



## **THE WELLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA**

# **REFERENDUM VERSION WELLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2021-2041**

Little Malvern and Welland Parish Council



**MARCH 2024**

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## Preface

This plan is all about delivering a vision for the future of our village as it develops over the next two decades. That vision, supported by residents, sets out the expectation that in 2041 Welland will be a thriving rural village. Its relationship to the open countryside and the Malvern Hills is integral to its unique and special charm.

Residents and visitors will value and enjoy the landscape and the natural and historic environment of the village.

The centre of the village with its facilities and amenities will act as a hub of community life, attracting users of all ages, supporting their everyday needs and fostering a sense of kinship and wellbeing among residents and visitors. The village will be linked to nearby towns by a range of transport alternatives.

A range of high-quality homes will be available to meet the local need.

New homes will have been designed and built to the highest standards of energy and environmental efficiency and the community will be actively engaged in local schemes to counteract the drivers of climate change and environmental pollution.

Small-scale businesses will be thriving, offering local employment opportunities and supporting the village economy. Many of its residents will conduct their businesses and do their work at their homes and many more will interact with providers of goods and services by phone or internet.

And for the enjoyment, health and convenience of the public, a diverse network of open spaces, footpaths and cycle routes will have been established within a short walk of all homes.

Welland will be a highly attractive and successful place for people to live, work and play in, retaining its village feel and combining that with modern facilities.

## Acknowledgements

Little Malvern and Welland Parish Council would like to acknowledge the help of everyone who has contributed over several years to the production of this plan. Our thanks go these and many others:

The many residents of the village whose patient engagement with and response to the evolving plan have significantly shaped what we have today.

Malvern Hills District Council officers whose advice and guidance was constantly sought and readily given.

Many public bodies, including the Malvern Hills National Landscape<sup>1</sup> Partnership, whose wise and informed advice and guidance continues to be much appreciated.

Professional agencies and advisors who provided both enabling funds and the high quality technical input that has built a robust evidence base for the plan.

Peter Hamilton, whose extra-ordinary planning consultancy has been vital to our progress. Landowners and other stakeholders whose collaboration with the assessment of sites has helped shape future housing and open space development in the village.

The volunteers, past and present, on the Parish Council's Working Group. Without their tenacity, their energy, their insights and their skills, this plan could not have been produced.

Mick Davies

Chair of Little Malvern and Welland Parish Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Central Government rebranded 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty' as 'National Landscapes' on 22 November 2023. However, since 'AONB' remains the legal name for the designation (for example in the NPPF), this term is also used in appropriate places, for example, when referring to the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan which is a statutory plan or when directly quoting from older documents. As such, the term AONB continues to be used throughout in this document.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### The Referendum version of the Welland Neighbourhood Plan

1.1 The Welland Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP), hereafter referred to as the 'Plan', underwent Regulation 16 consultation between 26 June and 21 August 2003 and an independent examination between 12 September and 14 December 2023. The examiner found the Plan, subject to certain modifications, met the Basic Conditions and should be taken forward to a referendum. Following Malvern Hills District Council's (MHDC) decision to accept the examiner's modifications on 11 January 2024 the modifications have been incorporated into this version of the Plan. The Plan will be subject to a referendum, organised by MHDC, on 7 March 2024. If the majority vote to support the use of the Plan as part of the statutory development plan for the Neighbourhood Area, MHDC will make a decision as to whether the Plan should 'made' in accordance with its procedures.

### Neighbourhood Planning

1.2 The Plan is part of the Government's approach to statutory plan-making. The neighbourhood plan process enables communities to better shape their area, inform how development takes place and helps to influence the type, quality and location of that development, ensuring that change brings with it local benefit. The statutory requirements of neighbourhood planning are set out in the Localism Act 2011, which came into force in April 2012.

1.3 The Localism Act sets out some important parameters that a neighbourhood plan must meet, known as, the 'basic conditions' which include:

- having regard to national policy and guidance;
- contributing to the achievement of sustainable development;
- being in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan in force for the local area;
- not being in breach of and being compatible with European Union (EU) obligations, including human rights requirements; and
- any prescribed matters have been complied with.

1.4 The above will be tested through an independent examination and considered by MHDC prior to proceeding to a Referendum.

1.5 In the case of strategic policies, these are within the following:

- The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) (adopted 25 February 2016)<sup>2</sup>;
- The Waste Core Strategy for Worcestershire (adopted November 2012); and

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<sup>2</sup> The South Worcestershire Councils (Worcester, Wychavon and Malvern Hills) started the process of a review of the SWDP in late 2017 see link [SWDP Review - South Worcestershire Development Plan \(swdevelopmentplan.org\)](https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org) and went out to consultation on the SWDP Review Preferred Options on 4 November 2019 see link [SWDP Review Preferred Options Consultation - South Worcestershire Development Plan \(swdevelopmentplan.org\)](https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org). The Regulation 19 version of the SWDP Review went out for consultation on 1 November 2022 see link <https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/swdp-review/swdpr-regulation-19-publication-consultation>. The SWDPR was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 27 September 2023.

- Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan 2018-2036 (adopted July 2022).

1.6 The latter two documents have less direct relevance as minerals and waste matters are outside of the remit of neighbourhood planning. Nevertheless, their provisions have been considered in the production of this plan to ensure no conflict occurs.

1.7 A neighbourhood plan should be produced following community engagement and evidence base gathering. This is to make sure that it is based on a proper understanding of the local area and of the views, aspirations, wants and needs of local people.

1.8 Following an examination of a neighbourhood plan, the Examiner will provide an assessment as to whether the plan meets the basic conditions and whether it needs any modifications to enable it to do so. The Examiner will also provide a recommendation on whether the plan should proceed to a public Referendum. It is necessary to gain more than a 50% 'Yes' vote of those voting in the referendum for a neighbourhood plan to be brought into force.

1.9 The Plan, when made (adopted) by MHDC, will form part of the statutory development plan for the Welland Neighbourhood Area (WNA). Decisions on planning applications by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) (MHDC) will have to be made in accordance with the made Plan, other parts of the statutory development plan (the SWDP) and other material considerations.

### **Developing the Welland Neighbourhood Development Plan**

1.10 Little Malvern and Welland Parish Council (LMWPC) set up a Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (NPWG) in June 2013 consisting of Parish Councillors and residents. It is a working party with no decision-making powers. It is tasked with overseeing the neighbourhood plan process and producing the Plan on behalf of the community and the Parish Council. The NPWG have regular meetings which are open to members of the public to attend. Its first meeting was on 10 July 2013.

1.11 LMWPC resolved on 16 December 2013 (minute ref. 147/13) to progress with producing a neighbourhood plan. On 24 January 2014 LMWPC applied for designation of the area defined by the boundaries of Welland Parish as a Neighbourhood Area (NA) [see Figure 1.1]. This designation was approved by MHDC on 12 May 2014. The Plan therefore only covers the area defined by the boundaries of Welland Parish and not Little Malvern Parish.

1.12 Between May 2014 and October 2015, the Welland NPWG carried out a number of engagement and consultation exercises with local residents:

- Review of other Neighbourhood Plans
- Have Your Say Village Survey (July-August 2014);
- Parish Council meetings
- Annual Parish meetings;
- Stakeholder discussions;
- Housing Policy Consultations; and
- Draft Policy Consultations.



1.13 LMWPC consulted on a Regulation 14 version of a draft Neighbourhood Plan from 15 December 2015 to 31 January 2016. Progress on the Plan was paused after this stage. This was due, in part, to the feedback from this consultation but mainly it was due to LMWPC's and the NPWG's resources being spent responding to the planning applications and appeals for housing developments adjacent to the village at that time.

1.14 Following the pause, the NPWG resumed working on the Plan in early 2018 and undertook the following key consultations:

- May 2018: Annual Meeting Parish Consultation - engaging the community in the 'Restart'.
- May 2019: Annual Meeting Parish Consultation - Status Report and review of approach to future development the village – format presentation, discussion, feedback, and Q&A.
- March-April 2020: **Your Village – Have Your Say** - March PC Newsletter: Seeking views and feedback from the community on proposals: Vision for Welland; Local Green Space; potential sites for future housing development.
- July 2020: **Proposed Local Green Space** – the Parish Council sent the Draft Proposed Local Green Space Designation Report with a covering letter to each landowner to advise that that their local green space site had been nominated as land to be protected within the Draft Neighbourhood Plan and to invite feedback and comments.
- April 2021: **Welland Neighbourhood Plan - A Plan for Our Village** - delivered to every household: Provides an update on the status of the plan and updates following on from the consultations and what to expect next – Regulation 14 Formal Consultation.
- 24 September and 7 November 2021: **Regulation 14 Consultation** – a summary leaflet delivered to every household, notification to consultee bodies and information on the Parish Council's website.

1.15 There have also been regular updates on the Plan in the monthly Parish newsletters and it is a standing item at the monthly Parish Council meetings to which the public is invited and have the opportunity to ask questions.

1.16 A **Consultation Statement** and its accompanying **Appendices** document demonstrates how the local community and other stakeholders have been able to engage in the process. It also highlights how the community's views have been taken into account in the preparation and production of the Plan.

1.17 On 1 September 2020, LMWPC requested a joint Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion of the draft Plan<sup>3</sup> from MHDC. Following consultation with Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency, MHDC concluded that the draft Plan did not require either an SEA or an

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<sup>3</sup> The version of the draft Plan was dated August 2020. Some changes have been made to the plan since then, including changes to proposed site designation references such as Local Green Spaces and policy numbering. However, these are not considered to affect the conclusions of the SEA/HRA Screening Opinion.

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HRA Appropriate Assessment. A copy of the Screening Opinion, dated July 2022, is included in the Basic Conditions Statement at Appendix 3.1.

1.18 A **Basic Conditions Statement** has been produced to demonstrate how the Plan meets the Basic Conditions requirements. This Statement includes how the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

1.19 The SWDP sets out both the strategic and development management policies (i.e., policies that will apply to individual development proposals) to ensure that development in south Worcestershire is appropriately located and designed. Whilst the SWDP provides the strategic framework within which the Plan is being prepared it also needs to be aware of the emerging policies within the currently progressing SWDP Review<sup>4</sup>. Although, the existing “made” SWDP’s time period runs to 2030, the South Worcestershire Councils have recognised, in line with the Government’s requirements, that it needs to be reviewed and updated.

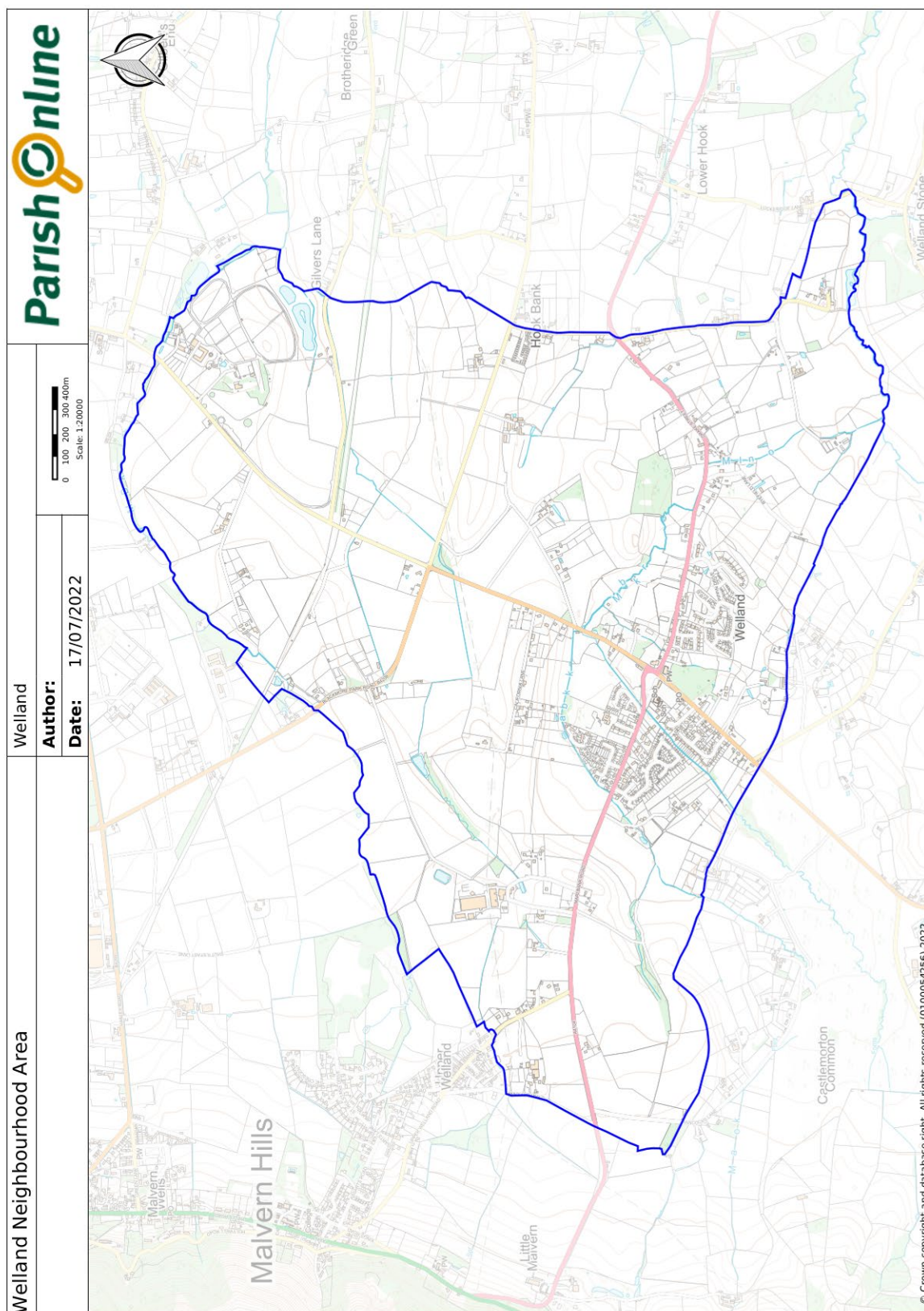
1.20 In this context, the Plan provides a locally distinctive planning policy framework within the WNA for the period of 2021–2041. It covers this period to align with the SWDP Review time period particularly in relation to housing provision. The policies within the Plan are considered to be in general conformity with the higher level planning policy within the adopted local plan and has considered the evidence and reasoning within the emerging local plan, as required by the Localism Act, and with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). Beyond the strategic issues, the Plan concentrates on key issues facing the WNA and includes planning policies that aim to deliver the right type, form, scale and design of development for the Village and the Parish.

1.21 The NPWG and MHDC have corresponded closely throughout the neighbourhood plan process including obtaining pre-Regulation 15 feedback on the proposed policies and the emerging policies within the SWDP. The Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement provide further detail on this.

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<sup>4</sup> ‘Although a draft neighbourhood plan or Order is not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested’. NPPG Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 41-009-20190509

Figure 1.1: Welland Neighbourhood Area



1.22 The Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with the residents within the Parish and others with an interest in the Parish. It is also based on proportionate and sound research and analysis of the available evidence. The NPWG has used a number of sources as evidence base to support the Plan including the following:

- The SWDP (February 2016)<sup>5</sup> and its evidence base (where relevant to the WNA);
- The SWDP Review<sup>6</sup> and its evidence base (where relevant to the WNA);
- Worcestershire's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) (November 2017)<sup>7</sup>;
- *The Welland Neighbourhood Area: Baseline Report* (September 2019), NPWG;
- *Welland Neighbourhood Development Plan Landscape Assessment* (June 2015), Carly Tinkler, CMLI;
- *Welland Neighbourhood Development Plan Landscape Sensitivity & Capacity Assessment Review of Selected Sites* (December 2019), Carly Tinkler CMLI;
- *Welland Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Sensitivity & Capacity Assessment Selected Sites* (April 2022), Carly Tinkler CMLI;
- *The Welland Neighbourhood Area: Development Boundary Review* (November 2022), NPWG;
- *Welland Neighbourhood Plan: Local Green Space Report* (March 2023), NPWG;
- *Welland Neighbourhood Plan: Neighbourhood Open Space Report* (March 2023), NPWG;
- *Welland Neighbourhood Plan: Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022), Sue Haywood/NPWG;
- *Welland Neighbourhood Plan: Housing Evidence Paper Appendices Document Resources, Housing Policy and Context* (June 2022), Sue Haywood/NPWG;
- *Welland Neighbourhood Plan: Housing Site Assessment and Selection Report* (November 2022), NPWG;
- *Welland Neighbourhood Plan: Housing Site Assessment and Selection Report Update* (February 2023), NPWG;
- *The Welland Neighbourhood Area Windfall Housing Delivery Report* (February 2023), NPWG;
- *Welland Design Guide and Code* (May 2023), AECOM;
- *Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty<sup>8</sup> Management Plan 2019-2024<sup>9</sup>* MH National Landscape Partnership; and
- Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership (MHAONB Partnership) Guidance documents, including (but not limited to) on *Guidance on Building Design* (2013), *Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development* (2016), *Guidance on Lighting, Highway Design, Guidance on how Development can respect Landscape in Views, Guidance on Identifying and Grading Views and Viewpoints*, and their *Landscape Strategy and Guidelines* document<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page\\_id=13752](https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=13752)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page\\_id=14555](https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=14555)

<sup>7</sup> The LTP4 sets the strategic vision and direction of highways and transportation services in Worcestershire. The availability of a reliable and efficient transport network plays a major role in the effectiveness of the Worcestershire economy. Where investment in transport infrastructure and services has been inadequate, this has been shown to adversely impact on future growth and competitiveness.

<sup>8</sup> Central Government rebranded 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty' as 'National Landscapes' on 22 November 2023.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/managing-the-aonb/management-plan/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/our-work/publications/>

## Next Steps

1.23 The next steps of the Plan include:

- Referendum; and
- The 'making' of the Plan by MHDC (if approved at Referendum).



## 2. THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

2.1 The NPPF and associated National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) set out the Government's planning policies and guidance for England and how these are expected to be applied. They set out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides the framework within which local people can produce their own and distinctive neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

2.2 Fundamental to the Government's planning policy is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These give rise to the need for the planning system to have three overarching objectives:

- An economic objective – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation, and by identifying and co-ordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- A social objective – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations, and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural wellbeing; and
- An environmental objective – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, and as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

2.3 According to the NPPF these objectives cannot be undertaken in isolation because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well-designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and communities. Therefore to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions.

2.4 Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including:

- Making it easier for local jobs to be created;
- Achieving net gains for nature;
- Ensuring better design;
- Improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure, and
- Widening the choice of high quality homes.

2.5 Paragraphs 66 and 67 of the NPPF states that LPA should, within the overall housing requirement for their area also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas. This should reflect the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area, the LPA should provide an indicative figure which should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.

2.6 Annex E of the Regulation 19 SWDPR (November 2022) contains an indicative housing requirement (IHR) figure for Welland of 25 dwellings for the period 2021-2041. This number is derived from a calculation of an apportioned share of the housing need that is being allocated to Category 1 villages across the South Worcestershire Council's area within the SWDPR. This is the minimum number of homes expected to be delivered through the SWDPR's policies in the period to 2041.

2.7 Around 40% of the WNA falls within the Malvern Hills AONB defined as a designated area within the NPPF. The remaining 60% may be considered to lie within the AONB's setting<sup>11</sup> due to the proximity to the AONB and the topography, visual and landscape sensitivities. NPPF paragraph 176 states, 'The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas'.

2.8 The Plan seeks to positively address the competing demands of development need and the conservation and enhancement of the AONB's landscape and scenic beauty. The Plan proposes a development through an allocation to meet local affordable need only on a site which is identified as having least adverse harm to the designated area and its setting. Although the IHR can be subject to change, this Plan is consistent with the IHR of 25 as set out in the Regulation 19 SWDPR documentation<sup>12</sup>. The Plan seeks to meet the IHR through a combination of this residential site allocation and a windfall development allowance which is based on past trends (see the Housing section).

2.9 A neighbourhood plan should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in the local plan and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. Paragraph 28 of the NPPF states non-strategic policies should be used by communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development which can include allocating sites.

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<sup>11</sup> The AONB Partnership's Position Statement on Setting provides details on defining the setting of an AONB (see <https://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s23433/9%20Development%20and%20Land%20Use%20change%20in%20the%20MH%20AONB.pdf>).

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that the Plan's Regulation 14 consultation and the documents and studies undertaken in 2022, including the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment and the Housing Evidence Paper and its Appendices document, were written in the context of the IHR being 14. The Consultation Statement sets out a timeline for the IHR information available for use by LM&WPC and the NPWG.

2.10 As a consequence, the community of Welland must:

- develop a neighbourhood plan that supports the strategic development needs for the area as set out in the adopted SWDP and consider the evidence and reasoning within the emerging SWDPR, and
- beyond these strategic elements, plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing sustainable development in the area.

### The adopted development plan

2.11 The strategic policies for the WNA are set out within the adopted South Worcestershire Development Plan (February 2016). There are several strategic policies within the SWDP that are relevant and with which policies within the Plan have to be in general conformity. The South Worcestershire Councils (SWC) have produced a note identifying strategic policies for the purposes of neighbourhood planning<sup>13</sup>. A list of the strategic policies which are considered relevant to the WNA are shown at Appendix 2.1.

2.12 The SWDP is currently being reviewed. The SWC published the Regulation 19 SWDP Review for consultation on 1 November 2022<sup>14</sup>. Once the SWDP Review is adopted neighbourhood plans will need to be in general conformity with its strategic policies. According to National Planning Practice Guidance emerging neighbourhood plans should take account of emerging local plans and in particular the evidence base and reasoning informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested.

2.13 By definition, any policy that is not identified as a strategic policy is classed as a non-strategic policy. Non-strategic policies in the Plan would take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the SWDP where they are in conflict unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are subsequently adopted within the SWDPR.

2.14 Minerals and waste matters are outside of the remit of neighbourhood planning. Nevertheless, Local Plan policies relating to minerals and waste can be found in the Waste Core Strategy for Worcestershire (2012)<sup>15</sup> and saved policies from the Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan 2018-2036 (adopted July 2022)<sup>16</sup>.

2.15 Clarification of the relationship between Plan and the SWDP and emerging SWDP Review is set out in the Basic Conditions Statement.

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/documents/283188/8815787/Strategic\\_Policies\\_NP.pdf/603496eb-f877-8b22-4b72-bad6d7e1fe6b](https://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/documents/283188/8815787/Strategic_Policies_NP.pdf/603496eb-f877-8b22-4b72-bad6d7e1fe6b)

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page\\_id=1455](https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=1455)

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20015/planning\\_policy\\_and\\_strategy/311/waste\\_core\\_strategy](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20015/planning_policy_and_strategy/311/waste_core_strategy)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20015/planning\\_policy\\_and\\_strategy/1009/adopted\\_minerals\\_local\\_plan](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20015/planning_policy_and_strategy/1009/adopted_minerals_local_plan)



### 3. THE WELLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

3.1 The Welland Neighbourhood Area (WNA) is approx. 7.6 square kilometers in area (see Figure 1.1). Approximately 40% of its western side is within the Malvern Hills AONB. Development in the remaining 60% may be considered to lie within the AONB's setting (see footnote 11) due to the proximity to the AONB and the topography, visual and landscape sensitivities. The Malvern Hills AONB's special qualities are set out in the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership's Management Plan, including Distinctive 'villagescapes', including conservation areas, listed buildings and local features, that define a 'spirit of place' in the settlements, and a strong 'spirit of place', landscapes that have inspired and continue to inspire and which have a deep cultural narrative. Some of these qualities are evident in and around Welland.

3.2 Alongside this special designation there are a number of other important planning and environmental designations within the WNA as summarised below.

#### Nature Conservation Assets

3.3 There are a number of nationally and locally designated nature conservation sites within the WNA including:

- Mutlow's Orchard Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Brotheridge Green (part) SSSI
- Welland Cemetery Site of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance
- Drake Street Meadow Site of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance
- Brotheridge Green Disused Railway (part) Site of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance
- Pool and Mere Brooks Site of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance (along the northern boundary of the WNA)

#### Flood Risk

3.4 The majority of the WNA is within Flood Zone 1 and, therefore, has a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of flooding in any year. According to the Environment Agency's 'Flood Map for Planning' there are two specific areas that are in Flood Zone 2 (between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of flooding) and Flood Zone 3 (1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding):

- In the south of the WNA along Marlbank Brook from the properties off Brookside within the village to the sewage works in the south-eastern corner of the parish.
- In the north of the WNA along Mere Brook from east of Merebrook Farm to south of Brook Farm and Tyre Hill House.

## Agricultural Land Classification

3.5 A proportion of the WNA is urban in character relating to the built-up area within the Welland Development Boundary. The countryside around it is made up of the Castlemorton Common (outwith the WNA) to the south and a mix of agricultural (arable and pastoral) to the north, east and west.

3.6 According to the Planning for Soils in Worcestershire: Technical Research Paper (December 2011)<sup>17</sup> by Worcestershire County Council, the WNA is mainly classed as Grade 3: Moderate to good (the paper does not distinguish between Grade 3a and 3b). There is an area of Grade 4 land within the vicinity of the WNA which is assumed to align with Castlemorton Common.

## Landscape Character

3.7 The Landscape Character Assessment<sup>18</sup> undertaken by Worcestershire County Council identifies two landscape character types within the WNA:

- Settled Farmlands and Pastoral Land Use – predominantly land in the west of the WNA
- Enclosed Commons – predominantly land in the east of the WNA.

## Green Infrastructure (GI)

3.8 According to the SWDP Policies Map there are two areas within the WNA which are designated as Green Space and protected through Policy SWDP38<sup>19</sup>:

1. Welland Park, Marlbank Road
2. Spitalfields, Marlbank Road

## Heritage Assets

3.9 There are no Conservation Areas or Scheduled Ancient monuments within the WNA. There are no Grade I or Grade II\* buildings within the WNA. There are 10 Grade II listed buildings within the WNA. There are currently no locally listed buildings within the WNA.

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<sup>17</sup> The Planning for Soils Technical Paper can be viewed at <http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/CD-141-Planning-for-Soils-in-Worcestershire.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> The Landscape Character Assessment can be viewed at [http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20014/planning/1006/landscape\\_character\\_assessment](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20014/planning/1006/landscape_character_assessment)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/SWDP\\_38\\_AdoptedSWDP.pdf](http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/SWDP_38_AdoptedSWDP.pdf)

## Settlement Hierarchy

3.10 Welland Village is categorised as a Category 1 village in the SWDP's Settlement Hierarchy. Category 1 Villages are considered to have a number of key facilities for everyday use by the local community making them relatively sustainable locations within the South Worcestershire rural context. The Village is centred around the crossroads of the B4208 and the A4104. There are a number of important community buildings within the Village including:

- Welland Primary School
- Welland Village Hall
- Welland Pre-school
- St James Church
- Post Office and Village Shop

3.11 During the last decade there has been a rapid increase in the size of the settlement and a consequential increase in the population within the WNA. The 2021 Census indicates the population is 1,559<sup>20</sup>, a growth of 32.0% from 2011. Putting this in context, using ONS data, Malvern Hills district as a whole had an increase in the same period of only 6.4%.

3.12 There are no rail stations within the WNA and bus services are limited. Most travel to and from the WNA will be done by private motor vehicle. There are a number of public rights of way but no dedicated cycle routes within the WNA.

3.13 Further information on the WNA can be found in *The Welland Neighbourhood Area: Baseline Report* (September 2019). Recent development in and around Welland have impacted the special qualities of the AONB and the rural character of the area. For example, levels of tranquillity were noted in the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity studies to have dropped significantly over the last few years. An AONB's special qualities can relate to factors within the setting as much as within the AONB itself. The significant expansion of Welland village in the last few years has resulted in adverse effects on many views from within the AONB, and towards it from within its setting. The experience from these recent developments has been a major catalyst for the production of the Plan. The Plan seeks to have a local focus to future development within the WNA to help mitigate their impact and protect the parish's key assets.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/select/getdatasetbytheme.asp?theme=93> based on 5 Output Areas which cover the WNA - E00164248, E00164249, E00164251, E00181372 and E00181374

## 4. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

### Vision

4.1 From wide ranging consultations with residents, businesses, visitors and other stakeholders as summarised in the *Consultation Statement* and sections 1.10-1.16 above, LMWPC has developed a vision describing the Welland Neighbourhood Area as it should be in 2041 and beyond. This forms the foundation of the Plan, its policies and proposals. In particular, the “Have Your Say” activities in 2014 and March 2020 enabled collation and analysis of views on the Vision for the Plan.

### Vision for Welland in 2041

**By 2041 Welland will be a thriving rural village. Its relationship to the open countryside and the Malvern Hills is integral to its unique and special charm.**

**Residents and visitors will value and enjoy the landscape and the natural and historic environment of the village.**

**The centre of the village with its facilities and amenities will act as a hub of community life, attracting users of all ages, supporting their everyday needs and fostering a sense of kinship and wellbeing among residents and visitors. The village will be linked to nearby towns by a range of transport alternatives.**

**A range of high-quality homes will be available to meet the local need.**

**New homes will have been designed and built to the highest standards of energy and environmental efficiency and the community will be actively engaged in local schemes to counteract the drivers of climate change and environmental pollution.**

**Small-scale businesses will be thriving, offering local employment opportunities and supporting the village economy. Many of its residents will conduct their businesses and do their work at their homes and many more will interact with providers of goods and services by phone or internet.**

**And for the enjoyment, health and convenience of the public, a diverse network of open spaces, footpaths and cycle routes will have been established within a short walk of all homes.**

**Welland will be a highly attractive and successful place for people to live, work and play in, retaining its village feel and combining that with modern facilities.**

4.2 To achieve this Vision, the NPWG identified 21 objectives under 4 key themes for the Plan, those themes being derived from the Vision and applying them to the three key principles for sustainable planning under the NPPF – environment, social and economic. Two separate key themes – “community cohesion” and “housing” – emerged in the consultation processes that were considered relevant to Social Sustainability and therefore these were addressed individually in the development of the Plan. These objectives have emanated from the spatial issues raised through public engagement and evidence base gathering. Policies within the Plan have been developed to ensure that the objectives and vision can be realised. In addition, non-policy actions have also been identified to assist in realising the objectives and vision of the Plan. The relationship between theme, objectives and the policies and non-policy actions are shown below.

Themes	Objective	Plan policy/Non-policy action (NPA)
<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>		
To ensure that Welland and its residents exist in harmony with the landscape and with the natural and historic environment.	EnS1: To reduce carbon dioxide emissions, promote energy security and reduce vulnerability to rising fuel costs for Welland residents.	SD1, SD2 and SD3.
	EnS2: To protect and enhance the village’s open green spaces.	SD1, DB1, G1, G2 and NPA.
	EnS3: To protect, enhance and conserve the AONB and its setting, and wider landscape and views.	SD1, DB1, G1, G2, LC1, D1 and NPA.
	EnS4: To protect and enhance the historic environment of Welland.	SD1, DB1, HE1, D1 and NPA.
	EnS5: To conserve and enhance biodiversity.	SD1, DB1, G1, G2, B1, D1, H4 and NPA.
<b>Social Sustainability – Community Cohesion</b>		
To ensure that the centre of the village with its facilities and amenities acts as a hub of community life, attracting users of all ages, supporting their everyday needs and fostering a sense of kinship and wellbeing within its residents and visitors	SSCC1: To position development within easy walking distance of village facilities.	SD1, DB1 and H4.
	SSCC2: To link all developments to the village centre with footpaths / cycleways, where appropriate.	SD1, D2 and H4.
	SSCC3: To integrate market and affordable housing to encourage the concept of a “balanced community”.	SD1, H1, H2, H3 and H4.
	SSCC4: To provide homes for younger people and young families and so counter the growing demographic imbalance.	SD1, HLP, H1, H2 and H4.
	SSCC5: To preserve important village assets and amenities.	SD1, G1, G2, C1, C2 and NPA.
	SSCC6: To enhance the community facilities and recreational facilities at the heart of the village and to encourage fitness and wellbeing.	SD1, G1, G2, C2 and NPA.

Themes	Objective	Plan policy/Non-policy action (NPA)
<b>Social Sustainability – Housing</b>		
To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a high quality home that meets their needs	SSH1: To provide new housing to meet local needs; including a greater range of affordable housing for Welland residents.	SD1, HLP, H1, H2, H3 and H4.
	SSH2: To provide a mix of housing types including smaller homes for older residents wishing to downsize and for young singles, couples or families needing their first home.	SD1, HLP, H1, H2, H3 and H4.
	SSH3: To ensure that new development is of high-quality design and reinforces local distinctiveness.	SD1, DB1, LC1, D1 and H4.
	SSH4: To give preferential access to some new homes for people with a local connection.	SD1, HLP, H1, H2 and H4.
	SSH5: To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.	SD1, SD2, SD3, LC1, I1 and H4.
	SSH6: To ensure that the scale of development is appropriate to the sustainable growth of the village whilst seeking to maintain its rural character.	SD1, DB1, LC1, D1, HLP and H4.
<b>Economic Sustainability</b>		
To ensure that small-scale businesses are thriving, offering local employment opportunities and supporting the village economy	EcS1: To encourage and support home working.	SD1, NPA, G1, G2, C1 and C2.
	EcS2: To provide local housing for local employees.	SD1, H1, H2 and H4
	EcS3: To support the provision of good telecommunications and connectivity as a means of delivering sustainable economic growth.	SD1, I2 and NPA.
	EcS4: To position new development such that current problems with congestion, parking and road safety are not exacerbated and, if possible, reduced.	SD1, D2, H4, and LE1

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## Key Diagram

4.3 Figure 4.1 provides a spatial plan with the key allocations and designations within and adjacent to the village. These relate to the policies and proposals which support the Vision and Objectives within the Plan. These include:

- Welland Development Boundary (edged red)
- Local Green Spaces (shown in green)
- Neighbourhood Open Spaces (shown in yellow)
- Residential allocation: land north of Cornfield Close (shown in brown and bright green)
- Existing built community facilities and the local shop (shown in blue)

4.4 The Key Diagram also includes the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation (in opaque green) providing a key landscape designation relevant to the WNA.

4.5 The Key Diagram for the whole WNA is included at Appendix 4.1 which also shows the Active Travel Corridor in hatched orange along with Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).



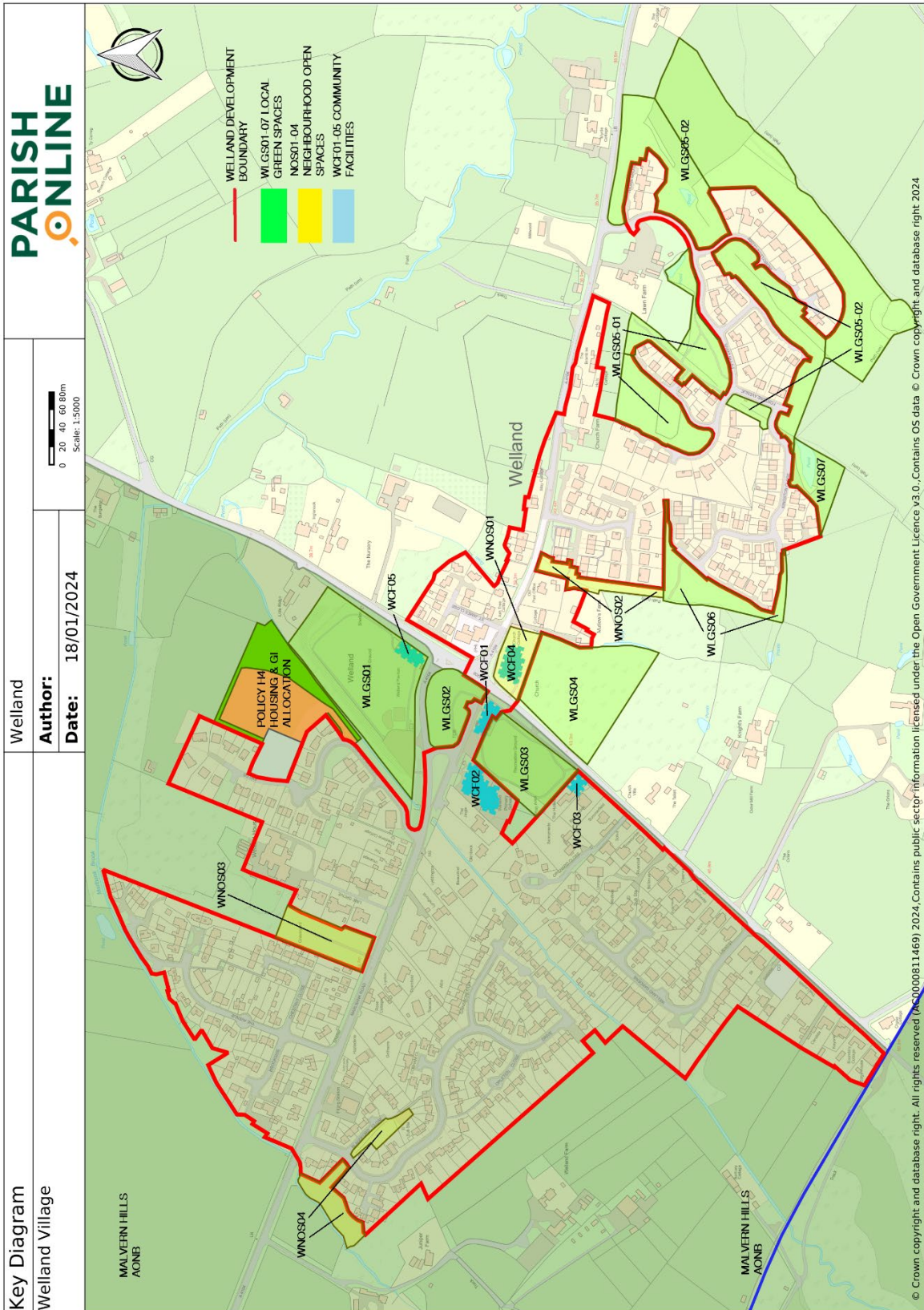


Figure 4.1: Key Diagram to Welland Village



## 5. POLICIES

### 5.1. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

#### **Policy SD1: Promoting and Achieving Sustainable Development**

Proposals which clearly demonstrate they promote and achieve sustainable development in accordance with the policies set out in the Welland Neighbourhood Development Plan will be supported.

#### **Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.1.1 The purpose of this Plan is to ensure new development contributes to the achievement of sustainable development<sup>21</sup>. Achieving sustainable development means the planning system should perform three mutually dependent roles; economic, social and environmental (NPPF para 8).

5.1.2 At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development which in relation to neighbourhood plan-making means that neighbourhood plans support the delivery of strategic development policies contained in local plans and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies (NPPF para 13).

5.1.3 The Plan seeks to ensure that the WNA and its community is a thriving and sustainable one. The concept of sustainability in communities covers a range of social, economic and environmental factors. These include having a balanced mix of age-ranges, good housing, employment, facilities and services, as well as having good health and wellbeing, pride in the place and a community spirit which all help to create resilient sustainable communities. It also means contributing to, protecting and enhancing our highly valuable natural, built and historic environment.

5.1.4 This overarching policy relates to the overall Vision and the 21 Objectives of the Plan. It aims to establish an overarching guide for all development in the WNA and places more specific policies in context. Where proposals demonstrate they meet the requirements of the policies within the Plan they are considered to help promote and achieve sustainable development. Where proposals conflict with the policies within the Plan and other relevant parts of the adopted development plan, planning permission will not usually be granted unless material considerations indicate that the statutory development plan should not be followed.

#### **Objectives**

5.1.5 This policy relates to the Vision and all the objectives of the Plan.

<sup>21</sup> Sustainable development in this context is defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Resolution 42/187 of the UN General Assembly) (NPPF para. 7).

## Related National and Local Plan policies

5.1.6 The principles of promoting and achieving sustainable development are considered to be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (in particular paragraphs 7-12) and with strategic policy SWDP1: Overarching Sustainable Development Principles.

### Policy SD2: Renewable and Low-Carbon Microgeneration-Development

Proposals requiring planning permission for renewable and low-carbon microgeneration development will be supported providing they do not cause significant harm to:

1. landscape character, visual amenity or other special qualities (either alone or cumulatively with existing development) having regard to the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan and associated guidance;
2. nearby heritage assets and their settings;
3. residential amenity; and
4. important habitat and biodiversity assets.

Development proposals that incorporate capacity to generate their energy requirements from on-site low-carbon and renewable energy sources will be supported.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.1.7 This policy relates to stand alone renewable and low-carbon microgeneration development as well as technologies which are integrated into existing and new buildings. Microgeneration is defined at section 82(6) of the Energy Act 2004 as 'use for the generation of electricity or the production of heat of any plant (a) which in generating electricity or (as the case may be) producing heat, relies wholly or mainly on a source of energy or a technology mentioned in subsection (7); and (b) the capacity of which to generate electricity or (as the case may be) to produce heat does not exceed the capacity mentioned in subsection (8)'.

5.1.8 The technologies, referenced at section 82(7) of the Act, are biomass, biofuels, fuel cells, photovoltaics, water (including waves and tides), wind, solar power, geothermal sources, combined heat and power systems, and other sources of energy and technologies for the generation of electricity or the production of heat, the use of which would, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, cut emissions of greenhouse gases in Great Britain.

5.1.9 The maximum capacity of microgeneration development, referenced at section 82(8) of the Act, is 50 kilowatts (0.05MW) in relation to the generation of electricity and 45 kilowatts thermal (0.045MW) kilowatts in relation to the production of heat.

5.1.10 This policy relates to microgeneration development only. Where development does not meet the parameters of microgeneration particularly in respect of capacity it will be subject to the relevant provisions policy SWDP27: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and the associated Renewable and Low Carbon Energy SPD (July 2018). The SPD also provides guidance on the factors that will be taken into account when determining the suitability of different renewable and low carbon energy schemes.

5.1.11 It is acknowledged that many types of microgeneration development may be considered 'permitted development' under Part 14, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015<sup>22</sup>. This policy would apply to those situations where the microgeneration development falls outside of the permitted development rights. In line with the conditions associated with many of the Classes of permitted development within Part 14, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 the policy seeks to ensure that proposals requiring planning permission minimise their effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity and character of the area. A key consideration will be the impact of any development on the AONB and its setting.

5.1.12 Development in the WNA would either be within the Malvern Hills AONB or could be considered to be within its setting. In line with NPPF paragraph 155 (a) development will need to satisfactorily address any adverse impacts (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts) specifically in relation to the special qualities of the Malvern Hills AONB. The Malvern Hills AONB Partnership has issued guidance<sup>23</sup> in relation to renewable energy technologies which should be referred to for proposals. The key issues to be considered are:

- Landscape and visual impacts including local and distant views, the backdrop to site's location, effect on the skyline, scale, colour, use of materials and glare;
- Noise impacts;
- Biodiversity impacts;
- Heritage and design impacts; and
- The cumulative impacts.

5.1.13 The Government introduced changes to Part L of the Building Regulations which came into force in June 2022, with new homes in England now needing to produce around 30% less carbon emissions and non-domestic buildings 27% less carbon emissions compared to the old regulations. The Future Homes and Buildings Standard will complement the Building Regulations to ensure new homes built from 2025 produce 75-80% less carbon emissions than homes delivered under the old regulations. This policy also seeks to encourage new development to generate 100% of their energy requirements from on-site low-carbon and renewable energy sources. This will help the fight against the climate emergency and the fuel crisis.

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<sup>22</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/596/contents/made>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/SolarPanelsFinal.pdf>;  
<http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Wind-Turbines-Final.pdf>;  
<http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/HeatPumpsFinal.pdf>  
<https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2022/08/19-24-MHAONB-Management-Plan.pdf>

5.1.14 Non-residential developments should use the Buildings Research Establishment BREEAM building standard ‘excellent’ as a frame of reference to facilitate compliance with this policy.

### Objectives

5.1.15 This policy fulfils the following objectives of the Plan:

- EnS1: To reduce carbon dioxide emissions, promote energy security and reduce vulnerability to rising fuel costs for Welland residents.
- SSH5: To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.

### Related National and Local Plan policies

5.1.16 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 155 and 158 and strategic policies SWDP27: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and SWDP23: The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills AONB.

### Policy SD3: Energy Efficiency Improvements to Existing Buildings

The retrofitting of energy efficiency measures in existing developments will be supported, subject to consideration of potential harmful impacts on landscape character and visual amenity, biodiversity assets, the historic environment and the amenity of the local area. Where relevant to the specific development and location of the site, proposals should demonstrate they have been informed by the AONB Partnership’s Guidance on Building Design

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.1.17 NPPF paragraph 153 states ‘Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures’. A footnote to this sentence states, ‘In line with the objectives and provision of the Climate Change Act (CCA) 2008’. Amendments to the CCA, introduced in June 2019<sup>24</sup>, set a net zero target for UK carbon emissions by 2050.

5.1.18 The ‘energy hierarchy’ states that energy demand should be reduced through energy efficiency and low energy design before meeting residual energy demand, first from renewable or low carbon and then from fossil fuels. Energy efficiency retrofitting proposals should therefore incorporate and maximise energy-efficient methods of construction and design including sustainable heating and lighting and passive ventilation.

5.1.19 This policy supports the principle of improving energy efficiency within the existing building stock within the WNA. It is acknowledged that in most cases, retrofitting energy efficiency measures does not require planning permission. However, in those instances where it does the proposal’s impacts on landscape character and visual amenity, biodiversity, the historic environment and the amenity of the local area will need to be considered. In assessing proposals due regard shall be had to the proposals being informed by guidance within the

<sup>24</sup> The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019.

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Welland Design Guide and Code, and, where relevant to the specific development and location of the site, AONB Partnership's Guidance on Building Design.

### **Objectives**

5.1.20 This policy fulfils the following objectives of the Plan:

- EnS1: To reduce carbon dioxide emissions, promote energy security and reduce vulnerability to rising fuel costs for Welland residents.
- SSH5: To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.

### **Related National and Local Plan policies**

5.1.21 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 155 and 158 and strategic policy SWDP27: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy.

## 5.2 WELLAND DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY

### Policy DB1: Development within the Welland Development Boundary

Development proposals will be supported within the Welland Development Boundary, as shown at Figure 5.1, provided they meet the following criteria:

1. They have regard to the guidance within the Welland Design Guide and Code (see Appendix 5.1); and, where relevant to the specific development and location of the site, to the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan and associated guidance documents.
2. Where developments are located within the AONB, they conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB's landscape and where they are considered to be within the setting of the AONB, they take into account views into and out of the AONB and the complementary nature of the landscape character and type within the AONB and its relationship to its setting.
3. They provide safe and suitable access to the site for all users;
4. They do not create significant harm to the amenity of adjacent residents and occupiers;
5. They do not cause significant harm to land or features that have important biodiversity, landscape character, visual amenity or heritage value; and

Land beyond the Welland Development Boundary, with the exception of the allocation at policy H4 and any strategic allocation, is considered to be within the open countryside where development proposals will be assessed against relevant local and national policies and any relevant policies within the Plan.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.2.1 The current development boundary to village of Welland was drawn up in the Malvern Hills District Local Plan 1986-2001 (adopted 1998). It was retained within the Malvern Hills District Local Plan 1996-2011 (adopted 2006) and was continued within the SWDP 2006-2030 (adopted 2016).

5.2.2 The role of the development boundary is to define the built limits of a settlement and differentiate between what is the built form of a settlement where the principle of development is usually acceptable subject to it meeting other relevant planning policies and the countryside where development is more strictly controlled. Development boundaries guide development to sustainable locations demarking a concentration of existing residential and employment premises and services and facilities. In addition, they provide clarity and certainty for developers and the general public by highlighting the areas which, in principle, will be more acceptable than others for additional built development.

5.2.3 Extensive development has taken place in the past 10 years to the east of the current development boundary on what was land defined as open countryside. That land to the north of Marbank Road (the Cornfield Close development) and to the south of Drake Street now has the characteristics of built form. Established, dispersed properties within relatively large

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and landscaped plots were considered appropriate to the character of the open countryside but the recent developments have changed the context to a built form character

5.2.4 The *Welland Neighbourhood Area: Development Boundary Review Report* provides the rationale and evidence to support the proposed extension of the development boundary to the east and north-east and some minor amendments to other parts of the existing boundary. The alteration to the current development boundary and this policy could provide opportunities for appropriate windfall development to come forward. These opportunities would be assessed against this and other Plan policies and relevant SWDP and national policies.

5.2.5 This policy applies to all development proposals requiring planning permission including, but not limited to, householder, residential, tourism and holiday accommodation, energy generation, and employment and agricultural developments. It supports the principle of development within the development boundary providing it meets certain criteria. These criteria are considered important local requirements for all development proposals to comply with including:

- compliance with the *Welland Design Guide and Code*
- the impact on the special qualities of the AONB and its setting;
- adequate and safe access for all users;
- the impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents and occupiers; and
- the impact on biodiversity assets, landscape character, visual amenity or heritage assets.

5.2.6 A large proportion of the WNA is beyond the Welland Development Boundary which is defined as open countryside. There are areas within the open countryside where there are existing houses and other buildings and where there may be proposals for further development in the future. Around 40% of the WNA lies within the Malvern Hills AONB, the remainder is in the vicinity of the AONB and development may therefore be considered to be in its setting. Development within the open countryside will be assessed against the relevant policies within the NPPF, SWDP and the Plan.

5.2.7 The Environment Act 2021, NPPF and SWDP and preferred options SWDP Review include specific provisions for the protection and enhancement of protected landscapes and biodiversity assets. This policy includes a requirement for any development proposals (and their associated infrastructure) to not only be in accordance with these provisions but also to have considered the information and guidance in relevant Malvern Hills AONB studies and guidance and any other relevant guidance.

## Objectives

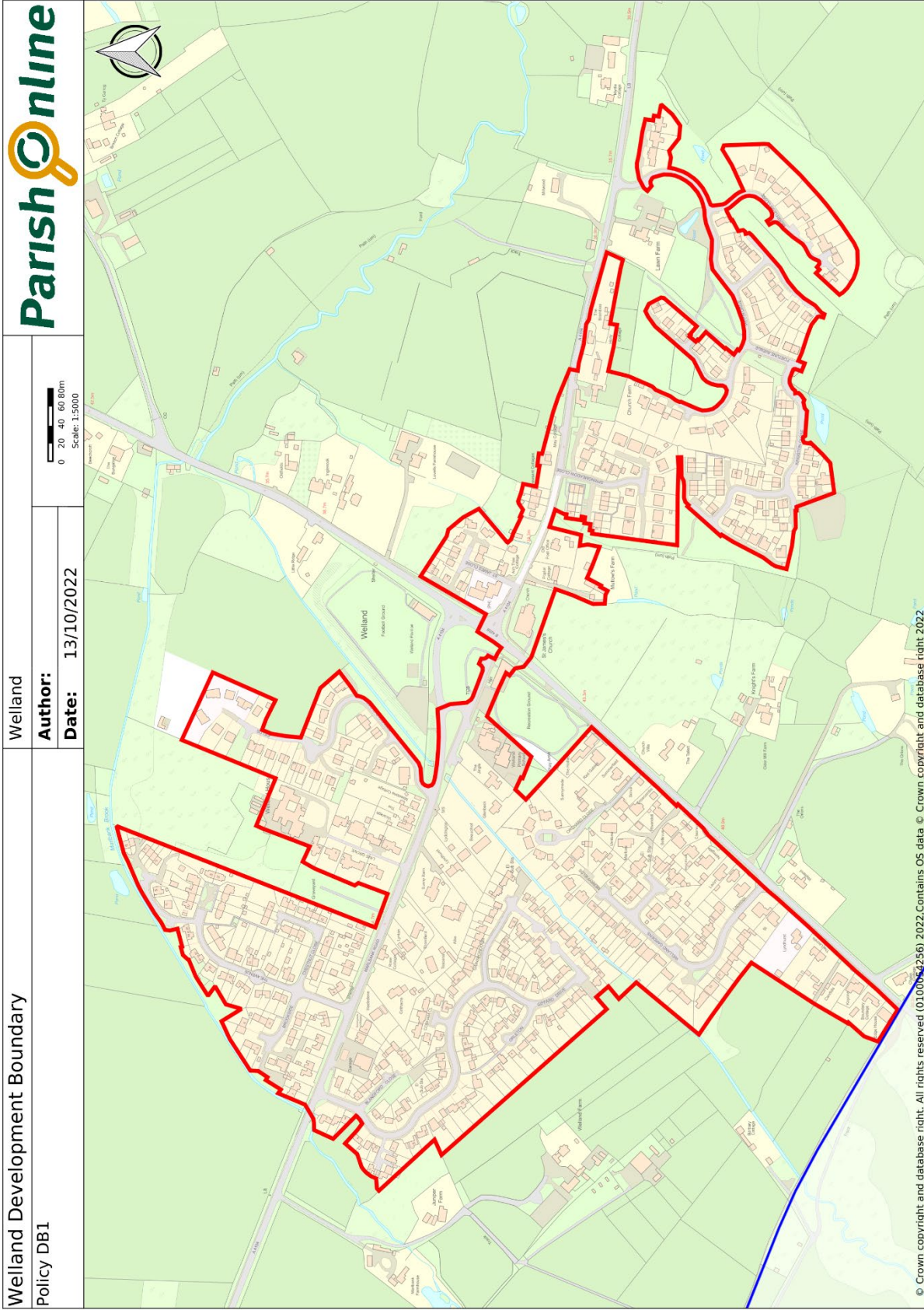
5.2.8 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

- EnS2: To protect and enhance the village's open green spaces.
- EnS3: To protect, enhance and conserve the AONB and its setting, and wider landscape and views.
- EnS4: To protect and enhance the historic environment of Welland.
- EnS5: To conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- SSCC1: To position development within easy walking distance of village facilities.
- SSH3: To ensure that new development is of high-quality design and reinforces local distinctiveness.
- SSH6: To ensure that the scale of development is appropriate to the sustainable growth of the village whilst seeking to maintain its rural character.

## Related National and Local Plan policies

5.2.9 Related policies include national policies directing development to sustainable locations and strategic policy SWDP 2: Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy and non-strategic policies SWDP16: Rural Exception Sites; SWDP18: Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside and SWDP19: Dwellings for Rural Workers and policy SWDP12: Employment in Rural Areas and policy LE1.





**Figure 5.1: Welland Development Boundary**

## 5.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

### Policy G1: Local Green Space

The following areas, identified at Figure 5.2 (and on individual site plans at Figures 5.2.1-5.2.8 in Appendix 5.2), are designated as Local Green Space where development will need to be consistent with national policy relating to Green Belt.:

WLGS01:	Spitalfields Recreation Ground
WLGS02:	Welland Village Green
WLGS03:	Welland Park
WLGS04:	Pursers Orchard
WLGS05-01:	St James Green
WLGS05-02:	St James Green
WLGS06:	Kingston Close Green Space
WLGS07:	Kingston Close Habitat Area

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.3.1 In accordance with the NPPF the community wishes to see greenspaces of particular importance to them protected for the future. As such and in line with paragraphs 101-103 of the NPPF the most important greenspaces will be afforded protection from new development unless very special circumstances demonstrate proposals are not inappropriate. These spaces are designated as LGS. The very special circumstances for which development proposals for sites within a designated Local Green Space can be considered should be consistent those circumstances expected for development in Green Belts, as per paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

5.3.2 The LGS locations are shown at Figure 5.2 (additional plans of each LGS are shown at Figures 5.2.1-5.2.8 at Appendix 5.2). A LGS does not have to be in public ownership. Further, a LGS may have restricted or unrestricted public access but designation does not in itself confer any rights of public access over what exists at present and land may be considered for designation even if there is no public access e.g., green areas that are valued for their wildlife, historic significance and/or beauty. The *Welland Neighbourhood Area: Local Green Space Report* provides the evidence to demonstrate that each of the LGS sites meets the three criteria at paragraphs 101-103 of the NPPF.

5.3.3 For context, the LGS sites, and their relationship with the Development Boundary and Neighbourhood Open Space (NOS) sites are shown at Figure 4.1 in this document, and on the map at Appendix 5.3. The Plan also designates a number of areas of open space as NOS as detailed in policy G2.

5.3.4 It is recognised that the SWDPR proposes to designate green spaces within the WNA. Some of these proposed green spaces are designated as LGS. The LGS designation is not considered to conflict with these proposals. New Green Infrastructure and other green spaces within the WNA will be assessed for their potential as LGS in a future review of the Plan.

## Objectives

5.3.5 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

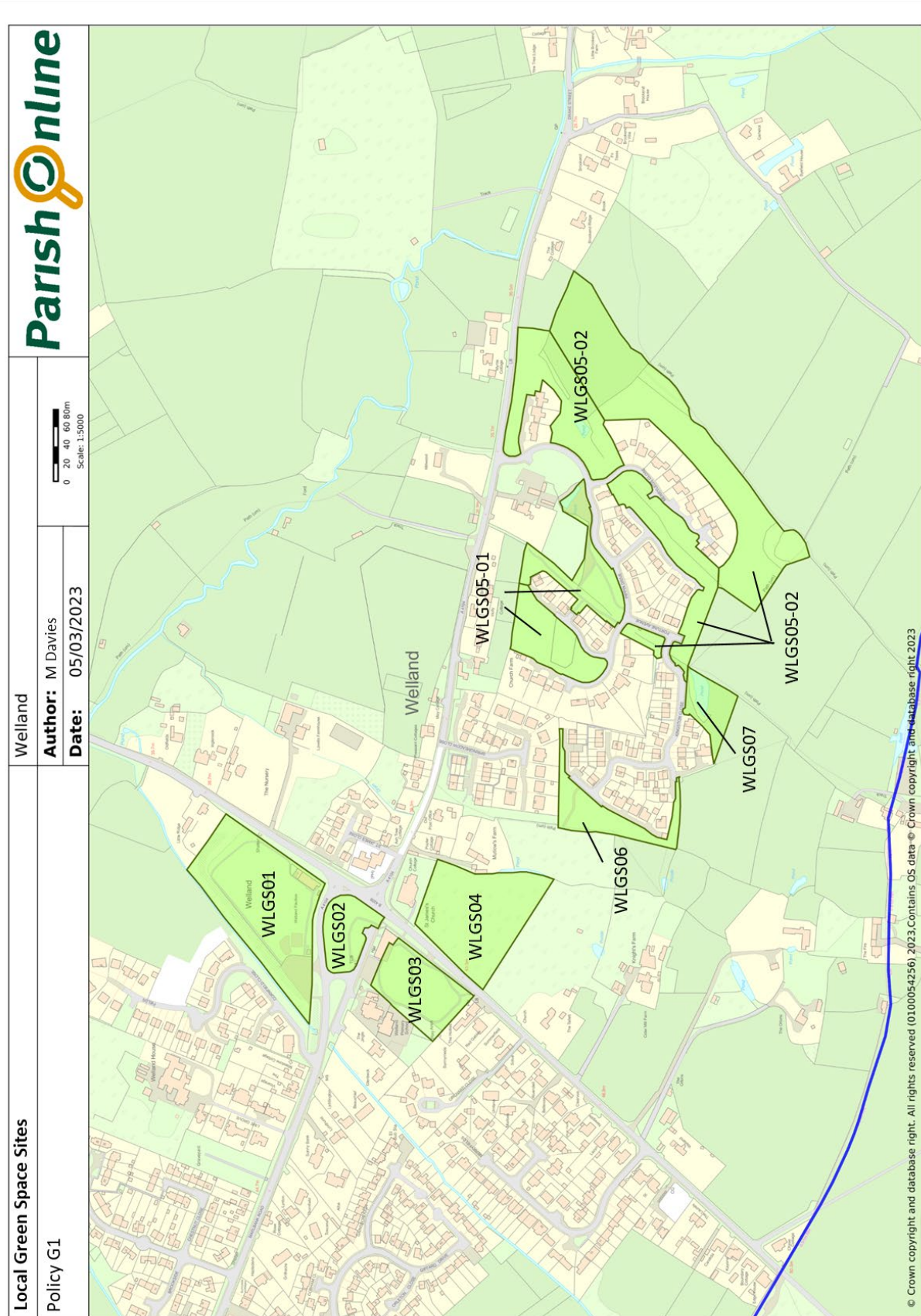
- EnS2: To protect and enhance the village's open green spaces.
- EnS5: To conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- EnS3: To protect, enhance and conserve the AONB and its setting, and wider landscape and views.
- SSSC5: To preserve important village assets and amenities.
- SSSC6: To enhance the community facilities and recreational facilities at the heart of the village and to encourage fitness and wellbeing.
- EcS1: To encourage and support home working.

## Related National and Local Plan policies

5.3.6 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 101-103, and complementary advice contained in the NPPG and strategic policy SWDP 5: Green Infrastructure and non-strategic policy SWDP 38: Green Space.



Figure 5.2: Local Green Space Sites



## Policy G2: Neighbourhood Open Space

The following areas, identified at Figure 5.3 (an on individual site plans on Figures 5.3.1-5.3.4 in Appendix 5.4), are designated as Neighbourhood Open Space (NOS):

WNOS01:	St James Church Yard
WNOS02:	Spring Meadows SSSI Buffer
WNOS03:	Welland Cemetery
WNOS04:	Giffard Drive and Blandford Close

Development proposals affecting a Neighbourhood Open Space will only be supported if:

1. the proposed development improves the existing use and community value of the space without harming the quality or character of the Open Space, or
2. the applicant can demonstrate that one of the criteria at NPPF paragraph 99 apply.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.3.7 To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities that a community needs planning policies should plan positively for the provision of shared spaces, community facilities (including open spaces) to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments (NPPF para 93a)). Access to a network of high-quality open spaces is important for the health and well-being of communities (NPPF para 96). NPPF para 92c is also relevant, which states that planning policies should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs, for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure. Neighbourhood open spaces are areas of land that provide such public value to the local community within the Welland neighbourhood area. These sites are not considered to meet the criteria for designation as Local Green Space but are nonetheless important to the local community to deliver the benefits as described in the NPPF 92c and 93a and meet the vision and objectives in this Plan.

5.3.8 The Plan sets out a policy that seeks to protect and enhance open spaces that are considered important to the local community to deliver the above stated benefits and in general accordance with the NPPF and SWDP policy 38: Green Space. Open spaces are defined within NPPF as 'All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as visual amenity'. The location of the NOS sites within the parish is shown at Figure 5.3 and individual site plans are shown in Figures 5.3.1-5.3.4 at Appendix 5.4. The use, amenity and value of each of the four NOS is included in the *Welland Neighbourhood Area: Neighbourhood Open Space Report*.

5.3.9 For context, the NOS sites and their relationship with the Development Boundary and Local Green Space (LGS) sites are shown at Figure 4.1 in this document, and on the map at Appendix 5.3.

5.3.10 It is recognised that the SWDPR proposes to designate green spaces within the WNA. Some of these proposed green spaces are designated as NOS. The NOS designation is not considered to conflict with these proposals. New Green Infrastructure and other green spaces within the WNA will be assessed for their potential as NOS in a future review of the Plan.

### **Objectives**

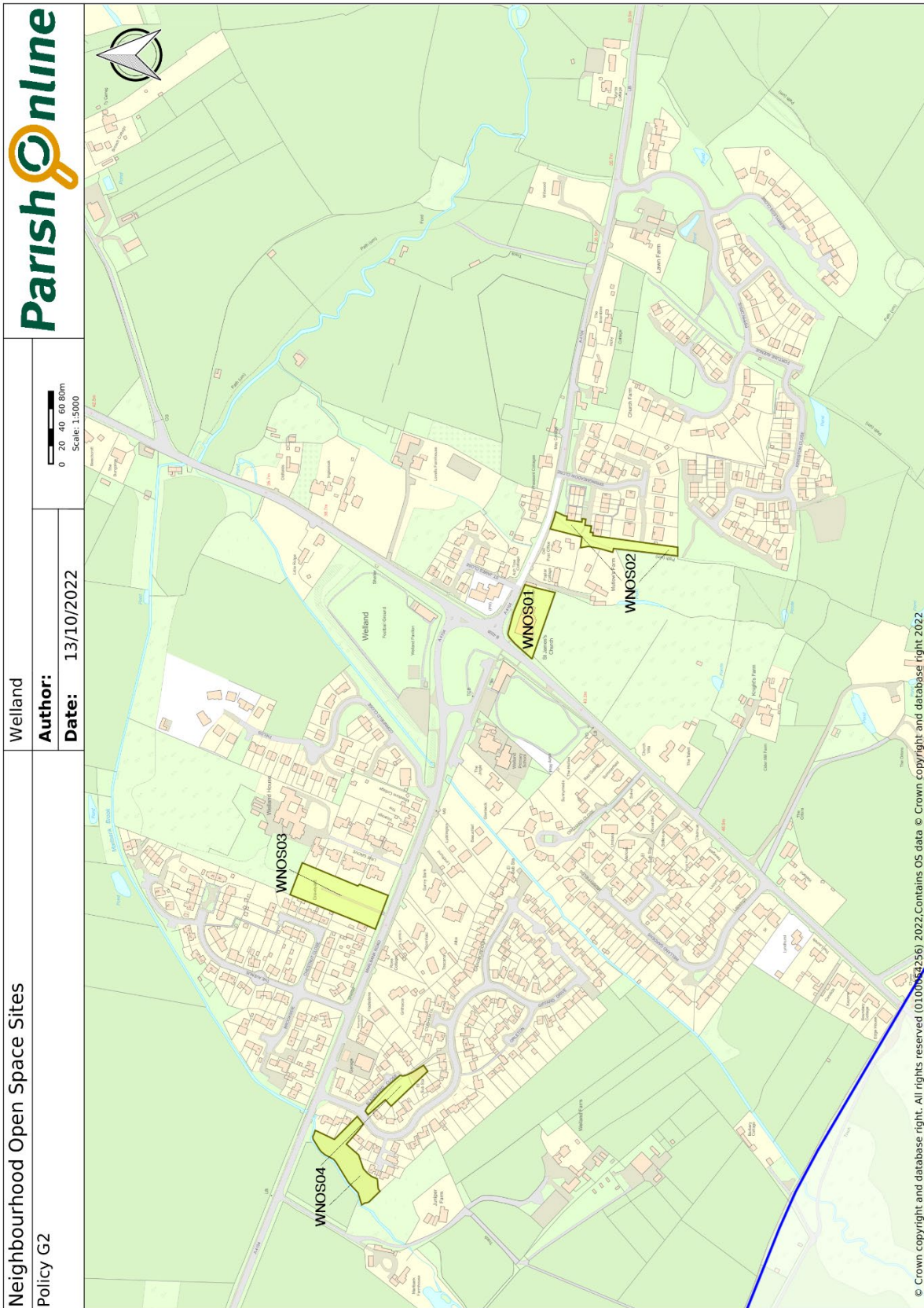
5.3.11 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

- EnS2: To protect and enhance the village's open green spaces.
- EnS3: To protect, enhance and conserve the AONB and its setting, and wider landscape and views.
- EnS5: To conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- SSCC5: To preserve important village assets and amenities.
- SSCC6: To enhance the community facilities and recreational facilities at the heart of the village and to encourage fitness and wellbeing.
- EcS1: To encourage and support home working.

### **Related National and Local Plan policies**

5.3.12 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 92-93 and 98-99, and complementary advice contained in the NPPG and strategic policy SWDP 5: Green Infrastructure and non-strategic policy SWDP 38: Green Space.





**Figure 5.3: Neighbourhood Open Space Sites**

## 5.4 BIODIVERSITY

### Policy B1: Local Biodiversity net gain

To be supported, all new residential and non-residential development will deliver a net gain in local biodiversity. Applicants will need to provide a proportionate and current assessment of the type and condition of habitats and species found on the site pre-development and demonstrate how the development will secure and maintain the improvements to biodiversity. This should have regard to relevant Malvern Hills AONB Guidance, including its Management Plan and Nature Recovery Plan.

Net gains in biodiversity should be through on-site measures, the details of which need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority. Off-site net gain measures will only be acceptable as a last resort and where on-site mitigation is demonstrated not to be possible. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that off-site gains will be brought forward in a timely manner at a scale and within reasonable proximity to the proposed development.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.4.1 In December 2018 the Government published plans for consultation to require housing and commercial developments to deliver 'bio-diversity net gains' resulting in improved habitats for wildlife from development and infrastructure provision. The Chancellor in his Spring Statement 2019 confirmed that the Government will mandate net gains for biodiversity on new development in England as part of meeting its objectives within the 25 Year Environment Plan. The Environment Act 2021<sup>25</sup> makes provisions to s90 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) that planning permission for development will need to show a 10% gain in onsite biodiversity value from pre-development values.

5.4.2 The above commitment is stronger than national policy currently within the NPPF. This states that plans should, 'identify and pursue opportunities for securing net gains for biodiversity' (para. 179 (b)). When determining planning applications LPAs should apply the following principles, (para. 180 (d)) 'development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate'.

5.4.3 With the proposals within the Environment Plan and the Environment Act 2021 it is considered that a policy requiring net biodiversity gains associated with new development is in conformity with national policy.

5.4.4 Applicants will need to submit a proportionate Ecological & Biodiversity Survey with their planning application which should identify the type and condition of important habitats and species within the site and also its contribution to the wider mosaic of habitats in the area. The Survey Report should identify and demonstrate the measures that have been taken to make improvements to the habitats and how these are to be maintained over the long term.

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/schedule/14/enacted>



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5.4.5 In order to deliver appropriate net biodiversity gains, applicants should have regard to relevant guidance on enhancing habitat and biodiversity assets in the Malvern Hills AONB and its setting. This guidance includes the Management Plan and the AONB's Nature Recovery Plan (March 2022)<sup>26</sup>, the whole WNA falling entirely within the area for this strategy.

### **Objectives**

5.4.6 This policy fulfils the following Plan objective:

- EnS5: To conserve and enhance biodiversity.

### **Related National and Local Plan policies**

5.4.7 Policy B1 has regard to national policies, in particular the Environment Act 2021, the 25 Year Environment Plan and NPPF paragraphs 179(b) and 180(d), and advice contained in planning practice guidance. The policy is also in general conformity with the strategic policy SWDP 22: Biodiversity and Geodiversity part F.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/MHAONB-NRP-Final-Mar22.pdf>

## 5.5 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

### Policy LC1: Landscape Character and Visual impact

Developments along with any associated infrastructure, including their accompanying landscaping schemes, must conserve and enhance the special qualities of the area's landscape and scenic beauty and be consistent with its landscape character and visual amenity through meeting all of the following requirements:

1. Provide measures that conserve and enhance the intrinsic landscape character and natural beauty of the area,
2. Avoid adverse impacts on the designated landscapes through sensitive design and location of development, and
3. Take into account local character and development patterns including immediately adjacent to the site.

This should be demonstrated through the submission of evidence, proportionate to the type and scale of development proposed and the site's location, to demonstrate they conserve and enhance the special qualities of the Neighbourhood Area taking account of:

- i. Visual assessments of the sensitivity and capacity of a site for development which should be independent of vegetation mitigation measures, on the basis that views of development may not be screened by vegetation in future.
- ii. A consideration of cumulative effects and matters such as coalescence arising from existing and planned future development, and
- iii. Demonstration of regard for the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan and the Welland Parish Council's Landscape Assessment Reports <sup>27</sup>.

Development proposals which would create unacceptable adverse effects that cannot be mitigated to an acceptable degree when compared to the baseline condition will not be supported.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning policies should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (para. 174). Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (para. 176).

5.5.2 Part of the WNA lies within the Malvern Hills AONB (see Figure 5.4). As such its landscape and scenic beauty are to be protected from development that would have a detrimental impact on it. Development proposals should look to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB which are set out in the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan

<sup>27</sup> Includes the Welland Neighbourhood Development Plan Landscape Assessment (June 2015), the Welland Neighbourhood Development Plan Landscape Sensitivity & Capacity Assessment Review of Selected Sites (December 2019) and the Welland Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Sensitivity & Capacity Assessment Selected Sites (April 2022).

2019-2024<sup>28</sup>. The remainder of the WNA is in the vicinity of the AONB where development may be considered to be in its setting.

5.5.3 Information on the Neighbourhood Area's landscape character and visual amenity can be found in the Welland Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Assessment Report (LAR) (June 2015) by Carly Tinkler CMLI and the update reports in 2019<sup>29</sup> and 2022<sup>30</sup>. These reports have also informed the production of this policy, the most recent update enabling consideration of the latest major developments in the WNA and the implications of these on the local landscape character visual amenity and thus the requirements for this policy.

5.5.4 The Welland Neighbourhood Plan LAR and updates refer to a number of relevant documents to which development proposals should have regard. These include:

- Worcestershire County Council Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance (August 2012)<sup>31</sup> and Landscape Character Assessment Technical Handbook (August 2013)<sup>32</sup>. Additional advice can be found in relation to Landscape Character at the website address below<sup>33</sup>
- Malvern Hills District Council produced a report in May 2019 entitled "Malvern Hills AONB Environs – Landscape and visual sensitivity study"<sup>34</sup>. This report provides useful information on Malvern Hills AONB setting issues.
- Malvern Hills AONB guidance documents, including:
  - Landscape Strategy and Guidelines
  - Guidance on Identifying and Grading Views and Viewpoints<sup>35</sup>
  - Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development<sup>36</sup>
  - Guidance on Building Design<sup>37</sup>
  - Position Statement on Development and Land Use Change in the setting of the Malvern Hills AONB (November 2019).<sup>38</sup>

5.5.5 This policy provides a local perspective to policy SWDP25: Landscape Character. The SWDP policy requires a LVIA for all major development proposals and for other proposals where they are likely to have a detrimental impact on a significant landscape attribute, an irreplaceable landscape feature or the landscape as a resource. In line with Malvern Hills District Council's 'Local Area Planning Application Requirements List - November 2017'<sup>39</sup> a

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/64217-Malvern-Hills-AONB-Management-Plan-2019-24-v06.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> Welland Neighbourhood Development Plan Landscape Sensitivity & Capacity Assessment Review of Selected Sites (December 2019), Carly Tinkler CMLI

<sup>30</sup> Welland Neighbourhood Plan 'Landscape Sensitivity & Capacity Assessment Selected Sites' (April 2022), Carly Tinkler CMLI

<sup>31</sup> [https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4788/landscape\\_character\\_assessment\\_supplementary\\_guidance](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4788/landscape_character_assessment_supplementary_guidance)

<sup>32</sup> [https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4789/landscape\\_character\\_assessment\\_technical\\_handbook](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4789/landscape_character_assessment_technical_handbook)

<sup>33</sup> [https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20014/planning/1006/landscape\\_character\\_assessment](https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20014/planning/1006/landscape_character_assessment)

<sup>34</sup>

<https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/component/fileman/file/Documents/South%20Worcestershire%20Development%20Plan/SWDP%20Review/Evidence%20Base/AONB%20Studies/Malvern-Hills-AONB-environs-final-report-2-310519r.pdf?routed=1&container=fileman-files>

<sup>35</sup> [http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/KEYVIEWSFinalreport-lowreswebsite\\_000.pdf](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/KEYVIEWSFinalreport-lowreswebsite_000.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> [http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/guidance\\_on\\_colour\\_use\\_screen.pdf](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/guidance_on_colour_use_screen.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MalvernBuildingDesignGuideLoRes\\_001.pdf](http://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MalvernBuildingDesignGuideLoRes_001.pdf)

<sup>38</sup>

<https://www.worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s23433/9%20Development%20and%20Land%20Use%20change%20in%20the%20MH%20AONB.pdf>

<sup>39</sup>

<https://www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk/component/fileman/file/Documents/Planning/Planning%20Application%20Forms/Local%20Area%20Requirements%20List%20Merged%202021.pdf?routed=1&container=fileman-files>

LVIA will be required for applications proposing development other than householder development<sup>40</sup> in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

5.5.6 The cumulative adverse effects on landscape and visual sensitivity from individual developments may be harmful to the AONB and its setting. Individual proposals will need to consider the potential cumulative effects of its development along with existing and planned future development (i.e., sites with planning permission and allocations). Development on sites identified with higher capacity for development into areas with higher visual and/or landscape sensitivity and lower capacity for development (for example, those identified as such in the 2022 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment), will not be supported. Planning proposals that incorporate measures to prevent such future incursion would be encouraged, for example the planting of permanent landscaping at the boundary, designation of the neighbouring land as protected habitat/wildlife site/ designated or protected open space etc.

## Objectives

5.5.7 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

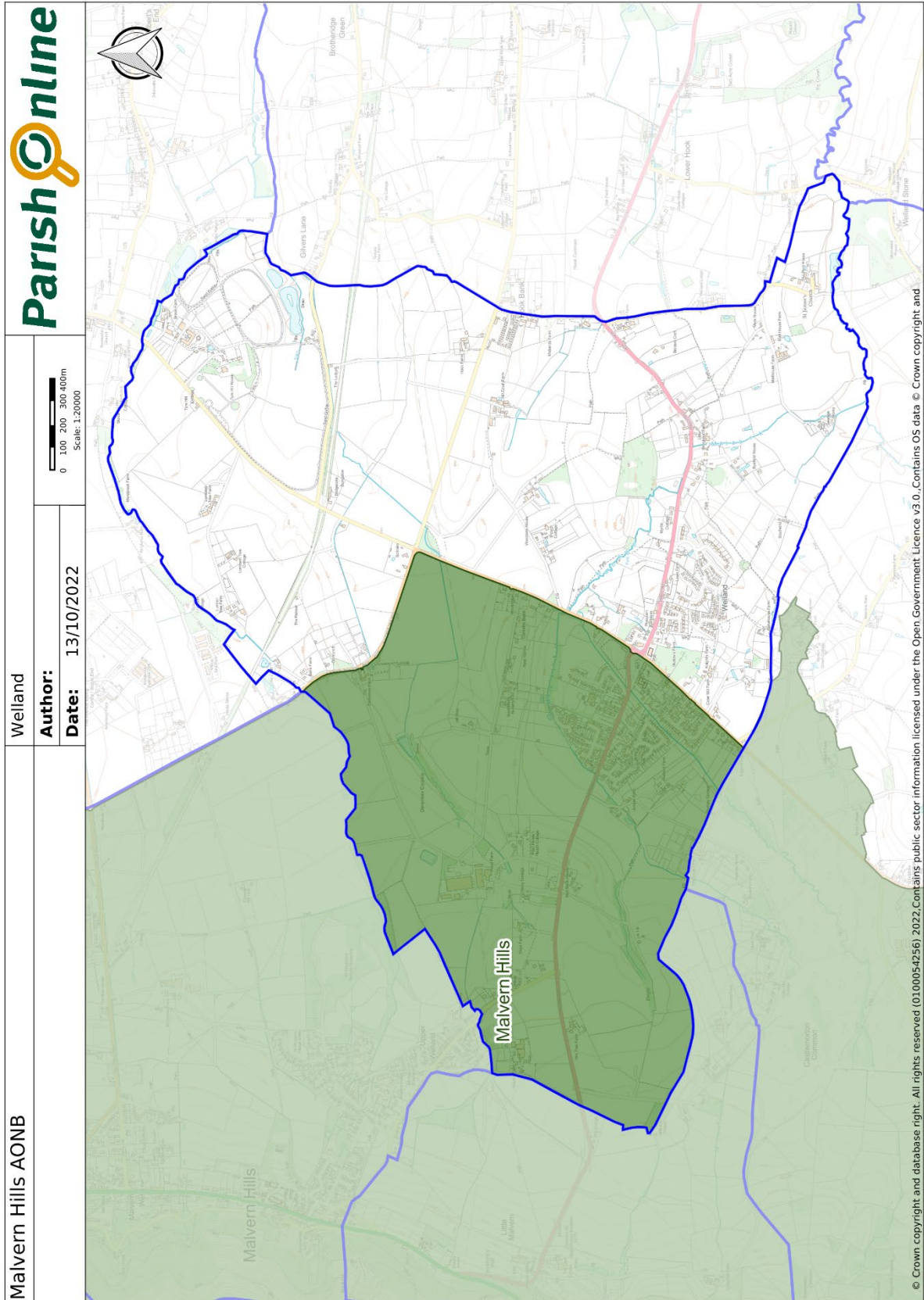
- EnS3: To protect, enhance and conserve the AONB and its setting, and wider landscape and views.
- SSH6: To ensure the scale of development is appropriate to the sustainable growth of the village whilst seeking to maintain its rural character.

## Related National and Local Plan policies

5.5.8 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 174 and 176 and complementary advice in NPPG and strategic policies SWDP 23: The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and SWDP 25: Landscape Character.

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<sup>40</sup> Householder development are those developments within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse, to alter or enlarge a single house (but not a flat) including works within the boundary/garden, which require an application for planning permission (such as extensions, conservatories, loft conversions, dormer windows, alterations, garages, car ports or outbuildings, swimming pools, walls, fences, domestic vehicular accesses including footway crossovers, porches and satellite dishes).



**Figure 5.4: Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**



## 5.6 COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

### Policy C1: Protection of existing Built Community Facilities and the Local Shop

Any proposal that would result in the loss of a site or building currently or last used as a community facility as identified below and shown at Figure 5.5 (with individual site plans at Appendix 5.5) will only be supported having regard to the criteria at policy SWDP 37B.

WCF01:	Welland Village Hall, Marlbank Road
WCF02:	Welland Primary School, Marlbank Road
WCF04:	St James Church of England Church, Gloucester Road/Drake Street
WCF05:	The Pavilion, Spitalfields, Marlbank Road

The following local shop with post office as identified below and shown at Figure 5.5 (with an individual site plan at Appendix 5.5) will be protected:

WCF03: Welland Village Store and Post Office, Gloucester Road

Proposals for a non-retail use of this premises will only be supported if consistent with policy SWDP10.

In relation to WCF04 above, special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses is required.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.6.1 Built social and community facilities cover a wide range of uses provided by the public, voluntary and private sectors. These in the main include uses which would fall within Use Class F2 'Local Community Uses'. However, they could also include uses which fall with Use Class C2 uses (residential institutions) and Use Class E: Commercial, Business and Service uses (e.g., non-residential institutions and assembly and leisure uses) and some Sui Generis uses (those uses without a use class) as identified in the Town and Country (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended. They can include the following uses:

- Education – schools, colleges, universities;
- Health – GP surgeries and dental practices;
- Indoor sports and leisure facilities;
- Libraries;
- Emergency services;
- Community venues;
- Youth centres;
- Community cinemas and theatres;
- Post Offices;
- Places of worship; and
- Public toilets.



5.6.2 Paragraph 93 of the NPPF advises that policies should plan positively for the provision and use of community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services. MHDC has produced a Sport & Leisure Strategy, entitled 'Active Communities Malvern Hills District – A Vision for the Future'. This strategy defines how MHDC will support sport and leisure provision in the future. It refers to the provision of built facilities including village halls and education sport and leisure facilities used by the community as part of the wider sport and leisure offer in the district. The Plan seeks through this policy to protect facilities within the WNA which provide wider leisure opportunities to local residents.

5.6.3 There are a small number of built community facilities and one local shop within the Neighbourhood Area; the Village Hall, primary school, pre-school, place of worship, and a village store with a post office. The first three of these are publicly owned facilities and the fourth is owned by the local diocese. They are important assets to the community providing facilities for the young and the elderly within the community. The shop and post office, although a privately owned local business, provides vital facilities for a rural community such as Welland. To promote the ongoing social and cultural capital of the WNA it is important that it retains these local facilities that help sustain the vitality of the community. The location of these facilities is shown at Figure 5.5 and individual site plans for each one of the 5 facilities is shown on Figure 5.5.1-5.5.5 at Appendix 5.5.

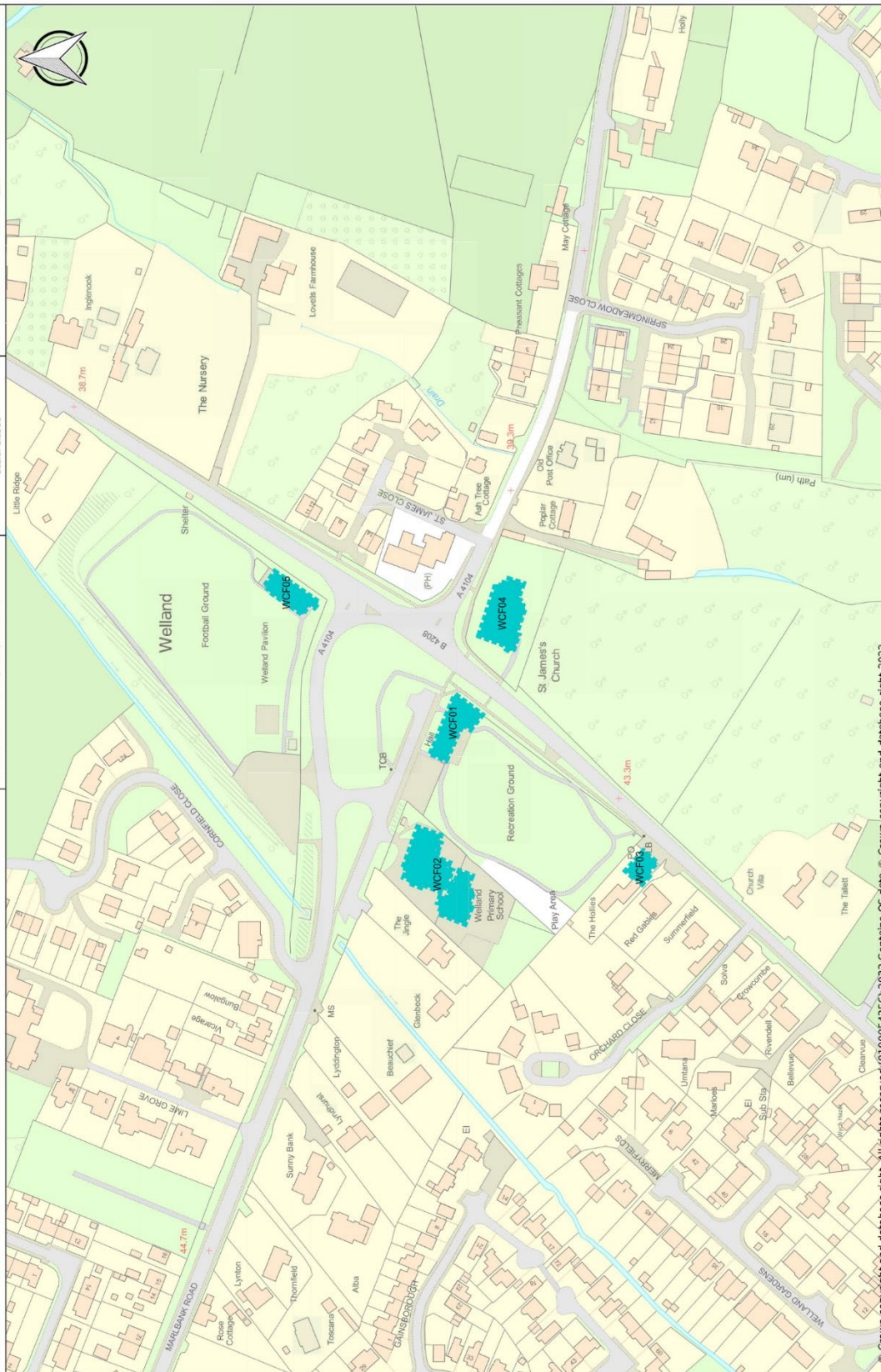
### **Objectives**

5.6.4 This policy fulfils the following Plan objective:

- SSCC5: To preserve important village assets and amenities.
- EcS1: To encourage and support home working.

### **Related National and Local Plan policies**

5.6.5 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 92 and 93 and complementary advice within NPPG and non-strategic policy SWDP 37: Built Community Facilities and strategic policy SWDP 10: Protection and Promotion of centres and local shops.



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**Figure 5.5: Existing Built Community Facilities and the local shop in the WNA**

### **Policy C2: Provision of new and improved built community facilities**

Proposals for new and improved built community facilities will be supported provided that all the following criteria are met:

1. They are of a scale appropriate to its location.
2. They have regard to the guidance within the Welland Design Guide and Code (see Appendix 5.1) and guidance produced by the AONB Partnership.
3. They avoid significant harm on residential and other local amenity.
4. They have satisfactory access and off-street parking such that existing residential or other uses is not significantly harmed.
5. They make full use of opportunities to provide access by walking, cycling or public transport – e.g., through the provision of bike racks or connectivity to footpaths. Where practical and viable, use should be made of sites which are within or physically well-related to the Welland Development Boundary.

#### **Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.6.6 Proposals for new or improved built community facilities will need to satisfy a number of criteria relating to design, amenity and traffic in order to be considered appropriate. LMWPC may seek to make improvements including extending the existing Village Hall (see Section 6 and Appendix 6.1: Community Projects)

5.6.7 Welland village population has grown by over 32% since 2011, and its housing stock by over 44%. In the same time, some facilities and amenities have been lost to the village, such as a petrol station and the village centre pub is currently not operating. The intent and rationale for this policy is to encourage new facilities and amenities that would enhance the role of the centre of Welland as a hub of village life and also meet more of the everyday needs of our growing community. This would not only reduce reliance on the use of the private car by members of the community, contributing positively to carbon emissions reductions, but it would also foster a sense of kinship and wellbeing within the village by creating more opportunity for residents and visitors to interact and create a sense of “belonging”. This may be particularly valuable for newer residents, particularly those now occupying the most recent larger developments in Welland. New facilities and amenities may also support new employment and/or education opportunities in the community. Proposals that help to extend the range of services to meet the community’s everyday needs and also to provide fitness and recreation opportunities are identified as areas that would be particularly encouraged. Proposals that, cumulatively with existing facilities, provide opportunities for every age in the community are desired.

5.6.8 The policy supports proposals to site the facilities/amenities within or close to the Development Boundary in order to reduce reliance on the private car and enable connectivity

with the homes in the village. Facilities and amenities that are particularly well connected to the centre of Welland would be more favourable still as these would support the Plan's objective to enhance the community facilities at the heart of the village.

5.6.9 The special qualities of the AONB, local landscape and biodiversity are important assets to the community. New amenities and built community facilities should not be detrimental to these, nor to existing residential and other local amenity. Further, given the limited capacity in Welland for development, they should complement existing facilities wherever possible to maximise the breadth of offering for the community.

### **Objectives**

5.6.10 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

- SSSC5: To preserve important village assets and amenities.
- SSSC6: To enhance the community facilities and recreational facilities at the heart of the village and to encourage fitness and wellbeing.
- EcS1: To encourage and support home working.

### **Related National and Local Plan policies**

5.6.11 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 92 and 93 and complementary advice contained in NPPG and non-strategic policy SWDP 37: Built Community Facilities.

## 5.7 LOCAL HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

### Policy HE1: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

To be supported development proposals which directly or indirectly affect a non-designated heritage asset must describe the impact of the proposal on its significance, and demonstrate regard for the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

Proposals for the renovation or alteration of a non-designated heritage asset (building or structure) must be designed sensitively and with careful regard to the heritage asset's historical and architectural interest and setting.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.7.1 The WNA includes a number of Grade II listed buildings which are designated heritage assets. There are additional designated heritage assets and scheduled monuments in the local area with which some areas within the WNA share varying degrees of interinfluence. Designated heritage assets are afforded significant protection under national planning policy within the NPPF and local planning policy within the SWDP (Policy SWDP6: Historic Environment and SWDP24: Management of the Historic Environment) and therefore this Plan does not seek to introduce further provisions.

5.7.2 Non-designated heritage assets<sup>41</sup> also enhance local distinctiveness and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Applicants will need to describe the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. Proposals should seek to protect or enhance non-designated heritage assets. Where harm is considered to be caused by a proposal this will need to be weighed against the benefits of the proposed development and any measures that can be put in place to avoid, minimise or mitigate any impact that may be caused to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

5.7.3 MHDC's Local List SPD (May 2015) states that local heritage assets will need to be significant with regard to at least one of the following - a significant period in the District's history, the social history of the District or a notable example of planned or incidental planning, or associated with an individual of local importance. In addition, a nominated asset will need to be significant having regard to one or more of the following – age, rarity, aesthetic value, group value, evidential value, archaeological interest, designed landscape, landmark status and social / communal value. Once a building or structure is on the Local List they will be formally recognised as a non-designated heritage asset although some buildings or structures may exist that are not formally on the Local List but could still be considered as non-designated heritage assets.

<sup>41</sup> Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. [PPG Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723](#)



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## Objectives

5.7.4 This policy fulfils the following Plan objective:

- EnS4: To protect and enhance the historic environment of Welland.

## Related National and Local Plan policies

5.7.5 Related policies include NPPF paragraph 203 and complementary advice contained in NPPG and strategic policy SWDP 6: Historic Environment and non-strategic policy SWDP 24: Management of the Historic Environment.



## 5.8 DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Policy I1: Development and Infrastructure

Development proposals, other than householder development, will be required to provide or contribute to the provision of infrastructure made necessary by that development or where it gives rise to the need for additional or improved infrastructure to mitigate its impact on existing provision.

Planning applications will need to demonstrate that an assessment has been carried out of the infrastructure requirements and its provision and delivery for the proposed development.

Where infrastructure is needed to support new development, the infrastructure must be operational no later than the appropriate phase of the development for which it is needed.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.8.1 NPPF states that the planning system in performing its economic role for promoting sustainable development should identify and co-ordinate the provision of infrastructure (paragraph 8). In relation to non-strategic policies, paragraph 28 of the NPPF states that communities should use these to set out detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development including the provision of infrastructure. In relation to neighbourhood planning the NPPF states at paragraph 29 that it gives local communities direct power to ..... deliver the sustainable development they need. There is no doubt that Government policy seeks to ensure that the provision of infrastructure contributes towards building a strong economy and delivering sustainable development and infrastructure provision is a matter that can be addressed within a neighbourhood plan.

5.8.2 Infrastructure includes a number of components which are important for the creation of sustainable places:

- Transport infrastructure including roads, rail, bus, cycle routes, pavements and footpaths sometimes referred to as grey infrastructure;
- Community infrastructure including schools, health care facilities, community centres, social clubs, etc;
- Green infrastructure including green spaces, green corridors, the countryside;
- Blue infrastructure such as rivers, canals, lakes and other waterbodies; and
- Utilities such as water supply, wastewater, energy, waste and telecommunications.

5.8.3 It is acknowledged that not all the above have land use planning implications and that there are statutory obligations on utility providers to make the necessary connections to new developments. However, it is also recognised that the provision of new development without the delivery of appropriate infrastructure is not sustainable development, as set out in NPPF. The economic role of sustainable development states that the planning system should identify and coordinate development requirements including the provision of infrastructure. This policy seeks to ensure the right type of infrastructure is available in the right places and at the right time to accommodate new development.

5.8.4 This policy seeks to ensure that the existing infrastructure provision, as listed at paragraph 5.8.2, can support new development. Where the existing infrastructure provision is assessed to be inadequate then applicants will need to show how proposals will make or contribute towards making the necessary improvements so that the proposed development does not worsen the existing situation. The assessment of the adequacy of infrastructure provision should be made clear within planning applications. For major applications<sup>42</sup> this assessment should be provided through providing relevant details within the Design & Access Statement.

5.8.5 Little Malvern & Welland Parish Council will expect statutory authorities to assess the infrastructure requirements for the area and ensure a robust assessment of the impact of new development on infrastructure provision. The Parish Council will seek to ensure that statutory authorities request and obtain the necessary improvements to infrastructure, where necessary, through new development. In addition, it is important that infrastructure is delivered in a timely manner and adequately provides for the delivery of its associated development.

5.8.6 The definition of householder development for the purposes of this Plan is considered to be proposals to alter or enlarge a single house (but not a flat), including works within the boundary/garden.

### **Objectives**

5.8.7 This policy fulfils the following Plan objective:

- SSH5: To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.

### **Related National and Local Plan policies**

5.8.8 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 8(a) and 28 and complementary advice contained in NPPG and strategic policy SWDP7: Infrastructure.

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<sup>42</sup> Footnote 60 of the NPPF states that for the purposes of paragraphs 176 and 177 in relation to the AONB, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined. Outside the AONB 'major development' is defined within the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

- 10 or more dwelling houses of a residential development site of 0.5ha if the number of units is unknown;
- A non-residential building of 1,000 sqm or more;
- Development on a site of 1ha or more.

## Policy I2: High Quality Communications Infrastructure

A. Development of ultrafast broadband infrastructure to serve the WNA will be supported. Any new development within the WNA should be served by full fibre broadband connections unless it can be demonstrated through consultation with the NGA Network providers that this would not be possible, practical or commercially viable. In such circumstances, suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate future installation.

The area in which the works have been carried out should be, so far as necessarily practicable, reinstated to its condition before the infrastructure was laid.

B. New infrastructure to support telecommunications installations (such as mobile phone masts) requiring planning permission will be supported provided that the proposal meets all of the following criteria:

1. The siting and appearance of equipment does not have an unacceptable impact on the landscape and scenic beauty of the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting;
2. The siting and appearance of equipment does not have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of local residents;
3. Equipment sited on existing buildings and structures is sympathetically designed;
4. Where freestanding new masts are proposed, it is demonstrated that there are no viable options for siting the equipment on or in existing buildings or structures;
5. The equipment and its siting/installation does not unacceptably or permanently harm biodiversity<sup>43</sup>.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.8.9 Broadband internet connection within the WNA is generally slow. This affects the ability of residents to access information and the performance of businesses that rely on the broadband as a key means of communication. Ultrafast broadband serving mobile devices as well as hard-wired systems will help to address these issues and bring with it a range of new opportunities, such as better results and home working and access to more online applications and services and the rapid transformation of high volumes of data.

5.8.10 In a time when the internet and digital media is continuing to grow as an essential means of communication the provision of fast broadband is a key asset for existing and new businesses within the WNA and will improve the wellbeing of its residents. This policy supports the provision of high speed broadband specifically in relation to new development and seeks to ensure that any infrastructure works within existing built areas is reinstated to its original condition.

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<sup>43</sup> Local important biodiversity assets and habitats are considered to be not only those within the development site, but those that could reasonably be impacted by development on the site. This could include, for example, if the site (or part of the site) has an important role as a wildlife corridor, or if light, noise or other pollution from the site could adversely impact a particular habitat or species.

5.8.11 Mobile phone coverage within parts of the WNA is considered variable and is particularly poor within indoor environments as shown on the Ofcom coverage map<sup>44</sup>. This affects local businesses and residents alike. The infrastructure provision for telecommunications should be the minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network. Existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used unless the need for a new site can be justified. The siting, appearance and design of equipment and masts will be important consideration in relation to its impact on the character of the area.

### **Objectives**

5.8.12 This policy fulfils the following Plan objective:

- EcS3: To support the provision of good telecommunications and connectivity as a means of delivering sustainable economic growth.

### **Related National and Local Plan policies**

5.8.13 Policy I2 has regard to national policies, in particular NPPF paragraphs 114-118, and advice contained in planning practice guidance as demonstrated in the Basic Conditions Statement. The policy provides a local perspective to non-strategic policy SWDP 26: Telecommunications and Broadband.

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<sup>44</sup> <https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/en-gb/mobile-coverage>

### **Policy I3: Surface and Foul Water Drainage and Management**

To be supported development proposals must be designed to include sustainable drainage and water management measures. Proposals must either demonstrate that the existing surface water drainage infrastructure is adequate or include improvements to that infrastructure to sustainably accommodate any additional water runoff.

Surface water should only connect with the public sewer as a last resort after all other alternatives have been investigated. This is particularly important to manage the impact on the public sewerage system as surface water flows are much larger than foul flows. Applicants should engage with the public sewerage undertaker at the earliest opportunity so that early consideration can be given to the proposed approach to foul water flows.

Development should be brought forward in accordance with an agreed overall site-wide drainage strategy (including foul and surface water drainage) submitted with the planning application. The drainage strategy should be agreed prior to the commencement of development on the site. Development proposals which are brought forward on a phased basis should have regard to interconnecting infrastructure. The strategy should ensure infrastructure is constructed with regard to interconnecting later phases.

Drainage proposals should be able to demonstrate how there will be no adverse impact or cumulative harm to existing biodiversity.

#### **Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.8.14 The above policy requires sustainable drainage systems to be incorporated into all development proposals. A Water Management Statement<sup>45</sup> must be submitted with applications which provide details of how the sustainable drainage will operate and be maintained. In addition, developers should ensure that there is sufficient drainage infrastructure capacity to accommodate the proposed development and not cause flooding elsewhere. A Flood Risk Assessment will be required in line with [MHDC validation requirements](#) to demonstrate that the development is not liable to flood or cause flooding elsewhere.

5.8.15 Any proposed sustainable drainage system should not unacceptably impact or cause cumulative harm to, existing natural environment and ecologically sensitive sites and should aim to prevent urban runoff pollution entering watercourses. To avoid flood risk and to protect wildlife corridors, culverting of existing watercourses and infilling of dry ditches should be avoided. Wherever possible, existing culverts should be opened up. Implementation of natural flood management measures will be encouraged and promoted to contribute towards delivering a reduction in local and catchment-wide flood risk and the impacts of climate change as well as to achieve other wider environmental benefits.

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<sup>45</sup> See item 34 in [MHDC's Local Area Planning Application Requirements List - November 2017](#)

5.8.16 According to the 'Flood Map for Planning'<sup>46</sup> the land adjacent to Marlbank Brook is within Flood Zones 2 and 3. This includes the northern edge of Welland Village. According to the Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment<sup>47</sup> (August 2019) there is also risk from surface water flooding along Marlbank Brook and a number of the drainage channels that flow into it which are located within Welland Village. In addition, the Village is identified within a medium risk area from the cumulative impact of development within its drainage catchment area (Bushley Longdon Brook).

5.8.17 Public sewerage for the WNA is served by the Welland Waste Water Treatment Works (WwTW) located off Welland Court Lane in the south of the parish. According to the Water Cycle Study – Phase 1 Scoping Report (August 2019)<sup>48</sup> the Welland WwTW has estimated spare hydraulic capacity of 48 dwellings with significant headroom available in terms of quality performance. Severn Trent Water has improvements planned 2020-2025 to meet new phosphorous permit. The Report identifies that for the Welland WwTW infrastructure and/or treatment upgrades will be required to serve proposed growth, but no significant constraints to the provision of this infrastructure have been identified. The Phase 2 Water Cycle Study (September 2021)<sup>49</sup> identifies a housing growth of 96 dwellings during the SWDPR period relating to the Welland WwTW. The Study concludes in relation to ammonia and biochemical oxygen demand there is sufficient environmental capacity at the Welland WwTW and that the proposed development (i.e., 96 dwellings) has no significant impact on the water body's potential for meeting good ecological status (GES). In relation to phosphate the Study states the 'proposed development can be accommodated with a tighter permit and upgrade to treatment. This is achievable with current technology'. The Appendix to the Phase 2 Study states in relation to proposed allocations within Welland, 'There are significant hydraulic flooding issues in the downstream network. Hydraulic modelling is required to determine the full impact'.

5.8.18 In line with the NPPG sustainable drainage systems<sup>50</sup> should follow the surface water hierarchy (see below) to reduce the impact of new development on flood risk in the area and ensuring new development is delivered in the most sustainable way.

- a) An adequate soak away or some other adequate infiltration system (approval must be obtained from local authority/building control/Environment Agency/LLFA); or, where that is not reasonably practicable;
- b) Attenuated discharge to watercourse (approval must be obtained from riparian owner/land drainage authority/Environment Agency/LLFA); or, where that is not reasonably practicable;
- c) Attenuated discharge to surface water sewer (approval must be obtained from Severn Trent/LLFA); or, where that is not reasonably practicable;
- d) Attenuated discharge to combined sewer (approval must be obtained from Severn Trent/LLFA).

<sup>46</sup><https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/confirm-location?eastings=379343.5&northings=239826.3&placeOrPostcode=welland>

<sup>47</sup> [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - South Worcestershire Development Plan \(swdevelopmentplan.org\)](https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/swdp-review/swdp-review-evidence-base/water-cycle-study)

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/swdp-review/swdp-review-evidence-base/water-cycle-study>

<sup>49</sup> [https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/component/fileman/file/Documents/SWDPR%20Reg%2019%20Docs/DDG-JBAU-XX-XX-RP-EN-0001-A1-C03-South\\_Worcestershire\\_WCS\\_Phase\\_2.pdf?routed=1&container=fileman-files](https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/component/fileman/file/Documents/SWDPR%20Reg%2019%20Docs/DDG-JBAU-XX-XX-RP-EN-0001-A1-C03-South_Worcestershire_WCS_Phase_2.pdf?routed=1&container=fileman-files)

<sup>50</sup> Paragraph: 056 Reference ID: 7-056-20220825 [Flood risk and coastal change - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/111111/Flood_risk_and_coastal_change_-_GOV.UK_(www.gov.uk))



5.8.19 The policy seeks to ensure that proposed new development does not cause a deterioration in the capacity or capability of the Welland WwTW and brings about improvements where necessary.

5.8.20 In line with MHDC Planning Application validation requirements a Foul Sewage Utilities Assessment is required for all applications proposing:

- major development (10 or more houses, new built development of 1000 sq. metres or more); and
- foul water generating development in an area where there is a known mains foul sewerage drainage problems

### Objectives

5.8.21 This policy fulfils the following Plan objective:

- To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.

### Related National and Local Plan policies

5.8.22 Policy 13 has regard to national policies, in particular NPPF paragraphs 20, 34 and 167, and advice contained in planning practice guidance. The policy is also in general conformity with the strategic policies SWDP 7: Infrastructure and SWDP 28: Management of Flood Risk and provides a local perspective to non-strategic policy SWDP29: Sustainable Drainage Systems.

### Policy 14: Active Travel Corridor

That area of the former Malvern to Upton-upon-Severn railway line that falls within the WNA will be safeguarded to form part of the Malvern to Upton-upon-Severn Active Travel Corridor, as shown on Figure 5.6. Proposals for the provision of a cycle and pedestrian route will be supported providing it does not unacceptably harm the nature conservation, biodiversity interest and landscape character along the corridor and the setting of the Malvern Hills AONB.

### Reasoned Justification (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.8.23 The Worcestershire's Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2018-2030<sup>51</sup> (Worcestershire County Council) includes a package promoting Active Transport Corridors within each of the County's areas including South Worcestershire.

<sup>51</sup> [http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/9024/worcestershire\\_s\\_local\\_transport\\_plan\\_ltp\\_2018\\_-\\_2030](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/9024/worcestershire_s_local_transport_plan_ltp_2018_-_2030)

5.8.24 According to the document an 'Active Travel Corridor' is systemic investment in walking and cycling links along the corridor to create a safe, comprehensive, integrated network linking residential areas with key trip attractors, including schools, rail stations, town centres and employment locations. This will include surfacing, signage, lighting and public realm improvements to create an attractive and coherent network. Secure cycle parking and sheltered secure cycle parking will be considered.

5.8.25 One such corridor is the Malvern to Upton-upon-Severn Active Travel Corridor which is split into two phases; phase one - Malvern to Three Counties Showground (SWAT7) and phase two - Three Counties Showground to Upton-upon-Severn (SWAT8). At present the route of phase 2 does not pass through the WNA but travels along the B4209 from the Three Counties Showground to Hanley Castle and then south to Upton-upon-Severn on the B4211. However, there is an opportunity for the corridor to be located along the route of the former Tewkesbury and Malvern railway that connects with the Cotswold Line to the north of the parish in Malvern and runs east to Upton-upon-Severn. A small portion of the former railway is in the WNA as shown in Figure 5.6. This corridor could provide a non-vehicular safe, secure and sustainable travel route from the parish to Malvern to the north and Upton-upon-Severn to the east. The route of the former railway is shown at Appendix 5.6.

5.8.26 The policy seeks to safeguard the route as an Active Travel Corridor. It also seeks to utilise funding opportunities from new development, where viable, towards the delivery and maintenance of the corridor. Part of the former railway line is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Therefore, any future use of the corridor for active travel will need to ensure the protection and possible enhancement of its biodiversity value.

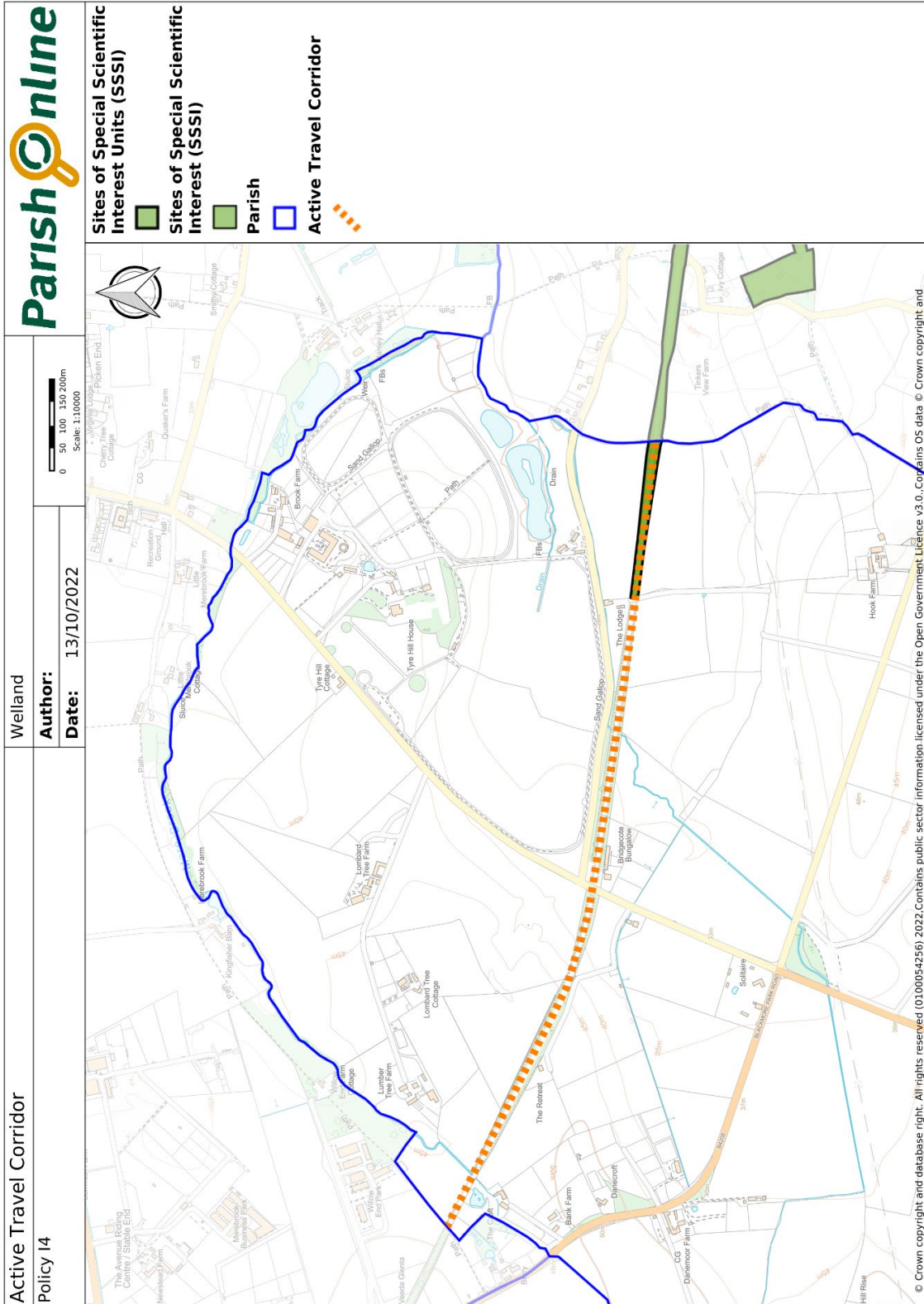
## Objectives

5.8.27 This policy fulfils the following Plan objective:

- SSCC6: To enhance the community facilities and recreational facilities at the heart of the village and to encourage fitness and wellbeing.

## Related National and Local Plan policies

5.8.28 Related policies include NPPF paragraph 104(c) and complementary advice contained in NPPG and strategic policy SWDP 4Jii: Moving around South Worcestershire.



**Figure 5.6: Malvern to Upton-upon-Severn Active Travel Corridor in the WNA**

## 5.9 DESIGN

### Policy D1: Design

Proposals for new development or the redevelopment of existing buildings should contribute towards the local distinctiveness of the Welland Neighbourhood Area. To be supported development proposals must demonstrate that they achieve high quality, sustainable and inclusive design which fully integrates into the village and parish by taking account of the Welland Design Guide and Code at Appendix 5.1 and the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan. Proposals need to address the following design principles and guidance:

1. Richness and variety of materials and details
2. Response to the landscape context and views to and from the AONB
3. Enhancing connectivity throughout the village and to future development
4. Knitting into the village's fabric which should also include a consideration of the character, design and development patterns immediately around the site
5. Boundary treatments

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

#### **Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.9.1 The physical environment of the WNA is important at many levels. It can generate a sense of belonging and pride amongst the local community, attract new residents, employers and visitors into the area and encourage investment from landowners and businesses. Good quality design is not just about what buildings look like. It is also about how new development is designed to relate to nearby buildings and spaces. New buildings, the redevelopment of existing buildings and development (including its associated infrastructure) involving the erection of structures or surfaces, including those relating to commercial, agriculture and employment uses should respond to local character and should reflect the identity of the local surroundings and the materials used in the past that contribute to creating a positive environment.

5.9.2 The *Welland Design Guide and Code* is included at Appendix 5.1. This provides specific a design code for the housing allocation (H4) and some general design principles and guidance for other development proposals within the WNA including:

## Richness and variety of materials and details

5.9.3 New developments should adhere to the following guidance in relation to the choice of building materials and details:

- Use sustainable building materials and new technologies to minimise fossil fuel reliance.
- Use a variety of building materials and architectural features that complement local, traditional buildings.
- All roofing materials must be nonreflective and avoid light colours (with allowances for harnessing solar energy).
- The colour of building materials to complement the local landscape avoiding light coloured and reflective roofs, especially when located at village edges (refer to AONB guidance).
- New dwellings within infill plots must complement the adjacent dwellings.
- The use of natural stone, timber and steel/zinc (non-reflective) for building elevations to add distinctive features to buildings is preferred.
- Where possible, use local building materials manufactured within and/or originating from the region to reduce transport energy.
- Environmental Colour Assessments (ECA) should ideally be carried out at an early stage in the planning and design process. Alternatively, an ECA can be the subject of a planning condition if planning is granted.

## Response to the landscape context and views to and from the AONB

5.9.4 Proposals must aim at integrating new buildings into the landscape in a way that benefits both the landscape and the built form through:

- All proposals, both within the AONB and visible from the AONB (e.g., land north of Cornfield Close) should respond to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment regarding views both to and from the Malvern Hills (including the three hills; Jubilee Hill, Pinnacle Hill and Black Hill and if applicable British Camp Hill Fort, see section 2.3 for further information).
- All development in Welland should respond to the colour palette of Welland as set out in the Guidance to strengthen a sense of local identity.
- Developers/applicants utilising the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan and guidance documents, including the “Guidance on Identifying and Grading Views and Viewpoints”. Principles provided in these on how development can respect landscape in views and on issues such as scale, massing, density and orientation of buildings should be applied,
- All development on the settlement edges, or adjacent to significant landscape features (e.g., Marlbank Brook) should aim to integrate the village within its landscape setting and make a positive contribution to the beauty and biodiversity of the native landscape.

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## Enhancing connectivity throughout the village & future development

5.9.5 Developments should consider a more permeable street network to cultivate important links. They should also keep pedestrian and cycle links into the village centre and surrounding neighbourhoods in mind. Overall, new developments should consider the following guidance:

- Propose routes laid out in a permeable pattern, allowing for multiple connections and choice of routes, particularly on foot. Any cul-de-sacs should be relatively short and provide onward pedestrian links.
- Propose short and walkable distances which are usually defined to be within a 10 minute walk or a five mile trip by bike. If the design proposal calls for a new street or cycle/pedestrian link, it must connect destinations and origins.
- Avoid designs that feature barriers to vehicle movement, gates to new developments, or footpaths between high fences.
- Align pedestrian and cycle routes to existing and new green infrastructure links and features wherever possible.

## Knitting into the village's fabric

5.9.6 The existing context needs to be considered and new development should react sensitively to preserve and enhance the best characteristics of a place by adhering to the following design guidance:

- The net density of development should not exceed 20 dwellings per hectare on developments of five or more dwellings.
- Developments of five or more dwellings must include a variety of dwelling sizes, forms and heights.
- Developments should not go beyond 2 storeys in height. 1 storey dwellings should have space in the roof to convert to an additional half storey.
- Individually designed buildings are preferred where they take their design cues from locally characteristic development.
- Whenever possible, architectural detailing where key vistas are terminated, at prominent corners or entrances, should be enhanced.
- Dual aspect corner units must have windows on all facades that front the street.
- Vistas should not be terminated with inactive development frontage including garages, car parking and rear boundary walls or fences.
- Wherever possible, long rows of terraced dwellings should be avoided as it does not reflect the character or the existing urban grain of the village.



## Boundary treatments

5.9.7 There are various boundary treatments used across the village. Generally, new developments should consider the following guidance with regard to boundary treatments:

- Boundary treatments should be sensitive to the local character.
- Development should seek to retain and enhance existing boundary hedges and hedgerow trees, between and around plots.
- Overall there should be a transition from more suburban areas to those on the fringes where more rurally appropriate species such as thorn should be used.
- Front boundaries on principal roads should be defined by either native hedgerow planting or low brick walls.
- Colour and design of boundary elements should reflect the predominant treatment of high quality along the street. Where there is a dominant character of (native) vegetation, this should be continued with regards to boundaries for new development.
- Infill dwellings should adopt the predominant boundary treatment of high quality along the street.
- Open lawn frontages are preferred in locations where this treatment is commonly found. Tree and shrub planting should be used to soften street frontages and add variety
- Wherever possible, appropriate tree and shrub planting that retains and enhances the local character should be used to minimise visibility of cars and create an attractive streetscape.
- Close boarded panel fencing erodes the local character and should be avoided.

5.9.8 The *Welland Design Guide and Code* document includes a specific design code for the housing allocation at policy H4. The design of development proposals at the allocation must comply with the relevant Design Code. The Design Code includes a concept plan for how a residential development, complying with the design parameters within the document, could be laid out. This is shown at Appendix 5.8. The concept plan is purely for illustrative purposes only. Proposals coming forward may be different to this and the layout of an approved scheme may also differ from this. It will for the applicant to demonstrate how their proposal accords with the requirements of the *Welland Design Guide and Code*.

5.9.9 Proposals should demonstrate how they meet the general design principles and guidance and the more specific design code through a Design and Access Statement where required<sup>52</sup>.

5.9.10 Developers/applicants are encouraged to consult the Parish Council on matters of design before submission of planning applications for new development as part of their meeting the requirement in the *Welland Design Guide and Code* for early discussions with the local community about the design and style of emerging schemes.

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<sup>52</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/1238/article/4/made>

## Objectives

5.9.11 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

- SSH3: To ensure that new development is of high-quality design and reinforces local distinctiveness.
- SSH6: To ensure that the scale of development is appropriate to the sustainable growth of the village whilst seeking to maintain its rural character.

## Related National and Local Plan policies

5.9.12 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 126-130 complementary advice contained in NPPG and guidance within the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code and strategic policy SWDP 21: Design.

### **Policy D2: Access, travel and connectivity associated with development proposals**

Proposals for all development, including change of use, must meet all of the following criteria:

1. It has safe vehicular access arrangements onto the highway;
2. It does not result in residual adverse cumulative impacts on the road network that are severe, and the impact on highway safety is acceptable;
3. It provides adequate vehicular and cycle parking in accordance with standards adopted by Worcestershire County Council;
4. It pursues opportunities to promote access by walking, cycling or by using public transport;
5. The design of proposed roads, pavements and cycle routes create a safe and efficient layout for all users including the mobility impaired, pedestrians and cyclists and for emergency service and refuse vehicles; and
6. Where changes to the highway are proposed, it is informed by the need to minimise any adverse impacts on the landscape and street scene having regard to the AONB's guidance on Highway Design.

Where necessary to assess the effect of development proposals, evidence, either in a Design and Access Statement or Transport Statement, which explains how the proposal meets the above criteria will be required.

### **Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.9.13 LMWPC recognises that the potential transport impacts associated with new development cause a significant amount of concern for local residents. It is important that proposals demonstrate to residents in a clear and objective way the impact that new development will have on the local highway network. Where the network will be unacceptably impacted, proposals will need to demonstrate how they will be mitigated for in order to reduce this impact so there is no adverse harmful impact on highway safety and the amenity of local residents.

5.9.14 Proposals should also demonstrate how they have incorporated sustainable transport measures. In particular, the integration of pedestrian and cycle provision will be seen as an important contributor to sustainability and accessibility. Local Transport Note 1/20 'Cycle Infrastructure Design'<sup>53</sup> provided useful guidance on delivering high quality cycle infrastructure as part of development proposals. In addition, proposals will need to demonstrate that the development is or can be appropriately accessed by public transport. In relation to what constitutes appropriate access, section 5 'Planning for Passenger Transport' of WCC's 'Streetscape Design Guide' (Spring 2020) states at para 5.2 'the County Council proposes a mean average walk distance for all properties within a development to scheduled bus stops of 400 metres'. Proposals will need to demonstrate they have provided safe and efficient access arrangements for all highway users. Parking should be provided as per the Parking Standards in WCC's Streetscape Design Guide<sup>54</sup> and any future amendments to those standards.

5.9.15 The Malvern Hills AONB Guidance on Highway Design should be used to help inform the design of new highway infrastructure. This includes advice on the colour of surfacing, signage, road edging and safety barriers which can all have an impact on the AONB and its setting.

5.9.16 The requirement for a Design and Access Statement associated with planning applications is set out The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013<sup>55</sup>. MHDC's 'Local Area Planning Application Requirements List - November 2017'<sup>56</sup> sets out when a Transport Assessment/Statement is required. In the context of housing a Transport Assessment is required when the proposal is for more than 80 dwellings. A Transport Statement may be required on a development below this threshold where there are likely to be impacts on the local transport network. Other factors to be taken into consideration are:

- the scale of the proposed development and its potential for additional trip generation (smaller applications with limited impacts may not need a Transport Assessment or Statement);
- existing intensity of transport use and the availability of public transport;
- proximity to nearby environmental designations or sensitive areas;
- impact on other priorities/ strategies (such as promoting walking and cycling);
- the cumulative impacts of multiple developments within a particular area; and
- whether there are particular types of impacts around which to focus the Transport Assessment or Statement (e.g., assessing traffic generated at peak times).

<sup>53</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/951074/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951074/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf)

<sup>54</sup> [http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/10113/streetscape\\_design\\_guide](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/10113/streetscape_design_guide)

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/1238/article/4/made>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.malvern hills.gov.uk/planning/making-a-planning-application>

## Objectives

5.9.17 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

- SSSC2: To link all developments to the village centre with footpaths / cycleways, where appropriate.
- EcS4: To position new development such that current problems with congestion, parking and road safety are not exacerbated and, if possible, reduced.

## Related National and Local Plan policies

5.9.18 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 112 and 130 and complementary advice contained in NPPG and strategic policies SWDP 4: Moving Around South Worcestershire and SWDP 21: Design.

## 5.10 HOUSING LAND

### Policy HLP: Welland Housing Land Provision

To meet the Indicative Housing Requirement of 25 dwellings for the Neighbourhood Area between 2021-2041, the Plan makes provision for housing land to be met through the following sources:

- a residential allocation for 13 affordable dwellings on land north of Cornfield Close (see policy H4); and
- a windfall development allowance of 12 dwellings.

Windfall development will be supported in sustainable locations, primarily within the Welland Development Boundary, and providing it accords with relevant national and local policies and policies within the Plan.

5.10.1 Annex E of the Regulation 19 SWDPR (November 2022) contains an indicative housing requirement (IHR) for Welland of 25 dwellings for the period 2021-2041. This number is derived from a calculation of an apportioned share of the housing need that is being allocated to Category 1 villages across the South Worcestershire Council's area within the emerging SWDP Review (SWDPR). The methodology does not take account of any specific physical, environmental or infrastructure constraints to future growth in a Neighbourhood Area and the SWDPR acknowledges that not all Neighbourhood Areas may be able to deliver the housing requirements due to local constraints. The IHR is based on the minimum number of homes to be delivered through the SWDPR's policies in the period to 2041 to meet the South Worcestershire area's needs. It is accepted that an IHR may be subject to change. In this event, the WPWG in consultation with MHDC, will undertake a review of this requirement and potentially revise the sources of housing land provision to meet this need (see Section 8: Plan Monitoring and Review).

5.10.2 The Plan makes provision to meet the IHR through two principal sources:

1. An allocation of 13 affordable dwellings at land north of Cornfield Close (see policy H4), and
2. Windfall development to deliver the remaining homes required to meet the IHR.

5.10.3 The allocation has been identified through a thorough site assessment process, detailed in the *Housing Site Assessment and Selection Report* (November 2022) and the subsequent *Housing Site Assessment and Selection Update Report* (February 2023), and further detail on the policy requirements and reasoned justification can be found in policy H4.

5.10.4 Paragraph 71 of the NPPF states that where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

5.10.5 According to information obtained from MHDC the number of residential windfall completions between the period 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2021 (a 16-year period) on small sites (i.e., 9 or less dwellings) is 28 and on large sites (10 or more dwellings) is 74 dwellings. This equates to 1.75 and 4.6 dwellings per annum respectively. The *Welland Neighbourhood Area Windfall Housing Delivery Report* provides the detail regarding the delivery of windfall housing with the WNA during the period 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2022.

5.10.6 Based on past historic trends for small windfall site developments only, a cautious projection would be for windfall delivery of one dwelling per year during the Plan period. This Policy makes provision for 12 dwellings from windfall development for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2041 (a 20-year period). This equates to less than one dwelling per annum (i.e., one dwelling every 20 months) and is considered achievable.

### **Policy H1: Market Housing Type and Size**

To be supported all new market housing development proposals of 5 dwellings or more must demonstrate, subject to viability considerations, that they provide the type and size of market housing to meet local housing need.

Within the WNA, there is a more demonstrable need for two and three bed properties than other sized homes and therefore the market housing mix for residential housing proposals should be:

- 10% one bedroom;
- 45% two bedroom;
- 40% three bedroom, and
- 0% four bedroom, and
- 5% five plus bedroom

Proposals should provide a larger share of semi-detached, short row (3 max) terraced houses and cottage style flats within their development as compared with detached houses to provide a greater mix of property type in the Parish. Smaller bungalows, including semi-detached bungalows, would also be supported.

Applicants should take account of the evidence and findings of the Housing Evidence Paper (June 2022). If applicants put forward a different housing mix to the above this will need to be justified through evidence of their own housing needs assessment which demonstrates how their proposals meet local housing need.

### **Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.10.7 SWDP14A states that “*All new residential developments of five or more units, having regard to location, site size and scheme viability, should contain a mix of types and sizes of market housing. The mix will be informed by the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and/or other local data, for example Neighbourhood Plans, Parish Surveys, Parish Plans and developers’ assessments. A Housing Evidence Paper (June 2022) has been produced as part*



of the evidence base to support the Plan and inform such housing mixes. Although, the evidence points to there being a need for affordable housing and not market housing in the WNA, the research has provided the suggested mix for market housing should proposals come forward for developments of five units or more in order to rebalance the housing stock to better meet the future needs of the local community.

5.10.8 The *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) provides the evidence to support the required housing mix. This is based on a previous desk-based housing needs assessment which uses the projected distribution of households by age within Welland and attributes the mix of dwelling size occupied by each age group to estimate the numbers of dwellings of each size that will be required at the end of the plan period. These figures are compared with the existing provision to calculate the additional need during the plan period. The result of this life-stage modelling exercise concludes that, in terms of demographic change, new development would involve the following share of dwelling sizes: 9.8% as one bedroom, 45.3% as two bedrooms, 37.9% as three bedrooms, 0% as four bedrooms and 7% as five or more bedrooms. These figures have been rounded so that the market dwelling mix that is required for any residential development of 5 dwellings or more is: 10% one bedroom, 45% two bedrooms, 40% three bedrooms and 5% 4 or more bedrooms.

5.10.9 Welland is notable for having a significantly higher proportion of detached properties and a lower proportion of terraced households and flats than compared with the District or the country as a whole. The proportion of semi-detached dwellings is also lower in Welland, albeit at a more comparative level to the proportion found in Malvern Hills. It is acknowledged that bungalows can play an important role in meeting the current and future needs of older people and people with accessibility needs. The data suggests that Welland has an adequate supply of smaller bungalows which are best suited to meet the needs of older people. As such proposals should seek to provide a greater share of semi-detached, and short row (3 max) terraced houses and cottage style flats<sup>57</sup> to provide a greater mix of property type in the Parish. The *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) suggests that some self-build could also be considered where the type and size of property meets the needs as identified in the *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) and is by people with proven local connection.

5.10.10 Should an applicant or developer put forward a different mix of market house type and size than required in the policy, they will need to provide firm evidence as to how the mix meets local need for market housing. This should include a local housing needs survey or housing needs assessment which would identify the need for the various house types and sizes.

5.10.11 The *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) provides current local housing need data and presents useful guidance for developers and applicants to consider when seeking to identify future local housing need appropriate to Welland's specific situation and which would constitute sustainable development for the community. This takes into account current SWDP policy but also Welland's location in the Malvern Hills AONB and its setting, including the provisions within the emerging in the SWDP Review for development in the AONB, other local and national policy provisions and guidance relevant to protected landscapes, and also

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<sup>57</sup> A style of two storey housing usually with single floor dwellings at ground level and similar dwellings on the floor above. They are typically arranged in a block of four with the outward appearance of a semi-detached house although can be arranged in short terraces.

discussions with the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership regarding the most appropriate data identification processes for settlements in an AONB.

## Objectives

5.10.12 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

- SSSC3: To integrate market and affordable housing to encourage the concept of a “balanced community”.
- SSSC4: To provide homes for younger people and young families and so counter the growing demographic imbalance.
- SSH1: To provide new housing to meet local needs; including a greater range of affordable housing for Welland residents.
- SSH2: To provide a mix of housing types including smaller homes for older residents wishing to downsize and for young singles, couples or families needing their first home.
- SSH4: To give preferential access to some new homes for people with a local connection.
- EcS2: To provide local housing for local employees.

## Related National and Local Plan policies

5.10.13 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 60 - 62 and complementary advice contained in NPPG and strategic policy SWDP 14: Market Housing Mix.

## Policy H2: Affordable Housing Provision

A. All new residential 'windfall' development, including conversions, above the thresholds below will contribute to the provision of affordable housing. The number of affordable dwellings to be provided on site is as follows:

- (i) 40% of units on greenfield sites of 5 dwellings or more should be affordable and provided on site;
- (ii) 30% of units on brownfield sites of 5 or more dwellings should be affordable and provided on site; and
- (iii) on sites of less than 5 dwellings, a financial contribution towards local affordable housing provision should be made, based on the cost of providing the equivalent in value to 20% of the units as affordable housing on site.

B. On the allocation at policy H4, 100% of the units should be affordable and provided on site. On a Rural Exception Site (RES) in the AONB, 100% of the units should be affordable and provided on site except in very exceptional circumstances. On a RES site outside of the AONB, where viability for 100% affordable housing provision cannot be achieved (subject to criterion F below), an element of market housing of no more than 20% may be included to provide sufficient cross-subsidy to facilitate the delivery of the affordable homes.

C. On developments of 5 or more units, a financial contribution may be accepted in lieu of on-site provision of affordable housing (in whole or in part) where it is demonstrated that on-site provision is unviable and undeliverable.

D. The tenure mix for the affordable housing should be 70% social rental, 5% shared ownership and 25% 'First Homes' (discounted market houses) unless it can be demonstrated that this mix is not viable or local need has demonstrated a need for a different affordable housing tenure for the site.

E. The mix of new affordable homes delivered through new development should be reflective of the following split unless it can be demonstrated that this mix is not viable or local need has demonstrated a need for a different affordable housing mix for the site:

- 45% one bedroom units,
- 25% two bedroom units and
- 30% three bedroom units.

F. For all new residential development where proposals for a lower provision and/or different mix of affordable housing from Parts A-E of this policy above are made on viability grounds a viability assessment must be submitted to demonstrate that cross-subsidisation is necessary. Such financial viability assessments must conform to an agreed methodology and, where necessary, the LPA will arrange for them to be independently appraised at the expense of the applicant. Where proposals for a different mix to the above are being made on the basis of meeting an evidenced local need for a different mix and/or tenure they will need to be justified through the applicant's own affordable housing needs assessment and/or local housing needs survey.

G. Secure arrangements will need to be put in place to ensure that the affordable housing provided in accordance with this policy will remain affordable in perpetuity (with the exception of First Homes for which this is not possible) and available to meet the needs of local people.

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**Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.10.14 The *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) shows that of the affordable routes to home ownership, shared ownership is considered the most viable for the local community but is still not tenable for those on average incomes or less. Other routes to home ownership are not considered affordable for the majority in the Parish and may not (in the case of First Homes) provide affordable housing in perpetuity. Social rental is considered the most appropriate affordable rental tenure for Welland's needs. Social rent is generally lower than affordable rent and so is more affordable to more people who cannot afford market rent or 80% of market rent (which is generally the rate for affordable rental properties). Social rental also provides a more reliable mechanism in the longer term to prioritise people with local connection through the Malvern Hills Rural Lettings Policy (and its successors).

5.10.15 The *Housing Evidence Paper* sets out evidence that there are between 12 and 14 homes – that should be affordable in perpetuity, particularly social rental homes – that could be justified as being for genuine local need and for whom alternative appropriate sites outside of the AONB are less available.

5.10.16 The *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) identified that policies for Rural Exception Sites in other plans generally had an expectation of 100% affordable housing. Where policies also enabled an element of market homes to be included (on evidenced viability grounds), a minimum of 75% affordable housing was generally specified. It was also noted that the policy for Rural Exception Sites in the emerging South Worcestershire Development Plan Review likewise includes an expectation of 100% affordable housing and a similar (20%) maximum cap on the inclusion of market housing on sites outside of the AONB should that not be feasible on viability grounds. This policy aligns with emerging SWDPR policy and is considered to reflect nationally benchmarked best practice.

5.10.17 The *Housing Evidence Paper* identifies the following affordable housing tenure splits as most appropriate for the identified local needs - 70% social rental, 5% shared ownership and 25% First Homes. This should be applied to the allocation and any Rural Exception Site that may come forward. This split provides for the delivery of shared ownership properties without overly diluting the delivery of social rental homes (the most needed tenure type of affordable tenure within the WNA). On other sites with developments of 5 units or more an alternative split of the affordable housing provided on site could be 75% social rental and 25% First Homes. This would maximise the delivery of the most needed housing type for the WNA within national policy constraints.

5.10.18 On 28 June 2021 the Government introduced through planning policy (a Written Ministerial Statement) and NPPG a requirement that a minimum of 25% of homes delivered through developer contributions should be First Homes. The First Homes must be discounted by a minimum of 30% although neighbourhood planning groups (and Local Authorities) can require higher minimum discounts at 40% or 50% if need can be evidenced through the most appropriate method available to them (either in the local or neighbourhood plan, an emerging policy or, where appropriate, a Supplementary Planning Document). According to the *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022), the price cap should be set as low as possible for households requiring affordable homes in Welland so they are able to access ownership of First Homes.

Therefore, the maximum discount allowable by the Government for First Homes of 50% should be applied to residential development proposals. A reduced discount would be considered on viability grounds only as this would not be meeting the evidenced needs of the local community.

5.10.19 The *Housing Evidence Paper* highlights the ‘Housing For You’ register data which suggests a greater focus on 1 and 2 bedroom social rental homes, with a split approaching 46% 1 bedroom, 23% 2 bedroom and 31% 3 bedroom units being the most suitable proposal for affordable housing development in the WNA to meet local need. After rounding the split for affordable housing developments should be 45% 1 bedroom, 25% 2 bedrooms and 30% 3 bedrooms. Evidence shows there is no requirement for affordable housing larger than three bedrooms in size. New affordable housing development should provide a larger share of semi-detached and short row (3 max) terraced houses and cottage style flats as compared with detached houses to provide a greater mix of property type in the Parish. Smaller bungalows, including semi-detached bungalows, will also be supported.

5.10.20 All affordable housing provision, with the exception of First Homes, should be affordable in perpetuity. Affordable housing provision should be on-site unless there is robust justification for financial contributions to be made in-lieu of on-site provision. Although the *Windfall Delivery Evidence Report* (March 2023) clearly shows capacity for a modest but confident delivery of homes under this Plan’s policies to meet, and exceed, its IHR and local housing needs, Welland is considered more limited for larger scale growth due to its position in the AONB and its setting, as highlighted in the 2022 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity report. Thus, there is a need to prioritise the types of homes that are most needed (i.e., affordable housing in perpetuity sited within the village). This also has regard to the expectations in Policy BD3 of the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan. Delivery of affordable homes offsite, particularly if beyond the WNA and adjoining parishes, would not benefit the local community nor meet its specific identified needs and vision for the Plan period.

5.10.21 Should an applicant or developer put forward a different mix of affordable house type, tenure or size than required in the policy, they will need to provide firm evidence as to how the mix meets local need for affordable housing. This should include a local housing needs survey or housing needs assessment which would identify the need for the various house types and sizes.

5.10.22 The thresholds and contributions for affordable housing for settlements such as Welland, in designated rural areas, as set out in Policy SWDP15 were amended in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document<sup>58</sup> (October 2016) to reflect changes in national policy. More recently, however, the 2021 NPPF paragraph 64 has introduced further changes, such that housing policies may now include requirements for affordable housing provision in designated rural areas. Both policy SWDP15 and the Affordable Housing SPD can therefore be considered no longer fully aligned with national policy on affordable housing contributions and thresholds as set out in the NPPF. Thus, although it is acknowledged that this policy deviates from adopted Local Plan policy on these aspects, this is considered to be justified as it more effectively aligns with national policy as laid out in the

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<sup>58</sup> <https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/publications/supplementary-planning-documents/affordable-housing-spd>

NPPF, and also the provisions in the emerging SWDP Review (SWDPR18), which has been written to accommodate latest national policy and guidance, as well as reflecting actual local needs, presented in local housing requirement evidence.

5.10.23 The *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) provides current local housing need data and presents useful guidance for developers and applicants to consider when seeking to identify future local housing need appropriate to Welland's specific situation and which would constitute sustainable development for the community. This takes into account not only current SWDP policy (where it does not conflict with current national policy) but also Welland's location in the Malvern Hills AONB and its setting, the provisions within the emerging SWDP Review for development in the AONB (including for rural exception sites), other local and national policy provisions and guidance relevant to protected landscapes, and also discussions with the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership regarding the most appropriate data identification processes for settlements in an AONB.

5.10.24 As a result, in terms of demonstrating local need for a new rural exception site for affordable housing, an applicant must robustly demonstrate that there is a local need for affordable housing arising within - in the first instance – the WNA. Evidence of housing need arising in neighbouring settlements to Welland that also lie within the Malvern Hills AONB would also potentially be relevant for consideration if those needs would otherwise not be met. Local needs data should consider movement between housing within a study area, e.g., it should take account of households already in the local area as these would be available for another household if the existing residents were to move to new accommodation. This would avoid double counting.

5.10.25 Local affordable housing need is considered to include those households identified in an up-to-date housing survey or who are registered on the 'Housing for You' register that have expressed both a connection with Welland and a stated preference to be housed within Welland or neighbouring settlements within the Malvern Hills AONB. The data also seeks to exclude households from elsewhere in the area which have no identified connection with the WNA (or neighbouring settlements within the Malvern Hills AONB) and also those households that have indicated they would accept homes located outside of Welland and the Malvern Hills AONB, even if they are currently resident in the WNA or have other connection to the area<sup>59</sup>. Additional evidence of local connection not clearly identified by Housing for You should also be considered where possible, for example those households with members who are employed in Welland or neighbouring settlements in the AONB, or have children at school in these locations. The sizes and types of homes to be provided as well as overall quantum should be clearly linked with robust local data. Useful guidance, references and discussion on local housing need data is set out in the Housing Evidence Paper and its Appendices Document.

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<sup>59</sup> This reflects the principle in the NPPF (paragraph 177) that major development in designated areas should be refused where there is scope to meet the need for it in some other way (e.g. outside of the designated area).



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## Objectives

5.10.26 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

- SCCC3: To integrate market and affordable housing to encourage the concept of a “balanced community”.
- SCCC4: To provide homes for younger people and young families and so counter the growing demographic imbalance.
- SSH1: To provide new housing to meet local needs; including a greater range of affordable housing for Welland residents.
- SSH2: To provide a mix of housing types including smaller homes for older residents wishing to downsize and for young singles, couples or families needing their first home.
- SSH4: To give preferential access to some new homes for people with a local connection.
- ECS2: To provide local housing for local employees.

### Related National and Local Plan policies

5.10.27 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 60 - 65 and complementary advice contained in NPPG and strategic policy SWDP 15: Meeting Affordable Housing Needs and SWDP16: Rural Exception Sites and the Affordable Housing SPD (October 2016).

### Policy H3: Home Standards

Development proposals for new dwellings that achieve Part M4(2) Accessible and adaptable dwellings, and Part M4(3) Wheelchair user dwellings of the Building Regulations will be supported.

#### **Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.10.28 The *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) states by the end of the plan period, Welland is forecast to have an over-75 population of 328, an estimated increase of 174 people from the 2011 Census. Welland will continue to have a higher proportion of people age 75+ compared to Malvern Hills. In addition, the 2021 census shows that in Welland 19.6% of the resident population are classed as disabled under the Equality Act with their day-to-day activities limited as a result.

5.10.29 The *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) noted that the Plan could substantially reduce some of its potential future specialist housing requirements for its growing older population by including an ambitious policy for accessibility and adaptability in new development in the WNA. *“This could include incorporating requirements for optional building regulation standards M4(2) and M4(3) to some or all new homes so that they better meet the needs of occupants as they age and need care and support”*.

#### **Objectives**

5.10.30 This policy fulfils the following Plan objectives:

- SSCC3: To integrate market and affordable housing to encourage the concept of a “balanced community”.
- SSH1: To provide new housing to meet local needs; including a greater range of affordable housing for Welland residents.
- SSH2: To provide a mix of housing types including smaller homes for older residents wishing to downsize and for young singles, couples or families needing their first home.

#### **Related National and Local Plan policies**

5.10.31 Related policies include NPPF paragraph 60 - 62 and complementary advice contained in NPPG and strategic policy SWDP 14: Market Housing Market Mix and non-strategic policy SWDP 20: Housing to Meet the Needs of Older People.

#### **Policy H4: Land north of Cornfield Close**

The 1.06ha (gross) site at land north of Cornfield Close is allocated for residential development and Green Infrastructure comprising as shown at Figure 5.7:

- (i) a maximum of 0.64ha (gross) of the site is allocated for development of 13 affordable dwellings, and
- (ii) a minimum of 0.42ha (gross) of the site is allocated as Green Infrastructure.

Development on the site will also need to address, subject to viability considerations<sup>60</sup>, all of the following issues:

1. Provide 0.42ha of Green Infrastructure to facilitate the integration of the development within the AONB, provide landscape enhancement and biodiversity net gain, connect with existing open spaces and the wider countryside to provide environmental, social and economic benefits including a sustainable drainage system to manage fluvial flood risk and surface water discharge.
2. Demonstrates that it is appropriate to its local landscape and villagescape character and form of development and protects views to and from the Malvern Hills having regard to the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan and guidance documents, 'Guidance on Building Design'; 'Guidance on Identifying and Grading Views and Viewpoints' and Guidance on how Development can Respect Landscape in Views' and its 'Guidance on Lighting'.
3. Have regard to the Welland Design Guide and Code at Appendix (5.1)
4. The colour of materials for buildings, boundary treatments, roads and pathways and other structures associated with the proposed development should have regard to all Malvern Hills AONB guidance including its Guidance on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development. An Environmental Colour Assessment should be submitted to demonstrate the appropriateness of the proposed materials and their finishes.
5. Provide a net gain in biodiversity value following development and having regard to the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan and Nature Recovery Plan.
6. Access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles to the site will be off Cornfield Close. The creation of the access road should retain a Green Infrastructure strip adjacent to the ditch and must not have a harmful impact on its existing landscape and biodiversity features nor surface water flood risk. The design of the proposed access road must also provide a landscape buffer adjacent to the existing dwelling on Cornfield Close as shown on Figure 5.7.
7. Demonstrate through a transport statement that the proposed development complies with Worcestershire County Council's Streetscape Design Guide<sup>61</sup> and the principles set out in Manual for Streets (Part 1 and 2). It should also have regard to any relevant Malvern Hills AONB highway design and its lighting guidance and demonstrate that the development will not adversely impact the tranquillity and enjoyment of the AONB.

<sup>60</sup> Any variation on viability grounds would be acceptable only in exceptional circumstances and when supported by robust evidence

<sup>61</sup> [http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20007/travel\\_and\\_roads/284/transport\\_guidance\\_for\\_developers](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20007/travel_and_roads/284/transport_guidance_for_developers)

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**Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.10.32 The evidence in the *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022)<sup>62</sup> points to there being a need for affordable housing and not market housing in the WNA. The evidence also support the need for between 12 – 14 affordable houses of mainly smaller 1, 2 and 3 bed spaces and for those tenures to be optimized to be affordable in perpetuity.

5.10.33 A site assessment, detailed in the *Welland Neighbourhood Plan: Housing Site Assessment and Selection Report* (November 2022) and the Update Report (February 2023), was undertaken of the sites put forward in the SWDP Review 2018 and 2019 ‘Call for Sites’ exercises. The site assessment included input from a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (April 2022)<sup>63</sup> undertaken by a chartered landscape architect. This examined the various sites around Welland Village in terms of their landscape sensitivity to development and their capacity to accept change to development.

5.10.34 Of the eight ‘available’ sites within or adjacent to the existing Village, the two site assessment reports concluded, looking at a range of factors, that one sub-area of a larger site has the potential to be put forward as an allocation for residential development to meet the local housing requirement. In addition, it is considered there will be opportunity for windfall development during the Plan period which will further increase housing supply.

5.10.35 The allocation site is located to the north of the recently constructed housing of 24 dwellings on Cornfield Close (ref. 13/01388/FUL<sup>64</sup>). A further development of 14 houses granted permission (ref. 19/01770/FUL<sup>65</sup>) in April 2021 is located to the west of the site allocation. This 14 house site is nearing completion with several houses already occupied. Both these neighbouring developments were promoted through the planning application process as rural exception sites.

5.10.36 The 1.06ha (gross) site is allocated for residential development and Green Infrastructure. 40% of the gross site (0.42ha) is to be allocated as Green Infrastructure to provide landscape, visual, biodiversity and other environmental protection and enhancements to land within the AONB. The location of the Green Infrastructure is shown on Figure 5.7. The largest area is on land to the east of the allocation as identified in the LSCA (April 2022). Smaller areas of GI include a strip to the north and west and a landscape buffer on the north-western side of the proposed access.

5.10.37 The remaining 60% of the site (0.64ha) is to provide 13 affordable dwellings. The housing allocation of 13 dwellings equates to a gross density of 12dph and a net density of 20dph. This is similar to the densities achieved on those recent developments within and adjacent to Welland which are considered to have integrated more successfully with its rural

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<sup>62</sup> At the time of writing the Housing Evidence Paper and its associated Appendices document, the November 2019 South Worcestershire Development Plan Review Preferred Options Consultation Document was the most current available for reference and thus the SWDPR policy numbers cited, and some detail in the *Housing Evidence Paper* (June 2022) and its Appendices document, may differ from those included in the Regulation 19 version of the SWDPR. Any resultant neighbourhood plan policies and the interpretation of the Housing Evidence Paper and its Appendices document contents will need to accommodate such changes but the rationale and the conclusions in the papers are still considered to be relevant and consistent with emerging policy. The Consultation Statement lays out the timeline for the various evidence bases that have informed this Plan, including the IHR information available for use by the NPWG and LM&WPC.

<sup>63</sup> The 2022 study updated the previous Assessments carried out in 2015 and 2019.

<sup>64</sup> <https://plan.malvern hills.gov.uk/Planning/Display/13/01388/FUL>

<sup>65</sup> <https://plan.malvern hills.gov.uk/Planning/Display/19/01770/FUL>

character. The density complies with the requirements set out in the *Welland Design Guide and Code*.

5.10.38 To help meet the identified local housing need, the dwellings should be 100% affordable and meet the requirements of policy H2. The tenure of the affordable houses should be 9 social rental (i.e., 70% of the total number of dwellings), one shared ownership (i.e., 5% of the total number of dwellings) and 3 'First Homes' (discounted market houses) (i.e., 25% of the total number of dwellings). Prioritisation of the homes for people with local connection will be – where applicable - through the Malvern Hills Rural Lettings Policy (and its successors).

5.10.39 In order that a development proposal is acceptable, particularly in relation to the site's location in the AONB, it should be informed by:

- a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, as required by policy LC1, which would address both the local landscape and villagescape character and the views to and from the Malvern Hills. The LVIA should have regard to the relevant guidance from the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership;
- the *Welland Design Guide and Code* and in particular the Design Code for the site<sup>66</sup>; and
- the Malvern Hills Management Plan and relevant Malvern Hills AONB Guidance, including that on the Selection and Use of Colour in Development to ensure the colour of all materials used in its construction are acceptable.

5.10.40 The access to the site is to be off Cornfield Close, as shown on Figure 5.7, and the development will incorporate cycle and pedestrian routes linked to Cornfield Close. In addition, the design of the access should include a landscape buffer adjacent to no. 24 Cornfield Close. This is to provide separation and screening between the proposed road and the existing dwelling and its garden. The site is within close and safe walking distance to the key community facilities and services within the Village and is considered to have appropriate access arrangements to the local network. A Transport Statement must be submitted to demonstrate how the proposal provides safe pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular access and design and complies with relevant guidance including Worcestershire County Council's *Streetscape Design Guide, Manual for Streets* and has regard to relevant AONB guidance.

5.10.41 The *Welland Design Guide and Code* includes a concept plan for how a residential development, complying with the design parameters within the document, could be laid out. This is shown at Appendix 5.8. The concept plan is purely for illustrative purposes only. Proposals coming forward may be different to this and the layout of an approved scheme may also differ from this. It will for the applicant to demonstrate how their proposal accords with the requirements of the *Welland Design Guide and Code*.

5.10.42 Development proposals must demonstrate how the requirement for a net gain in biodiversity value following the development is to be achieved and maintained, having regard to the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan and relevant Malvern Hills AONB Guidance, including its Nature Recovery Plan.

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<sup>66</sup> It should be noted that the Concept Plan included in the Design Code for the allocation (Fig 87 in the *Welland Design Guide and Code* document) is purely for illustrative purposes showing how the design principles can inform a proposed layout. The final layout and housing types may vary from this Concept Plan.

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## Objectives

5.10.43 These policies fulfil the following Plan objectives:

- SSCC1: To position development within easy walking distance of village facilities.
- SSCC2: To link all development to the village centre with footpaths/cycleways, where appropriate.
- SSCC3: To integrate market and affordable housing to encourage the concept of a “balanced community”.
- SSCC4: To provide homes for younger people and young families and so counter the growing demographic imbalance.
- SSH1: To provide new housing to meet local needs; including a greater range of affordable housing for Welland residents.
- SSH2: To provide a mix of housing types including smaller homes for older residents wishing to downsize and for young singles, couples or families needing their first home.
- SSH3: To ensure that new development is of high-quality design and reinforces local distinctiveness.
- SSH4: To give preferential access to some new homes for people with a local connection.
- SSH5: To ensure that the design and location of new development is resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.
- SSH6: To ensure that the scale of development is appropriate to the sustainable growth of the village whilst seeking to maintain its rural character.
- EcS2: To provide local housing for local employees.
- EcS4: To position new development such that current problems with congestion, parking and road safety are not exacerbated and, if possible, reduced.

### Related National and Local Plan policies

5.10.44 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 28-29 and 70 and complementary advice contained in NPPG and strategic policies SWDP 2: Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy (part H), SWDP25: Landscape Character and SWDP 59: New Housing for Villages (part B (ii)).



**Figure 5.7: Land north of Cornfield Close**



## 5.11 LOCAL ECONOMY

### **Policy LE1: New small-scale business development within the Welland Development Boundary**

Development proposals for new small-scale office, studio or light industrial space and small-scale shops and service outlets (Use Class E: Commercial, Business and Service) within the Welland Development Boundary will be supported provided they meet all of the following criteria:

1. Can be accommodated through the sympathetic conversion of an existing building without the need for extensions that are inappropriate for their location or in a new building of an appropriate scale, size, mass and height and of a design which respects its local context and its location in the AONB or its setting;
2. Can be operated without having significant harm to the amenity of local residents;
3. Have safe access and sufficient off-street parking provided for staff, delivery vehicles and visitors without unacceptably harming existing residential or other uses; and

Where practical and viable, use should be made of existing buildings and previously developed land in preference to new development on greenfield sites.

Proposals for business development beyond the Welland development boundary will be assessed against SWDP12 Employment in Rural areas and any successor policy in the SWDPR.

#### **Reasoned Justification** (an explanation of the approach to the above policy)

5.11.1 According to a House of Commons Standard Note ‘Small Businesses and the UK Economy’ (December 2014)<sup>67</sup> there were 5 million micro-businesses (i.e., a business with fewer than 10 employees) in the UK in 2014, accounting for 96% of all businesses. The note states that the Government’s Plan for Growth published alongside the Budget in March 2011 highlighted a number of policies which, it stated, would be of “particular benefit” to SMEs. These included measures to make it easier for SMEs to get planning consent.

5.11.2 Although there are no designated employment sites within the WNA there are a number of small-scale businesses providing local employment opportunities and making a contribution to the local economy. According to the 2011 Census data a high proportion of working residents ‘work from home or work mainly from home’ with some 23.1% as compared to 18.6% for the District and 9.8% for the Region (see Appendix D of the Welland Neighbourhood Area Baseline Report (September 2019)).

<sup>67</sup> [researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06078/SN06078.pdf](https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06078/SN06078.pdf)

5.11.3 LMWPC is supportive of diversifying the local economy to enable the WNA to be an attractive and sustainable place for micro and small businesses to locate within, start up and grow. Small-scale spaces for business start-ups, micro and small businesses within the Development Boundary will be supported in principle providing that the relevant criteria within the above policy and other relevant policies are adhered to.

5.11.4 It is important that applicants demonstrate that their proposals support sustainable economic development, for example through the creation of local employment opportunities including jobs, apprenticeships, training and volunteer programmes.

5.11.5 Proposals will need to be sympathetic to the landscape character and views to and from the Malvern Hills AONB in compliance with policy LC1 and D1. Where practical and viable, use should be made of existing buildings and previously developed land in preference to new development on greenfield sites. In addition, the proposals should be of a scale appropriate to their location, ensure that they have adequate vehicular access and take account of the amenities of nearby occupiers. Where business uses are proposed within residential areas consideration should be given to hours of operation, noise emitting activities and parking and delivery areas which could have an adverse harmful impact on residential amenity.

5.11.6 Proposals for business development beyond the Welland development boundary will be assessed against SWDP12 'Employment in Rural areas' and any successor policy in the SWDPR.

### **Objectives**

5.11.7 This policy fulfils the theme of ensure that small-scale businesses are thriving, offering local employment opportunities and supporting the village economy and the following Plan objective:

- EcS4: To position new development such that current problems with congestion, parking and road safety are not exacerbated and, if possible, reduced.

### **Related National and Local Plan policies**

5.11.8 Related policies include NPPF paragraphs 84 and 85 and complementary advice contained in NPPG and strategic policies SWDP 8: Providing the Right Land and Buildings for Jobs and SWDP 12: Employment in Rural Areas.

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## 6. NON POLICY ACTIONS

6.1 New development, where appropriate will be required subject to the requirements of the relevant Regulations, to contribute towards the Malvern Hills District Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and/or S106 Agreements. A proportion of funding from CIL, in line with the relevant Regulations, will go towards the delivery of projects and initiatives identified by the local community.

6.2 Little Malvern and Welland Parish Council and the local community have identified a range of projects and initiatives that they believe will help to make the parish a more sustainable place to live, work and visit. These projects and initiatives are not neighbourhood plan policies but, in some cases, may in part be supported by policies within the Plan.

6.3 Appendix 6.1 provides a report 'Community Development Projects' which was agreed at the Little Malvern and Welland Parish Council meeting on 20 March 2023. A further list of potential projects for consideration arising from the Reg14 consultation is also included. These projects and initiatives will be prioritised by LMWPC and an action plan for their delivery produced. The action plan will be monitored and reviewed and updated as part of the annual review of the Plan as part of the Parish Council's monitoring framework as highlighted in Section 8.

## 7. PLAN DELIVERY AND IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 The Plan will become part of the statutory development plan once it has been ‘made’ (brought into legal force). Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This will be the principal way in which the plan will be delivered and implemented.

7.2 The Plan will be delivered and implemented over the period 2023-2041 and by different stakeholders and partners subject to it being reviewed (see Section 8: Plan Monitoring and Review).

7.3 It is not, nor can it be, a rigid ‘blueprint’. It is instead a spatial framework and set of policies that will help guide incremental and sustainable growth within the WNA. The Plan provides an indication of the hopes and aspirations of today’s community. New challenges and opportunities will arise over the Plan period and it needs to be flexible enough to respond to these.

7.4 There are three principal sectors of development activity which will be influenced by the application of the policies within the Plan for development requiring planning permission. These sectors do not act in isolation and for development to be sustainable and the WNA to prosper these sectors need to work together.

1. Investment in, and management of, public services, assets and facilities to support the provision of local services. This will help to provide and maintain the appropriate environment and circumstances for investment from other sectors. Within the existing economic and public sector budgetary position this is and will continue to be a challenging proposition.
2. Investment and sustainable development from the private sector (from homeowners to developers) will help the WNA prosper and deliver the objectives of the Plan. The Plan will provide, as part of the statutory planning process, the framework to guide development of an appropriate scale to the right locations within the WNA.
3. The third sector (voluntary and community) has a strong role to play in delivery of sustainable development. They have made a significant contribution to the realisation of the Plan. Their continued involvement will be necessary to realise the aims and objectives of the Plan. In many respects it will be difficult to achieve this without their continued support.

7.5 The following summarises LMWPC’s approach to delivery and implementation of each of the key issues and policy themes identified within the Plan.

### **Sustainable Development and Design (Policies SD1-3)**

7.6 The Parish Council will use the Plan to seek to ensure that new development promotes sustainable development. It aims to ensure that all new development contributes to dealing with the climate and fuel crisis by encouraging low carbon and renewable development and technologies.

### **Welland Development Boundary (Policy DB1)**

7.7 The Plan creates a new Development Boundary for the Village incorporating the significant areas of new housing to the east within it. The community facilities of the Village Hall, Welland Primary School and St James' Church are located at the geographic centre of this new Development Boundary. The Parish Council will support proposals for new development within the Development Boundary provided they meet certain criteria and other relevant planning policies.

### **Green Infrastructure (Policy G1-2)**

7.8 The Parish Council will work with landowners and managers, such as the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership Unit, MHDC, WCC and others, to ensure that WNA's green spaces as identified within the Plan, are protected and enhanced.

### **Local Biodiversity (Policy B1)**

7.9 The Parish Council will use the Plan to protect existing nature conservation assets and seek to ensure that new development provides net biodiversity gain and that this is maintained.

### **Landscape and Visual Amenity (Policy LC1)**

7.10 The Parish Council will use the Plan to protect the landscape character and visual amenity within the WNA which is either within or provides an important setting to the Malvern Hills AONB.

### **Community Infrastructure (Policies C1 and 2)**

7.11 The Parish Council will work with local organisations, landowners and developers, WCC and MHDC to improve facilities and services for local people where there is an identified need. A key project for LMWPC is carrying out improvements to the Village Hall (see Appendix 6.1 Community Development Projects).

### **Local Historic Environment (Policy HE1)**

7.12 The Parish Council will work with stakeholders (landowners, managers, MHDC, Historic England and other local heritage organisations) to ensure the WNA's non-designated heritage assets are identified, protected and, where possible, enhanced.

### **Development and Infrastructure (Policies I1-4)**

7.13 The Parish Council will use the Plan to ensure that all new development brings forward the necessary infrastructure to meet the needs of the development. This includes the infrastructure to deliver adequate surface and foul water drainage for new development and improved communications connectivity providing it does not impact on the high-quality character of the AONB and its setting and other factors. The Parish Council will work with the relevant stakeholders to deliver the Malvern to Upton-upon-Severn Active Travel Corridor within the WNA.



### **Design and Access (Policies D1 and 2)**

7.14 The Parish Council will work with developers and owners of land and buildings to ensure that new and existing development makes a positive contribution to the character of the area and includes safe and efficient access for all road users by utilising the Design Guide and Code produced for the village.

### **Housing Land (Policies HLP and H1-4)**

7.15 The Parish Council will work with all those in the housing industry (including Registered Social Landlords, house builders, developers and MHDC) and the local community to deliver high quality and sustainably built housing on the housing allocation and windfall sites within appropriate locations. The Plan will help deliver housing which meets identified local need and which reflects and responds to local character.

7.16 The Plan proposes a site allocation for 13 affordable dwellings which meets the identified local need. The allocation, along with policies that guide windfall development to the types and sizes (which could include self-build and custom housing provision) for which there is greatest evidence of local requirement, will ensure that Welland provides for its housing needs and meets the indicative housing requirement figure of 25 dwellings for the period up to 2041.

7.17 The Plan seeks to ensure the correct mix, type and tenure of housing to meet the identified local need. In addition, the Plan seeks to ensure that new homes meet the requirements for accessible and adaptable (including for wheelchair access) dwellings within the Building Regulations.

### **Local Economy (Policy LE1)**

7.18 The Parish Council will work with local businesses, landowners and relevant economic development agencies to improve local employment opportunities including providing suitable accommodation for micro and small businesses.

### **Implementation**

7.19 Following the Plan being 'made' the Parish Council will establish an implementation framework for the Plan using the Locality toolkit '*After the Neighbourhood Plan is Made: Implementation, Monitoring and Review*'. This will be agreed at a future Parish Council meeting and monitored on an annual basis.

## 8. PLAN MONITORING AND REVIEW

8.1 Little Malvern & Welland Parish Council will ensure that the Plan is pro-actively monitored and reviewed over its lifetime. Following the Plan being ‘made’ the Parish Council will establish a monitoring framework for the Plan using the Locality toolkit ‘*After the Neighbourhood Plan is Made: Implementation, Monitoring and Review*’. The results of this will be reported annually at the meeting of the Parish Council. This will monitor the progress of the aims and objectives of the Plan and the success or otherwise of the various policies and progress with the implementation of the projects identified within the ‘Community Development Projects’ Section 6 of the Plan.

8.2 The Parish Council will monitor housing delivery annually in relation to the Indicative Housing Requirement and the Housing Land Provision made in the Plan. This will involve obtaining information from MHDC on housing completions during the Plan period and updating the *Welland Neighbourhood Area Windfall Housing Delivery Report* on an annual basis. The annual update will be reported to a Parish Council meeting. Should the IHR change, the Parish Council, through the NPWG, will in consultation with MHDC, undertake a review of this requirement in the context of local constraints and potentially revise the sources of housing land provision to meet any resultant and agreed IHR. It is acknowledged that this may require the revised Plan to undergo Regulation 14 and 16 consultations prior to being submitted for examination.

8.3 The Plan will also be monitored on a monthly basis by the Parish Council’s Planning Committee. This committee currently monitors and makes representations on planning applications submitted to the MHDC. It will continue to do this but with the benefit of applying the policies within the Plan to its responses. The MHDC Officer’s reports in relation to the application of the Plan policies, the decisions by the LPA and any appeal decisions will be monitored and reviewed on a monthly basis by this Committee. This information will provide the key data to be included in the report to the annual meeting. The annual report will also be submitted to MHDC.

8.4 Further evidence base reports may be commissioned by LMWPC as required to ensure that its review of the performance of the Plan and its decision making on planning applications are adequately informed. These may include, but are not restricted to, Housing Needs Surveys, the Welland Design Guide and Code and Landscape Sensitivity analysis. The *Housing Evidence Paper* and its Appendices document produced for the Plan provides some suggestions for this that the LMWPC may consider helpful in scheduling such. As well as the planning application and report information available from MHDC, other monitoring data and evidence available from the South Worcestershire Councils (SWCs), such as housing register data, will be sought from MHDC to inform the annual review of the Plan by LMWPC.

8.5 The South Worcestershire Councils (SWCs) started a review of the SWDP in late 2017. This is in line with Government requirements that local plans should be updated every five years. The review will provide an updated plan period to the year 2041. The plan will update the existing SWDP and where necessary its Vision, Objectives, Spatial Strategy and policies for the future development of the South Worcestershire area. The second part of the plan will include site allocations, policies and policy designations that will provide for the development needs of the area up to 2041 (11 years beyond the current SWDP). The SWCs publicised the SWDP Review Preferred Options for consultation on 4 November 2019<sup>68</sup>.

8.6 The Regulation 19 Publication version of the SWDP Review document (i.e., the document to be submitted for Examination) went out for consultation on 1 November 2022 until 23 December 2022<sup>69</sup>. Subject to the outcome of the consultation on the Publication version of the SWDP Review (Regulation 19), it is anticipated that the Plan will be submitted for Examination (Regulation 22) during 2023.

8.7 When new issues are identified, or policies in the Plan are found to be out of date, or in need of change, for example due to changing national or strategic planning policy, the Parish Council, in consultation with MHDC, may decide to update the Plan, or part of it. The Parish Council will assess whether the Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the emerging SWDP Review and will consult MHDC on its findings before making the review publicly available.

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<sup>68</sup> [https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page\\_id=14555](https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=14555)

<sup>69</sup> <https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/swdp-review/swdpr-regulation-19-publication-consultation>

## Initialisms

AONB:	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty <sup>70</sup>
CCA:	Climate Change Act
EU:	European Union
HEP:	Housing Evidence Paper
HNS:	Housing Needs Survey
HRA:	Habitat Regulations Assessment
LAR:	Landscape Assessment Report
LGS:	Local Green Space
LMWPC:	Little Malvern & Welland Parish Council
LPA:	Local Planning Authority
LTP:	Local Transport Plan
LVIA:	Landscape Visual Impact Assessment
MHAONB:	Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
MHDC:	Malvern Hills District Council
NGA:	Next Generation Access
NOS:	Neighbourhood Open Space
NPPF:	National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
NPPG:	National Planning Practice Guidance
NPWG:	Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
PV:	Photo Voltaic
SEA:	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SWC:	South Worcestershire Councils
SWDP:	South Worcestershire Development Plan
SWDPR:	South Worcestershire Development Plan Review
UN:	United Nations
WCC:	Worcestershire County Council
WNA:	Welland Neighbourhood Area

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<sup>70</sup> Central Government rebranded 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty' as 'National Landscapes' on 22 November 2023. However, since 'AONB' remains the legal name for the designation (for example in the NPPF), this term is also used in appropriate places, for example, when referring to the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan which is a statutory plan or when directly quoting from older documents. As such the term AONB continues to be used throughout in this document.

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## Glossary

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

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

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

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

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

e) First Homes - are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value; b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria; c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and, d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London). First Homes are the government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations.

**Design code:** A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

**Design guide:** A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.

**Green infrastructure:** A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

**Householder Development:** Those developments within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse to alter or enlarge a single house (but not a flat) including works within the boundary/garden, which require an application for planning permission (such as extensions, conservatories, loft conversions, dormer windows, alterations, garages, car ports or outbuildings, swimming pools, walls, fences, domestic vehicular accesses including footway crossovers, porches and satellite dishes).

**Local housing need:** The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance (or, in the context of preparing strategic policies only, this may be calculated using a justified alternative approach as provided for in paragraph 61 of the Framework).

**Local planning authority:** The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority, the Mayor of London and a development corporation, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

**Neighbourhood plan:** A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Non-strategic policies:** Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.

**Open space:** All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

**Renewable and low carbon energy:** Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans,



from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

**Reasoned Justification:** The supporting text in a development plan or Local Development Document explaining and justifying the approach set out in the policies contained in the document.

**Rural exception sites:** Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

**Self-build and custom-build housing:** Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

**Site of Special Scientific Interest:** Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

**Strategic environmental assessment:** A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

**Strategic policies:** Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Transport statement:** A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising from development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

**Wildlife corridor:** Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

**Windfall sites:** Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.