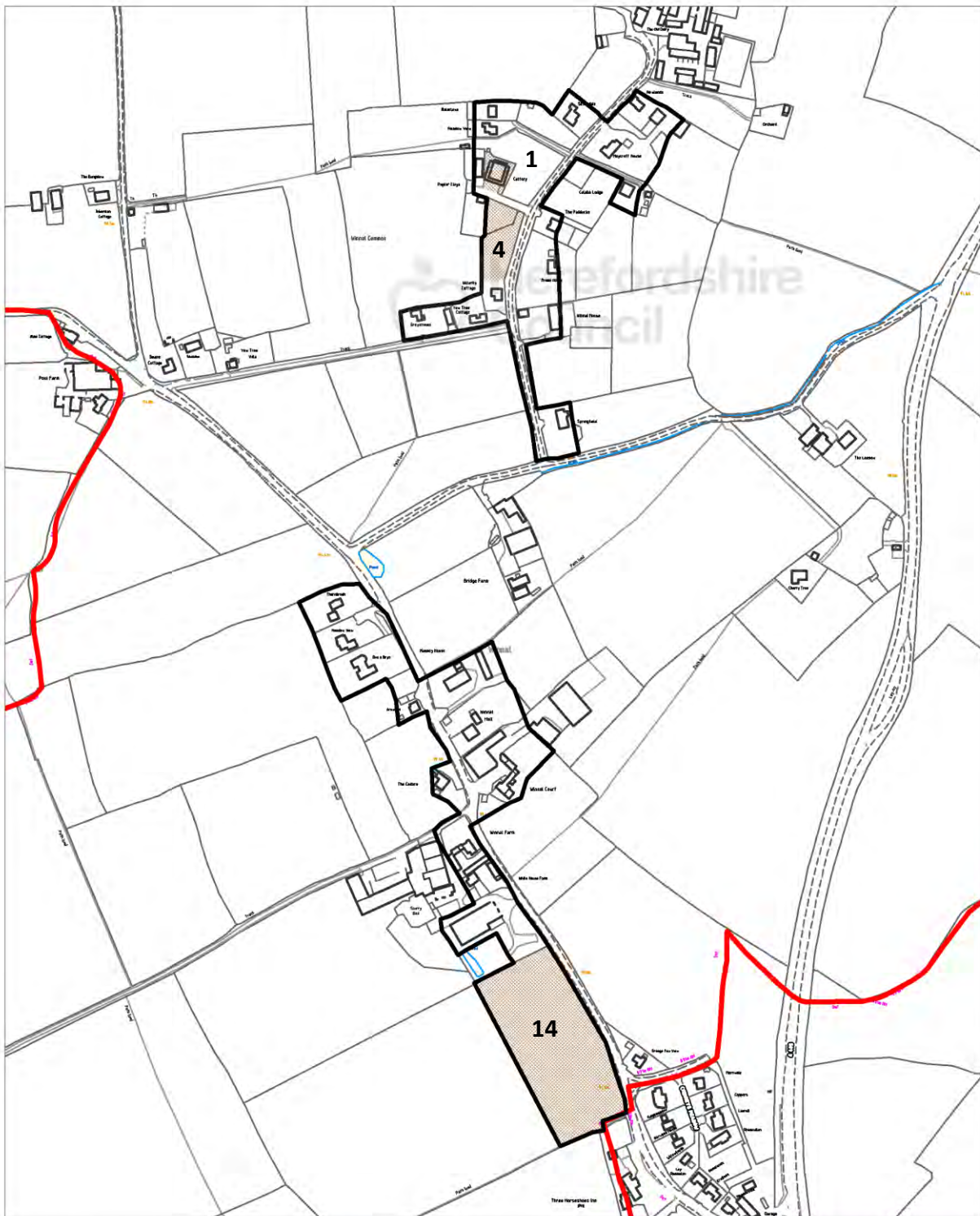
- 5.2.14. Following the completion of the site assessment the consultants recommended that six sites were considered potentially appropriate for allocation in the NDP. In addition, Site 14 was considered suitable in part (the south east corner which adjoins existing built form in the neighbouring parish of Kilpeck). These Preferred Option sites are shown in Table 1. All the recommended sites were included in the First Draft Plan for public consultation.

Table 1 Preferred Option Housing Sites

Site	Location	Area (ha)	Indicative housing capacity based on AECOM Report density of 30 dpa	Proposed capacity based on existing settlement density
Site 1	Winnal	0.07	2	1
Site 4	Winnal	0.25	5	1
Site 6	Allensmore	0.24	6	2
Site 14	Winnal	1.48	35 in total but only partial development recommended.	13 in total but only partial development recommended.
Site 15	Cobhall Common	0.56	15	5
Site 16	Court Plocks	0.05	1 (barn conversion)	1
Site 20	Cobhall Common	1.07	25	9
Total				Up to 32 houses

- 5.2.15. It is noted that, as site 16 at Court Plocks is not inside nor adjacent to the settlement boundary, it would not be in accordance with the Core Strategy Policy RA2, However, conversions of existing agricultural buildings in the rural area are supported in Core Strategy Policy RA3 and RA5. An application for this conversion would therefore be supported by the NDP.
- 5.2.16 The Site Assessment Report identified planning constraints and issues for each of the preferred sites. These have been noted and used to inform the criteria for each of the proposed site allocations in Policy A3. The Site Allocations and Settlement Boundaries are shown on Maps 2, 3, 4 and 5. A list of all the sites submitted and considered in the Site Assessment Report is published in the neighbourhood plan section of the parish council website:
<http://allensmore.org.uk/Neighbourhood-Development-Plan.php>.

Map 2 Winnal Settlement Boundary and Sites 1, 4 and 14



- Allensmore Settlement Boundary (A4)
- Proposed Housing Sites (A3)
- Neighbourhood Area

Winnal village Policies Map

Scale 1:2,500
at A4 size



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Map 3 Allensmore Settlement Boundary and Site 6



- Allensmore Settlement Boundary (A4)
- Proposed Housing Sites (A3)
- Safeguarding Mineral Reserves
- Commitment Sites

Allensmore village Policies Map

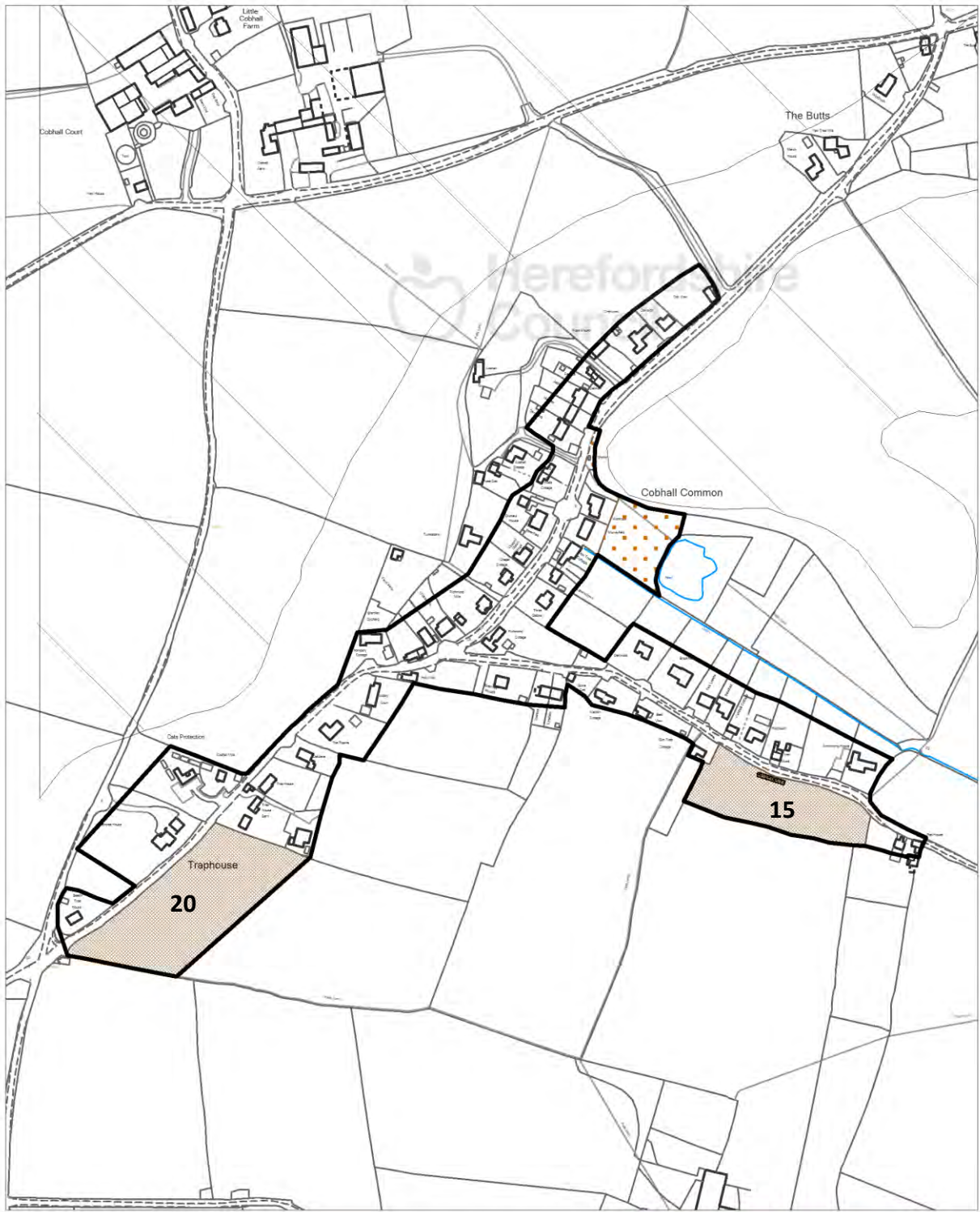
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at A4 size



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Map 4 Cobhall Common Settlement Boundary and Sites 15 and 20



-  Allensmore Settlement Boundary (A4)
-  Proposed Housing Sites (A3)
-  Safeguarding Mineral Reserves
-  Commitment Sites

**Cobhall Common
village Policies Map**

Scale 1:4,000
at A4 size



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Policy A3 –Site Allocations

The following sites are identified for new housing development, subject to the criteria in the policy set out for each site. The sites are identified on Maps 2, 3 and 4.

Site 1, Cats Whiskers Boarding Cattery, Winnal - see Map 2.

This site is considered suitable for the development of 1 dwelling, provided that:

- 1. Site layouts reflect the characteristics of the local area with properties set back from the road and accessed by driveways.**
- 2. Development is sited and designed to minimise overlooking of existing neighbouring properties and local residential amenity is protected.**

Development of holiday accommodation (C1) would also be acceptable on this site.

Site 4, Willoughby Cottage Garden, Winnal - See Map 2.

This site is considered suitable for the development of 1 dwelling, provided that:

- 1. Safe and suitable access is provided from the road.**
- 2. Any removal of existing established mature hedgerows or trees for access or development of the site is offset by replacement planting of suitable local species to enhance biodiversity.**

Site 6, Church Road, Allensmore - see Map 3.

This site is considered suitable for the development of 2 dwellings, provided that:

- 1. Suitable and safe access is provided from Church Road.**
- 2. Development proposals provide effective surface water drainage measures that ensure that the surface water drainage onsite is satisfactorily dealt with and that the development does not result in increasing the risk of flooding onsite or elsewhere. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be implemented in accordance with the SuDS hierarchy unless deemed inappropriate.**

Site 14, South of Winnal Farm, Winnal - see Map 2.

This proposed site is significant in scale and development of the entire area may not be appropriate. Development of part of the site for approximately 13 dwellings is supported provided that:

- 1. Development proposals include suitable screening and landscaping to protect long distance views towards the site from all directions, taking into account the site's prominent location within the landscape which has an open, rural character.**
- 2. Built form is concentrated in the south east corner as this area is considered to have a lower landscape sensitivity and adjoins existing built form at Chimney Meadows.**

Site 15, Cobhall Lane, Cobhall Common - see Map 4.

This site is considered suitable for the development of 7 dwellings. The capacity of the site is constrained by Cobhall Lane which is a high sided single track road with limited passing spaces.

Residential development will be supported provided that:

- 1. Development proposals are designed and sited to integrate well with the existing built form and reflect the local linear settlement pattern.**
- 2. Residential amenity of existing local neighbouring properties is protected and development is set back from the roadside to maximise separation distances and reduce overlooking of properties on the other side of the lane.**
- 3. Any removal of existing established mature hedgerows or trees for access or other development of the site is offset by replacement planting of suitable local species to enhance biodiversity.**

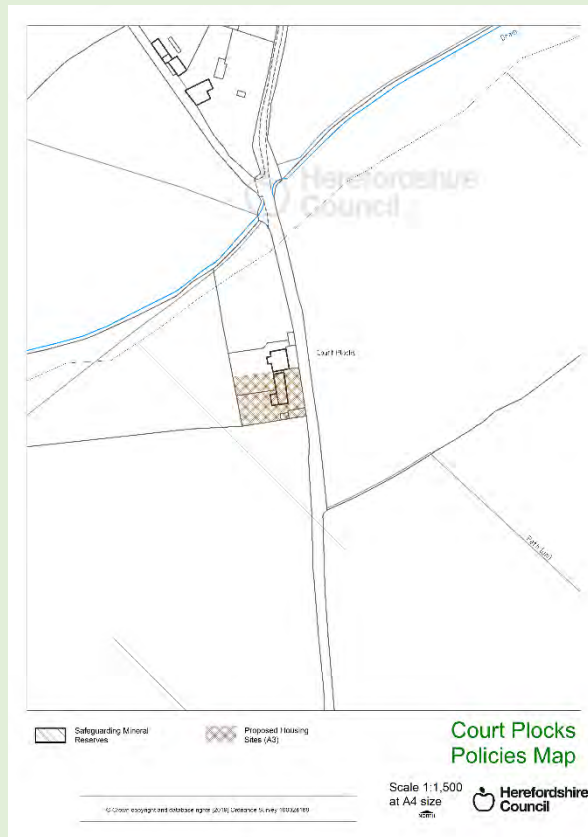
Site 20, Cobhall Common - see Map 4.

This site is considered suitable for the development of approximately 8 dwellings provided that:

- 1. Development reflects the existing pattern and grain of nearby development where houses are set in large plots, and development is of a low density.**
- 2. Proposals are well integrated with the existing settlement pattern and continue the linear form of the village.**
- 3. The design and layout of the development minimises overlooking of existing nearby properties and protects local residential amenity.**

Site 16, Court Plocks - Barn Conversion

Map 5 Court Plocks



This site is considered appropriate for a single dwelling through the conversion of the existing barn at Court Plocks from agricultural use to residential use.

Any proposed conversion should be of a high quality design which is sensitive to the barn's existing character.

Settlement Boundaries

- 5.2.17. Outside the main settlements, the neighbourhood area is considered to be wider countryside and development will be much more constrained, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy RA3. In order to differentiate clearly the areas of settlements where development would be considered appropriate, from the wider countryside, Herefordshire Council encourages NDPs to identify settlement boundaries.
- 5.2.18. The comments at the Launch event showed that local people value the strong sense of community where people know each other. Settlement boundaries would help to ensure that new development is limited in scale and maintains the character of small rural communities.
- 5.2.19. The steering group identified several possible settlement boundaries for Allensmore, Cobhall Common and Winnal for consultation as part of the Issues and Options process. Although these were largely supported by respondents, there were also a number of detailed comments and

concerns set out in relation to each of the proposed boundaries. Following careful consideration of the various suggestions submitted, and taking into account the Preferred Option housing sites, the proposed settlement boundaries were reviewed and amended and further comments were invited in the January 2019 consultation.

- 5.2.20. Settlement boundaries mean that a site within that boundary will have a presumption in favour of development (dependent on the usual planning/building regulations including satisfactory resolution of issues such as drainage). In consequence of this, and in response to feedback from residents, as well as advice from our professional consultants, the settlement boundary has been tightened in the centre of Cobhall Common in order to adhere to the policy of ensuring development remains linear (i.e. not building more than one deep). Following residents' communications in January 2019, a small adjustment has been made to the settlement boundary in Winal Common, returning that section to the line identified in the consultation in January 2018.
- 5.2.21. The proposed settlement boundaries are shown have been drawn fairly tightly around existing areas of housing. Map 2 identifies the settlement boundary for Winal, Map 3 identifies the settlement boundary for Allensmore and Map 4 identifies the settlement boundary for Cobhall Common. The settlement boundaries include all the proposed site allocations for market housing.
- 5.2.22. Policy A4 sets out criteria where development would be acceptable within the settlement boundaries. Overall the responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that only 28% of respondents thought that different criteria should be provided for each settlement, 29% did not know, and 44% did not think this was necessary. Therefore, Draft Policy A4 was prepared taking into account the various suggestions made during the consultation which are common to all three settlements. These included:
- Concerns about drainage, high water table, flooding and sewage (Note - this is addressed in Policy A7);
 - Possible impacts from traffic and parking on narrow roads;
 - The need to respond to local character;
 - The need to protect the setting of the church and historic cores of settlements;
 - The need to respond to local character in terms of form, materials etc; and
 - That all development proposals should be assessed on their own merits.

Policy A4 – Criteria for Development in Settlement Boundaries

In addition to the identified site allocations, proposals for new housing development within the identified Settlement Boundaries for Allensmore, Cobhall Common and Winnal (as shown on Maps 2, 3 and 4) will be supported where:

- 1. Development is small in scale on infill sites of single depth (that is, not behind other houses), and where the occupiers of new housing development will not be adversely affected by existing agricultural or commercial activities;**
- 2. Properties and extensions reflect the character of the settlements with housing set back in large plots (appropriate to the size of the dwelling) and interspersed amongst green spaces. Considerations include size, scale, density, height, layout and landscaping;**
- 3. Design is sensitive to any nearby built heritage assets such as the church and other Listed Buildings;**
- 4. New developments, extensions and conversions are designed sensitively to respond to the setting of the site, and reflect the rural character of neighbouring buildings, using appropriate materials;**
- 5. Modern and innovative designs incorporate sustainable design technologies to maximise resource and energy efficiency, and which minimise any adverse impacts on local character and setting;**
- 6. Sites have suitable and safe access. The impact of additional traffic from development proposals on existing rural roadworks should be carefully considered;**
- 7. Sufficient provision is made for adequate off-street parking where development is accessed from narrow rural roads. In addition, and where feasible, the construction of designated passing places is encouraged on road frontages, so as to prevent damage to verges and drainage ditches from encroaching cars;**
- 8. Provision of small-scale office facilities to accommodate home working within residential development will be considered favourably within the above context.**
- 9. Consideration should be given to the possibility of encountering contamination on sites as a result of former uses and specialist advice be sought should any be encountered.**

Types of New Housing

- 5.2.23. The Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment (2012 Update)⁸ sets out that in the rural areas of Herefordshire there is a greater need for more smaller properties such as 1, 2 and 3-bedroom houses, and a much lower requirement for 4 + bedroom houses - see Table 3 p16. In addition, para 1.14 advises that *"there is a strong retirement market within the County with older households moving to the County as it is an attractive place to live. This is evident in each of the HMAs, but appears strongest in the Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye HMAs."*
- 5.2.24. The report also highlights in para 1.18 that *"for the affordable sector, over the longer-term just under two-thirds of housing requirements are expected to be one- and two-bedroom properties to meet housing needs."*
- 5.2.25. The responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that there was a local preference for family housing of three bedrooms (75% of respondents supported this), starter homes of one or two bedrooms (supported by 60% of respondents) and conversions of non-residential buildings (60% of respondents). Other suggestions included affordable housing, apartments and bungalows as well as conversions of derelict properties, where there is some architectural benefit and not executive homes.
- 5.2.26. In terms of tenure, there was a clear preference for privately owned homes (88%) with lower proportions of respondents wanting to see affordable housing. This is significant also because affordable housing can only be required on market schemes of more than 10 houses (Core Strategy Policy H1 Affordable Housing) and the Allensmore NDP is promoting smaller sites, or on Rural Exception sites (Core Strategy Policy H2).
- 5.2.27. Policy A5 has been prepared to help ensure new housing proposals provide the types, sizes and tenure of housing which is suitable for Allensmore and which meets local needs.

⁸ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/1644/local_housing_market_assessment_2013

Policy A5 – Housing Mix

All proposals for new housing development and conversions of non-residential buildings to residential uses should demonstrate how they help to maintain a suitable mix of tenure, type and size of dwelling in Allensmore Neighbourhood Plan area.

Proposals should demonstrate how they respond to local needs for family housing (3 bedrooms), starter homes of one or two bedrooms, and housing for older people, or to other local needs if up to date housing needs information demonstrates a different mix is required. Whilst plot size should have regard to the prevailing plot size and density of the area in which the development is situated, any development should be designed according to the type and size of dwelling being proposed, so as to balance the need for efficient use of available plots.

Any proposals which trigger the threshold for an affordable housing⁹ requirement should integrate both the affordable housing and market housing across the site.

⁹ See Appendix 2 - Definition of Affordable Housing

5.3 The Economy of Allensmore, Cobhall, and Winnal



5.3.1 The NDP designated area is largely agricultural or private residential land. There are no industrial estates, or business parks within the boundary of our area.

5.3.2 There are currently approximately six working farms left in this area. These are family owned/or run businesses, many consisting of two or three generations being involved in the business. Most of these farms employ minimal outside labour, although they do rely on outside contractors at certain times of the year.

5.3.3 Historically there would have been many smaller farms, and in the last 40 years we have lost at least ten small dairy farms, as the economies of agriculture have changed. The numbers of staff on these small farms have been lost also as mechanisation has increased.

5.3.4 Some of the remaining farms are no longer farmed by the owners but let out to larger farms; this has also led to a loss of employment in the sector. Some of these small farms have been purchased by individuals as private homes, often with a couple of small fields, which they keep for a horse or other leisure pursuits.

5.3.5 Some of the working farms have housing for staff, which was a tradition in the past, as a farm worker often lived in a “tied cottage”. These are now lived in by family members working on the farm, been sold off, or let out for the rental market.

5.3.6 There used to be a few market gardens, and nurseries in the district, supplying tomatoes, cucumbers, vegetables, and flowers to locals, as well as wholesale customers in Hereford. These are now closed.



5.3.7 The one area that has greatly increased in recent years is the supply of horse livery facilities for people from the city to keep their horses. While this does not create employment, it does

provide income from land which would otherwise be difficult to farm due to the small field sizes. There are at least 4 of these operating within our boundary.

- 5.3.8 There are currently no shops, schools, or public houses within our boundary. Historically there was a school at Pateshall Village Hall, but this closed in the late 1950s. In the past, there was also a Post Office at The School House, Allensmore, a village shop in Cobhall Common, and a blacksmith at Goose Pool, Allensmore.
- 5.3.9 In addition to farming, there are a number of small businesses being run from home or operating throughout the region. These include:
- A groundworks and contracting business
 - Several home-based consultancies
 - Accountants
 - An events business specializing in pyrotechnics
 - A beansprout nursery
 - A farm-based engineering business
 - The cats' protection cattery
 - Dog kennels facility
 - A van sales business
 - A bed and breakfast business
 - A scrap metal business.
- 5.3.10 Job opportunities are relatively limited in Allensmore, and the nearest are likely to be in Hereford, or further afield. Most businesses require good infrastructure to survive, and if the proposed broadband fibre to premises in the Allensmore settlement is delivered in 2019/20 this could improve opportunities for working from home, or even the development of small business units. The advent of the University in Hereford could tie in with this.
- 5.3.11 The Core Strategy supports the conversion of traditional agricultural buildings to support economic development in rural areas (Policy RA5), and appropriate rural diversification such as tourism (Policy RA6). There may be opportunities for small scale business growth in hi tech / professional industries in Allensmore linked to the proposed university and development at nearby Rotherwas, provided suitable accommodation and public transport are available.
- 5.3.12 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that 75% of respondents wanted to see a policy in Allensmore NDP supporting conversions of agricultural buildings to promote local economic development. There was recognition of the need for the farming community to be able to diversify. There were also a number of comments relating to concerns local people have about such proposals and these included the following:
- The need to limit proposals to small scale businesses and control pollution and traffic; and
 - The need to promote well designed schemes (taking architectural advice) and ensure appropriate scale.
- 5.3.13 Policy A6 was prepared taking into account the responses to the Issues and Options consultation and further consultations.

Policy A6 - Conversion of Former Agricultural Buildings

The sensitive re-use of redundant or disused former agricultural or other rural buildings, including farmsteads, for residential or small-scale business use such as workshops, offices and studios will be supported where it does not lead to unacceptable impacts on local residents or on existing agricultural or commercial activities. The operation of existing agricultural or other commercial practices such as dairy/poultry farming, muck spreading etc. should not be adversely affected by new residential development and schemes should be designed to ensure that suitable mitigation is in place before first occupation.

In particular, appropriate conversions will be supported where redundant or disused buildings are adjoining or located in or in close proximity to the three settlements of Winnal, Allensmore and Cobhall Common.

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

Schemes should provide functional, energy and resource efficient buildings which are likely to be sustainable and resilient and offer a high quality living or working environment.

Adequate car parking should be provided on site and there should be suitable existing access to the highway network.

Consideration should be given to the possibility of encountering contamination on sites as a result of former uses and specialist advice be sought should any be encountered.

5.4 Improving Local Accessibility and Infrastructure



- 5.4.1 An NDP is concerned with planning policies related to the use and development of land and buildings. Planning policies can do little directly to address concerns about traffic speeds and traffic management, maintenance of the highway network, or improving public transport services. Planning policies can help to guide development to more accessible locations (such as those close to bus stops or local services) and encourage development proposals to link to existing walking and cycling networks to support lower levels of car use.
- 5.4.2 However, it is recognised that the adverse impacts of traffic through the area, and the need for more safe walking and cycling routes are significant issues for residents in Allensmore. Therefore, it is proposed that improving accessibility is included as an issue in the NDP, and where planning policies cannot directly address local peoples' concerns separate actions may be undertaken by the Parish Council.

Local Road Network

- 5.4.3 As the neighbourhood area is transected by the A465, communication and accessibility between Allensmore Village and Cobhall Common and Winnal is difficult. Crossing this road requires drivers and particularly walkers, horse riders and cyclists to take great care due to the high vehicular speeds. Road signs are often obstructed by vegetation and this is a particular concern along stretches of the A465.



5.4.4 The A465 trunk road which separates Allensmore village from Cobhall Common and Winnal, and the B4348 from Lock's Garage towards Kingstone are the only two-way roads in the parish. Almost all other roads are essentially single-track lanes with places to pass, sometimes quite far apart. This often requires vehicles to reverse to enable passing. There is a small section of pavement for pedestrians aside the B4348 by Lock's Garage and the Three Horseshoes public house, otherwise pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders share the carriageway with cars, farm vehicles and goods traffic. Apart from a ¼ mile stretch of the B4348 from Lock's Garage towards Kingstone, all other roads and lanes are de-restricted such that the National speed limit of 60 mph applies.



Footpaths and bridleways

5.4.5 There are many footpaths and a few bridleways in the area and these are generally well maintained by the parish council under the guidance of its Footpaths Officer. Some are well used by walkers, and the bridleways are used daily by horse riders. There are at least four commercial livery stable/yards and a number of horse owners in the area, so people are just as likely to meet horses on our lanes as walkers.



5.4.6 Between spring and autumn, a St Andrews Church led group, organise footpath walks around the parish. These social events see various paths well walked by up to 20 or more walkers. With the help and cooperation of landowners and the footpath officer, assisted by volunteers on occasion, most paths are kept clear. A policy of replacing stiles with gates is underway but with limited budgets it will be some years before all such stiles will be replaced.

5.4.7 It is possible to walk on public footpaths into Hereford, but it takes about two hours and, though a pleasant enough walk in fine weather, across the fields via Old Clehonger, it is of little value to anyone wishing to walk or indeed cycle into Hereford for work or for shopping. The verge on the A465 between Belmont and Lock's Garage is generally wide enough to walk, on one side or the other, but it is of rough grass which makes walking difficult, and totally suitable and also unsafe for cyclists, young families with push-chairs or wheelchair users. Effectively there is currently no acceptable walking or cycling route along the A465. There is an alternative route to the nearest Post Office and Shop at Lock's garage, from Winnal or Cobhall for those prepared to brave the traffic on the B4348.

Cycling

5.4.8 Riding a bike on the A465 is not for the faint hearted though "professionals" and cycling clubs do use the route. Other than the A465 and to a lesser extent, the B4348, cycling the lanes of our three communities is a mainly pleasurable activity and a relaxation for all ages although sometimes speeding vehicles can make this hazardous.

Traffic Speeds

- 5.4.9 All roads within the parish – including the many single track lanes - have the national speed limit of 60mph with the exception of a stretch of the B4348 past The Three Horseshoes Inn where the limit reduces to 40 mph. However, to ensure the safety of pedestrians and horse riders, as well as those travelling in vehicles, most of the village roads require drivers to drive much more slowly. Unfortunately, not all drivers exercise such restraint, therefore investigating the imposition of lower speed limits could be an option (even though we recognise that enforcement is another issue entirely).
- 5.4.10 A number of residents have expressed concern over safely accessing the A465 from Church Road by the Village Hall. Similar concerns would appear to apply to the Mapps Pool junction and the cross roads to Cobhall just south of the Village Hall. Visibility obstructed by vegetation adds to the problem and several have suggested that the speed limit on the A465 for perhaps ½ a mile in this area should be reduced to 50mph. Some have suggested an even lower limit.

Road surfaces

- 5.4.11 All roads in and through the neighbourhood area appear to be in a reasonable condition although like anywhere, there are pot holes from time to time, which become hazardous when they are hidden by localised flooding. Almost all lanes in the village are single track roads with passing places. Some passing places are created by design; others by vehicles repeatedly cutting in to grass verges and banks. The relatively small increase in vehicle movements that will be brought about by development anticipated in the planned period (2017-2031), will have some impact on local road networks.

Hedges and Visibility

- 5.4.12 The advent of mechanical hedge cutting has generally meant village hedges are well maintained and the neighbourhood area gives an impression of being well looked after. There will be exceptions since cutting will depend on the individual landowner.

Litter and illegal waste

- 5.4.13 Drink cans and food packets are still being dropped in the hedgerows and verges around the village and items of more substantial illegal waste can often be found dumped in the Lay-by on the A465 as well as other places.

Public Transport

- 5.4.14 Public transport is available linking the neighbourhood area along the A465 to either Hereford or Abergavenny (Stagecoach X3 service). This is a two-hourly service (reduced in 2015 from hourly, presumably due to limited uptake and lack of funds). There is one public bus through Cobhall and Winnal to Hereford each Wednesday which returns two hours later. A school bus passes through daily to collect and deliver schoolchildren who attend Kingstone school. Dore Community Transport is also available to all via Dial a Ride. There is no age limit for this, although young children will need to be accompanied by an adult.
- 5.4.15 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation provided a number of suggestions for actions by the Parish Council. These have been given further consideration by the steering group and the Parish Council have also agreed to consider them. The proposed non planning actions for the Parish Council are provided in Appendix 3.

Local Infrastructure

5.4.16 In addition to traffic and accessibility, there are other infrastructure issues in Allensmore neighbourhood area which may be significant to the NDP. Mains water is available in all three settlements in the parish although there may be a few isolated properties still dependent upon a private supply. Mains sewage is unavailable to all apart from a small area adjacent to Clehonger which is not included in Allensmore proposed NDP.

5.4.17 Surface water on the north west boundary of the parish enters the Cage Brook and from there flows into the River Wye. Surface water from the rest of the village flows through a network of ditches which meet below the church before passing into the Worm Brook and into the river Monnow. Due to the low-lying nature of both Cobhall Common and Winnal Common and a historically high-water table in these areas, surface drainage and flooding can be a major issue.



5.4.18 The replacement of a difficult section of the ditch from Cobhall Common provided an opportunity to increase capacity to remove surface water, however due to a poor connection to the existing network improvements have not been made. There is the capacity to improve the drainage from Cobhall Common, but funding and the cooperation of the landowners would be required. In general, due to the relatively flat nature of the landscape around both Winnal Common and Cobhall Common water flow is relatively slow and, in some cases, has to reach a level before it will flow at all, so maintenance of these ditches is vital.

5.4.19 Broadband services are improving with most properties having access to fibre and the remainder likely to in the next two years.

5.4.20 The consultation on Issues and options demonstrated widespread concerns about drainage, flooding, sewage and the high-water table across all areas. Policy A7 requires development proposals to address local issues of drainage, flooding and sewage treatment.

Policy A7 – Drainage, Flooding and Sewage

With no mains drainage and high-water tables throughout the designated plan area, the ground is known to drain very poorly across the whole of the area (see Map 6 below). Consequently, safe and reliable disposal of foul water is known to be challenging.

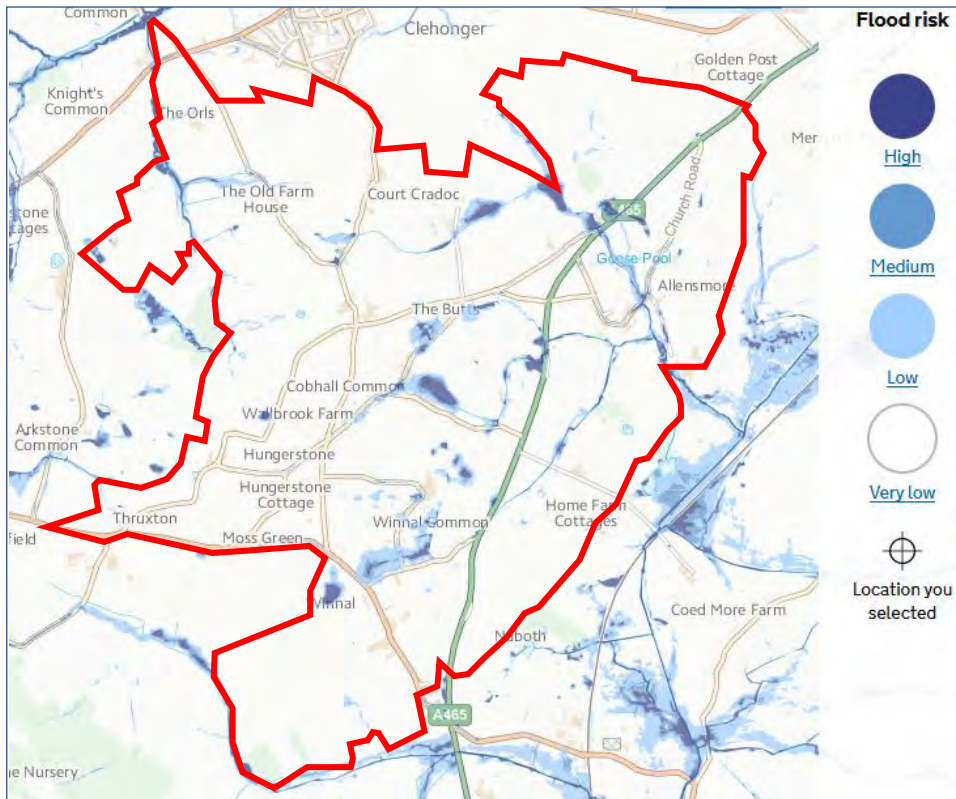
Development proposals will not be supported unless they can demonstrate with evidence (which may include fully documented porosity and percolation tests) that:

- **a sustainable foul water drainage scheme will be implemented which mitigates against these adverse conditions**
- **there is minimum risk of pollution or heightened flooding elsewhere**
- **suitable mitigation can be provided which does not exacerbate run off or higher ground water levels elsewhere**
- **designs maximise the retention of surface water on the development site and minimise runoff**
- **a reliable solution is fully compliant with all the most recent applicable national and locally adopted standards (including the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) hierarchy).**

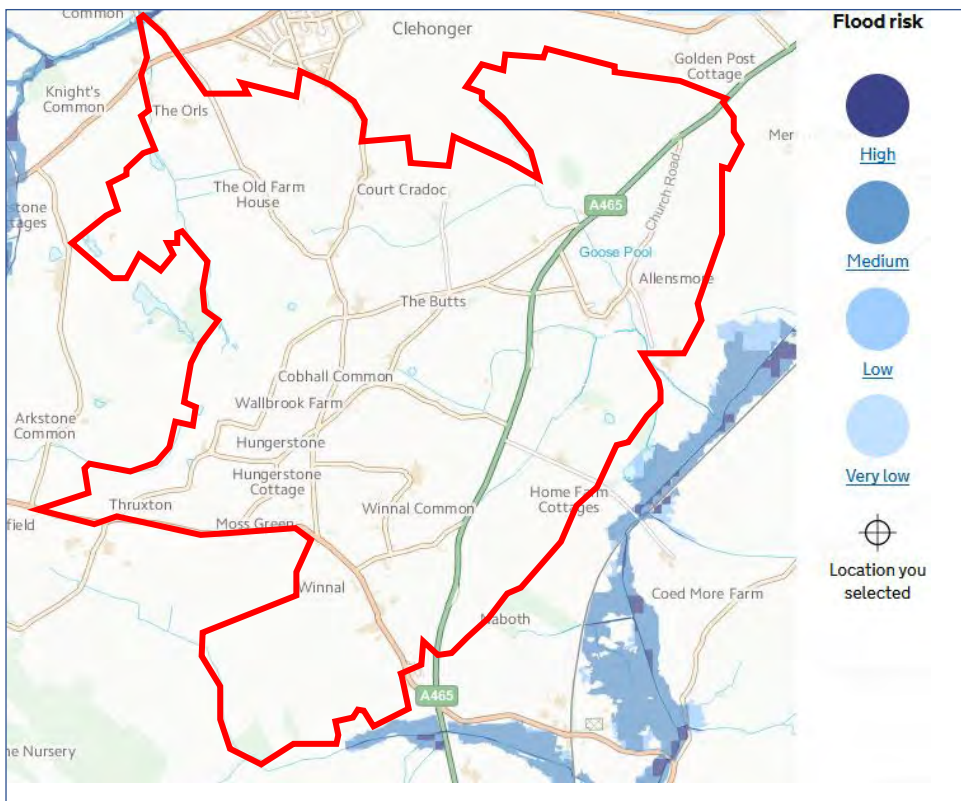
Current and subsequent owners will be made aware of the requirement for appropriate maintenance of the foul and surface water drainage systems and the potential penalties to which they may be liable in the event of land or water courses being contaminated as a consequence of inadequate maintenance.

Users of the Plan are encouraged to seek the most up to date information from the Environment Agency or other reliable sources of information.

Map 6. Flood risk from surface water



Map 7. Flood risk from rivers



5.5 Community Facilities



- 5.5.1 The neighbourhood area has a village hall and church but no other local community buildings. A petrol station/shop/post office and a public house are located just outside the neighbourhood area boundary adjacent to Winnal. The neighbourhood area has no significant public green spaces; there is a small area next to the village hall but this is prohibited for public use by Village Hall rules. However, all settlements are within 1 mile of the A465 giving good access onto the road network and the services and facilities of the City of Hereford - but only where residents have their own transport.
- 5.5.2 The village falls within the catchment area of Kingstone schools with school buses through Winnal and Cobhall Common. Some families opt for schools further afield in Madley, Ewyas Harold or Hereford.
- 5.5.3 The responses to the Issues and Options consultation showed that 90% of respondents supported a policy which protects the village hall as a local community facility and supports investment in improved facilities. It was clear that the village hall is valued as a focal point in the village, and that it requires on-going maintenance rather than any major improvement.



Allensmore Village Hall

- 5.5.4 Core Strategy Policy SC1 supports proposals which protect, retain and enhance existing social and community infrastructure.

Policy A8 – Protecting the Church and Village Hall and Supporting Investment in Improved Facilities

The church and village hall are protected for community type uses.

Development or investment which contributes towards the improvement of existing facilities, or provision of new recreational, community and educational resources and/or infrastructure in Allensmore Parish will be encouraged.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Listed Buildings in Allensmore Parish

Listed Buildings – Historic England List¹⁰

There are 23 Listed Buildings in Allensmore Parish. These are:

Site	List Entry Number	Heritage Category	National Grid Reference
HUNGERSTONE HOUSE	1099688	Grade: II	SO 44393 35204
LITTLE COBHALL FARMHOUSE	1099689	Grade: II	SO 45148 36019
LITTLE VILLAGE FARMHOUSE	1099690	Grade: II	SO 46454 35922
BARN ABOUT 15 YARDS SOUTH-EAST OF MAWFIELD FARMHOUSE	1099691	Grade: II	SO 45243 36476
MEER COURT	1099692	Grade: II	SO 43873 36303
THE OLD FORGE	1099693	Grade: II	SO 43936 34803
WOOD STREET	1099694	Grade: II	SO 46777 36021
CHURCH OF ST ANDREW	1099725	Grade: II*	SO 46629 35875
BEVAN MONUMENT ABOUT ONE YARD EAST OF SOUTH PORCH OF THE CHURCH OF ST ANDREW	1099726	Grade: II	SO 46623 35865
CHURCH HOUSE	1099727	Grade: II	SO 46618 35842
COBHALL FARMHOUSE	1099728	Grade: II	SO 45188 35938
HOME FARMHOUSE	1099729	Grade: II	SO 46488 35363
CHURCHYARD CROSS ABOUT 4 YARDS SOUTH OF THE WESTERNMOST WINDOW OF SOUTH SIDE OF THE NAVE OF THE CHURCH OF ST ANDREW	1166648	Grade: II	SO 46632 35866
STABLES ABOUT 85 YARDS EAST OF HOME FARMHOUSE	1166712	Grade: II	SO 46615 35383
MILESTONE A465	1166781	Grade: II	SO 46336 36232
WATER PUMP ABOUT ONE YARD WEST OF WINNALL COURT	1301218	Grade: II	SO 45357 34253
BARN ABOUT 20 YARDS WEST OF CHURCH HOUSE	1301253	Grade: II	SO 46590 35846
BARN ABOUT 25 YARDS SOUTH-EAST OF COBHALL FARMHOUSE	1301255	Grade: II	SO 45219 35908
LOWER MAWFIELD FARMHOUSE	1348789	Grade: II	SO 45219 36493
STABLES ABOUT 30 YARDS EAST OF LOWER MAWFIELD FARMHOUSE	1348790	Grade: II	SO 45254 36498
WINNALL COURT	1348791	Grade: II	SO 45367 34254
MILESTONE AT GOOSE POOL	1348792	Grade: II	SO 46251 36281
GATE PIERS ABOUT 30 YARDS EAST OF HUNGERSTONE HOUSE	1348827	Grade: II	SO 44429 35193

Note – The site of Allensmore Court is also identified as an Unregistered Park and Garden in the Core Strategy Appendix 8d.

The information in this appendix is correct at the time of writing the Plan. Up to date information on heritage assets should always be sought from Historic England or other reliable sources of information.

¹⁰ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Appendix 2: Definition of Affordable Housing

NPPF Annex 2: Glossary

Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b) **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.

c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Appendix 3: Non Planning Actions for the Parish Council

Non planning issues that arose from various NDP consultations

From study of the feedback from questionnaires and drop in events at the village hall over the consultation period, there are a number of concerns and suggestions for future action that fall outside the scope of this NDP. Since the principle of a Neighbourhood Plan is to reflect the views of parishioners it is important that the opportunity is taken to take these issues forward in the most appropriate manner. Consequently, the Parish Council, at its meeting on 22nd November 2018 agreed to help develop a Working Party of interested residents to look at broader community issues, the following ones having already arisen from the NDP process:

Highway and transport issues for future consideration:

Reducing the risk of traffic accidents on the A465

Accessing the A465 from Allensmore Village via Church Road adjacent the Village Hall or at the junction 200 yards further south at Saxon House has been noted by a number of residents as being potentially dangerous. Similar concerns apply at the junction just north at Mapps Pool. Pedestrians or horse riders crossing at these points, particularly adjacent Saxon House (the favoured crossing for those travelling between Allensmore Village and Cobhall Common) have to be especially vigilant.

There are no warning signs for traffic on the A465 and only the national speed limit of 60mph (often exceeded!) is in force.

Ways of reducing the risk might include:-

- reducing the speed limit on the A465
- cutting back trees which obscure views
- erecting warning signs or road markings

Reducing the risk of traffic accident and improving the experience of all users of lanes in the parish

More and more communities are getting speed limits reduced in their villages from 30mph to 20mph (the national limit of 60mph applies in almost all parts of our settlement areas). Feedback from residents would appear to support such a reduction in speed.

Footpath/Cycleway along the A465

There is clear evidence both from survey results and the post it notes comments that residents would value a footpath along the A465 between Lock's Garage and Belmont and a cycleway along the same route. It is noted that support for a footpath along the A465 would have gained higher support in the feedback had the question of a footpath as well as cycleway been posed.

Support for initiatives to get people to walk or cycle is a key policy in the Herefordshire Core Strategy.

Possible activities and actions for the community:

St Andrews Church

Liaising with and supporting relevant authorities in maintaining and developing the use of the church building in the future. Such an exercise is currently being carried out across the deanery.

Pateshall Hall

Liaising with the trustees to maintain and enhance this facility to maximise community use.

Local history

The interest shown by residents to learn more about and to protect our local heritage has led to a Local History Group being formed (several meetings have been held to gather residents' memories in relation to Allensmore Court and the village school).

Litter

Some residents had already taken it upon themselves to collect litter and rubbish left at the roadside and in hedges. A more organised approach to litter picking events and deterring people from dropping litter has now been adopted in conjunction with Herefordshire's "Stop the Drop" campaign.

Security

Judging by Police reports, Allensmore is fortunate in having a low crime rate. However, we have adopted a more proactive stance with the support of the local Police.

Appendix 4: Allensmore Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group Members

Present members:

Nick Chapman, chair

Tim Hancox, vice-chair

Tony Cramp, (Parish councillor) responsible for finance

Sally Lawrence (Parish Councillor) minutes

Jeremy Lawrence (Parish Councillor)

Yvonne Chapman

Merle Hancox

Past members:

Pat Scanlon (23rd March 2017 - 30th April 2017)

Jim Hamilton (23rd March 2017 - 13th August 2018)

Louise Hamilton (23rd March 2017 - 13th August 2018)

Michael Owens (23rd March 2017 - 25th October 2018)

