

SUTTON ST. NICHOLAS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

**Shape
Sutton Now**

**Neighbourhood
Development Plan
Consultation draft**

December 2015

Sutton St. Nicholas Parish Council

**Supporting Communities
in Neighbourhood
Planning Programme**



Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation and publicity notice

In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, notice is given that a formal pre-submission public consultation on the draft Sutton St. Nicholas Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) will begin at 9.00 am on Monday, 7 December 2015 for a period of eight weeks ending at 5.00 pm on Friday, 29 January 2016.

Copies of the draft Plan will be delivered to households and businesses in the Parish. The draft Plan is also available:

- On the parish website at <http://www.suttonstnicholas.co.uk/> and follow the link to the neighbourhood plan
- On request from the Clerk to Sutton St. Nicholas Parish Council, by email to ssnparishclerk@btinternet.com or by post to 20 Willow Rise, Sutton St. Nicholas, Hereford HR1 3DH.
- For inspection at the Hereford Centre, Franklin House, 4 Commercial Road, Hereford HR1 2DB.

Supporting documents are available on the parish website at <http://www.suttonstnicholas.co.uk/>.

How to make comments on the draft Plan

Comments should be made in writing and include the name and address of the person making the comments. All comments submitted will be publicly available. A form is available for comments, which will be delivered with copies of the Plan and is available on the website.

Please make comments as specific as possible, quoting the relevant policy or paragraph number(s).

If you wish to be kept updated on the progress of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, please also give an email address (which will not be published).

Send your comments to the Sutton St. Nicholas NDP Project Group:

- by email to: ssnparishclerk@btinternet.com
- by post to: The Clerk to Sutton St. Nicholas Parish Council, 20 Willow Rise, Sutton St. Nicholas, Hereford HR1 3DH.
- by hand: at the Golden Cross or any of the following drop-in sessions at the Village Hall:
 - Monday, 11 January, 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm
 - Saturday, 16 January, 10.00 am to 1.00 pm
 - Monday, 18 January, 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm.

All comments must be received by 5.00 pm on Friday, 29 January 2016. These will be considered by the NDP Project Group and will help shape the final Plan. A Consultation Statement, including a summary of the main issues and concerns raised and how these were considered, will be published together with the final Plan.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This is the consultation draft of the Sutton St. Nicholas Neighbourhood Development Plan.

This is the first such Plan that has been prepared by the Parish Council. Powers to prepare Neighbourhood Plans were given to Parish Councils by the Localism Act 2011, providing local communities with an opportunity to undertake their own statutory planning documents to guide decisions on land use and development.

The Parish Council decided to make use of this opportunity, in order to help deliver greater local control over development, and set up a Project Group to undertake the work.

The Plan looks ahead to 2031 and tackles key planning topics for the village and parish. Many of these were identified through work on the Community Plan in 2013, but the Neighbourhood Plan sets out much more detail on key land use planning topics – such as the village boundary, land for new housing, the local economy, design, and protecting open spaces.

The Project Group asked you about these issues in their household survey at the end of last year, and the draft Plan reflects the key messages arising. The Group has also looked in more detail at possible land for new housing in and around the village, to meet housing needs and requirements, and the draft Plan includes the results of that work.

In the Plan, you'll find draft policies on the planning issues that matter to you. Tell us your views – this is your Plan. We'd particularly like to hear from the younger generation, because the Plan provides for the future of the parish up to 2031. You'll find details of how to respond inside the front cover.

We'll take on board your comments and prepare another, revised version of the Plan for submission to Herefordshire Council. The Plan then has to go through a range of checks, including an independent Examination, before it is approved for adoption. The final stage is a parish referendum – a majority of those who vote need to agree with the Plan for it to be finalised and come into use. At that point, together with the complementary policies in Herefordshire Council's Local Plan, it will become the formal starting point for decisions on planning applications in the parish.

I very much hope you'll enjoy reading the draft Plan and I look forward to hearing your views.

Councillor Ronald Gow,
Chairman,
Sutton St. Nicholas Parish Council

Liz Connors

The Parish Council would like to acknowledge the contribution made by Liz Connors to the work of the Project Group. Her untimely death has left a legacy of commitment and enthusiasm, which the Group will honour in taking the Neighbourhood Development Plan forward.

2 CONTEXT

National and local planning policy

- 2.1 The draft Plan sets out a number of neighbourhood planning policies to govern land use and development within the parish for the period 2011 to 2031. These policies need to be read alongside existing national and County planning policies which apply within the parish.
- 2.2 National planning policy is set out within the **National Planning Policy Framework**, which was published in March 2010 and is regularly updated and amended. Companion **Planning Practice Guidance** provides more practical advice as to how national policy is to be implemented.
- 2.3 Herefordshire Council is responsible for the production of the **Local Plan**, which sets out strategic planning policies governing development in the County up to 2031. The first document to be produced as part of the Local Plan is the Core Strategy. This sets out the immediate context for the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans, notably housing requirements, as well as many other policies on relevant issues such as employment, open space and infrastructure.
- 2.4 The Neighbourhood Development Plan for Sutton St. Nicholas has been written to complement rather than duplicate these existing policies, which are listed in more detail at Appendix A. Reference is made to relevant policies in the text of the Plan as appropriate.

The parish and village

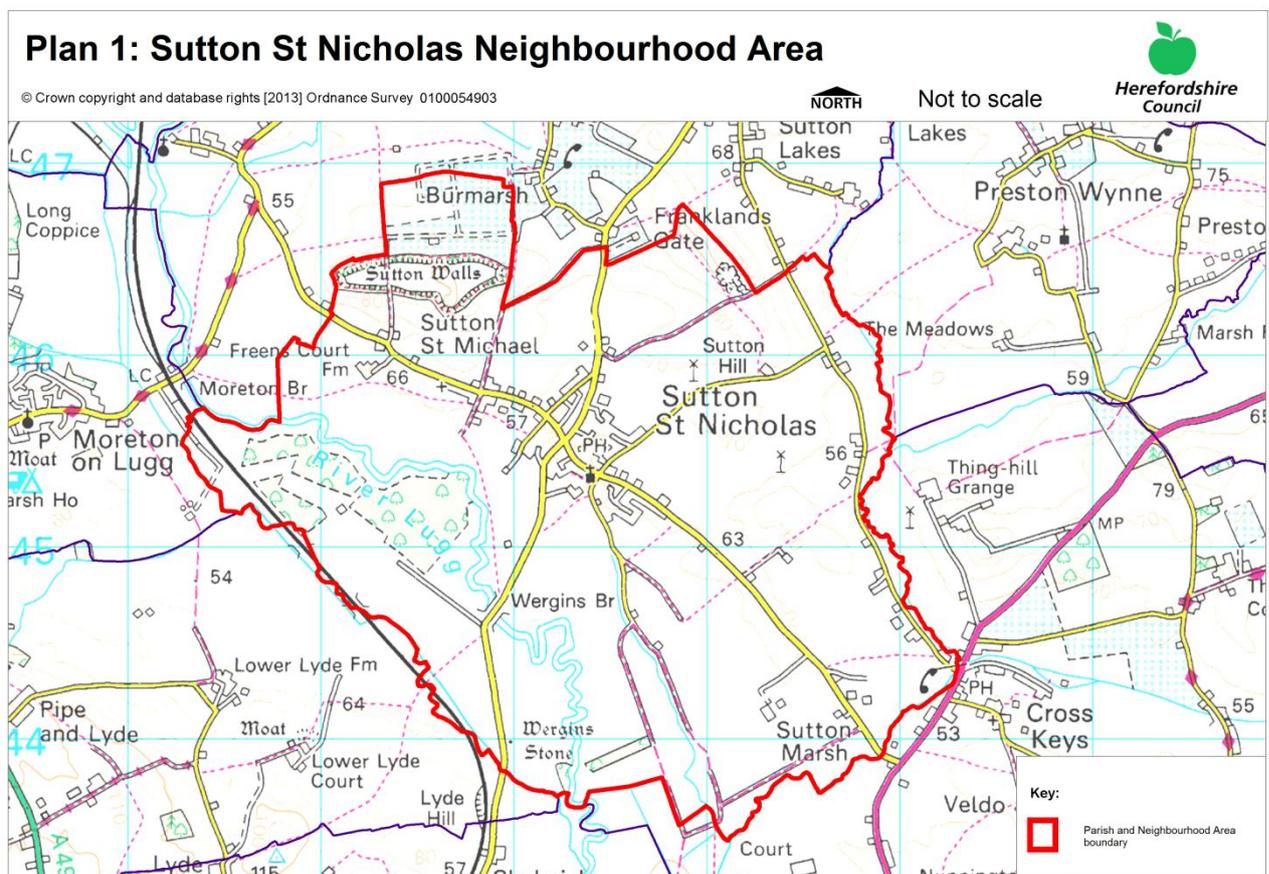
- 2.5 Sutton St. Nicholas is a compact rural parish within lowland Herefordshire, some 5 miles to the north east of Hereford. The main land use is agriculture, primarily arable with some livestock. Development is mainly residential, and is concentrated within the village itself, with some scattered dwellings along the Wyatt Road to the south east. The parish population has grown from 866 at the time of the 2001 Census to 925 in 2011, a 7% increase.
- 2.6 The village of Sutton St. Nicholas lies towards the centre of the parish, on the edge of the flood plain of the River Lugg. The settlement has developed around a crossroads where the main route from Hereford to the north crosses a flood-free route utilising higher land on the eastern edge of the Lugg flood plain. A public house, 'The Golden Cross' sits on one corner of the junction. The village is residential in character, with little in the way of industry, though working farms are still based within the centre. The Sutton Primary Academy and pre-school share new premises with the village hall.
- 2.7 There are two historic churches, St. Nicholas and St Michael; a Conservation Area; a number of listed buildings, and several scheduled ancient monuments, including the Sutton Walls iron age hill fort to the north and the Wergins Stone to the south, adjacent to the Hereford Road. The River Lugg is a European-level Special Area of Conservation by virtue of its biodiversity importance.
- 2.8 A Community Plan, 'Sutton Looks Forward' was finalised in 2013 and introduces many of the themes and issues explored in the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Preparing the plan

- 2.9 The draft Plan has been prepared by a project group comprising parish councillors and local volunteers, supported by a planning consultant. The Plan covers the area of Sutton St. Nicholas

parish, which was approved as a Neighbourhood Area by Herefordshire Council in January 2014 (Plan 1).

- 2.10 The project group has undertaken a number of consultations in preparing the Plan, including drop-in events, attendances at the Sutton Fete and other local publicity. A household questionnaire survey was undertaken in autumn 2014.¹ These exercises have produced valuable information which has been used in preparing the Plan. Regard has also been had to the Community Plan, and to a range of other published documents which are listed at Appendix B.
- 2.11 The project group has worked with local landowners in investigating the scope for land to be brought forward for necessary residential development. These discussions included a public 'call for sites'. An Assessment of the available housing sites was carried out for the Project Group in summer 2015.² The conclusions from this work were displayed at the Sutton Fete in July 2015, and form the basis of the village boundary and housing policies of the draft Plan.



2.12 The Plan, like all development plans, is subject to an assessment process termed Strategic Environmental Assessment. In addition, the Plan is subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment because the River Lugg, which runs through the parish, has European-level designation as a Special Area of Conservation. Herefordshire Council issued a scoping report, the first stage of the Assessment processes, in October 2014. This concludes that further assessments will be required as the Plan proceeds, and to this end Assessments of the draft Plan are now being published as part of the consultation.

¹ A full analysis of the survey can be found in the Results Report, published as part of the Plan's evidence base.

² Housing Site Assessment, 2015.

3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Key issues

- 3.1 National and local planning policies set sustainable development at the heart of the planning system – that is, to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. For Sutton St Nicholas, the Plan sets out what this means for the village and the parish.
- 3.2 Key issues have been identified during early work on the Plan, drawing on the Sutton Community Plan. Not all of these are capable of being tackled directly by this Plan or indeed the planning system. Some, such as the issues of traffic speeds, speed limits and enforcement, fall to other regulatory provisions. In these cases the Plan may be able to help indirectly, for instance by seeking developer contributions to support community actions. In other cases, desirable proposals which attract much support, such as a local shop, can only be provided by the actions of others. Here, the Plan can aid by setting a positive framework, helping schemes to progress readily through their planning stages. Key planning issues to be tackled directly or indirectly by the Plan are as follows:
- How to provide for and manage the future growth of the village
 - The scope for revising and extending the settlement boundary
 - The new housing which needs to be provided to meet housing requirements – amount, size, type and tenure
 - The extent of provision for affordable housing (both low cost and rent)
 - Enabling walking and cycling routes in new developments and elsewhere
 - Protecting existing open spaces in the village
 - Whether more local employment is needed, and of what type
 - Providing more local community facilities (including a local convenience store)
 - Protecting and enhancing the local environment
 - Ensuring new development respects the landscape and townscape character of the village and the rural areas of the parish
 - Encouraging renewable energy proposals and resource efficiency in new development

Vision

- 3.3 In 2031, Sutton St. Nicholas will be a sustainable and thriving local community, with the distinctive local environment of the village and surrounding countryside robustly and successfully safeguarded with new development in place to meet requirements for housing, jobs and local services.

Objectives

Settlement boundary

- To define the extent of the village over the plan period, 2011 to 2031

Housing

- To identify land for necessary new housing development
- To ensure that new housing is well-designed, sustainable and makes a positive contribution to townscape and landscape

Jobs and local services

- To enable new employment proposals of suitable scale and uses, consistent with the rural character of the parish and residential amenity
- To protect local community services and support the provision of new facilities
- To identify community needs and infrastructure to be met through developer contributions

Open spaces and the environment

The Plan endorses the Community Plan environment objective: to protect and enhance the distinctive local, natural and historic environment. The protection of natural and historic aspects is delivered through various existing statutory and other designations within the parish. Protecting local identity, character and appearance falls to this Plan and the following objectives are defined:

- To protect and enhance landscape character throughout the parish, particularly in respect of the setting of the village
- To ensure the design of new buildings is in keeping with the distinctive character and appearance of the village and rural area
- To safeguard valued local open green spaces

Format of the draft Plan

- 3.4 The Plan sets out focussed planning policies for each of the four themes identified in the objectives. Appendices provide more detail on the national and local planning policy background, and on the evidence base which has been used in drawing up the Plan.
- 3.5 The Plan's policies make various site-specific proposals and provisions, and these are illustrated on Plan 2. Other County-level policies apply to the parish area, as set out in the Local Plan.

4 SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

- 4.1 Sutton St. Nicholas is one of a number of rural settlements identified in the Local Plan to receive sustainable housing growth, and so needing a defined settlement boundary. The boundary serves to define the planned limits of the village and to clearly identify where the more restrictive countryside policies of the Local Plan apply.
- 4.2 The current village settlement boundary was established in 2007 by Herefordshire Council's Unitary Development Plan. There is considerable support for the principle of a settlement boundary for the village, with 90% of household survey respondents in favour of this option. Survey replies were evenly divided on whether the boundary should be kept as existing or revised and extended, although comments did recognise that extensions would be needed to accommodate further development if village open spaces and character were not to be compromised.
- 4.3 The current boundary has been reviewed and revised to take account of recent development, planning permissions and the proposals of the Plan (Plan 2). The revised boundary proposals were supported by 83% of those who responded at the Sutton Fete 2015. Changes have been made to the 2007 boundary in order to:
- Make provision for the residential development which is proposed by policy 3 to the north and south of the village, pursuant to the Housing Site Assessment
 - Recognise the scope for appropriate windfall development which is identified in the Housing Site Assessment
 - Reflect residential development and planning permissions granted since 2007.
- 4.4 The revised boundary provides for sustainable housing growth, and enables the protection of the countryside around and adjoining the village. In respect of the latter, Local Plan policy RA3 *Herefordshire's countryside* defines the exceptional circumstances in which residential development will be permitted.

POLICY 1: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

A SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY IS DEFINED FOR SUTTON ST. NICHOLAS. WITHIN THE BOUNDARY, NEW HOUSING AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PLAN'S POLICIES WILL BE PERMITTED. THE COUNTRYSIDE POLICIES OF THE LOCAL PLAN WILL APPLY OUTSIDE THE BOUNDARY.

5 HOUSING

Delivering new housing

Housing requirement

- 5.1 The amount of new housing to be delivered by Neighbourhood Development Plans in the County is derived from the Local Plan, which sets targets for a percentage level of growth in the rural housing market areas. Applied to the number of existing dwellings in each parish, this gives a minimum level of new housing to be delivered (policies RA1 *Rural housing distribution* and RA2 *Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns*).
- 5.2 Sutton St Nicholas falls within the Hereford Housing Market Area, for which growth of 18% is sought. Applied to the number of dwellings within the parish (401), this yields a figure of 72 for the number of new houses required during the plan period, 2011 to 2031.
- 5.3 Against this requirement, dwellings which have already been built since 2011, and existing planning permissions for new housing which have not yet been implemented, need to be taken into account. As at the end of April 2015, some 33 dwellings have either been built or have planning permission in the parish, leaving a remaining requirement of 39 whose delivery is to be considered through the Neighbourhood Development Plan.³
- 5.4 The Housing Site Assessment has considered how best to meet this requirement in and around the village. New housing may come forward either as Plan allocations, or as windfalls. These are new dwellings arising on sites which are not specifically identified in the Plan, but which nonetheless become available for development and achieve a planning permission. They may be smaller areas of land within the village settlement boundary, or which arise outside the boundary under the countryside policies of the Local Plan, for instance through the conversion of a redundant building in the countryside (policy RA3 *Herefordshire's countryside*).

Site allocation

- 5.5 The Housing Site Assessment identified two sites as suitable and available for development:
- Land at The Lane
 - Land adjacent to The Linnings
- 5.6 These two sites have the potential to deliver 38 dwellings over the Plan period to the north and south of the village, and are allocated for development. They are both well-suited to the provision of the types of dwellings supported in the household survey, including family housing,⁴ and are of a sufficient size to include an element of affordable housing. They are well related to the built form of the village and are both relatively self-contained sites; they compare well in these respects to other assessed locations. Further detail on the selection and assessment process and the factors considered can be found in the Housing Site Assessment. The site proposals were supported by 83% of those who responded at the Sutton Fete 2015.

³ See the Housing Site Assessment , Appendix A for details of the sites involved.

⁴ Results Report, question 5: family homes 82%.

Windfalls

- 5.7 In assessing an appropriate allowance to make for windfalls, the Housing Site Assessment takes account of past rates of supply and potential future opportunities. Within the Plan area, windfall opportunities are limited. The village settlement boundary is tightly drawn, and there are no significant areas of 'brownfield' (that is, previously-used) land within the village or parish which might contribute, or areas with potential for re-development. Policies of this Plan protect areas of open land within the village for open space purposes, restricting development potential.
- 5.8 Given the limited opportunities which are likely to be available, the Plan makes an allowance for up to 15 dwellings from this source over the remainder of the Plan period. Dwellings which may come forward as a result of the settlement boundary changes proposed in this Plan would contribute to this figure.
- 5.9 The following table summarises the overall position.

Source of housing supply	Elements	Total
Completions and commitments to date		33
Proposed site allocations:		
Land at The Lane	20	
Land adjacent to The Linnings	18	
Total site allocations		38
Proposed windfall allowance:		
		15
Total housing supply identified		86

Housing delivery

- 5.10 The Plan provides for a minimum of 86 new dwellings to be built within the parish up to 2031. This is an appropriate level of development which will enable overall housing needs and requirements to be met, and which will also help deliver an element of affordable housing. It takes account of availability, suitability and site-specific planning considerations, together with a reasonable assumption in respect of likely windfall supply and existing completions and planning permission commitments. The majority of the development will be in and adjacent to the main built form of the village. Both the location and level of growth will satisfy Local Plan requirements.
- 5.11 The provision of new housing is supported by the Community Plan, where the majority (65%) of respondents thought there should be some new housing built in the village, within limits. Household survey responses indicate a preference for the use of allocations to allowing sites to come forward within a looser settlement boundary,⁵ and this approach has been taken in the Plan with a greater reliance on allocations rather than windfalls.

⁵ Results report , question 6: allocations 58%, allowing sites to come forward within the boundary 31%.

POLICY 2: DELIVERING NEW HOUSING

THE PLAN WILL ENABLE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MINIMUM OF 86 NEW DWELLINGS IN THE PARISH OVER THE PLAN PERIOD. SUTTON ST. NICHOLAS VILLAGE WILL BE THE MAIN FOCUS OF HOUSING DEVELOPMENT. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT COMPLETIONS AND COMMITMENTS, HOUSING REQUIREMENTS WILL BE MET BY:

- 1 THE ALLOCATION OF LAND AT THE LANE (20 DWELLINGS) AND LAND ADJACENT TO THE LINNINGS (18 DWELLINGS): TOTAL 38 DWELLINGS**
- 2 AN ALLOWANCE FOR WINDFALLS: 15 DWELLINGS**

Criteria for new housing development

- 5.12 Local Plan policies already set out planning requirements for new housing development. These include for instance policies on affordable housing (H1), housing types (H3), sustainable design and energy efficiency (policy SD1), meeting open space requirements (OS1) and traffic and transport (MT1).
- 5.13 For the Neighbourhood Development Plan, policy 3 below addresses issues of particular local relevance. These are the size, type and tenure of the houses to be built; sustainable drainage and waste water issues; and site specific matters. This local perspective is intended to supplement, not duplicate Local Plan policies. The policy focuses on the two allocated sites, as these are expected to account for the bulk of new housing development. However the policy will also be relevant to other windfall development which comes forward in accordance with policy 1. The policy is also to be read alongside other policies of this Plan with regard to landscape, townscape and building design.

Dwelling size, type and tenure

- 5.14 Dwelling sizes should be provided which reflect the local housing requirements, and will vary according to whether the houses are to be sold on the open market or are being provided as affordable housing. Over the Plan period, in the rural parts of the Hereford Housing Market Area, the majority of open market housing will need to be either 2 or 3 bedroom (23% and 54% respectively of the total requirement). For affordable housing, 1 and 2 bedroom properties are seen to be required (33% and 37%), against 3 bedroom or larger (30%).⁶ This pattern is also seen in the local Affordable Housing Needs Survey.⁷ Household survey responses particularly identify 2 and 3 bedroom property as being required overall (72% and 82% of respondents respectively).
- 5.15 In terms of dwelling type, the presumption is that houses will be the norm, though there is support in the household survey for bungalows (47% of replies) and supported/sheltered accommodation (34%).
- 5.16 In accordance with Local Plan policy H1 *Affordable housing*, 35% of housing units should be 'affordable' – that is, housing provided to meet the needs of eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market. This will also deliver on a Community Plan action. The affordable units should be presented 'tenure blind', so that they cannot be distinguished from market units by virtue of either their location or appearance.

⁶ Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment 2013, tables 50 and 51.

⁷ Local Affordable Housing Needs Survey for the Sutton St. Nicholas area, 2011.

5.17 Affordable housing can be provided either as social- or affordable rented dwellings, usually by a housing association, or through various other forms of 'intermediate' homes for sale and rent below market levels, such as shared ownership. The appropriate mix of affordable tenures will need to be determined at the time of application, having regard to prevailing local needs. As an indication, current evidence for the Hereford Housing Market Area indicates affordable tenure requirements as follows: social rent 54%; affordable rent 24%; and intermediate tenures 22%.⁸ This pattern may not hold locally or over time during the plan period, and will need to be validated at application. For example, the 2011 local Affordable Housing Needs Survey indicates 65% of responding households preferring affordable purchase options (i.e. intermediate tenures),⁹ and this sub-tenure was supported by 52% of household survey respondents.

Sustainable drainage and wastewater

5.18 Suitable management of water flows arising from development is particularly important because of the presence of the River Lugg to the south west, a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation, and with an extensive flood plain. The site allocations lie outside the flood areas, within Flood Zone 1, but should incorporate measures to ensure that their development does not increase flood risk elsewhere, in line with national policy and Local Plan policy SD3 *Sustainable water management and water resources*. In meeting the requirements of policy SD3, sustainable drainage should be specified so as to not result in an increase in surface water runoff over existing.

5.19 In respect of wastewater flows, conservation objectives for the Lugg are presently at risk because of excessive nutrient levels, principally phosphate. To address these issues, a Nutrient Management Plan has been produced by the Environment Agency and Natural England with other stakeholders. Local Plan policy SD4 *Waste water treatment and river water quality* sets out the related planning requirements which development will need to meet. Wastewater connection should be to the village sewage treatment works, which adjoin the proposed housing site at The Lane, in the first instance.

Site specific matters: land at The Lane

5.20 This site offers an opportunity to provide housing to the south of Sutton St. Nicholas, conveniently accessible to Hereford without increasing traffic through the village - a point made in the household survey. Vehicular access will be taken from the Hereford Road. Safe pedestrian and cyclist access into the village will be required.

5.21 The southern portion of the allocated site, as shown on Plan 2, is to be kept free of development. This part of the allocation should be used instead for structural landscaping, in recognition of the sensitivity of the approach to the village from the south across the Lugg flood plain. This measure will also increase the distance between the River Lugg Special Area of Conservation and the development edge, and allow development to avoid a defined area of mineral reserves safeguarding.¹⁰ Proposals for the future use and management of this land are to be included within the planning application for the housing development on the remainder of the site. These should incorporate measures to protect and enhance the area as a habitat for wildlife, with native and

⁸ Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment 2013, paragraph 7.36.

⁹ Local Affordable Housing Needs Survey for the Sutton St. Nicholas area, 2011.

¹⁰ Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007, saved policy M5, Safeguarding mineral reserves.

traditional planting, for instance orchard trees, to soften the transition between the village and open countryside.

- 5.22 Careful consideration will be required to the design of the housing development, particularly in terms of the highway frontage. The site lies partly within the Sutton Conservation Area, and to the north adjoins The Lane complex with its listed buildings; to the east, across the highway, is the Sutton Court unregistered park and garden. Due regard should be had to these heritage assets in scheme design, in line with national and Local Plan policy.

Site specific matters: land adjacent to The Linnings

- 5.23 This site offers an opportunity for housing to the north of the village, close to the school and without extending the settlement edge beyond the limits established by planning approvals on the opposite side of the road at Willowcroft. As well as vehicular access, safe pedestrian and cyclist access to the school and on into the village will be required.
- 5.24 Careful consideration should be given to design, dwelling heights, siting and landscaping/boundary treatments, including to both the road frontage and adjoining open countryside.

POLICY 3: CRITERIA FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

FOR EACH OF THE ALLOCATED SITES, COMPREHENSIVE PROPOSALS SHOULD BE PREPARED, TO INCLUDE:

- 1 DWELLING TYPES, SIZES AND TENURES TO MEET LOCAL HOUSING REQUIREMENTS, AND TO INCLUDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO MEET LOCAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS;**
- 2 PROPOSALS TO ADDRESS FLOOD RISK THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE AND FOR THE TREATMENT OF WASTEWATER TO MEET WATER QUALITY REQUIREMENTS;**
- 3 LAYOUT, DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING PROPOSALS WHICH RESPECT THE LANDSCAPE SETTING, THE SETTING OF ADJOINING HERITAGE ASSETS AND DWELLING AMENITY; AND**
- 4 SUITABLE VEHICULAR ACCESS TO THE HIGHWAY AND SAFE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST ACCESS INTO THE VILLAGE.**

IN THE CASE OF LAND AT THE LANE, NO DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE PROPOSED ON THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE ALLOCATION, WHICH IS TO BE USED FOR STRUCTURAL LANDSCAPING, DESIGNED AND SPECIFIED WITH A VIEW TO ENHANCING WILDLIFE POTENTIAL.

REQUIREMENTS 1-4 WILL ALSO APPLY AS APPROPRIATE TO OTHER HOUSING PROPOSALS WHICH COME FORWARD ELSEWHERE.

6 JOBS AND LOCAL SERVICES

Small-scale employment

- 6.1 Farming is the principal economic activity in the parish, with other employment linked to local village services such as the school, public house and retirement/sheltered housing at Woodville Grove. The Local Plan recognises the role of the rural economy in parishes such as Sutton, with policy RA6 *Rural economy* giving support for a wide range of employment uses in the County's rural areas including through the re-use of redundant rural buildings (policy RA5), tourism projects (policy E4) and homeworking (policy E3).
- 6.2 Household survey respondents thought that the Plan should encourage a range of local employment, such as tourism, leisure and crafts; offices and small businesses, and pubs, restaurant and cafes, to support the local economy and existing businesses and help reduce travel into Hereford. There was particular support for farming (70%) and for shops (68%), reflecting the strong local sentiment that a shop is needed in the village, and which is considered further below. Less favoured were light industry/manufacturing (21%) and food and drink production (28%).
- 6.3 In line with the focus on small-scale types of employment, survey replies supported the conversion of existing buildings for such uses, protecting existing sites from change of use and homeworking, above allocating land for new employment development. Other comments were made to the effect that further employment was not required, and that the residential character of the village and the rural environs should be protected.
- 6.4 Responding to the survey messages, and reflecting Local Plan rural economy policies, this Plan does not identify new employment land (and in this respect diverges from a Community Plan action). Equally, there are no existing employment sites requiring protection. Rather, the following policy supplements the strategic policies by providing more specific guidance as to the type of employment development that is appropriate within the village and parish, and the associated planning requirements. The policy is supportive of suitable types of new employment provision where these are compatible with the local rural environment and residential amenity. It is envisaged that such development will involve existing buildings, delivered through change of use or homeworking, rather than new build. Proposals to extend existing businesses and premises will need to be carefully considered against the policy criteria.

POLICY 4: SMALL-SCALE EMPLOYMENT

PROPOSALS FOR SMALL-SCALE EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT CONSISTENT WITH RESIDENTIAL AMENITY AND LOCAL VILLAGE AND RURAL AREA CHARACTER WILL BE PERMITTED. PROPOSALS SHOULD:

- 1 WHEREVER POSSIBLE, MAKE USE OF EXISTING PREMISES INCLUDING THROUGH THE RE-DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE OF USE OF REDUNDANT RURAL BUILDINGS, AND BY HOMEWORKING;**
- 2 NOT CREATE UNACCEPTABLE ADVERSE IMPACTS TO THE AMENITY OF LOCAL RESIDENTS, INCLUDING THROUGH NOISE, DUST, LIGHT LEVELS, WORKING HOURS, AND INCREASES IN TRAFFIC; AND**
- 3 ENABLE TRAFFIC GENERATED TO BE SAFELY ACCOMMODATED ON LOCAL ROADS WITHOUT UNDUE OPERATIONAL, SAFETY OR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES, INCLUDING ROAD WIDENING OR LOSS OF HEDGEROWS.**

Local community facilities

- 6.5 The parish has few community facilities, although there is a newly-developed village hall in premises shared with the school and a public house (The Golden Cross). The nearest local convenience shop is at Marden. The Local Plan seeks to resist the loss of existing facilities (policy SC1 *Social and community facilities*). As noted earlier the provision of a village shop was a major theme in the household survey and in the Community Plan, where the community provision of shop, library and post office is mooted. Direct provision of such facilities is beyond the scope of the Plan, but it can enable a positive planning framework, so that proposals coming forward in suitable village premises can be readily agreed through the planning stage. The Community Right to Bid process, introduced in the Localism Act 2011, provides an opportunity to recognise and safeguard against the loss of recognised Assets of Community Value.
- 6.6 Local Plan policy ID1 *Infrastructure delivery* proposes a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of infrastructure to support development and sustainable communities. This is to be undertaken by securing developer contributions through legal section 106 agreements and/or a future Community Infrastructure Levy. In furtherance of this approach, local parish requirements for new and improved community facilities infrastructure are identified below. These reflect issues arising through the Community Plan and also highlighted within the household survey, such as traffic speeds and speed limit enforcement within the village and along the Wyatt Road.
- 6.7 Forthcoming enhancements to broadband are welcomed by the Parish Council and supported in the Community Plan. No specific land use implications are expected to arise requiring a Plan policy with necessary development delivered through permitted development rights. However, such infrastructure improvements will support local business and economic activity, including homeworking, as well as many other aspects of village and community life, and are welcomed as such in the Plan.

POLICY 5: LOCAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES

LOCAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES WILL BE PROTECTED, RETAINED AND ENHANCED. SUPPORT WILL BE GIVEN TO APPROPRIATE DIVERSIFICATION PROPOSALS WHERE THESE CAN BE SHOWN TO ENABLE VIABILITY.

PROPOSALS FOR NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES IN AND ADJACENT TO THE VILLAGE AND WHICH ARE ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF TRANSPORT MODES WILL BE SUPPORTED. PROPOSALS SHOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE POTENTIAL FOR THE CO-LOCATION OF SERVICES IN ACHIEVING VIABILITY. A VILLAGE SHOP WILL BE PARTICULARLY WELCOMED.

APPROPRIATE DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS WILL BE SOUGHT TOWARDS MEETING IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY NEEDS, INCLUDING:

- 1 NEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF EXISTING PLAY AREAS, PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AND SAFE CYCLE AND WALKING ROUTES;**
- 2 SUPPORT FOR CONTINUED USE OF THE LENGTHSMAN SCHEME FOR MINOR HIGHWAY WORKS;**
- 3 TRAFFIC SPEED MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT.**

7 OPEN SPACES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Context

7.1 The environment is a key theme within the Community Plan, whose objective ‘to protect and enhance the distinctive local, natural and historic environment’ is adopted here. Much of this protection and enhancement is already in place through a range of designations which apply in the parish. The statutory designations comprise:

- Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest: River Lugg
- Conservation Area: Sutton village
- Numerous listed buildings within the historic core of the village
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Sutton Walls (camp); Freen’s Court Magnates residence, moat and fishponds; deserted medieval village, Sutton St Michael; the Wergins Stone.

7.2 Non-statutory features include several Special Wildlife Sites and an unregistered park and garden (Sutton Court).

7.3 All these features are protected, according to their importance, by national and Local Plan planning policies, which do not need to be repeated here. The Plan can add further detail on local landscape character and the setting of the village; building design; and the protection of open spaces.

Landscape

7.4 The village lies at the centre of the parish, within an agricultural landscape which rises gently from the River Lugg flood plain to higher land in the north (Sutton Walls, the disused quarry). From rural lanes and footpaths there are long distance views across open country as far afield as the Malverns and the Black Mountains.

7.5 The countryside around Sutton St. Nicholas has a distinctive character which has been assessed in national and County-level studies. The parish is within the Herefordshire Lowlands National Character Area, defined by Natural England,¹¹ and the County Landscape Character Assessment identifies two types of landscape within the parish: Riverside Meadows and Principal Settled Farmlands.¹² Riverside Meadows are secluded pastoral landscapes associated with alluvial floodplains, characterised by tree-lined rivers and riverside meadows defined by hedgerow and ditches. The landscape to the south and south-west of the village, for example along the Hereford Road and The Rhea, is typical of this type. Principal Settled Farmlands are the rolling Herefordshire lowlands, a rich patchwork of hop fields, orchards, grazed pastures and arable fields with restricted tree cover and field boundaries formed by hedgerow. The open, more elevated land around the village, such as along the Ridgeway, is an exemplar of this type.

7.6 Both landscape types, and the distinctive differences between them, are readily apparent in local countryside walks from and around the village, which has a clearly defined ‘urban’ edge also evident in the settlement boundary shown on Plan 2. As such, they are important in defining the character of the landscape setting of the settlement.

¹¹ Natural England, National Character Area 100: Herefordshire Lowlands, 2013

¹² Landscape Character Assessment, 2009.

7.7 Local Plan policy LD1 *Landscape and townscape* provides for landscape character to be considered within planning decisions, and includes reference to the setting of settlements. National planning policy enables the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes.¹³ Household survey responses give weight to the protection of important views and the landscape setting of the village (82% of respondents). Indeed, much of the open countryside around the village was seen by some respondents to merit protection,¹⁴ and is clearly valued in these terms. Many of the specific features identified, such as orchards, are elements within the landscape types discussed above.

POLICY 6: LANDSCAPE

PROPOSALS SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE PREVAILING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE, INCLUDING KEY FEATURES AND ATTRIBUTES, HAS POSITIVELY INFLUENCED THEIR DESIGN, LAYOUT AND SCALE, AS APPROPRIATE TO THE LOCATION AND CONTEXT OF THE SITE. ANY LANDSCAPING PROPOSALS SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH AND SERVE TO CONSOLIDATE THE ESTABLISHED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER.

PROPOSALS SHOULD PARTICULARLY RESPECT THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE SETTING OF SUTTON ST. NICHOLAS. DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT UPON THE LANDSCAPE SETTING OF THE VILLAGE, CONSIDERED IN TERMS OF THE ASSESSED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

Building design

7.8 A further aspect of local distinctiveness is the characteristic building design. The older buildings in the parish, such as in the historic core of the village, are typically built of local stone, with later developments in brick and more modern property in a range of materials including brick and brick/render. Village dwellings tend to be detached or semi-detached rather than terraced, often set back generously from the highway. Such aspects contribute to the established village character, which also draws on natural features, open spaces, historic buildings including two places of worship, and the working farms within the settlement. All these are set within a cruciform highway layout around the crossroads, and with a clear and close relationship to the surrounding countryside.

7.9 Planning policy supports high quality design. Local Plan policy SD1 *Sustainable design and energy efficiency* details the wide range of factors that are assessed in this respect. For this Plan, the following policy emphasises the importance of securing a locally distinctive design approach in individual developments, which relates to and supports the existing village character. In the household survey, 79% of respondents wanted to see new development in keeping with village character, with over half supporting the use of traditional building materials. In assessing schemes under the following policy, regard will be needed to such aspects of design as layout and siting; density; means of access and enclosure, including relationship to the highway; scale and mass; height; detailing; materials; and landscaping.

POLICY 7: BUILDING DESIGN

PROPOSALS SHOULD BE DESIGNED SO AS TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE VILLAGE AND RURAL AREAS OF THE PARISH. REGARD SHOULD BE HAD TO THE ESTABLISHED BUILT, NATURAL AND HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS AND THE WIDER TOWNSCAPE AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXTS.

¹³ National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 109.

¹⁴ Results Report, land for protection, p. 29.

Open spaces

- 7.10 The open spaces in the village greatly contribute to its rural character. Local Plan policies LD1 *Landscape and townscape* and LD3 *Green infrastructure* provide a strategic direction but it falls to this Plan to identify specific areas for protection. Household survey responses confirm this is important, with 78% of respondents wanting the Plan to identify and protect open spaces.
- 7.11 Land at the old Post Office Orchard on the Marden Road was identified by the UDP as an important open area/green space, and protected as such. The protection is continued in this Plan, using the Local Green Space designation introduced by the National Planning Policy Framework.¹⁵ In the household survey, open land west of Upper House Farm was seen as valued and is also included within the Local Green Space designation.
- 7.12 Both areas of Green Space are local in character, and comprise limited areas of land with clearly defined boundaries to existing village development. Both lie within the village and were identified by responses to the household survey as deserving protection as open spaces. They offer relief to the built-up areas of the village on principal road frontages, making an important contribution to the historic physical form of the village. Their agricultural character contributes to the village's identity and rural sense of place. The Green Space west of Upper House Farm is in the Sutton Conservation Area, but the additional designation is justified by the need to specifically protect the open character of the land concerned. The designation is without prejudice to the continued agricultural/open space uses of the areas concerned. In addition, there are public open spaces held and maintained by the Parish Council at Millway/Willowrise, the village hall, and at the play area.

POLICY 8: OPEN SPACES

LAND AT THE OLD POST OFFICE ORCHARD AND WEST OF UPPER HOUSE FARM IS IDENTIFIED AS LOCAL GREEN SPACE. DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL GREEN SPACES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES ARISE WHICH OUTWEIGH THE NEED FOR PROTECTION. PROPOSALS THAT WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.

Renewable energy

- 7.13 Renewable energy is the subject of actions in the Community Plan which proposes to investigate solar, wind, water or ground energy sources for the whole community. Various methods of local generation were supported in the household survey, notably ground heat pumps and hydropower. The topic is the subject of Local Plan policies SD1 *Sustainable design and energy efficiency* and SD2 *Renewable and low carbon energy*, which provide a positive framework of such proposals. In particular, community-led micro-generation schemes proposed in Neighbourhood Development Plans will be supported where they meet the Local Plan's policies. There are no such proposals in the Neighbourhood Development Plan area at present, and in view of the clear Local Plan statements on this matter it is not considered that any further policy provision is required in this Plan.

¹⁵ National Planning Policy Framework, paragraphs 76 and 77.

8 DELIVERING THE PLAN

8.1 The Plan is a long-term planning document, which will be implemented in the period to 2031 primarily via decisions on planning applications but also by the actions and investments of other agencies and parties. For each of the four Plan themes, the Parish Council will seek to implement and deliver the Plan as follows in delivering the sustainable development of the parish.

Settlement boundary

- Working with Herefordshire Council to secure decisions on planning applications which are in accordance with the Plan. This will include decisions in favour of development which meets Plan objectives and policies, including the delivery of housing growth; and against proposals which would conflict with the Plan, including in respect of the setting of the village.

Housing

- The Parish Council will work with Herefordshire Council, landowners, developers, social housing providers and the community to secure housing growth as set out in the Plan.

Jobs and local services

- Working with businesses to improve local employment opportunities in line with the objectives and policies of the Plan
- Particularly supporting proposals for a local shop to meet community needs
- Working with Herefordshire Council and local organisations to protect, retain and enhance community facilities
- Seeking the use of infrastructure monies including developer contributions to meet needs including for open space, cycle and walking routes, the lengthsman scheme, and traffic speed monitoring and enforcement.

Open spaces and the environment

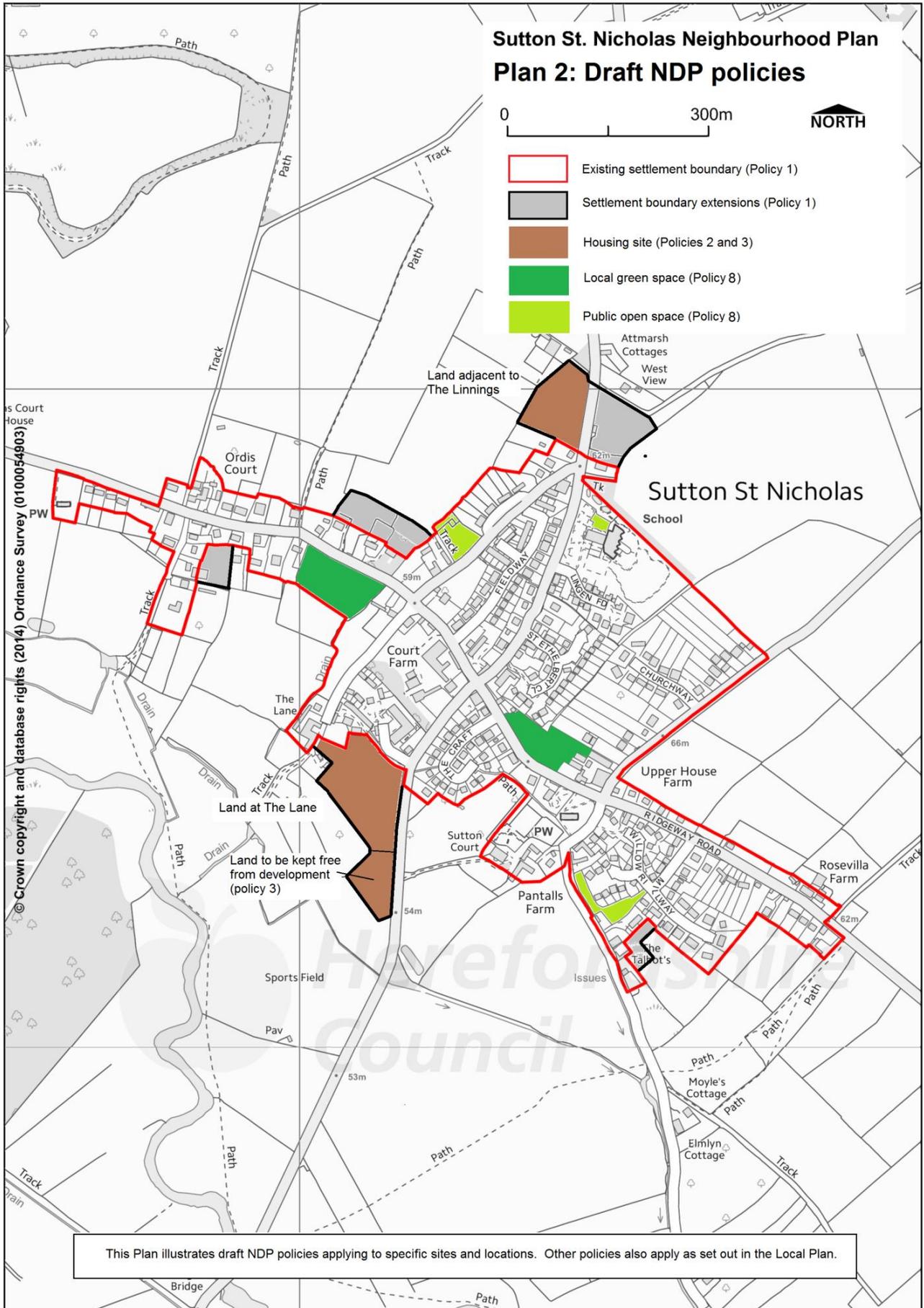
- Working with Herefordshire Council through decisions on planning applications which serve to protect and enhance landscape and townscape in the village and parish
- Protecting valued open spaces within the village as Local Green Spaces.

Sutton St. Nicholas Neighbourhood Plan Plan 2: Draft NDP policies

0 300m

NORTH

-  Existing settlement boundary (Policy 1)
-  Settlement boundary extensions (Policy 1)
-  Housing site (Policies 2 and 3)
-  Local green space (Policy 8)
-  Public open space (Policy 8)



This Plan illustrates draft NDP policies applying to specific sites and locations. Other policies also apply as set out in the Local Plan.

APPENDIX A: National and local planning policies

A.1 A wide range of planning policies already apply to the Sutton Neighbourhood Area courtesy of the National Planning Policy Framework and County-level plans. The principal documents and their provisions are summarised below.

National Planning Policy Framework

A.2 The Framework sets out national policy statements on the full range of planning matters, including both development and environmental protection. Relevant chapters are:

- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (Chapter 3)
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (6)
- Requiring good design (7)
- Promoting healthy communities (8)
- Meeting the challenge of flooding (10)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment (11,12)

A.3 The Framework is supported by Planning Practice Guidance which sets out more detail on how the national policies should be implemented, for instance with regard to flood risk.

Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007

A.4 Though the bulk of the Unitary Development Plan policies have been superseded by those set out in the Local Plan, the following policy continues in force:

- M5, Safeguarding mineral reserves

Herefordshire Local Plan, Core Strategy 2011-2031, 2015

A.5 This sets out a County-level spatial strategy and policies on a wide range of planning matters, with the following of particular relevance and importance to the Neighbourhood Development Plan:

- SS1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- RA1 Rural housing distribution
- RA2 Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns
- RA3 Herefordshire's countryside
- RA4 Agricultural, forestry and rural enterprise dwellings
- RA5 Re-use of rural buildings
- RA6 Rural economy
- H1 Affordable housing
- H3 Ensuring a range and mix of housing types
- SC1 Social and community facilities
- OS1 Requirement for open space, sports and recreational facilities
- OS2 Meeting open space, sports and recreation needs
- MT1 Traffic management, highway safety and promoting active travel
- E3 Home working
- E4 Tourism
- LD1 Landscape and townscape

- LD2 Biodiversity and geodiversity
- LD3 Green infrastructure
- LD4 Historic environment and heritage assets
- SD1 Sustainable design and energy efficiency
- SD2 Renewable energy
- SD3 Sustainable water management and water resources
- SD4 Wastewater treatment and river water quality
- ID1 Infrastructure delivery

APPENDIX B: Evidence base

B.1 The following planning policy documents, reports and survey material have been used in drawing up the draft Neighbourhood Plan. These were produced by or for Herefordshire Council (HC) unless otherwise stated.

National and County level evidence

Department for Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.

Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan, 2007.

Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2004 updated 2009.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2012.

Rural housing background paper to Core Strategy, 2013.

Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment, 2013.

Herefordshire Local Plan, Core Strategy 2011-2031, Pre-submission publication, 2014.

Herefordshire Local Plan, Core Strategy, Proposed Main Modifications, 2015.

Environment Agency and Natural England, River Wye SAC, Nutrient Management Plan, Evidence base and options appraisal, Action Plan, 2014.

Natural England, National Character Area profile, 100: Herefordshire Lowlands, 2013.

Parish and local level evidence

HC Research Team, Local Affordable Housing Needs Survey for the Sutton St Nicholas area, 2011.

Sutton St. Nicholas Community Plan Group, Sutton St. Nicholas Community Plan 2013-2018, Sutton looks forward, 2013.

Sutton St Nicholas Neighbourhood Area, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Scoping Report, 2014.

Sutton St Nicholas Neighbourhood Plan Project Group, Household questionnaire survey 2014, Results report, 2014.

Sutton St Nicholas Neighbourhood Plan Project Group, Housing Site Assessment 2015.

Residential commitments and completions data for Sutton parish, 2015.