



**Brockhampton Group  
Neighbourhood Development Plan  
2011-2031**

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# **Consultation draft**





## **Brockhampton Group Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011-2031**

### **Pre-submission consultation and publicity notice**

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A public consultation on the draft Brockhampton Group Neighbourhood Development Plan held in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 will start at 9.00 a.m. on Monday, 12 October 2020 and end at 5.00 p.m. on Monday 7 December 2020.

#### **Where you can inspect the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan**

The draft Neighbourhood Development Plan and supporting documents may be inspected on the Brockhampton Group Parish Council website at <https://brockhamptongrouppc.org.uk/>.

Printed copies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan can be obtained on request from the Parish Clerk, David Hunter-Miller at [brockhamptongroup@gmail.com](mailto:brockhamptongroup@gmail.com) or telephone 07513 122918.

#### **How to make comments on the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan**

Comments must be made in writing and include the name and address of the person making the comments. Please make comments as specific as possible, quoting the relevant policy or paragraph number(s). All comments will be publicly available.

A comments form is available and can be either downloaded and printed from the Parish Council website, or requested from the Parish Clerk.

Send your comments:

- by email to the Parish Clerk at [brockhamptongroup@gmail.com](mailto:brockhamptongroup@gmail.com).
  - by post to the Parish Clerk, 35 Benbow Close, Malvern Wells, Worcestershire WR14 4JJ.
- If you have any questions, please telephone the Parish Clerk, David Hunter-Miller on 07513 122918.

**All comments must be received by 5.00 p.m. on Monday 7 December 2020.** These will be considered by Brockhampton Group Parish Council and will help shape the final Neighbourhood Development Plan.

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*Front cover image: Lower Brockhampton*

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*Milestone on A44 at Linton Court*

# **1. SETTING THE SCENE**

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 New planning powers were given to local communities by the Localism Act 2011. These include the ability to prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans as part of the statutory planning framework governing the development and use of land in the area. When planning applications are made, they must be decided in accordance with this framework unless there are overriding circumstances to the contrary.
- 1.2 Brockhampton Group Parish Council has decided to prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) to help ensure that decisions on future development are guided locally.

## **Format of the Neighbourhood Development Plan**

- 1.3 The NDP begins by giving a thumbnail sketch of the Neighbourhood Area (chapter 2).
- 1.4 A Vision for the Neighbourhood Area in 2031 is set out in chapter 3, together with more detailed objectives. In line with national and County-wide planning policies, the NDP seeks to contribute to sustainable development by addressing social, environmental and economic matters together. This chapter includes an overarching policy for the sustainable development of the Neighbourhood Area.
- 1.5 The NDP then sets out policies on the development and use of land, on the environment (chapter 4); social and community, including housing (chapter 5) and the economy (chapter 6). A concluding chapter explains how the NDP will be delivered, and includes a set of Community Actions to capture aspirations on non-land use matters.
- 1.6 The NDP has been prepared using evidence gathered from a range of sources. Much information has been taken from reports prepared by Herefordshire Council for the Local Plan Core Strategy and other documents. This has been supplemented by local sources, including a comprehensive questionnaire survey, a Call for Sites/housing site assessment, and community engagement. The resultant 'evidence base' for the NDP is set out at Appendix A.

## **National and local planning policy context**

- 1.7 The NDP's policies need to be read alongside the existing national and County planning policies which apply in the Neighbourhood Area.
- 1.8 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Planning Practice Guidance gives more detailed advice as to how national policy is to be implemented.
- 1.9 Herefordshire Council is responsible for preparing the Local Plan. The Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted in October 2015 and sets out strategic planning policies for the development of the County from 2011 to 2031. These cover such issues as requirements for new housing, the

rural economy, the environment and community facilities. The NDP has been written to complement rather than duplicate these existing policies, and similarly covers the period from 2011 to 2031.

- 1.10 A Review of the Local Plan Core Strategy is underway which will extend the plan period to 2041. The Review is in its early stages with consultation on Issues and Options scheduled for 2020. Where NDP policies refer to Core Strategy policies this should be taken to include reference to any equivalent successor policies which may come forward through the Review.
- 1.11 Also forming part of the Local Plan, the Travellers' Sites Development Plan Document (DPD) was adopted in October 2019. It makes site-specific allocations for new pitches including at the Openfields caravan site in the Neighbourhood Area.
- 1.12 Herefordshire Council are in the process of preparing a DPD for the market town of Bromyard which lies immediately to the west of the Neighbourhood Area. The purpose of the DPD is to set out proposals to ensure full delivery of Bromyard-specific objectives in the Local Plan Core Strategy. At the time of writing, an Issues and Options consultation is awaited.
- 1.13 In terms of NDPs being prepared by neighbouring parishes, that for Whitbourne to the east was completed ('made') in December 2016. The parishes of Edwyn Ralph, Bromyard and Winslow, and Avenbury have all commenced plan preparation and are at the drafting stage.
- 1.14 The NDP, like all development plans, is subject to an assessment process known as Strategic Environmental Assessment. It must also undergo Habitats Regulations Assessment because of the proximity of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which includes the River Lugg. These Assessments are undertaken independently, by Herefordshire Council. To this end, Assessments of the NDP have been carried out and are being published for consultation alongside the draft Plan.

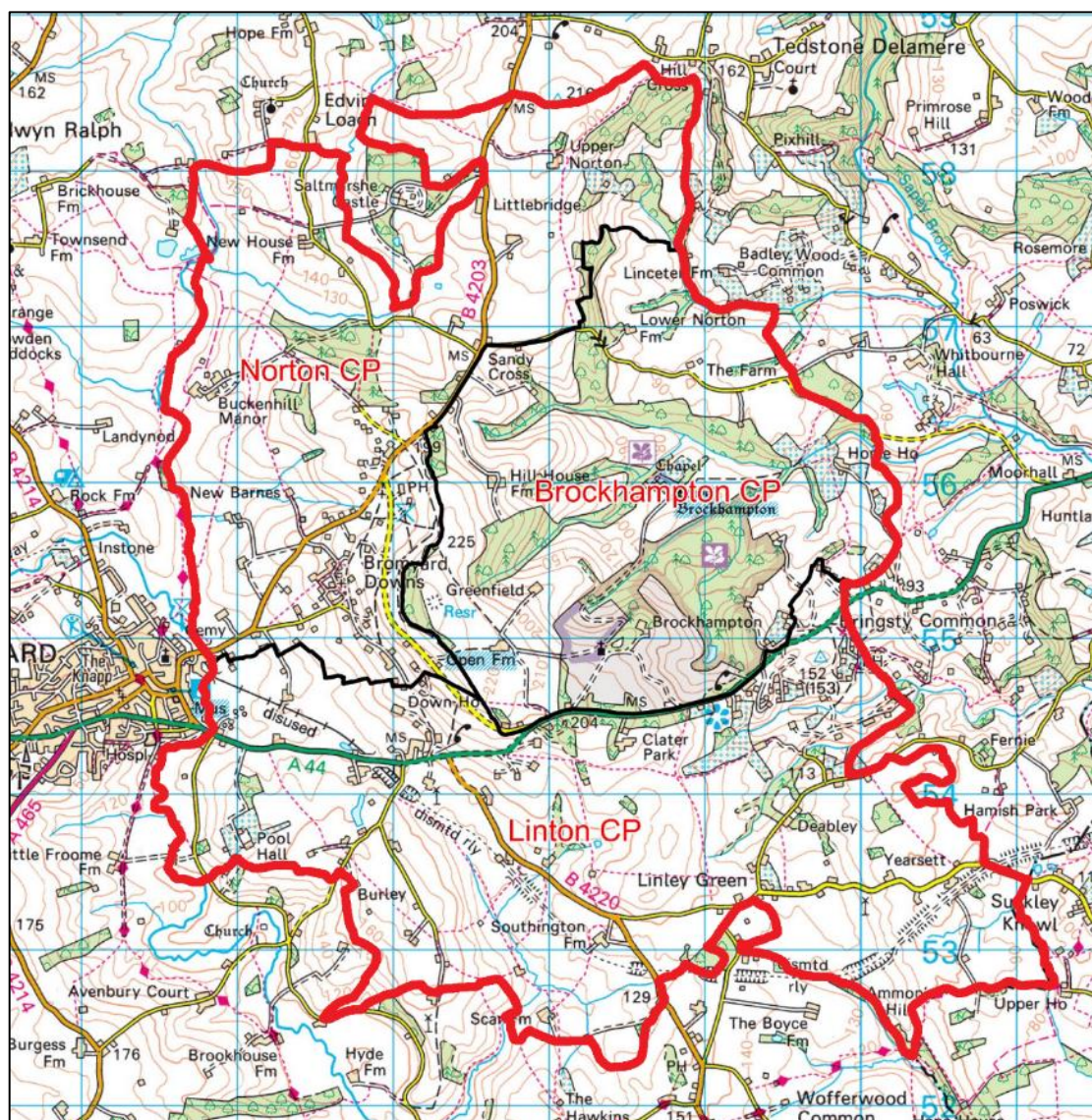


*Looking south from near the trig point on Bringsty Common*



## 2. BROCKHAMPTON GROUP NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Area was designated in November 2017 for the administrative area of Brockhampton Group Parish Council, the qualifying body (Plan 1). There are three constituent parishes: Brockhampton, Linton and Norton. The Neighbourhood Area extends to 2,290 hectares to the east of the market town of Bromyard (Plan 1).



Neighbourhood Area



Parish boundary



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**Plan 1: Brockhampton Group Neighbourhood Area**

## Social and community

- 2.2 The Neighbourhood Area is strongly rural in character, with a settlement pattern linked to the main roads and areas of common land. Fronting onto the A44 at Linton, the former Bromyard Union workhouse (1836) was used as a hospital and has now been converted and extended to provide private residential accommodation (Linton Court and Enderby Court). There are two extensive areas of common land, at Bromyard Downs and Bringsty Common; here, the typical and distinctive pattern is for cottages to be scattered across or on the periphery of the commons, reflecting the historic exercise of commoner's grazing rights. Between the two areas of common land lies the Brockhampton Estate, a 687-hectare farmed estate now in the care of the National Trust. Elsewhere there is a dispersed pattern of settlement typical of rural Herefordshire, based around farmsteads and other small clusters of wayside development.
- 2.3 Services and facilities reflect the rural context. There are no places of worship or village halls. Brockhampton Primary School opened in 1882 on its present site, close to where the three parishes come together at the southern end of the Bromyard Downs road. This central location continues to enable convenient access from across the parishes. There are two public houses, The Live and Let Live on Bringsty Common and The Royal Oak on Bromyard Downs. Residents are otherwise reliant on services and facilities provided in the nearby market town of Bromyard, including for secondary education and daily shopping. The Parish Council meets outside the Neighbourhood Area at the offices of Bromyard Town Council. However, Bromyard Town Football Club are based at Delahay Meadow in the east of the Neighbourhood Area. Higher-level services are to be found in Worcester (13 miles) and Hereford (16 miles).
- 2.4 The Neighbourhood Area is relatively well-connected. The A44 runs through the area, providing access to Worcester and the M5 to the east and to the A49 at Leominster in the west. There are also road connections to Stourport (B4203) and Malvern (B4220). Minor roads and rural lanes provide access to neighbouring settlements outside the Area.
- 2.5 The Neighbourhood Area is crossed by numerous public rights of way (footpaths and bridleways), including several circular routes around the Brockhampton Estate and further afield, giving access for local use, walkers and tourists. The regular 420 bus service runs between Worcester and Bromyard along the A44. The nearest rail services are at Worcester and Hereford, following the closure of the single-track railway between Leominster, Bromyard and Worcester in 1964. The disused railway line has potential for use as a walkway/cycleway with leisure, economic and safety benefits.
- 2.6 Due to Census 2011 reporting restrictions for small geographies, the available population and other data for the Neighbourhood Area also includes a predominantly-rural part of adjoining Whitbourne parish. The information given here relates to this wider area. The resident population was 1,129 in 2011. Young people aged 0-15 made up 12% of the population (County 16.1%) with the same proportion of those aged 65 and over as at County-level (24%).



The population density in 2011 was 0.4 persons per hectare, less than that for the County (0.8).

- 2.7 There were 507 households in 2011, giving an average household size of 2.2 persons per household. In 2011 80% of homes were owner occupied, either outright or with a mortgage or loan, more than the County average (67.7%). Almost half (48%) of households owned their properties outright, significantly higher than at County (39%) or national (31%) levels. Conversely a much lower proportion of households lived in socially rented properties (3%) than in the County as a whole (14%). Some 73% of dwellings had three bedrooms or more, compared to 67% in Herefordshire.
- 2.8 To the south of Linton Trading Estate the Openfields Travellers site provides ten pitches managed by the local authority. The adopted Gypsy and Travellers DPD, part of the Local Plan, includes proposals to add an additional two pitches within the existing site boundary.



*Brockhampton Primary School*

## Environment

- 2.9 Despite its compact size, the Neighbourhood Area has an notable diversity of landscape which is important in defining local character and distinctiveness. The following landscape types are identified by the County Landscape Character Assessment:<sup>1</sup> Plateau Estate Farmlands to the north west; Wooded Estatelands between the A44 and the B4203 Stourport Road; Principal Timbered Farmlands and Principal Settled Farmlands to the south of the A44; and Unenclosed Commons at Bromyard Downs and Bringsty Common.
- 2.10 Bromyard Downs comprises 114 hectares of unimproved grassland in the west of the Neighbourhood Area. As well as their continued use for grazing the Downs are important for informal recreation and for biodiversity. They are a significant landscape feature, rising dramatically from the valley of the River Teme and providing panoramic vistas of Bromyard and the surrounding countryside. In the east, Bringsty Common presents a varied and striking landscape, and like the Downs is of value for grazing, recreation and wildlife. Part of the registered common area of 93 hectares lies in the neighbouring parish of Whitbourne.
- 2.11 A number of habitats are designated at County level as Local Wildlife Sites (there are no national-level Sites of Special Scientific Interest). All of Bromyard Downs, Bringsty Common and adjoining woodlands are so designated, as well as: the Punch Bowl, woodland adjacent to Paradise Brook, Woodend Coppice, the Down House Side Meadow, River Frome, and Tinkers Castle Meadows. There are no designated Local Geological Sites.
- 2.12 There are also Priority Habitat Inventory entries for deciduous woodland, ancient replanted woodland, traditional orchards, and good quality semi-improved grassland.<sup>2</sup> Wood-pasture and parkland are recognised as Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats. Clater Park and Brockhampton Park offer extensive areas of parkland and woodland habitats. Herefordshire Council's Ecological Network Map shows how the various habitats provide core areas, buffer zones, corridors and stepping stones which together cover the majority of the Neighbourhood Area. Recognising its geodiversity interest, almost all of the Neighbourhood Area is in the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark.
- 2.13 The Neighbourhood Area has a range of heritage assets which are protected under their own consent regimes. There are numerous mainly grade II listed buildings, typically associated with dwellinghouses and farmstead complexes including barns and other agricultural buildings. Lower Brockhampton House and gatehouse are listed grade I; the Chapel remains to the west are II\*. The Chapel and gatehouse are scheduled ancient monuments. Brockhampton House, Chapel and the Worcester Lodge on the A44 are grade II\*. There are no Conservation Areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Herefordshire Council, Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2004 updated 2009.

<sup>2</sup> The Priority Habitat Inventory is maintained by Natural England pursuant to section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

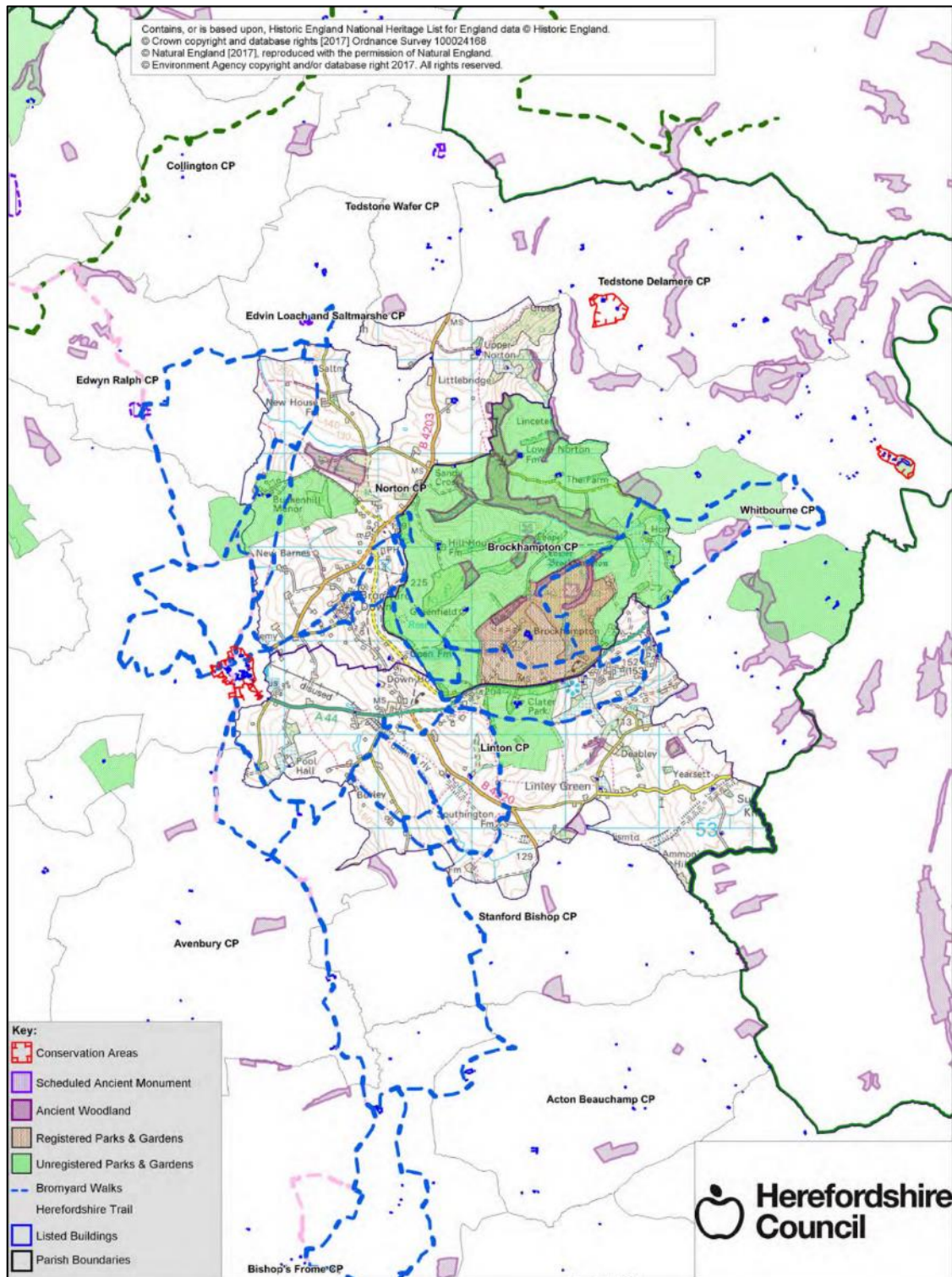
- 2.14 Brockhampton Park extends to 137 ha. and is registered grade II in Historic England's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens for its special historic interest. Buckenhill, Brockhampton and Clater Park are unregistered parks and gardens.
- 2.15 The western part of the Neighbourhood Area drains via the River Frome to the River Lugg and thence to the Wye, whilst to the east the Area drains to the Sapey Brook, the River Teme and the River Severn. Land in the corridor of the River Frome on the western edge of the Neighbourhood Area is liable to flood (Flood Zones 2 and 3).
- 2.16 A notable issue in the Wye and Severn catchments is excessive concentrations of phosphates affecting river water quality. This is an issue of particular importance in the Wye catchment because the Rivers Wye and Lugg are recognised internationally as a Special Area of Conservation due to the flora and fauna they support. Until recently the Nutrient Management Plan prepared by the Environment Agency and Natural England has provided a way of enabling development in the catchment whilst conserving the river environment.<sup>3</sup> However, recent case law and the unfavourable condition of the River Lugg in particular has meant that there is currently only limited scope for approving development in the River Lugg catchment which could lead to additional damaging effects by increasing phosphate levels. This is considered further in chapter 4 of the NDP.

## Economy

- 2.17 The level of economic activity of residents in 2011 was the same as in Herefordshire as a whole (70%), although the rate of self-employment (23%) was higher than at the County level (14%). There was also a greater proportion of retired residents (20% compared to 17%). For those in employment, farming-related, professional and administrative, and health and social care occupations were more represented than at County level.
- 2.18 Some 11% of working residents worked at or mainly from home, almost twice the level for Herefordshire (6%). For those travelling to work, this was typically by driving a car or van; reflecting this and the rural surroundings, car ownership rates were relatively high with 61% of households having 2 or more cars or vans (County 41%).
- 2.19 The prevailing land use is agriculture, principally arable, with most of the farmland rated as grade 3 (good to moderate). The two areas of common land are rated grade 4 (poor). Linton Trading Estate on the A44 is home to three-quarters of the businesses in the Neighbourhood Area, with a focus on the motor trade and transport. Farms, the primary school, local services and other small businesses including home-working also provide employment.
- 2.20 Plans 2 and 3 are taken from the Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report produced by Herefordshire Council. They show the many areas of heritage, landscape, minerals and biodiversity interest in the Neighbourhood Area.

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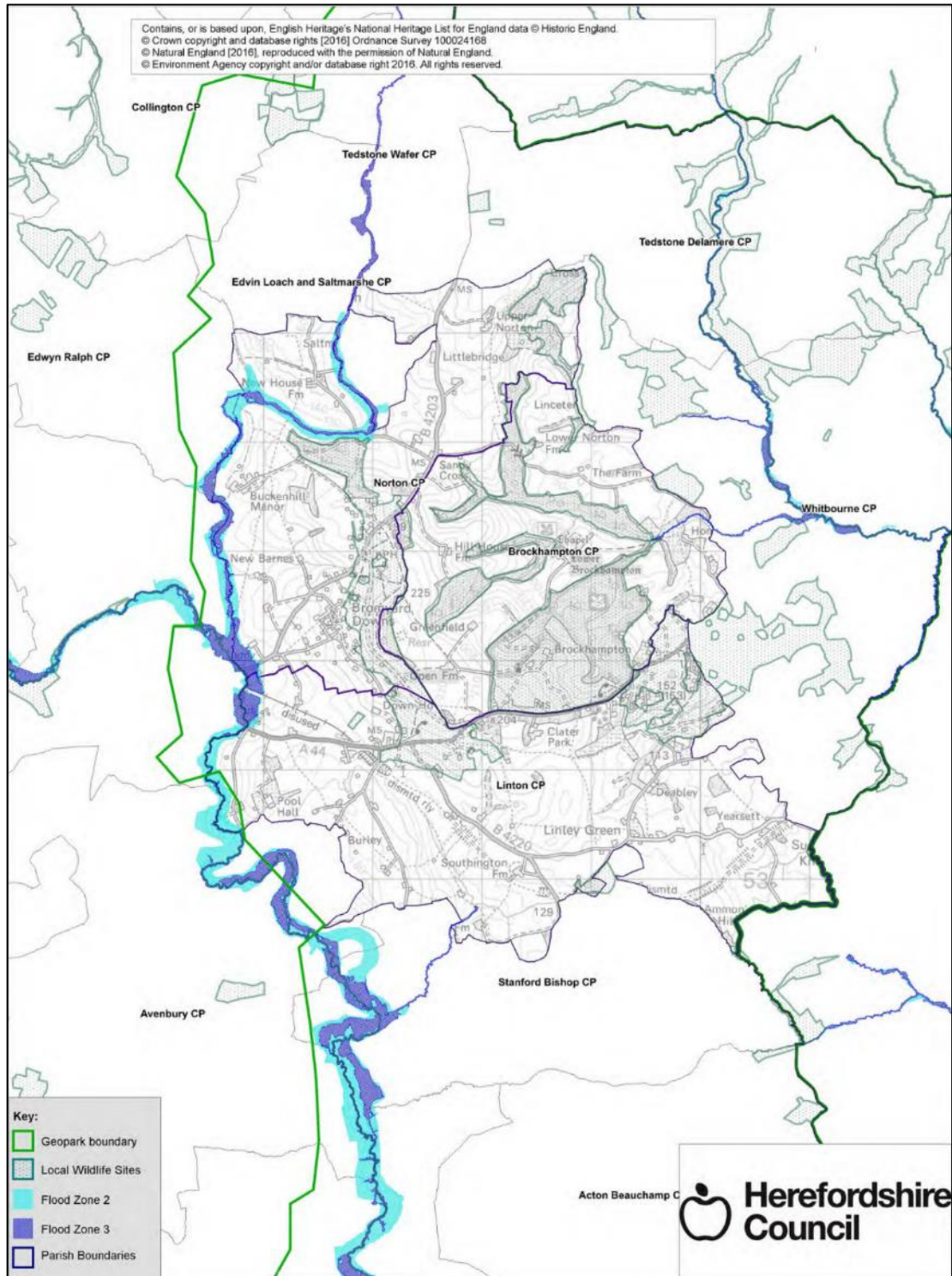
<sup>3</sup> Environment Agency and Natural England, River Wye SAC, Nutrient Management Plan, Evidence base and options appraisal, Action Plan, 2014.



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## Plan 2: Brockhampton Group Strategic Environmental Assessment: Heritage and Landscape.





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### Plan 3: Brockhampton Group Strategic Environmental Assessment: Biodiversity, geodiversity and Flood Zones.

### 3. VISION, OBJECTIVES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#### Vision

- 3.1 The NDP aims to deliver the following Vision by 2031, in combination with national planning policies and the policies of the Local Plan. It has been informed by the NDP's household survey. Respondents wanted to see the Neighbourhood Area in 2031 being described as "rural", "protected" and "tranquil". Little weight was given to "unchanged" and "traditional", indicating an acceptance of a degree of development provided key characteristics associated with rurality were maintained.
- 3.2 The Vision accordingly proposes that the future of the Neighbourhood Area lies in protecting and enhancing its essential qualities, features and facilities whilst allowing careful and limited change.

#### The NDP's Vision

In 2031 the parishes of Brockhampton, Linton and Norton will be:

- **A sustainable rural environment where the Bromyard Downs, Bringsty Common, other distinctive landscapes, wildlife and heritage are protected and enhanced, providing an attractive and peaceful countryside for all to enjoy; and**
- **A home for thriving and distinct local communities, with well-designed new development directed to Bringsty and to Linton, and which helps meet local requirements and needs for housing; and**
- **A place where appropriate economic development is supported, helping to provide local employment at Linton Trading Estate, other small businesses and farming enterprises.**

#### Objectives

##### 3.3 Objective 1: Environment

- **To protect and enhance the local environment by** ensuring that new development respects the character of the landscape and biodiversity, and achieves a high quality of design.

##### 3.4 Objective 2: Social and community

- **To meet housing requirements** by demonstrating delivery of the requirements set out in the Local Plan Core Strategy, identifying land for new housing, defining the planned extent of the settlements of Bringsty and Linton, and requiring a mix of size and type of properties to meet community needs.

- **To protect, retain and improve community services and facilities** to support health, social and cultural well-being.

### 3.5 Objective 3: Economy

- **To support the local economy** by enabling development which is in scale and in keeping with the rural character of the Neighbourhood Area and appropriate to its location and setting.

### 3.6 Objective 4: Community Actions

- **To identify those matters which fall outside the formal development and land-use scope** of the Neighbourhood Development Plan as Community Actions for further consideration and action by the Parish Council working in partnership with others.

## Sustainable development

### **Policy BROCK1: Sustainable development**

**Development proposals which contribute to the sustainable development of the Brockhampton Group Neighbourhood Area will be supported. In making this assessment the following objectives will be sought and balanced, as relevant to the proposal:**

- 1. conserving and enhancing the distinctive rural environment of the Neighbourhood Area, with development avoiding undue harm to Bromyard Downs and Bringsty Common, landscape character, biodiversity, heritage assets, tranquillity and amenity;**
- 2. delivering proportionate new housing focussed at Bringsty and Linton in accord with the requirements of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy and which helps address community needs;**
- 3. retaining and enhancing social and community infrastructure, and promoting and enabling new provision, to meet a range of needs and promote quality of life;**
- 4. supporting existing, new and diversified employment opportunities at Linton Trading Estate and elsewhere which are compatible and in scale with the rural nature of the Neighbourhood Area.**

- 3.7 National and local planning policies place the achievement of sustainable development at the heart of the planning system. Sustainable development seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> National Planning Policy Framework 2018 paragraph 7; Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly.

- 3.8 The planning system has three overarching and interdependent objectives - economic, social and environmental. These need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that net gains can be secured across each objective.
- 3.9 The NDP seeks to play an active role in guiding development towards a sustainable solution. It does this by setting out the character of the area, identifying needs and opportunities, and providing appropriate land-use planning policies to manage change.
- 3.10 Some development proposals may entail a mix of gains and losses when assessed against the Vision and its supporting objectives. Planning decisions will need to balance such impacts against each other in considering how individual projects contribute to sustainability, taking into account the character, needs and opportunities of the Neighbourhood Area. Policy BROCK1 acknowledges this balancing process and identifies the key local environmental, social and economic elements which are to be considered in directing development towards a sustainable solution.



*The Live and Let Live public house*



## 4. ENVIRONMENT

### Landscape character

#### **Policy BROCK2: Landscape character**

**Development proposals should protect and enhance the landscape character of the Neighbourhood Area by:**

- 1. demonstrating that site selection and scheme design has had a positive regard to the character of the relevant Landscape Type, as this is defined in the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment; and**
- 2. retaining and conserving existing site features which are of importance to the landscape character of the Neighbourhood Area including woodland, hedgerows, trees, traditional orchards, ponds and watercourses; and**
- 3. restoring, enhancing and making suitable new provision of landscape features including tree cover where appropriate, taking account of the guidelines in the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment; and**
- 4. retaining important views, vistas and panoramas, in particular into, out of and from the Brockhampton Park registered park and garden, Bromyard Downs, and Bringsty Common.**

4.1 The Neighbourhood Area is situated in the Herefordshire Plateau National Character Area (NCA) as defined by Natural England. The NCA has a deeply tranquil, rural character which has largely escaped the pressures of modern development and retained much of its historical built character. The rolling landform and narrow valleys give rise to medium- to large-scale arable fields with hop fields and hop kilns at the outer fringes and timber-framed manor houses such as at Lower Brockhampton.<sup>5</sup>

4.2 Local Plan Core Strategy policy LD1 *Landscape and townscape* requires proposals to conserve and enhance the natural, historic and scenic beauty of important landscapes, to include landscaping schemes so that they integrate into their surroundings, and to maintain and extend tree cover. Policy BROCK2 reflects these concerns in the context of the Neighbourhood Area.

4.3 An important part of the evidence base for strategic policy LD1 is the Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment.<sup>6</sup> This identifies five Landscape Types in the Neighbourhood Area:

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<sup>5</sup> Natural England, National Character Area profile 101, Herefordshire Plateau 2014.

<sup>6</sup> Herefordshire Council, Landscape Character Assessment, Supplementary Planning Guidance, 2004 updated 2009.

- **Plateau Estate Farmlands** lie to the north west of the B4203 Stourport Road. These comprise an ordered, estate landscape of regular, medium sized fields separated by small hedges and woodlands within an undulating topography.
- **Wooded Estatelands**, comprising the central part of the Neighbourhood Area between the A44 and the B4203, are agricultural landscapes with mixed farming as the dominant land use but where the presence of large irregularly-shaped blocks of woodland is the key element in defining its character.
- **Principal Timbered Farmlands** lie between the A44 and the B4220 Malvern Road. They are rolling lowland landscapes made up of a mosaic of small to medium sized fields, irregularly shaped woodlands and winding lanes. The key element is the unifying presence of tree cover provided by woodlands, hedgerow trees and linear tree cover along streams.
- **Principal Settled Farmlands** are to the south-west of the B4220. These are the agricultural landscapes typical of central Herefordshire with mixed farming, hedgerows, and restricted tree cover. Orchards, grazed pastures and arable fields make up a rich patchwork of farmed land use. The characteristic pattern is of small to medium sized hedged fields, often following long-established historic boundaries.
- **Unenclosed Commons** are open landscapes characterised by a lack of enclosure and overall sense of wilderness. They are traditionally grazed; the unimproved rough grazing land and stands of regenerating semi-natural vegetation are associated with a high value to nature conservation. They are a distinctive landscape type characteristic of the Neighbourhood Area, which has two extensive areas of registered common land at Bromyard Downs and Bringsty Common. As set out in chapter 2, these are dramatic and varied landscape features whose natural beauty makes a significant contribution to the character of the Neighbourhood Area and to biodiversity and recreation.

4.4 For all these Landscape Types except Unenclosed Commons, the Assessment indicates that landscape character is being harmed by the loss and deterioration of hedgerows and hedgerow trees through for instance the intensification of arable farming. This harm arises from both the loss of hedgerows/trees themselves and impacts on any associated historic field boundary. For this reason, the further loss of important<sup>7</sup> or other hedgerows and wayside trees will generally be resisted.

4.5 For the Unenclosed Commons Landscape Type, the Assessment points generally to a long-term trend in grazing by commoners to decline, leading to the encroachment of bracken and scrub. Management needs to balance commoners' rights to graze, amenity and recreational use and the enhancement of landscape character. Locally, these issues are actively addressed by the Bromyard Downs Common Association and the Bringsty Common Manorial Court.

4.6 Protecting the landscape character of the Neighbourhood Area including views and landscape features was a priority for respondents to the household survey, with 96% seeing the protection of landscape character as fairly or very important. Comments to the survey

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<sup>7</sup> As defined in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 SI No. 1160.

emphasised the landscape, wildlife and recreational value of Bromyard Downs and Bringsty Common, as well as pointing to the contribution made by local habitats such as the disused railway line, Brockhampton Estate, woodland, orchards, hedgerows, ponds and watercourses to the landscape character of the Neighbourhood Area.

- 4.7 Respondents also supported seeking the designation of the landscape as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), with 59% seeing this as very important. The Malvern Hills AONB lies to the south-east, within 1.6 km at its closest point, and the majority of the Neighbourhood Area is already included within the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark. A commitment to pursue such a designation is included in the NDP as a Community Action (Table 3).



*Looking west over Bromyard from the Downs*

## Biodiversity

### **Policy BROCK3: Biodiversity**

**Development proposals should protect and enhance sites of biodiversity value and provide net gains for biodiversity by:**

- 1. avoiding likely harm to the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (including River Lugg) and to species of European importance; and**
- 2. promoting the conservation, restoration and enhancement of all sites and features of biodiversity interest in accordance with their status, including those identified in the Priority Habitats Inventory, Local Wildlife Sites, irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and veteran trees, hedgerows, ponds and watercourses; and**
- 3. maintaining, restoring and where possible enhancing the contribution of sites and habitats to the coherence, resilience and connectivity of the Herefordshire Ecological Network, taking into account their role as green infrastructure.**

- 4.8 Biodiversity refers to the range of habitats and species which are present in the Neighbourhood Area and which make an important contribution to its special qualities. National policy seeks the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity sites in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality, and requires planning policies to provide net gains for biodiversity including by establishing coherent and resilient ecological networks.<sup>8</sup>
- 4.9 The Local Plan Core Strategy includes policies to protect biodiversity and geodiversity (policy LD2) and green infrastructure (policy LD3). Together with national policy and guidance, they give an overall framework for environmental protection which is proportionate to the status and significance of the features involved. They are given local focus in policy BROCK3. Household survey responses strongly supported protecting wildlife habitats, with 88% of respondents seeing this as fairly or very important.
- 4.10 The western part of the Neighbourhood Area drains via the River Frome to the River Lugg at Hampton Bishop. The Lugg is part of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a habitat recognised as being of international importance for the aquatic flora and fauna it supports. Phosphate levels in the River Lugg exceed water quality objectives such that it is in an unfavourable condition. The high level of protection afforded to the SAC and case law mean that there is only limited scope for approving development in the River Lugg catchment which could lead to additional damaging effects by increasing phosphate levels.

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<sup>8</sup> National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 170.



- 4.11 The relevant strategic policy is Local Plan Core Strategy policy SD4 *Wastewater treatment and river water quality*. This requires that development does not undermine the achievement of water quality targets for the County's rivers, particularly through the treatment of wastewater. Herefordshire Council has also issued guidance for developers to address the issue of the impact of phosphates on the SAC.<sup>9</sup> Development may proceed where it can be shown to be either nutrient neutral or would lead to betterment. In respect of the use of soakaway drainage fields, criteria provided by Natural England are set out, for example the distance from receiving watercourses. If these requirements can be achieved this may allow development to be approved, as there no pathways for impacts to occur. Policy SD4 also supports delivery of Water Framework Directive objectives, together with Local Plan Core Strategy policy SD3 *Sustainable water management and water resources*.
- 4.12 The Neighbourhood Area has a range of features of value to biodiversity. Habitats of importance are listed in Natural England's Priority Habitat Inventory and comprise a mosaic of ancient replanted woodland; good quality semi-improved grassland, deciduous woodland and traditional orchards (Priority Habitat Inventory habitats); and wood-pasture and parkland (Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat). Clater Park and Brockhampton Park are notably extensive areas of parkland and woodland habitats.
- 4.13 There are a number of Local Wildlife Sites in the Neighbourhood Area designated by Herefordshire Nature Trust for their value at County level. They include Bromyard Downs, Brockhampton Park and Bringsty Common together with other habitats including areas of woodland and meadow (Plan 3). Other landscape features such as trees, hedgerows, ponds and watercourses throughout the Area also have value to wildlife and form part of green infrastructure. The potential of the disused Leominster-Worcester railway line is recognised in the Green Infrastructure Strategy, and a Community Action is included in the NDP to support a feasibility study into the viability and costs involved in converting the route into a walkway/cycleway (Table 3).
- 4.14 Herefordshire Council's Ecological Network Map provides a detailed picture of habitats in the Neighbourhood Area. The Map is based on data held by the Herefordshire Biological Records Centre. It identifies the role that individual sites and areas play in the network and shows how they provide ecological connections within the more intensively managed areas of farmland and to neighbouring areas.<sup>10</sup> In the Neighbourhood Area, the Map confirms the important role played by Bromyard Downs, Brockhampton Park and Bringsty Common as interlinked core areas. Policy BROCK3 ensures that the evidence base that the Ecological Map represents will be taken into account in planning decisions. This includes consideration of connectivity in an environment which is becoming increasingly fragmented from a wildlife point of view.

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<sup>9</sup> Herefordshire Council, Position Statement – Development in the River Lugg Catchment Area, March 2020.

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/77/ecological\\_network\\_map](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/77/ecological_network_map)

## Design

### **Policy BROCK4: Design**

**Development proposals should achieve a high quality of design by:**

- 1. being in character with adjoining development having regard to siting, density, height, scale, detailing, means of enclosure and materials; and**
- 2. incorporating sustainability measures to include energy and water conservation, sustainable construction methods and materials, renewable energy generation, charging points for electric vehicles, provision for communications and broadband technologies, cycle storage and the recycling of waste. New housing should ideally be carbon neutral whilst as a minimum complying with Building Regulations; and**
- 3. being capable of being safely accessed from the local road network without undue local environmental impacts which cannot be mitigated; and**
- 4. in the case of proposals for new housing, being sited and designed to avoid adverse impacts on the amenity of future occupants from the operation of existing agricultural, business and other uses; and**
- 5. avoiding creating unacceptable impacts on residential amenity and tranquillity from noise, volume and nature of traffic generated, light, dust or odour; and**
- 6. supporting green infrastructure and the Herefordshire Ecological Network.**

**Modern design approaches which take an innovative approach, including to energy efficiency and sustainability, will be welcomed where they make a positive contribution to the character of the area and to local distinctiveness.**

- 4.15 The design of individual buildings and their relationship to each other and their surroundings is an important aspect of the local environment. Local Plan Core Strategy policies LD1 *Landscape and townscape* and SD1 *Sustainable design and energy efficiency* detail a wide range of factors to be assessed in considering the design of new development.
- 4.16 Household survey replies emphasised that new development should be in keeping with its surroundings, that traffic from new development should be compatible with the local roads, and that noise and light pollution should be avoided; 94% of respondents regarded these as very or fairly important considerations. Aspirational standards for energy efficiency and the use of local materials were also priorities, being very or fairly important to over 80%. Asked about new homes, the preference was for these to vary as to style and height rather than being built to a uniform design.
- 4.17 The creation of new accesses to serve development can have notable environmental impacts (Local Plan Core Strategy policy MT1 *Traffic management, highway safety and promoting active travel* deals with technical highway requirements). For example, achieving the required

sightlines for new or improved junctions may lead to undue impacts on local character through the loss of roadside vegetation, with a general “opening up” of what may have been a relatively closed landscape setting. Proposals which cannot satisfactorily mitigate such environmental impacts will not be supported.

- 4.18 Policy BROCK4 supplements the strategic policies by reflecting the survey feedback. It is intended to be applicable to all forms of development as relevant, with an emphasis on new housing proposals. In respect of the natural environment and the provision of green infrastructure delivering high quality places for people and wildlife, developers are encouraged to follow the Building with Nature standards throughout the development process, from planning and design to long-term management and maintenance.<sup>11</sup>



*Looking south towards the Malvern Hills from the toposcope on Bringsty Common*

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<sup>11</sup> See <https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk/>.

## 5. SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY

### Local Plan Core Strategy housing requirement

- 5.1 The main type of development for which provision needs to be made in the NDP is housing. The Local Plan Core Strategy requires the NDP to make provision for at least 30 new dwellings between 2011 and 2031.
- 5.2 The Local Plan Core Strategy also requires that settlement boundaries be defined in Neighbourhood Development Plans for those villages which are earmarked for proportionate housing development. This is so that new housing can be best situated in relation to existing services and facilities, and to avoid unnecessary, isolated development in the open countryside, in line with national planning policy.
- 5.3 The Local Plan Core Strategy designates Bringsty and Linton as settlements in the Neighbourhood Area which are the “main focus” for proportionate housing growth. In the countryside (that is, all land outside the settlement boundaries defined in the NDP for Bringsty and Linton) housing development is restricted to avoid an unsustainable pattern of development. In the Neighbourhood Area this includes all of the parishes of Norton and Brockhampton.

### Housing delivery

#### **Policy BROCK5: Housing delivery**

**New dwellings will be delivered in the Brockhampton Neighbourhood Area to meet local needs and to satisfy the minimum requirements of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy. This is enabled and demonstrated by:**

- 1. allocating land for new housing at Bringsty and Linton; and**
- 2. defining settlement boundaries for Bringsty and Linton; and**
- 3. supporting windfall housing proposals inside these settlement boundaries provided that planning requirements are met; and**
- 4. acknowledging the potential for windfall housing development in the countryside outside the Bringsty and Linton settlement boundaries where this meets the requirements of Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policy RA3.**

- 5.4 The NDP implements the Local Plan Core Strategy by identifying land for new housing at both Bringsty and Linton, and by defining appropriate settlement boundaries to reflect the planned extent of these settlements.

5.5 The delivery of new housing has been informed by a Call for Sites, consultation and a Housing Site Assessment.<sup>12</sup> It is provided for as follows:

- by taking into account dwellings completed since 2011 and dwellings with planning permission as of 1 April 2019; and
- by allocating land for new housing at The Bannut, Bringsty and to the west of Malvern Road, Linton for around 17 new dwellings in total; and
- by making a realistic allowance for “windfalls”.<sup>13</sup> The Housing Site Assessment provides a conservative estimate that windfalls will continue to come forward at around half the recent delivery rate, equivalent to six units to the end of the plan period. In addition, account has been taken of the potential for windfall units to arise through the conversion of redundant buildings on the National Trust Brockhampton Estate, and from the development of land considered in the Housing Site Assessment which is not allocated but is included within the Bringsty settlement boundary. It is therefore suitable in principle for development and may come forward as a planning application if site factors can be addressed.<sup>14</sup>

<b>BROCKHAMPTON NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA HOUSING REQUIREMENT 2011-2031</b>	<b>30</b>
Dwellings completed since 2011	5
Dwellings with planning permission, 1 April 2018	1
Land allocated in the NDP	17
Windfall allowance	9
<b>TOTAL HOUSING DELIVERY</b>	<b>32</b>

**Table 1: Housing delivery**

5.6 Table 1 confirms the potential to deliver at least 32 new dwellings in the Neighbourhood Area between 2011 and 2031, satisfying the minimum requirement of 30 dwellings set by the Local Plan Core Strategy.

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<sup>12</sup> Housing Site Assessment June 2019 and Addendum December 2019.

<sup>13</sup> This term refers to dwellings arising on sites which have not been specifically identified in the NDP but which may be brought forward as planning applications.

<sup>14</sup> Site 16 Land at The Live and Let Live public house (assessed capacity 2-3 dwellings) in the Addendum report. See also para. 5.14 of the NDP.



## Housing site allocations

### Policy BROCK6: Housing site allocations

The following sites are allocated for the development of housing:

Site name	Indicative number of dwellings
Land at The Bannut, Bringsty (Plan 5)	5
Land west of Malvern Road, Linton (Plan 6)	12

#### Land at The Bannut, Bringsty

- 5.7 The Bannut is a part of a small group of dwellings on the western edge of Bringsty Common. The site is occupied by a bungalow and has previously been used as a plant nursery. The indicative capacity will enable a scheme which reflects the low-density, dispersed settlement pattern of the locality. It will also allow for the provision of access to the A44, which will need to take account of the difference in levels between the road and the site; ensure the avoidance of any harm to, or loss of, the significance of designated heritage assets, and enable the retention of some of the established tree and other planting.

#### Land west of Malvern Road, Linton

- 5.8 This site lies opposite residential development on the B4220 Malvern Road, from which it would take access. The indicative capacity of around 12 dwellings will allow a proportion of affordable housing to be provided and for a scheme which is in keeping with its surroundings, in particular respecting the amenity of the housing opposite. New, native-species hedgerows should be established along the south-west and south-east boundaries of the site allocation to farmland; the latter follows a historic field boundary.
- 5.9 Responses to consultation undertaken in preparing the NDP identified an issue in respect of drainage flows from the developed area to the north-east at times of heavy rainfall. This should be considered further through a Flood Risk Assessment to accompany any planning application.

## Settlement boundaries

### **Policy BROCK7: Settlement boundaries**

**Settlement boundaries are defined for Bringsty (Plan 5) and Linton (Plan 6). Proposals for housing inside the settlement boundaries will be supported where they are in accord with other Plan policies including in respect of landscape character (BROCK2) and design (BROCK4), and provide a range of types, size and tenure of dwellings to meet local housing need in accordance with policy BROCK8 on housing mix.**

- 5.10 Settlement boundaries for Bringsty and Linton are shown on Plans 5 and 6. The boundaries delineate the planned extent of the main built-up form for each village and generally follow physical features, principally curtilages marked by fence or hedgerows. They incorporate the housing site allocations proposed at policy BROCK6. They have been prepared having regard to criteria in Herefordshire Council guidance.<sup>15</sup>
- 5.11 Further new housing will be supported inside the settlement boundaries where it is appropriate to its context and respects local character, including the settlement pattern of the village concerned, and meets local needs and demand. It is anticipated that such schemes will be either individual properties or small developments on infill sites.
- 5.12 Land outside the settlement boundaries is defined as countryside in planning terms.

### **Bringsty**

- 5.13 The settlement of Bringsty lies on and adjacent to Bringsty Common. The registered area of common land is bisected by the Neighbourhood Area boundary with the eastern part falling within Whitbourne parish.<sup>16</sup> In the Neighbourhood Area there are several clusters of dwellings and The Let and Let Live public house which are surrounded by common land. Other groups of dwellings adjoin the common to the west. The character of these settlement areas is notably dispersed and low-density, with individualistic detached properties set in irregularly shaped plots.
- 5.14 Land at The Live and Let Live public house was put forward as a possible location for new housing during the preparation of the NDP. The land was assessed in the Addendum report as site 16. Its potential for allocation was found to be limited by several unresolved factors. These were: whether an access to serve new development via the existing Byway Open to All Traffic (which runs from the site to the A44) would be acceptable to its landowner, Herefordshire Council; whether any harm to or loss of significance of the grade II listed public

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<sup>15</sup> Herefordshire Council, Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20 Guide to settlement boundaries, June 2015.

<sup>16</sup> The settlement boundary defined here for Bringsty relates only to that part of the village which is in the Brockhampton Neighbourhood Area.

house could be avoided or otherwise justified in the absence of detailed proposals; and whether a viable scheme could be developed which respected the prevailing landscape character. Having regard to these issues, the site has not been allocated for development. It is however included within one of the proposed settlement boundaries for Bringsty. This will enable a suitable scheme to come forward in due course and on this basis it has been taken into account in the allowance made for windfall sites (Table 1).

## **Linton**

- 5.15 The settlement of Linton is situated in the west of the Neighbourhood Area to the north and south of the A44. To the north of the main road there is residential development at Union Lane and Linton Villas. To the south of the A44 is Linton Court and Enderby Court providing 53 residential units in a converted and extended former hospital building. This backs onto the disused railway line which is in cutting at this point, with Linton Trading Estate and the Openfields travellers site to the west and south. There is also an area of housing to the south-east served by the B4220 Malvern Road.



*Linton Court*

## Housing mix

### Policy BROCK8: Housing mix

**To be supported all new housing development proposals must incorporate dwellings of a range of types, size and tenure to meet local housing need, having regard to the latest assessment of housing needs and viability considerations. There is a particular need in the Neighbourhood Area for:**

- **Smaller family housing of 3 bedrooms or less**
- **Housing designed to meet the needs of older people including bungalows and adaptable/easy access homes.**

- 5.16 It is important to make sure that housing of the right kind is provided to meet local needs. National policy is that planning policies should reflect the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community, and that in rural areas policies should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs.<sup>17</sup>
- 5.17 Local Plan Core Strategy policy H1 *Affordable housing thresholds and targets* requires that new open market housing proposals on sites of more than 10 dwellings which have a maximum combined gross floor space of more than 1000 m<sup>2</sup> will be expected to contribute towards meeting affordable housing needs.<sup>18</sup> There is a target of 40% affordable housing provision for qualifying sites in the Neighbourhood Area.
- 5.18 Local Plan Core Strategy policy H3 *Ensuring an appropriate range and mix of housing* recognises the need to plan for a range and mix of house types and sizes which can contribute to balanced communities. On sites of more than 50 dwellings, the policy seeks the provision of housing to meet the needs of all households, including younger single people and older people.
- 5.19 In the Neighbourhood Area, developments which are proportionate to the scale of the village communities concerned are expected to be each significantly less than 50 dwellings. However, the evidence points to a continuing need to provide positively for a range of house types and sizes to meet a variety of household needs, so as to deliver sustainable and balanced communities.

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<sup>17</sup> National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 61 and 77.

<sup>18</sup> Affordable housing is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market. Under national policy, affordable housing may be sought on sites of 10 or more homes or with an area of 0.5 hectares or more.

- 5.20 Information from the Local Housing Market Assessment<sup>19</sup> on the tenure, type and size of dwellings which are needed locally over the plan period is set out in Table 2. This refers to the Bromyard Rural Housing Market Area (HMA) which includes the Neighbourhood Area. In terms of dwelling type and size, for market housing the requirement is almost exclusively for 3-bedroom (76%) and 2-bedroom (33%) houses. For affordable housing, most dwellings should be provided as houses rather than flats, with a greater emphasis on smaller properties; 62% should be 1- or 2-bedroom homes.

Type	Market housing		Affordable housing	
	No.	%	No.	%
Houses	224	102.6%	120	82.3%
Flats	-6	-2.6%	26	17.7%
Size				
1 bedroom	1	0.5%	35	23.7%
2 bedroom	73	33.3%	55	37.9%
3 bedroom	166	75.8%	50	34.5%
4+ bedroom	-21	-9.6%	6	3.8%

**Table 2: Tenure, type and size of dwellings required, Bromyard Rural HMA 2011-2031**

Source: Local Housing Market Assessment tables 94 and 95.

- 5.21 The evidence underpinning strategic policy H3 also includes *A Study of the Housing and Support Needs of Older People 2012*.<sup>20</sup> This confirms there is an increasing requirement for new housing to cater for older people. Policy H3 reflects this, seeking to ensure that new housing takes account of the changing needs of an ageing population, and that developments contain a range of house types, including, where appropriate, bungalows.
- 5.22 In the Neighbourhood Area, responses to the household survey underlined these issues. Smaller, cheaper homes and dwellings in a range of sizes were preferred. The most favoured sizes of new housing were 2-bedroom starter homes and 3-bedroom family homes. Larger family homes with 4 bedrooms were seen as much less important. There was also support for adaptable/easy access homes, live/work facilities and bungalows. Existing and emerging households who would be looking to move within five years indicated a preference for a 2- or 3- bedroom property, including bungalows.
- 5.23 In summary, the evidence points to a need for smaller and less expensive homes to better meet the housing requirements of younger people and families, provided as both market and affordable housing. The provision of suitable housing such as bungalows for older people will allow existing residents to stay in the community, enabling downsizing and so the release of existing larger homes for family occupation. This will cater for all ages including the young and old alike so as to allow both groups to remain in the parishes.

<sup>19</sup> Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment 2012 update, 2013.

<sup>20</sup> Herefordshire Council, *A study of the Housing and Support Needs of Older People in Herefordshire*, 2012.



- 5.24 Taking all this into account, policy BROCK8 will help deliver sustainable and balanced communities in the Neighbourhood Area by encouraging a suitable mix of housing. All forms of housing development, including conversion and sub-division schemes as well as new development, will be expected to show that they are contributing to meeting the latest assessment of local housing needs, subject to consideration of viability. It is particularly important that new housing proposals in the Neighbourhood Area address the requirement for smaller accommodation and for dwellings to meet the needs of older people. This will help meet housing market pressures and local need.



*The Royal Oak public house*

## Social and community facilities

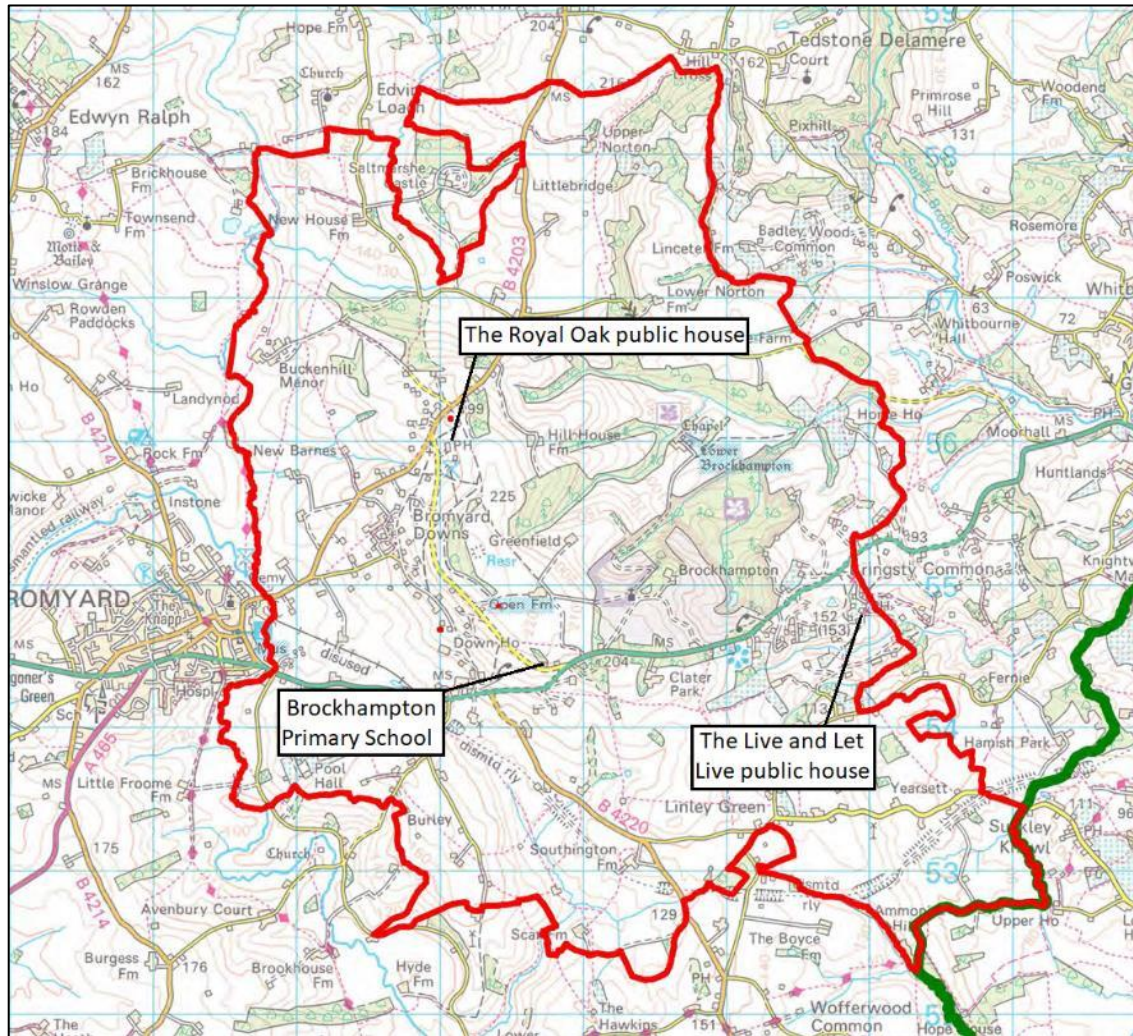
### **Policy BROCK9: Social and community facilities**

**The following existing social and community facilities in the Neighbourhood Area shown on Plan 4 will be retained in accordance with Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policy SC1:**

- **Brockhampton Primary School**
- **The Royal Oak public house**
- **The Live and Let Live public house.**

**Development proposals for the enhancement of existing social and community facilities, and for new provision which is in or close to Bringsty and Linton and where practicable is safely accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, will be supported.**

- 5.25 Local social and community facilities are important in meeting the current and future needs of residents. Brockhampton Primary School continues to operate from its original site and is well-positioned to give access across the three parishes. The two public houses, The Live and Let Live at Bringsty Common and The Royal Oak on Bromyard Downs also contribute to the tourism and leisure offer in the Neighbourhood Area. Replies to the household survey confirmed the importance placed on retaining the Primary School and the two public houses for the benefit of the local community and economy.
- 5.26 These facilities will be retained and enhanced in line with Local Plan Core Strategy policy SC1 *Social and community facilities*. This provides that facilities will be retained unless an appropriate alternative is available or can be provided, or that the facility can be shown to be no longer required, viable or fit for purpose. Where appropriate, it must have been vacant and marketed for community use without success.
- 5.27 The NDP policy also supports proposals for new facilities which may arise provided they are located in or close to the existing settlements and safely accessible by sustainable modes of transport where this is possible.
- 5.28 The household survey demonstrated the importance placed on bus services, broadband and mobile phone reception by the community. These are outside the scope of the NDP. Their retention and enhancement are the subject of Community Actions (Table 3).



Neighbourhood Area



County boundary



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#### Plan 4: Social and community facilities

## 6. ECONOMY

### Linton Trading Estate

#### **Policy BROCK10: Linton Trading Estate**

**Proposals for new development or the re-use of existing buildings at Linton Trading Estate as shown on Plan 6 for employment uses within Use Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General industrial) or B8 (Storage or distribution) will be supported provided that:**

- 1. the proposal does not lead to unacceptable adverse impacts on residential amenity or the environment from odour, noise, light, air or water pollution; and**
- 2. the amount and type of traffic likely to arise is acceptable or capable of being made acceptable; and**
- 3. the risk from any previous contaminative uses has been shown to be acceptable or as otherwise being capable of satisfactory remediation; and**
- 4. the scale and design of buildings, choice of colour and landscaping respects visual amenity and landscape character including in respect of the Estate boundaries with open countryside.**

**Proposals for non-employment uses will be guided by Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policy E2 and should also have regard to the site's rural location.**

- 6.1 Linton Trading Estate comprises 2.9 hectares of employment land fronting onto and accessed from the A44. It is on a bus route and there is a footway opposite, alongside the main road into Bromyard. Three-quarters of businesses<sup>21</sup> in the Neighbourhood Area operate from the Estate carrying out a range of activities mainly within Use Classes B2 and B8 and with a focus on the motor trade and transport. A household waste recycling centre lies to the south, accessed through the Estate. The Openfields Travellers site also adjoins to the south (accessed separately from Burley Lane). There is countryside to the east and west.
- 6.2 The potential of the site was assessed in an Employment Land Study carried out to inform the Local Plan Core Strategy.<sup>22</sup> The site scored moderately in commercial terms reflecting the presence of the household waste recycling centre to the rear. The site also scored moderate for environmental sustainability and strategic planning, being located outside of a defined urban area with limited access to services, public transport, cycle paths and footpaths. However, it was recognised that further development and redevelopment of the site had the potential to improve its contribution to townscape quality and to the delivery of economic objectives.

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<sup>21</sup> Excluding sole traders working from home such as consultancies.

<sup>22</sup> Herefordshire Council, Employment Land Study, 2012.



- 6.3 The Estate's potential is further assessed in the Bromyard Employment Land Study, undertaken to guide HC planning policy with regard to employment land in and around the town.<sup>23</sup> This confirmed that the site was suitable for an on-going employment use, mainly B2 and B8 but also including office units. A small plot of 0.23 ha. at the front of the site was identified as being suitable for development and this is included within the Estate boundary as shown on Plan 6.
- 6.4 The Local Plan Core Strategy recognises that the County's employment land needs will be provided for through sites and premises in Hereford, the market towns and the rural areas. Linton Trading Estate forms part of this portfolio. The NDP encourages the continued contribution of the Estate to the supply of employment land by supporting suitable proposals within the planning Part B Use Classes.
- 6.5 Proposals will need to take account of the Estate's rural location and setting. The site lies in an elevated position alongside the A44, the western boundary being the most exposed and sensitive. Proposals should reduce the potential for visual harm through their design and landscaping. The potential for impacts on residential amenity through odour, noise, light and air pollution should also be considered.
- 6.6 Proposals for the non-employment use of land and premises on the Estate will be considered under Local Plan Core Strategy policy E2 *Redevelopment of existing employment land and buildings*. This allows the redevelopment of moderate-rated employment land (such as Linton Trading Estate) to non-employment uses under certain conditions. Protecting existing employment sites from changes of use was very or fairly important to 61% of respondents in the NDP household survey.



*Linton Trading Estate*

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<sup>23</sup> Herefordshire Council, Bromyard Employment Land Study, 2019.



## Small-scale employment development

### **Policy BROCK11: Small-scale employment development**

**Development proposals which enable the creation or expansion of small business enterprises will be supported provided that they are of a scale, type and nature appropriate to their location and setting. This includes:**

- 1. the conversion and re-use of redundant rural buildings for business use; and**
- 2. the small-scale extension of existing business and commercial premises; and**
- 3. new buildings for small-scale employment uses provided they are not located in an isolated countryside setting; and**
- 4. extensions to existing dwellings needed to enable home working; and**
- 5. the development and diversification of farm, forestry and other land-based rural businesses.**

- 6.7 As well as the businesses on the Linton Trading Estate, employment in the Neighbourhood Area is also provided by mixed farming, leisure and tourism, local services and small consultancies. Self-employment is a significant feature - 23% of working age residents were self-employed in 2011, higher than in the County (14%) or the West Midlands (8%). Home-working is also notable; 11% of working age residents worked at or mainly from home, notably more than for Herefordshire as a whole (6%).<sup>24</sup>
- 6.8 Respondents to the household survey thought that the NDP should particularly encourage farming, forestry and related businesses, tourism and leisure. There was majority support for a range of options seen as very/fairly important for economic development, particularly improvements to broadband, the extension of existing businesses, home-working and the conversion of rural buildings for business purposes.
- 6.9 The Local Plan Core Strategy recognises the broadly-based nature of the rural economy in Herefordshire. Policy RA6 *Rural economy* gives support for a wide range of employment uses in the County's rural areas through the re-use of redundant rural buildings (policy RA5) and homeworking (policy E3).
- 6.10 Proposals for new businesses and other forms of economic development which enable the diversification of the rural economy will be supported provided they are of a scale and nature which are appropriate to their location and setting. Planning requirements to safeguard the character of locations and their settings, residential amenity, highway safety, and water quality are set out in Local Plan Core Strategy policy RA6. To complement this strategic approach, the above policy promotes sustaining existing businesses and suitable small-scale

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<sup>24</sup> As explained in chapter 2, the 2011 Census data reported here also includes a predominantly-rural part of adjoining Whitbourne parish.

development for employment purposes through both conversions and (in acceptable locations) new building. The aim is to enable small-scale employment in the Neighbourhood Area to continue to evolve, with a flexible approach to growing enterprises and to enabling self-employment. Policy BROCK4 will apply in respect of design matters. The delivery of enhanced broadband is outside the scope of the NDP and is addressed in a Community Action at Table 3.

- 6.11 The Bromyard Employment Land Study 2019 identifies 0.15 ha of land between Linton Court and the disused railway line as appropriate for small-scale starter units as offices or light industry. The Study notes that concerns over sharing an access with Linton Court would need to be resolved. In addition, any employment use would need to safeguard residential amenity. Given these issues, the site is not allocated in the NDP for employment use although a suitable scheme which was able to satisfactorily address these concerns could be supported through the above policy. The site is situated within the Linton settlement boundary.

## **Agricultural and forestry development**

### **Policy BROCK12: Agricultural and forestry development**

**Proposals for agricultural and forestry development requiring planning permission should be able to demonstrate that they meet the following requirements. Account will also be taken of ancillary works and buildings which may be necessary, and of any other existing, permitted or proposed similar developments in the locality so that cumulative impacts can be considered:**

- 1. the local highway network and the proposed means of vehicular access can cater safely for both the volume and type of vehicles anticipated, and the proposed access is environmentally acceptable; and**
- 2. the impacts on landscape character and visual amenity are acceptable, or are capable of being satisfactorily mitigated by a landscaping scheme which is itself acceptable; and**
- 3. there will be no undue loss of amenity to the occupiers of residential properties, including by way of external lighting, the design and siting of any installation, or odour, noise and air pollution; and**
- 4. there are no unacceptable impacts on biodiversity, heritage assets or the utility and enjoyment of public rights of way; and**
- 5. sustainable drainage proposals are included to acceptably manage surface water and avoid risk of pollution and soil erosion.**

- 6.12 Changes in farming have seen pressures arise for larger-scale developments in the countryside such as intensive livestock units, glass houses and polytunnels. Permitted development rights

for agriculture and forestry mean that only buildings above certain size thresholds or where other circumstances apply require planning permission. Local Plan Core Strategy policy RA6 *Rural economy* provides that proposals to diversify the rural economy will be permitted provided that there are no undue impacts due to scale or on residential amenity, traffic safety and water quality.

- 6.13 Responses to the residents' survey strongly supported agriculture, forestry and related businesses as types of economic development to be encouraged. However, there was little support for polytunnels or intensive livestock units. For example, only 6% of respondents thought that intensive livestock units should be encouraged in the NDP.
- 6.14 Larger-scale proposals may give rise to a range of possible impacts including on the landscape, the highway network and public rights of way. Policy BROCK12 is intended to help ensure that new agricultural development is undertaken sensitively and with due regard to its implications. Regard will also be had to ancillary works and buildings which may be required, such as workers' accommodation or drainage. Larger scale development proposals should provide a Transport Assessment or Statement depending on the size and impact on the highway, written in accord with Department of Transport guidance.
- 6.15 Herefordshire Council has issued a Polytunnels Planning Guide which provides a comprehensive assessment of the relevant issues and a set of guidelines.<sup>25</sup> These guidelines will also be taken into account in deciding whether polytunnel proposals requiring planning permission are to be supported.



*Signage at Bringsty Common*

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<sup>25</sup> [https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/14577/polytunnels\\_planning\\_guide\\_2018.pdf](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/14577/polytunnels_planning_guide_2018.pdf)

## Tourism and leisure

### **Policy BROCK13: Tourism and leisure**

**Proposals for new or enhanced facilities for tourism and leisure will be supported where they:**

- 1. are of a scale, type and nature appropriate to their location and setting; and**
- 2. serve to sustain and wherever possible enhance and promote the local natural and historic environment, including by furthering its interpretation and understanding; and**
- 3. make full use of opportunities for enabling access by walking, cycling and public transport where practicable having regard to the type of development and its location.**

**Proposals to enhance facilities at the Brockhampton Estate or to improve walking and cycling access between Bromyard Downs, the Brockhampton Estate and Bringsty Common and which protect landscape character and the setting of heritage assets will be encouraged. The potential of the route of the disused Leominster-Worcester railway line within the Neighbourhood Area as a walkway/cycleway is recognised.**

**Larger-scale rural tourism and leisure proposals will not be supported if they would be of a disproportionate scale or size relative to their location and setting, or may lead to unacceptable adverse impacts on tranquillity, landscape character and amenity, or generate levels of traffic which cannot be safely accommodated on the rural road network.**

- 6.16 National policy is that sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside should be enabled. Local Plan Core Strategy policy E4 *Tourism* recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the Herefordshire countryside as a unique asset in promoting quality leisure visits and sustainable tourism.
- 6.17 The Neighbourhood Area is well-placed both to benefit from tourism and leisure development and to contribute to the overall County offer. Its strengths in this respect are the diversity of landscape, countryside, woodland, wildlife habitats and heritage assets within a relatively compact and accessible area. The National Trust's historic Brockhampton Estate attracts between 50 and 60,000 visitors annually to enjoy its combination of traditionally-farmed landscapes and heritage, including the grade I listed Lower Brockhampton House and gatehouse. Bromyard Downs and Bringsty Common enable informal countryside access to some 160 ha of common land within the Neighbourhood Area, with designated cycle routes on the latter, and the scenic and varied wider landscapes of the Neighbourhood Area are readily appreciated from the network of public rights of way, including several circular walks. The A44 and the B4203 give convenient access to the Downs, Brockhampton Estate, and

Bringsty Common from nearby Bromyard and further afield. Away from these main roads, tranquillity is a key feature.

- 6.18 Visitor accommodation is provided by bed and breakfast accommodation, three holiday rental properties on the Brockhampton Estate, and at the 36-pitch Bromyard Downs Caravan Club site at Clater Park, south of the A44. Malvern View holiday home park lies to the south-east and Saltmarshe Castle caravan park to the north; both are adjacent but outside the Neighbourhood Area. The two public houses, picturesquely situated on the Bromyard Downs and Bringsty Common, cater for tourists, walkers and holidaymakers as well as residents.
- 6.19 Household survey replies took a positive view of further provision being made for tourism and leisure, favouring various forms of low-key and low-impact provision linked to an enjoyment and appreciation of the countryside, such as walking and cycling. Further provision of facilities for children and young people were also well-supported, as were farm diversification schemes and enhancements to facilities at the Brockhampton Estate.
- 6.20 Tourism and leisure proposals of a scale and nature which are both proportionate and appropriate in character to the rural location and setting of the Neighbourhood Area will be supported. This is in line with Local Plan Core Strategy policy E4, which supports the development of long-distance walking and cycling routes, food and drink trails and heritage trails.
- 6.21 The route of the former Leominster-Worcester railway line, which runs through the Neighbourhood Area, has potential for use as a walkway/cycleway. This could have a range of leisure, safety and economic benefits, including enabling active travel into Bromyard, and a Community Action is included in Table 3 to investigate this further.
- 6.22 The quiet and tranquil nature of the Neighbourhood Area fosters such pursuits as walking and the quiet enjoyment of the countryside. These features could be unduly impacted by larger-scale tourism and leisure proposals. This is recognised in replies to the household survey, where a camping/caravan site attracted little support. In respect of such proposals specific criteria are identified in the policy to protect the distinctive character and environment, and so ensure that the Neighbourhood Area's unique mix of assets which are crucial to sustaining its tourism and leisure offer are not unduly harmed.



## **7. DELIVERING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

- 7.1 The NDP is a long-term planning document which will be implemented in the period up to 2031. Brockhampton Group Parish Council will seek to implement the objectives of the NDP in delivering the sustainable development of the Neighbourhood Area.
- 7.2 The principal means of doing this will be through decisions on planning applications, taken by Herefordshire Council as local planning authority in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NDP will, when made, form part of the overall 'development plan'.
- 7.3 The Parish Council will seek planning decisions which accord with the development plan when consulted on planning applications by Herefordshire Council. This includes supporting proposals which meet the policies of the NDP, and opposing proposals which do not.
- 7.4 Wherever possible, the Parish Council will work pro-actively with applicants and the local planning authority to allow planning permission to be granted for development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions of the Neighbourhood Area.

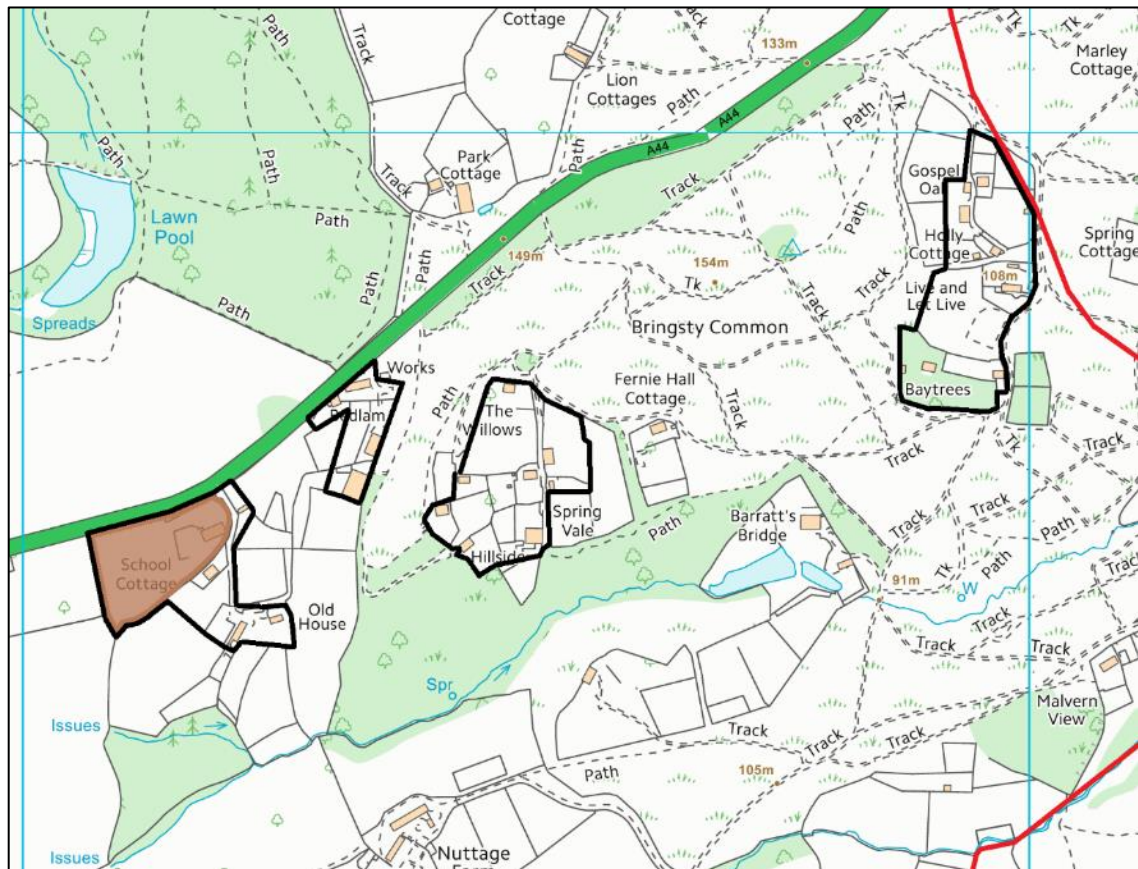
### **Community actions**




- 7.5 The formal role of the NDP is the setting of planning policies which deal with land use and development. However, in preparing the NDP and in responding to the household survey the local community has identified ways of improving the Neighbourhood Area which extend beyond this remit. These generally concern infrastructure, transport, and other local services and facilities. Such issues cannot be addressed through the land use planning policies of the NDP but may be expressed as Community Actions to be undertaken or led by the Parish Council. These are set out in Table 3. The Community Actions shown reflect the priorities expressed in the household survey. Where appropriate, developer contributions will be sought to deliver, or support the delivery, of improvements to these aspects of life in the three parishes.


Ref.	Topic area	Community Action
CA1	Highways – road safety for all users	BGPC will continue to work with Herefordshire Council and other partners to identify and implement road safety measures to include traffic calming, footway improvements, the enforcement and lowering of speed limits, and weight/parking restrictions.
CA2	Highways – road maintenance	BGPC will continue to work with Herefordshire Council to address highway maintenance issues including hedges, ditches and drains.
CA3	Public transport provision	BGPC will work with Herefordshire Council, bus operators and Community Transport providers to maintain existing service levels and deliver improvements.
CA4	Public rights of way	BGPC will continue to work with landowners to promote the maintenance of public rights of way throughout the Parishes.
CA5	Disused Leominster-Bromyard railway line	BGPC will in principle support a feasibility study into the viability and costs involved in converting the route of the disused Leominster-Worcester railway line into a walkway/cycleway.
CA6	Communications and broadband	BGPC will promote and support improvements to communications infrastructure by working in partnership with Herefordshire Council and network operators.
CA7	Landscape designation	BGPC will pursue opportunities which may arise to formally recognise the special qualities of the landscape of the Neighbourhood Area, including through national designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**Table 3: Community Actions**

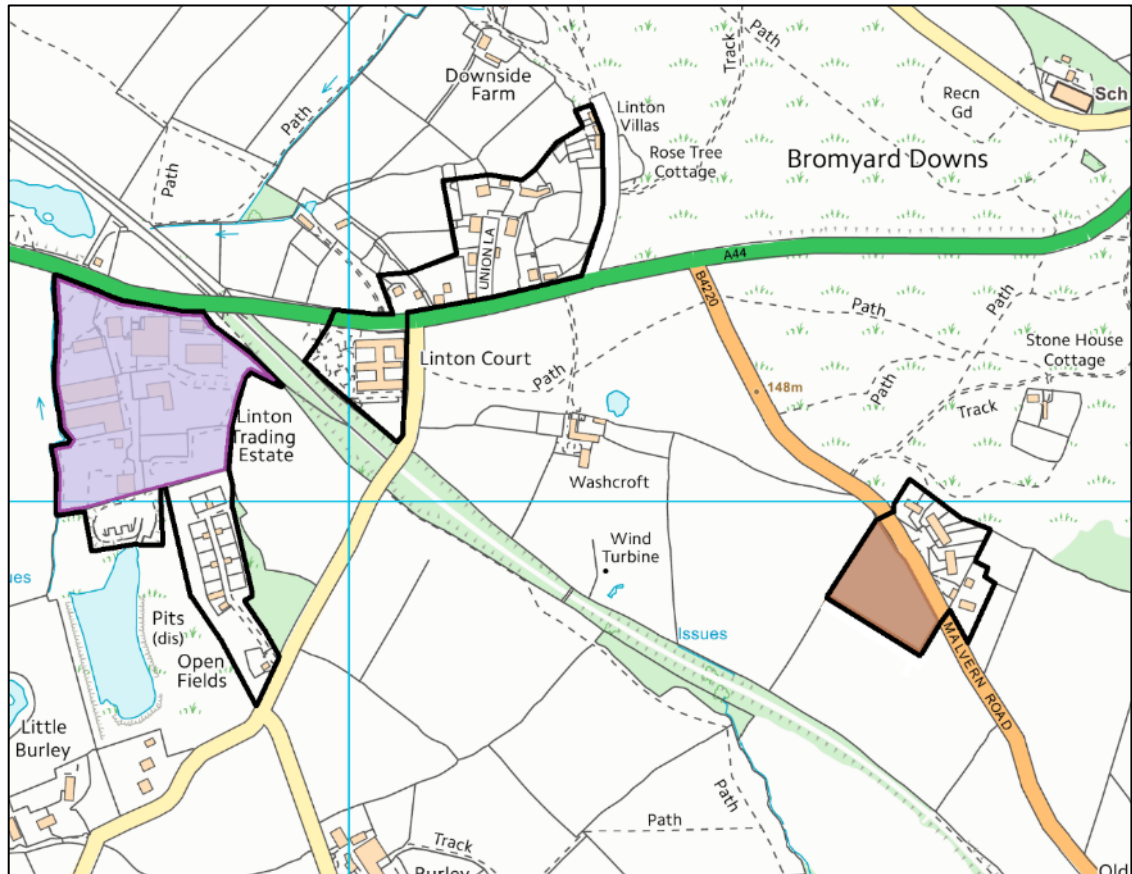
BGPC = Brockhampton Group Parish Council







-  Neighbourhood Area
-  Settlement boundary (policy BROCK7)
-  Housing site allocation (policy BROCK6)

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### Plan 5: Bringsty village policies



-  Settlement boundary (policy BROCK7)
-  Housing site allocation (policy BROCK6)
-  Linton Trading Estate (policy BROCK10)

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## Plan 6: Linton village policies

## APPENDIX: EVIDENCE BASE

- A.1 The following planning policy documents, reports, consultation evidence and other survey material have been used in drawing up the NDP.

HC = Herefordshire Council

### National level evidence

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, 2019.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Planning Practice Guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Department of Transport guidance for Transport Assessments, Statements and Travel Plans at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-plans-transport-assessments-and-statements>

Census 2011 at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census>

Natural England, National Character Area profile 101: Herefordshire Plateau, 2014.

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

Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales, Severn river basin management plan, updated December 2015, 2016.

Environment Agency, Flood Map for Planning at <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

Historic England, National Heritage List for England at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/>

Natural England, Magic Map at <http://www.magic.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx> (includes Priority Habitat Inventory sites).

Natural England, Agricultural Land Classification Map West Midlands, 2010.

### County level evidence

HC, Highway Design Guide for New Developments, 2006 and Highways Specification for New Developments, 2006 amended 2015.

HC, Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan, 2007.

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

HC, Green Infrastructure Strategy, 2010.

A study of the Housing and Support Needs of Older People in Herefordshire, Peter Fletcher Associates and arc4 for Herefordshire Council, 2012.

HC, Employment Land Study, 2012.

HC, Herefordshire Ecological Network Map, 2013.

HC, Rural Housing Background Paper, 2013.

HC, Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment 2012 update, 2013.

HC, Herefordshire Local Plan, Core Strategy 2011-2031, 2015.

HC, Polytunnels Planning Guide, 2018.

HC, Travellers' Site DPD, 2019.

HC, Position Statement – Development in the River Lugg Catchment Area, 2020.

## **Parish and local level evidence**

HC, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Brockhampton Group Neighbourhood Area Scoping Report, 2018.

HC, Bromyard Employment Land Study, 2019.

Reports by DJN Planning Limited for Brockhampton NDP Steering Group:

- Evidence base and strategic policies listings 2018.
- Household survey Results Report and Comment listings, 2019.
- Housing site assessment, 2019.
- Housing site assessment Addendum, 2019.
- Report on Community Engagement Event, 2019.

HC, Environmental Report and Habitats Regulations Assessment Reports, 2020.

HC, residential commitments and completions data for Brockhampton Group Neighbourhood Area.