

Much Marcle Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011-2031

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¹All maps in the Annexes, with exception of Annex A and Annex G, are reproduced under Public Service Mapping Agreement (PSMA) licence No. 0100054917.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Much Marcle Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Party, established in September 2013 under the direction of the Much Marcle Parish Council, has prepared this document.

The Much Marcle Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) is a new type of planning document that sets out the direction of growth in Much Marcle parish until 2031. It is part of the Government's new approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area.

The Plan provides a vision and objectives for the future of the community and sets out clear policies to realise them.

The Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with the people of Much Marcle parish and others with an interest in the community.

The Plan gives local people the opportunity to have some control over where new housing and any other new development should be built.

The focus of new development is proposed to be within or adjacent to the three existing settlements, and through conversion or re-use of redundant buildings.

Settlement Boundaries have been drawn for Much Marcle, Rushall and Kynaston with the principal aims of (i) preventing coalescence between the three settlements thus preserving their historic separate identity and (ii) preventing further incursion into open countryside.

The Plan will allow for some infill in existing developed frontages, within or outside Settlement Boundaries, to enable limited and controlled growth.

Much Marcle contains a conservation area at its core, the character of which should be preserved.

The Plan will support appropriate development in open countryside only where such proposed development meets the policies set out in the Plan and can be proved to be sustainable.

²The complete Phase 1 survey (April 2016) map of priority habitats has been published on the Much Marcle Parish Council website www.muchmarcleparishcouncil.org.

The Plan is designed to be flexible, adaptable and above all sustainable in order to ensure the future wellbeing of our community, meet the needs of a growing population, safeguard our environment and build our local economy.

2. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROCESS

Roles of the Parish Council & Working Party

The Much Marcle Parish Council established a Working Party in September 2013, following an initial public meeting in July that year, to develop the Plan. The Working Party was empowered by, and reported to, the Parish Council. It met at least monthly to oversee the development of the Plan.

The preparation of the Plan has been made possible by a funding grant from Locality, and support from Herefordshire Council and Foxley Tagg Planning Ltd.

The reports of Working Party meetings and all key documents relating to the development of the Plan are available for scrutiny on the Much Marcle Parish Council website www.muchmarcleparishcouncil.org.

Process Summary & Timeline

Stage/Task	Start Date	End Date
Stage 1: Initial public meeting & Neighbourhood Plan Area designated	July '13	Sept '13
Stage 2: Review Evidence Base	Sept '13	Nov '15
Stage 3: Review Vision & Objectives	Aug '15	Nov '15
Stage 4: Develop the draft Plan	Nov '15	Aug '16
Stage 5: Regulation 14 consultation	Nov '16	Jan '17
Stage 6: Regulation 15 submission of final Plan to Herefordshire Council	Oct '17	Nov '17
Stage 7: Independent Examination	Jan '18	Feb '18
Stage 8: Referendum	Apr '18	Apr '18
Stage 9: Adoption	May '18	Jun '18

Key stages and timeline for development of the Plan are summarized below:

Neighbourhood Development Plan Area

The parish of Much Marcle was formally designated as a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area (Annex A) following an application made under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (part 2 S6), consulted on from 30 August to 10 September 2013, and approved by Herefordshire Council on 11 September 2013.

The parish of Much Marcle covers an area of approximately 19.62 km² (7.58 square miles).

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Neighbourhood Development Plans are a new type of planning policy document, introduced by the Localism Act 2011, which enable local people to make decisions about development in their towns and settlements.

Neighbourhood Development Plans must accord with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).

As part of the Local Plan for Herefordshire, the Plan must be in conformity with the strategic policies of the Herefordshire Core Strategy. Both the Plan and the Core Strategy will remain in force until 2031.

The Plan policies are to be considered as a whole together with the strategic policies of the Core Strategy.

The Plan will guide where new development should go, and how the parish should change.

The Plan provides the local policy framework for Herefordshire Council to determine planning applications on behalf of the people of Much Marcle parish.

Sustainability Appraisal

Herefordshire Council, on behalf of the Much Marcle Parish Council, has carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), which are material considerations in developing and delivering the Plan.

Status of Much Marcle Parish Design Statement

A Parish Design Statement was approved by the Much Marcle Parish Council on 13 September 1999, and endorsed by Herefordshire Council on 23 February 2000. An Addendum to the Parish Design Statement was approved in 2014.

Herefordshire Council's Local Development Scheme states such documents "*will not have a statutory basis but where they contain provisions relevant to planning and set out community aspirations, they may influence planning policy and decisions as material considerations, but will not have the formal status and weight of Development Plan Documents or Neighbourhood Development Plans*".

The Plan therefore takes full account of the Parish Design Statement and carries forward many of its provisions.

Current Local Planning Situation

The parish of Much Marcle is located in the Ross-on-Wye rural Housing Market Area (HMA) where the Core Strategy **Policy RA1 – Rural housing distribution** seeks an indicative housing growth target of 14% between 2011 and 2031. This target equates to a minimum indicative figure of 41 new dwellings that are required to be built by 2031. The Plan may propose more new dwellings than the 14% growth target requires, but it cannot propose less.

Herefordshire Council has approved planning applications for a net total of 18 newly built and committed residential dwellings in small scale or windfall developments between April 2011 and March 2016. These new dwellings contribute to the 14% housing growth target to be achieved between 2011 and 2031. Therefore, the residual number of new dwellings to be built by 2031 is 23.

Much Marcle is identified in the Core Strategy (Figure 4.14) **Policy RA2 – Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns** as one of 31 settlements in the Ross-on-Wye rural HMA which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development; and Rushall is identified (Figure 4.15) as one of 24 settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate, subject to particular attention to form, layout, character, location and setting of the site, and contribution to social well-being. There are, however, a significant number of planning constraints in Much Marcle (see map at Annex B).

Exception Case for Kynaston

Kynaston is not identified in the Core Strategy as a settlement for proportionate growth and is treated within the scope of **Policy RA3 – Herefordshire's countryside**, but it is quite clearly a 'settlement' and has been so for generations. It has a clearly defined settlement pattern and 14 dwellings within the main settlement area, of which 6 are council built houses. It is separated from Rushall by open country either side of Hall Court, and is acknowledged to be a separate hamlet in the Much Marcle Parish Design Statement, which was approved by Herefordshire Council in 2000.

The Core Strategy (Figures 4.14 and 4.15, and **Policy RA2**) policy does not identify Kynaston as a settlement for proportionate housing growth because of its lack of community services and facilities. However, such facilities exist in both

Rushall and Much Marcle, which are in close proximity³, and so locating some new dwellings in Kynaston would appear to be consistent with the NPPF (paragraphs 54 and 55), the Core Strategy (paragraph 4.8.21) and **Policy RA2**.

Kynaston is located in close proximity to Rushall and Much Marcle (both identified in **Policy RA2**), the three settlements are connected by a short stretch of road, and in order to allow a wider range of housing size, type and tenure to meet local need and demand, the Much Marcle Parish Council has decided to treat Kynaston as part of the settlement of Rushall⁴ within the scope of Core strategy **Policy RA2**.

The consequences of the alternative scenario (reliance on **Policy RA3**), given the significant constraints to new development around the Much Marcle Settlement Boundary (see map at Annex B) and uncertainty about the likelihood of development of rural exception sites and conversion of redundant buildings, are that the 14% housing growth target of 41 new dwellings will be at risk and unlikely to be met; and provision of affordable housing will be at risk.

Rural Exception Sites

Land for new dwellings can also be identified on rural exception sites within the scope of **Policy RA3** and **Policy H2 – Rural exception sites** where:

- 1) a proposal could assist in meeting a proven local need for affordable housing; and
- 2) affordable housing provided is made available to, and retained in perpetuity for local people in need of affordable housing; and
- 3) a site respects the characteristics of its surroundings, demonstrates good design and offers reasonable access to a range of services and facilities normally in a settlement identified in **Policy RA2**.

Agriculture, Forestry & Rural Enterprises

Agriculture is the major land use within the parish and so proposals for dwellings associated with agriculture, forestry and rural enterprises may be supported where they comply with the Core Strategy **Policy RA4**.

Conversion of redundant buildings

Nineteen sites with redundant or disused buildings with potential for conversion and re-use have been identified throughout the parish of Much Marcle (Dot map

³ Kynaston is located ½ mile (<1km) from Rushall and 2.4 miles (<5km) from Much Marcle. Rushall has a pub/village hall (Rushall Club) and employment site (Graham Baker Motors), whereas Much Marcle has six key day-to-day services (employment sites, 3 pubs, village hall, primary school, shop and post office).

⁴ A detailed and well-evidenced document entitled *Planning Policy Context – An Exception case for Kynaston* (July 2017) has been submitted and discussed with Herefordshire Council and has been published on the Much Marcle Parish Council website www.muchmarcleparishcouncil.org.

showing examples at Annex C). These fall within the scope of Core Strategy **Policy RA5 – Re-use of rural buildings** and are expected to make a significant contribution to housing growth.

PARISH DESCRIPTION – EVIDENCE BASE SUMMARY

The parish of Much Marcle comprises the village of Much Marcle and the two smaller linear settlements of Rushall and Kynaston, which are recognised locally as hamlets of Much Marcle. Elsewhere the settlement pattern is more dispersed with isolated farms, houses and cottages.

The village of Much Marcle contains most of the dwellings, centred around the A449/B4024 crossroads, including the post office and general store, garage and one of the village's three public houses.

There is no dominant style of domestic building, many of which are randomly spaced and located at various orientations in relation to neighbouring buildings and along minor roads and country lanes.

Detached dwellings (including bungalows) make up 73% of the housing stock, but overall the parish has a wide choice of properties and a type and size of homes that is broadly in line with the trend for England as a whole.

The parish has a population of 660 people (an increase of 2% since 2001 according to the 2011 census), living in 286 households. The average household size is 2.3 persons, broadly in line with the averages for Herefordshire (2.34) and England (2.40).

The full Evidence Base Summary report is available for scrutiny on the Much Marcle Parish Council website www.muchmarcleparishcouncil.org.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – CONSULTATION SUMMARY

The Plan has been produced by, and belongs to, the people of Much Marcle parish. It has been informed by the views of local people gathered using a variety of different consultation approaches including a parish-wide questionnaire survey, six open public meetings held at Much Marcle Memorial Hall, an open public meeting held at Rushall Club, a questionnaire survey of housing landowners at Kynaston, a survey of the owners of redundant buildings identified as possible conversions for new housing, and responses to written comments received throughout the process.

A Consultation Summary Report and detailed reports of each of the public open meetings and local residents questionnaire responses are published on the Much Marcle Parish Council website www.muchmarcleparishcouncil.org.

5. VISION & OBJECTIVES FOR 2031 □

Vision Statement

Our vision is that we, as the present guardians of our built and natural heritage:

- maintain and enhance the characteristic features which define our particular sense of place and local distinctiveness; and
- create a sustainable and resilient community where people want to live and work.

To fulfil our vision we have identified the following objectives:

Issues	Objectives
Sustainable Development	MMO1 - Ensure all new development makes a positive contribution to sense of place and local distinctiveness, has a low carbon footprint and low embedded energy. MMO2 - Minimise flood risk to homes, employment and the environment. MMO3 - Support renewable energy development in appropriate scale and locations.
Housing	MMO4 - Identify housing land allocations, to achieve a minimum of 14% housing growth by 2031, with an appropriate mix of market, social and affordable dwellings.
Employment & Economy	MMO5 - Encourage and support employment that is locally based, sustainable and diverse. MMO6 - Value and support agriculture as an integral part of our community.
Built Environment, Heritage & Historic Assets	MMO7 - Protect and maintain the setting, fabric and visual character of the Much Marcle Conservation Area, listed buildings, and Homme House park and garden.
Natural Environment	MMO8 - Avoid, or mitigate (to minimize), harm to important landscape views (e.g. Marcle Ridge and the Malvern Hills), and maintain open views to surrounding countryside. MMO9 - Value, protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity features, especially where they provide ecological connectivity. MMO10 - Avoid or mitigate (to minimize) harm, and compensate to offset residual unavoidable harm, to biodiversity and geodiversity features so that the aggregate level and quality of those features does not decline.
Community, Sport & Leisure	MMO11 - Maintain existing community facilities, increase the range of activities they provide, and support new and/or improved facilities.
Transport & Infrastructure	MMO12 - Reduce speed limits on parts of the A449 and some adjoining roads. MMO13 - Identify a cycle loop/route similar to and linking with the Ledbury and Newent cycle loops by end of 2019, and establish by 2022.
Broadband & Mobile Reception	MMO14 - Research and establish ways to attain the highest practicable broadband speed and mobile reception, and coverage for both, in the parish.

6. PLAN POLICIES

Sustainable Development

Objectives

MMO1 - Ensure all new development makes a positive contribution to sense of place and local distinctiveness, has a low carbon footprint and low embedded energy.

MMO2 - Minimise flood risk to homes, employment and the environment.

MMO3 - Support renewable energy development in appropriate scale and locations.

Building design guidelines

All new development and alterations to existing buildings and structures should be designed and built to the highest possible standards, taking account of historic details and layouts and maximizing the contribution to sense of place and local distinctiveness. This basic requirement does not necessarily promote any particular type or style, or rule out innovation and modern design solutions that are of high quality in their own right or which may add to the visual enjoyment and character of settlements within the parish. It does, however, imply the need to avoid standardized solutions, based on limited range of type, style, size and design; and insensitive, badly detailed and inappropriately scaled buildings.

The guidelines in Section 8 of the Much Marcle Parish Design Statement should be followed, unless there are material reasons for not doing so, to ensure that local character and distinctiveness is maintained and, where possible, enhanced.

Flood risk management

The Environment Agency Flood Map for Much Marcle shows an extensive area of land within Flood Zone 3 (land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding - <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk>) and a wider area within Flood Zone 2 (land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding), extending from Bodenham Bank to The Walwyn Arms, Ryemeadows and north to the parish boundary at Kynaston.

Policy MM1 – Sustainable Development

All development proposals should seek to achieve high standards of sustainable building design and, in particular, demonstrate how the location, scale, density, design, form, construction and operation:

- a) **comply with the guidance in the Parish Design Statement;**

- b) **work with the site and its context, taking account of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), biodiversity, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates;**
- c) **reduce use of fossil fuels, adopt and facilitate low and zero carbon energy infrastructure, and promote the production and consumption of renewable sources of heat and electricity;**
- d) **promote efficient use, re-use and recycling of natural resources;**
- e) **adopt best practice in sustainable drainage systems;**
- f) **apply the Sequential Test set out in paragraphs 100-104 of the NPPF, and avoid land which is liable to flood (Flood Zone 3), or which would exacerbate flood risk to adjacent properties.**

Renewable energy

The parish has some installed capacity of solar voltaic panels and there is considerable potential for further development of solar, as well as biomass, geothermal and wind renewable energy resources.

Policy MM2 – Renewable Energy

Development proposals for biomass, geothermal, solar and wind renewable energy resources will be supported in appropriate scale and locations where they comply with Policies MM1, MM6, MM7, MM8, MM9 and MM10.

Housing

Objective

MMO4 - Identify housing land allocations to achieve a minimum of 14% housing growth by 2031, with an appropriate mix of market, social and affordable dwellings.

Housing need

The Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA, 2013) found that in the Ross-on-Wye HMA the greatest need for market housing was for 3 bedroom properties (57%) and 2 bedroom properties (24.7%). Of the additional dwellings required in the Ross-on-Wye HMA over 95% are required to be houses.

In terms of affordable housing, the LHMA found that in the Ross-on-Wye HMA the size of affordable homes required to meet the need was fairly evenly split between 1 bedroom (29%), 2 bedroom (37%) and 3 bedroom (31%) properties. The need for houses (73%) was considered greater than the need for flats (27%).

Reference was also made to 'Assessment of Land with Housing Potential' (Much Marcle) 2015, (Herefordshire Council); and 'Housing Needs Study for Much

Marcle Parish', June 2008 (Keith Parry, Rural Housing Enabler for Herefordshire).

Affordable housing

The LHMA found that the average indicative income required in 2013 to buy a 2-bed property in the Ross-on-Wye HMA is £32,860, while the average wage in the area was £22,947. The proportion of households unable to afford market housing without subsidy in Ross-on-Wye HMA was 53.4%.

Settlement Boundaries

- The Settlement Boundaries for Much Marcle, Rushall and Kynaston shown on the maps at Annexes D and E were drawn following the guidance and criteria set out in 'Neighbourhood Planning Guide to Settlement Boundaries' (Herefordshire Council), April 2013 – Revised June 2015.

Housing land allocations

Land potentially suitable for housing, including affordable housing, was identified by a sub-group of the Working Party which met on 30 January 2015 to review land allocations suggested for new dwellings in responses to the Residents' Questionnaire.

A revised housing land assessment, based on the Core Strategy modifications following examination and subject to the same rigorous SEA/HRA criteria, was completed and agreed by the Working Party and Parish Council in June 2015.

The Working Party confirmed initial housing land allocations at a meeting on 21 September 2016. Following the Regulation 14 consultation and a public meeting held at Rushall Club on 23 January 2017, the settlement boundary and housing land allocations at Rushall were revised. The final agreed settlement boundaries and housing land allocations, confirmed by the Working Party on 25 July 2017, are shown below and on maps at Annexes D and E.

Much Marcle (6 dwellings on 3 sites):

Land adjacent to Audley Farm □(2)

Land beside Glebe Orchard □(3)⁵

Plot between Hardwick Oaks and Audley Cottage (1)

Rushall and Kynaston (13 dwellings on 6 sites):

Land by the Steppes □(2)

Land behind Bridge Cottage □(1)

Old Chapel Site (5)

Land at Stoney House Farm □(1)

⁵ Subject to provision of an equivalent area of Priority BAP habitat (traditional standard orchard) to compensate for the area lost to development of this site – Policy MM8.

Land and barns around Gatchapin (2)
Land adjacent to No. 10 Orchard View (2)

Rural exception sites

Land identified as rural exception sites within the scope of Core Strategy **Policy H2 – Rural exception sites**, is shown below and on the map at Annex D.

Rural exception sites – Much Marcle (10 dwellings on 6 sites):

Dobbins Pitch (4 = 2 net because 2 existing to be demolished)
Hazardine □(1)
Land adjacent to Jink Robin (2) ⁶
Old Pike (2)
Rye Meadows - plot between Farley and New Normandy (1)
Slip and area around □gardens of houses, Watery Lane □(2)

Building conversions

A survey of 19 redundant or disused buildings suitable for conversion and re-use for housing was completed and agreed by the Working Party and Parish Council in June 2015. A survey of all of the owners of the 19 identified redundant buildings, completed in June 2017, has confirmed that they would be willing to bring these properties forward for conversion/re-development for housing during the Plan period to 2031. The Plan assumes that 10/19 redundant buildings will be converted/re-developed for housing to meet the residual housing growth target.

Examples of convertible buildings identified are shown on the dot map at Annex C.

Housing infill

Some development may be proposed as infill in an existing developed frontage, within or outside Settlement Boundaries. A “developed frontage” means setback from but fronting the access road with a front garden and parking on the site. Infill sites between existing dwellings within a developed frontage may provide appropriate locations for self-build or custom build and affordable housing.

Housing extensions

Housing extensions should be proportionate to the existing dwelling and to the site, and should not result in an increase of more than 30% in the size, volume or footprint of the existing development.

Proportionate housing growth 2011-2031

⁶ Subject to provision of an equivalent area of Priority BAP habitat (traditional standard orchard) to compensate for the area lost to development of this site – Policy MM8.

The 14% indicative housing growth target for the Plan period 2011-2031 equates to a minimum of 41 new dwellings. A total of 18 new dwellings have been built/committed since 2011 (as at March 2016)⁷, leaving a residual figure of 23 new dwellings to be built by 2031.

The Plan proposes to achieve, and exceed, the residual indicative housing growth target by identifying land allocations and building conversions for 39 new dwellings in order to facilitate the proportionate housing growth envisaged by Policy RA2 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy).

The number and percentage of new dwellings built/committed and planned for in the settlements of Much Marcle, Rushall and Kynaston over the Plan period 2011-2031 is shown in the table below.

Number of new dwellings	Much Marcle	Rushall & Kynaston
Built/committed since 2011	15	3
Housing land allocations	6	13
Rural exception sites	10	0
Building conversions	10	0
Total	41	16
%	72	28

Policy MM3 – Housing

Housing land allocations and rural exception sites

Development proposals for good quality market housing, self-build or custom build, and affordable homes for local people will be supported where they:

- a) **make best and full use of brownfield sites and identified housing land within Settlement Boundaries, and land identified as rural exception sites in accordance with Core Strategy Policy H2 (Maps at Annexes C and D); or**
- b) **would result in the sustainable conversion and re-use of a redundant or disused building(s) where it complies with Core Strategy Policy RA5; or**
- c) **meet an agricultural or forestry need or other farm diversification enterprise for a worker to live permanently at or near their place of work and complies with Core Strategy Policy RA4; and**
- d) **provide an appropriate range of housing size, type and tenure that is required to meet local need and demand;**

⁷Source: Herefordshire Council policy database of net commitments and completions (including self-contained annexes) between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2016.

- e) **complement adjacent properties, would not result in loss of amenity for existing residents and comply with Policy MM1;**
- f) **are accompanied by appropriate provisions for permeable off street parking, safe access, storage of waste and recycling, and a garden;**
- g) **do not result in inappropriate development of residential gardens.**

Housing infill

Development proposals on infill sites in an existing developed frontage, within or outside Settlement Boundaries, will be supported where:

- a) **infill gap does not exceed 25m frontage to a public highway;**
- b) **dwelling size does not exceed habitable living space of 90sq m (3 bed) or 100sq m (4 bed); and**
- c) **plot size does not exceed 350sq m.**

Housing extensions

Development proposals for extensions to existing houses and new development within residential curtilages will be supported where they do not result in an increase in the size, volume or footprint of the existing house(s) of more than 30%.

Employment & Economy

Objectives

MMO5 - Encourage and support employment that is locally based, sustainable and diverse.

MMO6 - Value and support agriculture as an integral part of our community.

Support for local businesses

Agriculture is the major land use in Much Marcle parish and a relatively large employer of local residents - the fifth biggest sector. Nine percent of those employed in the parish work in agriculture according to the 2011 census.

There is a small, but strong, range of businesses in the parish. Weston's Cider, Much Marcle Garage and Graham Baker Motors are major employers.

The business survey carried out by the Working Group found that there were five businesses requiring additional space. Three of these were for areas less than 50m², one for more than 200m² and one identifying two buildings of over 200m².

Working from home

Nineteen percent of working age residents of the parish is in managerial,

directorial or senior official positions, and there are also more residents in professional occupations than is the case nationally. These data indicate a potential demand for live/work accommodation.

Policy MM4 – Employment & Economy

Development proposals for agriculture, tourism and leisure, recreation, crafts, holiday accommodation, and food and drink production will be supported where they comply with Policies MM1, MM6 MM7 and MM8.

Policy MM5 – Business Premises

Re-development of business premises used for A1 (Shops), A4 (Public Houses), B1 (Business) and B2 (General Industrial) will only be supported where:

- a) **it can be demonstrated that the use of the premises for these purposes is no longer viable; and**
- b) **there is no alternative sustainable employment use of land or premises identified for these purposes (Maps at Annexes C and D).**

Built Environment, Heritage & Historic Assets

Objective

MMO7 - Protect and maintain the setting, fabric and visual character of the Much Marcle Conservation Area, listed buildings, and Homme House park and garden.

Conservation Area

Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a duty on Local Planning Authorities to determine from time to time which parts of their area are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance' and to designate these areas as conservation areas.

The Much Marcle Conservation Area (shown on the map at Annex B) encompasses the historic core of the village centred around St Bartholomew's Church (dating from C13); the adjacent remains of Mortimer's Castle, motte and bailey; Hellens (dating from C13); Homme House (dating from C16) and its park and garden; and Phillips House (1703).

- Herefordshire Council has a duty to protect the Conservation Area from
- development which would harm its special historic or architectural character and this is reflected in Core Strategy **Policy LD4 – Historic environment and heritage assets.**

The Parish Council will encourage Herefordshire Council to carry out a

comprehensive appraisal of the character and special qualities of the Conservation Area to provide a sound basis for decisions about planning applications, the future management of the area, and other proposals for change.

Listed buildings, park and garden

There are 90 listed buildings/ancient monuments in the parish, including Homme House park and garden listed Grade 11* (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing>).

Policy MM6 – Listed Buildings

Development proposals for restoration, conversion and re-use of listed buildings will be supported where they comply with Policies MM1, MM7, MM8 and MM9.

Natural Environment

Objectives

MMO8 - Avoid, or mitigate (to minimize), harm to important landscape views (e.g. the Marcle Ridge and the Malvern Hills), and maintain open views to surrounding countryside.

MMO9 - Value, protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity features, especially where they provide ecological connectivity.

MMO10 - Avoid, or mitigate (to minimize) harm, and compensate to offset residual unavoidable harm to biodiversity and geodiversity features so that the aggregate level and quality of those features does not decline.

Landscape

The overall character of the landscape consists of mixed farmland, orchards and hedgerows, with a large number of mature trees. To the west, Marcle Ridge reaches 231 metres above sea level and is surmounted by a high telecommunications mast visible from many miles away.

The proximity of protected landscapes (the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and the Malvern Hills AONB), and the topography within the parish mean that there are important local and wider views within, looking out of and into each of the three settlements. Examples of these important local and wider views are identified in a schedule with photographs and a map at Annex F.

Policy MM7 – Landscape

Development proposals will be expected to avoid, or mitigate (to minimise), harm to important landscape views (e.g. the Marcle Ridge and the Malvern Hills), and maintain open views to surrounding countryside.

Designated sites

Herefordshire Biological Records Centre has provided the map at Annex G, which shows the location of designated sites within the parish, including Hall Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), six Local Geological Sites and six Local Wildlife Sites.

Priority habitats

Field surveys completed in April 2016 confirmed that the parish supports good examples of UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) priority habitats - e.g. lowland meadow and unimproved pasture, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, traditional standard orchard, ponds, rivers and streams, reedbed, wood pasture and parkland (See map at Annex B and the complete Phase 1 habitat survey map on the Much Marcle Parish Council website www.muchmarcleparishcouncil.org); and locally important, characteristic habitats such as 'ghost' outlines of wild daffodils (a UK BAP priority species) along field margins and beneath roadside hedgerows along the B4024 Dymock Road, the Kempley Road and at Lyne Down.

Protected species

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Several species of bats, dormouse, great crested newt and common otter recorded in the parish are protected under European and UK law; a number of bird species are protected by UK law; and UK BAP priority species recorded in the parish include birds, mammals, amphibians and plants.

European protected species are listed in Schedules 2 and 4 of the

• Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010 (as amended); and species protected by UK law are listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The Wildlife and Countryside Act also prevents destruction of or disturbance to nesting birds, their nests, eggs and young; and so it is advisable to avoid works to vegetation during the nesting season, generally taken to be March through to August inclusive. □

The presence of protected or priority (important) species on a proposed development site is a material consideration in the planning process. Sufficient information must be presented with planning applications to identify the species present and the extent to which they may be affected by the development proposals.

Policy MM8 – Biodiversity

Development will be expected to avoid harm, mitigate to minimize, or compensate to offset residual unavoidable harm to:

- a) **Designated Sites (e.g. Hall Wood SSSI and Local Geological Sites**

- and Local Wildlife Sites);
- b) **European Protected Species;**
 - c) **Species protected by UK law;**
 - d) **UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats and priority species;**
 - e) **Locally important, characteristic habitats and species (e.g. wild daffodils);**
 - f) **mature trees and hedgerows; and**
 - g) **streams and watercourses.**

Community, Sport & Leisure

Objective

MMO11 - Maintain and support existing community facilities, increase the range of activities they provide, and support new and/or improved facilities.

Community facilities

The parish has a small number of community facilities and meeting places. In addition to St Bartholomew's Church, a primary school and an ancillary nursery school, the parish boasts Much Marcle Memorial Hall and Rushall Club. There are three pubs, a licensed restaurant, and the Much Marcle Post Office and Village Store – the latter enabling the local community to withdraw/pay in cash and purchase staple foods without having to travel to Ledbury or another neighbouring town.

Policy MM9 – Community Facilities

Development proposals for new and/or improved community facilities will be supported where they comply with Policies MM1, MM6 MM7 and MM8.

Policy MM10 - Loss of Community Facilities

Re-development for non-community uses will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the use of the premises for community purposes is no longer viable, or where acceptable alternative provision exists or is proposed concurrently.

Local green spaces

Published evidence shows that access to the natural environment benefits people's mental and physical health, their sense of wellbeing and quality of life.

Local green spaces in Much Marcle (See map at Annex B) listed in the table below are all in close proximity to the community they serve and demonstrably special (National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 77) for reasons stated.

Local Green Space	Relevant NPPF criteria
St Bartholomew's Church and graveyard	Beauty, historic and cultural significance – Grade 1 listed church with adjacent churchyard cross (Scheduled Ancient Monument), and historic yew tree.
Mortimer's Castle, Motte and Bailey	Historic and cultural significance (Scheduled Ancient Monument).
The Bartons	Recreational value as a playing field.
Monk's Walk	Historic and cultural significance – avenue of perry pear trees planted c1710 to mark the reign of Queen Anne.

They link to the surrounding open countryside, via the public rights of way network, and provide a variety of public benefits, including cultural and historic heritage, wide ranging landscape views, biodiversity and public access.

Policy MM11 – Local Green Spaces

All development proposals will be expected to protect, provide and plan for the maintenance of local green spaces through:

- a) **retention of existing local green spaces, corridors and linkages with the surrounding open countryside;**
- b) **provision of new on-site local green space;**
- c) **integration with, and connection to, the existing local green space network and the surrounding open countryside.**

Transport Infrastructure & Public Access

Objectives

MMO12 - Reduce speed limits on parts of the A449 and some adjoining roads.

MMO13 - Identify a route for cycle loop/route similar to and linking with the Ledbury and Newent cycle loops by end of 2019, and establish by 2022.

Road network

Much Marcle parish is situated on the A449, which connects Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye. This location means that the village has a good connection to Wales (via the A449 and A40), to the Midlands (via the M50), and to the Cotswolds (via the A417).

From Much Marcle it is possible to reach Ledbury by car in 10 minutes, Ross in around 15 minutes, Monmouth in 25 minutes, Hereford and Gloucester in less than 30 minutes, and both Worcester and Cheltenham in around 45 minutes.

Public transport

Bus services to and from Much Marcle are sparse. There are 9 services in total serving the village during the average week. As a consequence, commuting from Much Marcle to local towns via bus is not a viable option.

The nearest railway station is in Ledbury, around 6 miles away, with trains to and from Hereford, Birmingham and London.

Public rights of way

The parish is well served by a local public rights of way network, which connects each of the three settlements with links to the surrounding open countryside.

The Three Choirs Way long distance walking route, devised with themes of poetry and music (drawing on the cultural history of the Dymock Poets and Three Choirs Music Festival), passes through the village of Much Marcle and some of the finest countryside in the parish, including wild daffodil meadows, orchards and the Marcle Ridge.

The ridge has one of the area's best footpaths along its length with open landscape views to the west over the Woolhope Dome, part of the Wye Valley AONB, to the south towards May Hill and the Forest of Dean, and to the east towards the Malvern Hills AONB and the Cotswolds AONB.

Policy MM12 – Transport Infrastructure & Public Access

All development proposals will be expected to:

- a) **demonstrate that the local highway network can absorb the traffic impacts of the development, or that traffic impacts can be managed to acceptable levels;**
- b) **promote walking and cycling and, where possible, incorporate supporting public access infrastructure (depending on the nature and location of the site) to reduce numbers of short distance car journeys; and**
- c) **meet the needs of people with disabilities and provide safe and efficient access for the emergency services.**

Broadband & Mobile Reception

Objective

MMO14 - Research and establish ways to attain the highest practicable broadband speed and mobile reception, and coverage for both, in the parish.

Justification

In a February 2016 survey 30% of local broadband subscribers received download speeds under 4 Mbps, while half of all respondents were very or quite dissatisfied with their current broadband service.

The community consultation indicated a very strong need for significantly improved broadband, both to address the needs of present businesses and to provide a suitable IT environment to attract new businesses. In the February 2016 survey 48% of respondents indicated that they ran a business from home, with 87% of these business owners accessing the internet at least daily, 70% relying on a standard (copper) connection, with 39% receiving download speeds under 5 Mbps.

Over half of local business owners (52%) are either very or quite dissatisfied with their current broadband service, with an overwhelming majority (91%) indicating interest in super-fast broadband.

Policy MM13 – Broadband & Mobile Reception

All development proposals, and land within their curtilage, will be expected to have the infrastructure necessary to provide the highest practicable broadband speed and mobile reception.

7. MONITORING & REVIEW

The Much Marcle Parish Council will review the content and monitor progress of the Plan, keeping track of development proposals and approvals of planning permission. The Plan will be subject to a formal review within 5 years of its adoption by Herefordshire Council.

Annex F: Landscape Views (Photographs and a map with directional arrows to be included in final draft plan)

Local views in Much Marcle

1. A449/B4024 cross roads south-east towards Walwyn Court and The Malverns
2. Kempley Road north towards Much Marcle – entrance to the village
3. Kempley Road south towards Awnells Farm – exit from the village
4. Kempley Road east towards Gregg's Pit
5. Causeway west towards St Bartholomew's Church
6. Monk's Walk east towards Hellens
7. Monk's Walk south towards Dymock Road B4024 and May Hill
8. Dymock Road B4024 north-east towards Monk's Walk
9. Dymock Road B4024 (between Pickett's Corner and Rhonville) south towards Street Farm

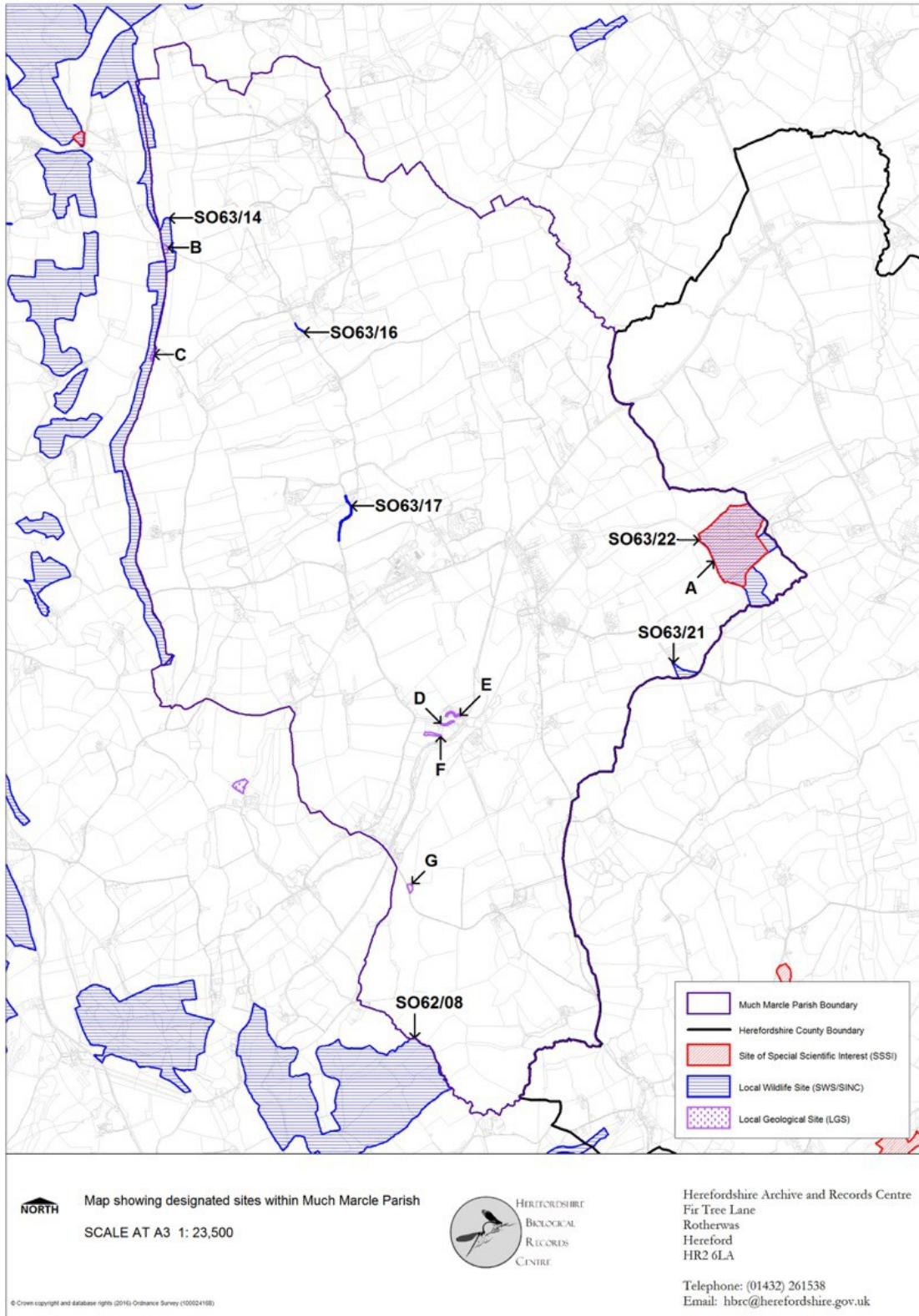
Local views in Rushall & Kynaston

1. South towards Hill End, Rushall
2. North towards Kynaston – entrance to settlement
3. West towards open countryside and Ridge Hill, Kynaston
4. East towards The Pump House and garden, Kynaston
5. A449 from Lyne Down road
6. East towards Ledbury and the Malverns from cross-roads at Graham Baker Motors
7. East towards Ledbury and the Malverns from road at Southern end of Orchard View

Wider Views

1. Much Marcle from Bodenham Bank
2. North-east towards Moorcourt Cottages, Hall Wood SSSI and The Malverns from Gregg's Pit
3. North-west towards St Bartholomew's Church and Marcle Ridge from Gregg's Pit
4. East towards Westons, Much Marcle and The Malverns from Marcle Ridge
5. North-West towards Playford, St Bartholomew's Church and Marcle Ridge from B4024 Dymock Road – entrance to the village from south-east
6. East towards British Camp across traditional standard apple orchards, Rushall
7. South-east towards Much Marcle, Hellens, Hall Wood SSSI and the Cotswolds from Marcle Ridge.

Annex G: Designated Sites



Key:

- A Hall Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- B Hooper's Oak Quarry Local Geological Site
- C Sleaves Oak Quarry Local Geological Site
- D Bodenham Farm Site 2 Local Geological Site
- E Bodenham Farm Site 1 Local Geological Site
- F Bodenham Farm Site 3 Local Geological Site
- G Lyne Down Quarry Local Geological Site

- SO62/08 Coldborough Park Local Wildlife Site
- SO63/14 Woodlands along Marcle Hill and Ridge Hill Local Wildlife Site
- SO63/16 Rushall road cutting Local Wildlife Site
- SO63/17 Lower Walton Road Cuttings Local Wildlife Site
- SO63/21 Field North-West of Bridges Farm Local Wildlife Site
- SO63/22 Hall Wood and adjoining Meadow Local Wildlife Site