

4. Policies for New Housing and Development

Core Strategy

- 4.1 The Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031 (the “Core Strategy”) was adopted in October 2015 and sets the overall context for housing growth throughout the County. (The NDP has to be in conformity with the Core Strategy.) Policy RA1 – Rural Housing Distribution of the Core Strategy specifies how new housing will be distributed throughout the rural areas using the concept of “Proportionate housing development” i.e. a percentage growth figure based on the number of houses in the named settlements as they existed in 2011. The policy sets the target of 18% growth for the Hereford Sub Area which includes the Withington Group of parishes. However, there is a key difference between Withington which is the list of “Settlements which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development” and Preston Wynne, Westhide and Withington Marsh which are in a second table of “Other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate”.
- 4.2 The following table sets out known commitments and completions since 2011. Note that the “Growth figure” of 18% is intended to apply to the whole of the NDP area rather than separately to the individual settlements within it.

Table 1 Withington Group NDP Source of Housing Supply and Requirements (Data from 2011 to 31st March 2017)		
Existing dwellings in 2011	Withington/Withington Marsh	610
	Westhide	33
	Preston Wynne	60
	Total	703
Minimum requirement to 2031 in accordance with Core Strategy Policy RA1		
	18% of 703	=127
Completions 2011 to 31 st March 2017	Withington/Withington Marsh	10
	Westhide	0
	Preston Wynne	1
	Total	11
Commitments (permissions granted, allocations and under construction)	Withington: Adj. Whitestone chapel Southbank Rear of Vine Tree Close Care Home at Whitestone	33 69 31 80
Individual permissions of 1 or 2 dwellings (i.e. “windfall”)	Withington	3
	Westhide	0
	Preston Wynne	10
Total Allocations/Permissions		237
Demolitions		2
Total Committed New Dwellings		235
Proposed windfall allowance to 2031	(includes Withington, Westhide, Preston Wynne, Withington Marsh and remaining rural area)	20
Total Housing Supply Identified		255

- 4.3 From Table 1 above it can be seen that the target of “proportionate growth” has already been achieved by April 2017 and, if all existing commitments come to fruition, will be significantly exceeded early on in the plan period. This raises the possibility of having no further housing growth in the NDP between now and 2031 but a moratorium on all new housing for that length of time would not be realistic. Consequently, whilst this NDP has no outstanding need to identify any significant new sites, it would be prudent to have policies to allow for occasional infill and other specific housing needs in the settlements that make up the Group and to allow for the possibility that all the currently permitted sites might not be fully developed. Two of the current sites with planning permission are allocated for development as both have shown little progress in being brought forward. The care home site at Whitestone is specifically allocated for residential care rather than for general housing, for which it is considered unsuitable due to its location on the south side of the A4103.

Rural Areas Site Allocations Development Plan Document

- 4.4 In June 2017 Herefordshire Council published an Issues and Options Paper in preparation of a new document to allocate housing development to the rural areas of the County. However, that Issues and Options Paper is intended to cover only those parts of the County without adequate coverage of Neighbourhood Development Plans – thus any future housing growth in the Withington Group of parishes over and above that already achieved since 2011 can now be managed through this Neighbourhood Development Plan.