

## 5. HOUSING

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION AND AIMS AND OBJECTIVES - PARAGRAPHS 5.1.1 TO 5.2.2

#### Objections

P790/1965                      West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium  
P790/1975                      West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium

#### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Further emphasis could be placed on other secondary sources of data on affordable housing. (790)
- To prioritise affordable housing as a separate aim would create a robust list of aims from which to work. (790)

#### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

##### *Secondary sources of data on affordable housing - 790*

5.1.1 There is no evidence to suggest to me that the consideration of affordable housing needs has suffered as a result of any lack of emphasis on sources other than the housing needs studies. In any event, Paragraph 5.2.1 is essentially factual. It is listing studies and other work which have been used to develop and inform the Plan. I would not expect the list to be exhaustive. There is inadequate justification for any modification.

##### *Prioritising affordable housing as a separate aim - 790*

5.1.2 Affordable housing is already mentioned in Paragraph 5.2.1 in the context of satisfying local household growth. Given that the paragraph is just identifying three broad aims, I do not consider that separate identification of affordable housing is necessary or appropriate.

#### RECOMMENDATION

5.1/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.2 HEREFORD AND THE MARKET TOWNS: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES AND ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS (NON-SITE BASED ISSUES) - POLICY H1 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.4.1 TO 5.4.5**

### **Objections**

P635/1472                      Campaign to Protect Rural England  
P1120/3609                    Mr B and Ms M Richardson

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- Settlement boundaries have been wrongly applied in several locations. (635)
- A relaxation of the hierarchy of settlement boundaries could lead to a supply of cheap land for low cost housing. (1120)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Incorrect application of settlement boundaries - 635*

5.2.1 I appreciate that extending towns by varying the settlement boundary could add "lumps" onto the edges of the towns and would not always be the most sensitive or practical way of accommodating growth. However, if there are problems in particular instances, I would expect these to be the subject of site specific objections. I have not perceived there to be any general problem in this regard and I see no need for further studies of settlement boundaries or a revision of the related policy provisions.

5.2.2 As to whether all forms of development should be controlled by settlement boundaries, I do not consider that they should. For example, there may be instances where the balance of public interest favours the provision of community facilities outside a settlement boundary.

#### *Relaxation of the hierarchy of settlement boundaries - 1120*

5.2.3 Through Policy H10, the Plan already makes provision for the potential release of land for low cost housing within or adjoining established rural settlements. In other parts of my report, for example in Section 3.18, I have determined that an extension of these provisions would not be appropriate.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

5.2/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

### 5.3 HEREFORD – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES AND ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS (SITE BASED ISSUES) – POLICY H1

#### Objections

P373/796	Sonnic Ltd
P602/5520	Herefordshire Nature Trust
P602/5512	Herefordshire Nature Trust
P381/817	Mr D J and Mrs I R Powell
P427/7236	Belmont Abbey
P659/7237	Messrs B J and M I Thomas
P415/865	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P415/11488	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P415/11489	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P991/2958	E Coombs and M Freeman
P187/406	W O and O E Price
P202/439	Mr G Hankins
P237/501	Mr D West (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P203/441	Messrs M J, A B and R G Griffiths
P1181/3732	Mr F Hanbury
P179/396	Mr and Mrs R Hooper
P352/665	Mr B Willis
P930/2695	Mr C N A Stanford

#### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the boundary of the established residential area at the rear of Dorchester Way should be amended. (373)
- Objection is raised to the designation of the Eign Brook SINC as an Established Residential Area. (602)
- Objection is raised to the designation of the Great Western Way SINC as an Established Residential Area. (602)
- Whether land at Kings Acre Road should be included within the established residential area. (381, 203, 1181)
- The settlement boundary of Hereford should be amended to incorporate the whole of the proposed country park area at Belmont. (427, 659)
- The settlement boundary at Holmer should be extended. (415)
- The settlement limits should be amended to exclude land at Bullinghope. (415)
- A larger allocation at Holmer should be made. (991)
- The settlement boundary should be amended to include land at Holmer House Farm. (187)
- Land north of Church Way, Holmer should be included within the settlement boundary. (202, 237)
- The settlement boundary should include land east of Perrystone Lane. (179)

- The exclusion of land at Canon Pyon Road from the defined settlement boundary is inappropriate. (352)
- The Graftonbury Garden Hotel should be included within the boundary of Hereford. (930)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Rear of Dorchester Way - 373*

5.3.1 The objector would wish the boundary of the established residential area at the rear of Dorchester Way to be extended. This would enable windfall development to take place sufficient to bring about the provision of public open space on what is currently private land. In this regard, the Council's Director of Environment has been authorised to acquire the land in question. Investigations preparatory to making a compulsory purchase order, if negotiations fail, are under way.

5.3.2 It appears to me that the Council is taking steps to secure the provision of open space on the objection site in line with its adopted management plan (Document S 1), provision that is to be supported. However, by encouraging residential development, the objector's proposals would conflict with the recreational use that is now being sought for the land. There is no evidence that suggests to me that the Council will not be able to implement its proposals. In all the circumstances, I support the provisions in the emerging UDP subject only to ensuring that the boundary of the established residential area follows the curtilage of existing properties.

#### *Eign Brook SINC - 602*

5.3.3 The relevant part of the Eign Brook runs through the heart of a residential area and, to my mind, is correctly shown as falling within the Established Residential Area. However, this does not mean that nature conservation interests would be subordinate. Any development would be subject to policies that include Policies NC1 and NC4. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Great Western Way SINC - 602*

5.3.4 The Great Western Way SINC runs through the heart of a residential area and, to my mind, is correctly shown as falling within the Established Residential Area. However, this does not mean that nature conservation interests would be subordinate. Any development would be subject to policies that include Policies NC1 and NC4. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Land at Kings Acre Road – 381, 203, 1181*

5.3.5 These objections relate to specific parcels of land in the vicinity of Kings Acre Road including land at Hala Carr, at Cherry Orchard and at Breinton Lee. However, the matter of the settlement boundary and the boundary of the established residential area for Kings Acre as a whole is also raised. This begs the question of whether other land, for example land at Wyevale Nurseries, should be included within any extended boundary. However, this "other land" is not the subject of specific objections or detailed representations.

5.3.6 In the emerging UDP, the Kings Acre Road area is not included within any settlement boundary. It is not regarded as being within the confines of Hereford

nor is it treated as a separate main village or named smaller settlement. In policy terms, it would be regarded as being "countryside".

5.3.7 To my mind, this is not a sustainable position. I appreciate that, historically, ribbon development has taken place along Kings Acre Road; and that this is not a form of development to be encouraged in the future. Nevertheless, it is clearly a built-up area with related amenities and facilities. As such, it is deserving of the status of a settlement of one form or another. This much was conceded by one of the Council's witnesses at the inquiry.

5.3.8 Some witnesses were of the opinion that the area should be treated as part of Swainshill; others that it should be part of Hereford. My own impression is that the area is a legitimate part of Hereford. It is a continuation of the built-up area of Hereford, albeit in an attenuated form, and one has the impression of passing through the outskirts of the city. On the other hand, I took the main part of Swainshill to be further to the west, to be detached from the Kings Acre Road area and to have more of a rural feel.

5.3.9 My first main conclusion, therefore, is that the area of Kings Acre Road should be treated as part of Hereford. However, in accordance with Paragraph 5.4.2 of the Plan, I would expect the main purpose of the boundary of Hereford to be to define the extent of existing urban land uses. Within this defined boundary, the established residential area would then depict land that is predominantly in use for housing purposes.

5.3.10 With regard to the land at Hala Carr, this is on the southern extremity of frontage housing along Breinton Lane, housing that would legitimately fall within the settlement boundary. The objection site itself has a "built-up" appearance, mainly as a result of the presence of glasshouses, now derelict. In addition, there is a strong boundary hedge along the southern boundary of Hala Carr. All in all, the site reads as part of the urban area and can be readily distinguished from the open agricultural land to the south.

5.3.11 Nevertheless, the previous use of the site was horticultural. It is not defined as previously developed land. In addition, and in terms of previous policy, the site has been treated as part of the countryside. In these terms, an appeal against the refusal of planning permission for two dwellings was dismissed in 2001. Be that as it may, I can see that the site would be a continuing eyesore. As a matter of common sense, it could be included within the settlement boundary and hence pave the way for some productive development associated as it would be with the remainder of the settlement.

5.3.12 The land at Cherry Orchard is slightly different. It is undeveloped land comprising, in part, an old orchard where I have observed sheep grazing. It can be distinguished from the surrounding housing that I would regard as comprising urban land uses and established residential area. The northern part of the site is, in particular, surrounded by built development and could be included within the city boundary without any material impact on the countryside. Nevertheless, I would regard the objection site as lying outside a boundary tightly containing the urban land uses and established residential area.

5.3.13 As to the Breinton Lee site, I did not perceive this to comprise urban land uses or to be part of the established residential area. It is beyond the settlement limits. I appreciate that there is housing development to the north and east of the objection site. However, the site itself is open and undeveloped. It is part

grassed, part treed. There are clear views across the site to the contiguous open countryside beyond.

5.3.14 If one or more of the objection sites were seen as part of a package of preferred sites that would help meet the county's housing requirement, then it would be legitimate to include them within the settlement boundary. This is a matter that I have considered in other parts of this section in relation to calls for allocation as housing sites. However, I have concluded that the housing requirement should be met in other ways.

5.3.15 In the foregoing discussion, I have accepted that there is a case for including land at Kings Acre Road within an extended settlement boundary of Hereford. However, to my mind, this is a matter that needs to be considered in a comprehensive way using consistent criteria. It is an exercise that concerns other land, land additional to the sites the subject of specific objections. I consider that the best way forward would be for the Council to bring forward a related review of the Hereford settlement boundary and established residential area in a development plan document. In the meantime, my comments above could be a material consideration in any planning decision.

*Settlement boundary at Belmont – Haywood Country Park – 427, 659*

5.3.16 These objections were made at the deposit draft stage. At that time, there was considerable concern about whether the housing allocation at Belmont would provide the return necessary to meet all the requirements included in the Plan. However, considerable changes have since been made. For example, the area of the housing allocation has been increased and requirements in respect of the country park would be less onerous.

5.3.17 In the light of the above, I am satisfied that an adequate area for development has been included within the settlement boundary. As an area of functional open space, the country park should be outside the defined built-up limits to development. Indeed, to include the country park area within the settlement boundary could give encouragement to inappropriate built development. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Settlement boundary at Holmer - 415*

5.3.18 The aim of these objections was to extend the settlement boundary at Holmer beyond that envisaged in the Deposit Draft Plan. However, at the inquiry, the objector did not pursue these objections. The aim now is to reflect the position shown at the deposit draft stage. The objections were effectively withdrawn and no further action in this regard is necessary.

*Settlement boundary at Bullinghope - 415*

5.3.19 I have discussed the proposed allocation at Bullinghope in Section 5.14 of my report. I conclude that the allocation should be dropped. It follows that the settlement boundary should not be extended to include the land proposed to be allocated at the revised deposit stage. I recommend that the boundary should revert to that shown in the Deposit Draft Plan.

*Larger allocation at Holmer - 991*

5.3.20 The possible allocation of additional land at Holmer, north of Coldwells Road, is discussed in Section 5.31 of my report. I have determined that no housing allocation should be made. Given also that the built-up limits of Hereford do not

and would not extend to the objection site, there is no justification for the settlement boundary of the city to be drawn around this rural part of Holmer.

*Land at Holmer House Farm - 187*

5.3.21 I do not consider that the boundary of Hereford should be drawn to include Holmer House Farm. On the east side of the A49, the extent of built development is clearly defined by Church Way, well to the south of the objection site. North of Church Way there are, effectively, no buildings fronting the A49. The area is characterised by grassed fields and views of the open countryside to the north of Hereford.

5.3.22 On the west side of the A49, there is significant built development up to and including a house called Whitegates. This built development includes the Holmer Church Centre, the recently extended Holmer Nursing Home and the Parish Church of St Bartholomew, Holmer. However, to the north of Whitegates, I perceived there to be a distinct change in character.

5.3.23 Notwithstanding the presence of the complex of substantial buildings that comprise Holmer House Farm, these buildings are separated from the continuous built-up area by a gap through which there are open views to the agricultural land to the west. More particularly, the farm buildings themselves are set well back and are largely hidden from view. There is extensive vegetation along the A49 frontage and to the front of the farm with filtered views only of the end of the roof and the second storey windows of the farmhouse. The impression I gained was of having passed out of the built-up area and having entered the countryside beyond.

5.3.24 In the light of the above, I consider that the settlement boundary of Hereford, in the vicinity of the objection site, has been correctly drawn by the Council. Given also my acceptance in Section 5.31 below that there should be no allocation of this land, there is no justification for the Plan to be modified.

*Land north of Church Way, Holmer – 202, 237*

5.3.25 The objection sites lie north of Church Way and east of the A49. As described above, I consider that the built-up limits of Hereford and the appropriate settlement boundary are defined by Church Way and do not extend to the north. Given also the conclusions in Section 5.31 of my report that allocation of the sites would not be appropriate, there is no justification for modifying the settlement boundary.

*Land east of Perrystone Lane - 179*

5.3.26 In my opinion, the built-up limits of Hereford in the vicinity of the objection site are clearly defined by Perrystone Lane. There is a marked contrast between the housing areas to the west and the undeveloped land to the east. I appreciate that the objection site, which at the time of my site visit was being grazed by horses, is largely enclosed by trees and hedgerows. Nevertheless, it is part of the open countryside that, in views to the northeast, stretches as far as the eye can see.

5.3.27 In Section 5.31 of my report, I have determined that allocation of the site for housing purposes would not be appropriate. In all the circumstances, there is no justification for modifying the settlement boundary.

*Land at Canon Pyon Road - 352*

5.3.28 I consider that the settlement boundary at Bobblestock is appropriately drawn. This is an area that is on the very northwestern fringe of Hereford. Continuous frontage development along the A4103 and at the southeastern end of Tillington Road is rightly included. However, when turning north into Canon Pyon Road, there is a distinct change in character.

5.3.29 To my mind, the built-up limits of Hereford are defined by the northern boundaries of the properties Larch Meadow to the west and West View to the east of Canon Pyon Road. Beyond, the character of the area is rural. In particular, there is a significant gap, represented by the objection site, between Larch Meadow and White Roses to the north. The impression I gained was that the objection site marks the beginning of the countryside to the north of this part of Hereford.

5.3.30 In Section 5.31 of my report, I have considered whether the objection site should be allocated for housing purposes. I have concluded that it should not. In all the circumstances, exclusion of the site from the defined settlement boundary is entirely appropriate.

*Graftonbury Garden Hotel - 930*

5.3.31 I do not consider that the Graftonbury Garden Hotel remotely qualifies for inclusion within the settlement boundary of Hereford. The built-up limits of Hereford lie to the north, generally beyond the railway line that well defines the extent of the city. On the other hand, Grafton enjoys a rural setting. The approach to the hotel from Hereford is along a country lane extending through open countryside and some distance from the established residential area of the city.

5.3.32 In addition, I do not consider that the site should be allocated for development including residential development. This is as determined in Section 5.31 of my report. There is no justification for including the site within the boundary of Hereford.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.3/1 Ensure that, on the Proposals Map, the boundary of the established residential area at the rear of Dorchester Way follows the curtilage of the existing houses.

5.3/2 Subject to the Council's priorities in respect of its local development framework, review the settlement boundary of Hereford and the established residential area in the vicinity of Kings Acre Road in an early development plan document.

5.3/3 In the vicinity of Bullinghope, modify the settlement boundary to align with that shown in the Deposit Draft Plan.

5.3/4 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.4 LEOMINSTER – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES AND ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS (SITE BASED ISSUES) – POLICY H1

### Objections

PX692/1706	Jennings Estates Ltd
P152/351	Mr D Parry
P527/1079	P D O’Herlihy
P223/485	Mrs Y N Powell

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The settlement boundary should be modified to include land south of Barons Cross Road. (692)
- The development boundary should be extended to include land at the corner of Cholstrey Road and Ginhall Lane. (152)
- Land at Ginhall Lane should be allocated as Established Residential Area. (527)
- Land known as Pinfarthings should be included in the settlement boundary. (223)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Land south of Barons Cross Road - 692*

5.4.1 In Section 5.32 of my report, I have determined that land south of Barons Cross Road should not be allocated for housing purposes. Given that this land is presently open countryside beyond the built-up extent of Leominster, there would be no other reason for including the land within the settlement boundary. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Land at the corner of Cholstrey Road and Ginhall Lane - 152*

5.4.2 As indicated in Paragraph 5.4.2 of the Plan, the main purpose of settlement boundaries is to define the extent of existing urban land uses. In these terms, the objection site is clearly outside the built-up limits of Leominster being grazing land separated from the established residential area by open space forming part of the substantial Buckfield housing estate.

5.4.3 I acknowledge that the site could be included within the settlement boundary if such an adjustment was appropriate in the light of a legitimate development proposal. However, there is no need for housing in Leominster additional to the provisions that have already been made in the Plan. This is confirmed in Section 3.18 of my report. In addition, Paragraph 30 of PPG 3 advises that the search should not be extended further than required to provide sufficient capacity to meet the agreed housing requirement.

5.4.4 I appreciate that the objection site only extends to 1.12 ha; also that only five houses are contemplated. Nevertheless, irrespective of the advantages put forward on behalf of the objector, I share many of the Council’s detailed concerns. Be that as it may, I do not consider that there is a need for the development envisaged on this site. There is no justification for extending the settlement boundary.

*Land at Ginhall Lane - 527*

5.4.5 In Section 9.43 of my report, and in the context of Policy HBA9, I consider the appropriateness of including the objection site within the boundary of the Established Residential Area. I conclude that the Policy HBA9 designation should be retained. It follows that inclusion within the boundary of the Established Residential Area would not be appropriate. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Pinfarthings - 223*

5.4.6 In Paragraphs 5.4.2 to 5.4.4 above, I refer to a site that is outside the built-up limits of Leominster in circumstances where there is no need to allocate or search for additional housing land. The same considerations apply to the land known as Pinfarthings. In the circumstances, and irrespective of the Council's detailed objections, there are no overriding reasons why the site should be considered for inclusion within the settlement boundary.

**RECOMMENDATION**

5.4/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

**5.5 ROSS-ON-WYE – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES AND ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS (MODEL FARM AND OVERROSS) - POLICY H1 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.4.1 TO 5.4.5**

**Objections**

P365/11167	Ross Rural Parish Council
P862/10889	BP Oil (UK) Ltd
RP1251/10096	J Grinstead
RP1282/10098	Mrs J Bureau
RP1283/10099	P A Bureau
RP1284/10101	Mrs A M McMahan
RP1286/10109	G R Downing
RP1287/10111	Mr and Mrs C H Hirst
RP1288/10113	M and P Lodge
RP1289/10116	Mr J E S Danks
RP1290/10118	Mr and Mrs C Watkins
RP1291/10121	R Cohen and E Phillips
RP1292/10123	M Knowles
RP1293/10125	Mr and Mrs Kernot
RP1294/10127	P Humpston
RP1295/10129	T and J Flowers
RP1296/10131	Mrs S M Besant
RP1297/10133	Mr M C Besant
RP1298/10135	Mr and Mrs S Williams
RP1299/10137	Mr D E Kirk
RP1300/10139	M D Blackney
RP1301/10141	Mr C Paganuzzi
RP1302/10143	Mr and Mrs R K Dixon
RP1303/10145	Mr G C Paganuzzi

RP1304/10147	Mr and Mrs Lines
RP1305/10149	N S Wallis
RP1306/10151	Mrs L Ashrat
RP1307/10153	Rev and Mrs D C Porter
RP1308/10155	Mrs J V Field
RP1309/10157	Mr S Rosser
RP1310/10159	A Sonn
RP1311/10161	S L Preedy
RP1312/10163	J and J S Bacon
RP1313/10165	C J Collins
RP1314/10167	Mr D Foy
RP1315/10169	Mr C I Wheeler
RP1316/10171	Mr P and Ms E Metcalfe
RP1317/10173	Mr B C and Ms E L Armstong
RP1318/10175	Dr and Mrs R Nasaratnam
RP1319/10177	Mr R I Hendrie
RP1320/10179	Mr W Bufton
RP1321/10181	Mrs J Baldwin
RP1322/10183	Mr M Price
RP1324/10187	G M Fulford
RP1325/10189	Dr M Taylor
RP1326/10191	Mr H and Mrs B Rich
RP1327/10193	P Goodby
RP1328/10195	A B McAllan
RP1330/10199	Mrs L J Weinhardt
RP1331/10201	Mr P Nichols
RP1332/10203	Mr S B Jones
RP1333/10214	Mr V and Ms L Lewis
RP1334/10215	Mr N Pascoe
RP1335/10217	Ms E M Walker
RP1336/10221	Mr and Mrs T J R Booth
RP1337/10223	Mr R and Ms J Dowding
RP1340/10259	Mr A Hodges
RP1356/10284	Mr M Eardley
RP1357/10286	Mr R Fishwick
RP1371/10353	Mr and Mrs Woodhouse
RP1372/10355	Mr M and Ms A Palfrey
RP1374/10373	Mr J and Ms M Morris
RP1375/10375	D J Bennett
RP1376/10377	Mrs C Hetherington
RP1422/10454	R A Francis
RP1441/10588	Mrs J Pascoe
RP1442/10590	Mr N Pascoe
RP1443/10592	Mr and Mrs J S Harley
RP1444/10594	R W Andrews
RP1475/10717	Ms C Soble

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The settlement boundary should be amended to include the motorway service area (south) and the surrounding area. (862)
- Whether the settlement boundary should be extended to include land at Model Farm. (All other objections)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Settlement boundary of Ross-on-Wye – all objections*

5.5.1 In Section 6.10 of my report, I conclude that the provisions relating to Model Farm should be deleted from the Plan. Those in respect of the Overross site (motorway service area (south) and surrounding area), dating from the deposit draft stage, should be reinstated. It follows that the settlement boundary should also revert to that shown in the Deposit Draft Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.5/1 In respect of the Overross site and in the vicinity of Model Farm, revert to the settlement boundary shown in the Deposit Draft Plan.

5.5/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## **5.6 ROSS-ON-WYE – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES AND ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS (SITE BASED ISSUES) – POLICY H1**

### **Objections**

P198/428	Alan Porter Ltd
P1174/3717	Mr and Mrs J Price
P686/1680	Mr B Owen

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- Land in the vicinity of Ashfield Park Primary School should be included within the Established Residential Area. (198)
- Land at Arbor Hill is a logical extension to Ross-on-Wye. (1174)
- Land at Lower Greytrees should be included within the settlement boundary. (686)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Land in the vicinity of Ashfield Park Primary School - 198*

5.6.1 On my site visit, I approached the objection site from Walford Road and Ashfield Park Road. Walford Road runs through a solidly residential area. However, immediately upon turning into Ashfield Park Road, I detected a change in the area's character. The residential area lies to the southwest of Ashfield Park Road. The land to the northeast, with its tennis courts and recreation ground, is open in nature.

5.6.2 This open feel intensifies as one reaches the head of Ashfield Park Road. The housing to the southwest gives way to the open grounds of Ashfield Park Primary School whilst on the opposite side of the private drive continuing Ashfield Park Road there is an undeveloped grassed plot.

5.6.3 I appreciate that, at the end of Ashfield Park Road on the northeast side, there is a residential property. There is also built development to be found further along the private drive including Abacus Nursery School, Rectory Farm and a large house in generous grounds to the southwest of Rectory Farm. Nevertheless, all this development is in an area with an open feel markedly different from the predominantly residential area generally to the south and west. In my judgement, the objection land should not be included within the Established Residential Area.

*Land at Arbor Hill - 1174*

5.6.4 As indicated in Paragraph 5.4.2 of the Plan, the main purpose of settlement boundaries is to define the extent of existing urban land uses. In these terms, the objection site is clearly outside the built-up limits of Ross-on-Wye being uncontained open countryside beyond existing residential development.

5.6.5 I acknowledge that the site could be included within the settlement boundary if such an adjustment was appropriate in the light of a legitimate development proposal. This is a matter that I have considered in Section 5.33 of my report. However, I have concluded that a housing allocation would not be appropriate. In the circumstances, I do not consider that the site would be a logical extension of Ross-on-Wye such that it should be included within the settlement boundary.

*Land at Lower Greytrees - 686*

5.6.6 The objection site was included within the settlement boundary at the revised deposit stage. No modification is necessary.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.6/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.7 BROMYARD – SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES AND ESTABLISHED RESIDENTIAL AREAS (SITE BASED ISSUES) – POLICY H1**

### **Objections**

P330/616	Mr E G Berry
P176/394	Top Garage
P34/33	Mr M and Mrs S Smith

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- Land at the junction of Panniers Lane and Leominster Road should be included within the settlement boundary. (330)
- The settlement boundary should extend to include Top Garage and the land to the north. (176)
- The paddock adjoining 36 Highwell Lane should be included within the settlement boundary. (34)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Land at the junction of Panniers Lane and Leominster Road - 330*

5.7.1 On the western outskirts of the town, and on the north side of the A44, the settlement boundary of Bromyard is defined by two bungalows on the west side of Upper Hardwick Lane. At the same time, the western elevation of the veterinary surgery on the west side of Panniers Lane is prominent in views from the west. The objection site is further into Bromyard. There is housing development generally to the east; and, in addition to its context, the site itself has an urban appearance. It is disturbed hummocky ground with vestiges of previous structures and an abandoned metal storage cabin on the site.

5.7.2 Given the circumstances that I have described, I consider that there is a case for including the objection site within the settlement boundary of Bromyard. However, there are other anomalies in this location. These include the site of the veterinary surgery. There is also the question of the appropriate status of the open land north of the vets and west of the objection site.

5.7.3 To my mind, the settlement boundary issue needs to be considered in a comprehensive way using consistent criteria. In my opinion, the best way forward would be for the Council to bring forward a related review of the Bromyard settlement boundary in a development plan document. In the meantime, my comments above could be material consideration in any planning decision.

### *Top Garage and the land to the north - 176*

5.7.4 I appreciate that, within this triangle of land, there are a variety of buildings on the outskirts of Bromyard. To my mind, they signal the proximity of the main built-up area. However, in the approach along the A465 Hereford Road, there continues to be open agricultural land on the east side of the road; and, north of the complex of building including Top Garage, there is a distinct "green gap" formed by the embankments of the school playing fields. I perceived there to be no clear sense of arriving at Bromyard until I reached Ashfield Way.

5.7.5 The approach along Panniers Lane is similar. One passes a loose collection of buildings on the objection site but the obvious boundary of Bromyard is much further to the north. In the opposite direction, and along both roads, the impression of passing out of Bromyard ahead of the objection site is even more striking given the context of open countryside generally to the east and west and the gap formed by the school playing fields.

5.7.6 I appreciate that the objection land is transitional in nature. Nevertheless it can be readily distinguished from the intensive existing urban land uses that are contained within the settlement boundary as drawn by the Council. There is no overriding justification for more housing in this location and I conclude there should be no modification of the Plan in regard to this objection.

### *Paddock adjoining 36 Highwell Lane - 34*

5.7.7 As indicated in Paragraph 5.4.2 of the Plan, the main purpose of settlement boundaries is to define the extent of existing urban land uses. In these terms, the objection site is clearly outside the built-up limits of Bromyard being an open paddock beyond existing residential development.

5.7.8 I acknowledge that the site could be included within the settlement boundary if such an adjustment was appropriate in the light of a legitimate development proposal. However, there is no need for housing in Bromyard additional to the

provisions that have already been made in the Plan. This is confirmed in Section 3.18 of my report. In addition, Paragraph 30 of PPG 3 advises that the search should not be extended further than required to provide sufficient capacity to meet the agreed housing requirement.

5.7.9 Irrespective of the detailed objections of the Council, I have concluded that the objection site is not within the boundary of existing urban land uses nor is there any need to seek additional residential sites in Bromyard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.7/1 Subject to the Council's priorities in respect of its local development framework, review the settlement boundary of Bromyard in the vicinity of the junction of Panniers Lane and Leominster Road in an early development plan document.

5.7/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.8 HEREFORD AND THE MARKET TOWNS: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS (NON-SITE BASED ISSUES) - POLICY H2, PARAGRAPHS 5.4.1 TO 5.4.5 AND TABLE 2

### Objections

W198/1173	Hereford Civic Trust (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P444/917	Robert Hitchins Ltd
P635/4179	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P677/11523	Brasenose College
P790/1979	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P866/5032	Church Commissioners for England
P975/2876	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd
P975/4406	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd
P975/11611	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd
P977/2894	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/2898	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/11613	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P1000/3004	House Builders' Federation
P1000/3005	House Builders' Federation
P1022/3077	Mr R J Bennett
P1102/10791	H P Bulmer Ltd
P1107/10797	H P Bulmer Ltd and Jennings Estates Ltd
P1193/3784	Collier and Brain Ltd
P718/1758	Mrs M Birch

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The use of greenfield land at Holmer should only be permitted when all other sources including windfalls have been used. (198)
- It is not clear whether allowance has been made for the late or non-implementation of allocated sites. (444)

- The windfall estimates are questioned. (444)
- Objection is raised to the way in which the housing requirement would be met. (635)
- An additional 250 houses should be allocated to Leominster. (677)
- In respect of affordable housing, variance from the overall target is questioned. (790)
- Affordable housing targets should be based on a robust housing needs assessment. (790)
- The Plan should have regard to the longer term. (866)
- A greater proportion of housing should be distributed to Hereford and the market towns. (975, 977)
- Table 2 should be simplified. (975, 977)
- The windfall allowance is an over-estimate. (975, 977)
- There should be referencing of housing allocations. (975, 977)
- The UDP should be operative for a period of 10 years from the point of adoption. (975, 977)
- Sufficient sites should be shown on the Proposals Map for at least the first five years of housing development without reliance on windfalls. (975, 977)
- The figures in Table 2 are not substantiated by sufficient detail. (1000)
- The affordable housing requirement should be subject to negotiation. (1000)
- The housing allocation at Ross-on-Wye should be increased. (1022, 1193)
- Sites other than those identified in the urban capacity study may come forward. (1102, 1107)
- The quality of housing provision is in doubt. (1193)
- There should be no more social flats or houses. (718)
- Bromyard shouldn't be a place for just retirement and a place for people just to live. (718)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Greenfield land at Holmer - 198*

5.8.1 I consider the allocation of land at Holmer in Section 5.15 of my report. Matters of phasing are considered in this section as well as in Section 3.18. I support the allocation of housing land at Holmer. However, bearing in mind that, following adoption, the Plan would probably have less than five years to run, the phasing envisaged by the Council and staging the release of greenfield sites would not make sense. No modification in response to the objection is therefore necessary.

### *Allowance for late or non-implementation - 444*

5.8.2 I have considered this matter in Section 3.18 of my report. I have concluded that the way forward is monitoring of the on-going situation and, if

necessary, making good any shortfall through adjustments in policy and implementation. No modification of the Plan is necessary in this regard.

*Windfall estimates - 444*

5.8.3 I consider the robustness of the windfall estimates in Section 3.18 of my report. I conclude that there is sufficient "slack" in the Council's estimates. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Way in which the housing requirement would be met - 635*

5.8.4 The CPRE would wish to see the omission of eight of the sites listed in Policy H2. It is felt that other ways of meeting the housing requirement should be pursued ahead of the use of any greenfield land. In this regard, town plans should be re-examined.

5.8.5 For my part, and as detailed in Section 3.18 of my report, I am satisfied with the way that allowance has been made for other allocated sites, outstanding permissions, windfalls and the like. There is no evidence to suggest that suitable sites have not been identified and that re-examination of town plans would pay dividends at this stage of the plan-making process. I accept that, having had regard to other elements of the housing supply, and to possible brownfield sites, the contentious allocations will be required. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Additional houses at Leominster - 677*

5.8.6 In Section 3.18 of my report, I conclude that there is no strategic case for allocating a higher number of housing units to Leominster. It follows that no related modification of Table 2 is necessary.

*Variance from the overall affordable housing target - 790*

5.8.7 The 20% overall affordable housing target is based on likely provision from all housing in the county over the plan period including completions and commitments. The 35% figure relates to future building. It is the affordable housing percentage that it is felt could properly be sought from appropriate sites. I see no need for a modification of Policy H2 in relation to this objection.

*Robust housing needs assessment - 790*

5.8.8 The objector is not entirely convinced that the affordable housing target is based on a robust overall housing needs assessment. In this regard, the Council's approach is set out in the background documentation notably the General Statement on Affordable Housing (Document J 26) and the Housing Background Paper (Document J 8). There is inadequate justification for any modification of the Plan.

*Regard to the longer term - 866*

5.8.9 I appreciate that, by giving greater commitment to the period post-2011, it would be possible to adopt a long term approach to the distribution of development. However, to my mind, such an approach would be premature. For example, in accordance with RPG 11 (Policy CF2), the role of Hereford as one of the sub-regional foci of development is to be determined through further study. The UDP should not prejudice or pre-judge that assessment. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Distribution of housing to Hereford and the market towns – 975, 977*

5.8.10 I have examined the distribution of housing in Section 3.18 of my report. I conclude that a balanced amount of development has been allocated to the market towns. Future consideration of growth should be tempered by the requirement that their function should not generally be to accommodate migration from the Major Urban Areas (RPG 11, Policy CF2).

5.8.11 In terms of Hereford, I concluded that the proposed level of allocations is entirely appropriate. I also note that Hereford's role as one of the sub-regional foci will be determined through further study. However, as a result of regional planning guidance, the housing requirement for Herefordshire is slightly higher than had previously been envisaged. In this regard, I would expect Hereford to be the prime location for additional development. I have reflected this conclusion in my response to other site specific objections.

*Simplifying Table 2 – 975, 977*

5.8.12 These objections call for Table 2 to be simplified. As a consequence of the recommendation to do away with phasing, it would be appropriate to combine the figures for 2001-2006 and 2006-2011. However, in all other respects, the table shows clearly how the contribution for Hereford and each of the market towns would be made up in terms of commitments, windfalls and allocations. I appreciate that the figures are disputed. This is a matter that is dealt with in Section 3.18. However, I do not see any additional justification for simplifying Table 2.

*Windfall allowance – 975, 977*

5.8.13 The windfall allowance is considered in Section 3.18 of my report. I conclude that there is sufficient "slack" in the Council's estimates of the contributions from windfall sites and that there is no need to reduce further the windfall figure.

*Referencing of housing allocations – 975, 977*

5.8.14 I have dealt with the matter of referencing housing sites in Section 17.1 of my report. Recommendation 17.1/1 refers. Subject to considerations of feasibility, I accept that sites should be referenced on the Proposals Map. However, Table 2 does not identify specific allocations. As such, it would not be appropriate to include the references in Table 2.

*Operative period of UDP – 975, 977*

5.8.15 In Section 3.18 of my report, I reach a number of conclusions relevant to these objections. First of all, the future sub-regional role of Hereford is to be determined through further study. It would be inappropriate for the Plan to prejudice or pre-judge that assessment. Secondly, by adopting an annualised housing requirement, there will be a context for housing provision in Herefordshire beyond 2011. Thirdly, I would expect the UDP soon to be replaced by a development plan document dealing with the on-going need for housing in the county and its distribution.

5.8.16 In the light of these factors, there is no overriding need to identify and control the release of sites for 10 years post-adoption.

*Sites on the Proposals Map – 975, 977*

5.8.17 At the time of adoption, I would expect the UDP to be in its final phase. In the circumstances it is necessary to anticipate and plan for the likely number of windfall completions, a legitimate source of development. To ignore the windfall contribution and make up the housing contribution through development on allocated sites would lead to over-provision since windfalls would still continue to come forward at a significant rate. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Substantiating Table 2 with sufficient detail - 1000*

5.8.18 To my mind, Table 2 is a summary of the facts and figures that are to be found elsewhere in the Plan and in the supporting documentation. It has been possible to test this information through the inquiry process. Some adjustment will be necessary to reflect the latest position. In other respects, the figures have been substantiated by the Council and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Negotiating the affordable housing requirement - 1000*

5.8.19 Policy H9 makes clear that affordable housing provision will be sought through negotiations. In addition, there is reference to development costs. However, this is in the context of windfall sites above the stated thresholds. To my mind, no scheme should be rendered unviable through the provision of affordable housing at the rates indicated. I am recommending clarification through an appropriate revision of Paragraph 5.4.5.

*Housing allocation at Ross-on-Wye – 1022, 1193*

5.8.20 In Section 3.18 of my report, I conclude that increased housing provision in Ross-on-Wye is not an imperative. Bearing in mind also my acceptance of the level of windfall provision likely to be achieved in the town, and the suitability of the allocated sites, I do not consider that the housing allocation should be specifically increased.

*Non-urban capacity sites – 1102, 1107*

5.8.21 Policy H2 indicates that, in considering windfall planning applications, priority will be given to applications on urban capacity sites and previously developed land. In this regard, and in order to restrict the supply of housing or to help achieve brownfield targets, I can see that the Council may wish to restrict the supply of housing from greenfield sites. However, since these are by definition not windfall sites, it would be better to refer to non-allocated sites. Subject to such an amendment, and bearing in mind that I have been able to consider specific objections into other candidate sites, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Quality of housing provision - 1193*

5.8.22 To my mind, quality housing provision would be a consideration under Policy DR1 (Design) and Policy H13 (Sustainable residential design). Given also that use would be made of supplementary planning guidance and development briefs as well as monitoring and review, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Social flats and houses - 718*

5.8.23 Paragraph 1 of Circular 06/98 (Planning and Affordable Housing) indicates that, where there is evidence of need for affordable housing, local plans should include a policy for seeking an element of such housing on suitable sites. To my mind, a need for affordable housing in Bromyard has been clearly demonstrated

and I support the Council's responses in this regard. To halt the provision of social flats and houses would be totally inappropriate.

*Bromyard as a place for retiring and living - 718*

5.8.24. I do not see that Bromyard would be a place for just retirement or a place for people just to live. In my opinion, the Plan makes provision for a wide variety of facilities and amenities essential for thriving communities. There is no undue emphasis on retirement or living.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.8/1 Modify the figures in Table 2 to reflect the situation that would obtain after modification; also by combining the figures in the columns for 2001-2006 and 2006-2011 into a single column for 2001-2011.

5.8/2 Substitute the following for the third sentence of Paragraph 5.4.5: "Site suitability and local circumstances, including site economics, will also be taken into account in considering individual schemes."

5.8/3 For the words "In considering windfall planning applications" in Policy H2, substitute the following words: "In considering development on non-allocated sites,".

5.8/4 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.9 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED SITES - BRADBURY ESTATE – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.7

### Objections

P194/419	Callow and Haywood Group Parish Council
P866/2440	Church Commissioners for England
P995/2971	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P995/11511	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1017/3138	Lower Bullingham Parish Council
P1018/500015	Belmont Rural Parish Council

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Objection is raised to the increase in density at Sterling Lines. (194)
- The site capacity at the Bradbury Estate, Putson appears excessive. (866)
- The housing capacity of the Bradbury Lines site should be about 500 dwellings. (995)
- The housing capacity of the Bradbury Lines sites should be increased to 600 dwellings. (995)
- Whether housing at the Bradbury Estate, Putson would exacerbate overstretched community facilities and road infrastructure. (1017, 1018)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Capacity of Bradbury Estate, Putson – all objections*

5.9.1 I note that there is an outline planning permission dated 10 February 2005 for "mixed use development to provide housing, open space, community and local retail uses". However, although the material submitted with the application indicated a proposal of about 500 dwellings, the application itself did not specify any number. Nor does the permission itself specify a number or include a restriction on the number of dwellings that could be provided. In these terms, I take the view that the capacity could be increased to 600 dwellings and still remain within the ambit of the planning permission. This view accords with counsel's opinion (Document GWSL 1).

5.9.2 Although the number that can be supported by appropriate infrastructure and the achievement of an acceptable layout are still relevant, I see no overriding problems in this regard. I would expect there to be plenty of opportunities to increase the density well above 30 dph. At the top end of the range, 17.4 ha of land at 35 dph would yield 609 dwellings; and 15.5 ha of land at 40 dph would yield 620 dwellings.

5.9.3 With regard to drainage, the evidence indicates that capacity exists within the 300mm public sewer in Hoarwithy Road to cater for the discharge of foul water. Planning conditions are the means of controlling the discharge of surface water.

5.9.4 A range of other concerns have also been raised. These include the adequacy of provision in respect of doctors, dentists, schools, public transport, play space and meeting facilities. With regard to open space and play facilities, public transport and education, these are all addressed in a Section 106 obligation. In addition, I note an intention to use a former military chapel for community use. I appreciate that medical provision is also a concern; but I have no evidence to suggest that the additional population would be an unacceptable burden.

5.9.5 The capacity of the local road network is a more particular concern. In this regard, I note that there is significant scope for modal transfer. In addition, although the Council has not had the benefit of considering a transport assessment for 600 dwellings, there is an expectation that the effects of additional traffic could be mitigated.

5.9.6 I conclude that all but objection no P995/11511 have been overtaken by events. The capacity of the Bradbury Estate, Putson should be increased to 600 dwellings.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.9/1 In Policy H2, increase the estimated dwellings 2001-2011 for Bradbury Estate, Putson from 500 to 600. Increase the target of affordable dwellings proportionately.

5.9/2 In Paragraph 5.4.7, amended references to 500 dwellings to read 600 dwellings. Delete the final sentence of the paragraph.

5.9/3 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.10 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED SITES - LAND AT BELMONT – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.8

### Objections

W193/500007	SHARP
W198/11305	Hereford Civic Society
P427/890	Belmont Abbey
P427/7235	Belmont Abbey
P427/10801	Belmont Abbey
P866/2441	Church Commissioners for England
P1000/11237	House Builders' Federation
RW1266/11214	Westbury Homes (Holdings) Ltd
P659/1533	Mr B J and M I Thomas
P659/11235	Mr B J and M I Thomas

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the allocation at Belmont should revert to 35 houses. (193, 198)
- The justification and implementability of this allocation is questioned. (866)
- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)
- Whether there would be an acceptable balance between the amount of housing proposed and the requirement of the Plan. (427, 659, 866, 1266)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Reverting to 35 houses – 193, 198*

5.10.1 SHARP is concerned at the environmental impact, and the danger to children, that could result from extension almost to the edge of Belmont Pool. In response, I note the proposal to contain housing development within the lower part of the site. Residential amenity would be respected. In addition, development would be kept away from the pools as far as possible given the size of the allocation and landscape considerations. In my opinion, there is inadequate justification for reverting to an allocation of 35 houses as opposed to 60 houses.

5.10.2 Hereford Civic Society in its duly made objection fails to see how reducing the area allocated to the park can be of benefit. It is presumed that this is an inappropriate use of planning gain. For my part, I acknowledge that there would be further encroachment into greenfield land. However, I do not consider that the area involved is significant in landscape or biodiversity terms or that there would be a material impact on the country park proposals. On the other hand, there would be legitimate use of necessary housing development to aid in the delivery of a related Plan recreational proposal.

#### *Justification and implementability - 866*

5.10.3 The country park proposal is long standing and, in my opinion, well founded. I consider that it is appropriate to put forward linked residential and recreational proposals in order to achieve both the Plan's housing requirements and the implementation of the country park scheme. The package has the support, in

principle, of land owners and developers. I see no overriding problems regarding implementation.

*Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.10.4I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, improvements are planned by March 2006 and I would not expect there to be any problems in delivering 60 houses.

*Acceptable balance between housing and Plan requirements – 427, 659, 866, 1266*

5.10.5The remaining objections are essentially concerned with whether the housing allocation can provide the necessary returns. To some extent, this issue has been addressed in the increased allocation, in the Revised Deposit Draft, from 35 dwellings to 60 dwellings. However, outstanding matters include future recreational schemes and maintenance; affordable housing provision; and access into the development site.

5.10.6Paragraph 5.4.8 of the Plan requires a commuted payment for future recreational schemes in the locality (including those identified in the Belmont / Haywood Management Plan). At the inquiry, the Council acknowledged that it would be help to specify, at 7.8 ha, the amount of park land envisaged. It was also conceded that the stated requirement could be regarded as very open-ended and unreasonable. I agree that the related part of the sentence should be deleted.

5.10.7With regard to on-going maintenance, the Council felt that it would still be appropriate to see maintenance of the whole scheme. However, to my mind, this would be contrary to the advice at Paragraph B14 of Circular 1/97 on planning obligations (now Paragraph B19 of Circular 05/2005).

5.10.8In terms of affordable housing and the overall planning gain package, it is suggested that such matters should be determined in a planning brief. However, it appears to me these are considerations that should be flagged up in the UDP. In this regard, I take as indicative the affordable housing target in Policy H2. If development costs were affecting viability, this would be a relevant consideration under the terms of Paragraph 5.4.5 as proposed to be modified.

5.10.9Finally, and with regard to access, objectors would wish to be free to access the site from the east. The Council, for its part, is concerned to avoid potential damage and disturbance to a SINC and has specified that access should be from Kingfisher Way. For my part, I note that there are already several road crossings of the SINC. Indeed, the Kingfisher Way access would cross the SINC. On my site visit, I did not gain the impression that access via Mulberry Close would be any more damaging. In my opinion, there is no need to specify the point of access in the Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.10/1 In the third sentence of Paragraph 5.4.8, insert "(7.8 ha)" after "park land".

5.10/2 In the fourth sentence of Paragraph 5.4.8, delete all the words after "public land".

5.10/3 In Paragraph 5.4.8, delete the sentence saying "Access would be from Kingfisher Road."

5.10/4 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## **5.11 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED SITES - GENERAL HOSPITAL – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.9**

### **Objection**

P746/6889 Bloor Homes Ltd

### **Summary of Objection / Issue**

- Development is likely to be constrained by the need to have regard to the conservation area and to the listed building. (746)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

*Constraint of conservation area and listed building - 746*

5.11.11 appreciate that the General Hospital site is subject to constraints. However, the grant of planning permission for a scheme of 90 dwellings, and its implementation, demonstrates that the deliverability of this number of units is not an issue. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

5.11/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objection.

## **5.12 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED SITES - LAND AT FRIARS STREET – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.10**

### **Objection**

P1000/11238 House Builders' Federation

### **Summary of Objection / Issue**

- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.12.1I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, improvements are planned by March 2006 and I would not expect there to be any problems in delivering 112 houses.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

5.12/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objection.

## **5.13 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED SITES - LAND AT WALTON CLOSE – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.12**

### **Objection**

P358/697 Environment Agency

### **Summary of Objection / Issue**

- The allocation should be deleted unless a flood risk assessment shows that dry access can be maintained in a 1% probability flood event. (358)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Deletion of the allocation - 358*

5.13.1To my mind this objection has been overtaken by events. A scheme of residential development on the allocation site has been completed. The Revised Deposit Draft has been updated and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

5.13/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objection.

## **5.14 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED SITES - LAND AT BULLINGHOPE – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.13**

### **Objections**

W198/11303	Hereford Civic Society
P415/11281	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P441/10534	South Wye Regeneration Partnership
P578/1261	Residents' Association
P635/11431	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P692/11505	Jennings Estates Ltd
P746/11012	Bloor Homes Ltd

P746/11013	Bloor Homes Ltd
P830/500223	Herefordshire Friends of the Earth
P866/10891	Church Commissioners for England
P890/10806	Government Office for the West Midlands
P898/10282	Herefordshire Green Party
P995/11512	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P998/10786	Special Metals Wiggin
P1017/11130	Lower Bullingham Parish Council
P1018/500016	Belmont Rural Parish Council
P1102/10790	H P Bulmer Ltd
P1107/10798	H P Bulmer Ltd and Jennings Estates Ltd
P1113/11138	Rail for Herefordshire
RP1265/10033	Much Dewchurch Parish Council
RP1359/10290	Arctic Circle Ltd
RP1378/10380	Dinedor Hill Action Group
RP1421/10447	Hereford City Council
RP1478/10728	Mr and Mrs A Priddle
P386/10274	W H D Hartland
W578/11090	Mr Jonathan Hines
P907/10711	Mrs Judy Allen
P973/11160	Mr B Price
P1013/10368	Ms A Adams
P1098/10575	Mr G F M Dawe
RP1252/10020	Mr A C Knight
RP1253/10021	Mr and Mrs R Farmer
RP1254/10022	Mr and Mrs Lewis
RP1255/10023	D Blackstone
RP1256/10024	Ms H Blackstone
RP1257/10025	Mrs V A Hince
RP1258/10026	Mrs M B Le Surf
RP1259/10027	L Conroy
RP1260/10028	M Evans
RP1261/10029	A L Le Surf
RP1262/10030	P B Blackwell
RP1263/10031	M Munn
RP1264/10032	Mr D Davies
RP1266/10034	W L Banks
RP1267/10035	Ms N Simpkins
RW1272/500119	Mr A Pucill
RP1275/10084	Mr F Hawkins
RP1276/10085	Mr G and Ms H Slee
RP1277/10086	Ms T Smith
RP1278/10087	Mrs T Derry
RP1279/10088	Mrs D L Ware
RP1280/10089	Ms V Harding
RP1281/10090	Revd and Mrs P Hackett
RP1338/10232	Ms Y and Mr T Pegler
RP1339/10233	Mr and Mrs G Morse
RP1341/10261	Ms F L Edmunds
RP1343/10263	Mrs B Holloway
RP1344/10264	Miss R Amies
RP1345/10265	Mr J G Hodgson
RP1346/10266	Ms A L Hodgson
RP1347/10267	H Healey
RP1348/10268	M K Healey
RP1349/10269	M J and F J Morgan
RP1351/10271	Mr and Mrs W Griffin

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RP1352/10272	Ms L Roberts
RP1354/10279	Mr E Gittoes
RP1355/10280	Mrs D Gittoes
RP1373/10367	Mr I H Roberts
RP1377/10379	Ms S Owens
RP1379/10381	Mrs T Haggett
RP1382/10384	Ms S Vale
RP1383/10385	Mr R Mainwaring
RP1384/10386	Mrs J Neave
RP1385/10387	C M Hyde
RP1386/10388	Mrs S A Palmer
RP1387/10391	Mr R E Underwood
RP1388/10392	Mr and Mrs R Little
RP1389/10395	L P Baddeley
RP1390/10396	Mr S Cocks
RP1391/10397	Ms D E Pritchard
RP1393/10399	Mr T McDade
RP1394/10400	P Westwood
RP1395/10401	K Gummerson
RP1396/10402	Mr M Cole
RP1398/10403	Mr J R J Colman
RP1399/10405	Mr W H Jenkins
RP1400/10407	Ms D Gatfield
RP1401/10408	C Panniers
RP1403/10410	B M Healey
RP1404/10411	P Stokes
RP1405/10412	Mr S Edwards
RP1406/10413	Mrs E Edwards
RP1408/10414	A Elliott
RP1412/10418	Mrs E J Hicks
RP1413/10420	Ms M Double
RP1414/10421	Mr and Mrs Russell
RP1415/10423	Mr and Mrs B Dukes
RP1418/10437	Mrs C L Graham
RP1420/10444	Mrs J Jones
RP1424/10460	Mr and Mrs Rodgman
RP1430/10533	Ms F Madison
RP1431/10535	Mrs C M Maullin (Conditional Withdrawl)
RP1434/10563	Ms D Bell
RP1438/10572	Mr and Mrs T Roberts
RP1439/10573	Mr and Mrs B Caldicutt
RP1440/10583	Ms J E Tonge
RP1458/10633	Dr D Marcer
RP1459/10634	Ms E Marcer
RP1467/10695	Mr C Bishop
RP1479/10726	Ms L Sykes
RP1481/10733	Miss E M Davies
RP1486/10901	Mr I Pontin
RP1491/11022	Ms I Williams
RP1494/11097	Mrs U Attfield
RP1495/11102	Mr C Chappell
RP1500/11112	Mrs Lloyd-Hayes
RP1503/11154	Mr S and Ms C Niblett
RP1507/11229	Mr R Haig
RP1508/11230	Mr R D C Smith
RP1510/11509	Ms V Murray

## Summary of Objections / Issues

- The estimated dwelling capacity in Policy H2 should be amended to read “up to 2,000”. (746)
- Whether land at Bullinghope should be allocated as a proposed housing site. (All other objections)

## Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

### *Capacity for up to 2,000 dwellings - 746*

5.14.1I start with the “strategic” objection of Bloor Homes Ltd. If it can be demonstrated that Bullinghope is the area where significant development beyond the plan period should be accommodated, then this has important implications for the legitimacy of the “initial” allocation of 300 dwellings under Policy H2.

5.14.2I appreciate that, under Policy CF2 of RPG 11, Hereford is recognised as one of five sub-regional foci where longer term strategic housing development should be located. However, the policy goes on to state, “The function that each of the foci would be expected to fulfil should be determined through further study.” This message is reinforced by RPG 11 Paragraph 9.69. This refers to the multi-modal study that has been undertaken. The text continues by saying, “Further work is proposed to identify the role of the foci as part of an early partial review of this RPG. This will need to be informed by the multi-modal study and consider the priority that needs to be allocated to its outcomes.”

5.14.3Although it has been put to me that Bullinghope is the unrivalled and best option in terms of the strategic role of Hereford, I am not able to confirm that conclusion. It is clear to me that the “further work” signalled by RPG 11 has not yet been carried out. Indeed, the Council does not wish the extended area to be identified as a strategic allocation. It sees the exact position as being determined through the local development framework taking into account higher order opportunities.

5.14.4Nor were an obvious range of options considered at the inquiry. Even if, for the sake of argument only, Holmer is dismissed as a strategic location for growth, other questions arise. For example, what is the role of west Hereford particularly if there is to be a western distributor around the town?

5.14.5It is suggested that the multi-modal study, catering for demand up to 2031, supports the adoption of Bullinghope. However, it does not appear to me that the study tests the implications of significant development in this location. For the forecast years of 2011 and 2031, the model incorporates the provisions of the LTP, the Deposit Draft Plan (ie with housing at Holmer) and Government estimated socio-economic changes from 2016 to 2031.

5.14.6It may well be that significant development at Bullinghope could benefit from elements of the “blended package” recommended under the multi-modal study. However, there would be an element of the tail wagging the dog. Priority would need to be given to certain measures, admittedly with financial support from the developers; but, to my mind, this is not giving priority to the outcomes of the multi-modal exercise in the light of the further study envisaged by RPG 11. Again, taking west Hereford as an example, would further study promote such a location and suggest priority for a western distributor?

5.14.7 In any event, the question of whether future transportation infrastructure could cope with an additional 2,000 dwellings at Bullinghope is unresolved. The A49 into Hereford is renowned for its congestion. I accept that, with help from the Rotherwas Access Road, there would be relief at the junctions with Holme Lacy Road and Bullingham Lane such that technical standards could be met. Nevertheless, the A49 is still a very busy road corridor.

5.14.8 The solutions for the medium term are heavily dependent upon modal shift. It takes a considerable amount of faith to believe that the transport strategy envisaged would produce "a broadly neutral effect on the A49 corridor" or that "The numbers that did decide to travel by car would be offset by other car drivers switching mode to walk, cycle or public transport due to the improved facilities provided in the strategy" (Proof of evidence of Mr M Brooks, Paragraphs 4.2.2 and 4.3.2).

5.14.9 Be that as it may, it is not known how the traffic associated with 1,600 to 2,000 dwellings would be accommodated. The evidence for the objector acknowledges that this could take several forms and would be developed and delivered through the LTP. The Council's statement (Paragraph 5.5.19) indicates that the housing commitment is in broad terms and that the implications would need to be considered further in the context of the local development framework.

5.14.10 In my opinion, if there is going to be a commitment to a much larger residential development at Bullinghope beyond the plan period, the planning and transportation aspects need to be considered now and appropriate provisions built into the current Plan.

5.14.11 In summary of the above, it appears to me that Hereford's role as one of the sub-regional foci, and the scale and direction of future development, need to be the subject of further study and commitment to related transport measures. I am not able to conclude that Bullinghope is the appropriate location for future strategic growth of the order of 2,000 dwellings. Any such conclusion would be premature and prejudicial to a considered solution to Hereford's strategic growth.

#### *Allocation of land at Bullinghope as a proposed housing site – all other objections*

##### Introduction

5.14.12 I now discuss the appropriateness of the provisions of Policy H2 and Paragraph 5.4.13. Under these provisions, a first phase allocation for 300 dwellings would be made at Bullinghope. This is the position advanced in the Revised Deposit Draft. The allocation is in substitution for the 300 dwellings proposed at Holmer in the Deposit Draft Plan. I discuss representations in respect of the Holmer site, and other candidate sites, in other parts of my report. With regards to the objections to Bullinghope, these are discussed below. For convenience, I have adopted the issues identified by the Council in its statement.

##### Need for the development and the availability of other sites

5.14.13 In Section 3.18 of my report, I have examined Herefordshire's future housing requirement in the light of regional planning guidance. Part of the requirement has already been met through completions. Yet more completions can be anticipated on sites that already have planning permission or on windfall sites. However, there remains a considerable gap that will have to be made up from new allocations in the Plan. This gap is considerably in excess of 300 dwellings. I conclude that there is a clear need for a contribution from allocated sites that considerably exceeds that proposed for Bullinghope.

5.14.14 Objectors argue that sites more suitable than Bullinghope are available elsewhere. I have considered other candidate sites elsewhere in my report. My conclusions on Holmer are particularly relevant in this regard (Section 5.15 below). In the light of these deliberations I have been able to conclude that another more suitable site is available elsewhere.

Strategic change to Bullinghope and commitment to future direction of growth

5.14.15 I have considered this matter in Paragraphs 5.14.1 to 5.14.11 above. I have concluded that Bullinghope should not be regarded as an automatic strategic location for future growth. However, the allocation of 300 houses would be an obvious commitment in this regard. There would be a major breach of the main existing limits of Hereford, delineated by the railway, and a future defensible boundary in the form of the Rotherwas Access Road well to the south. Having made the break in this direction, I can see the sense in continuing development up to the new road.

5.14.16 However, as indicated above, the debate on the amount and direction of further strategic growth in Hereford, and commitments in terms of transport infrastructure and the like, is still to take place. In my opinion, the allocation of 300 houses at Bullinghope would be premature and would prejudice open discussion of alternatives for the city.

Timing of change and lack of consultation

5.14.17 I can appreciate the frustration felt by many objectors in respect of the timing of the change regarding Bullinghope and the perceived lack of consultation. However, it is important for the latest development proposals to be reflected in the UDP. In this regard, a late change would be better than an out of date plan. In any event, the purpose of the two deposit system is to enable changes to be made in the light of objections to the initial deposit version.

5.14.18 To my mind, objectors have had an adequate opportunity to make clear their feelings. Amongst other things, this is evident from the representations before the inquiry. Bearing in mind also that the objections relate to procedural matters, there is no justification for rejecting the proposed allocation on the grounds of the timing of the change or any lack of consultation.

Sustainability of development at Bullinghope

5.14.19 Development at Bullinghope would involve building on greenfield agricultural land beyond the present boundaries of Hereford. To this extent, the proposal would be less sustainable than the preferred option of re-using previously developed land and buildings within urban areas as identified in an urban capacity study.

5.14.20 However, it is not possible to meet the housing needs of Herefordshire on brownfield land. The next most sustainable option is usually considered to be urban extensions. At the inquiry, the relative sustainability of the rival urban extensions at Bullinghope and Holmer was considered in detail. To my mind, there is little to choose between the locations. My conclusion is that sustainability considerations would not rule out the allocation of housing land at Bullinghope as proposed by the Council.

The need for and delivery of the Rotherwas Access Road

5.14.21 The Rotherwas Access Road has the benefit of planning permission. Objections into the scheme were considered by the Council when it was deciding

whether the scheme should be approved. Given the grant of planning permission, to re-open that debate would be counter-productive. It is, of course, relevant to consider what weight should be given to a guarantee of funding the scheme. This is a matter that I consider below in the context of arguments for abandoning the Holmer proposal.

5.14.22Be that as it may, it is clear to me that the Rotherwas Access Road would be a necessary accompaniment of housing development at Bullinghope. The evidence to the inquiry indicated that no more than about 200 dwellings could be occupied without the new road. The road would be necessary in reducing right-turning traffic on the A49 and hence facilitating the flow of traffic out of Holme Lacy Road and Bullingham Lane in accordance with acceptable standards.

#### Funding of the Rotherwas Access Road

5.14.23As indicated above, the Rotherwas Access Road would be intimately linked with the proposed housing allocation at Bullinghope. Given its necessity in order for the final tranche of the allocation to proceed, I consider as legitimate the funding of the Rotherwas Access Road on the back of the housing development. In this regard, I have noted the unequivocal commitment by the prospective developers to fund the construction of the road.

#### Relationship between the Rotherwas Access Road and the proposed housing

5.14.24As explained above, there would be a direct relationship between the housing allocation at Bullinghope and the funding of the Rotherwas Access Road. Having regard to the provisions of Circular 1/97 on planning obligations (now Circular 05/2005), I do not consider that the funding of the road would be an unacceptable form of planning gain.

#### Impact of traffic and links with the city

5.14.25For objectors to the Bullinghope development, familiar with the daily congestion on the A49, I can understand their concerns that the Council's proposals will only make matters worse. Certainly, I would not expect them to get any better. However, the proposed allocation has been the subject of a transport assessment. This indicates that, with certain provisions in place, notably the Rotherwas Access Road and improvements at the A49 / Holme Lacy Road junction, the traffic will work within tolerable limits.

5.14.26There are detailed points of concern. The assessment would need to be updated in the light of the proposed increase in the number of dwellings at the Bradbury Estate, Putson. Pedestrian delay at signal controlled junctions with the A49 is also a potential issue. However, in principle, and in relation to a development of 300 houses, I am satisfied that the impact of traffic and links with the city are not overriding issues.

#### Affordable housing

5.14.27Given the necessity to provide funding for the Rotherwas Access Road, the normal requirement to provide affordable housing would be waived. This is a significant disadvantage. At the rates applied elsewhere, there would be the potential to provide over 100 affordable dwellings at Bullinghope. Nevertheless, I would not consider this to be a determining issue. Although unfortunate, I consider as reasonable a solution where, in the light of other abnormal costs, no affordable housing would be sought.

#### Ownership of land

5.14.28 I appreciate that a national house builder may have a large land bank in the Bullinghope area. However, the main planning issues in this case are unrelated to matters such as land options or ownerships.

#### Impact on existing services / provision of new services, facilities and infrastructure

5.14.29 Objectors to the Bullinghope proposals are concerned about pressure on existing services. Health provision, schooling and community facilities are frequently mentioned. For my part, I note that a comprehensive range of facilities are available within Hereford. Across the range, I would say that there is little to choose between Bullinghope and Holmer. Be that as it may, where provision or capacity is lacking, there is no reason to suppose that new provision or contributions to the expansion of existing facilities could not be sought as part of the development.

5.14.30 Particular reference has been made to overstretched sewerage facilities particularly in the light of on-going developments. In this regard, confirmation of the capacity at the sewage treatment works was anticipated by the consultants acting for the prospective developer. The problem was seen as one of capacity within the drainage network. It was acknowledged that the up-sizing of pipes would probably be necessary. However, I see no problems in principle.

#### The Withy Brook and flooding of part of the development site

5.14.31 I can understand the concerns of objectors in respect of flooding. Hereford is a city where problems regularly occur. An increase in development automatically tends to be associated with increased run-off and greater flood risk. However, no part of the allocation site is land at high risk of flooding from the Withy Brook or from any other watercourse. Further, there is no objection from the competent authority, the Environment Agency, in this regard. In addition, sustainable drainage techniques would need to be pursued in accordance with Policy DR7.

5.14.32 All in all, and prior to the occupation of any new dwellings, detailed provision for storm water drainage would need to have been designed by the developer and approved by the Council. I do not see any overriding problem in this regard.

#### Potential damage to landscape quality, wildlife, archaeology and local amenity

5.14.33 On a preliminary point, there is no evidence to suggest to me that the allocation area is of any significant merit in regard to wildlife or archaeology. To my mind, these are not determining issues.

5.14.34 In terms of landscape quality and local amenity, I have visited this area several times. I have observed the objection site from roads, from footpaths and from the high ground of Dinedor Hill. On each occasion, the predominant impressions that I gained in this locality are of open countryside; of a landscape that is distinctly rural in its character and appearance; and of an extensive, gently rolling agricultural prospect.

5.14.35 I appreciate that there is an outlier of development at Bullingham Lane and at Bullinghope itself. Also, further to the east, the Rotherwas Industrial Estate is to be found beyond Watery Lane. I have also borne in mind the likely impact of the Rotherwas Access Road. However, the abiding picture is of a landscape devoid of large scale built development and the associations of an urban area. The objection

site itself has all the hallmarks of the open rural countryside; and it is an integral part of the wider agricultural landscape unsullied by urban development.

5.14.36I consider that the proposed development would be a material and unjustified incursion into the open countryside surrounding Hereford. It would be significantly harmful to the rural character and appearance of the area and, in the circumstances that I have described, an unwarranted accretion to the south of the city. I have no hesitation in recommending that the proposed allocation should not be pursued under the unitary development plan.

The railway as a physical barrier

5.14.37I strongly support the view that the railway is an obvious physical boundary to the spread of Hereford. I appreciate that, as referred to above, there are elements of built development to the south of the railway line. There is also the prospect of the Rotherwas Access Road. However, to my mind, these elements do not in any way diminish the marked contrast between the city to the north of the railway and the agricultural land to the south. To breach this boundary and to allow housing development to spill into the rural countryside would not be justified.

Loss of agricultural land

5.14.38It would appear that some of the best and most versatile agricultural land would be lost as a result of development on the allocation site. However, I do not consider that such loss would be of overriding importance. It is perhaps unfortunate that the strategic housing requirement cannot be met without extending into surrounding agricultural land. This is the case at Bullinghope as at other candidate sites. To my mind, it is an inevitable consequence of the growth of the city.

Safeguarded mineral reserves

5.14.39In Section 11.11 of my report, I conclude that the safeguarding of mineral reserves in the Lower Bullingham area is not justified. I recommend that the related land should be omitted from the area safeguarding mineral reserves. Irrespective of whether potential extraction of the reserves would indeed be prejudiced, it follows that there is no impediment to housing development at Bullinghope on these grounds.

Damage to tourism and recreation

5.14.40I can see that, if the proposed housing development went ahead, the area would be less attractive from the point of view of tourism and recreation. However, I would say that the allocation site is merely part of the wider area of interest. It has no particular value in itself. Although the enjoyment of those viewing the area might be diminished, I would not expect there to be any major impact on tourism and recreation. The enjoyment is more broadly based. For example, the number of people visiting Dinedor Hill is unlikely to reduce significantly. The main interest is in Dinedor Hill itself including the camp even though some would find the surrounding views less attractive.

Other unspecified objections

5.14.41A number of objectors have not highlighted any particular point of concern. They have a general objection to the proposed allocation at Bullinghope and, in some cases, a preference for Holmer. There is inadequate justification for these objections although I think it likely that I will have dealt with detailed points of concern under the various headings above.

## Conclusions

5.14.42 The allocation site lies within the open countryside to the south of Hereford. It is beyond the strong boundary formed by the railway line. The proposed development would be a major incursion, physically separated from the built-up limits of the city and harmful to the rural character and appearance of the area. To allocate the site under the unitary development plan would be unwarranted.

5.14.43 Comparisons are inevitable. In this regard, I consider below the merits and demerits of the objection site at Holmer. I conclude that, irrespective of the perceived advantages of the Bullinghope proposal, Holmer is a much better site. In my judgement, and notwithstanding the support for Bullinghope, Holmer should be the site that contributes 300 dwellings towards the strategic housing requirement.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.14/1 Delete reference to land at Bullinghope from Policy H2 and from Paragraph 5.4.13.

5.14/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.15 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED SITES - LAND AT HOLMER – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.13 (DELETED)

### Objections

P415/11282	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P415/864	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P613/1363	Mrs M Williams
P830/500225	Herefordshire Friends of the Earth
P866/2442	Church Commissioners for England
P898/10283	Herefordshire Green Party
P915/2623	Holmer and District Residents' Association
P998/10787	Special Metals Wiggin
P1108/3552	Hereford and Gloucestershire Canal Trust Ltd
RP1421/10448	Hereford City Council
W10/19	Mr J and Ms M Byard
P48/241	Ms D and Mr R Holland
P49/231	Mrs J Jeffery (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P64/535	Mr G V Hyde
P127/322	Mr C Trenchard
W186/230	Mr B Jeffery (Conditionally Withdrawn)
W186/6680	Mr B Jeffery (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P190/413	Mr P Stevens
P193/418	Mr and Mrs Moody
W202/2612	Mr S N and Mrs J L Fields
P234/496	Mr W J Hanks
P237/1015	Mr D West (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P259/542	V J Heath
P260/544	Mr G Preece
P262/546	Ms K O'Hare
P320/606	N D Cope

P442/912	Mr and Mrs Roach
P465/959	Ms C R Aitken
P488/1010	Mr and Mrs L Corbett
P493/1023	Mrs P Walker
W496/2020	Mr and Mrs S Watkins
P514/1119	Mr S Baker
P516/1058	Mrs J P Williams
P517/1059	Mrs Y Baker
P528/1084	A N West (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P529/1082	Mr J G and Mrs C Codrington
P530/1100	Mr J Cartwright
P534/1109	Mrs M J Watkins
P536/1134	Mr and Mrs J Watkins
P537/1138	Mrs H E Cantrill
P538/1145	Mr K Tong
P540/1162	G B Stubbs
P541/1176	Mrs C A Lawson
P542/1192	Ms T Lane
P544/1212	Mr J and Mrs D King (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P545/1217	Mr P Bullock
P546/1376	Ms S Jones
P547/1219	E and J Brooks
P548/1223	G and M Rowe
P549/1221	Mr D Borthwick
P552/1228	Miss F M Riddell
P553/1230	Ms J Ramage-Smith
P558/1249	Mr and Mrs R Corrigan
P559/1251	Mr and Mrs A J Dallimore
P560/1252	Mr A S Hayes
P577/1259	Mr A Kershaw (Conditionally Withdrawn)
W578/11616	Mr Jonathan Hines
P579/1263	Mr and Mrs A Onions
P580/1265	Mr B O'Brien
P581/1266	D R Volpe (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P582/1267	Mr M D Soanes
P583/1268	Ms G Morris
P584/1270	Mr R J and K E Moxley
P585/1272	J Marchant
P593/1282	Mr George Howcroft
P598/1289	Mr C E Kennett
P606/1348	R E and R Preece
P607/1350	Mr M L and Mrs C E Rawson
P608/1352	Mrs M Parsons
P615/1366	Mr and Mrs I Wood
P619/1382	S R Cooke
P620/1383	Mr and Mrs C.J and D.M. Jones
P621/1385	Mr E James
P622/1386	Mr W G and Mrs P J Jay
P627/1399	Mr and Mrs L Harrison
P628/1402	Mr and Mrs M Graver
P630/1405	Mr and Mrs T R Galloway (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P631/1408	Mrs R Downes-Hopkins
P638/1416	B M Donaldson
P639/1418	K Donaldson
P640/1419	Mrs J E Davies
P642/1421	Mr and Mrs P Davies
P646/1445	Mr W E Turner

P739/1789	Mr G Lawson
P740/1790	Mr I Harrison
P751/1840	G R and V D Minett
P762/1889	H J Stockton
P795/2023	Mr K Watkins
P797/2027	Mr C and Mrs E Black
P798/2028	S P Greenly
P801/2032	Mr and Mrs A Horne
P803/2039	Mr A T and Mrs J J Howells
P804/2221	Mr I Watkins
P805/2046	Mr N B and Mrs G M Millichip
P806/2056	Miss K P Uridge
P812/2103	Mrs V A Ball
P814/2106	R A and T G Beveridge
P815/2110	Ms J and Mr M Williams
P816/2115	Mr J and Mrs N Beveridge
P818/2119	Mr M and Ms L Beveridge
P820/2121	K and S Connor
P825/2130	Mr N and Mrs M Jones
P845/2222	Mrs C Watkins
P847/2237	D Butler
P849/2248	Mr W and Mrs A L Fotheringham
P850/2250	Mr and Mrs A C Cracknell
P851/2254	Mrs A Aitken
P852/2263	Ms A Little
P853/2270	Mrs P Richards
P856/2277	Mr J F and Mrs S Tyler
P858/2286	Mr J Stiff
P859/2288	Ms J Sargeant
P861/2307	V A Pugh
P863/2320	Mr T V Morris
P868/2467	Mr P Saville
P869/2475	Mr R Binnersley
P870/2477	R E Barnes
P871/2479	P Field
P873/2481	Mr and Mrs K Mason
P875/2485	Mrs G Watkins
P877/2489	T H and G Edwards
P882/2494	Mr E L and Mrs B Crooks
P885/2503	Mr E M and Mrs D Brimfield
P887/2507	Mr P Cocks
P888/2509	Ms D Barnes
P892/2511	Mr T and Ms L Lott
P893/2515	Mr N H Agger
P899/2559	Mr N O'Neil
P900/2581	Mr M Hollis
P901/2586	Ms D Hooper
P902/2589	Mrs W Fisk
P903/2599	S Fox
P904/2600	J Goodwin
P907/2602	Mrs J Allen
P908/2604	Mr S Adams
P909/2606	Mr G Doyle
P910/2608	Mrs D Perrin
P911/2610	Mr and Mrs I Combe
P912/2614	Ms A and Mr C Finch
P913/2616	L M Oakley-Davies

P914/2620	Mr S R Smith
P916/2624	Mr V Stoner
P935/2701	Mr R T Bradley
P937/2703	A J and A R Fryer
P938/2705	Mr J E Arnold
P948/2750	Mrs S A Asquith (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P950/2753	Mr C Asquith (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P1013/10369	Ms A Adams
P1048/3175	Mr A E Hemming (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P1049/3177	M J Grundy
P1051/3179	Miss M Hill
P1080/3320	C Clarke
P1084/3440	W S Pollitt
P1127/3626	Mr G Herbert
P1143/3651	Mr S Ramsdale
P1144/3653	W G H Devereux
P1152/3663	Mrs B Williams
P1153/3665	Mrs D Whittaker
P1155/3668	Mrs E Walshe
P1156/3674	Mr J B Nash
P1165/3691	Mrs M T Loughrey (Conditionally Withdrawn)
RP1354/10278	Mr E Gittoes
RP1355/10281	Mrs D Gittoes
RP1467/10696	Mr C Bishop
RP1471/10706	Ms M A Meredith
RP1491/11023	Ms I Williams
RP1495/11103	Mr Chris Chappell
RP1500/11111	Mrs Lloyd-Hayes
RP1503/11155	Mr S and Ms C Niblett
P189/411	Mr W T Walker

### Summary of Objections / Issue

- Whether land at Holmer should be allocated / reinstated for housing purposes. (All objectors)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

*Holmer – allocation / reinstatement for housing purposes – all objectors*

#### Introduction

5.15.1 In the Deposit Draft Plan, Holmer was seen as the location for an allocation of 300 dwellings. In the Revised Deposit Draft, this allocation was deleted and equivalent provision was made at Bullinghope instead. However, there are scores of outstanding objections in respect of Holmer. Most of these date from the initial deposit stage. The Council rightly takes the view that, with the omission of the Holmer allocation, the related objections have been met. However, most have not been withdrawn. I have considered them alongside the other representations including those in support of the Revised Deposit Draft.

5.15.2 There are a limited number of objectors who support the original proposals for Holmer. Some of these are Bullinghope objectors who would prefer to see major housing development to be located at Holmer. Others are from the prospective developers of the site and from bodies such as Hereford City Council, the Herefordshire Friends of the Earth and the Herefordshire Green Party. In

addition, some would prefer a lesser number of houses at Holmer, for example, 100 or 150 rather than 300. Most, however, would wish to see no housing at all.

5.15.3 There are also two specific objections to the wording of the "old" Paragraph 5.4.13. One objection from Crest Strategic Projects Ltd seeks the deletion of the reference to a contribution towards the road improvements and rail crossing at the eastern end of Roman Road. An objection from the Hereford and Gloucestershire Canal Trust Ltd seeks a contribution towards restoration of the canal corridor.

5.15.4 Given the Council's change of heart in respect of this allocation, I examine first the reasons for this shift. I then consider the main site specific reasons behind the objections. For convenience, I use the summary set out in the Council's statement. I then consider the specific matters of appropriate financial contributions before drawing my own conclusions.

Council's reasons for preferring an alternative location

5.15.5 The Council's reasons for preferring an alternative site, as stated in its statement, had regard to "both the merits of the alternative site (Bullinghope) in meeting the Plan's housing requirements and its close relationship with other Plan employment and transport proposals." Any site of 300 dwellings would, of course, make an equivalent contribution to the housing requirement. However, as set out in Section 5.14 above, the Bullinghope site has significant disadvantages. In terms of the employment and transport proposals, this is a reference to the employment provisions at the Rotherwas Industrial Estate and the construction of the Rotherwas Access Road.

5.15.6 I appreciate that the Rotherwas Industrial Estate is the main employment area in the county; also that it is close to the proposed housing area at Bullinghope. However, I do not consider this to be a point of overriding importance. For example, housing at Holmer would be close to the significant employment areas south of Roman Road and a sustainable location in this regard.

5.15.7 More particularly, as part of my review of the employment provisions of the Plan, I have been able to reach two relevant and important conclusions. First of all, the need for new employment land in Hereford has been grossly exaggerated. I have recommended that allocations at the Rotherwas Industrial Estate should be reduced. Secondly, there is a qualitative issue in that there is an apparent shortage of available employment land in the north of Hereford. Both of these conclusions suggest that, in the future, the role of Rotherwas will be less important than previously assumed.

5.15.8 The matter of the Rotherwas Access Road is, of course, tied to provision at the Rotherwas Industrial Estate. With a diminution in the significance of the industrial area, the case for the road would not be bolstered as previously envisaged. The Council may conclude that the road is justified in any event. However, I consider that the relationship between housing and future employment and transport proposals has been materially weakened.

5.15.9 In the light of the above, and notwithstanding the potential bank-rolling of the road by Bloor Homes Ltd, I conclude that there is no material advantage in housing, employment or transport terms to an allocation at Bullinghope and I turn to the site specific objection in respect of Holmer. In this regard the Council states that "landscape intrusion, land drainage and flooding and infrastructure provision would remain to be development constraints." However, it has no overriding site specific objections.

Countryside / agricultural land / landscape / containment / tree cover / habitat loss

5.15.10 To my mind, the urban context of the Holmer land is the feature that most distinguishes this area from the Bullinghope site. I appreciate that the land is "countryside" in the sense that it lies outside the present built-up limits of Hereford. However, it is an area that is readily associated with the city and its built development.

5.15.11 On approaching Hereford from the east, along the A4103, the built-up area effectively starts at the A4103/A465 roundabout. There is frontage development along Aylestone Hill and Roman Road together with an industrial estate at Staniers Way. To the west of the railway there is more employment development. This includes South Hereford Garages and Booker Cash and Carry. West of Centurion Way and opposite the area of the former allocation are Cotswold BMW and Baylis Vauxhall.

5.15.12 From the west, the urban context is even more obvious. The traveller enters the urban area west of the A4110. There is considerable built development either side of the road between here and the A49. East of the A49, and on the approach to the site formerly allocated, housing development extends to the north and industrial development to the south.

5.15.13 The objection site is bordered by Attwood Lane to the west and Munstone Lane to the east. From Attwood Lane, the housing estate to the west is dominant. Munstone Lane is different. Beyond the frontage development close to Roman Road, the impression is of passing out of the built-up area. The open agricultural land that comprises the former allocation site is visible to the west. However, I saw an area quite uninteresting in landscape terms, crossed by overhead power lines and with clear views of the housing estate at Attwood Lane to the west. Along the stream course to the north, views are contained by a belt of dense vegetation.

5.15.14 Further along Munstone Lane, and from Coldwells Road, there is a distinctly rural feel. However, by then, the objection site has been left behind. Views towards the site are extremely limited and even then the industrial buildings along Roman Road can be seen. Most observers would be unaware of any new housing development until they approach a point equivalent to the line of the stream course under Munstone Lane.

5.15.15 With regard to some of the detailed points mentioned, I appreciate that development of the site would involve the loss of agricultural land. However, I do not consider that the county's housing requirement can be met without agricultural losses such as this. The same would be true of other sites such as Bullinghope. In addition, I saw that the objection site was largely devoid of trees. Further, I have no reason to suppose that there would be significant habitat loss. Agricultural land is not generally known for its high biodiversity value.

5.15.16 With regard to containment, I note the Council's intention to use a low ridge as the northern limit of any development. This is not well defined on the ground and the main physical feature in this regard is the stream course and associated vegetation to the north. However, I would say that the site as a whole is very well contained. Unlike Bullinghope, it is not exposed to view within a wider open landscape. It is well screened from the rural areas to the north. Elsewhere, the site is seen in an urban context. I consider that it is well suited to housing development.

Localised flooding / adverse impact on ecology, fauna and flora

5.15.17I note that the area is not shown as liable to flooding on the related maps of the Environment Agency. However, local flooding can take place along Munstone Lane and in adjacent fields forming part of the objection site. So much is clear from photographs provided by the Holmer and District Residents' Association. Such flooding is likely to be the result of the Holmer Stream overtopping its banks in circumstances where there is reduced flow capacity in the culvert under Munstone Lane and a silted channel invert. There are obvious technical solutions to this sort of problem.

5.15.18As indicated above, I am not aware that the objection site or the land to the north is of particular significance from a nature conservation point of view. In any event, I would expect solutions to the flooding issue to pay due regard to the area's ecology, fauna and flora. This would include limiting runoff from the site to greenfield levels. I do not see any overriding problem in regard to this issue. Similarly, in the case of foul drainage, it is apparent that offsite up-grading would be necessary and that there are no problems in principle.

Loss of amenity to local residents and those who walk in the countryside

5.15.19For some local residents passing the site, or crossing the site via the public footpath, I can see that its development by houses would be regarded as an important loss of amenity. However, this is a site that is seen in an urban context and which I perceive as having very little landscape merit. I do not consider that any loss of amenity would be significant.

High infrastructure costs and resultant high density housing

5.15.20I appreciate that it would be necessary to deal with the overhead electricity services that cross the site. However, in this respect and in relation to other infrastructure matters, there is no evidence to suggest that development standards or the provision of affordable housing would be prejudiced as a result of abnormal costs. The matter of services has been investigated by the prospective developers and no problems have been reported.

Safe access / road improvements / urbanising country lanes

5.15.21Many objectors are concerned that development of the site would lead to or exacerbate congestion on Roman Road. I do not share those concerns. The ability of the road network to accommodate development in the Holmer area, without a bypass, has been investigated on several occasions. No significant problems have been reported.

5.15.22In particular, the results of a detailed investigation into the capacity of various junctions close to the site were available to the inquiry. In this regard, the western arm of the Holmer Road / Roman Road roundabout is already congested in the morning peak hour. However, the change imposed by the Holmer development would not be significant. In any event, I can envisage improvements that could take place.

5.15.23With regard to safe access, the developers envisage a signal controlled junction on Roman Road. I consider that this would be a safe method of gaining access to the site. In addition, there would be the potential to close Munstone Lane at its southern end. This could be a safety improvement.

5.15.24I appreciate that there would be a change in the peripheral character of Munstone Lane where it passes the development site. However, steps could be

taken to safeguard the character of the lane itself and to deter or reduce its use by vehicular traffic. I see no overriding problem in this regard.

#### Roman Road improvements

5.15.25 The improvements to Roman Road are, in a sense, a separate issue. They are included in the LTP and are to take place, and in part have already taken place, irrespective of whether there is to be any major development at Holmer. I would not expect there to be any unacceptable traffic increases, and related noise problems, as a result of the Holmer development. Nor would I expect there to be any unacceptable light pollution. In any event, this would be associated with the programmed highway improvements rather than with any housing development.

#### Inadequate health, educational and social facilities in the area

5.15.26 Objectors to the Holmer proposals, as with Bullinghope, are concerned about pressure on existing services. Health provision, schooling and social facilities are frequently mentioned. For my part, I note that a comprehensive range of facilities are available within Hereford. Across the range, I would say that there is little to choose between Holmer and Bullinghope. Be that as it may, where provision or capacity is lacking, there is no reason to suppose that new provision or contributions to the expansion of existing facilities could not be sought as part of the development.

#### Insufficient local employment opportunities

5.15.27 I would not expect there to be insufficient local employment opportunities for the residents of any new housing development at Holmer. There are a large number of employers close to the site. In addition, a wide range of opportunities elsewhere within Hereford, including the city centre, would be accessible by sustainable transport modes. There is no overriding problem in this regard.

#### Increased vandalism due to lack of leisure facilities in the area

5.15.28 As noted above, a comprehensive range of facilities are available within Hereford. These include Hereford Race Course, playing fields, an athletics ground, a leisure centre, the Courtyard Theatre complex and Hereford United Football Club all within reasonable proximity to the site. I do not consider that increased vandalism is a material issue in terms of allocating the Holmer site.

#### Housing and industry proposals are incompatible

5.15.29 I have considered the proposed employment allocation at Holmer in Section 6.9 of my report. I have not recommended reinstatement of the employment proposals that date from the initial deposit stage. As such, the matter of compatibility between housing and industrial proposals at Holmer does not fall to be considered at this stage.

#### Contribution towards the road improvements and rail crossing

5.15.30 I now turn to the matter of a contribution towards the road improvements and rail crossing at the eastern end of Roman Road. In this regard, the improvement of the A4103 Roman Road (eastern section) is a safeguarded scheme under Policy T10.

5.15.31 Crest Strategic Projects Ltd, in objecting to the reference to a contribution, has assumed that the issue is one of traffic delays at the signal controlled section over the railway bridge and the consequent undesirable diversion of traffic through the city centre. In this regard, surveys show no evidence of traffic diverting in the

manner suggested. Be that as it may, I see a more straightforward link between the safeguarded improvements and development at Holmer.

5.15.32 At present, the road bridge over the railway is only wide enough to accommodate a one-way flow of traffic. Such movement is controlled by traffic signals. Queues of traffic can form particularly at busy times. To my mind, this is an anomalous situation. I would not expect an A-class road feeding an area of major housing development to be the subject of such restrictions. To my mind the highway should be improved; and housing development at Holmer should contribute to this improvement. As envisaged in Circular 1/97 on planning obligations (now Circular 05/2005), any contribution would have to be proportionate.

Contribution towards restoration of canal corridor

5.15.33 I do not have comprehensive information on the canal corridor, its proposed restoration and the potential connection with housing development at Holmer. As appropriate, this is a matter that could be addressed in the site development brief. However, there is inadequate justification for specific mention within the unitary development plan.

Conclusions

5.15.34 At the initial deposit stage, the suitability of the Holmer site was accepted by the Council. No new land use matters of any significance have been raised since that time and the Council's basic stance in this regard has not changed. It has, however, taken a different view on the merits of the alternative site at Bullinghope and the relationship of that land with employment and transport proposals. The Council has also had regard to the weight of feeling against the Holmer site.

5.15.35 For my part, I have considered all the objections to the proposal together with representations in support of the Council's stance. Many points of detail have been raised. I have discussed above those matters that are most likely to have a bearing on the decision. I support the initial position of the Council. I find that the site is suitable for housing development of the scale envisaged. It is a relatively well contained site that is seen in an urban context. By comparison, the Bullinghope site is totally unsuitable. It would be a major incursion, physically separated from the built-up limits of the city and harmful to the rural character and appearance of the area.

5.15.36 As to the employment and transport matters, these have been overtaken by events. As part of my deliberations on the emerging Plan, I have been able to conclude that far less weight should be attributed to the role of the Rotherwas Industrial Estate and the Rotherwas Access Road. The reasons for the change from Holmer to Bullinghope are no longer material. Given also that the Holmer site is far superior in land use terms for an allocation of 300 houses, I have no hesitation in recommending reinstatement of the proposals relating to Holmer.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.15/1 In relation to Policy H2 and Paragraph 5.4.13, reinstate the provisions relating to land at Holmer as set out in the Deposit Draft Plan. Adjust the settlement boundary accordingly.

5.15/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.16 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED SITES - WHITECROSS HIGH SCHOOL – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.15

### Objections

P866/2443 Church Commissioners for England  
P1000/11239 House Builders' Federation

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- A housing scheme could achieve more than is currently being assumed. (866)
- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Achieving more than is currently assumed - 866*

5.16.1 There are a number of requirements to take into account in this case. These include conversion of existing buildings for community use, retention of the majority of the playing fields and regard to ecological interests. In the circumstances, I consider that 60 is a reasonable estimate of the dwellings capacity of the site.

#### *Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.16.2 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.16/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.17 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED MIXED-USE SITES - POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.16 – DEPOSIT DRAFT PLAN

### Objections

P746/6887	Bloor Homes Ltd
P746/6888	Bloor Homes Ltd
P746/6886	Bloor Homes Ltd
W198/11304	Hereford Civic Society
P809/2089	Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The scope for residential development at Berrington Street / Aubrey Street will be constrained. (746)
- There is no certainty that redevelopment of Hereford Livestock Market will achieve additional housing. (746)
- Whether land at Widemarsh Street represents a suitable housing site. (746)
- The housing element at Causeway Farm should be reinstated. (198)
- The ability to provide the anticipated mix of uses at Causeway Farm is questioned. (809)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Berrington Street / Aubrey Street - 746*

5.17.1 In the redevelopment of the Berrington Street site, it will be necessary to have regard to the presence of the City Walls, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. However, at 25 dwellings, the estimated residential content of the scheme is relatively modest. There is no evidence to suggest that this figure could not be achieved.

#### *Hereford Livestock Market - 746*

5.17.2 In the Revised Deposit Draft, it is no longer envisaged that there would be residential development on the site of the livestock market. The objection has been overtaken by events and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Widemarsh Street - 746*

5.17.3 This objection has been superseded in that the Widemarsh Street scheme has been replaced by proposals for the Canal Basin and Historic Core (Policies H2 and TCR21R). An objection by Bloor Homes Ltd into these provisions is dealt with in Section 5.18 below.

#### *Causeway Farm – 198, 809*

5.17.4 A scheme for the redevelopment of the Causeway Farm site now has full planning permission. To this extent, the objections have been overtaken by events. In Section 7.27 of my report, I recommend that reference to the scheme be deleted from the Plan. No further related action is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.17/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.18 HEREFORD – ALLOCATED MIXED-USE SITES - POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.16 – REVISED DEPOSIT DRAFT

### Objections

P746/11014 Bloor Homes Ltd  
P830/500224 Herefordshire Friends of the Earth

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The allocation of land within the Canal Basin and Historic Core should be deleted. (746)
- The housing allocation for the Canal Basin and Historic Core should be much bigger. (830)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Allocation of land within the Canal Basin and Historic Core - 746*

5.18.1 The objector has concerns about the delivery of housing from this scheme bearing in mind multiple ownership and flood risk. On the question of multiple ownership, it appears to me from the information set out in the Council's statement that steps are being taken that would secure the implementation of the scheme. In terms of flood risk, this is a known issue. Following consultation with the Environment Agency, safeguards have been built into the Plan in Policy TCR21R and Paragraph 7.7.39R as proposed to be changed (Proposed Change No 10). I have no reason to suppose that the scheme would not be deliverable.

#### *Housing allocation for the Canal Basin and Historic Core - 830*

5.18.2 Policy H2 and Paragraph 5.4.16 refer to a contribution of 180 dwellings from the Canal Basin and Historic Core development. However, this is the contribution that would be achieved within the plan period. Total provision would indeed be much bigger. However, it would be inappropriate to make an allocation of the post-2011 housing element.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.18/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.19 LEOMINSTER – ALLOCATED SITES – BARONS CROSS CAMP – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.4.17 TO 5.4.18

### Objections

P33/32	Leominster Civic Trust
P866/2444	Church Commissioners for England
P977/2897	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/4408	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/4409	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/11007	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P1000/11240	House Builders' Federation
P35/34	Mr and Mrs T P G Jessop
W287/847	Mr A Greene
P466/963	Ms M Storey
P482/995	Mr M Bufton
P599/1291	Mr G Greene
P734/1776	R B Kilvert
P829/2139	Ms M Fothergill
P879/2492	Ms P Greene
P1003/3035	Mr and Mrs A Greene
P1164/3689	Mr A Ramsden
P1188/3763	W S Layton
P1199/4458	Ms P O'Keefe

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Objection is raised to the proposed release of the land for housing. (33)
- The site has poor sustainability credentials. (866)
- The estimated capacity figure for the site should be increased. (977)
- Affordable housing provision should be negotiated. (977)
- Reference to development being constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system should be deleted. (977)
- Delivery of housing should not be phased. (977)
- There should not be an express requirement for nursery accommodation. (977)
- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)
- Development of land forming the northern part of the allocation would have an adverse effect on the objectors. (35)
- Objection is raised to the development of Barons Cross Camp. (287, 599, 829, 879, 1003, 1164, 1188, 1199)
- Whether the Council's proposals are appropriate. (466)
- Reference to a Zone of Influence should be withdrawn. (482)
- There should be a high standard of recreational, play and activity area provision. (734)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Release of land for housing - 33*

5.19.1 The Leominster Civic Trust objects to the proposed release of the land for housing before road infrastructure is available to relieve the A44. In this regard, a transport assessment has been undertaken as part of an appraisal by the developers. I am satisfied that, with certain improvements in place, the local road system would be able to accommodate the likely increase in traffic. In addition, there would be no material worsening of air pollution problems.

### *Sustainability credentials - 866*

5.19.2 I appreciate that the site is at the western end of Leominster. In a local context, it is a site that is one of the furthest from the town centre. However, the town centre is still only about 2 km away and certain facilities, such as a Morrison's superstore, are closer at hand. I would not expect there to be unacceptable private car use. Bearing in mind that this is a brownfield site, I do not consider that the sustainability credentials are poor.

### *Increasing the capacity figure - 977*

5.19.3 Policy H2 and Paragraph 5.4.17 give an estimated capacity figure for the site of 360 dwellings. The objector would wish the figure to be increased to 425 dwellings in line with an outline planning application. In this regard, evidence before the inquiry indicated that, with certain improvements in place, there would be no overriding problem with regard to highway capacity or drainage. In other respects also, and subject to on-site provision or financial contributions to enhanced provision elsewhere, I do not consider that there would be any undue constraints in respect of schooling, local services and amenities, open space provision and the like.

5.19.4 In terms of the density of development, provision of 425 dwellings would represent a density of 36 dph. To my mind this is not unreasonable. Planning Policy Guidance Note No 3 (Housing), at Paragraph 58, encourages housing developments of between 30 and 50 dph net. In this regard, 30 dph net should be regarded as a minimum. Further, and without endorsing the developer's master plan, it appears that a development of 425 dwellings could be satisfactorily accommodated on the site. In the circumstances, I support the higher capacity figure.

### *Constraint of public sewerage system - 977*

5.19.5 Although there is capacity at the waste water treatment works, there are capacity problems in the sewers. I regard these sewers as part of the public sewerage system. Therefore, I conclude that it is appropriate to say that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Further, I appreciate that a requisition process can be utilised with Welsh Water. Nevertheless, I do not consider that there is any contradiction in stating that developers *may* be required to fund improvements.

### *Affordable housing provision - 977*

5.19.6 In Section 3.18 of my report, I accept that the Council's affordable housing targets are soundly based. In such terms, there is no basis for deleting the figure for Barons Cross Camp and relying entirely upon negotiation. With regard to higher development costs, this is a matter that I have dealt with in Section 5.8 above. I recommend a modification of Paragraph 5.4.5 to make clear that site

economics can be taken into account in considering individual schemes. If appropriate, this would apply to Barons Cross Camp.

*Phasing delivery of housing - 977*

5.19.7I have already recommended (Recommendation 5.8/1) that the figures in the columns in Policy H2 for 2001-2006 and 2006-2011 should be combined into a single column for 2001-2011. This would meet the objection and no further modification is needed.

*Nursery accommodation - 977*

5.19.8The objector is concerned that Paragraph 5.4.18 could be read so as to require direct provision of nursery accommodation on site. I agree that the paragraph is not clear; also that "early years" education is a matter of legitimate concern. However, appropriate provision could be made through a financial contribution in line with the advice in Circular 1/97, Planning Obligations (now Circular 05/2005).

*Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.19.9I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Development of the northern part of the allocation - 35*

5.19.10I see no objection, in principle, to the allocation of the site for housing purposes including the northern part of the site. To my mind, the site could be developed without prejudicing the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. The exact way in which the development would take place would be guided by the development brief and determined under the planning permission. Protecting residents' living conditions would be an important consideration at both these stages but it does not affect the principle of the site allocation.

*Objection to the development of Barons Cross Camp – 287, 599, 829, 879, 1003, 1164, 1188, 1199*

5.19.11The objectors feel that the site is too far out on a limb. It is not close to schools, employment, the town centre or the bus or railway stations. It would be preferable to build on better located greenfield land on the north or east side of Leominster.

5.19.12I note that Morrison's superstore is just over 800m from the site and the town centre is about 2,000m away. Westfield School, Leominster Junior School and Ivington Church of England Primary School are between 1,600m and 2,000m away; Minster College and Leominster Infants' School are up to about 2,500m away. The bus station is some 2,000m away although the railway station is on the eastern extremity of the town as is the main industrial area. In my opinion, and bearing in mind that Barons Cross is one of the best served areas by public transport, these distances are not excessive.

5.19.13It is stated by the objectors that construction would reinforce out of town shopping at the Morrison's store to the detriment of the retailers in the town centre. In this regard, I would expect the potential impact of the store on the town centre to have been taken into account when planning permission was granted. It

may be that new expenditure from the Barons Cross development would go to the store but this would not amount to a reduction in trade at the town centre.

5.19.14 With regard to alternative locations for development, I accept in Paragraph 8.35.5 of my report that it would be wrong, unnecessary and premature to indicate that land southwest of Leominster is most suited to longer term growth. It follows that similar indications should be removed from Paragraph 5.4.17 of the Plan. The same prematurity arguments apply to locations north or east of the town. Be that as it may, I find that there are no overriding reasons why Barons Cross Camp should not be allocated for future housing development. Given also that there is no strategic need for yet more housing, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Appropriateness of the Council's proposals - 466*

5.19.15 The objector applauds the direction of some of the Council's changes to the Plan. However, there are outstanding concerns in respect of the number of houses, nursery provision, cycle routes, public consultation and affordable housing.

5.19.16 I have considered housing numbers in the foregoing discussion. I conclude that numbers can be increased, and more efficient use made of previously developed land, without detriment to important interests. I have also discussed nursery provision. It appears to me that the main justification is in support of provision for "early years" education. That is the emphasis that I am recommending in the revised wording of Paragraph 5.4.18.

5.19.17 With regard to cycle routes, and real public consultation over time, I would expect such matters to be taken on board in adopting the development brief. In this regard, I have no detailed information. However, I note that Paragraph 5.4.17 of the Plan requires a number of transport measures to be put in place. Bearing in mind that the consultation process is an administrative matter, I do not perceive the need for modifications to the Plan.

5.19.18 With regard to the provision of affordable housing, this would have to be negotiated with the site developer. However, I am satisfied that the Plan includes appropriate "teeth" in this regard and that no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Reference to a Zone of Influence - 482*

5.19.19 In Section 8.35 of my report, in the context of transport proposals, I recommend that reference to a Leominster Zone of Interest should be withdrawn. It follows that the reference should also be deleted from Paragraph 5.4.17. I recommend accordingly.

*Recreational, play and activity area provision - 734*

5.19.20 I do not see the need for specific reference to recreational, play and activity area provision. I appreciate that, in certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to draw attention to particular matters; also to matters that would not normally fall to be considered. However, open space and play provision is a standard requirement. It is covered by provisions such as Policies DR4 (Environment) and RST3 (Standards for outdoor playing and public open spaces) as well as in the related text. In addition, I note that the developer's master plan shows the intention to make related provision. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.19/1 In Policy H2 and Paragraph 5.4.17, increase the estimated capacity of the site from 360 dwellings to 425 dwellings. Adjust the affordable housing target accordingly.
- 5.19/2 At the end of the third sentence in Paragraph 5.4.18, delete the words "nursery accommodation to make".
- 5.19/3 Delete the final sentence of Paragraph 5.4.17.
- 5.19/4 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.20 LEOMINSTER – ALLOCATED SITES – GARAGE SITE AT BARONS CROSS – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.19

### Objections

P866/2445 Church Commissioners for England  
P1000/11241 House Builders' Federation

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The site has poor sustainability credentials. (866)
- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Sustainability credentials - 866*

5.20.11 appreciate that the site is at the western end of Leominster. In a local context, it is a site that is one of the furthest from the town centre. However, the town centre is still only about 2 km away and certain facilities, such as a Morrison's superstore, are closer at hand. I would not expect there to be unacceptable private car use. Bearing in mind that this is a brownfield site, I do not consider that the sustainability credentials are poor.

#### *Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.20.21 appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### RECOMMENDATION

- 5.20/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.21 LEOMINSTER – ALLOCATED SITES - LAND EAST OF RIDGEMOOR ROAD – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.20

### Objections

P358/760	Environment Agency (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P977/2902	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P1000/11242	House Builders' Federation

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- A flood risk assessment is needed. (358)
- The allocation should be replaced with the allocation of land west of Barons Cross Camp. (977)
- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Flood risk assessment - 358*

5.21.1 The Revised Deposit Draft now states that a flood risk assessment will be required. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Replacing the allocation - 977*

5.21.2 I see no reason why the allocation should be replaced. The site is an urban extension relatively close to the town centre and to public services. Notwithstanding the flood risk, it is a site that is suitable for development subject to various precautions. Further, the site has an urban context. The northern part of the site has already been developed. The remainder has built development to the north, west and south. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.21.3 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. The constraint has not hampered the commencement of development. There is no evident reason why the remainder should not follow.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.21/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.22 LEOMINSTER – ALLOCATED SITES - DALES FORMER OFFICE SITE – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.21 (DELETED)

### Objections

P466/964 Ms Maja Storey  
P977/2903 Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd (Conditionally Withdrawn)

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The design of the houses should receive very special consideration. (466)
- Objection is made to the allocation. (977)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Both objections*

5.22.1 The site has now been totally redeveloped. There is a retail warehouse on the site that is now trading. As such, the objections have been overtaken by events. The position is reflected in the Revised Deposit Draft in that the allocation has been deleted. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.22/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.23 ROSS-ON-WYE – ALLOCATED SITES - TANYARD LANE – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.22

### Objections

P195/423 Yorkley Timber Co Ltd  
P635/1481 Campaign to Protect Rural England  
P690/1700 Ross-on-Wye Chamber of Commerce  
P826/2134 John Gabb Associates  
P917/2629 Camanoe Estates Ltd  
P975/2878 Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd  
P975/11175 Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd  
P1000/11243 House Builders' Federation  
P1193/3786 Collier and Brain Ltd  
W13/11 Mr F Smith  
P31/29 Mr B J and Mrs J M Edwards  
P36/35 Mr A F Wood  
P37/36 Mrs G Wood  
P42/199 Mr C A Petrie (Conditionally Withdrawn)  
P42/7309 Mr C A Petrie (Conditionally Withdrawn)  
P43/203 Mrs L Petrie (Conditionally Withdrawn)  
P128/323 R T E Jacques  
P129/324 Mrs M A Jacques

P131/326	D J and Mrs G R Boulter
P132/327	Mr R A Davies
P178/395	Mr C S Mantle
P180/399	Mr J T Smart
P196/426	Mr H Hague
W203/352	Mr M A Field
P255/534	Mr J T Milligan
P256/537	Mrs D M Milligan
P474/978	T P White
P623/1388	Mrs D Cross
P643/1424	Mrs M Richards
P681/1672	Mr C W Richards
P682/1675	Mr B Henry
P749/1837	Mr and Mrs R G W Smith
P752/1842	Mr P J Davidge
P752/7279	Mr P J Davidge
P752/10833	Mr P Davidge
P759/1880	Mr G F Kirby
P831/2146	Mrs E H Ellis (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P1022/3076	Mr R J Bennett

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- Whether the provisions in respect of the proposed housing land at Tanyard Lane, Ross-on-Wye should be modified. (All objectors)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Modification of the Tanyard Lane provisions – all objectors*

##### Introduction

5.23.1 The Council's proposals have attracted many objections. Some are strategic objections whereby objection is raised to the amount of housing that would be built in Ross-on-Wye or how that element of the housing requirement would be met. Others objectors are opposed to matters that would affect the principle of whether or not this particular site should be allocated. In addition, there are objections to detailed aspects of the Council's proposals or the way in which the site could be developed.

5.23.2 I do not propose to deal with administrative matters such as the consultation process nor with detailed aspects of the scheme. To my mind, it goes without saying that the resultant development should be an attractive, neighbourly scheme that meets all the usual development control considerations. Such matters will be determined through the development brief (Document K 13), planning permission and Section 106 obligation. For my part, I am satisfied that the text and the many policies in the Plan provide an appropriate context for determining any particular scheme.

5.23.3 In considering whether housing development of the scale envisaged by the Council is acceptable in principle, I use the headings set out in the Council's statement. The topics covered also embrace a number of detailed matters and the way that they are dealt with in Paragraph 5.4.22 of the Plan.

### Housing strategy

5.23.4 Related housing objections of a strategic nature are dealt with in Section 3.18 of my report. Ross-on-Wye needs to play its part in helping to meet the county's housing requirement. Notwithstanding the lack of a railway station, the town is well located relative to the A49 corridor and the M50. I conclude that the quantitative housing provision proposed for the town is reasonably well balanced and generally in accordance with the intentions of regional planning guidance. Increased housing provision in the town, beyond that envisaged in the Plan, is not an imperative.

5.23.5 I would add that meeting the strategic requirement in the way proposed by some objectors would not accord with regional planning guidance. For example, to accommodate more housing in surrounding villages would be a less sustainable approach unjustified by consideration of local needs. Similarly, although previously developed land would be the first port of call in allocating housing land, there is simply not enough available brownfield land or other smaller sites within the town. As such, I am satisfied that a large greenfield urban extension of Ross-on-Wye is needed.

5.23.6 I consider below detailed aspects of the site's suitability. However, amongst other things, the site has an urban context and it has the benefit of being part previously developed. In addition, it is accessible to employment and local services and would respect the basic considerations in Policy S3 (Housing). Given that the allocation would meet the local housing requirement, there is no strategic need to consider other sites. It would, nevertheless, be necessary to use the whole site for housing rather than, for example, encouraging mixed use.

5.23.7 I also consider that 150 is a reasonable estimate of the site's capacity. The net developable area is 5 ha. Government advice is to the effect that local planning authorities should avoid developments that make inefficient use of land (less than 30 dph net). In addition, and as discussed below, I have not identified any overriding infrastructure constraints that would impact on dwelling numbers.

### Phasing

5.23.8 Some objectors are concerned about the likely rate of build. In addition, Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd objects to the proposed reference to phasing. I have already recommended that Policy H2 be modified to omit phasing. I see no other reason to intervene. The rate of housing building would, quite appropriately, be dictated by market conditions. I see no likely harm in this regard and no further modification is necessary.

### Access and transportation

5.23.9 Many objectors have concerns over the access and transportation arrangements. Some question the appropriateness of access off the A40. Others are concerned that access should not be from the Colliers and Brain development, from Tanyard Lane / Ledbury Road or via Court Road. There are also detailed points of concern, for example, in respect of the extent and scope of the works necessary and the timing and funding of those works.

5.23.10 For my part, I note the clear statement in the Plan that vehicular access would be from the A40. As indicated in the development brief (Document K 13) there is no intention of using other points of access except for pedestrian, cycle or emergency use. In addition, the Highway Agency's letter of 18 November 2004 (Appendix 2 of the Council's statement) confirms that the agency "does not object

to the principle of the proposed development, subject to the submission of a detailed Planning Application to be supported by a Transport Assessment ...". This follows reappraisal of the route's status and the intention to de-trunk the A40.

5.23.11 The necessary transport assessment would, in turn, deal with many of the detailed matters of concern to objectors. For example, there would be a need to look at the safety and noise aspects of any scheme of development including the design and location of the proposed roundabout; improvements at the Overcross roundabout; and other traffic calming and road safety matters including effects in the town centre.

5.23.12 Funding from the developer would be negotiated in the light of the advice in Circular 1/97, Planning Obligations (now Circular 05/2005). Other detailed matters would be controlled through planning conditions or the planning obligation as envisaged in the Plan. As such, the timing of the works and access by construction traffic could be appropriately addressed.

5.23.13 In the light of the above, I am satisfied that the most appropriate means of access has been identified in the Plan. For the reasons given by the Council, other options are inappropriate. Outstanding matters would be addressed through the development brief, planning permission and Section 106 obligation. The principle of allocating the site is not affected.

#### Flooding

5.23.14 Flooding is an issue associated with the Rudhall Brook. Paragraph 5.4.22 of the Plan specifically refers to the need for a surface water limitation scheme and to avoid an increase in surface water runoff. The issue is also addressed in the development brief (Document K 13). The requirements of the Environment Agency will need to be met. However, there is no related objection in principle. In all the circumstances, I am satisfied that an appropriate package of measures could be required as part of the approval process. I have no overriding concerns in this regard.

5.23.15 In addition, I am aware that wider problems affecting Ross-on-Wye are to be addressed in a flood alleviation scheme that is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2006. Document HC 9 refers.

#### Welsh Water

5.23.16 It is apparent that, for many years, Ross-on-Wye has suffered from problems associated with an overloaded public sewerage system. Many objectors are concerned that the Tanyard Lane development would exacerbate the problems and therefore should not take place. However, Welsh Water has now received an allocation of funding such that improvements to the public sewerage system can be put in hand.

5.23.17 If the site is brought forward for development in advance of Welsh Water's programme, developers may be required to finance advancement of the capital works. However, this is a common procedure and I would not expect there to be any overriding constraint on achieving the number of housing completions that are estimated for the plan period.

5.23.18 With regard to the reference to the public sewerage system in Paragraph 5.4.22 of the Plan, I find this to be factually correct. However, it would be helpful to bring the text up to date. I am recommending an appropriate modification in this regard.

### Affordable Housing

5.23.19 In my opinion, the Ross-on-Wye Housing Needs Study of October 2003 (Document M 8) justifies the level of affordable housing provision envisaged at Tanyard Lane. No modification of Policy H2 is necessary in this regard.

5.23.20 In terms of securing provision, the amount and type of affordable housing would be discussed between the Council and the developer. The discussions would be guided by Policy H9 of the unitary development plan; also the provisions of the development brief which, in turn, flags up affordable housing as a matter to be covered in a Section 106 planning obligation.

### Landscaping

5.23.21 I appreciate that, from some directions, the site is exposed to distant views. Nevertheless, it is a part developed site that has an urban context. There is residential development to the north and west and a caravan park and an industrial area to the south. To my mind, developments that have taken place around the site have reduced its landscape value. I consider that, from a landscape and sustainability point of view, the site is suitable for housing development. Its development would not constitute undesirable infill or detract from the town's tourist appeal.

5.23.22 I would expect many of the objectors' points of concern to be dealt with in the detailed consideration of the scheme. In this way, the landscaping of the site itself together with the provision of open space and play areas, vistas, boundary treatment and the like would be addressed.

### Nature conservation

5.23.23 I have noted reference to "the incredible variety of wild animals and plants using this field as a habitat". Be that as it may, the site has been the subject of a full ecological study including a habitat appraisal and protected species survey. The Herefordshire Wildlife Trust states that there are no records of non-statutory or protected species and that the site "holds little value for wildlife". Elements that need to be protected have been included in the development brief. There is inadequate justification for any modification of the Plan.

### Capacity of the local infrastructure and planning obligations

5.23.24 Many objectors question whether the town's infrastructure is capable of absorbing the housing development proposed at Tanyard Lane. In this regard, I have commented above on matters such as foul and storm water drainage; also on highway access. Improvements would be secured as necessary through planning conditions and obligations. Capacity issues at the Overross roundabout would also be dealt with in this way. I do not envisage any overriding problems.

5.23.25 The need to upgrade or make provision for other aspects of infrastructure would also be addressed through planning obligations. In this way, matters such as provision for affordable housing, open space maintenance, transportation measures, education and playing fields would be made. With these safeguards in place, I have no overriding concerns regarding the principle of allocation.

### Miscellaneous

5.23.26 A variety of objections relating to miscellaneous matters have been raised by objectors. Many relate to minor matters that do not affect the principle of allocation, to detailed aspects of the scheme or to issues that have been dealt with

in the generality of the foregoing discussion. I am satisfied that allocation of the site would not lead to unacceptable development on the other side of the relief road or otherwise prejudice matters of acknowledged importance.

#### Conclusions

5.23.27I accept that, in order to meet Ross-on-Wye's contribution to the county's housing requirement, it will be necessary to make use of greenfield land. The Tanyard Lane site is eminently suitable in this regard. It is a well located urban extension site that, in landscape terms, is not unduly sensitive. It would accommodate a significant number of dwellings on a site contained by the bypass.

5.23.28Many detailed matters will need to be resolved. However, the terms of Paragraph 5.4.22 and the various policies in the Plan provide an appropriate context for the determination of a future planning application. The development brief will, in particular, be an important way of guiding detailed development. In this regard, it would be helpful to refer to the brief adopted in January 2005.

5.23.29Proposals for the site are being progressed by the prospective developer. I have no reason to suppose that the development will prove to be economically unviable or that the number of completions envisaged will not be achieved within the plan period.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

5.23/1 Substitute the following for the second sentence of Paragraph 5.4.22: "Its development will be guided by the supporting development brief as adopted in January 2005."

5.23/2 Substitute the following for the final sentence of Paragraph 5.4.22: "Welsh Water has included in its capital expenditure programme works to resolve the sewerage constraints in the town. If the site is brought forward for development in advance of this programme, developers may be required to finance advancement of the capital works."

5.23/3 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

### 5.24 ROSS-ON-WYE – ALLOCATED SITES - FORMER ALTON COURT BREWERY – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.23

#### Objections

P1000/11244	House Builders' Federation
RP1489/10967	M F Freeman Ltd
P1022/3075	Mr R J Bennett

#### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)
- The site's capacity does not reflect the flood risk assessment. (1489)
- A high density scheme could be regarded as overdevelopment. (1022)

## Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

### *Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.24.1I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### *Flood risk assessment / overdevelopment – 1489, 1022*

5.24.2In my opinion, these objections have been overtaken by events. Irrespective of whether the site is suitable for a mixed use development, the Council has resolved to grant planning permission for a residential development of 43 units. There is no objection from the Environment Agency. The Plan should be updated to reflect the capacity revealed by a detailed scheme of development.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.24/1 In Policy H2 and Paragraph 5.4.23, change the estimated site capacity from 30 dwellings to 43 dwellings. Update the text to refer to the latest planning history.

5.24/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.25 ROSS-ON-WYE – ALLOCATED SITES - CAWDOR GARDENS – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.24

### Objections

P371/788	Ross-on-Wye and District Civic Society
P635/1482	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P917/2630	Camanoe Estates Ltd
P1000/11245	House Builders' Federation

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- There needs to be provision of a wider access. (371)
- The existing number of allotments should be retained. (371)
- The site should be omitted from the Plan. (635)
- The site should be removed as a housing allocation. (917)
- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Wider access - 371*

5.25.1 I appreciate that access to the site is gained through Cawdor Arch. This is of restricted height and width and will need to be protected. However, I do not consider that there is any overriding problem that would preclude allocation of the site for housing purposes. Nevertheless, details will need to be examined as part of the development brief.

### *Allotments - 371*

5.25.2 Paragraph 5.4.24 of the Plan states that development proposals will need to include arrangements within the scheme to retain the allotments that currently occupy the site. If this cannot be achieved on site, a satisfactory alternative site will need to be provided by the developers in line with Policy RST4. In my opinion, this is an entirely appropriate arrangement. If a satisfactory solution did not come forward as part of the planning application, I would expect the scheme to be refused. However, this does not affect the principle of the allocation.

### *Omitting the site from the Plan - 635*

5.25.3 The objector is concerned that the development would represent undesirable infill on land within a conservation area and the AONB in circumstances where there would be loss of allotments. For my part, I appreciate that the site is within a conservation area and the AONB. A sensitive scheme would be required. However, bearing in mind the urban context of the site, I do not consider that a residential allocation would be inappropriate. The allotments would be safeguarded as indicated above.

### *Removal of the site as a housing allocation - 917*

5.25.4 The objector notes that the 1992 planning permission was not implemented and questions whether the site can be relied upon in meeting the strategic housing requirement. In response, the Council has appended to its statement a letter of explanation from the owners of the site. It is clear that development of the site is to be progressed. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### *Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.25.5 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.25/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.26 ROSS-ON-WYE – ALLOCATED SITES - VINE TREE FARM – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.25**

### **Objections**

P605/3024	Three Counties Planning
P635/1484	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P866/2446	Church Commissioners for England
P917/2628	Camanoe Estates Ltd
P1000/11264	House Builders' Federation
P150/350	Mr D and Ms M Wilce
P682/1674	B Henry

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- The site is completely unsustainable and is objected to. (605)
- The site should be omitted from the Plan. (635)
- There is no justification for releasing this site. (866)
- Objection is raised to the site's inclusion as a housing allocation. (917)
- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)
- There should be no building until a relief road is constructed. (150)
- The site should be developed as a playing field. (682)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *All objections*

5.26.1 At the time of my site visit, a scheme of residential development on this site was under construction. The various objections have been overtaken by events and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

5.26/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.27 BROMYARD – ALLOCATED SITES - LAND SOUTH OF LOWER HARDWICK LANE (DELETED) – LAND AT PORTHOUSE FARM - POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.27**

### **Objections**

P520/10734	Bromyard and Winslow Town Council
P520/10737	Bromyard and Winslow Town Council

P526/1101	Welsh Water (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P635/11432	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P692/11506	Jennings Estates Ltd
P1016/10799	Bromyard and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry
RW1256/500019	Bromyard and District Community Swimming Pool Trust
RW1257/500014	Cole Bishop and Co
P328/10326	Mr D Cave
RW1265/500018	Mrs M Gibbs
RP1492/11101	K Handley (Conditionally Withdrawn)
RP1496/11104	G P Handley
RP1497/11105	H W Handley

### Summary of Objections / Issue

- Whether the land at Porthouse Farm should be allocated for housing purposes. (All objections)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Allocation of the Porthouse Farm site for housing purposes – all objectors*

##### Introduction

5.27.1 In the deposit draft version of the Plan, the land south of Lower Hardwick Lane was allocated for housing purposes. The land at Porthouse Farm was designated as safeguarded employment land. In the Revised Deposit Draft, the housing allocation at Lower Hardwick Lane has been dropped. Instead, the majority of the Porthouse Farm site is now allocated for housing purposes.

5.27.2 In Section 6.4 of my report, I have dealt with objections to the removal of the safeguarding employment land designation. I conclude that there is no justification for a reversal of the provisions of the Plan. In terms of the housing objections, many are concerned that residential development would not be compatible with existing activities at the Porthouse Industrial Estate. Others suggest that sites elsewhere in Bromyard including the Lower Hardwick Lane site would be better alternatives. In addition, there are some residual objections to the original Lower Hardwick Lane allocation.

5.27.3 Given that the Lower Hardwick Lane site no longer features in the Revised Deposit Draft, it follows that related objections have been overtaken by events. With regard to other suggested alternative sites, these are considered in Section 5.35 of my report. The remaining objections are considered below.

5.27.4 The strategic context for housing in Bromyard is considered in Section 3.18 of my report. I conclude that there are no overriding arguments in favour of enhanced provision. As such, there is no strategic case for an allocation over and above the sort of quantitative provision that would be made at Porthouse Farm (87 dwellings).

5.27.5 I discuss the objections under various headings. These headings summarise the key issues which I consider are relevant to the principle of the allocation.

##### Nature of the site

5.27.6 Throughout its statement, the Council states that the Porthouse Farm objection site is a brownfield site. However, objectors emphasise its greenfield

nature; also that it is a prominent site the development of which would harm the landscape and represent outward creep of the town edge.

5.27.7 For my part, and as conceded by the Council at the inquiry, I agree that the Porthouse Farm site does not fall within the definition of previously developed land. However, whereas the other candidate sites are areas of open grassed land, the objection site exhibits vestiges of previous development, albeit agricultural. There is a concrete roadway into the site; there are two abandoned dwellings to the northwest of the roadway; and much of the remainder of the site is overgrown, uneven, disturbed ground. In addition, the site is seen in the context of the industrial estate to the southeast.

5.27.8 In my opinion, Bromyard's contribution to the county's housing requirement cannot be met without an urban extension onto greenfield land. However, I consider that by its very nature the Porthouse Farm site is the best site in this regard.

#### Land use compatibility

5.27.9 At one level, this issue concerns the living conditions of the occupiers of the proposed dwellings notably in respect of possible noise and fumes from the Porthouse Industrial Estate. However, a more fundamental point is the potential effect on Bromyard's economy. There could be pressure to curtail the industrial uses. Environmental pollution or public health legislation might subsequently result in costly new conditions or restrictions being imposed on the industry as a consequence of the new neighbouring development.

5.27.10 More particularly, the investment decisions of existing companies could be affected. For example, Polytec Holden Ltd has been identified as Bromyard's principal employer. If future complaints led to a move by the company, this would be an economic and social disaster. It is, therefore, particularly important to be sure of the compatibility of the resultant development.

5.27.11 With regard to possible noise nuisance, a noise assessment report was presented as part of the Council's evidence. The report concludes that part of the site falls into Noise Exposure Category B. In this regard, PPG 24 advises that noise should be taken into account when determining planning applications and, where appropriate, conditions imposed to ensure an adequate level of protection against noise. The noise consultants identify a range of potential mitigation measures including site layout, screening, property orientation and building design including glazing specification.

5.27.12 For my part, I am aware that the Polytec Holden factory operates on a 24-hour a day basis. Night-time noise is a particular concern. The noise assessment indicates that factory plant is the dominant source of noise at night. I would expect this to be more of a background drone that, in a sense, could be more easily mitigated. My concern is that, with 24-hour working, there could be impact and impulsive noise such as that emanating from materials handling or reversing beepers. Such noise could be disruptive of sleep.

5.27.13 To my mind, the work on noise carried out so far is supportive of the Council's stance. However, I consider that there should be a requirement in Paragraph 5.4.27 of the Plan to demonstrate that, in any particular scheme, the legitimate interests of future residents and existing employers are not prejudiced.

5.27.14 In terms of fumes, I can understand that Polytec Holden and other would not wish their actions to be fettered by the proximity of residential development

particularly in respect of any new facility adjacent to the objection site. However, the existing authorisation for Polytec Holden requires that no offensive odour shall be detectable at or beyond the site boundary by an authorised officer of the Council. If similar conditions obtained in the future, I do not foresee any significant problem.

5.27.15 In conclusion, I would say that there is no technical evidence to indicate that the allocation would be inappropriate. However, bearing in mind the importance of this matter, I am recommending an addition to Paragraph 5.4.27 that would safeguard the position of both future residents and existing employers. In other respects, I would expect respective interests to be safeguarded by the proposal landscape buffer and the application of the various policies and other provisions of the Plan.

#### Transport matters

5.27.16 The proposed housing development would generate additional traffic. However, I do not envisage any overriding problems in this regard. In particular, improved pedestrian and cycling facilities would be required in order to help reduce journeys by car and to provide safe movement, for example, by children walking to school.

#### Maximum community gain

5.27.17 I would expect that the provision or enhancement of the usual community facilities would be secured through the execution of a planning obligation. However, there would be a need to satisfy the tests in Circular 1/97, Planning Obligations (now Circular 05/2005), for example, in terms of reasonableness.

#### Low-lying land

5.27.18 I note that the land that is liable to flood has been excluded from the proposed housing site; also that a flood risk assessment would probably be required under the terms of Policy DR7. The related interest of residents would thereby be safeguarded. With regard to river mists, I would expect the microclimate to change as a result of the development. I do not foresee an overriding problem in this regard.

#### Conclusions

5.27.19 Subject to the modifications that I am recommending, I accept the suitability of the proposed land use. I support the residential allocation. This will meet Bromyard's contribution to the county's housing requirement. There is no strategic need for other sites including the Lower Hardwick Lane site as originally envisaged.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.27/1 Add the following at the end of Paragraph 5.4.27: "In respect of possible noise or fumes from the adjacent industrial estate, applicants will be required to demonstrate that, in any particular scheme, the legitimate interests of future residents and existing employers are not prejudiced."

5.27/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.28 BROMYARD – ALLOCATED SITES - HIGHWAYS DEPOT – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.28

### Objections

P520/1069	Bromyard and Winslow Town Council
P1000/11246	House Builders' Federation
W11/10	Dr I Tait

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Building on the highways depot should only be permitted after a viable alternative site has been developed. (520)
- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)
- The site boundary has been incorrectly shown. (11)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Alternative highways depot - 520*

5.28.1 There is no evidence to indicate that an alternative highways depot is needed or that material harm would be occasioned if a replacement depot was not built. No modification of the Plan is appropriate. Be that as it may, I note from the Council's statement that an alternative site would have to be identified and developed before any redevelopment of the existing depot could commence.

#### *Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.28.2 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Boundary - 11*

5.28.3 This objection has been met by the revision in the Revised Deposit Draft. In this regard, it is not appropriate to refer to property rights. The annotation regarding the shared driveway will not appear on the final Proposals Map in any event.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.28/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.29 BROMYARD – ALLOCATED SITES - LAND ATTACHED TO ASHFIELDS – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.29

### Objection

P1000/11247 House Builders' Federation

### Summary of Objection / Issue

- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

*Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.29.11 appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.29/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objection.

## 5.30 KINGTON – ALLOCATED SITES - LAND WEST OF OLD EARDISLEY ROAD – POLICY H2 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.31

### Objections

P535/1156	Kington Town Council
P535/10394	Kington Town Council
P635/1491	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P635/11433	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P1000/11248	House Builders' Federation
P774/1930	J W and G R N Watkins (Conditionally Withdrawn)

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- There should be no more than 40 dwellings. (535)
- There should be two parking spaces per dwelling and adequate communal play. (535)
- Objection is raised to the removal of the greenfield buffer / expansion of the site. (535, 635)
- The site should be omitted from the Plan. (635)

- Whether the delivery of some or all of the capacity could be prejudiced by the need for essential infrastructure. (1000)
- Objection is raised to the proposed phasing of the site and to the site boundaries. (774)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Dwelling numbers - 535*

5.30.1 The Plan provides for 40 dwellings including 14 affordable housing units. This is in accordance with the representations and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Parking and communal play - 535*

5.30.2 There is no need to make specific reference to car parking or communal play within Paragraph 5.4.31. Provision would be made in accordance with the requirements set out elsewhere in the Plan.

#### *Greenfield buffer / expansion of site – 535, 635*

5.30.3 In the Revised Deposit Draft, the proposed housing site has been enlarged at the expense of the area designated for protection of open areas and green spaces. However, the Council explains that this is to ensure consistency with other housing allocations in the Plan whereby associated open space is not mapped separately. There is no intention of having more houses and less open space. I would expect the details to be set out in the development brief with attention also to visual impact and biodiversity. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Omitting the site - 635*

5.30.4 I appreciate that the objection site is a greenfield site. However, I am satisfied that Kington's contribution to the strategic housing requirement cannot be met without making use of an urban extension site. Within the allocated area there is considerable opportunity to mitigate any impact on the landscape. To my mind the principle of allocation is not affected and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Delivery of capacity - 1000*

5.30.5 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Phasing / site boundaries - 774*

5.30.6 As a result of changes introduced in the Revised Deposit Draft, this objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no modification of the Plan is necessary. In this regard I have already recommended that there should be a single phase of house building covering the period 2001-2011.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

5.30/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.31 HEREFORD – SUGGESTED SITES – POLICY H2

### Objections

P1115/7492	Bovale Ltd
P1115/3598	Bovale Ltd
P334/624	The Wegg Prosser Trust
P258/541	Welsh Water
P746/1829	Bloor Homes Ltd (Withdrawn)
P373/798	Sonnic Ltd
P930/2696	Mr C.N.A. Stanford
P959/2777	Hereford City Partnership Ltd
P325/611	Mrs D Harrap
P327/613	Mrs R Eaton
P605/3023	Three Counties Planning
P415/867	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P998/2987	Special Metals Wiggin / Crest
P386/837	W H D Hartland
P973/2863	Mr B Price
P187/407	WO and OE Price
P202/440	Mr G Hankins
P237/502	Mr Danny West
W414/849	Mr and Mrs J M Rodgman
P203/442	Mr MJ, AB and RG Griffiths
P203/455	Mr MJ, AB and RG Griffiths
P381/813	Mr D J and I R Powell
P381/815	Mr D J and I R Powell
P1194/3797	Mr D Powell
P1102/3517	H P Bulmer Ltd
P1181/3736	Mr F Hanbury
P352/666	Mr B Willis
P1063/3225	The Executors of the late Ken Goodwin and his Estate
P505/1039	Mr T Goodwin
P179/397	Mr and Mrs R Hooper
P1102/3516	H P Bulmer Ltd
P1102/3514	H P Bulmer Ltd
P1107/3539	H P Bulmer Ltd and Jennings Estates Ltd
P692/1704	Jennings Estates Ltd
P991/2959	E Coombs and M Freeman
P325/7163	Mrs D Harrap
P327/7164	Mrs R Eaton
P505/1040	Mr T Goodwin
P692/1718	Jennings Estates Ltd
P866/2447	Church Commissioners for England
P1102/3515	H P Bulmer Ltd
P368/3810	Mr R Hughes

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Land at Faraday Road should be allocated for residential purposes. (1115)
- Land adjoining Merryhill House, Belmont should be used for housing purposes. (334)

- Land at Broomy Hill waterworks should be allocated for residential purposes. (258)
- Whether housing development at the rear of Dorchester Way should be facilitated. (373)
- The Grafton Gardens Hotel should be allocated for residential and special housing needs. (930)
- The Greyfriars site should be listed under Policy H2. (959)
- Land north of Copsewood Drive, Hampton Deane should be allocated for housing. (325, 327)
- Further land should be included in the Holmer area. (605, 991)
- Land at Holmer should be allocated for residential development. (415)
- The boundary of the Holmer allocation should be extended further out. (998)
- Objection is raised to some of the details of the Holmer proposal. (386)
- Land at Holmer House Farm (north of Roman Road) should be allocated for housing purposes. (973)
- Holmer House Farm should be added as a housing allocation. (187)
- Land at Church Way, Holmer should be added as a housing allocation. (202, 237)
- Land at Kings Acre Road should be included within the list of sites allocated for residential development. (414)
- Land at Hala Carr, Cherry Orchard and Breinton Lee should be allocated for housing purposes. (203, 381, 1194, 1181)
- Bulmer's sports ground should be allocated for residential development. (1102)
- Land at Canon Pyon Road should be allocated for residential development. (352)
- Land at Lower Bullingham should be allocated for residential development. (1063, 505)
- Land off Yazor Road and north of Whitecross School should be allocated for residential development. (1102, 1107, 692)
- Land at Plough Lane should be allocated for residential development. (1102)
- Land north of Ledbury Road should be allocated for housing. (325, 327)
- The Watery Lane barns site should be allocated for residential use. (505)
- Land east of Perrystone Lane should be developed for residential purposes. (179)
- Land at Whitecross should be allocated for residential development. (866)
- Land at Whitecross Road should be allocated for development. (1102)
- Land at Yazor Road would form a suitable area for limited residential development. (368)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Land at Faraday Road - 1115*

5.31.1 Bovale Ltd has made two duly made objections in respect of housing allocations. One relates to a site of 1 ha at Faraday Road. The other relates to a site of 2.38 ha. However, at the inquiry, it was confirmed that there is in effect only one objection site. This is an area slightly smaller than the 2.38 ha site. To this extent, the objection on the site of 1 ha has been overtaken by events and no further action is necessary.

5.31.2 As to the larger site, I conclude in Section 6.39 of my report that safeguarding under Policy E5 is entirely appropriate. However, in this section, I consider whether there are any overriding arguments in favour of a housing allocation.

5.31.3 On the face of it, as previously developed land, the Faraday Road site could make a useful contribution to the strategic housing requirement. However, proximity to a nearby rendering plant operated by Sun Valley brings into question the suitability of the site for residential purposes.

5.31.4 The Council states that, "Any housing closer than the existing 250m separation distance currently enjoyed by the rendering plant is likely to place Sun Valley in an unfair and compromising position. The extensive odour abatement system in place there has been designed and improved over the years to perform with a separation distance of at least 250m from housing. Any reduction in this distance may lead to a breach in Sun Valley's permit which has a condition requiring "no odour beyond the site boundary". Therefore a separation distance of 250m from housing should be maintained at all times."

5.31.5 For the objector it is stated that normal operation of the plant does not give rise to problems of odours. Problems only arise as a result of occasional breakdowns of plant or occasional poor practice / management coupled with very particular weather conditions. The number of incidents where odours have given rise to problems are, in fact, extremely limited. Tighter regulation and enforcement will further improve the situation.

5.31.6 It appears to me that Sun Valley is already making use of the "Best Available Techniques" which balance the costs to the operator against the benefits to the environment. As such, smells will not reduce as a result of tighter regulation. Nor would I expect the notification period to be of much comfort to residents in circumstances where a pollution incident had already occurred.

5.31.7 Notwithstanding use of Best Available Techniques, pollution incidents continue to occur. Complaints have reduced dramatically since about 2000. Nevertheless, there was a repetition of odour events during July / August 2004; and over 40 complaints were received in the first half of 2005. A liaison group set up to represent residents' interests is still active.

5.31.8 Despite the use of Best Available Techniques, the release of offensive odours from time to time is, in a sense, part of the normal operation. On the evidence before me, I conclude that pollution events are likely to continue in the future. The majority of the objection site is within 250m of the rendering plant. Residential development on the site would not be compatible with nearby industrial activity. Allocation for residential purposes would not be appropriate.

*Land adjoining Merryhill House, Belmont - 334*

5.31.9 The development of land at Merryhill is seen as a way of compensating for the release of land at Belmont Pools to form a Local Nature Reserve. In this regard, I would have expected the objector to have been involved in the discussions regarding housing land at Belmont and proposals for the Haywood Country Park.

5.31.10 Be that as it may, I consider that housing on the objection site would be totally inappropriate. In marked contrast to the proposed Belmont allocation, the site is in the open countryside. Development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. I would endorse the comments on the Inspector who determined the 1996 planning appeal where he stated that "the planning gain referred to would not justify allowing development so demonstrably harmful to interests of acknowledged importance."

*Land at Broomy Hill waterworks - 258*

5.31.11 In Section 16.3 of my report, I conclude that the SINC designation at the water treatment works is no longer appropriate. In a sense, that decision clears the way for consideration of a residential allocation. However, the Council has two main concerns. The first is whether allocation would be appropriate given uncertainty about implementation. The second relates to noise and other potential disturbance.

5.31.12 I can appreciate the Council's concern about implementation. Residential planning permissions on part of the site have twice been allowed to lapse. However, it appears to me that the future of the works is now more settled. There are clear instructions to gain a residential planning permission and to find a buyer for the surplus land. As such, I see no objection to allocation on this ground.

5.31.13 With regard to environmental concerns, I was told of the £15 million upgrade of the works. Operation of the plant is largely automatic and silent. In addition, there is little vehicular movement. This evidence was supported by my own observations at the site visit. In the circumstances, I consider that residential allocation of the areas hatched blue and green on the objector's plan showing the extent of the land area would be appropriate.

5.31.14 Allocation at this late stage could attract objections and delay adoption of the Plan. This would not necessarily be in the public interest. In the circumstances, and as soon as the priorities of the Council will allow, the site should be allocated for housing purposes in a development plan document. In the interim, my comments in this section would be material considerations in respect of the principle of development. In addition, and as a notional estimate for the purposes of the unitary development plan, I have assumed a capacity of 36 dwellings (1.21 ha at 30 dph).

*Rear of Dorchester Way - 373*

5.31.15 In Section 5.3 of my report, I examine whether the boundary of the established residential area at the rear of Dorchester Way should be amended in order to facilitate residential development and open space provision. I conclude that it should not. It follows that the land should not be treated as one of Hereford's housing sites under Policy H2.

*Graftonbury Gardens Hotel - 930*

5.31.16 In Section 5.3 of my report, I identify the Grafton Gardens Hotel as being in a rural location some distance from the established residential area of Hereford. It is not a location that falls with the search sequence identified in Paragraph 30 of PPG 3. Hereford's housing requirement, and that of the county, can be met on previously developed land in urban areas and in other ways as identified in the Plan including limited urban extension. Consideration of a detached location in the open countryside is not necessary or appropriate.

*Greyfriars site - 959*

5.31.17 This is a developed site within the established area where I would expect the principle of residential development to be established. The Council refers to constraints imposed by the existing building, the inclusion within a conservation area, the potential archaeological importance of the site and the liability to flooding. The delivery of an appropriate scheme within the plan period is questioned.

5.31.18 For my part, I do not see any overriding reason why an acceptable development could not be completed by 2011. Indeed, allocation could bring greater certainty and encourage development proposals to be brought forward. In addition, although it would be sensible to explore options, I do not see any overriding reason why the existing buildings should be retained if an appropriate scheme of redevelopment could be devised.

5.31.19 The allocation of the site at this late stage could attract objections and delay adoption of the Plan. This would not necessarily be in the public interest. In the circumstances, and as soon as the priorities of the Council will allow, the site should be allocated for housing purposes in a development plan document. In the interim, my comments in this section would be material considerations in respect of the principle of development. In addition, and as a notional estimate for the purposes of the unitary development plan, I have assumed a capacity of 22 dwellings (0.45 ha at 50 dph).

*Copsewood Drive – 325, 327*

5.31.20 Paragraph 30 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (Document D 3) indicates that councils should only seek to identify sufficient land to meet the housing requirement set by regional planning guidance and strategic planning processes. In doing so they do not need to consider all the land in their area. They should not extend the search further than required to provide sufficient capacity to meet the agreed housing requirement.

5.31.21 In the site selection process, priority is given to the re-use of previously developed land and buildings, then to urban extensions. In the case of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan, much of the housing requirement would be met on previously developed sites. In addition, the Council is relying on a small number of greenfield urban extension sites to make up the requisite numbers.

5.31.22 In consequence of the above, land sufficient to meet the strategic requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further. For this reason alone, modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Holmer area – 605, 991*

5.31.23 In Section 5.3 of my report, I conclude that the built-up limits of Hereford do not and would not extend to land at Holmer north of Coldwells Lane. In

addition, at Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, I note that land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites particularly greenfield sites detached from the city's settlement boundary. For this reason alone, modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Land at Holmer - 415*

5.31.24 In Section 5.15 of my report, I have recommended the reinstatement of the provisions relating to land at Holmer as set out in the Deposit Draft Plan. However, objection no P415/867 relates to a larger area that extends to Holmer Stream and to the rear of Coldwells Road. In this regard, the evidence to the inquiry (Lennon Planning, Paragraph 1.5) states that, "The objection with regards the increase in the site allocation to 500 dwellings is not being pursued." In the circumstances, and bearing in mind that sufficient housing land has been identified without searching further, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Extending the boundary of the Holmer allocation - 998*

5.31.25 As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has already been identified. There is no need to search further. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Details of the Holmer proposal - 386*

5.31.26 Whilst providing some factual information, the objector does not indicate what changes to the Plan are being sought. There is inadequate justification for any modification of the Plan.

*Land at Holmer House Farm (north of Roman Road) - 973*

5.31.27 In Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, I note that land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites notably greenfield urban extension sites. There is no need for me to endorse or otherwise comment on the various objections of the Council. Modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Holmer House Farm - 187*

5.31.28 In Section 5.3 above, I conclude that Holmer House Farm lies outside the settlement boundary of Hereford. As such, if allocated, it would fall into the "urban extension" category. In this regard, and as noted in Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites notably urban extension sites. Modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Land at Church Way, Holmer – 202, 237*

5.31.29 In Section 5.3 above, I conclude that the Church Way sites at Holmer lie outside the settlement boundary of Hereford. As such, if allocated, they would fall into the "urban extension" category. In this regard, and as noted in Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites notably urban extension sites. Modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Land at Kings Acre Road - 414*

5.31.30 In Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, I note that land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites notably greenfield urban extension sites. There is no need for me to endorse or otherwise comment on the various objections of the Council. Modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Land at Hala Carr, Cherry Orchard and Breinton Lee - 203, 381, 1194, 1181*

5.31.31 I discuss these sites in Section 5.3 of my report in the context of the settlement boundary of Hereford. I acknowledge that, in the case of the former Hala Carr Nurseries, there is an argument for including the site within a reviewed settlement boundary. However, with regard to allocations, I support the Council's stance of adopting a threshold of a minimum of 10 dwellings. It is unlikely that the site would support this sort of number of dwellings in any event.

5.31.32 The other sites are slightly different. They lie outside the established residential area. I would regard them as potential urban extension sites. In this regard, and as noted in Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites notably urban extension sites. Modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Bulmer's sports ground - 1102*

5.31.33 The objection has been superseded by the grant and implementation of planning permission for the construction of 44 dwellings, a new cricket pavilion, improved sports facilities, car parking and associated work. The residential part of the site should now be shown as established residential area. The remainder of the site should be safeguarded under Policy RST4 (Recommendation 10.5/1 refers).

*Land at Canon Pyon Road - 352*

5.31.34 In Section 5.3 of my report, I conclude that the settlement boundary near to the objection site has been appropriately drawn. The objection site lies outside the settlement boundary and, if developed, would constitute an urban extension.

5.31.35 In Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, I note that land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites, notably urban extension sites, or to identify "reserve" sites. There is no need for me to endorse or otherwise comment on the various objections of the Council. Modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Land at Lower Bullingham – 1063, 505*

5.31.36 In Section 5.14 of my report, I consider whether land at Bullinghope should be allocated as a proposed housing site. I conclude that it should not, nor should there be strategic provision to meet longer term housing needs. It follows that the objection site should not be allocated for residential purposes within the plan period nor identified as a strategic location for development post-2011.

*Land off Yazor Road and north of Whitecross School – 1102, 1107, 692*

5.31.37 Under this heading, I deal with objections nos P1102/3514, P1107/3539, P692/1704 and P692/1718. The land has been variously described as Plough Lane, north of Whitecross High or Whitecross School; Sherrington Drive; and Westfields Trading Estate, Yazor Brook. For the avoidance of doubt, I am discussing Site 1 as identified on the Location Plan forming part of the Council's statement Ref:

C5/061/H2/Hereford – Alternative site (Land at H P Bulmer) but including also the access from Yazor Road. I deal separately with the Plough Lane site (P1102/3516) and the Whitecross Road site (P1102/3515).

5.31.38 There are three important matters that have a bearing on my discussion. First, in Section 3.18 of my report, I find that the strategic housing requirement for the plan period should be 12,200 dwellings, not 11,700 dwellings. I would expect that, if practical, the shortfall should be made up from previously developed land. Secondly, in Section 6.43, I conclude that the safeguarding of employment land north of Whitecross School is not of overriding importance. Thirdly, in Section 9.36, I conclude that land off Sherrington Drive should be protected under Policy HBA9.

5.31.39 In the light of the above, I would say that the site is a candidate for helping to meet the strategic housing requirement. However, that part of the site which is subject to Policy HBA9 should continue to be safeguarded. This area (1.4 ha), known as the “pulp field”, does not in any event fall within the definition of previously developed land. The fact that it is a Site of Importance to Nature Conservation (Policy NC4) and liable to flooding (Policy DR7) also suggest that development on this part of the site would not be appropriate.

5.31.40 The remainder of the site (3.7 ha excluding the access) is previously developed. The main outstanding issue is whether there would be unacceptable conflict with established industrial processes. In this regard, there is existing housing and open space to the west; and along the majority of the southern boundary, housing and open space are seen as the future land uses. However, the area generally to the northeast comprises an established employment area.

5.31.41 Bearing in mind the common ownership, I can envisage boundary treatment, including landscaping, that would mitigate the visual impact of the industrial premises. However, the proximity of the Sun Valley rendering plant and a power station are potentially overriding problems.

5.31.42 The Council's stance in respect of the rendering plant is as described in Paragraph 5.31.4 above. In this regard, I accept that a separation distance of about 250m should be maintained at all times. However, reference to the plan submitted by the Council when objections by Bovale Ltd were being heard (Document HC 16) indicates that only the smallest portion of the site is within the 250m separation distance. To my mind, this does not prejudice the potential allocation of the objection site.

5.31.43 A second potential problem is the presence of the gas and oil fired Dalkia Utilities Combined Heat and Power Station. At its closest, the plant is about 90m from the boundary of the objection site. In its statement (Paragraph 6.5.20), the Council says that this “occasionally leads to complaints”. No other information is given. Bearing in mind the opportunities for mitigation as part of any residential development, it does not appear to me that the case for a residential allocation is significantly undermined by concern about proximity of the power station.

5.31.44 In the light of the above, I consider that the site is suitable for residential development and that it would make a valuable contribution to the strategic housing requirement. However, as with other sites, an allocation at this late stage could attract objections and delay adoption of the Plan. This would not necessarily be in the public interest. In the circumstances, and as soon as the priorities of the

Council will allow, the site should be allocated for housing purposes in a development plan document.

5.31.45 In the interim, my comments in this section would be material considerations in respect of the principle of development. In addition, and as a notional estimate for the purposes of the unitary development plan, I have assumed a capacity of 148 dwellings (3.7 ha at 40 dph).

*Land at Plough Lane - 1102*

5.31.46 The site at Plough Lane (the Council's "Site 2") is a different kettle of fish. Apart from the proposed housing site to the northwest, the land is surrounded on all sides by existing employment uses. More particularly, most of the site is within 250m of the rendering plant at Sun Valley. For this reason alone, I consider that residential use would not be compatible with existing industrial activity.

*Land north of Ledbury Road – 325, 327*

5.31.47 In Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, I note that land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites notably greenfield urban extension sites. Similar considerations apply to the land north of Ledbury Road. Modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Watery Lane barns - 505*

5.31.48 In my opinion, the main issue in this case relates to flooding. Planning Policy Guidance Note 25: Development and Flood Risk indicates that developed areas at high risk of flooding (Zone 3a, Table 1) may be suitable for residential development provided the appropriate minimum standard of flood defence can be maintained for the lifetime of the development. However, I do not have the evidence to determine this point. In the circumstances, there is inadequate justification for modifying the Plan.

*Land east of Perrystone Lane - 179*

5.31.49 In Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, I note that land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites notably greenfield urban extension sites. Similar considerations apply to the land east of Perrystone Lane. Modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Land at Whitecross - 866*

5.31.50 In Paragraphs 5.31.20 to 5.31.22 above, I note that land sufficient to meet the strategic housing requirement has been identified. There is no need to search further for potential housing sites notably greenfield urban extension sites. For this reason alone, and irrespective of the Council's concern over the transport implications and other matters, modification of the Plan is not necessary.

*Land at Whitecross Road - 1102*

5.31.51 I appreciate that the site forms part of the available employment land supply, that there is no suggestion that use for employment purposes could not continue and that there are no apparent constraints to redevelopment for such purposes. I also appreciate that allocation for housing purposes could be detrimental to the interests of the established businesses on the site. However, in Section 6.44 of my report, I conclude that there is no overriding reason why this site should continue, in the main, to be safeguarded employment land.

5.31.52 In this case, I consider that the balance is in favour of residential allocation. In this regard, the site is a developed site that will make a valuable contribution to the strategic housing requirement in circumstance when the need for employment land is at best uncertain.

5.31.53 Allocation of the site at this late stage could attract objections and delay adoption of the Plan. This would not necessarily be in the public interest. In the circumstances, and as soon as the priorities of the Council will allow, the site should be allocated for housing purposes in a development plan document. In the interim, my comments in this section would be material considerations in respect of the principle of development. In addition, and as a notional estimate for the purposes of the unitary development plan, I have assumed a capacity of 47 dwellings (0.95 ha at 50 dph).

*Land at Yazor Road - 368*

5.31.54 The objection site is protected under Policy RST5. In Section 10.35 of my report, I conclude that the designation should remain. It follows that allocation for housing purposes would not be appropriate. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.31/1 As soon as the priorities of the Council will allow, the following sites should be allocated for housing purposes in a development plan document: Broomy Hill (36 dwellings); The Greyfriars (22 dwellings); Land off Yazor Road and north of Whitecross School (148 dwellings); and Land at Whitecross Road (47 dwellings).

5.31/2 On the Proposals Map, modify the extent of the Established Residential Area so that it coincides with the detail shown in Appendix 2 of the Council's statement Ref: C5/041/H2/Hereford – Alternative site (Bulmer Sports Ground).

5.31/3 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.32 LEOMINSTER – SUGGESTED SITES – POLICY H2

### Objections

P223/486	Mrs Y N Powell
PX692/1705	Jennings Estates Ltd
P677/1654	Brasenose College
P977/2899	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether land at Pinfarthings should be allocated for residential development. (223)
- Land south of Barons Cross Road should be allocated for housing purposes. (692)
- Land west of Barons Cross Camp should be allocated for housing. (677, 977)

## Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

### *All objections*

5.32.1 Paragraph 30 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (Document D 3) indicates that, in seeking to identify housing land, councils should not extend their search further than required to provide sufficient capacity to meet the agreed housing requirement. In this regard, a number of important conclusions can be drawn in the context of the Leominster omission sites.

5.32.2 First, looking at the county as a whole, the strategic housing requirement can be met by utilising previously developed land and a limited number of urban extensions that have been identified by the Council. There is no need to look for additional urban extension sites. Secondly, the number of housing units that the Council has allocated to Leominster is entirely reasonable. There is no strategic case for allocating a higher number of housing units to the town. Thirdly, the allocations in Leominster that have already been made are soundly based. There is no need to look for substitute sites.

5.32.3 In addition, I have considered land south of Barons Cross Road in the context of the Leominster Zone of Interest (Paragraphs 8.35.1 to 8.35.5 refer). I conclude that it would be wrong, unnecessary and premature to indicate that land southwest of the town is most suited to longer term growth with a related bypass. The same reasoning would apply to land to the west.

5.32.4 In the circumstances, I conclude that no additional housing land in Leominster needs to be identified. Irrespective of the site specific objections of the Council, additional urban extension sites are not needed in Leominster at this point in time.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.32/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.33 ROSS-ON-WYE – SUGGESTED SITES – POLICY H2

### Objections

P198/429	Alan Porter Ltd
P1174/3718	Mr and Mrs J Price
P1004/3068	Mr R.V. Mills (deceased)
P917/2635	Camanoe Estates Ltd
P198/430	Alan Porter Ltd
P1046/3174	Mr S P Little
P969/2789	Harper Group Construction Ltd
P198/432	Alan Porter Ltd

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Land adjoining Abacus Nursery School should be allocated for housing purposes. (198)
- Land at Arbour Hill should be included for housing expansion. (1174)

- Land at Brampton Road should be allocated for housing purposes. (1004)
- Land at The Chase should be allocated for residential development. (917)
- Land off Fernbank Road should be allocated for housing purposes. (198)
- Land at Greytree should be allocated for housing purposes. (1046)
- Land at Merrivale should be allocated for housing purposes. (969)
- Land adjacent to Rossleigh should be allocated for housing purposes. (198)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Land adjoining Abacus Nursery School - 198*

5.33.1I support the Council's stance of adopting a threshold of a minimum of 0.5 ha or 10 dwellings (Housing Background Paper, Document J 8, Paragraph 9.11). The area of the objection site is only about 0.28 ha. To my mind, irrespective of whether residential development would be acceptable, its allocation for housing purposes would not be appropriate. Site specific matters can be determined in accordance with the general provisions of the Plan and any other material considerations.

#### *Arbour Hill / Brampton Road / Fernbank Road / Rossleigh – 1174, 1004, 198*

5.33.2I would regard these various objection sites as urban extension sites outside the defined settlement boundary. In Paragraphs 5.32.1 to 5.32.4 above, and in the context of Leominster, I conclude that no additional housing land needs to be identified. Similar considerations apply in Ross-on-Wye. Irrespective of the site specific objections of the Council, additional greenfield sites are not needed in the town at this point in time.

#### *Land at The Chase - 917*

5.33.3The Chase Hotel and its grounds are in a sustainable location close to the town centre of Ross-on-Wye. They fall within the category of previously developed land. I would normally consider such a site to be a prime candidate for residential allocation ahead of urban extension sites. However, it does not necessarily follow that the site is suitable for housing use or that the whole of the curtilage should be redeveloped.

5.33.4In this case, the site enjoys the protection of Policy HBA9 (Protection of open areas and green spaces). In addition, it is within the Ross-on-Wye Conservation Area. In Paragraph 9.45.1 of my report, I acknowledge that the site is not public open space. Nevertheless, it represents a major open area in this part of Ross-on-Wye which is important to the setting of the Chase Hotel and to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

5.33.5Any significant redevelopment at the site is likely to have a material effect upon the protected open area and green space and upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. There is inadequate justification for allocation of the site within the unitary development plan.

#### *Land at Greytrees - 1046*

5.33.6Notwithstanding the planning history of part of the land, the objection site is essentially a greenfield site. In my opinion, although it falls within the settlement boundary of Ross-on-Wye, the first consideration is whether this site is needed in

order to meet the housing requirement. I have already determined that additional greenfield sites are not needed in the town at this point in time. It follows that allocation of the site for housing purposes would not be appropriate.

*Land at Merrivale - 969*

5.33.7 To my mind, the Merrivale site is different from the other omission sites in Ross-on-Wye. It is a site of 0.97 ha reasonable close to the town centre and forming part of the established residential area. There is a bungalow in the northwestern quadrant of the site. The remainder of the site is essentially a featureless grassed open space that, in my opinion, has little amenity value.

5.33.8 At the inquiry, I established that the Council has no objection in principle to the redevelopment of the site. However, it would wish open space to be incorporated in any scheme of development. As such, there would be fewer than 10 houses. The site should not be allocated but should be treated as a windfall site.

5.33.9 For my part, I appreciate that the open areas of the site would be a familiar feature in the local area. Nevertheless, as indicated above, I do not consider that the site has any particular merit in terms of Policy HBA9 (Protection of open areas and green spaces). I see no reason for a disproportionate amount of open space to be included within any scheme of development.

5.33.10 As stated, the total site area is 0.97 ha. Even if the existing bungalow was excluded from the calculation, about 0.7 ha would be available for development. In a location such as this, a reasonable high density scheme might be expected. However a scheme of 30 dph with reasonable landscape and open space provision would yield some 21 dwellings. I support a related allocation.

5.33.11 Allocation of the site at this late stage could attract objections and delay adoption of the Plan. This would not necessarily be in the public interest. In the circumstances, and as soon as the priorities of the Council will allow, the site should be allocated for housing purposes in a development plan document. In the interim, my comments in this section would be material considerations in respect of the principle of development.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.33/1 As soon as the priorities of the Council will allow, land at Merrivale (21 dwellings) should be allocated for housing purposes in a development plan document.

5.33/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## **5.34 LEDBURY – SUGGESTED SITES – POLICY H2**

### **Objections**

W282/569  
P746/1831

Persimmon Homes  
Bloor Homes Ltd

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Land between the Full Pitcher public house and Martins Way should be allocated as a housing site. (282)
- Land at Ledbury Football and Cricket Ground should be allocated for residential development. (746)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Both objections*

5.34.1 These objections relate to a large area of open space adjacent to the Ledbury Bypass. The area, located within the settlement boundary of Ledbury, amounts to about 6.42 ha in total. It may be described in three parts. The northern part of the area mainly comprises a football ground, club house and bungalow. The largest, central portion of the area is a sports ground with pavilion. The southern part of the site is designated as open space.

5.34.2 The objection of Bloor Homes Ltd relates to the northern and central parts of the site. All of this land is safeguarded under Policy RST4 (Safeguarding existing recreational open space). Persimmon Homes' objection relates to the central and southern parts of the site. The central part is subject to Policy RST4, as indicated. The southern portion of the site is subject to Policy HBA9 (Protection of open areas and green spaces). In addition, Persimmon's objection would involve relocation of recreational land to a site adjacent to the Rugby Club, southwest of the bypass.

5.34.3 I consider the safeguarding of the existing recreational open space in Section 10.10 of my report. I conclude that the site currently performs a valuable and established recreational function, albeit as a club site rather than as public open space. The retention of the Policy HBA9 designation is discussed in Section 9.41. Here I conclude that the site is integral to the character of this sector of Ledbury. The open character should be protected and the Policy HBA9 designation retained.

5.34.4 Notwithstanding my conclusions in Sections 9 and 10 of the report, I have considered whether there are overriding reasons why one or both sites should be allocated for housing purposes. In this regard, the primary consideration is, to my mind, whether additional housing land is needed in Ledbury.

5.34.5 In Section 3.18 of my report, I reach the general conclusion that a balanced amount of development has been allocated to the market towns. Looking at Ledbury in particular, it is not a town where I would expect provision to be particularly high. For example, it does not enjoy the sub-regional status of Hereford; and, unlike Leominster and Ross-on-Wye, the town is not with the A49 transport corridor as referred to in RPG 11 (Policy RR2). In addition, there is no particular evidence of unmet *local* needs.

5.34.6 I note that, in 1999, Ledbury had 4.4% of the county's population. However, the number of completions anticipated in the period 1996-2011 amounts to some 8% of the strategic requirement. I appreciate that much of that development has now taken place and that there is only one allocation in Ledbury. However, I see no overriding reason why high rates of build are needed in the future.

5.34.7 I conclude that, irrespective of the detailed objections of the council and the necessity or otherwise of replacement sports facilities, there is no need for an

additional housing allocation in Ledbury at this point in time. On-going needs would be met from the existing housing stock and from commitments and windfall developments.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.34/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.35 BROMYARD – SUGGESTED SITES – POLICY H2

### Objections

P520/6460	Bromyard and Winslow Town Council
P1087/3446	S Walters and Partners
P520/6459	Bromyard and Winslow Town Council
P520/6458	Bromyard and Winslow Town Council
P1061/3215	G S Hinds

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether land at Hardwick Close should be allocated for housing purposes. (520, 1087)
- Whether land at Drythistle Farm should be allocated for housing purposes. (520)
- Whether land west of St Peter's School should be allocated for housing purposes. (520, 1061)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *All objectors*

5.35.1The objection sites are all greenfield sites that lie beyond the settlement boundary of Bromyard on the northwestern side of the town. Similar considerations apply to all the sites.

5.35.2Paragraph 30 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (Document D 3) indicates that, in seeking to identify housing land, councils should not extend their search further than required to provide sufficient capacity to meet the agreed housing requirement. In this regard, a number of important conclusions can be drawn in the context of the Bromyard omission sites.

5.35.3First, looking at the county as a whole, the strategic housing requirement can be met by utilising previously developed land and a limited number of urban extensions that have been identified by the Council. There is no need to look for additional urban extension sites. Secondly, the number of housing units that the Council has allocated to Bromyard is entirely reasonable. There is no strategic case for allocating a higher number of housing units to the town. Thirdly, the allocations in Bromyard that have already been made are soundly based. There is no need to look for substitute sites.

5.35.4 In the light of the above, and irrespective of the detailed objections of the Council, I conclude that there is no need for additional housing land in Bromyard at this point in time. None of the objection sites should be allocated for housing purposes.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.35/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.36 KINGTON – SUGGESTED SITES – POLICY H2**

### **Objections**

P810/2088 J J Turner  
W321/936 Mrs E Newman

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- Whether land south of the River Arrow should be allocated for housing. (810)
- Whether the site of the present cattle market should be allocated for development. (321)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Land south of the River Arrow - 810*

5.36.1 In the main, the objection site forms part of the undeveloped river meadows alongside this part of the River Arrow. It enjoys the protection of Policy HBA9 (Protection of open areas and green spaces) and makes a significant contribution to the character and setting of Kington. The northern part of the site is an area liable to flood. For these reasons, allocation for housing purposes would not be appropriate. In drawing this conclusion, I note that conversion of the existing buildings would not necessarily be precluded.

#### *Cattle market site - 321*

5.36.2 To my mind, allocation of the cattle market site for housing development would not be appropriate. There has been no debate about the appropriateness of the land use. Indeed, the Council's housing capacity study suggests that the appropriate alternative use would be employment / business / light industrial / commercial. In addition, I consider that allocations are only appropriate where there is a reasonable certainty of development taking place within the plan period.

5.36.3 I appreciate that there are arguments for choosing a previously developed site such as this ahead of greenfield sites. However, allocation of the site at this point in time would not be appropriate.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.36/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.37 MANAGING THE RELEASE OF HOUSING LAND - POLICY H3 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.4.32 TO 5.4.36

### Objections

P415/868	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P635/1492	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P785/1946	Fownhope Parish Council
P866/2450	Church Commissioners for England
P890/2584	Government Office for the West Midlands
P921/2641	Mr P Hill
P977/2904	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P1000/3006	House Builders' Federation
P352/667	Mr B Willis
P381/814	Mr D J and Mrs I R Powell
P653/1480	Mr B McIlwrick
P923/2656	Messrs D, R and J Ewens
P973/2864	Mr B Price

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the release of housing land should be managed. (All objectors)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *All objectors*

5.37.1 The individual objectors make various detailed criticisms about Policy H3 and the supporting text. However, to my mind, these have all been overtaken by events. I can see the sense of a phasing policy and the managed release of land when there are several logical plan phases. However, by the time the Plan is adopted, the final phase of development (2006-2011) will have been reached. All the allocated greenfield sites are going to be needed within this phase. On the larger sites, development will need to commence as soon as possible in order to secure the anticipated provision by 2011.

5.37.2 I have already determined that the identification of three phases of development would not be appropriate and that there should be a single phase spanning the period 1996-2011. However, in the light of the circumstances that I have described, it would be inappropriate to try and manage the release of land. Policy H3 and the related text should be deleted.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.37/1 Delete Policy H3 and Paragraphs 5.4.32 to 5.4.36.

5.37/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

### **5.38 MAIN VILLAGES: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES (NON-SITE BASED ISSUES) - POLICY H4, PARAGRAPHS 5.4.37 TO 5.4.44 AND TABLE 3**

#### **Objections**

P444/918	Robert Hitchins Ltd
P975/2880	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd
P977/2906	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P1000/3007	House Builders' Federation
P269/557	Huntingdon Open Space Action Group
P414/850	St John Kemble Hereford Housing Association
P444/4517	Robert Hitchins Ltd
P444/10725	Robert Hitchins Ltd
P605/3028	Three Counties Planning
P635/1493	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P673/11027	D H Waterhouse and others
P754/1859	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P754/10558	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P769/1912	Cradley Parish Plan Project and Village Design Statement Steering Group
P785/1947	Fownhope Parish Council
P975/2879	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd
P977/2905	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P993/2968	Stroudwater Redevelopment Partnership Ltd
P995/2973	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1068/3245	Cradley Parish Council
W196/5414	Mr R Rock
P511/1049	Mrs P Edwards (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P653/1483	Mr B McIlwrick
P653/1488	Mr B McIlwrick
P711/3070	Mr F Hemming
P1006/3086	M R Allfrey
P1094/3478	Mr C Cook
P1120/3610	Mr B and Ms M Richardson

#### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- The figures in Table 3 should be adjusted to allow for non-completions. (444)
- The windfall estimates are questioned. (444)
- Additional land should be allocated. (444)
- Windfalls have been over-estimated. Where appropriate they should be identified as allocations. (975, 977, 995)
- Objection is made to the failure to allow for phasing of development. (975, 977)
- Whether appropriate criteria have been used in the selection of main villages. (977, 444, 754, 196, 653)
- The figures in Table 3 are not substantiated by sufficient detail. (1000)
- The criteria set out in the Plan for defining settlement boundaries are not consistent with those in the Housing Background Paper. (269)
- Settlement boundaries should not be drawn too tightly. (414)

- Whether priority should be given to applications on urban capacity sites and previously developed land. (444, 673, 754, 995)
- Objection is raised to the concept of settlement boundaries. (605)
- The policy should be substituted by a set of policies that would assist the true sustainability of the rural life style. (635)
- The size of infill plots and new dwellings in main villages should be restricted. (769, 1068, 1006)
- There should be reference to policies on conservation areas and open spaces. (785)
- There should be no change in the settlement boundary at Kingsbridge Lane, Cradley. (511)
- Development outside defined settlement boundaries should not necessarily be precluded. (653)
- Whether the wording of Paragraph 5.4.42 should be retained. (711)
- Policy H4 is too restrictive. (1094)
- Settlement boundaries should be relaxed. (1120)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Non-completions / windfalls / allocations – 444, 975, 977, 995*

5.38.1 Matters relating to non-completions, windfalls estimates and allocations have been addressed in Section 3.18 of my report. There are potential implications for Table 3, Policy H4 and Paragraphs 5.4.37 to 5.4.44 of the Plan. However, I do not consider that any modifications are necessary.

5.38.2 In particular, I am aware that the assumed windfall contribution has been derived largely from urban capacity work. However, the Government guide "Tapping the potential" (Document D 33) supports the inclusion of villages that might be considered for housing development. In addition, the assumptions are supported by reference to past build rates. I support the way that the windfall contribution has been estimated, the results of that process and the reliance placed upon windfalls. In this regard, the small size of the sites and uncertainties regarding development militate against allocation.

#### *Phasing of development – 975, 977*

5.38.3 Objection has been made to a stated failure to allow for phasing of development, which is allowed for in Table 3. However, as stated elsewhere, the use of phasing is inappropriate given the late stage that has been reached in the plan adoption process. The columns in Table 3 for 2001-2006 and 2006-2011 should be combined into a single column covering 2001-2011.

#### *Criteria used in selecting main villages – 977, 444, 754, 196, 653*

5.38.4 A theme common to several of the objections is that too low a population threshold has been chosen. As such, many of the selected villages do not possess sufficient services, facilities, employment opportunities, access to public transport and the like. The alternative of using a minimum population of 1,000 is suggested. For my part, I note that a minimum level of facilities / employment provision and

access to public transport are prerequisites of definition as a main village. In addition, the population should be 250 or over.

5.38.5I support the approach of the Council. I appreciate that, by choosing a population threshold of 250, many small villages are included. However, other considerations come into play. For example, I consider that it is important to have a reasonable spread of development across the county. In this way truly local needs can be met in appropriate local service centres. If a population criterion of 1,000 were used, development would be concentrated around Hereford and Malvern. Large parts of the rural area would be left without a meaningful focus for new development.

5.38.6At the same time, I consider that the use of a population threshold is important. In this regard, there is a suggestion that it is the total score achieved by a settlement that is important not its population. However, to my mind, size is an indication of future housing need. There is unlikely to be significant local need in a settlement with a low population. Settlement size is also an indication of the number of people available to support local services.

5.38.7As to the method used to calculate village populations, I do not consider that the Council's approach is unreasonable or that the results are likely to be significantly inaccurate. The alternative of using the 1999 mid-year estimates by parish would not be appropriate. Parishes usually cover areas much larger than the main settlement. More than one settlement could be included within the figure.

5.38.8Other objectors pick on the significance or otherwise of criteria such as the availability of employment. In this regard, I accept the scoring system used by the Council; also the necessity for significant employment to be available on the doorstep and not in a nearby town.

5.38.9I have reviewed the methodology adopted by the Council including the chosen criteria and the system of scoring. I have considered whether, having regard to factors such as location and available services, a sensible list of main villages emerges as the outcome of the process. In my opinion, the Council's approach is soundly based and appropriately justified. I support the way in which the Council has selected the main villages and the settlements so identified.

*Substantiating Table 3 with sufficient detail - 1000*

5.38.10To my mind, Table 3 is a summary of the facts and figures that are to be found elsewhere in the Plan and in the supporting documentation. It has been possible to test this information through the inquiry process. Some adjustment will be necessary to reflect the latest position. In other respects, the figures have been substantiated by the Council and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Criteria for defining settlement boundaries - 269*

5.38.11It appears to me that, in dealing with practical measures to be used in defining settlement boundaries, the considerations set out in the Housing Background Paper augment the factors listed in Paragraph 5.4.41 of the Plan. The two documents are not inconsistent. Be that as it may, I consider that the factors in the Plan are soundly based and provided an appropriate basis for boundary definition.

*Tight settlement boundaries - 414*

5.38.12I can see the merit in allowing for flourishing villages that remain attractive to all sections of the community. However, in this regard, I am not aware of any instances where tight drawing of settlement boundaries could prejudice such matters. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Priority to urban capacity sites and previously developed land – 444, 673, 754, 995*

5.38.13Following adoption, the Plan will only have a few years to run until its end date of 2011. It appears to me that reliance will have to be placed on all sources of housing provision. There is no sense in giving priority to one category or another since all sources need to be utilised in the remaining part of the Plan period. I recommend the deletion of the reference to urban capacity sites and previously developed land.

*Concept of settlement boundaries - 605*

5.38.14To my mind, the settlement boundaries concept is a widely used and well understood planning tool that helps give certainty to the planning process and the application of policies. There is inadequate justification for any modification of the Plan.

*Sustainability of the rural lifestyle - 635*

5.38.15In my opinion, the Council's approach to main villages is entirely appropriate. Essentially, they are the largest villages and those with the widest range of facilities. They are the logical and most sustainable focus for development in the wider rural areas of the county. As indicated above, settlement boundaries are an appropriate way of constraining development whilst allowing for small-scale growth. In addition, limited development outside the defined settlements can still take place under Policies H6 and H7. I see no need for a different set of policies.

*Size of infill plots and new dwellings - 769, 1068, 1006*

5.38.16I appreciate that, in the smaller settlement, restrictions on the size of infill plots and new dwellings is likely to be of benefit to those seeking affordable housing. However, the role of the main villages is slightly different. Here, the emphasis is on meeting a broader variety of housing need. As such a wider range of house types and sizes is appropriate. In addition, it is expected that affordable housing will be provided on the back of market housing. These objectives would not be met if development was restricted as envisaged by the objectors.

*Conservation areas and open spaces - 785*

5.38.17I acknowledge that due regard should be paid to conservation areas and open spaces. However, these matters are covered adequately in other parts of the Plan. The related policies would be applied, as appropriate, to development in main villages. Bearing in mind that the Plan should be read as a whole, there is no necessity for these policies to be stressed in the context of Policy H4.

*Kingsbridge Lane, Cradley - 511*

5.38.18Following publication of the Revised Deposit Draft, this objection was conditionally withdrawn. No further action is necessary.

*Development outside settlement boundaries - 653*

5.38.19I appreciate that a limited amount of housing can be expected to be accommodated in expanded villages. However, to my mind, the most sustainable

location for such development would normally be within the confines of main villages. Government policy is to strictly control new housing building, including single dwellings, in the countryside away from established settlement or from areas allocated for housing in development plans. I consider that Policy H4 represents a sustainable approach to development in the rural areas and is to be supported.

*Retaining the wording of Paragraph 5.4.42 - 711*

5.38.20 The objector accepts retaining the wording of Paragraph 5.4.42 provided that Policy H10 and Paragraph 5.5.18 are changed. This matter is dealt with below in the context of rural exceptions.

*Whether Policy H4 is too restrictive - 1094*

5.38.21 I appreciate that it is difficult for rural businesses to find plots of land and get permission for the erection of a dwelling. However, as indicated above, the main aim of government policy is to strictly control new housing building, including single dwellings, in the countryside away from established settlement or from areas allocated for housing in development plans. I consider that this should be the general rule. Some flexibility is available through Policies H6 to H8 but I do not consider that any broader concessions would be appropriate.

*Relaxation of settlement boundaries - 1120*

5.38.22 Through Policy H10, the Plan already makes provision for the potential release of land for low cost housing within or adjoining established rural settlements. In other parts of my report, for example in Section 3.18, I have determined that an extension of these provisions would not be appropriate.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.38/1 In Table 3, set out the figures for 2001-2006 and 2006-2011 in a single column for 2001-2011.

5.38/2 In Policy H4, delete the words "(priority will be given to applications on urban capacity sites and previously developed land)".

5.38/3 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## **5.39 MAIN VILLAGES: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY – CRADLEY – POLICY H4**

### **Objections**

P269/556	Huntingdon Open Space Action Group
W329/615	Cradley Village Design Statement
P483/1000	Cradley Village Hall Management Committee
P769/1908	Cradley Parish Plan Project and Village Design Statement Steering Group
P770/1922	Hon Curate of Cradley with Mathon and Storridge
P1068/3239	Cradley Parish Council
P41/198	Mr J and Ms H Hunaban
P51/233	Ms E Kevan
P52/236	Mr R Styles

P53/238	Mr G W Thomas
P58/244	Miss F A Roadknight
P65/252	Mr B and Ms C Allcock
P148/346	Ms P A Fenwick
P149/348	Mr P T Fenwick
W190/195	Mr R Harris
W280/1262	Mr R Gill
P480/990	Mr and Mrs J.C. Thomas
P485/1004	Mr P L Hunt
P486/1006	Mrs W M Hunt
P508/1042	Mrs S M Hyson (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P518/1057	R and E W Repton
P694/1723	Mrs S J Davies
P696/3631	Mrs P A Fairfax
P712/1751	Mr E J Edgar
P713/1752	Dr S E Herriot
P717/1757	Mr J Rowe
P760/1882	G P Young
P761/1888	S R Ashton
P963/2781	Miss J Pilling
P1005/7358	R D Carver
P1006/3087	M R Allfrey
P1054/3189	H B Kingsley
P1161/3684	J Jerkins
W280/7403	Mr R Gill
P480/7379	Mr and Mrs J C Thomas
P1005/7345	R D Carver
W329/7411	Cradley Village Design Statement
P483/7380	Cradley Village Hall Management Committee
P769/7471	Cradley Parish Plan Project and Village Design Statement Steering Group
P770/7473	Hon Curate of Cradley with Mathon and Storridge
P1068/7365	Cradley Parish Council
W280/7402	Mr R Gill
P480/7378	Mr and Mrs J C Thomas
P485/7381	Mr P L Hunt
P486/7383	Mrs W M Hunt
P712/7453	Mr E J Edgar
P713/7458	Dr S E Herriot
P717/7461	Mr J Rowe
P761/7466	S R Ashton
P1005/3082	R D Carver
P1006/7359	M R Allfrey
P269/7396	Huntingdon Open Space Action Group
W329/7412	Cradley Village Design Statement
P769/7470	Cradley Parish Plan Project and Village Design Statement Steering Group
P1068/7366	Cradley Parish Council
P41/7393	Mr J and Ms H Hunaban
P51/7420	Ms E Kevan
P52/7421	Mr R Styles
P53/7422	Mr G W Thomas
P58/7431	Miss F A Roadknight
P65/7423	Mr B abd Ms C Allcock
P148/7371	Ms P A Fenwick
P149/7372	Mr P T Fenwick
W190/7475	Mr R Harris

W280/7401	Mr R Gill
P480/7377	Mr and Mrs J C Thomas
P485/7382	Mr P L Hunt
P486/7384	Mrs W M Hunt
P508/7414	Mrs S M Hyson
P518/7440	R and E W Repton
P694/7443	Mrs S J Davies
P696/7446	Mrs P A Fairfax
P712/7452	E J Edgar
P713/7457	Dr S E Herriot
P760/7463	G P Young
P1006/7354	M R Allfrey
P684/1677	Mr B Harrison
P16/21	Mr B W Waters
P1028/3147	Mr and Mrs M Rogers

### Summary of Objections / Issue

- Whether the proposed settlement boundary of Cradley should be varied. (All objectors)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Varying the settlement boundary of Cradley – all objectors*

##### Introduction

5.39.1 All the objectors, in one form or another, seek modification of the settlement boundary of Cradley as proposed by Herefordshire Council. Many seek the reinstatement of the boundary used in the Malvern Hills District Local Plan. They say that, in the absence of a need to allocate land for development, there is no need to change the boundary. Indeed, some vulnerable parcels of open land would enjoy greater protection by being left outside the boundary of the village and being treated as part of the open countryside. Other objectors would wish certain parcels of land to be included within the boundary specifically with a view to later development.

5.39.2 Most of the objections concern the protection of open spaces within or adjacent to the village. In this regard, related objections are dealt with in Section 9 of my report. Section 9.33 and Sections 9.52 to 9.56 are particularly relevant. The open spaces are essentially those that were identified in the village design statement. This was published too late for matters to be incorporated in the Deposit Draft Plan. However, revisions in the Revised Deposit Draft address many of the initial points of concern. In addition, I note that the village design statement has been adopted by the Council.

5.39.3 The first point to bear in mind is that the Council, in preparing the UDP, is drawing up a unified plan for Herefordshire. The new plan draws upon and will replace several plans that have already been considered and adopted. These include the Malvern Hills District Local Plan. It is inevitable that there will be changes particularly as a result of the Council's attempts to achieve a consistent approach across the whole of the county.

5.39.4 One element of the attempt to achieve consistency is the definition of settlement boundaries. The Council's aim is to draw a line that defines the boundary of the built form of the village. To my mind, that is eminently sensible

and I support the approach. However, this does not mean that all land within the boundary is a candidate for development. Appropriate protection can be afforded in other ways. The application of Policy HBA9 (Protection of open areas and green spaces) is one way in which other interests can be safeguarded.

5.39.5I acknowledge that, having regard to the provisions of PPS 7, comprehensive protection would be available to land defined as being outside the boundaries of Cradley. In addition, there is the protection available under the AONB both within and outside the village. However, it appears to me that there is a correct approach to be followed. First, a boundary should be drawn that logically includes the built form of the village. Secondly, land within the boundaries of the village deserving of particular designation or allocation should be dealt with accordingly.

5.39.6Under the following headings, I discuss the discrete areas of land that have been the subject of particular objection. The discussion covers both sites that are regarded as candidates for protection as open green spaces and those where development is envisaged by particular objectors.

#### Land adjacent to St James's Church

5.39.7In the Malvern Hills District Local Plan, land on the north side of Rectory Lane was not included within the settlement boundary. However, there are several built elements in this location. These include The Old Rectory, St James's Church, the village hall and a house known as The Elms at the eastern end of the lane. To my mind, these properties and their curtilages are obvious and continuous elements of the built form of the village. I support their inclusion within the settlement boundary.

5.39.8In addition, I note that all but The Elms enjoy the protection of Policy HBA9. The designation of the land as protected open space was an amendment introduced into the Revised Deposit Draft.

5.39.9The glebe land opposite the church is rightly included within the settlement boundary. It is surrounded by built development on all sides and is clearly within the confines of the village. It was also within the settlement boundary defined in the Malvern Hills District Local Plan. I can understand that residents and others are concerned that the land could be vulnerable to development. However, as noted in Section 9.53, I would expect the land to enjoy protection under Policy CF6 (Retention of existing facilities).

#### Land adjacent to Russet House

5.39.10In a difference from the situation in the Malvern Hills District Local Plan, a triangle of land to the east of Russet House would be included within the settlement boundary in the Herefordshire UDP. As discussed in Section 9.53, the land is rightly excluded from the provisions of Policy HBA9. However, bearing in mind the strong boundary definition and intimate relationship with Russet House, I agree that the land should be included within Cradley's settlement boundary.

#### Land between St Katherine's and Huntingdon

5.39.11This area has proved to be particularly controversial. In the Malvern Hills District Local Plan, St Katherine's and associated land to the south of Kingsbridge Lane is outside the settlement boundary; also an area of open space at the rear of 21 to 24 Huntingdon. The Herefordshire UDP includes all this land with the settlement. In addition, the open space would be protected under Policy HBA9 though a revision introduced at the revised deposit change.

5.39.12I have considered the future of the open space in Section 9.56 of my report. I conclude that the land should be excluded from the area subject to Policy HBA9. To my mind, it is a rather anomalous area of grassland fringed by existing development and of little importance in terms of the policy considerations. In this regard, I conclude that the settlement boundary has been correctly drawn by the Council. From what I saw, the built form of the village clearly extends to St Katherine's on the south side of Kingsbridge Lane.

#### Land south of Barratt's Cottage

5.39.13The objectors would wish land south of Barratt's Cottage to be included within the settlement boundary of Cradley. There is development on the opposite side of the road and it is felt that a development of the highest standards could be contained within the objection site itself.

5.39.14For my part, I have noted the detailed objections of the Council; also concerns about various aspects of the local infrastructure. However, a basic starting point is the need or otherwise for more development in this area. In this regard, Policy CF2 in RPG 11 states that, in rural areas, the provision of new housing should generally be restricted to meeting local housing needs and/or to support local services. In addition, Paragraph 30 of PPG 3 indicates that councils do not need to search further than required to meet the agreed strategic housing requirement.

5.39.15There is inadequate justification for new housing development on these counts. Further, as stated in the Council's statement, the village will benefit from growth without the need for further allocation (or adjustment of Cradley's boundaries). Reference is made to 25 outstanding commitments and to the potential for 58 dwellings through windfalls in the village. All in all, there is no need to extend the boundaries of the village to include greenfield building land.

#### Land off Chapel Lane

5.39.16Considerations similar to those enunciated in respect of land south of Barratt's Cottage apply to the Chapel Lane site. With regard to provision for "smaller and less well off households", I would expect an element of suitable housing to come forward as part of, and on the back of, other developments in Cradley. More particularly, Policy H10 (Rural exception housing) supports the principle of permitting affordable housing on land adjoining established rural settlements. In this regard, there is no need to vary the boundary of Cradley.

#### Land east of Cradley Brook

5.39.17There is an objection that seeks the allocation of land between east and west Cradley for mixed use purposes. This is dealt with in Section 5.63 of my report in the context of Policy H5. However, in relation to Policy H4, amendment of the settlement boundary is sought in respect of land east of Cradley Brook. In this regard, I consider first whether the site falls within the logical built-up limits of Cradley; and secondly whether the need for housing suggests that the objection site should be included within the boundaries of the village.

5.39.18From what I saw on site, I would say that, in the main, the objection site is a steeply sloping area of land containing a plantation of stream-side trees and scrub. I appreciate that the stream to the west is a distinct physical feature that could be used for boundary purposes. However, the majority of the objection site lies outside the built form of the village. It can be readily distinguished from the

generally suburban nature of the houses and domestic gardens of properties lying to the east.

5.39.19I am aware that, at the northern end of the objection site, there are two existing cottages. These premises are residential in nature and different from the vegetated and undeveloped land to the south. However, to all intents and purposes, only the eastern corner of the curtilage of the northern property adjoins the settlement boundary. They are not logically part of the built-up form of the village but are essentially separate from it surrounded as they are by countryside.

5.39.20So far as housing need is concerned, I have noted the objector's concerns about low recent building rates and the need to facilitate modest development including market housing through minor adjustments to the boundary; also the need for flexibility in order to retain and enhance services and facilities. These and other matters are considered in Section 5.63 and in the foregoing part of this section. My conclusion is that additional provision in Cradley, over and above that envisaged by the Council, is not needed.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.39/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.40 MAIN VILLAGES: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY – OTHER VILLAGES – POLICY H4

### Objections

P1037/3161	Mr P Mokler
P1040/3164	Mr J Mokler
P1041/3165	Mr Ashley Owens
P61/247	Mr J W Yeomans
P532/1103	Mr M A Godson
P754/1846	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P942/2732	Mr D Gower
P28/25	Mrs J Kings
P715/1754	Eveson Charitable Trust
P1089/3448	Walker Stuart Planning Solutions
P551/1239	Bodenham Parish Council
P201/437	Mr E Bevan
P1043/3166	C F and S M Powell
P1119/3603	Mr J K Brick
P1177/3722	R Chilman
P435/898	Mrs J A Throssell
P597/1285	Mr and Mrs S Chadd
P784/4066	Mr and Mrs W Tisdale
P1112/3563	Mr R Chadd
P596/1283	Mr P Ross
P817/2117	Mr and Mrs R C Buckley
P832/2149	C G Property
P990/2954	Mrs J Jones and Mr I B Hamer
P1183/3738	L Evans and Son
P479/985	Mrs C E Mussell

W352/3773	Mr P Griffiths
P506/11275	Colwall Parish Council
P30/27	Mr J Milne
W460/953	Ms S Bond
P107/303	Old Court Nurseries
W499/4505	The Tyler-Parkes Partnership Ltd
P993/2969	Stroudwater Redevelopment Partnership Ltd
P1180/3729	Mr G Bachelor
P383/818	Miss M Johnson
P103/296	Eardisley Group Parish Council
P476/1011	Hereford Diocesan Board of Finance
P123/318	Mr R Johansen
W192/196	Mr G Thomas
P922/2646	S C Hardwick and Sons
P807/2064	Mr D Middleton
P1092/3466	Interplan Design Partnership Ltd
P1099/3501	Mr T S Oakley
P1023/3143	The Diocese of Hereford
P964/2783	Mr and Mrs G Schenke
P377/809	Mr and Mrs D A Thompson
P605/3046	Three Counties Planning
P1039/3163	Mr P L Price
P987/2945	Scott Newman Group
P923/2658	Messrs D, R and J Ewens
P813/2105	Mr M Kirby (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P590/1278	Little Dewchurch Parish Council
P492/1021	Mr A P Paton
P947/2748	Mr and Mrs P Paterson
P1176/3719	Davenport and Co
P525/1076	Mr and Mrs K Boardman
P632/1410	Mr G J N Powell
P943/2736	Mr J F Hill
P513/10241	Mr K Morgan
P513/1052	Mr K Morgan
P941/2730	Mr C Mason
P1065/3231	Mr I George
P1111/3561	Mr C and Ms J Marriott
P1044/3168	Mr R Smith
P1045/3171	Mr G Smith
P499/1032	Mr S Couzens
P501/1034	Miss S A Hide
P765/1898	Mr R H Morris
P257/538	Staunton-on-Wye Group Parish Council
P1131/3633	R S and E W Davies
P940/2718	C R and J Jenkins
P1100/3503	Mr T L Griffiths
P134/330	P Barley
P363/779	Miss R Jenkins
P366/783	Mr J L Shipp
P409/844	Mr W A Daron
P649/1451	Dr R Nayler
P649/6980	Dr R Nayler
P794/2022	Mrs E A Tallis
P1162/3685	Stoke Edith Estate
RP1269/10038	Mr G S Lowth
P207/449	Dr Green
P1032/3154	Sir Nicholas Harington

P198/433	Alan Porter Ltd
P1103/3519	Mr M. Bundy
P333/622	Mr B Thornett
P121/315	Mr T J Herbert
P56/242	Mr and Mrs R G Williams
P605/3050	Three Counties Planning
P918/2626	Messrs R and G Stevens
P105/3124	Collins Engineering Ltd
P29/26	Mr J Hawkins
P772/1924	Dent Farms Ltd
P921/2647	Mr P Hill

### **Summary of Objections / Issue**

- Whether the boundaries of the main villages listed below should be varied. (All objectors)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### ***Introduction***

5.40.1 In reviewing the boundaries of the main villages, I have had regard to the matters listed in Paragraph 5.4.41 of the Plan. Six factors are mentioned. I take the list to be all embracing with no indication of priorities. For my part, I would expect the main contiguous built elements and their curtilages to be contained within the settlement boundary. Other land could be included where it forms an essential part of the village for a variety of reasons.

5.40.2 In addition to the above, village boundaries may need to include land necessary to accommodate further development. In this regard, Policy CF2 in RPG 11 states that, in rural areas, the provision of new housing should generally be restricted to meeting local housing needs and/or to support local services. In addition, Paragraph 30 of PPG 3 indicates that councils do not need to search further than required to meet the agreed strategic housing requirement.

5.40.3 As noted in Section 3.18, there is no strategic necessity to increase provision in main villages. Indeed, where appropriate, the opportunity can be taken to remove allocations. As such, the emphasis is on meeting local needs.

5.40.4 In the following discussion, my approach has been to see whether the boundaries proposed in the Plan represent a sensible definition of the limits of the village particularly its main built-up extent. Where appropriate, I also consider whether the Council has made appropriate provision for local needs. Other potentially overriding matters are addressed where relevant. In many cases, the proposed revision of a settlement boundary is coupled with a suggested allocation. In these instances, housing need arguments are also considered in following sections of my report in the context of Policy H5 (Main villages: housing land allocations).

#### ***Almeley***

*The Manor House and land to the east – 1037, 1040, 1041*

5.40.5 When looking from the east towards the objection site, I gained the distinct impression that the natural built-up limits of Almeley extend beyond Church

Terrace to include Stable Lodge and Almeley Manor. In particular, the stone wall forming the southern elevation of Stable Lodge and that in front of the manor house draw the eye west and, together with the buildings themselves, clearly indicate a continuation of development along the lane.

5.40.6I am aware that my observations suggest a boundary in a location different from that determined by others. In this regard, and at the time of my site visit, the hedge in front of the objection site and the gap represented by the land itself did not strike me as prominent features in the street scene. It is the buildings and boundary treatment further to the west that are demonstrative of continuing development and which are of greater dominance.

5.40.7To my mind, the boundary of the village in this location is deserving of review. The precise line of an alternative boundary has not been debated. For example, it could be argued that inclusion of the garden land west of but within the curtilage of Almeley Manor should not be included within the settlement boundary. In addition, I make no comments on the suitability of the objection site for development purposes.

5.40.8Modification of the boundary at this late stage could attract objections and delay adoption of the Plan. This would not necessarily be in the public interest. In the circumstances, and as soon as priorities will allow, the Council should review the settlement boundary of Almeley in an early development plan document. In the interim, and without prejudice to site specific matters, my comments in this section would be material considerations in the determination of any planning application.

*Land north of Sunnyside House - 61*

5.40.9Affordable housing on land that would not normally be released for development and that is adjacent to a settlement such as Almeley could be considered under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). However, to my mind, there is no substantive case for arguing that the objection site should be included within the settlement boundary of the village. Most of the 3.94 ha site comprises open agricultural land of rural character and appearance that is clearly beyond the built-up limits of Almeley. In addition, there is no suggestion that local market housing needs cannot be met without the inclusion of a site such as this.

***Bartestree***

*Land east of Longworth Lane - 532*

5.40.10I am aware that there is an appreciable amount of development east of Longworth Lane. This is described as including a nursery school, seven existing houses, five further housing commitments, a substantial industrial building and a vacant, previously developed site all part of Bartestree and adjacent to the existing settlement boundary. However, to my mind, this can be readily distinguished from the main part of the village to the west.

5.40.11I would say that the part of the Bartestree to the west of the objection site is solidly built up and intensively developed. To the east, development is more sporadic. It is part of a larger area of loosely knit buildings and curtilages in the area between Longworth Lane and the A438 that comprise a poorly defined edge between the fringes of the village and the open countryside beyond.

5.40.12In my opinion, the main built-up part of the village is clearly defined by Longworth Lane. Irrespective of perceived anomalies in comparison with other

areas, I find that there is inadequate justification for a modification of the village boundary at this point. Confirmation of the settlement boundary should assist in the interpretation of policy and the appropriateness or otherwise of proposed developments.

*Land north of St James Close - 754*

5.40.13 The objection site is open agricultural land beyond the built-up limits of Bartestree. The reason for adjusting the settlement boundary would be to allow for housing development on this greenfield site. However, as determined in Section 5.63 below, there is no justification for such a proposal. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Land at Lower Bartestree Farm - 942*

5.40.14 I appreciate that development has taken place on OS Parcel 8711 (housing at Frome Park) and is continuing through the conversion of buildings at the former convent. Whilst I do not know the full history of such developments, I support the inclusion of these areas as part of a built-up outlier of Bartestree. On the other hand, the objection site is clearly outside the limits of the village. There is no justification for its inclusion within the settlement boundary.

***Bishops Frome***

*Extending west to Lyndale - 28*

5.40.15 I appreciate that Lyndale and the nearby houses as well as The Badhams are recognisable if small clusters of housing on the fringe of Bishops Frome. However, to my mind, the main built-up extent of the village is defined by the western boundary of the properties at Broadfield Close. Between here and the objection site there is agricultural land on both sides of the road. This separates the village from the sporadic development beyond. Although the boundary may be different from that shown in the adopted Local Plan, I believe that it is correctly defined.

5.40.16 With regard to controlled expansion, I believe that there are adequate opportunities to meet local need. These are as set out in Paragraph 4.5.3 of the Council's statement. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Land adjacent to Broadfield Close - 715*

5.40.17 I appreciate that Bishops Frome is a suitable location for modest development; also that redevelopment of the site could be uncontroversial and could improve visual amenity. However, to my mind, there is inadequate justification for modification of the village boundary. In particular, local needs would be met in the way envisaged by the council without the loss of buildings in agricultural (greenfield) use. Further, there is no evidence to suggest that local services would become unviable without this development.

*Land southwest of the village - 1089*

5.40.18 The main justification for the proposed modification is to allow for development mainly in the form of affordable housing but with a small element of enabling market housing. However, Policy H10 already supports the principle of affordable housing on land adjoining settlements. I would expect low land values to provide an enabling subsidy rather than market housing.

5.40.19 I see no particular reason why the objection site should be preferred to the allocated site at the Frome Valley Haulage Depot particularly as it is a greenfield

site outside the limits of the village. Affordable housing could be provided on rural exception sites in any event. Further, the economics of development on the allocated site would no doubt be taken into account in negotiating a scheme. There is no reason to suppose that a viable development could not be achieved.

### ***Bodenham***

#### *Dividing Bodenham into "two villages" - 551*

5.40.20 Inset Map 4 shows Bodenham as being contained within one main and two smaller areas. However, to my mind, this is entirely appropriate. The essential purpose of the boundary is to illustrate the main built-up extent of the village; also where, in policy terms, certain development would be allowed. It is common practice in the mapping of settlement boundaries. Bearing in mind that the village as a whole is shown on the plan of the Bodenham Conservation Area (Inset Map 57), and that this is referred to in the key to Inset Map 4 in the Revised Deposit Draft, no modification is needed.

#### *Land at Chapel Lane - 201*

5.40.21 The objection site comprises greenfield agricultural land that is clearly outside the built-up limits of Bodenham. In Section 5.63 of my report, I have determined that there is no immediate need for a housing allocation at Bodenham. It follows that extension of the settlement boundary would not be appropriate.

#### *Land opposite England's Gate - 1043*

5.40.22 The objection site comprises greenfield agricultural land that is clearly outside the built-up limits of Bodenham. In Section 5.63 of my report, I have determined that there is no immediate need for a housing allocation at Bodenham. It follows that extension of the settlement boundary would not be appropriate.

#### *Land west of England's Gate - 1177*

5.40.23 The objection site comprises greenfield agricultural land that is clearly outside the built-up limits of Bodenham. In Section 5.63 of my report, I have determined that there is no immediate need for a housing allocation at Bodenham. It follows that extension of the settlement boundary would not be appropriate.

### ***Brimfield***

#### *South of The Firs – 1119, 817*

5.40.24 A number of matters have been raised in the context of whether land south of The Firs is suitable for development and should be included within the settlement boundary of Brimfield. However, there are two important matters of principle. These are whether there are sound reasons for leaving the site outside the settlement boundary; and whether there is any overriding need to plan for additional housing in the village.

5.40.25 The potential development site is within the curtilage of The Firs and to that extent could be regarded as previously development land. However, as indicated in the Housing Background Paper (Document J 8, Paragraph 10.9), settlement boundaries have sometimes excluded large gardens, orchards and other areas. This is to conserve the character of the village and to limit further expansion. In terms of Paragraph 5.4.41 of the Plan, unnecessary encroachment into the open countryside would be avoided. To my mind, this is a case where all these considerations are important.

5.40.26As to the need for further development, the housing needs studies (Documents G 2 and G 3) suggest that the number needing or wanting market homes was 17. Since the 1999 study on which these figures were based, 20 market houses have been completed. In addition, at 2004, there were a handful of outstanding commitments and perceived infill opportunities.

5.40.27Bearing in mind also the lack of any strategic needs, and the relative paucity of facilities in Brimfield when compared with other main villages, I do not consider that there is any overriding case for including the site within the settlement boundary. In addition, I am aware that affordable housing could be provided on sites adjoining the settlement boundary under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing).

*South of Holmleigh - 1119*

5.40.28The land south of Holmleigh is a greenfield site that lies beyond the main built-up limits of Brimfield. As indicated above, there is no overriding need to include additional housing land within the village boundary. In the circumstances, I do not consider that the boundary should be modified.

*South of Mara - 1119*

5.40.29The land south of Mara is a greenfield site that lies beyond the main built-up limits of Brimfield. As indicated above, there is no overriding need to include additional housing land within the village boundary. In the circumstances, I do not consider that the boundary should be modified.

*North of Wyson Lane – 435, 597, 784, 1112*

5.40.30As with the land south of The Firs, there are two important matters of principle in relation to the Wyson Lane site. These are whether there are sound reasons for leaving the site outside the settlement boundary; and whether there is any overriding need to plan for additional housing in the village.

5.40.31On the first matter, this is a greenfield site that, to my mind, clearly lies beyond the main built-up limits of Brimfield. I consider that the boundary has been drawn in the correct place. With regard to housing need, I have already noted that affordable housing adjacent to the settlement boundary can be considered under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). In other respects, and as indicated above, there is no overriding justification for including the site within the settlement limits of Brimfield.

*Rear of Oldfield House - 596*

5.40.32Similar considerations apply to the land at the rear of Oldfield House. It is undeveloped land that, to my mind, clearly lies outside the main built-up limits of Brimfield in circumstance where there is no overriding need to extend the boundary. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

**Burghill**

*Land at Pyefinch Farm / Adjacent to St Mary's Church – 832, 990*

5.40.33It is clear to me that both the objection sites lie outside the main built-up limits of Burghill. As such, the overriding consideration is whether there is a need for more housing development in the village. In this regard, I have already established (Section 3.18) that there is no strategic need for an enhanced contribution from housing in main villages. Indeed, where appropriate for other reasons, the opportunity could be taken to remove allocations.

5.40.34 With regard to the local needs of Burghill, I find that the position is not clear cut. I appreciate that Burghill is one of the largest of the main villages not to have a specific allocation, an earlier proposal having been abandoned. Further, it is asserted that the boundaries have been tightly drawn and that there are few opportunities for infill housing or redevelopment within the village. However, I have not been presented with any information on the level of need for market and affordable housing or with related details of recent housing completions, outstanding commitments and other perceived development opportunities.

5.40.35 On the matter of local services, I would expect these to be buoyed by an increase in the village's population. Nevertheless, there is no evidence to suggest that schools, shops and the like would become unviable without some modest growth. In the light of the above, and bearing in mind the strategic position, I consider that there is inadequate justification for a housing or mixed use allocation in Burghill with related modification of the settlement boundary.

### **Canon Pyon**

*Crown House site - 1183*

5.40.36 The Crown House site is a brownfield site. However, it is in a detached location being separated from the main built-up limits of the village by the open agricultural land to the south. I would expect development of the former bus / coach depot, an allocated brownfield site within the settlement boundary, to help meet the local needs of the area. In the circumstances, there is no justification for extending the village boundary to include the objection site.

### **Clehonger**

*Bine Cottage - 479*

5.40.37 It is stated that the objection site is the only garden in Clehonger that has been put outside the village envelope. However, as indicated in the Housing Background Paper (Document J 8, Paragraph 10.9), settlement boundaries have sometimes excluded large gardens, orchards and other areas. This is to conserve the character of the village and to limit further expansion. In terms of Paragraph 5.4.41 of the Plan, unnecessary encroachment into the open countryside would be avoided. To my mind, this is a case where all these considerations are important.

5.40.38 It is also stated that the village seems to be losing its heart and that it needs to rejuvenate itself. However, there is no evidence that suggests to me that a housing allocation is needed in Clehonger. In this regard, I have noted the substantial amount of housing that has taken place in the recent past within the parish and the role of Belmont in meeting many of the needs of the village. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Land off Poplar Road - 352*

5.40.39 Irrespective of whether the land off Poplar Road could be described as a "natural extension of Clehonger Village", the site is clearly outside the built-up limits of the village. The essential justification would be if the site was needed for additional housing development. In this regard, I see no need for the allocation of this site. Policy H10 (Rural exception sites) already provides the policy context for the consideration of affordable housing sites outside village boundaries. Other needs would be met as indicated above.

### ***Colwall***

#### *Old Church Road – 506, 460*

5.40.40 The objectors have a number of concerns regarding the likely effects of development north of Old Church Road which they consider would follow the proposed boundary change. Amongst other things, it is felt that there would be an erosion of the rural aspect of the area, pressure on services, loss of the character of the Conservation Area and unacceptable traffic impacts. For my part, I appreciate that these are legitimate concerns. However, I would expect such matters to be safeguarded by other policies in the Plan. The central question is whether the boundary has been drawn in the right place.

5.40.41 In this regard, I concur with the views of the Inspector who heard objections into the Malvern Hills District Local Plan. I appreciate that there are differences between the character and appearance of the existing development either side of Old Church Road. For example, the development to the north is at a lower density, often with large detached houses in substantial grounds. Nevertheless, to my mind, this area is an obvious part of the village and clearly within the built-up limits of the settlement. I have no hesitation in supporting the settlement boundary proposed by Herefordshire Council.

#### *South of Brook House - 30*

5.40.42 I do not see the need for a single settlement boundary around Colwall particularly if linking different parts of the village would encourage development in inappropriate circumstances. In this regard, I note that the objection site presents a solid boundary to the B4218 where it encloses the maintained grounds of Brook House. Nevertheless, the land to the rear is a greenfield site.

5.40.43 At the time of my site visit, the open land was being used for the grazing of sheep. Notwithstanding that the railway embankment to the rear could be used as a physical boundary, the land is clearly outside the built-up limits of the settlement. Elsewhere in my report, I have determined that the Covent Garden allocation should stand. In all the circumstances, there is no justification for additional housing and no necessity to modify the Plan by including the objection site within the settlement boundary.

#### *Old Court Nurseries – 107, 499*

5.40.44 The objectors foresee a number of difficulties regarding the future of the Old Court Nurseries site in circumstances where housing development could preserve and enhance the area. In addition, and as an alternative to the Covent Garden site, the loss of recreational land could be avoided.

5.40.45 For my part, I have confirmed elsewhere the appropriateness of the Covent Garden allocation. As to the objection site itself, I see no need for its inclusion within the village envelope. It would be wrong to anticipate the problems that the owner envisages. More particularly, it is entirely legitimate to exclude greenfield uses from the settlement boundary thus restraining development opportunities and helping to safeguard the on-going commercial use.

### ***Credenhill***

#### *North of St Mary's School - 993*

5.40.46 The case for the allocation of land north of St Mary's School is considered in Section 5.63 below. I conclude that an allocation should not be made. It follows

that the objection site should not be included within the settlement boundary of Credenhill.

*West of Station Road - 1180*

5.40.47 The site west of Station Road is described as mixed brownfield / greenfield land. Irrespective of whether a line including this site would form a natural boundary and that the factors set out in Paragraph 5.4.41 of the Plan would not be compromised, it is a site that lies outside the main built-up extent of Credenhill. In my opinion, the Council has correctly defined the village boundary. There is no suggestion that additional land is required in order to meet local housing needs. In the circumstances, there is no justification for including the objection site within the settlement boundary.

**Eardisland**

*Absence of allocated sites - 383*

5.40.48 I appreciate that there are no housing allocations in Eardisland and that reliance would have to be placed on windfall sites. However, there is no suggestion that such sites together with recent completions and outstanding commitments would fail to meet the on-going local needs of the village. No specific alteration of the settlement boundary has been sought. There is inadequate justification for a modification of provisions related to Policy H4.

**Eardisley**

*Reinstatement of housing envelope - 103*

5.40.49 I appreciate that the proposed boundary of Eardisley is different from that identified in the Leominster District Local Plan. However, in standardising practice across the whole of the County, and responding to current circumstances, I would expect differences to occur. In the absence of any detailed points, I find that there is inadequate justification for reinstating the former settlement boundary.

*Hereford Diocese land - 476*

5.40.50 The objection site owned by the Hereford Diocese lies at the southern end of the village west of the A4111. It is described as an area of fields, mostly old orchards. To my mind, it lies outside the main built-up limits of Eardisley and has been rightly excluded from the settlement boundary. I appreciate that the site was formerly included within the boundary; also that the future of the site could be safeguarded in other ways. However, in my opinion, there is inadequate justification for modifying the Plan.

**Ewyas Harold**

*The Cedars - 123*

5.40.51 I appreciate that including The Cedars and Ivony within the village envelope of Ewyas Harold would accord with the personal circumstances of the objector as well as providing an opportunity to improve traffic arrangements. However, in the context of the Unitary Development Plan, I do not consider that these are overriding considerations. To my mind, the main built-up limits of the village are defined by Dark Lane. This forms a strong defensible boundary that separates the main village to the southwest from sporadic development and mainly undeveloped land to the northeast. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### ***Fownhope***

#### *The Crymes / Lower Park - 192*

5.40.52 My starting point regarding the settlement boundary at The Crymes site, and at the other objections sites, is to consider whether there is a need for a housing allocation in Fownhope. In this regard, Fownhope is classified as a main village. However, no housing allocation has been made. I have already established that there is no strategic need for greater housing provision within the main villages. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to have regard to the local needs of the area.

5.40.53 At the inquiry, the Council reported on a local needs survey that had just become available. This suggested a need in Fownhope for 9 or 10 market houses together with 8 affordable dwellings. This scale of need does not suggest to me that a specific housing allocation is necessary. I would expect provision on urban capacity sites and windfall sites to meet the need for market housing. Affordable housing could be provided in accordance with Policy H10 (Rural exception sites).

5.40.54 Nevertheless, a number of concerns have been voiced regarding infilling. Examples of such concerns are the effect on the Conservation Area; on the availability of affordable housing; and on long term local needs.

5.40.55 In terms of the Conservation Area, I can see that harm could be caused by unacceptable development. However, the Council has a duty to consider effects on the character and appearance of the area. I would expect any unacceptable windfall development to be rejected.

5.40.56 As to the effects on affordable housing prices, I can see that windfall developments are likely to comprise higher priced market housing. Nevertheless, there is the opportunity to meet affordable housing needs on rural exception sites.

5.40.57 A further argument is that the increase in market housing on windfall sites would ultimately increase local needs and the pressure to develop more land. For my part, I would expect the numbers involved and any resultant pressures to be quite small. In any event, additional development on newly allocated sites would be likely to have a greater impact in this regard.

5.40.58 Turning to the merits of the individual sites, I appreciate that land at The Chymes may once have been used as a scrap yard. However, to all intents and purposes it is a greenfield site outside the main built-up limits of the village. Notwithstanding the perceived merits of the site for development purposes, or indeed the detailed objections of the Council, I find that there is no justification for amending the boundary of the settlement.

#### *Northwest of Scotch Firs - 922*

5.40.59 In the foregoing discussion, I have established that there is no need for a housing allocation at Fownhope. It follows that there is no need to incorporate a greenfield site beyond the main built-up limits of the village within the settlement boundary.

#### *Southeast of Ferry Lane - 807*

5.40.60 I consider that there is a case for including land northwest of Ferry Lane within the settlement boundary of the village. Here there is more or less continuous frontage housing including five recently built dwellings. The land on the opposite side of Ferry Lane is a different kettle of fish. This is undeveloped

greenfield land that, to my mind, lies outside the main built-up limits of the settlement. Irrespective of the Council's detailed objections, I do not consider that the site should be included within the settlement boundary.

*Southwest of Lower House – 1092, 1099*

5.40.61 In the foregoing discussion, I have established that there is no need for a housing allocation at Fownhope. It follows that there is no need to incorporate a greenfield site beyond the main built-up limits of the village within the settlement boundary.

*The Rectory - 1023*

5.40.62 As indicated in the Housing Background Paper (Document J 8, Paragraph 10.9), settlement boundaries sometimes exclude large gardens, orchards and other areas. This is to conserve the character of the village and to limit further expansion. In terms of Paragraph 5.4.41 of the Plan, unnecessary encroachment into the open countryside would be avoided. To my mind, such considerations are important in the case of the land at The Rectory. I consider that the settlement boundary has been correctly defined and that no modification is necessary. In this regard, it is not necessary to follow the Conservation Area boundary.

***Kingsland***

*Between Kingsleane and Harbour House - 964*

5.40.63 The objectors' intentions with regard to the land adjacent to Kingsleane were clarified at the inquiry. It is proposed to build perhaps 10 units of low cost / shared ownership housing on the eastern part of the site. In this regard, the development could be facilitated through an allocation in the Plan or through the application of Policy H10 (Rural exception sites). Either way, I would expect an up-to-date affordable housing needs survey to have been carried out. The Council would also wish to be satisfied with regard to the nature conservation value of the site.

5.40.64 With regard to the need for affordable housing, the Council carried out a survey in 1999. This showed a need for 11 affordable homes. However, the picture is complicated by provision at Kingsleane a few years earlier, the presence of former Council houses on the Boarsfield estate and proximity to Leominster. In all these circumstances I do not consider that reliance can be placed on the 1999 survey for the purposes of an allocation in the development plan.

5.40.65 As to the site itself, I would regard this as being outside the main built-up limits of the village. I appreciate that there is a cluster of development to the east of the objection site; also along the road to the west. However, the main part of the village is centred on North Road and Longford to the northeast. The development in the vicinity of Kingsleane is more peripheral. In particular, the objection site represents a significant greenfield gap along the frontage of the road at this point. The land to the south is also generally open.

5.40.66 In the circumstances that I have described, I consider that there is inadequate justification for an extension of the village boundary to encompass all or part of the objection site. In addition, local affordable housing needs, quantified through an up-to-date survey, could be met on a rural exception site without a specific allocation or adjustment of the settlement boundary.

*Land opposite Coronation Hall - 377*

5.40.67 Development of the land opposite Coronation Hall is seen as instead of or additional to the Deposit Draft allocation north of North Road. In the Revised Deposit Draft, the North Road allocation has been deleted. It is not suggested, however, that there is a need to make up the provision somewhere else within the village.

5.40.68 In any event, the objection site would not be suitable for this purpose. It is essentially a greenfield site forming part of the open countryside and having a completely rural outlook. It is outside the main built-up part of the village forming as it does an undeveloped gap between the principal settlement to the north and the cluster of development to the south. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

**Kingstone**

*Land to rear of surgery – 605, 987*

5.40.69 In the main, the objection site is greenfield land adjoining the settlement boundary of Kingstone. It lies outside the built-up extent of the village behind existing frontage development. Before deciding whether all or part of this particular site would be suitable for inclusion within the settlement boundary, it is necessary to consider the extent to which local housing needs would be met under the present provisions of the Plan.

5.40.70 In this regard, I note that Kingstone is a main village where no residential allocation has been made. As to the supply of housing, it is stated that, "Twenty two new homes were built between 1986 and 1997 but housing commitments of a further 42 units are exhausted." Be that as it may, I have no up-to-date information on housing need. For example, there is no information on more recent housing completions or current commitments. Further, there is an absence of information on the potential contribution (or absence of contribution) from windfall sites.

5.40.71 I would expect that, in any event, affordable housing needs could be met on rural exception sites that accord with Policy H10. No allocation would be necessary. In terms of market housing, I find that there is inadequate justification for a housing allocation or for a related extension of the settlement boundary.

*Land adjacent to Coldwell - 1039*

5.40.72 I appreciate that Coldwell and the adjacent dwellings to the southwest are established roadside dwellings that are part of the original community of Kingstone. However, that is not to say that they should be included within the settlement boundary. To my mind, the essential purpose of the boundary is to define the main built-up extent of the village and the area where infill development and the like should be concentrated.

5.40.73 I consider that the main built-up part of Kingstone in the vicinity of the objection site lies northwest of the B4349. In marked contrast, the land adjacent to Coldwell is greenfield land that forms part of the undeveloped rural countryside to the southeast. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

**Lea**

*Re-examination of village boundary - 923*

5.40.74 As stated by the Council, the Lea Housing Needs Study 2004 indicated that there was no evidence of housing need in the village. In addition, there is no

evidence to suggest that local services could become unviable without some modest growth. In these circumstances, and bearing in mind the absence of any strategic need for more housing in the main villages, it is appropriate for the settlement boundary to be tightly drawn. This will help conserve the character of the village and to limit further expansion. In terms of Paragraph 5.4.41 of the Plan, unnecessary encroachment into the open countryside would be avoided. No re-examination or amendment of the settlement boundary is necessary.

***Leintwardine***

*Site between the main road and Dark Lane - 813*

5.40.75 In the Revised Deposit Draft, the settlement boundary has been amended to include land along Dark Lane. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no further action is necessary.

***Little Dewchurch***

*Farmstead near Upper Court - 590*

5.40.76 To my mind, the main built-up limits of Little Dewchurch in the vicinity of the objection site are defined by the Upper Court itself and by the estate at Court Close to the rear. I appreciate that there is some built development to the northwest. However, this is beyond the main settlement boundary. Bearing in mind the absence of any need for development beyond that currently envisaged, there is no justification for extending the village boundary at this point.

***Lugwardine***

*East of burial ground / adjoining ancient monument - 492*

5.40.77 I appreciate that some built development as well as garden land north and east of the Scheduled Ancient Monument has been excluded from the settlement boundary. However, in order to limit further development and avoid encroachment into open land, I consider that the exclusion of large gardens is sometimes appropriate; also peripheral development. This is a case in point. In my opinion, the settlement boundary has been appropriately drawn.

5.40.78 As to the land east of the burial ground and extending up to Lumber Lane, this is clearly outside the main built-up limits of the village. I am aware that no allocation has been made in Lugwardine. In addition, only two dwellings (or perhaps some affordable housing) are envisaged on the objection land. However, bearing in mind the recent past expansion of the village, no further allocations are needed. To allow unnecessary development outside the village envelope would fly in the face of the reasons for defining settlement boundaries.

5.40.79 I would expect that provision for affordable housing could be made under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). However, modification of the settlement boundary would be unwarranted. Improvements to the graveyard could be permissible irrespective of decisions on any new housing.

*East of Traherne Close - 947*

5.40.80 The undeveloped land east of Traherne Close is clearly outside the main built-up limits of Lugwardine in circumstances where there is no need to extend the settlement boundary in order to make provision for more housing. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Newcourt Farm - 1176*

5.40.81 The objector's statement refers to Lugwardine as an area where some new development might be accommodated in order to meet local needs. However, as indicated above, new allocations or extensions of the settlement boundary are not needed. In addition, there is no evidence to suggest that local services could become unviable without some modest growth. Given that the objection site lies outside the main built-up limits of the village, there is no justification for including the land within the settlement boundary.

**Luston**

*Townsend Park - 525*

5.40.82 The objectors' statement indicates that further small scale housing development in Luston is desirable and sustainable. However, I would normally expect local housing needs to be met in a variety of ways. These would include completions that have already taken place over the plan period and development pursuant to planning permissions that are still extant. In addition, further development would take place on urban capacity sites and on other windfall and infill plots within the settlement boundary.

5.40.83 I appreciate that Luston is a main village where no allocations have been made. However, the objection site is clearly outside the main built-up limits of the village. Whilst allocations have been made in other villages, this is where there is a clear demonstration that local needs would not be met in other ways. In the present case, and notwithstanding the specific objections of the Council, I consider that there is inadequate justification for extending the settlement boundary.

**Madley**

*Northern extension of Madley - 632*

5.40.84 The objector questions whether the growth rate implied by the single housing allocation in Madley is justified. For my part, I appreciate that the provision of 20 dwellings, averaged out over the plan period, suggests a low rate of provision. However, the Council's statement indicates that 29 other completions have already taken place. In addition, there are 35 outstanding commitments. Further completions are to be anticipated on windfall sites.

5.40.85 In the circumstances, I consider that there is provision for sustained growth that would amongst other things complement nearby commercial activity at Madley Airfield and at the Gooses Foot Industrial Estate. There is no justification for including further land within the settlement boundary.

**Marden**

*West of Laystone Green - 943*

5.40.86 I appreciate that the objection site may have potential for one dwelling and that there could be an improvement in the approach to Marden from the west. Nevertheless, it appears to me that the main built-up limits of the village are defined by the development at Laystone Green. On the opposite side of the road, the housing at Paradise Farm will define the main extent of Marden. In marked contrast, the buildings on the objection site are used in connection with an area laid out for horse riding and forming part of the open countryside. I see no overriding reason for extending the village settlement boundary as envisaged.

### **Orleton**

#### *Ammis Orchard and Fairfield Caravan Park - 513*

5.40.87 Under these objections, there is a presumed need to extend the settlement boundary to allow for additional housing. This is partly because the proposed allocation west of the primary school has now been deleted from the Plan; also because the Fairfield Caravan Park site may well not come forward for development. The lack of provision in other main villages is an additional consideration.

5.40.88 For my part, I have reached a different conclusion. As noted above, there is no strategic need for additional housing in main villages. In terms of local needs, the 1999 Herefordshire Housing Needs Study (Document G 2) estimated a need for 10 affordable housing units within the village. This is a need that could be met on rural exception sites under Policy H10. In other respects, the Council states that there is no reason to provide for additional development by allocating sites or extending the settlement limits beyond the present built-up area.

5.40.89 The remaining main consideration is whether the settlement boundary has been drawn in the right place. I conclude that it has. In the case of Ammis Orchard, the main built-up extent of the village is as indicated by the Council. In this regard, the objection site is essentially a modern bungalow in the centre of greenfield land. The Fairfield Caravan Park site is described as an area of previously developed land abutting the settlement boundary. To my mind, in reflecting the built form of the village, this site is appropriately included within the settlement boundary.

5.40.90 There is no evidence that suggests to me that the settlement boundary needs to be extended to allow for further housing development. Given also my conclusion that the village envelope has been appropriately defined, there is no need for the Plan to be modified.

#### *Land at Hewell Gardens - 941*

5.40.91 There is an objection to the land at Hewell Gardens being treated as part of the open countryside. However, the plot is in a relatively isolated location well removed from the main built-up limits of Orleton. It is clearly outside the village envelope and the location where, for sustainability reasons, any development might be concentrated. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Land off Millbrook Close - 1065*

5.40.92 In the main, the objection land is a greenfield site that is clearly outside the built-up extent of Orleton. The Council has strong policy objections in respect of flood risk. However, in my opinion, the principle of whether additional housing land is needed should be resolved first of all. In this regard, as noted above, there is no strategic or local need that would suggest that the settlement boundary should be extended in the manner indicated. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### **Pembridge**

#### *Manley Field - 1111*

5.40.93 Manley Field is a large greenfield site that is clearly outside the main built-up limits of Pembridge. There are two main considerations in this case. The first is

whether there is a need for additional housing in Pembridge. The second is whether the package of proposed benefits is of overriding importance.

5.40.94 There is no strategic need for more housing in any of the main villages. With regard to local needs, Pembridge has seen significant development and expansion within the recent past including the completion of 47 dwellings between 1996 and 2004. In addition, in 2004, there were a further 13 outstanding commitments. Additional opportunities for windfall development have also been referred to by the Council. In the circumstances, I conclude that there is no need for the settlement boundary to be adjusted in order to facilitate additional housing development.

5.40.95 With regard to benefits, the suggested package includes affordable housing, traffic calming, formal recreation provision, wildlife habitats, a business centre and the like. I would expect that affordable housing could be provided under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing) without the need to modify the boundary. In terms of the other benefits, there is nothing to suggest to me that the gains would override policy consideration such as harm to the open countryside. I conclude that extension of the settlement boundary would not be appropriate.

*Land at Townsend Farm – 1044, 1045*

5.40.96 Irrespective of the removal of the white “Woolaway” bungalow and a perceived enhancement of the approach to the village from the east, the objection site is essentially a greenfield site outside the main built-up limits of the village. This is notwithstanding the recent development of three houses between Townsend Farm house and Stoney Croft. There is no need to extend the settlement boundary in order to accommodate more housing in Pembridge. In the circumstances there is no justification for modifying the Plan.

*Telephone exchange – 1044, 1045*

5.40.97 The Townsend Farm / telephone exchange site is undeveloped agricultural land that lies outside the main built-up limits of Pembridge. There is no need to include additional housing land within the settlement boundary and no justification for the modification envisaged.

*The Oaks – 499, 501*

5.40.98 I appreciate that the settlement boundary cuts through the middle of the objectors’ property. However, boundaries sometimes excluded large gardens, orchards and other areas. This is to conserve the character of the village and to limit further expansion. In terms of Paragraph 5.4.41 of the Plan, unnecessary encroachment into the open countryside would be avoided. To my mind, these matters are relevant in the case of The Oaks. The boundary has been appropriately defined and no modification is necessary.

**Shobdon**

*Former Tarmac site - 765*

5.40.99 I would normally expect a previously developed site to be preferred over a greenfield site. However, the objection site is in a detached location to the southwest of the village, away from the main part of Shobdon centred on Presteigne Road. On the other hand, the land adjacent to The Birches fronts onto Presteigne Road. In addition, housing on this site would form the important function of linking The Birches with the remainder of the village. The village would

then have a more cohesive form. This would not be achieved with development on the former Tarmac site. Indeed, there would be greater fragmentation.

5.40.100 The site allocated by the Council, adjacent to The Birches, has an estimated capacity of 30 dwellings. This can be compared with an estimated need for market housing by local emergent households of between 8 and 29 dwellings. I appreciate that this is a broad estimate. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the opportunity to accommodate affordable housing on rural exceptions sites, it does not appear to me that a further allocation is needed in Shobdon. In all the circumstances, there is no justification for including the former Tarmac site within the settlement boundary of the village.

### ***Staunton-on-Wye***

#### *Enlargement of settlement boundary - 257*

5.40.101 The extension of settlement boundaries is sometimes necessary in order to accommodate more housing within villages. However, there is no strategic need for additional housing in the main villages. With regard to any particular local need, I would normally expect this to be met from a number of sources. These would include dwellings already built within the plan period; dwelling built pursuant to extant planning permissions; future development on non-allocated sites within the settlement boundary; and affordable housing on rural exception sites.

5.40.102 In the case of Staunton-on-Wye, there is no evidence that suggests to me that these sources of housing will be inadequate to meet local needs or that any new primary school would not be viable without further growth. I find that there is inadequate justification for extending the settlement boundary.

#### *North of A438 - 1131*

5.40.103 The reduced objection site, north of the A438, is a parcel of greenfield land that is clearly outside the main built-up limits of Staunton-on-Wye. This is in circumstances where there is no apparent need for housing additional to that which could be accommodated within the settlement boundary. Satisfactory access is available to the school and I see no overriding benefit in this regard. In the circumstances, irrespective of the terms agreed for the disposal of the school site, no modification of the settlement boundary is necessary.

#### *North of Bliss House - 940*

5.40.104 The Council's objections to the proposed modification tend to focus on site specific reasons why development on the site could be inappropriate. However, to my mind, the issue is whether the site should be included within the settlement boundary.

5.40.105 The Council has not raised any arguments relating to the main built-up extent of the village. In this regard, the developed eastern part of the site could be regarded as falling within the village envelope. The western part of the site is an undeveloped paddock. There is further development to the north that extends the settlement boundary and the plot could be seen as a typical gap site within the confines of the village. However, potential inclusion of the objection site within the village boundary also begs the question of whether property to the north should also be included.

5.40.106 It is, of course, relevant to consider whether the settlement boundary should remain as proposed in order to conserve the character of the village, limit

further expansion or prevent unnecessary encroachment into the open countryside. However, I do not consider that there are imperatives in this case.

5.40.107 Modification of the boundary at this late stage could attract objections and delay adoption of the Plan. This would not necessarily be in the public interest. In the circumstances, and as soon as priorities will allow, the Council should review the settlement boundary of Staunton-on-Wye in the vicinity of Bliss House in an early development plan document. In the interim, and without prejudice to site specific matters, my comments in this section would be material considerations in the determination of any planning application.

### ***Sutton St Nicholas***

*Land southeast of Sutton St Nicholas - 1100*

5.40.108 The land to the southeast of Sutton St Nicholas is undeveloped agricultural land that is clearly outside the main built-up limits of the village. For the objector, it is indicated that the village would accommodate further expansion. In addition, development would provide the impetus for local improvements. Be this as it may, there is no evidence to suggest that local housing needs would not be met by development on allocated and non-allocated sites within the settlement boundary. Extension of the boundary southeast of the village would not be justified.

### ***Tarrington***

*Land between Columbine Cottage and Orchard Hill – 363, 366, 409, 649, 794*

5.40.109 A variety of site specific reasons have been given by objectors as to why land between Columbine Cottage and Orchard Hill should not be developed. However, the matter of principle is whether it is legitimate to regard this site as falling within an appropriate settlement boundary for Tarrington.

5.40.110 It appears to me that, in this part of Tarrington, the built form is characterised by large detached dwellings of single plot width fronting Church Lane. I appreciate that there is a gap in the frontage east of Columbine Cottage. However, the built form is continued by Orchard Hill. I conclude that the boundary has been appropriately defined. The future of the site, including detailed matters of concern to the objectors, would be safeguarded under the various development control policies in the Plan.

*Former village hall – 649, 1162*

5.40.111 The site of the former village hall has been developed by housing. It now comprises part of the built form of the village and is appropriately included within the settlement boundary.

### ***Walford***

*Development in Walford - 134*

5.40.112 It appears to me that the objector has concerns about additional development in Walford. Reference is made to various problems. These include drainage, flooding, water-logging, springs, ground water, cats and dormice. However, I note that no housing allocations have been made. Any new development would essentially take place within the existing confines of the village and would be subject to the various policies in the Plan. Adjustment of the settlement boundary is not necessary.

### ***Weston-under-Penyard***

*Land south of The Link – 207, 1269*

5.40.113 In my opinion, the appropriate settlement boundary south of The Link is shown in Proposed Change No 25 which I hereby recommend. The large maintained garden south of the property is thereby included within the village envelope. However, the overgrown and undeveloped land beyond, defined on its northern boundary by a post and wire fence, is excluded. Given the absence of need for any additional development in Weston-under-Penyard, and irrespective of the historic position, there is no justification for a further modification of the boundary.

### ***Whitbourne***

*Land adjacent to Virginia Cottage - 1032*

5.40.114 The Plan aims to concentrate development in sustainable locations, locations that are better served by local services and that are more built up. Within the rural areas of the county, the envelopes of main villages have been identified as areas which are more developed and where infilling could take place; also in certain defined smaller settlements.

5.40.115 I saw that the main built-up part of Whitbourne is at Meadow Green where the school, shop and village hall are located. The area within and close to the Conservation Area is well separated from the main part of the village. It is lacking in local services and is not, in my opinion, an area where infill development should be encouraged irrespective of the overgrown nature of the site and the scope for a sympathetic development. I consider that the settlement boundary has been correctly defined. It should not extend to old Whitbourne.

### ***Whitchurch***

*Land adjacent to Delburne Farm - 198*

5.40.116 It is claimed that the site is suitable for housing purposes being adjacent to other residential properties. In addition, it is stated to be not a prominent site or the best and most versatile agricultural land. Be that as it may, the site does not form part of the main built-up extent of Whitchurch. Indeed, it is severed from the main part of the village by the A40. There is no justification for including the site within the settlement boundary of Whitchurch.

*Land east of A40 - 1103*

5.40.117 I appreciate that there is a cluster of existing development on the eastern side of the A40. However, this development is separated from the main village by the A40. To my mind, it does not form part of the main built-up element of Whitchurch. With regard to housing need, there is no strategic need for more housing in main villages; and any need for affordable housing could be met, if necessary, on rural exception sites under Policy H10. There is no demonstrable need for market housing that could not be met with the defined settlement boundary. All in all, no modification of the settlement boundary is justified.

*Land at Newmills Hill - 333*

5.40.118 This objection has been listed under the Whitchurch heading. However, at the inquiry, the objector claimed that the site should be included in Goodrich. Whatever the case, the site forms part of an isolated cluster of dwellings at Newmills Hill that does not form part of the main built-up area of either

Whitchurch or Goodrich. As noted above, the Plan aims to concentrate development in sustainable locations, locations that are better served by local services and that are more built up. In these terms, locations away from the built-up areas of Whitchurch and Goodrich are not generally considered to be suitable for new housing.

5.40.119 The objector has highlighted a problem of low cost accommodation for fire service personnel. In this regard, I appreciate that the building of a new house on the objection site could mean that the objector's existing house could be sold at low cost to another fireman. However, the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan aims to direct development to the most appropriate locations. In these terms, building or occupation of a new house within the confines of Whitchurch or Goodrich would still mean that a low cost dwelling could be released.

5.40.120 In addition to the above, there is always the possibility of building affordable housing on rural exception sites under Policy H10. However, in terms of the main objection, land at Newmills Hill is not a suitable candidate for inclusion within the settlement boundary of either Whitchurch or Goodrich.

*Land at Rockview Farm - 121*

5.40.121 The objector states that the proposed bungalow would be in line with Ridgeway Crescent and would not go outside the natural limits of the existing village. However, it appears to me that the developed part of the village goes as far as the telephone exchange. The agricultural land beyond does not form part of the main built-up extent of the village and should not be included within the settlement boundary.

5.40.122 Reference is made to a number of personal circumstances in support of this case. In my opinion, such matters do not affect the general policy that should be applied. It is always possible to put forward "material considerations" additional to the development plan when making a planning application. Exceptions can also apply in the case of agricultural workers' dwellings (Policy H8) and affordable housing in perpetuity on land adjacent to settlements (Policy H10). However, I consider that the settlement boundary has been correctly drawn and that the Plan should not be modified.

*Land west of filling station - 56*

5.40.123 I see no reason for including land west of the filling station within the settlement boundary of Whitchurch. I appreciate that part of the site had the benefit of planning permission for a single dwelling. However, that permission has now lapsed. Given also that the site lies outside the main built-up extent of Whitchurch, there is no justification for modifying the Plan.

**Withington**

*Settlement boundary - 605*

5.40.124 It is indicated that, in terms of Withington, "objection is made with regard to the drawn settlement boundary". However, no details are given. There is inadequate justification for modifying the boundary.

*East of Whitestone Business Park - 918*

5.40.125 The objector states that "the settlement boundary of Withington / Redstone for residential purposes is objected to"; but no details are given. There is inadequate justification for modifying the settlement boundary.

*Land around Ramblers Court – 105, 29*

5.40.126 It appears to me that the land around Ramblers Court has a role to play in the context of the landscaping of the business park. Be that as it may, the site is divorced from the main built-up extent of Withington in circumstances where there is no need for additional housing land outside the settlement boundary. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Land adjacent to village hall - 772*

5.40.127 Objection is raised to the inclusion of land adjacent to the village hall within the settlement boundary of Withington. The site is described as a valuable green space having ecologic value as an overgrown traditional orchard. However, I saw that the site has now been cleared. In my opinion, the site could be satisfactorily developed with some 15 dwellings, wildlife habitat and strong landscape boundary. Its inclusion within the settlement boundary is entirely appropriate.

*Pomona Corner Cottage / north of Railway House / southwest of railway bridge - 921*

5.40.128 Elsewhere in my report I have considered the appropriateness of designating parts of the above sites for a form of residential or employment development. However, there is no related objection to the settlement boundary and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.40/1 Subject to the Council's priorities in respect of its local development framework, review the settlement boundary of Almeley in the vicinity of Almeley Manor in an early development plan document.

5.40/2 Subject to the Council's priorities in respect of its local development framework, review the settlement boundary of Staunton-on-Wye in the vicinity of Bliss House in an early development plan document.

5.40/3 Modify the Plan in accordance with Proposed Change No 25.

5.40/4 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## **5.41 ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED MAIN VILLAGES – POLICY H4**

### **Objections**

P933/2699	Mr G Mitchell
P832/2162	C G Property
P114/314	R A and J E Davies
P1019/3136	E Dorman
P1020/3139	D Wadley
P961/2774	The Morgan family
P936/2708	Mr M K Whittall Williams
P1181/3733	Mr F Hanbury
P670/1621	Greyhound Close Developments
P9/6663	Ms C Cooke

P239/504	Mr C W R Cooke
P835/2178	Mr P Wrixon
P951/2762	Mr Williams
P10/14	Miton Limited
W196/521	Mr R Rock
P617/1371	Mr F C Cobb
P926/2676	Mr and Mrs C Stone Fewings
P955/2760	Mr T Lynch
P313/593	Mr H Danter

### **Summary of Objections / Issue**

- Whether additional settlements should be designated as main villages. (All objections)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Introduction*

5.41.1 The Council's approach to the location of most rural development is intended to follow the guidance in Paragraph 3 of PPS 7. This states that, "Away from larger urban areas, planning authorities should focus most new development in or near to local service centres where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together. This should help to ensure these facilities are served by public transport and provide improved opportunities for access by walking and cycling. These centres (which might be a county town, a single large village or a group of villages) should be identified in the development plan as the preferred location for such development."

5.41.2 The PPS continues by saying, at Paragraph 4, "Planning authorities should set out in LDDs their policies for allowing some limited development in, or next to, rural settlements that are not designated as local service centres, in order to meet local business and community needs and to maintain the vitality of these communities. In particular, authorities should be supportive of small-scale development of this nature where it provides the most sustainable option in villages that are remote from, and have poor public transport links with, service centres".

5.41.3 The approach in Herefordshire (in addition to allowing development in Hereford and the market towns) is to designate 46 "main villages". These are the service centres envisaged in PPS 7 where most new development in the rural areas would take place. This would be on allocated and non-allocated sites within the defined settlement boundary of the main village. In addition, and in accordance with Paragraph 4 of PPS 7, the Council has identified 34 named "smaller settlements". Here, some limited development would be permitted on infill plots.

5.41.4 In identifying the main villages, the Council has applied a number of criteria. These are partly based on a point scoring system in relation to existing facilities such as public houses, churches, shop / post offices, village hall, school, bank, medical facilities and sports facilities. The availability of important local employment opportunities was also scored.

5.41.5 In the light of the above, the criteria needed to qualify as a main village are:

- population of 250 or over;
- location within a defined public transport route or existing bus service on at least 5 days per week to a market town and return; and
- combined facilities / employment provision score of more than 2.5 points.

5.41.6 It appears to me that the criteria selected by the Council and the methodology adopted are eminently sensible. They focus on the considerations most relevant to the identification of local service centres. Some have criticised the choice of a population threshold as low as 250. However, application of the chosen criteria will also ensure a reasonable spread of development across the county, meeting local needs and supporting local services.

*Bodenham - 933*

5.41.7 I appreciate that the designation of Bodenham as a main village (in addition to The Moor) could give policy support to development of land adjacent to Bodenham Court for holiday cottages. However, Bodenham does not meet the criteria for designation as a main village. In particular, the local population is estimated to be 90. Its designation as a main village would not be appropriate.

*Burmarsh - 832*

5.41.8 Irrespective of the form and character of the settlement, Burmarsh does not meet the criteria necessary for designation as a main village. The estimated population is only 90. I am aware that lack of designation constrains development opportunities. However, I would expect the Council's objectives for rural housing, and those in PPS 7, to be met without reliance on settlements of this small size.

*Edwyn Ralph - 114*

5.41.9 Edwyn Ralph does not meet the criteria necessary for designation as a main village. The estimated population is 90; and public transport as well as community facilities and employment opportunities are lacking. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Gorsley – 1019, 1020*

5.41.10 In the Revised Deposit Draft, Gorsley is designated as a main village. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Grafton - 961*

5.41.11 Grafton does not meet the criteria necessary for designation as a main village. The estimated population is 50; and public transport as well as community facilities and employment opportunities are lacking. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Hampton Bishop - 936*

5.41.12 Hampton Bishop does not provide sufficient facilities to justify its selection as a main village. In any event, it is located entirely within the floodplain of the rivers Wye and Lugg. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Kings Acre - 1181*

5.41.13 In Paragraph 5.3.7 above, I conclude that the Kings Acre Road area should be treated as part of Hereford. Recommendation 5.3/2 refers. Identification as a separate main village is not necessary or appropriate.

*Longtown - 670*

5.41.14 Objections are raised concerning the criteria that exclude the definition of Longtown as a main village. In particular, although Longtown has a small population, it has a wide range of facilities including an outdoor education centre. In addition, it is the only substantial settlement in this part of the county and has an important role to play in rural regeneration. The survival of existing facilities is also an issue.

5.41.15 For my part, I consider that population size is the most important consideration. In rural areas, the provision of new housing should generally be restricted to meeting local housing needs and/or to support local services (RPG 11, Policy CF2). The lower the population, the lower the need for more housing to meet needs emerging from that population bearing in mind also that provision for affordable housing can be made on rural exception sites under UDP Policy H10.

5.41.16 In the case of Longtown, the Council estimates the population (in 2000) at 200. I am aware that this figure has been questioned; but there is no evidence to indicate that the current figure exceeds 250. Nor is there any evidence to show that local services could become unviable without some modest growth.

5.41.17 As indicated above, I support the way in which the Council has selected the main villages and the defined smaller settlement. In this regard, Longtown has the status of a smaller settlement and has a role to play in the rural regeneration strategy and in meeting local needs. It will complement the part played by other nearby smaller settlements and main villages such as Ewyas Harold. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Much Marcle – 9, 239*

5.41.18 The reason why Much Marcle has not been selected as a main village is its population. This was estimated by the Council as 230 in 2000. For the objectors it is stated that the village comprises more than 250 people. However, I have no reason to doubt the Council's figure. This is based on a count of the number of houses in and around the settlement and the application a multiplier of 2.5 to represent the number of persons per dwelling. I would expect the resultant figure to be a generous indication of the village population. In these terms, Much Marcle would be less sustainable as a location for housing development. However, as a named smaller settlement, it would have a continuing role under Policy H6.

*Norton Canon - 835*

5.41.19 It does not appear to me that Norton Canon meets the criteria for definition as a main village. There is no "centre" that has a population of 250. The population is spread over a wide area. Similarly, other amenities and facilities are scattered throughout the parish. In addition, public transport availability does not meet the criteria laid down by the Council.

5.41.20 I appreciate that Norton Canon is perceived as an area where there is plenty of space. However, although single affordable dwellings according with Paragraphs 5.5.15a and b of the Plan would be a possibility, I do not consider that this is a location where development should be encouraged. Local facilities would continue to be supported by the existing population. In the main villages elsewhere, I have no reason to suppose that there would be unacceptable development pressures. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Preston on Wye - 951*

5.41.21 Preston on Wye does not meet any of the basic criteria necessary for designation as a main village. Irrespective of the presence of brownfield land and a previous grant of planning permission, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Wellington Heath – 10, 196, 617*

5.41.22 Wellington Heath does not meet the criteria for designation as a main village because it is lacking in local facilities and employment provision. It has a "score" of 1.5 points. The requisite score is more than 2.5 points. I appreciate that the situation would be different if Ledbury was taken as an appropriate source of employment opportunities. However, to view Wellington Heath as a growth centre with employment in Ledbury would be to increase the likelihood of travel by car. Ledbury is the preferred location for housing those who are employed in the town. In the circumstances, and bearing in mind Wellington Heath's designation as a named smaller settlement, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Withington Marsh - 926*

5.41.23 Withington Heath does not meet any of the basic criteria necessary for designation as a main village. Notwithstanding the perception of the area as one worthy of development, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Woolhope (including Wessington Court) - 955*

5.41.24 Woolhope does not meet any of the basic criteria necessary for designation as a main village. Irrespective of whether a local craftsman would be encouraged to stay and work in the area, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Wormelow - 313*

5.41.25 To my mind, a fundamental reason for not designating Wormelow as a main village is its low population. This is estimated by the Council as 90 in the year 2000. I do not agree that regard to population size is a false way to deal with the selection of local service centres. In the rural areas, meeting local needs is a primary consideration. The lower the population, the lower the need for further housing.

5.41.26 I appreciate that there are problems associated with the future use of the objector's land. However, the settlement strategy should not be used as a tool to give legitimacy to any particular development proposal. I support the way in which the Council has identified the main villages. Development in other locations should be considered in the light of other policies in the Plan and any other material considerations.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.41/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.42 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS (NON-SITE BASED ISSUES) - POLICY H5

### Objections

P415/869	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P790/6826	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P1089/3449	Walker Stuart Planning Solutions
P1102/6804	H P Bulmer Ltd
P973/2865	Mr B Price
P1032/7569	Sir Nicholas Harington

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the level of allocations in the main villages is too high. (415, 973)
- In respect of affordable housing, variance from the overall target is questioned. (790)
- Whether indicative targets for affordable housing should be referred to in Policy H5. (1089)
- The policy should be flexible enough to accommodate housing sites elsewhere. (1102)
- Smaller sites should be included as areas suitable for residential development. (1032)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Allocations in the main villages – 415, 973*

5.42.1I have discussed intended provision in the rural areas in Section 3.18 of my report. I do not consider that future provision would be excessive. I recognise that, where appropriate for other reasons, the opportunity could be taken to reduce the rural provision and to remove specific allocations. However, there is no strategic imperative so to do and no need for related modification of the Plan.

#### *Variance from the overall affordable housing target - 790*

5.42.2The 20% overall affordable housing target is based on likely provision from all housing in the county over the plan period including completions and commitments. The 35% figure relates to future building. It is the affordable housing percentage that it is felt could properly be sought from appropriate sites. I see no need for a modification of Policy H5 in relation to this objection.

#### *Indicative targets for affordable housing - 1089*

5.42.3It appears to me that the Council's approach accords the with advice at Paragraph 10 i)(c) of Circular 06/98 (Planning and Affordable Housing). I have no reason to suppose that the targets for specific sites do not reflect local needs within the area or that provision would be in conflict with the objective of a high standard of design. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Accommodating housing sites elsewhere - 1102*

5.42.4A certain amount of development outside main villages is permissible within the rural areas. For example, infilling could take place in the smaller settlement identified in Policy H6. However, I do not see a place for allocations outside the main villages. The main villages have been identified as sustainable locations where a certain amount of growth across the county can be accommodated without harming the countryside. The allocation of land in the rural areas beyond main villages would lead to increased travel by car and harm to the character and appearance of the countryside.

*Including smaller sites - 1032*

5.42.5I support the Council's policy of not allocating sites of less than 0.5 ha / sites that would yield less than 10 dwellings. To do otherwise would introduce unnecessary detail into the Plan. In addition, the allocation of small sites is not necessary. The Plan is supportive of development in sustainable locations. As such, development on small non-allocated sites can come forwards on sites within the settlement boundary of the main villages or on infill plots in named smaller settlements.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.42/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.43 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – FROME VALLEY HAULAGE DEPOT, BISHOPS FROME – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.46

### Objections

P754/1863	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/2907	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P1000/11249	House Builders' Federation
P1089/6670	Walker Stuart Planning Solutions
P1089/10852	Walker Stuart Planning Solutions

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the allocation should be dropped given that the population is less than 1,000. (754, 977)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)
- Reference to affordable housing should be dropped from the policy and from Paragraph 5.4.46. (1089)
- It is unreasonable to expect a financial contribution towards improvements to the waste water treatment works. (1089)

## Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

### *Dropping the allocation in the light of the settlement size – 754, 977*

5.43.1 In Paragraphs 5.38.4 to 5.38.9 of my report, I have examined the criteria used by the Council in the selection of main villages. I support the Council's approach including the adoption of a population threshold of 250, not 1,000. In this regard, it follows that the allocation of the Frome Valley Haulage Depot site should not be dropped.

### *Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.43.2 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### *Reference to affordable housing - 1089*

5.43.3 I have discussed references to affordable housing in Paragraph 5.42.3 of my report. It appears to me that the Council's approach accords with the advice in Circular 06/98 (Planning and Affordable Housing). I have no reason to suppose that the target for the haulage depot site does not reflect the local need of the area or that provision would be in conflict with the objective of a high standard of design. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### *Financial contribution towards waste water treatment works - 1089*

5.43.4 The duly made objection states that it is unreasonable to expect a financial contribution towards improvements to the waste water treatment works. However, based on the evidence that 15 dwellings would generate significantly more waste than the existing user, I do not consider that it is unreasonable to flag up the possibility of developer funding of essential improvements.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.43/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.44 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS - FORMER BUS / COACH DEPOT, CANON PYON – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.47**

### Objections

P754/1864	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/2908	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P1000/11250	House Builders' Federation

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the allocation should be dropped given that the population is less than 1,000. (754, 977)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

*Dropping the allocation in the light of the settlement size – 754, 977*

5.44.1 In Paragraphs 5.38.4 to 5.38.9 of my report, I have examined the criteria used by the Council in the selection of main villages. I support the Council's approach including the adoption of a population threshold of 250, not 1,000. In this regard, it follows that the allocation of the former bus / coach depot at Canon Pyon should not be dropped.

*Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.44.2 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.44/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.45 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS - COVENT GARDEN, COWALL – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.48

### Objections

P444/920	Robert Hitchins Ltd
W499/2734	Tyler-Parkes Partnership Ltd
P635/1495	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P977/2917	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P988/6157	English Courtyard
P995/2978	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P30/28	Mr J Milne
P321/607	Mr N Buller
P323/608	Mr D Evans
W460/954	Ms S Bond

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the allocation should be omitted from the Plan. (444, 499, 635, 995, 30, 321, 323)
- Whether there is a need to provide alternative recreational land. (988)
- Whether the density envisaged would be too high. (460)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

*Omitting the allocation – 444, 499, 635, 995, 30, 321, 323*

5.45.1A number of objections have been raised to the inclusion of the Covent Garden site within the Plan. In broad terms, these objections relate to regeneration; loss of recreational land; character and appearance; traffic; and infrastructure.

5.45.2In terms of regeneration, I appreciate that there is a policy of restraint in the rural areas in order to foster urban generation. However, that does not mean that there would be no growth in places like Colwall. Some allocations are needed in the main villages in order to support local housing needs and services. In this regard, and as determined in Section 3.18 of my report, I consider that a reasonable balance has been reached between provision in the rural areas and that in Hereford and the market towns. In addition, although the site is greenfield, its development would be highly sustainable.

5.45.3The recreational use on the allocation site would, of course, be lost. The land is used as a playing pitch by The Downs School although it is stated to be surplus to requirements. Be that as it may, any development proposals would be subject to Policy RST4 (Safeguarding existing recreational open space). In particular, and unless there is a clear excess of provision, alternative provision of at least equivalent community benefit would have to be provided in a convenient and accessible location. In these terms, and bearing in mind provision at Mathon Road, I consider that adequate safeguards are in place.

5.45.4With regard to the character and appearance of the area, I appreciate that the site is within the AONB and a conservation area. There are hedgerows; and trees protected by a preservation order. Overall, the playing field is seen as an important green lung which would be destroyed by urbanisation.

5.45.5For my part, I saw that the site is well contained and within the built-up limits of the village. There is peripheral vegetation although I see no reason why important trees and hedgerows could not be retained. However, the site itself is rather flat, featureless and uninteresting. I can conceive of a scheme at the density envisaged that would contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area and to the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside.

5.45.6With regard to traffic related matters, relatively modest local improvements would be necessary. However, to my mind, they do not affect the principle of developing the site residentially.

5.45.7As to pressure on schools, doctors, public sewerage system and the like, these were matters that were considered at the inquiry. However, there is no evidence to suggest that there are overriding constraints in this regard. All in all, I see no objection to the principle of developing this site for residential purposes at the density proposed and with an element of affordable housing. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Alternative recreational land - 988*

5.45.8I appreciate that the site is in private use and is surplus to the school's requirements. Nevertheless, in terms of Paragraph 10 of PPG 17, "surplus to requirements" should include consideration of all functions that open space can perform. In my opinion, necessary safeguards are included within Paragraph 5.4.48.

*Density of development - 460*

5.45.91 would normally expect sites to be developed at a minimum density of 30 dph. The density proposed for the Covent Garden site is the equivalent of about 22 dph. Such a density would reflect the particular circumstances of the site and its setting and would allow matters such as substantial additional tree planting to be addressed. In my judgement, a scheme at this density would be entirely appropriate and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

**RECOMMENDATION**

5.45/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

**5.46 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS - LAND OPPOSITE THE CO-OP, CUSOP – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.49**

**Objections**

P390/840	The Moor Estate
P635/1498	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P754/1866	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/2909	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P995/2979	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1000/11251	House Builders' Federation

**Summary of Objections / Issues**

- Whether there should be reference to open space provision. (390)
- Whether reference to estimated dwelling capacity should be deleted. (390)
- As expansion creep at the edge of the settlement, the site should be omitted. (635)
- Whether the allocation should be dropped given that the population is less than 1,000. (754, 977)
- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)

**Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

*Reference to open space provision - 390*

5.46.11 appreciate that the Plan should be read as a whole and regard had to all relevant policies. However, to my mind, it is entirely appropriate to highlight particular development requirements. As such, I do not consider that the reference to open space provision should be deleted.

*Reference to estimated dwelling capacity - 390*

5.46.2 There is reference to the estimated capacity of the site in the heading above Paragraph 5.4.49. To my mind, nothing is added by repeating the estimate in the text. I recommend the deletion of the reference.

*Expansion creep - 635*

5.46.3 Notwithstanding the objector's description of "expansion creep", I consider that the site forms an integral part of the northern part of the settlement. It is surrounded by development on three sides. It is an appropriate development site and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Dropping the allocation in the light of the settlement size – 754, 977*

5.46.4 In Paragraphs 5.38.4 to 5.38.9 of my report, I have examined the criteria used by the Council in the selection of main villages. I support the Council's approach including the adoption of a population threshold of 250, not 1,000. In this regard, it follows that the allocation of the land opposite the Co-op at Cusop should not be dropped.

*Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.46.5 As in the case of the Covent Garden site at Colwall, I consider that development of the largely greenfield objection site would be highly sustainable. The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

*Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.46.6 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.46/1 Delete the third sentence of Paragraph 5.4.49.  
5.46/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## **5.47 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS - LAND ADJACENT TO LOWER HOUSE FARM, EWYAS HAROLD – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.50**

### **Objections**

P754/1868	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/2910	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P995/2980	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1000/11252	House Builders' Federation

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the allocation should be dropped given that the population is less than 1,000. (754, 977)
- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Dropping the allocation in the light of the settlement size – 754, 977*

5.47.1 In Paragraphs 5.38.4 to 5.38.9 of my report, I have examined the criteria used by the Council in the selection of main villages. I support the Council's approach including the adoption of a population threshold of 250, not 1,000. In this regard, it follows that the allocation of the land adjacent to Lower House Farm, Ewyas Harold should not be dropped.

#### *Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.47.2 The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration relevant to allocations in main villages. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

#### *Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.47.3 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.47/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

### **5.48 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS - LAND NORTH OF NORTH ROAD, KINGSLAND – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.51 (DELETED)**

#### Objections

P1128/3628	Kingsland Parish Council
P357/714	English Heritage (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P960/2772	Mrs J Markam (Conditionally Withdrawn)
PX692/1715	Jennings Estates Ltd (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P1157/3679	Mrs B N Eastaugh (Conditionally Withdrawn)

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether there should be a reduction in the proposed density. (1128, 960)
- Whether the site should be allocated. (All other objections)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Reduction in density – 1128, 960*

5.48.1 In the Revised Deposit Draft, the allocation of the land north of North Road has been deleted. As such, the objection has been overtaken by events. No further modification is necessary.

#### *Allocation of the site – all other objections*

5.48.2 Following the deletion of the site in the Revised Deposit Draft, all the objections have been met. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.48/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.49 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS - LAND REAR OF PLOUGH INN, LITTLE DEWCHURCH – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.52**

### Objections

P635/1502	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P754/1870	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/2911	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P995/2982	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1000/11253	House Builders' Federation
P439/906	Mr F L Sainsbury
P440/908	Mrs V Sainsbury

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The site should be omitted given poor services and other impacts. (635)
- Whether the allocation should be dropped given that the population is less than 1,000. (754, 977)
- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)
- There is absolutely no housing need in Little Dewchurch. (439)
- There is no need for even more houses. (440)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Poor services and other impacts - 635*

5.49.1 Little Dewchurch is a main village where an appropriate range of services are available. In other respects, there is no evidence to suggest that there are any particular constraints on development.

5.49.2 In terms of impacts on the landscape and the nearby AONB, a sensitive scheme will be required as indicated by the Council. However, I see no overriding problem in this regard. With regard to impact on neighbours, again I see no problem in principle. This is a matter that would be taken into account in the detailed planning and approval of the development.

### *Dropping the allocation in the light of the settlement size – 754, 977*

5.49.3 In Paragraphs 5.38.4 to 5.38.9 of my report, I have examined the criteria used by the Council in the selection of main villages. I support the Council's approach including the adoption of a population threshold of 250, not 1,000. In this regard, it follows that the allocation in Little Dewchurch should not be dropped.

### *Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.49.4 The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration relevant to allocations in main villages. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

### *Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.49.5 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### *Absolutely no housing need - 439*

5.49.6 It appears to me that provision in Little Dewchurch is intended to meet a need wider than that of the village itself. It would also help meet the needs of the surrounding rural area. In this way, development would be concentrated in a sustainable built-up location with a reasonable range of services. By minimising development in the open countryside, effects on the character and appearance of the wider rural area would be minimised. Affordable housing needs would be met as well as the local need for market housing. I consider that the principle of development is to be supported.

### *No need for even more houses - 440*

5.49.7 The objector has no objection to a scheme of four starter homes. However, the amount of cars and traffic generated by 12 dwellings would be a problem on this narrow unclassified road. For my part, I note that there have been consultations with the Council's transportation section. It is envisaged that access could be provided from the C class Hereford to Hoarwithy road. However, precise requirements would be set out in the development brief. I do not consider that there is any overriding problem in this regard.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.49/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.50 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND NORTH OF B4352, MADLEY – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.53

### Objections

P354/669	Madley Parish Council
P635/1504	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P995/2983	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1000/11254	House Builders' Federation
P632/1411	Mr G J N Powell

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The number of houses proposed should be reduced. (354)
- The site should be omitted given poor services and adverse impact on the approach to the village. (635)
- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)
- The growth rate is questioned. (632)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Reducing the number of houses - 354*

5.50.1 Madley Parish Council is concerned that a development of 20 houses would overload the facilities of the village. However, notwithstanding recent building, there is no evidence of particular problems in this regard. As to the opportunities for landscaping, I do not consider that a scheme of 20 dwellings would cause any particular problems. In my opinion, appropriate landscaping and suitable access could both be achieved with a scheme of this density.

#### *Poor services and impact on approach to village - 635*

5.50.2 Madley is a main village where an appropriate range of services are available. In other respects, there is no evidence to suggest that there are any particular constraints on development. In terms of impacts on the approach to the village, I do not envisage any overriding problem in this regard. This is a matter that is referred to in Paragraph 5.4.53 and which I would expect to be addressed at the detailed design stage.

#### *Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.50.3 The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration relevant to allocations in main villages. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services

may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

*Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.50.4I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Growth rate - 632*

5.50.5The objector questions whether the growth rate implied by the single housing allocation in Madley is justified. For my part, I appreciate that the provision of 20 dwellings, averaged out over the plan period, suggests a low rate of provision. However, the Council's statement indicates that 29 other completions have already taken place. In addition, there are 35 outstanding commitments. Further completions are to be anticipated on windfall sites. In the circumstances, I do not consider that development is unduly restricted.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.50/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.51 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND ADJACENT TO NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL, MARDEN (DELETED) / LAND AT PARADISE FARM - POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.54

### Objections

P635/11435	Campaign to Protect Rural England
RW1270/500118	Marden Parish Council
P27/10736	Mr D Price

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The Paradise Farm site should be omitted given adverse impact on the landscape. (635)
- Objection is raised to the deletion of the land adjacent to the primary school. (1270, 27)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

*Adverse impact on the landscape - 635*

5.51.1On 7 March 2005, outline planning permission was granted for the erection of 23 houses on the Paradise Farm site. I would expect the Council to have

considered impact on the landscape in making its decision. However, in my opinion, the permission should be reflected in the allocation of the site.

*Deletion of land next to primary school – 1270, 27*

5.51.2 Marden Parish Council accepts the addition of the Paradise Farm site. However, bearing in mind the length of the planning process and the need for affordable housing, it would wish the primary school site to be allocated as well. In this regard, there is no evidence to suggest that provision of up to 30 more houses would be necessary or sustainable. I have no reason to suppose that development on the allocated site will not proceed. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

5.51.3 With regard to Mr Price's objection, I am aware that he would be prepared to accept a reduced allocation of 7-10 dwellings on the original primary school site. This would make up the difference between the original primary school allocation (30 dwellings) and the Paradise Farm allocation (23 dwellings). However, notwithstanding the strengths of Marden as a location for development and the Council's acceptance of the site for development purposes, I consider that any such allocation would be premature.

5.51.4 In this regard, there is no strategic need for more housing in locations such as Marden. Indeed, reductions could be effected where appropriate. At the same time, the primary school site is a greenfield site outside the main built-up extent of the village. I consider that it should be developed only if there is an overriding need. In these terms, bearing in mind also the opportunity to construct affordable housing on rural exception sites, I do not perceive there to be an overriding need for as few as seven dwellings. In my opinion, the primary school site should be regarded as an option for the future.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.51/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.52 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND ADJACENT TO CALLOW VIEW, MUCH DEWCHURCH – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.55**

### **Objection**

P1000/11261 House Builders' Federation

### **Summary of Objection / Issue**

- There are uncertainties regarding the deliverability of this development. (1000)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Deliverability of the development - 1000*

5.52.1 Paragraph 5.4.55 states that the new housing will not be allowed to commence before the village hall has been completed. I appreciate that this raises

questions about deliverability. However, the owners of the site refer to the village hall as part of the development scheme. There is support from all the principal parties and I do not foresee a problem in this regard.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.52/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objection.

## **5.53 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND WEST OF PRIMARY SCHOOL, ORLETON – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.56 (DELETED)**

### **Objections**

P754/1872	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P111/10474	Mr F Price
P1110/3557	Orleton Parish Council (Conditionally Withdrawn)

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- The housing site should be removed from the Plan. (754, 1110)
- Objection is raised to deletion of the housing allocation. (111)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Removing the site from the Plan – 754, 1110*

5.53.1 In the Revised Deposit Draft, the land west of the primary school is no longer a housing allocation. The objection has been met and no further action is necessary.

#### *Deletion of the housing allocation - 111*

5.53.2 Notwithstanding the potential resolution of earlier identified problems, there is no overriding need for an allocation on greenfield land in Orleton. As noted above, there is no strategic need for additional housing in main villages. In terms of local needs, the 1999 Herefordshire Housing Needs Study (Document G 2) estimated a need for 10 affordable housing units within the village. This is a need that could be met on rural exception sites under Policy H10. In other respects, the Council states that there is no reason to provide for additional development by allocating sites or extending the settlement limits beyond the present built-up area.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.53/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.54 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND ADJACENT TO THE BIRCHES, SHOBDON – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.57

### Objections

P635/1510	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P754/1874	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P766/3853	Shobdon Parish Council
P977/2914	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P995/2988	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1000/11255	House Builders' Federation
W200/668	Mrs M Stokes
P811/2102	Mr and Mrs R Hopgood

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- As greenfield infill with adverse landscape impact, the site should be omitted. (635)
- Whether the allocation should be dropped given that the population is less than 1,000. (754, 977)
- Whether proposals for access and open space are acceptable. (766)
- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)
- There should be fewer houses in a different area. (200)
- Permission for building should be refused. (811)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Greenfield infill and landscape impact - 635*

5.54.1 I appreciate that the objection land is a large greenfield infill site. However, in Paragraphs 5.40.96 to 97 above, I acknowledge that development would perform an important function in helping to give the village a more cohesive form. As to effects on the landscape, the Council envisages a woodland belt on the south side of the site; also that the highest part of the frontage would remain undeveloped. In all the circumstances, I consider that development of this site would be acceptable.

#### *Dropping the allocation in the light of the settlement size – 754, 977*

5.54.2 In Paragraphs 5.38.4 to 5.38.9 of my report, I have examined the criteria used by the Council in the selection of main villages. I support the Council's approach including the adoption of a population threshold of 250, not 1,000. In this regard, it follows that the allocation in Shobdon should not be dropped.

#### *Access and open space - 766*

5.54.3 Shobdon Parish Council suggests linking access into the road system at The Birches, safeguarding green space design for existing for existing houses and

making provision for sport and recreation. To my mind, these are not matters that affect the principle of allocation. I would expect that they would be addressed in the development brief and in the detailed design and implementation of the scheme.

*Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.54.4 The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration relevant to allocations in main villages. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

*Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.54.5 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Fewer houses in a different area - 200*

5.54.6 The objector has a number of concerns. These include increased traffic; pressure on existing schools, drainage and sewerage; conservation; lack of social facilities and employment; affect on tourism; and depreciation of property values. For my part, as a main village, I accept that Shobdon is a suitable location for development. As indicated in the Council's statement, I would expect many of the outstanding concerns to be addressed at the detailed stage. I see no overriding problems that would affect the principle of the allocation.

*Refusing permission for building - 811*

5.54.7 In common with other objections, concern is expressed at the lack of facilities within the village and the pressures that additional development would bring. However, to my mind, Shobdon is a suitable location for modest additional development. As necessary, new provision could be made on site or through enhancement of existing facilities elsewhere. With regard to access, privacy, waterlogged ground, conservation and the like, there is no evidence to suggest that there are overriding problems. I support the principle of developing the site.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.54/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.55 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND OPPOSITE PRIMARY SCHOOL, SUTTON ST NICHOLAS – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.58**

### **Objections**

P754/1875 Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd  
P977/2915 Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd

P995/2989                      George Wimpey Strategic Land  
P1000/11256                  House Builders' Federation

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the allocation should be dropped given that the population is less than 1,000. (754, 977)
- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

*Dropping the allocation in the light of the settlement size – 754, 977*

5.55.1 In Paragraphs 5.38.4 to 5.38.9 of my report, I have examined the criteria used by the Council in the selection of main villages. I support the Council's approach including the adoption of a population threshold of 250, not 1,000. In this regard, it follows that the allocation in Sutton St Nicholas should not be dropped.

*Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.55.2 The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration relevant to allocations in main villages. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

*Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.55.3 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.55/1                      Do not make any modification in response to the objection.

## 5.56 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS - CHURCH FARM, WELLINGTON – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.59

### Objections

P358/777                      Environment Agency  
P473/979                      Mr and Mrs Langford (Conditionally Withdrawn)  
P635/1511                      Campaign to Protect Rural England  
P754/1877                      Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd  
P995/2990                      George Wimpey Strategic Land  
P1000/11257                  House Builders' Federation

W205/10037  
W316/601

Mr P McKay  
Wellington Parish Council (Conditionally Withdrawn)

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- Further work needs to be done before the site can be shown to be out of flood risk. (358)
- The Auberrow Road site is to be preferred. (473)
- The Church Farm site should be omitted. (635)
- The site is highly constrained. (754)
- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)
- The flood risk zone should be shown correctly. (205)
- Two separate developments are needed. (316)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Flood risk - 358*

5.56.1 To my mind, this objection has been overtaken by events. The latest information available from the Environment Agency shows that the Church Farm site is outside the area liable to flood. Map PC8 and Recommendation 4.7/2 refer.

#### *Auberrow Road site - 473*

5.56.2 In the Revised Deposit Draft, the Auberrow Road site is allocated in addition to land at Church Farm. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no further action is necessary.

#### *Omission of Church Farm site - 635*

5.56.3 The CPRE is concerned that the Church Farm site is a part greenfield site in a conservation area. Development would have an adverse impact on the approach to the village. To my mind, this does not necessarily follow. The Council envisages a well designed scheme with high quality landscaping. I would expect such a scheme to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and the approach to the village. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Highly constrained site – 754*

5.56.4 This site is now identified as being outside the area liable to flood. In addition, I do not see location within the Conservation Area as a reason for not allocating the site. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.56.5 The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration relevant to allocations in main villages. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

*Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.56.6I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Flood risk zone - 205*

5.56.7In my opinion, the Council is entitled to use the information that the Environment Agency feels is most important for planning purposes. I appreciate that local knowledge is often relevant. In this regard, and under Proposed Change No 6 and Recommendation 4.7/1, account can be taken of "other justified data". Policy DR7 (Flood risk) as a whole and its reference to sustainable drainage techniques will also apply. No further modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Two separate developments - 316*

5.56.8The objection of Wellington Parish Council has been met by the allocation of the Auberrow Road site. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.56/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.57 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND OFF AUBERROW RD, WELLINGTON – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.59a

### Objections

P754/10560	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P844/10252	Trustees of Wellington Chapel
P1000/11258	House Builders' Federation
W205/10542	Mr P McKay

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the allocation should be dropped given that the population is less than 1,000. (754)
- The allocation of land adjacent to Wellington Chapel is to be preferred. (844)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)
- Community land provision and a local equipped play area should be included. (205)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *Dropping the allocation in the light of the settlement size – 754*

5.57.1 In Paragraphs 5.38.4 to 5.38.9 of my report, I have examined the criteria used by the Council in the selection of main villages. I support the Council's approach including the adoption of a population threshold of 250, not 1,000. In this regard, it follows that the allocation of the Auberrow Road site should not be dropped.

### *Land adjacent to Wellington Chapel - 844*

5.57.2 At the inquiry, the Council confirmed that it has no objection in principle to residential and open space / recreational use of the land adjacent to Wellington Chapel. As such, both the chapel site and the Auberrow Road site could come forward for development. In such terms, it is not necessary to reject the Auberrow Road site and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

### *Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.57.3 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

### *Community land and local equipped area - 205*

5.57.4 The Council has suggested further amendments that it feels would meet the objection regarding community land provision and a local equipped play area. I support the amendments. I feel that they would be sufficiently clear and precise whilst at the same time giving some flexibility in terms of future negotiations. In addition, and bearing in mind the desirability of locating facilities at the other end of the village, I consider that there should be the option of accepting provision elsewhere. I recommend accordingly.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.57/1 Modify Inset Map 40 by showing additional land subject to Policy RST4 (Safeguarding existing recreational open space) and Policy RST5 (New open space in/adjacent to settlements) all as shown on the plan at Appendix F of the Council's Statement Ref: C5/163/H5/RST5/RST7/DR7.

5.57/2 In Policy RST5, add Wellington to the list of Rural Areas.

5.57/3 In Paragraph 5.4.59, substitute the following for the sentence commencing "In addition": "Some additional car parking for the school and road improvements adjacent to the school are also expected. In addition, the housing scheme will be expected to contribute to the provision of recreation facilities including the provision of a children's play area properly equipped and fenced on adjoining land which is allocated through Policy RST5. Future housing schemes which are developed within the village will also need to give consideration to contributing to this facility."

5.57/4 Add the following at the end of Paragraph 5.4.59a: "In addition, consideration should be given through Policy H19 of the Plan to a financial payment for the provision of recreation facilities on land south of Church Farm protected

through Policy RST5 of the Plan or on such other site as may be agreed by the Council in substitution."

5.57/5 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## **5.58 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND REAR OF SURGERY, WEOBLEY – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.60**

### **Objection**

P635/1512 Campaign to Protect Rural England

### **Summary of Objection / Issue**

- Whether land rear of the surgery should be omitted from the Plan. (635)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

*Omitting the site - 635*

5.58.1 It is suggested that the allocation should be omitted because the development would represent greenfield development in a conservation area. For my part, I recognise that the site is within a conservation area. However, this does not preclude development, particularly development that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area. As to the nature of the site, I would describe this as the last remaining plot of a committed development. I see no objection to the allocation of the site.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

5.58/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objection.

## **5.59 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND ADJACENT TO WEOBLEY METHODIST CHURCH – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.61**

### **Objections**

P635/1513 Campaign to Protect Rural England  
P995/2992 George Wimpey Strategic Land  
P734/1778 R B Kilvert

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- Whether land adjacent to the Methodist Church should be omitted from the Plan. (635)

- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- There should be regard to inadequate visibility. (734)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Omitting the site - 635*

5.59.1 It is suggested that the allocation should be omitted because the development would represent greenfield development in a conservation area. For my part, I recognise that the site is within a conservation area. However, this does not preclude development, particularly development that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area. As to the nature of the site, I appreciate that this is a greenfield site. However, it is essentially surrounded by housing and would represent natural rounding off of built development within the village. I see no overriding objection to its allocation.

#### *Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.59.2 The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration relevant to allocations in main villages. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

#### *Inadequate visibility - 734*

5.59.3 In my opinion, direct access to the site from Hereford Road would be the safest option. A carefully designed scheme should be able to respect the rural character of the area, the Conservation Area and the ancient monument opposite. In this regard, I saw nothing particularly precious about the main road frontage. I recommend an appropriate modification of the text.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

5.59/1 In Paragraph 5.4.61, deleted the words: "Direct access onto Hereford Road will not be permitted."

5.59/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objection.

## **5.60 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND AT UPPER WESTON, WESTON-UNDER-PENYARD – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.62**

### **Objections**

P754/1876 Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd  
P977/2916 Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd

### Summary of Objections / Issue

- Whether the allocation should be dropped given that the population is less than 1,000. (754, 977)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

*Dropping the allocation in the light of the settlement size – 754, 977*

5.60.1 In Paragraphs 5.38.4 to 5.38.9 of my report, I have examined the criteria used by the Council in the selection of main villages. I support the Council's approach including the adoption of a population threshold of 250, not 1,000. In this regard, it follows that the allocation at Weston-under-Penyard should not be dropped.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.60/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.61 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND ADJACENT TO WHITESTONE CHAPEL, WITHINGTON – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.63

### Objections

P635/1514	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P921/2650	Mr P Hill
P995/2995	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1000/11259	House Builders' Federation
P1030/3151	Dent Farms Ltd

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Owing to poor services and adverse impact on landscape, the site should be omitted. (635)
- The allocation attaches to the wrong, non-deliverable land. (921)
- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)
- Objection is raised to the identification of land adjacent to Whitestone Chapel as a proposed housing site. (1030)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

*Poor services and landscape impact - 635*

5.61.1 There is no evidence that suggests to me that the services in Withington, improved as appropriate as part of the development proposals, would be inadequate to support the proposed Withington allocations. With regard to

landscape impact, I saw that the objection site is a small contained pocket of grassed land where one or two vehicles had been abandoned. It is surrounded by housing and, in my opinion, its development would have no significant impact on the landscape.

*Wrong, non-deliverable land - 921*

5.61.2 At the inquiry reference was made to a number of constraints. These included landscape matters, public sewerage and access. I have dealt with landscape and sewerage matters elsewhere in this section. With regard to access, and from my own observations on site, I see no overriding problems in this respect. All in all, I do not consider that questions about deliverability undermine the allocation of the site.

*Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.61.3 The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration relevant to allocations in main villages. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

*Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.61.4 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Identification as a proposed housing site - 1030*

5.61.5 The first main issue raised by the objector is the contribution that the paddocks make to the character and amenity of the area and the amenity of adjacent properties. I have described my perception of the site in Paragraph 5.61.1 above. Bearing in mind the requirement set out in Paragraph 5.4.63 of the Plan, and the safeguarding of residents' amenities through development control, I see no need for the on-going protection of this site.

5.61.6 With regard to the density of the development, I would not expect the package of proposals to result in a development that would be unacceptable in this location. Be that as it may, the capacity of the site is expressed as an estimate. The high standard of design required by Paragraph 5.4.63 of the Plan will be the paramount consideration.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.61/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.62 MAIN VILLAGES: HOUSING LAND ALLOCATIONS – LAND ADJACENT TO VILLAGE HALL, WITHINGTON – POLICY H5 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.64

### Objections

P605/3025	Three Counties Planning
P635/1515	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P772/1925	Dent Farms Ltd
P921/2649	Mr P Hill
P995/2994	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1000/11260	House Builders' Federation
P290/579	Mrs M Telford

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- There are better and more appropriate sites. (605)
- The site should be omitted. (635)
- Objection is raised to the identification of land adjacent to Whitestone Chapel as a proposed housing site. (772)
- The allocation attaches to the wrong, non-deliverable land. (921)
- Objection is raised to the allocation of greenfield sites in main villages. (995)
- Concern is expressed about the ability to deliver the capacity identified. (1000)
- Objection is raised to the folly of destroying attractive natural scenery. (290)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Better and more appropriate site - 605*

5.62.1 Objection is raised to the allocation on the ground that there are better and more appropriate sites elsewhere in the Whitestone / Withington area. I have considered the alternative sites in earlier parts of this section of my report. There are no sites that I consider to be better or more appropriate. As such, there is no basis upon which to reject the proposed allocation.

#### *Omission of site - 635*

5.62.2 In requesting the omission of the site, the CPRE refers to poor services, edge creep and adverse impact on habitat. Services in Withington are discussed in Paragraph 5.61.1 above. With regard to edge creep, I appreciate that this is a greenfield site with open countryside beyond. Nevertheless, it is a site with existing development on three sides. The proposed northern boundary would be a continuation of the line of existing development on either side. In these terms, I do not consider that there would be any unacceptable edge creep.

5.62.3 The matter of habitat impact is addressed in Paragraph 5.40.127. Given that the site has now been cleared, I consider that it could be satisfactorily developed with some 15 dwellings, wildlife habitat and strong landscape boundary. Its allocation is entirely appropriate.

*Identification as a proposed housing site - 772*

5.62.4 The site is no longer dense scrub at a traditional orchard. It has been cleared of vegetation and its value in open space and ecological terms considerably diminished. I see no reason for protecting the site on these grounds.

5.62.5 With regard to the density of the development, I would not expect the package of proposals to result in a development that would be unacceptable in this location. Be that as it may, the capacity of the site is expressed as an estimate. The high standard of design required by Paragraph 5.4.64 of the Plan will be the paramount consideration.

*Wrong, non-deliverable land - 921*

5.62.6 At the inquiry reference was made to a number of constraints. These included nature conservation, landscape matters and public sewerage. I have dealt with nature conservation and sewerage matters elsewhere in this section. With regard to landscaping, the northern boundary of the site will form a new boundary to the village. However, whilst strong landscaping will be important, I see no reason to question the allocation on these grounds.

*Greenfield sites in main villages - 995*

5.62.7 The availability of suitable land in higher order settlement is not the only consideration relevant to allocations in main villages. It is necessary to address local housing needs; also, as indicated by the objector, support for local services may be relevant. There is no specific evidence to indicate that the allocation should be deleted.

*Delivering the capacity identified - 1000*

5.62.8 I appreciate that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. However, as indicated in the Plan, the developer could fund essential improvement works should these be required in advance of works by Welsh Water. This is an established practice and I am not aware of any particular problems in this regard. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Destroying attractive natural scenery - 290*

5.62.9 This objection was lodged prior to the clearance of the site; also to the redevelopment of Norman's supermarket. The objection has been overtaken by events and no modification of the Plan is appropriate.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.62/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.63 MAIN VILLAGES – SUGGESTED SITES – POLICY H5**

### **Objections**

P61/248	Mr J W Yeomans
P532/1111	Mr M A Godson
P942/2733	Mr D Gower

P754/1847	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P833/2153	Ms N Parsons
P715/1756	Eveson Charitable Trust
P201/438	Mr E Bevan
P1043/3167	C F and S M Powell
P1177/3723	R Chilman
P596/1284	Mr P Ross
P1119/3605	Mr J K Brick
P817/2118	Mr and Mrs R C Buckley
P1119/3604	Mr J K Brick
P435/899	Mrs J A Throssell
P597/1286	Mr and Mrs S Chadd
P784/1944	Mr and Mrs W Tisdale
P1119/3606	Mr J K Brick
P1112/3564	Mr R Chadd
P997/6964	Mr and Mrs C Challenger
P832/2155	C G Property
P990/2955	Mrs J Jones and Mr I B Hamer
P653/1900	Mr B. McIlwrick
P1183/3739	L Evans and Son
P64/250	Mr G V Hyde
P479/986	Mrs C E Mussell
W352/3774	Mr P Griffiths
P321/7578	Mr N Buller
P323/7581	Mr D Evans
P444/4522	Robert Hitchins Ltd
P323/7582	Mr D Evans
P107/304	Old Court Nurseries
W499/2735	Tyler-Parkes Partnership Ltd
W499/1027	Tyler-Parkes Partnership Ltd
P321/7580	Mr N Buller
P444/914	Robert Hitchins Ltd
P684/1678	Mr B Harrison
P67/255	Mr P Griffiths
P993/2967	Stroudwater Redevelopment Partnership Ltd
P1180/3730	Mr G Bachelor
P390/1254	The Moor Estate
P989/2956	Mr R Lloyd
P1190/3771	P Davies
P383/820	Miss M Johnson
P999/3000	Mr D Phillips
P807/3487	Mr D Middleton
W192/7051	Mr G Thomas
P922/2648	S C Hardwick and Sons
P1099/3502	Mr T S Oakley
P314/4605	Blasemere Ltd
P314/598	Blasemere Ltd
P1019/4234	Mr E Dorman
P1020/4575	D Wadley
P1020/3141	D Wadley
P946/2743	Mr M B Roberts
P961/6260	The Morgan family
P605/3042	Three Counties Planning
P1024/3144	J Patrick Power
P936/6992	Mr M K Whittall Williams
P906/2619	Mr and Mrs D Headon
P1102/3523	H P Bulmer Ltd

P1181/3737	Mr F Hanbury
P964/2784	Mr and Mrs G Schenke
P987/2946	Scott Newman Group
P923/2660	Messrs D, R and J Ewens
P1069/3242	Mr and Mrs G and J Adams
P522/1067	B H Savidge and Son
P59/246	Mr C Grindon
P63/249	Ms J White
P59/6332	Mr C Grindon
P813/2109	Mr M Kirby (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P670/1622	Greyhound Close Developments
P492/1022	Mr A P Paton
P947/2749	Mr and Mrs P Patierson
P1176/3720	Davenport and Co
P632/5633	Mr G J N Powell
P66/254	Mr and Mrs R Vaughan (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P368/3809	Mr R Hughes
P1102/3526	H P Bulmer Ltd
P1195/3815	Residential Investment Ltd
P952/2755	Mr B Goodwin
P476/1013	Hereford Diocesan Board of Finance
P239/505	Mr C W R Cooke
P104/6579	Mr B J Deem
P604/3796	Mr T Fry
P954/2759	Mr J Fry
P928/2690	Mr and Mrs M Phillips
P1110/3560	Orleton Parish Council (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P1110/3559	Orleton Parish Council (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P1110/3558	Orleton Parish Council (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P111/308	Mr F Price
P1065/3230	Mr I George
P1044/4045	Mr R Smith
P1045/4046	Mr G Smith
P1111/3562	Mr C Marriott
P1044/3169	Mr R Smith
P1045/3172	Mr G Smith
P1026/3146	Mr M Colwell
P763/1892	Mr A J Dale
P763/1893	Mr A J Dale
P951/2763	Mr Williams
P765/1901	Mr R H Morris
P986/2940	Mr and Mrs N Donovan
P985/2938	Mr N Chamberlain
P982/2932	Mr J Kendrick
P380/812	The Trustees of the Treago Estate
P1102/3525	H P Bulmer Ltd
P1102/3522	H P Bulmer Ltd
P257/539	Staunton-on-Wye Group Parish Council
P1131/3634	R S and E W Davies
P940/2720	C R and J Jenkins
P481/992	Mr B A and S R Jarman
P980/2929	Mr V Gethin
P1162/3686	Stoke Edith Estate
P1184/4231	Mrs R Barnett
P981/2931	Mr D Price
P844/2220	Secretary, Trustees of Wellington Chapel
W205/1746	Mr P McKay

P473/980	Mr and Mrs Langford (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P472/975	Mr J Lloyd
P207/450	Dr Green
P1032/6993	Sir Nicholas Harington
P198/6818	Alan Porter Ltd
P1103/3524	Mr M. Bundy
P56/243	Mr and Mrs R G Williams
P287/6687	Hornchurch Construction Co Ltd
P290/580	Mrs M Telford
P605/3026	Three Counties Planning
P921/2651	Mr P Hill
P921/2655	Mr P Hill
P921/2653	Mr P Hill
P772/5990	Dent Farms Ltd
P926/2677	Mr and Mrs C Stone Fewings
P313/594	Mr H Danter
P111/7545	Mr F Price

### **Summary of Objections / Issue**

- Whether additional sites should be allocated for housing purposes. (All objections)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### ***Introduction***

5.63.1 In Section 3.18 of my report, I conclude that there is no strategic need to increase housing provision in main villages over and above that envisaged by the Council. In addition, in the foregoing discussion within this section of the report, I have determined that none of the allocations proposed within the main villages should be deleted. It follows that, as far as the main villages are concerned, the appropriate contribution to the strategic housing requirement can be met from the allocated sites.

5.63.2 In addition, and in accordance with Paragraph 30 of PPG 3, there is no need to search further for housing land. As such, there is no need for a decision to be made about the majority of the sites put forward as sites additional to, or in substitution of, sites allocated under the UDP. There is, however, no implication that the sites would otherwise be suitable for development. Some sites are too small for allocation. Others have already been rejected for other reasons. Detailed consideration would lead to the rejection of yet more sites on site specific grounds.

5.63.3 Policy CF2 of RPG 11 states that, in rural areas, the provision of new housing should generally be restricted to meeting local housing needs and/or to support local services. In addition, PPG 3 at Paragraph 70 indicates that villages will only be suitable locations for accommodating significant additional housing where it can be demonstrated that this will support local services which would become unviable without some modest growth; also to meet local needs, such as affordable housing, which will help secure a mixed and balanced community. Where appropriate, I have therefore considered whether there are any overriding arguments in these respects.

5.63.4 Other potentially overriding matters are also discussed where appropriate. Reference should be made to other relevant parts of my report, for example, where objection sites are discussed in relation to settlement boundaries.

***Almeley***

*Land north of Sunnyside House - 61*

5.63.5 There is no evidence that suggests to me that the local housing needs of Almeley could not be met in ways envisaged in the Plan. Some of the need will have been met through housing completions in the earlier parts of the plan period. The remainder would be met through completions on committed sites and on additional windfall sites within the village. Affordable housing needs would be met through Policy H9 (Affordable housing) or possibly Policy H10 (Rural exceptions housing). In such terms no new allocation is necessary.

***Bartestree***

*Land off A438 - 532*

5.63.6 As indicated above, there is no strategic need for additional housing in the main villages including Bartestree. However, in this case, the objector argues that there is a particular local need that should be met bearing in mind that Bartestree is well placed to receive additional housing. In this regard, reference is made to the Council's 2001 Housing Needs Study (Document G 3).

5.63.7 The Housing Needs Survey suggests that, within the parish of Lugwardine within which most of the village falls, there was a 2001 need for 16 market homes and 36 affordable homes. In terms of supply, information is provided in the Council's statement. Some 25 dwellings were completed within Bartestree parish in the period 1996-2004 with a further 77 units in the neighbouring parish of Lugwardine. I would expect some of these dwellings to have contributed towards meeting the perceived 2001 need. In addition, at 2004, there were 60 outstanding commitments in Bartestree parish and 10 in Lugwardine. Housing capacity sites and windfall sites are an additional source of future housing.

5.63.8 The Council opines that the Housing Needs Survey should be treated with caution. It is based on applying rates of need identified in local housing need surveys to unsurveyed areas. For my part, I also note that the figures apply to the whole of Lugwardine parish, not just to Bartestree village. In addition, no local needs study has been undertaken to confirm the assessment. This is a standard requirement, for example under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing).

5.63.9 To my mind, the above evidence does not indicate that local needs would go unmet. In any event, affordable housing could be provided on unallocated sites within or adjoining the settlement under Policy H10. I appreciate that this has not happened in the past; but positive policy encouragement is available under PPG 3 and within the UDP itself. In addition, where there is a perceived possibility of future permission for market housing, it is not surprising that disposal for affordable purposes has not taken place (or would take place in the future).

*Land at Lower Bartestree Farm - 942*

5.63.10 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Bartestree and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land north of St James Close - 754*

5.63.11 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Bartestree and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*The Old Nursery, Church Lane - 833*

5.63.12 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Bartestree and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Bishops Frome***

*Land adjacent to Broadfield Close - 715*

5.63.13 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Bishops Frome and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Bodenham***

*Land at Chapel Lane - 201*

5.63.14 The objector states that there is an identified need, in Bodenham, for between 17 and 36 dwellings. The Council, for its part, refers to a need for 12 affordable homes and 22 market homes (total 34 homes). Leaving aside the detailed differences, I would expect the local needs of the village to be met through a combination of housing on sites with planning permission or on urban capacity or other windfall sites. Affordable housing would be provided through Policy H9 (Affordable housing) or possibly Policy H10 (Rural exception housing).

5.63.15 I appreciate that the number of existing commitments is low (only 7 dwellings); also the number of dwellings built on windfall sites in the period 1996-2004 (11 dwellings). I am also aware that Bodenham is a main village where additional housing development could be appropriate. Nevertheless, I observed a number of potential development sites within the village.

5.63.16 In addition, even though they are not identified as specific opportunities, the Grange Farm and "Baches Bargains" urban capacity sites have considerable potential. The sites are in agricultural and employment use respectively. However, redevelopment is an option that may be preferable to extending the village onto a greenfield site outside the village envelope should there be an unmet local need.

5.63.17 In conclusion, I gained the impression that there are a number of development opportunities whereby the local needs of Bodenham could be met without building outside the developed limits of the village. In my opinion, there is inadequate justification for a greenfield allocation at this point in time.

*Land opposite England's Gate - 1043*

5.63.18 The objector refers to the Bodenham Housing Needs Study 2000 (Document M 9) as evidence of a need for new housing for 40 households. For my part, it would appear that for 23 of those households the need is for accommodation outside Bodenham (Figure BD1, Page 51). Indeed, the Council puts the total need of the village at 12 affordable homes and 22 market homes. Be that as it may, I have determined above that the local needs of Bodenham could be met without building outside the developed limits of the village. In my opinion, there is inadequate justification for a greenfield allocation at this point in time.

*Land west of England's Gate – 1177*

5.63.19 In the foregoing paragraphs, I have determined that local needs of Bodenham could be met without building outside the developed limits of the village. In my opinion, there is inadequate justification for a greenfield allocation at this point in time.

***Brimfield***

*Rear of Oldfield House - 596*

5.63.20 The objection site is mostly outside the settlement boundary of Brimfield and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or of local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*South of Holmleigh - 1119*

5.63.21 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Brimfield and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*South of The Firs – 817, 1119*

5.63.22 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Brimfield and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*North of Wyson Lane – 435, 579, 784, 1112*

5.63.23 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Brimfield and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*South of Mara - 1119*

5.63.24 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Brimfield and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified.

Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Bromsash**

*Land adjacent to Forge House - 997*

5.63.25 Bromsash is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Burghill**

*Adjacent to St Mary's Church / Land at Pyefinch Farm – 832, 990*

5.63.26 The objection sites are outside the settlement boundary of Burghill and are not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Burley Gate**

*West of Burley Gate Inn - 653*

5.63.27 Burley Gate is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Canon Pyon**

*Crown House site - 1183*

5.63.28 As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Clehonger**

*Land adjacent to Kimleigh (was Westhope) - 64*

5.63.29 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Clehonger and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Bine Cottage - 479*

5.63.30 The objection site is mostly outside the settlement boundary of Clehonger and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or local services becoming

unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land off Poplar Road - 352*

5.63.31 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Clehonger and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Colwall**

*Adjacent to Oddfellows Public House – 321, 323*

5.63.32 The objection site is mostly outside the settlement boundary of Colwall and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*South of Old Church Road - 444*

5.63.33 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Colwall and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or local services becoming unviable. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Colwall as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land off Old Orchard Lane – 323, 321*

5.63.34 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Colwall and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Old Court Nurseries – 107, 499*

5.63.35 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Colwall and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*South of Old Church Road - 444*

5.63.36 The objection land is outside the settlement boundary of Colwall and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or local services becoming unviable. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Colwall as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Cradley***

#### *Land between east and west Cradley - 684*

5.63.37 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Cradley and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or local services becoming unviable. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Cradley as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Credenhill***

#### *Adjoining Cross Farm - 67*

5.63.38 As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

#### *North of St Mary's School - 993*

5.63.39 As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Credenhill as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. In this regard, I do not consider that there would be excessive dependence on windfall sites. This is a matter that is considered in Section 3.18 of my report. Monitoring indicates that windfalls on capacity sites are coming forward at rates generally consistent with those anticipated in the UDP. There is no need to reduce further the windfall figures.

5.63.40 I appreciate that the provision of a new primary school, with associated sport and recreational space, would be an important planning gain. However, as noted in Paragraph 13.9.2 of my report, the education authority is still considering options. In addition, a replacement school could be progressed under Policy CF5 of the Plan. All in all, no modification of the Plan is appropriate.

#### *West of Station Road - 1180*

5.63.41 As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified; also provision for social housing. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Cusop***

#### *Land to east of proposed allocation opposite the Co-op - 390*

5.63.42 As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Cusop as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

#### *Land to north of proposed allocation opposite the Co-op - 989*

5.63.43 As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. There is no overriding need to "better balance out this end of the town" and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

### ***Dormington***

#### *Claston Farm - 1190*

5.63.44 Dormington is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. In any event, the proposals put forward by the objector now have the benefit of planning permission. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Eardisland***

#### *South of Shop Cottage - 383*

5.63.45As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. I appreciate that Eardisland is essentially dependent upon windfall sites. However, there is no evidence to suggest that local needs would not be met. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Fawley***

#### *Land adjacent to Lion House - 999*

5.63.46 Fawley / Kings Cuple is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. To my mind, local needs would be very small given the low population and would be met in the main villages and to an extent in Kings Cuple itself. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Fownhope***

#### *Southeast of Ferry Lane - 807*

5.63.47 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Fownhope and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

#### *The Crymes / Lowe Park - 192*

5.63.48 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Fownhope and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

#### *Northwest of Scotch Firs - 922*

5.63.49 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Fownhope and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Fownhope as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Southwest of Lower House - 1099*

5.63.50 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Fownhope and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Goodrich**

*Land at The Nutshell - 314*

5.63.51 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Goodrich and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs. Low cost housing needs could be met in or on the edge of Goodrich. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Between A40 and Dean Swift Close - 314*

5.63.52 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Goodrich and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs. Low cost housing needs could be met in or on the edge of Goodrich. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Gorsley**

*Land at Whitehouse Farm - 1019*

5.63.53 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Gorsley and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land off Chapel Lane - 1020*

5.63.54 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Gorsley and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land off Sterrys Road - 1020*

5.63.55 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Gorsley and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Grafton**

*Grafton Inn - 946*

5.63.56 Grafton is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and

as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Grafton Lane - 961*

5.63.57 Grafton is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Graftonbury Garden Hotel - 605*

5.63.58 Grafton is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Hampton Bishop**

*Land at Crabtree Hall - 1024*

5.63.59 Hampton Bishop is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Rear of Church Farm - 936*

5.63.60 Hampton Bishop is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Harewood End**

*East of A49 - 906*

5.63.61 Harewood End is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Hereford**

*Field Farm - 1102*

5.63.62 This site does not fall within a main village or within the settlement boundary of Hereford. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Kings Acre***

*Land at Breinton Lee - 1181*

5.63.63 This site does not fall within the prospective settlement boundary of Hereford or within a separate main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Kingsland***

*Land adjacent to Kingsland - 964*

5.63.64 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Kingsland and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local need. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Kingstone***

*Land rear of surgery - 987*

5.63.65 The objection site is mostly outside the settlement boundary of Kingstone and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local need. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### ***Lea***

*Adjacent to Lea Hall - 923*

5.63.66 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Lea and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Lea as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Adjoining Millbrook Gardens - 1069*

5.63.67 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Lea and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Lea as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land between A40 and Mill Lane - 522*

5.63.68 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Lea and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Lea as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land opposite Castle End Farm - 59*

5.63.69 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Lea and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Lea as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land on B4224 - 63*

5.63.70 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Lea and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land at Castle End Farm - 59*

5.63.71 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Lea and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs. Notwithstanding the perceived advantages of Lea as a location for additional development, additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Leintwardine***

*Land off Dark Lane - 813*

5.63.72 In the Revised Depot Draft, the settlement boundary has been amended to include land along Dark Lane. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no further action is necessary.

***Longtown***

*Land adjacent to Greyhound Farm - 670*

5.63.73 Longtown is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. To my mind, local needs would be very small given the low population and would be met in the main villages and to an extent on infill plots in Longtown itself. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Lugwardine***

*East of burial ground - 492*

5.63.74 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Lugwardine and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land east of Traherne Close - 947*

5.63.75 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Lugwardine and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified.

Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land at Newcourt Farm - 1176*

5.63.76 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Lugwardine and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Madley**

*Land to the north of Madley - 632*

5.63.77 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Madley and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Marden**

*Paradise Farm - 66*

5.63.78 The Paradise Farm site is allocated in the Revised Deposit Draft. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no further action is necessary.

**Merryhill**

*Adjacent to Merryhill Villa - 368*

5.63.79 Merryhill is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Monnington-on-Wye**

*Land at Monnington Farm - 1102*

5.63.80 Monnington-on-Wye is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Moreton-on-Lugg**

*Land east of Moreton-on-Lugg - 1195*

5.63.81 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Moreton-on-Lugg and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Much Birch**

*Land at Penny Pitt - 952*

5.63.82 Much Birch is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land

sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Much Dewchurch***

*Land adjacent to Church View - 476*

5.63.83The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Much Dewchurch and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. There is no necessity to close the gap fronting the B4348. Bearing in mind also the site specific objections of the Council, no modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Much Marcle***

*Monks Walk Cottage and paddock - 239*

5.63.84Much Marcle is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Newtown Crossroads***

*Land adjoining The Bungalow - 104*

5.63.85Newtown Crossroads is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land between Newtown Cottage and Yew Tree - 604*

5.63.86Newtown Crossroads is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land west of Oaklands - 954*

5.63.87Newtown Crossroads is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Orcop***

*Land between Trehome Cottage and Holly Cottage - 928*

5.63.88Orcop is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### **Orleton**

#### *Land northeast of Orleton Primary School - 1110*

5.63.89 Following revisions at the revised deposit stage, this objection has been conditionally withdrawn. No further action is necessary.

#### *Land adjacent to The Halletts - 1110*

5.63.90 Following revisions at the revised deposit stage, this objection has been conditionally withdrawn. No further action is necessary.

#### *Caravan Park - 1110*

5.63.91 Following revisions at the revised deposit stage, this objection has been conditionally withdrawn. No further action is necessary.

#### *Land off Kings Road - 111*

5.63.92 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Orleton and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

#### *Land off Millbrook Close - 1065*

5.63.93 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Orleton and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### **Pembridge**

#### *Land adjacent to telephone exchange – 1044, 1045*

5.63.94 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Pembridge and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

#### *Manley Field - 1111*

5.63.95 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Pembridge and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

#### *Land at Townsend Farm – 1044, 1045*

5.63.96 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Pembridge and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Penrose Green***

*Land at Penrose Green - 1026*

5.63.97 Penrose Green is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Preston-on-Wye***

*Land adjacent to Cloverdale Drive - 736*

5.63.98 Preston-on-Wye is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land adjacent to Ploughfields - 736*

5.63.99 Preston-on-Wye is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Green Farm - 951*

5.63.100 Preston-on-Wye is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Shobdon***

*Former Tarmac site - 765*

5.63.101 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Shobdon and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***St Owens Cross***

*Land at New Inn - 986*

5.63.102 St Owens Cross is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. It would not be appropriate for me to have regard to the personal circumstances of the objectors in determining development plan policy. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land adjacent to The Heathers - 985*

5.63.103 St Owens Cross is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land adjacent to High House - 982*

5.63.104 St Owens Cross is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***St Weonards***

*Land at Treago Estate - 380*

5.63.105 St Weonards is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Staunton-on-Wye***

*Land adjacent to The Ridge - 1102*

5.63.106 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Staunton-on-Wye and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land at Lower House Farm - 1102*

5.63.107 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Staunton-on-Wye and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Allocation of land for housing - 257*

5.63.108 As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is no evidence to suggest that the proposed new primary school would be unviable without more housing. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land north of the A438 - 1131*

5.63.109 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Staunton-on-Wye and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*North of Bliss House - 940*

5.63.110 In Paragraphs 5.40.104 to 107 above, I conclude that land north of Bliss House would be appropriate for inclusion within a reviewed settlement boundary. If developed in whole or in part, it would count towards the windfall element of the strategic housing supply. However, no more allocated sites are needed. In any event, the objection site is too small for allocation. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

***Stretton Sugwas***

*Land southeast of Blenheim House - 481*

5.63.111 Stretton Sugwas is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is inadequate evidence of local needs or local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. I see no overriding reason why Stretton Sugwas needs "a more appropriate heart". No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Swainshill***

*Land at Sugwas Pool - 980*

5.63.112 Swainshill is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is no significant evidence of unmet local needs or of local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Tarrington***

*Land adjacent to The Vines - 1162*

5.63.113 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Tarrington and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is no significant evidence of unmet local needs or of local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Tillington***

*Land adjacent to Wigmore Cottage - 1184*

5.63.114 Tillington is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is no significant evidence of unmet local needs or of local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Upton Bishop***

*Hill Top Poultry Farm - 2931*

5.63.115 Upton Bishop is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In

addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is no significant evidence of unmet local needs or of local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### **Wellington**

*Land adjacent to Wellington Chapel – 844, 205*

5.63.116 At the inquiry, the Council confirmed that it has no objection in principle to residential and open space / recreational use of the land adjacent to Wellington Chapel. However, the site is too small for allocation. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Land at Auberrow Road - 473*

5.63.117 In the Revised Deposit Draft, land at Auberrow Road has been allocated as a proposed housing site. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no further action is necessary.

### **Weobley**

*Land north of Burton Wood Road - 472*

5.63.118 The objection site is outside the settlement boundary of Weobley and is not in a location where development would be encouraged. Further, as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Notwithstanding the perceived suitability of the village as location for additional development, there is no significant evidence to suggest that local needs would go unmet or that local services would become unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### **Weston-under-Penyard**

*Land south of The Link - 207*

5.63.119 As indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. Further, as recognised at the inquiry, the site is too small for allocation even if it was located within the settlement boundary. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### **Whitbourne**

*Land adjacent to Virginia Cottage - 1032*

5.63.120 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Whitbourne and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

### **Whitchurch**

*Land adjacent to Delburne Farm - 198*

5.63.121 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Whitchurch and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land east of A40 - 1103*

5.63.122 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Whitchurch and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land west of filling station - 56*

5.63.123 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Whitchurch and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Wigmore**

*Kings Meadow - 287*

5.63.124 This site is within the settlement boundary of Wigmore. The Council has no objection, in principle, to housing development. However, the site is too small for allocation. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**Withington**

*Norman's supermarket site - 290*

5.63.125 This objection has been overtaken by events in that the site has recently been redeveloped for housing purposes. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Land around Ramblers Court - 605*

5.63.126 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Withington and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land north of Railway House - 921*

5.63.127 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Withington and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Pamona Corner Cottage - 921*

5.63.128 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Withington and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land southwest of railway bridge - 921*

5.63.129 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Withington and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been

identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Land south of Southbank - 772*

5.63.130 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Withington and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Withington Marsh***

*Land adjacent to Marsh Farm - 926*

5.63.131 Withington Marsh is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Wormelow***

*Land at Park Hall - 313*

5.63.132 Wormelow is not a main village. It is not a location where, in terms of the settlement hierarchy, a housing allocation would be appropriate. In addition, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. There is no significant evidence of unmet local needs or of local services becoming unviable. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. Further, it would not be appropriate for me to have regard to the personal circumstances in determining development plan policy. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

***Yarpole***

*Land east of Eastholme - 111*

5.63.133 This site lies outside the settlement boundary of Yarpole and is not a location where additional development would be encouraged. In addition, and as indicated above, land sufficient to meet the housing requirement has already been identified. Additional or substitute sites are not needed. There is no duly made objection in respect of land on the Kingsland Road. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.63/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.64 HOUSING IN SMALLER SETTLEMENTS (NON-SITE BASED ISSUES) - POLICY H6, TABLE 4 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.4.65 TO 5.4.71

### Objections

P253/528	Withington Parish Council
P358/773	Environment Agency (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P380/5455	Trustees of the Treago Estate
W411/842	Stoke Lacy Parish Council
P444/922	Robert Hitchins Ltd
P444/919	Robert Hitchins Ltd
W493/1021	The Bulmer Foundation
P495/1026	Dorstone Parish Council
W506/1030	Pershore Group of Colleges
P605/3027	Three Counties Planning
P635/1516	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P670/1623	Greyhound Close Developments
P673/1625	D H Waterhouse and others
P692/11507	Jennings Estates Ltd
P754/1848	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P785/1948	Fownhope Parish Council
P846/2229	Country Land and Business Association
P846/11218	Country Land and Business Association
P890/2583	Government Office for the West Midlands
P975/2881	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd
P977/2918	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P995/2996	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P995/11510	George Wimpey Strategic Land
P1000/3010	House Builders' Federation
P1066/3233	Paul Smith Associates
P1066/11227	Paul Smith Associates
P1074/3248	Longtown Group Parish Council
P9/12	Ms C Cooke
W196/5415	Mr Robert Rock
P203/443	Messrs MJ, AB and RG Griffiths
P224/488	Mr K Morrill
P239/506	Mr C W R Cooke
P247/517	Mr G Davies
P248/518	Mr D Hill
W500/1028	Mr N Symonds
P600/1293	Mr R Wheeler
P653/1489	Mr B McIlwrick
P688/5441	Mr H Kent
P714/1753	Mr A Jones
P741/1792	G A Gough
P742/1793	Ms K Palmer
P763/1891	Mr A J Dale
P781/1941	Mr N R Symonds
P835/2180	Mr P Wrixon
P906/6296	Mr and Mrs D Headon
P928/6158	Mr and Mrs M Phillips
P928/6159	Mr and Mrs M Phillips
P946/6232	Mr M B Roberts
P954/6587	Mr and Mrs J Fry

P970/2790	Mr T Jennings
P973/2866	Mr B Price
P975/2882	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd
P977/2919	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P982/4611	Mr J Kendrick
P985/4610	Mr N Chamberlain
P986/4609	Mr and Mrs N Donovan
P997/6963	Mr and Mrs C Challenger
P999/6709	Mr D Phillips
P1000/3009	House Builders' Federation
P1019/3137	Mr E Dorman
P1020/4574	Mr D Wadley
P1026/5809	Mr M Colwell
P1079/3296	Revd N Read and Ms A Holden
P1094/3479	Mr C Cook
P1120/3611	Mr B and Ms M Richardson
P1181/3734	Mr F Hanbury

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Remove the restrictions on dwelling size and plot size. (253, 673, 1000, 1066, 247, 248, 714, 741, 742, 835, 906, 928, 954, 970, 982, 985, 986, 997, 999, 1000, 1019, 1020, 1026, 1079)
- Delete Hampton Bishop from the list of villages where infilling would be allowed. (358)
- Settlement size should not be such a key factor. (380)
- Two or three houses should be allowed in Stoke Lacy / Stoke Cross. (411)
- Development in smaller settlements should not be permitted. (444)
- Additional land should be allocated. (444)
- The infill gap width criterion should be varied. (493, 506)
- There should be some flexibility for low cost housing. (495)
- Objection is raised to the form and contents of Policy H6. (605)
- The policy should be omitted. (635)
- Proposals are constrained by criteria that do not respect the characteristics of the pattern of development. (670)
- Development should be restricted to previously developed land. (692, 995)
- Additional settlement should be included within the policy. (754)
- Development should be allowed in smaller hamlets. (785)
- The policy should be applied to clusters of dwellings. (846)
- Objection is raised to the maximum floorspace allowances. (846)
- There would be too much scope for development in unsustainable settlements. (890)
- Objection is made to a section on housing in small settlements. (975, 977)
- The term "infill gap" is imprecise. (1066)
- Pontshill should be retained under Policy H6. (1066)

- The needs of local individuals outside the settlement area should be met. (1074)
- Much Marcle should be included within the list of main villages. (9, 239)
- Wellington Heath should be a main village. (196)
- Land at Cherry Orchard, Hereford should conform with Policy H6. (203)
- There should be some recognition for other types of dwelling; also for septic tanks. (224)
- The policy is unduly restrictive. (247, 248)
- The proposal needs clarifying to suit individual settlements. (500, 781)
- Whether the wording of the policy is sufficiently precise. (600)
- All housing types should be encouraged. (653)
- Wellington Heath should be included within Policy H6 and the policy amended. (688)
- Small scale extension to existing smaller settlements should be allowed. (763)
- Applications should be treated on their merits. (835)
- Settlement boundaries should be drawn. (203, 605, 928, 946)
- A more restrictive line on windfalls should be taken. (973)
- The figure assumed for windfalls in rural areas is questioned. (975, 977)
- Objection is raised to Table 4. (1000)
- The policy should permit local needs for small county-based businesses. (1094)
- A relaxation of the hierarchy could help make land for affordable housing more plentiful. (1120)
- Land at Breinton Lee, Hereford should be identified as within the settlement boundary. (1181)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

*Restrictions on dwelling size and plot size – 253, 673, 1000, 1066, 247, 248, 714, 741, 742, 835, 906, 928, 954, 970, 982, 985, 986, 997, 999, 1000, 1019, 1020, 1026, 1079*

5.64.1 Policy H6 and the supporting text impose a number of restrictions on housing development in named smaller settlements. In this respect, I consider first of all the objectives of the Council and whether those objections would be met by the terms of the Plan.

5.64.2 The starting point is that housing in the wider rural area would not normally be permitted. It is expected that housing would be concentrated in Hereford, the market towns and, to a certain extent, the more sustainable (“named”) villages. However, there may still be a need beyond these settlements for a limited amount of new development to meet local needs and to help secure mixed and balanced communities. Such a need could come, for example, from a newly married couple, currently living with family, who wish to have their own home in the area where they have been brought up and where they continue to work.

5.64.3 The properties available within the wider rural area tend to be the larger and more expensive houses. To meet local needs, the most obvious requirement is for smaller, inexpensive properties. It appears to me that the Council's policies are directed towards meeting this requirement. I believe that the objectives and the way of trying to secure those objectives should be supported.

5.64.4 I would expect there to be two particular benefits stemming from the restriction on dwelling size. First of all, all other things being equal, it is likely that the properties would be cheaper and more affordable to emerging local households and the like. Secondly, the supply of smaller properties in the wider rural area would be increased. At the moment the mix of housing is heavily skewed towards higher value homes.

5.64.5 At the same time, by making an allowance for four bedroom homes of up to 100 sq m, the Council's policy would ensure that some larger, if cheaper, properties would be available to meet the needs of larger local households. As necessary, the number of bedrooms and future extension of the property could be controlled by conditions including the withdrawal of permitted development rights. This would ensure the on-going availability of such properties. At the same time, I do not consider that the needs of growing families would be unduly inhibited.

5.64.6 As to plot size, it is again to be expected that a new house on a relatively small plot would be less expensive and more likely to meet legitimate local needs. In addition, by ensuring higher densities, efficient use of land would be made. Affordable housing would be an appropriate exception on wider plots where local need has been successfully demonstrated. I see no grounds for allowing a mix of housing.

5.64.7 I appreciate that there may be locations in the open countryside where it could be argued that infilling, perhaps by a single dwelling, would not alter the character of the countryside especially on plots that have become unsuitable for other purposes. However, this could be repeated too often with a gradual erosion of the nature and appearance of rural areas. More particularly, it is important both to direct development to relatively sustainable locations and to direct policy only towards meeting genuinely local housing need.

*Hampton Bishop - 358*

5.64.8 In the Revised Deposit Draft, Hampton Bishop has been removed from the list of settlements where infilling would be allowed. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no further action is necessary.

*Settlement size - 380*

5.64.9 I see settlement size as being of paramount importance. The smaller the settlement, the smaller local needs are likely to be. I appreciate that local needs then have to be met in sustainable locations; and that local facilities, employment opportunities and public transport are important in this regard. Nevertheless, I consider that settlement size is the main determinant.

*Houses in Stoke Lacy / Stoke Cross - 411*

5.64.10 To my mind, Policy H6 and the supporting text contain an appropriate degree of flexibility. In addition, affordable housing within or adjacent to settlements could be provided under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). Further flexibility could result in the policy being undermined or abused. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Not permitting development in smaller settlement - 444*

5.64.11As indicated above, there are limited circumstances where housing in smaller settlements, to meet local needs, would be appropriate. This is recognised by the Council's policy and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Allocation of additional land - 444*

5.64.12The objector considers that an additional discount should be applied to sites with planning permission; also to allow for non-implementation or late implementation of allocations. As a consequence, additional land should be allocated. In response, I have considered such matters in Section 3.18 of my report. I consider that the applied lapse rate of 5% is appropriate and in keeping with monitored trends. In addition, any under provision could well be met by development at higher densities. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Varying the infill gap width criterion – 493, 506*

5.64.13The objectors suggest that the infill length should be increased or allowance taken of cases where residential development plays an important part in rural regeneration and sustainable local employment initiatives. For my part, I consider that any such variation would invite larger and more expensive developments to the detriment of the policy. In this regard, Holme Lacy does not have the population to support extensive local needs development.

*Flexibility for low cost housing - 495*

5.64.14To my mind, Policy H6 and the supporting text contain an appropriate degree of flexibility. In addition, affordable housing within or adjacent to settlements could be provided under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). Further flexibility could result in the policy being undermined or abused. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Form and contents of Policy H6 - 605*

5.64.15The objector indicates that the limits set for dwellings are artificial and detract from a range, choice and tenure of dwelling. For my part, I do not consider that the limits are too restrictive. I consider that the provision of small, affordable houses would lead to a widening of the range, choice and tenure. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Omission of the policy - 635*

5.64.16In Paragraphs 5.64.1 to 5.64.7 above, I support the Council's proposals for limited local needs housing in named smaller settlements. Further support for the Council's settlement strategy is to be found in Section 3.18 of my report. It appears to me that housing in the rural areas is heavily skewed towards higher value properties. I would expect the policy to help redress the imbalance, albeit in a slow and modest way, and provide for affordable housing in a way that could not be expected on the back of windfall developments (Policy H9). Further, the named settlements are likely to be more sustainable and to have greatest needs.

5.64.17As to development in village gaps, I acknowledge that this would be permissible under the policy. However, other considerations would also apply. For example, I would expect the Council to reject applications that would lead to development harmful to the character of the settlement.

*Criteria that do not respect the characteristics of the pattern of development - 670*

5.64.18I appreciate that the provisions of the Plan will act to constrain development in smaller settlements. However, I have no reason to suppose that important characteristics of the development pattern would not be respected. To my mind, this would be a factor to be taken into account in determining any particular planning application.

*Restricting development to previously developed land – 692, 995*

5.64.19In my opinion, to restrict housing development in named villages to previously developed land would be unduly restrictive. Opportunities would be very limited and the objectives of the policy would not be met.

*Inclusion of additional settlements - 754*

5.64.20In other objections, the objector has argued that certain named villages should be “downgraded” to smaller settlements. However, I have upheld the selection of main villages. It follows that none of the named villages should be listed instead as smaller settlements.

*Development in smaller hamlets - 785*

5.64.21The objector considers that, as an alternative to concentrating on main villages, development in smaller hamlets should be considered. However, such an approach would run counter the Council’s rural settlement strategy as supported in Paragraphs 5.64.1 to 5.64.7 above. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Applying the policy to clusters - 846*

5.64.22I do not consider that wider application of the policy, to groups or clusters of houses or to larger houses or plots, would be appropriate. To do so would not be targeting local needs but would be encouraging a dispersed pattern of development in less sustainable locations. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Maximum floorspace allowances - 846*

5.64.23It is always necessary to look at the merits of individual cases. However, I consider that the general rule applied by Policy H6 and the supporting text is entirely appropriate. As such, emphasis would be placed on the provision of small, affordable homes of which there is under-provision within the rural areas of the county.

*Too much scope for development in unsustainable settlements - 890*

5.64.24From what I heard at the inquiry, it is clear to me that there is a need for more low cost housing across the rural parts of the county. I appreciate that some of this need could be met under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). However, delivery from such sources has, in the past, been extremely modest and I support the Council’s attempts to boost the provision of small, lower value properties in the named smaller settlements.

5.64.25In reality, the contribution from this source is likely to be quite low. Table 4 of the Plan needs to be corrected to allow for arithmetical errors; also to allow for a single phase of development 2001-2011. However, dwelling completions in the rural area for the effective remainder of the plan period (2006-2011) would amount to 427 units. Commitments and completions already account for some 88% of the windfall estimate.

5.64.26As to the sustainability of the smaller settlements, many are not well related to public transport routes. However, in many ways, this is a reflection of the rural nature of the county and the difficulty of providing a comprehensive network of provision. Be that as it may, I am satisfied that the named settlements are reasonably sustainable; that development in these centres would secure a spread of development across all parts of the county; and that assistance would be given towards meeting local housing needs and supporting local services. All in all, I support the provisions of the Plan.

*Section on housing in small settlements – 975, 977*

5.64.27The objectors consider that the housing supply should be accounted for in Hereford, the market town and the main villages. However, a substantial proportion of the population will continue to live in the wider rural area. To my mind, there will be on-going local housing needs that would appropriately be met in smaller settlements. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Precision of term “infill gap” - 1066*

5.64.28The term “infill gap” should be read in conjunction with Paragraph 5.4.67 of the Plan. This paragraph explains what is meant by the term and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Retaining Pontshill in Policy H6 - 1066*

5.64.29Pontshill does not have the level of services or public transport provision necessary for inclusion in the list of named smaller settlements. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Needs of local individuals outside the settlement area - 1074*

5.64.30To my mind, it is important for new housing to be located within the most sustainable location, namely within the settlement. Affordable housing may be permissible on land adjoining existing settlements under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing).

*Much Marcle – 9, 239*

5.64.31The assessed population of Much Marcle is less than 250. As such, it does not qualify for inclusion within the list of main villages. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Wellington Heath - 196*

5.64.32In Paragraph 5.41.22 of my report, I note that Wellington Heath does not meet the criteria for designation as a main village because it is lacking in local facilities and employment provision. It does, however, qualify for listing as a smaller settlement. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Cherry Orchard, Hereford - 203*

5.64.33In Paragraph 5.3.8 of my report, I conclude that land in the vicinity of Cherry Orchard should be considered as part of Hereford. It is not part of a smaller settlement such as Swainshill. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Other types of dwellings / septic tanks - 224*

5.64.34The policy is specific in its aim of permitting lower cost housing to help satisfy local needs. I do not consider that allowance for other types of dwelling would be appropriate. With regard to septic tanks and the Building Regulations,

there are means of achieving design solutions, for example, by siting tanks off site. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Unduly restrictive policy – 247, 248*

5.64.35I do not consider that “rounding off” of the redevelopment of previously developed land should necessarily be permitted. In this regard, sustainability of the location is the paramount consideration. I appreciate that definition of settlement boundaries could be of assistance. However, given the criteria set out in the policy, and the intention of only allowing limited development, boundary definition is essential.

*Clarifying the policy to suit individual settlements – 500, 781*

5.64.36I appreciate that, in Stoke Lacy, development opportunities may be limited. However, I consider that there is flexibility within the policy, and through Policy H10 (Rural exception housing), without being “far to general”. There is no indication of how the policy should be clarified to suit individual settlements and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Precision in the wording of the policy - 600*

5.64.37It is necessary to read Policy H6 in the context of the supporting text and in conjunction with other parts of the Plan. In these terms, I consider that the wording is sufficiently precise and that there would be adequate safeguards regarding the character and scale of settlements. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Encouraging all housing types - 653*

5.64.38The policy is specific in its aim of permitting lower cost housing to help satisfy local needs. I do not consider that encouraging other housing types would be appropriate.

*Including Wellington Heath within Policy H6 and amending the policy - 688*

5.64.39In the Revised Deposit Draft, Wellington Heath is included within Policy H6. However, I do not see any need to amend the policy to make it less restrictive. The criteria are deliberately aimed at securing smaller, more affordable homes in perpetuity and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Small scale extension to existing smaller settlements - 763*

5.64.40In terms of settlements where infill housing would be allowed, the named smaller settlements are the least sustainable in the hierarchy. Except in the circumstances covered by Policy H6, namely meeting local needs, development should be directed to higher order settlements. As such, the extension of existing smaller settlements would not be appropriate.

*Treating applications on their merits - 835*

5.64.41It will always be necessary to have regard to the circumstances of individual cases. However, there would be a lack of policy direction if settlements were not classified and all applications were simply treated on their merits. Bearing in mind my acceptance, in Paragraphs 5.64.1 to 5.64.7 above, of the thrust of the Council’s policy, and of the criteria used for selecting relatively sustainable smaller settlements, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Settlement boundaries should be drawn – 203, 605, 928, 946*

5.64.42 The objectors seek boundaries around the settlements. However, I consider that a policy based on the criteria in Policy H6 is to be preferred. Amongst other things, the drawing of settlement boundaries could encourage windfall developments of a scale inappropriate to the smaller settlements.

*More restrictive line on windfalls - 973*

5.64.43 Herefordshire is a large rural county. In the remainder of the plan period (2006-2011), it is estimated that there will be 427 completions in the wider rural area. Most of these houses would be built in the relatively sustainable smaller settlements and in accordance with a sound settlement strategy. I have no reason to suppose that such development would be excessive and unjustified.

*Assumed windfalls in the rural areas – 975, 977*

5.64.44 It does not appear to me that the windfall estimates are particularly exaggerated or inaccurate. They take into account past rates and the likely effect of more restrictive policies. The estimates were also reduced at the revised deposit stage. Bearing in mind also that completions and commitments account for 88% of the estimated total, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Table 4 - 1000*

5.64.45 Objection is raised to the lack of detail relating to the individual components of Table 4 and their derivation. However, having regard to the information in the Housing Background Paper (Document J 8), and my own reading of the table, I do not consider that there are any significant problems in this regard.

*Housing for small county-based businesses - 1094*

5.64.46 I appreciate that finding housing plots for those engaged in small county-based businesses is not easy. However, current housing policy aims to direct new building to sustainable locations. In most cases in the wider rural areas it is likely that builders, carpenters, plumbers and other rural craftsmen can live in smaller settlements and main villages. Otherwise, Policy H8 (Agricultural and forestry dwellings and dwellings associated with rural businesses) is directed at genuine local needs outside settlements. I am satisfied that adequate provision is available within the Plan and that no modification is necessary.

*Relaxation of the hierarchy - 1120*

5.64.47 The objectors' concerns have been examined in several sections of my report. To my mind, a relaxation of the settlement hierarchy would lead to housing in unsustainable locations; also to development that would erode the rural character and appearance of the countryside. At the same time, I consider that adequate provision has been made for affordable housing. For example, under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing), affordable housing could be built adjacent to established rural settlements in circumstances where market houses (and the related land values) would not be permitted. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Land at Breinton Lee, Hereford - 1181*

5.64.48 In Section 5.3 of my report, I conclude that land in the vicinity of Kings Acre Road is a candidate for inclusion within the settlement boundary of Hereford. It does not fall within a smaller settlement such as Swainshill. However, the

Breinton Lee land falls outside the settlement boundary. No modification of Policy H6 or the supporting text is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.64/1 In Table 4, combine the figures for 2001-2006 (668 dwelling as corrected) and 2006-2011 (427 dwellings as corrected) into a single column for 2001-2011.

5.64/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.65 HOUSING IN SMALLER SETTLEMENTS (SITE BASED ISSUES) - POLICY H6

### Objections

P653/1494	Mr B McIlwrick
P653/1490	Mr B McIlwrick
P971/2791	Monkland and Stretford Parish Council
P470/972	Dr D G Jeffery
P471/973	Dr J M Barnes
P802/2108	Kings Acre Residents Association
P1189/3766	Breinton Parish Council
P381/816	Messrs D J and I R Powell
P980/2928	Mr V Gethin
P981/2930	Mr D Price

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The extent of development in Burley Gate is far too limited. (653)
- Development in Burley Gate should be encouraged. (653)
- Infilling in Monkland should not be allowed. (971, 470, 471)
- Swainshill cannot be accurately defined. (802)
- Swainshill should be removed from the list of smaller settlements. (1189)
- Land which has been previously developed in Hereford / Swainshill should be developed before other greenfield sites. (381)
- Swainshill should be listed as at least a smaller settlement. (980)
- Upton Bishop should be listed as at least a smaller settlement. (981)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Extent of development at Burley Gate - 653*

5.65.1 Burley Gate has a fairly small population and a limited range of facilities. It does not qualify for categorisation as a main village. As such, I consider that development should be limited to the circumstances described in Policy H6 and the supporting text. Infilling in accordance with the policy would be permitted within

the settlement notwithstanding the absence of a settlement boundary. In my opinion, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Encouraging development in Burley Gate - 653*

5.65.2As indicated above, Burley Gate has a limited population and range of facilities. It is not a location where development other than for limited local needs should be encouraged. I appreciate that there are a number of services that should be maintained. However, there is no evidence that local services would be unviable without some modest growth. Nor is there any evidence to suggest that the method of defining smaller settlements is flawed. I appreciate that development would be restricted; but this is appropriate in the circumstances of the case.

*Infilling in Monkland – 971, 471, 472*

5.65.3The objectors are concerned that infilling would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the village; that it would be overcrowded ribbon development; and that any remaining open spaces would be destroyed. However, if there were any significant problems in these respects, I would expect planning permission for individual proposal to be refused in line with other provisions of the Plan. Policy H6 does not convey an automatic right to permission. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Definition of Swainshill - 802*

5.65.4I do not consider that inclusion of Swainshill as a smaller settlement would be to the detriment of residents living in the vicinity. All applications would still need to be considered on their merits. Any proposal harmful to local residents could be refused.

*Removing Swainshill from the list of smaller settlements - 1189*

5.65.5I appreciate that confusion reigns about the location and extent of Swainshill. So far as Breinton Parish Council is concerned, the location of Cherry Orchard relative to Swainshill is a point in question. This is a matter that I have discussed in Section 5.3 of my report. To my mind, Swainshill lies to the west of Breinton Lane. Cherry Orchard is associated with the outskirts of Hereford itself rather than with a separate smaller settlement. Whilst the settlement boundary of Hereford still needs careful consideration, this does not mean that Swainshill, further to the west, cannot be regarded as a separate smaller settlement.

*Previously developed land in Hereford / Swainshill - 381*

5.65.6I would expect priority to be given to the most sustainable development option in any particular location. Normally this would involve maximising the use of previously developed land. This is an aim of Policy S3 and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Swainshill as a smaller settlement - 980*

5.65.7Swainshill is listed as a smaller settlement. Although there is no need for a settlement boundary, for reasons discussed above, further development in accordance with Policy H6 would be permissible. With regard to the restricted size of dwellings, this is discussed in Paragraphs 5.65.1 to 5.65.7 of my report. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Upton Bishop as a smaller settlement - 980*

5.65.8 Upton Bishop is listed as a smaller settlement. Although there is no need for a settlement boundary, for reasons discussed above, further development in accordance with Policy H6 would be permissible. With regard to the restricted size of dwellings, this is discussed in Paragraphs 5.65.1 to 5.65.7 of my report. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

**RECOMMENDATION**

5.65/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

**5.66 ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED SMALLER SETTLEMENTS – POLICY H6**

**Objections**

P113/313	Border Group Parish Council
P425/886	Mr J C Voysey
P1104/3534	Mr M Nahorniak
P757/1878	Aymestrey Parish Council
P605/6799	Three Counties Planning
P997/2975	Mr and Mrs C Challenger
P605/6793	Three Counties Planning
P832/2165	C G Property
P245/515	Mr R Waller
P883/2498	Chairman of Bredenbury Primary School Board of Governors
P999/2999	Mr D Phillips
P605/6801	Three Counties Planning
P946/2741	Mr M B Roberts
P605/6791	Three Counties Planning
P906/2618	Mr and Mrs D Headon
P605/6802	Three Counties Planning
P605/6797	Three Counties Planning
P1196/3816	Mr G C Davies
P1197/3817	Mrs M A Davies
P368/786	Mr R Hughes
P605/6792	Three Counties Planning
P604/1360	Mr T Fry
P742/2019	Ms K Palmer
P954/2758	Mr and Mrs J Fry
P605/6794	Three Counties Planning
P928/2688	Mr and Mrs M Phillips
P605/6795	Three Counties Planning
P1026/3145	M Colwell
P605/6790	Three Counties Planning
P982/2933	Mr J Kendrick
P985/2937	Mr N Chamberlain
P986/2939	Mr and Mrs N Donovan
P605/6796	Three Counties Planning
P380/811	Trustees of the Treago Estate
P1184/3749	Mrs R Barnett

P224/487	Mr K Morrill
W12/604	Titley Farms
P636/1414	Mr G Price
P605/6800	Three Counties Planning
P10/5448	Miton Limited
W196/522	Mr R Rock
W196/500130	Mr R Rock
P103/297	Eardisley Group Parish Council
P104/299	Mr B J Deem

### **Summary of Objections / Issue**

- Whether additional settlements should be designated as smaller settlements.  
(All objections)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Introduction*

5.66.1 The Council's approach to the location of most rural development is intended to follow the guidance in Paragraph 3 of PPS 7. This states that, "Away from larger urban areas, planning authorities should focus most new development in or near to local service centres where employment, housing (including affordable housing), services and other facilities can be provided close together. This should help to ensure these facilities are served by public transport and provide improved opportunities for access by walking and cycling. These centres (which might be a county town, a single large village or a group of villages) should be identified in the development plan as the preferred location for such development."

5.66.2 The PPS continues by saying, at Paragraph 4, "Planning authorities should set out in LDDs their policies for allowing some limited development in, or next to, rural settlements that are not designated as local service centres, in order to meet local business and community needs and to maintain the vitality of these communities. In particular, authorities should be supportive of small-scale development of this nature where it provides the most sustainable option in villages that are remote from, and have poor public transport links with, service centres".

5.66.3 The approach in Herefordshire (in addition to allowing development in Hereford and the market towns) is to designate 48 "main villages". These are the service centres envisaged in PPS 7 where most new development in the rural areas would take place. This would be on allocated and non-allocated sites within the defined settlement boundary of the main village. In addition, and in accordance with Paragraph 4 of PPS 7, the Council has identified 34 named "smaller settlements". Here, some limited development would be permitted on infill plots.

5.66.4 In identifying the smaller settlements, the Council has applied a number of criteria. These are partly based on a point scoring system in relation to existing facilities such as public houses, churches, shop / post offices, village hall, school, bank, medical facilities and sports facilities. The availability of important local employment opportunities was also scored.

5.66.5 In the light of the above, the criteria needed to qualify as a smaller settlement are:

- population of between 100 and 249; and
- combined facilities / employment provision score of more than 1.5 points.

5.66.6 It appears to me that the criteria selected by the Council and the methodology adopted are eminently sensible. They focus on the considerations most relevant to the identification of smaller delivery points throughout the county. Application of the chosen criteria will also ensure a reasonable spread of development across the county, meeting local needs and supporting local services. Many settlements identified in existing local plans will, however, no longer have the status of the new smaller settlement. In addition, it is recognised that lack of growth places limitations on community life and support for local services.

*Adforton – 113, 425*

5.66.7 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Adforton to be classified as a smaller settlement. However, affordable housing may be permitted within or adjacent to established rural settlements under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Allensmore - 1104*

5.66.8 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Allensmore to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition the population is too low. It is stated that Allensmore was identified as a smaller settlement in the South Herefordshire District Local Plan. Be that as it may, policy has been reviewed such that most development is directed to the urban areas. The rural areas are intended to cater for local needs. To include settlements that do not meet the relevant criteria would undermine the housing strategy. Excessive development would take place in relatively unsustainable locations and the rural character of the countryside would be eroded.

*Aymestrey - 757*

5.66.9 The population of Aymestrey is too low for it to be classified as a smaller settlement. However, affordable housing may be permitted within or adjacent to established rural settlements under Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Bromsash – 605, 997*

5.66.10 The population of Bromsash is too low for it to be classified as a smaller settlement. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Burmarsh – 605, 832*

5.66.11 The population of Burmarsh is too low for it to be classified as a smaller settlement. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary. Irrespective of whether development could be achieved without unacceptable impacts on the environment or the existing community, Burmarsh is not a sustainable location. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Crockers Ash - 245*

5.66.12 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Crockers Ash to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition the population is too low. Notwithstanding the presence of previously developed land,

it is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary.

*Edwyn Ralph - 883*

5.66.13I applaud the efforts of the governors and headmaster of Bredenbury Primary School in their attempts to secure the future of the school by boosting the local population. However, notwithstanding the presence of the school, this is not a location where development should be encouraged. The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Edwyn Ralph to be classified as a smaller settlement. In this regard, Bredenbury itself is a more appropriate location for limited development.

*Fawley / Kings Caple - 999*

5.66.14The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Kings Caple to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition the population is too low. In this regard, I do not consider that Kings Caple should be treated as part of Fawley. To my mind, the settlements are quite separate and distinct.

*Grafton – 605, 946*

5.66.15 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Grafton to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition the population is too low. No alternative population estimates have been put forward. Further, I do not consider that the scale and choice of local employment is significant. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Harewood End – 605, 906*

5.66.16The population of Harewood End is too low for it to be classified as a smaller settlement. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary. In this regard, I do not consider that it is appropriate to look at the population of the wider area. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Holmer - 605*

5.66.17The built-up parts of Holmer are included within the settlement boundary of Hereford. The remaining areas of the parish contain a number of groups of houses scattered along minor roads. In terms of Policy H6, there is no separate settlement with the appropriate population or amenities.

*Lower Egleton / Newtown Crossroads – 605, 604, 742, 954*

5.66.18The population of Lower Egleton / Newtown Crossroads is too low for it to be classified as a smaller settlement. A low population suggests very low local needs, the essential reason for new housing in rural areas. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary. I appreciate that life in the village and the sense of community are limited by the size of the settlement. However, I see no reason why the village would “die” without further growth. Further, there is no evidence to suggest that local services would become unviable without modest growth in the village. In this regard, I would expect passing trade to be an important consideration.

*Maund Bryan, Bodenham – 1196, 1197*

5.66.19 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Maund Bryan, Bodenham to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition the population is too low. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Merryhill - 368*

5.66.20 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Merryhill to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition the population is too low. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Orcop – 605, 928*

5.66.21 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Orcop to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition, the population is too low. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary.

*Penrose Green – 605, 1026*

5.66.22 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Penrose Green to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition, the population is too low. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary.

*St Owens Cross – 605, 982, 985, 986*

5.66.23 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for St Owens Cross to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition, the population in the village is too low. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary. I appreciate that there is a small amount of employment in the area. However, I do not consider that the scale and choice of local employment is significant. Notwithstanding the previous status of the village, and the support that would be provided to local services, no modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*St Weonards – 605, 380*

5.66.24 The population of St Weonards is too low for it to be classified as a smaller settlement. A low population suggests very low local needs, the essential reason for new housing in rural areas. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary.

*Tillington - 1184*

5.66.25 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Tillington to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition, the population is too low. It is not a location where development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary.

*Tillington Common - 224*

5.66.26 The number of facilities / access to employment opportunities is not sufficient for Tillington Common to be classified as a smaller settlement. In addition, the population is too low. It is not a location where, in the future, development would be encouraged with or without a settlement boundary.

*Titley – 12, 636*

5.66.27 The population of Titley is too low for it to be classified as a smaller settlement. A low population suggests very low local needs, the essential reason for new housing in rural areas. Further, there is no evidence to suggest that local services would become unviable without modest growth in the village. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Wellington Heath – 10, 196*

5.66.28 Wellington Heath meets the criteria for classification as a smaller settlement and has been listed as such in the Revised Deposit Draft. As discussed above, it does not qualify for status as a main village. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Whitney-on-Wye - 103*

5.66.29 The population of Whitney-on-Wye is too low for it to be classified as a smaller settlement. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Yarkhill - 104*

5.66.30 I appreciate that there is a range of local service and employment opportunities in the Yarkhill / Newtown Crossroads / Lower Egleton area. However, the population of the area is too low for it to be classified as a smaller settlement. A low population suggests very low local needs, the essential reason for new housing in rural areas. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.66/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.67 HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OUTSIDE SETTLEMENTS - POLICY H7 AND PARAGRAPH 5.4.72**

### **Objections**

P11/550	Wall, James and Davies (Solicitors)
P253/5232	Withington Parish Council
W351/3044	Brilley Parish Council
W351/3045	Brilley Parish Council
P355/671	Titley and District Group Parish Council
P444/923	Robert Hitchins Ltd
P605/3029	Three Counties Planning
P685/1688	Tufnell Town and Country Planning
P776/1936	Sutton Parish Council
P846/2230	Country Land and Business Association
P898/2544	Herefordshire Green Party
P921/2657	Mr P Hill
P1074/3250	Longtown Group Parish Council
P1102/3511	H P Bulmer Ltd
P50/232	Mr R Hockley
P187/434	WO and OE Price
P203/444	Messrs MJ, AB and RG Griffiths

P245/516	Mr R Waller
P653/1496	Mr B McIlwrick
P711/3072	Mr F Hemming
P742/1794	Ms K Palmer
P923/2665	Messrs D, R and J Ewens
P1120/3612	Mr B and Ms M Richardson
P1181/3735	Mr F Hanbury

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- There should be no need to site development within a settlement wherever possible. (11)
- Whether housing should be allowed in the countryside outside settlements. (253, 355, 605, 776, 846, 1102, 203, 50, 203)
- Provisions affecting new rural enterprises should be relaxed. (351)
- Reference to smaller settlements should be deleted. (444)
- There should be refinement of the provisions relating to replacement buildings. (685)
- Policy H7 should include additional exceptions. (898, 923)
- The policy is purely subjective. (921)
- The reinstatement of abandoned cottages should be allowed. (1074)
- Provision should be made for local workers. (1074)
- The open countryside should be interpreted in a more realistic way. (50)
- The criteria for the development or redevelopment of sites adjacent to or close to existing settlements should be relaxed. (187, 653, 1181)
- Small scale development opportunities on previously developed land should not be overlooked. (245)
- Housing for workers in certain rural enterprises should be allowed. (711)
- Employment other than agriculture or forestry should be given equal weight. (742)
- Policy H7 should be relaxed. (1120)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Siting development within a settlement - 11*

5.67.1 At the revised deposit stage, the requirement to site development within a settlement wherever possible was removed from the Plan. The objection has been met and no modification is necessary.

#### *Allowing housing in the countryside - 253, 355, 605, 776, 846, 1102, 203, 50, 203*

5.67.2 To my mind, there would be two main effects of allowing development in the countryside outside settlements. First of all, development would be taking place in unsustainable locations. They would be locations more remote from local services such as schools and shops. Use of the car would undoubtedly increase and there would be less opportunity for using non-car modes of travel.

5.67.3 Secondly, there would be a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the countryside. It is often argued that small, carefully sited houses or infill developments would make no difference particularly where related to clusters of existing houses. However, these could be repeated too often. Gradually, the rural nature of the agricultural landscape would be eroded by built development in unsustainable locations. Even houses on the edge of settlements would be further away from the centre of activity and would result in the incremental loss of the undeveloped countryside.

5.67.4 I appreciate that the policy will place limitations on community life within rural parishes and the support available for remote services. In addition, I acknowledge that there may be special circumstances that favour exceptions to the policy. However, to my mind, and in accordance with the settlement hierarchy and the Council's development strategy, the general rule should be as stated in Policy H7.

*Provisions affecting new rural enterprises - 351*

5.67.5 At the inquiry, a number of amendments to Policy H7 and Paragraph 5.4.72 were agreed between the objector and the Council. These amendments are reflected in the recommendations at the end of this section of my report. In my opinion, the amendments would give appropriate emphasis and definition to the objectives of the Council. No further modifications are necessary.

*Reference to smaller settlements - 444*

5.67.6 The objector's essential concern is that development in smaller settlements should not be allowed. As such, Policy H7 would cover housing development outside the urban areas and the main villages. However, in the earlier discussion, I have accepted that appropriateness of a policy covering smaller settlements. No related modification of Policy H7 is necessary.

*Replacement buildings - 685*

5.67.7 To my mind, it is reasonable for a replacement building to be comparable in size and scale with the existing building. As such, there would be limits on the cumulative effect on the character and appearance of the area; also on the provision, without adequate justification, of larger dwellings and a potentially greater number of people living in unsustainable locations.

*Additional exceptions to the policy – 898, 923*

5.67.8 Policy H7 already lists the main exceptions to the policy, for example, agricultural workers' dwellings permissible under Policy H8. However, there is no reference to rural exception housing under Policy H10. To my mind, Policy H7 would be more complete if rural exception housing was also listed.

5.67.9 With regard to developments based on the highest ecological principles, such forms of development do not have a special functional requirement to be located in the open countryside. The policy lists the main exceptions to the settlement policy. However, I would expect less common developments to be considered on their merits.

*Subjective nature of the policy - 921*

5.67.10 The objector states that the policy is purely subjective and does not take into cognisance the tremendous windfall allocation. For my part, I do not consider that the policy is unduly subjective. It sets out clearly the circumstances under

which housing in the countryside outside settlements would be allowed. I would expect completions under the policy to be few in number and to have minimal impact on the windfall allocation.

*Reinstatement of abandoned cottages - 1074*

5.67.11I do not consider that, as a general rule, the reinstatement of cottages should be allowed. To do so would be likely to lead to the perpetuation of instances of poor planning including the siting of developments in unsustainable locations.

*Provision for local workers - 1074*

5.67.12The objector indicates that provision needs to be made for local workers employed within the community or for farmers' children vital to the sustainability of a home farm. For my part, I would draw attention to Policy H8 (Agricultural and forestry dwellings and dwellings associated with rural businesses) and Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). I consider that these policies afford appropriate exemption to the general restriction on housing in the countryside.

*Interpreting the open countryside in a more realistic way - 50*

5.67.13I would always expect development to be visually attractive. This is safeguarded by the various policies of the Plan. However, as stated above, the character and appearance of the countryside could be eroded if unjustified developments were allowed.

5.67.14There is allowance for "people-centred" planning, notably in the form of the affordable housing provisions. Be that as it may, the thrust of policy is to direct development to sustainable locations. In general, this excludes the open countryside, that is, those areas outside the urban areas and the named settlements. In my opinion, Policy H7 is a sound component of the Council's rural settlement strategy and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Development of sites adjacent to or close to existing settlements – 187, 653, 1181*

5.67.15I do not consider that there is any place for a relaxation of Policy H7 on sites adjacent to or close to existing settlements. It is eminently sensible to be clear about where one policy ends and another begins. For example, the land within a settlement is deemed to be in a more sustainable location where development of an appropriate design and layout would be in keeping with the built-up character and appearance of the area. Beyond the boundaries of such settlements, the surroundings are predominantly rural and the location less sustainable. Different policies should apply. This is as set out in the UDP. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Small scale development opportunities on previously developed land - 245*

5.67.16It will be important to maximise the use of previously developed land. However, that land has to be in the right place. It would not be appropriate to encourage the redevelopment of land in unsustainable locations. The position is safeguarded by Policy H7 and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Housing for workers in certain rural enterprises - 711*

5.67.17I appreciate that the objector is looking for flexibility in the application of rural housing policy to workers in small scale horticulture, agriculture, agro-forestry, forestry enterprises and the like. However, as stated in Annex A of PPS 7, isolated new houses in the countryside require special justification for planning

permission to be granted. In my opinion, Policy H7 sets the appropriate context. Provision for exceptions is made by Policy H8 (Agricultural and forestry dwellings and dwellings associated with rural businesses) and Policy H10 (Rural exception housing). I do not consider that further concessions would be appropriate.

*Employment other than agriculture and forestry - 742*

5.67.18 To my mind, the Council's policies give equal weight to employment other than agriculture and forestry. For example, Policy H7 covers "rural enterprises"; and Policy H8 embraces not just agricultural and forestry dwellings but "dwellings associated with rural businesses" as well. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Relaxation of Policy H7 - 1120*

5.67.19 The objectors would wish to see more plentiful provision for affordable housing; also low impact housing. In this respect, the policy lists the main exceptions to the settlement policy. These include affordable housing provided in accordance with Policy H10. I would expect less common types of development to be considered on their merits bearing in mind the overriding principle of the sustainability of the location.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.67/1 In exception 2 to Policy H7, delete ", including tourism and farm diversification schemes".

5.67/2 In exception 2 to Policy H7, add "establishment or" before "growth".

5.67/3 In Paragraph 5.4.72, after "farm diversification requirement", add "or accompanies the establishment or growth of a rural enterprise".

5.67/4 Add a new exception to Policy H7: "it is rural exception housing in accordance with Policy H10".

5.67/5 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.68 AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY DWELLINGS AND DWELLINGS ASSOCIATED WITH RURAL BUSINESS - POLICY H8

### Objections

P44/217	National Farmers' Union
P635/1518	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P846/2231	Country Land and Business Association
P1074/3252	Longtown Group Parish Council
P734/1779	R B Kilvert

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether dwellings should be subject to a size limitation. (44, 635, 846)
- There is a lack of definition of rural businesses. (635)
- A more flexible limit for temporary accommodation is needed. (635, 846)

- The problem of housing itinerant agricultural workers is not addressed. (635)
- Whether the proposed occupancy restrictions are appropriate. (846)
- Account should be taken of income from part-time off-farm work. (1074)
- Agricultural ties should be compatible with the requirements of mortgage lenders. (1074)
- Marketing property "at a realistic price" is open to interpretation. (734)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Size limitation – 44, 635, 846*

5.68.1 In the Revised Deposit Draft, the link to Policy H7 and the related size limitation has been dropped. The gist of the objections has been met and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Definition of rural businesses - 635*

5.68.2 At the inquiry, the objector did not wish to pursue this part of the objection. There is inadequate justification for a modification of the Plan.

#### *Flexible limit for temporary accommodation – 635, 846*

5.68.3 Under Annex A of PPS 7, one of the requirements in relation to an agricultural dwelling is that the unit and the agricultural activity have been established for at least three years. As such, permission for permanent accommodation for a new enterprise would not normally be given and housing may need to be provided in temporary accommodation. Policy H8 states that temporary accommodation may be granted for a "maximum" period of three years. In these terms, there is likely to be a tension between the Plan and PPS 7.

5.68.4 Paragraph 13 of Annex A of PPS 7 continues by saying that successive extensions to a temporary permission over a period of more than three years should not normally be granted. Incorporation of similar wording in Policy H8 would resolve the tension and is hereby recommended.

#### *Itinerant agricultural workers - 635*

5.68.5 To my mind, it is not necessary to deal specifically with the issue of accommodation for itinerant agricultural workers in the development plan. I appreciate that there have been a couple of high profile cases within the county. However, I am of the opinion that the actual instances of this type of development are few in number and that specific provision is not warranted.

5.68.6 In reaching this conclusion, I have had regard to the policies against which related development would be assessed. For example, under Policy LA1 (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), development will only be permitted where, amongst other things, it would not adversely affect the intrinsic natural beauty of the landscape. Similarly, under Policy LA2 (Landscape character), development having an adverse effect on the overall character of the landscape will not be permitted. To my mind, these are strong controls.

5.68.7 It appears to me that, where non-permitted development is involved, adequate controls are available elsewhere within the Plan and that housing for itinerant workers could be considered on its merits. In this regard, I am aware that objectors are disappointed with previous decisions of the Council in this

regard. Be that as it may, I am satisfied that the policies in the UDP provide an adequate basis for determining future planning applications.

*Occupancy restrictions - 846*

5.68.8 The objector indicates that tying an agricultural dwelling to associated land or buildings or putting an agricultural restriction on existing farmhouses should apply "only in exceptional circumstances." However, I do not see why any exceptional circumstances test should apply. Isolated new houses in the countryside require special justification. It will be important to ensure that the stock of dwellings available for occupancy by agricultural or similar workers is not diminished. Conditions and obligations will, in any event, need to satisfy the tests set out in the related Government circulars. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Income from off-farm work - 1074*

5.68.9 Paragraph 3 (ii) of Annex A of PPS 7 indicates that the need for an agricultural dwelling should, amongst other things, be related to "a full-time worker, or one who is primarily employed in agriculture and does not relate to a part-time requirement." The suggestion of Longtown Group Parish Council would be contrary to this statement. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Compatibility with the requirements of mortgage lenders - 1074*

5.68.10 I can see that mortgage lenders may be wary of properties subject to agricultural occupancy conditions. However, where there is special justification for an agricultural worker's dwelling, it will be necessary to ensure that the dwelling is kept available to meet the on-going need. In this regard, occupancy conditions are necessary and no modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Marketing property at a realistic price - 734*

5.68.11 I am aware that the process of removing agricultural occupancy conditions is open to abuse. In this regard, I can see the advantage of more detailed guidance. However, to include details on matters such as valuations and marketing periods in the policy could be unduly inflexible and fail to take account of changing circumstances. All in all, I am satisfied that the policy covers the relevant matters. It would be necessary to provide evidence of genuine attempts to market the property with the occupancy condition in place; that those attempts had been unsuccessful; and that the property was being offered at a realistic price. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.68/1 In Policy H8, after the phrase "may be granted for a maximum period of three years", add the following: "Successive extensions will not normally be granted." Delete the final sentence of the same paragraph.

5.68/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.69 AFFORDABLE HOUSING - POLICY H9 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.5.1 TO 5.5.13

### Objections

P415/870	Crest Strategic Projects Ltd
P444/924	Robert Hitchins Ltd
P605/3030	Three Counties Planning
P635/1519	Campaign to Protect Rural England
P754/10559	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P769/1916	Cradley Parish Plan Project and VDS Steering Group
P790/1981	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P790/1982	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P790/1984	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P790/6828	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P809/2090	Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce
P917/2632	Camanoe Estates Ltd
P917/6856	Camanoe Estates Ltd
P975/2883	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd
P977/2920	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/11010	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P988/2957	English Courtyard
P1000/3012	House Builders' Federation
P1017/3135	Lower Bullingham Parish Council
P1068/4946	Cradley Parish Council
P1089/3450	Walker Stuart Planning Solutions
P1169/3706	BT PLC
P1169/4250	BT PLC
RP1489/10964	M F Freeman Ltd
P435/901	Mrs J A Throssell
W460/955	Ms S Bond
P597/1287	Mr and Mrs S Chadd
P653/1497	Mr B McIlwrick

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether appropriate thresholds are being used. (415, 444, 917, 975, 977, 1000, 1089, 1169, 1489)
- Whether the scope of the affordable housing provisions should be widened. (605)
- There should be further calculation of the demand for affordable housing. (635)
- Provision of affordable housing should be confined to registered social landlords. (635)
- Policy should encourage greater provision of affordable housing in rural areas. (635)
- Thresholds should be treated as maxima; also decided on a site specific basis. (754)
- To make a more significant contribution to affordable housing, the size of infill plots and new dwellings in main villages should be restricted.
- It is inappropriate to apply parish based policies on a district wide scale. (790)

- It is not reasonable to expect developers to undertake housing needs surveys. (790)
- There should be a target percentage for provision on windfall sites. (790)
- The Council should be working to consolidate the housing needs assessment. (790)
- No account is taken of sites allocated for mixed use developments. (809)
- Whether affordable housing should be available in perpetuity. (975)
- There should be flexibility on brownfield sites. (977)
- There is no mention of housing for the elderly. (988)
- There is a need for a genuine long term plan for locals / first time housing. (1017)
- The threshold should be reduced to four dwellings in rural areas. (1068)
- Land at Brimfield could meet the affordable housing need. (435, 597)
- A quantitative minimum on a per site basis is inappropriate. (460)
- There should be further encouragement for affordable housing on sites in and adjacent to smaller settlements. (653)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

*Appropriateness of the thresholds – 415, 444, 917, 975, 977, 1000, 1089, 1169, 1489*

5.69.1A number of objectors have questioned the appropriateness of using thresholds different from those set out in Circular 06/98, Planning and Affordable Housing. In this regard, Policy H9 of the Plan applies in larger settlements to sites with an estimated capacity of 15 or more dwellings or more than 0.5 ha in extent. However, Paragraph 10 of the circular indicates that the policy should only be applied to housing developments of 25 or more dwellings or residential sites of 1 ha or more.

5.69.2The circular continues by saying that it may be appropriate to adopt a lower threshold where exceptional local constraints are demonstrated. This is acknowledged by objectors; also that practice and emerging policy are supportive of the Council's approach. Nevertheless, it is felt that exceptional local constraints have not been demonstrated.

5.69.3For my part, I consider that the overriding consideration is the absolute number of households in need of affordable housing. The Herefordshire Housing Need Study 1999 (Document G 2) indicates that there is a requirement to provide some 2,300 affordable dwellings over the plan period. Updated data from the 2001 Housing Needs Survey (Document G 3) indicates that up to 1,114 dwellings are needed in Hereford and the market town over the period 2001-2011. The figure for the rural areas is up to 985 dwellings. To my mind, the robustness of the information available is adequate for the purposes of policy formulation.

5.69.4The Council's General Statement on Affordable Housing (Document J 26), at Paragraph 6.2.2, indicates that the urban need of about 1,100 affordable dwellings could be met if approximately 35% affordable housing provision was made on all

qualifying sites, in particular those with an estimated capacity of 15 dwellings or more. In a sense this is the main justification for the thresholds adopted by the Council.

5.69.5I support the approach adopted by the Council. I am aware that a threshold of 15 dwellings as opposed to 25 increases affordable housing numbers by nearly 27% and affected sites by 88% (Document J 26, Paragraph 6.2.1). There is a much better chance of meeting affordable housing needs with the proposed thresholds in place. I consider that all the allocated sites are suitable for provision of the order indicated. The particular circumstances obtaining on these and other sites can be taken into account, as appropriate, at the application stage.

5.69.6Only four of the allocated sites listed in Table 2 of the Plan have an estimated dwelling capacity of less than 25 dwellings in any event; and three of these have either completed development or planning permission. The main additional contribution would come from qualifying windfall sites. The remaining allocated site, land attached to Ashfields, has an estimated capacity of only 10 dwellings. However, the Council is prepared to be flexible on provision on small sites. I do not envisage any particular problems in providing a reasonable mix of housing type and size.

5.69.7In terms of the rural areas, it is clear that affordable housing needs would not be met even at the thresholds envisaged by the Council. However, I believe that to require affordable housing provision on developments of 6 or more dwellings or sites of more than 0.2 ha is a reasonable compromise that would help maximise provision. A variety of problems are likely to militate against provision on yet smaller open market developments.

5.69.8In all the circumstances, I support the approach adopted by the Council. To my mind, there is adequate justification for the adoption of standards different from the headline thresholds in Circular 06/98. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Widening the scope of the affordable housing provisions - 605*

5.69.9The objector envisages a situation where land could be made available at low cost to those with proven local connections in smaller settlements and in the open countryside. On such land, a form of market affordable housing could be provided and self build or "another benefit" would be available.

5.69.10For my part, and in situations where housing associations are involved, I can appreciate that the limitations of shared ownership could be a disincentive to participation. However, the provisions of the Plan mean that affordable housing could be provided in a number of ways. This could include low cost market housing and self build housing where appropriate. Most qualifying householders are likely to have family or other local connections in any event. In short, I consider that sufficient flexibility is available within the various policies of the Council. To widen the scope of the provisions could undermine the principles of sustainable development.

*Further calculation of demand - 635*

5.69.11I would expect the need for affordable housing to be the subject of continuous monitoring and review. However, I am satisfied that the work carried out so far underpins the provisions of the Plan. The initial Herefordshire Housing Need Study 1999 (Document G 2) has been continually reviewed. Such work indicates that the factors governing the generation of new emergent households in

need of affordable housing have remained fairly constant. I appreciate that the estimates are not exact and can only provide a broad indication of actual need. Nevertheless, in my opinion, no modification of the Plan is necessary at this stage.

*Confining provision to registered social landlords - 635*

5.69.12 I do not consider that affordable housing should only be provided by registered social landlords. Indeed, given the levels of available finance, only a fraction of the need would be met if provision was restricted in this way. Government policy makes no distinction with regard to provision by the private sector or by registered social landlords. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Encouragement of greater provision in rural areas - 635*

5.69.13 The CPRE would wish to see revision of the affordable housing provisions to allow provision of small numbers of affordable houses whenever need can be shown to exist. Suggestions include not allocating greenfield sites in main villages for market housing; requiring 50% affordable housing provision on qualifying windfall sites; restricting development exclusively to affordable housing in the smaller settlements; and exploring every option by the low-cost market route.

5.69.14 For my part, I recognise that affordable housing need within the rural areas is not going to be met. There is a case for exploring additional options. However, I consider that restrictions on market housing would not be appropriate. The provision of market housing is a way in which affordable housing can be brought forward and subsidised. In addition, it helps meet the legitimate local needs of those who can afford to purchase or rent housing on the open market.

5.69.15 With regard to increasing to 50% the threshold for provision on qualifying windfall sites, there is a real danger that high targets would act as a disincentive to investment and development. High thresholds on larger sites have been sanctioned in other circumstances. However, taking the example of a development of six houses where three would have to be affordable, my own experience suggests that appropriate returns would not be available.

5.69.16 In terms of low-cost market housing, the Plan already encourages such provision by restricting the size of houses in rural areas. In addition, it appears to me that the UDP sets out a framework that is supportive of and favourable to the provision of affordable housing in a variety of circumstances. As such, more landowners may be encouraged to make land available for affordable housing developments. The availability of funding, to housing associations in particular, will remain an on-going problem and a limiting factor in future provision.

*Maximum / site specific thresholds - 754*

5.69.17 I see no problem with expressing targets as an indicative percentage. This would be consistent with the advice in Paragraph 9 of Circular 06/98 and would be the figure around which discussion would take place. However, to suggest that the figure should be "up to" 35% would enable provision at any lower figure and would not achieve the objective of making an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing supply.

5.69.18 As to the suggestion of deciding thresholds on a site specific basis, I have already supported the approach adopted by the Council. Housing needs surveys taken since 1999 have served to confirm the Council's stance. A target of 35%, applied to all qualifying sites, is entirely appropriate. A lower figure could be

adopted on individual sites if circumstances such as abnormal development costs dictated.

*Restricting the size of infill plots and new dwellings in main villages - 769*

5.69.19 It is possible that restricting the size of infill plots and dwellings in the main villages would result in an increased number of affordable houses. However, there are other legitimate interests to be met as well. Bearing in mind that the most effective and efficient use of the site area available would be required under Policy H15 (Density), I do not consider that any additional restrictions would be appropriate.

*Applying parish based policies on a district wide scale - 790*

5.69.20 I consider that the gist of this objection could be met by a small modification of Paragraph 5.5.5. I am recommending that, at the end of the paragraph, reference should be made to lack of affordable housing within the county rather than within the parish.

*The undertaking of housing needs surveys by developers - 790*

5.69.21 To my mind, Paragraph 5.5.8 does not indicate that developers would necessarily have to undertake housing needs surveys. Indeed, the Council employs a dedicated Housing Needs Officer to provide information to support proposals. No modification of the text is necessary.

*Target percentage for provision on windfall sites - 790*

5.69.22 In the Revised Deposit Draft, the wording has been changed to indicate that affordable housing at an indicative target of 35% will be required on suitable windfall sites. I consider that the gist of the objection has been met and that no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Consolidating the housing needs assessment - 790*

5.69.23 I do not consider that any modification of the Plan is needed in response to this objection. Assessments additional to the 1999 Housing Needs Study have been carried out and further studies will follow. Amongst other things, these provide information on needs in particular areas.

*Mixed use developments - 809*

5.69.24 I would expect the affordable housing requirements to apply to mixed use developments with a residential component at or above the thresholds stated in Policy H9. In negotiating the actual amount of provision, it will be possible to take into account issues such as development economics.

*Affordable housing in perpetuity - 975*

5.69.25 It appears to me that the UDP is geared towards the provision of a certain amount of affordable housing. Once a contribution to the total requirement has been made, it seems eminently sensible to make sure that the resource is not lost. As such, I support the requirement for affordable housing, once provided, to be enjoyed in perpetuity. This approach is consistent with the advice in PPG 3. For example, Paragraph 1 of Annex B refers to providing affordable housing on rural exception sites to meet local needs "in perpetuity".

5.69.26 I appreciate that low cost market housing, not tied to a legal agreement, could help meet local needs. However, where provision is specifically intended to

contribute towards affordable housing targets, I consider that the benefits should be available in perpetuity. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Flexibility on brownfield sites - 977*

5.69.27 In my Recommendation 5.8/2, I suggest a revision to Paragraph 5.4.5 to make clear that site suitability and local circumstances, including site economics, will also be taken into account in considering individual schemes. Additional information on development costs is also included in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (Document K 12). I consider that the point has been addressed adequately and that no additional flexibility needs to be incorporated into Policy H9.

*Housing for the elderly - 988*

5.69.28 I appreciate that housing for the elderly is an important aspect of housing need. However, I do not consider that specific policy provision is necessary in this regard. So far as market housing is concerned, there is no evidence that suggests to me that an appropriate response is not being made by developers in this field and that any particular intervention is needed. The scheme proposed by the objector at Colwall is an example of an appropriate market response.

5.69.29 In terms of affordable housing, there are a variety of types of need. These include affordable housing in one form or another for the elderly. Nevertheless, I see no need for special mention. I would expect the needs of any particular sector to be revealed in surveys of the sort referred to in Paragraph 5.5.8. As appropriate, provision could be made by registered social landlords or other competent in this sort of development. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Long term plan for locals / first time housing - 1017*

5.69.30 In my opinion the needs of the rural indigenous population are being recognised through the housing needs surveys and addressed in the various provisions of the Plan. I do not see the response as one of "tacking a few houses on the end of some housing estate which are still too expensive for locals to buy". Provision is specifically geared towards meeting a quantified need at prices or rents that are truly affordable. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Reducing the threshold to four dwellings in rural areas - 1068*

5.69.31 It is apparent that reducing the threshold as suggested by the objector would have only a marginal effect on affordable housing provision. The Council suggests that, at best, an average of only about 17 dwellings a year would be achieved. On the other hand, there would be significant cost implications for developers. I would expect that many developments of four or five dwellings would be rendered unviable or that developers would be frightened off by the necessity to make affordable housing provision. I find that there is inadequate justification for modifying the Plan.

*Land at Brimfield – 435, 597*

5.69.32 I have dealt with the subject matter of these objections in Paragraph 5.40.31 of my report. No modification of the Plan is needed.

*Quantitative minimum on a per site basis - 460*

5.69.33 I do not consider that a quantitative minimum on a per site basis is inappropriate. If submitted schemes would have a deleterious effect on the

character of main villages and rural settlements I would expect planning permission to be refused.

*Further encouragement for affordable housing at smaller settlements - 653*

5.69.34 Affordable housing at settlements such as Burley Gate would be permissible under Policies H6 and H10. In the absence of any further justification, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.69/1 Change the final word of Paragraph 5.5.5 from "parish" to "county".
- 5.69/2 Change the numbering in the second part of Policy H9 to a), b) and c).
- 5.69/3 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.70 RURAL EXCEPTION HOUSING - POLICY H10 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.5.14 TO 5.5.18

### Objections

W351/3049	Brilley Parish Council
P605/3032	Three Counties Planning
P785/1949	Fownhope Parish Council
P790/1985	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P830/500227	Herefordshire Friends of the Earth
P830/500228	Herefordshire Friends of the Earth
P1074/3255	Longtown Group Parish Council
P1102/3510	H P Bulmer Ltd
P1102/10788	H P Bulmer Ltd
P1193/3783	Collier and Brain Ltd
P435/900	Mrs J A Throssell
P597/1288	Mr and Mrs S Chadd
P653/1499	Mr B McIlwrick
P653/10243	Mr B McIlwrick
P653/10358	Mr B McIlwrick
P711/3073	Mr F Hemming
P979/2927	Mr D C Morgan
P1079/3298	Revd N Read and Ms A Holden
P1120/3614	Mr B and Ms M Richardson
P1120/11215	Mr B and Ms M Richardson

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Affordable housing should be permitted in the countryside outside settlements. (351)
- Implementation of schemes is difficult. (605)
- Policies for conservation areas and open spaces should be considered. (785)
- Rural exception sites can aid the maintenance of services and employment. (790)

- The conversion of rural buildings for employment use requires qualification. (830)
- Single affordable dwellings in rural areas should be permissible. (830)
- The policy does not adequately provide for local need in the countryside. (1074)
- Affordable housing should be allowed on suitable sites in rural locations. (1102)
- Reference to access to facilities and public transport should be deleted. (1102)
- There may be circumstances where more than one dwelling is justified. (1102)
- The exceptions policy will need to be brought into play at an early stage. (1193)
- Land at Brimfield should be used to satisfy local needs. (435, 597)
- Policy H10 is overly restrictive. (653)
- Landowners should be encouraged to bring forward developments. (653)
- There is no up-to-date survey for settlements such as Burley Gate. (653)
- There should be less control in the wider rural area. (711)
- Housing for local people should be allowed outside settlements. (979)
- The development of affordable housing alongside normal housing should not be restricted. (1079)
- There is too little regard to housing quality and choice. (1120)
- The policy should allow isolated new housing in the countryside. (1120)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Allowing affordable housing in the countryside outside settlements - 351*

5.70.1 In regard to this objection, there are two key aspects of Government policy. The first is to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty. The second is to reduce the need to travel particularly by car. For these reasons, development is directed towards settlements which are already built up and where services are likely to be close at hand.

5.70.2 A concession is already made in the case of affordable housing in that development "adjoining existing small rural communities" may be acceptable. I appreciate that housing in some settlements is widely dispersed. Judgements may have to be made about whether a particular parcel of land is within or adjoining an established rural settlement. However, I see no reason for going beyond Government policy.

#### *Difficulties in scheme implementation - 605*

5.70.3 The objector makes some short observations about difficulties and problems that arise in relation to the provision of affordable housing. However, no particular modification is sought. Notwithstanding undoubted difficulties, I am satisfied that the UDP provides an appropriate context for the implementation of affordable housing schemes. No modification of the Plan is needed.

*Policies for conservation areas and open spaces - 785*

5.70.4 The Plan is to be read as a whole. Policies in respect of conservation areas and open spaces will be relevant to development outside settlement boundaries but there is no need for these policies or others to be specifically mentioned.

*Aiding the maintenance of services and employment - 790*

5.70.5 I appreciate that rural exception schemes can in themselves aid in the maintenance of existing services and employment. However, I do not see that any modification of the Plan is necessary in response to the objector's comment.

*Conversion of rural buildings for employment use - 830*

5.70.6 The Plan's approach to the re-use of rural buildings is set out in Policies HBA12 (Re-use of rural buildings) and HBA13 (Re-use of rural buildings for residential purposes). The policies recognise that rural buildings can play a valuable role in meeting a wide range of needs in rural areas within a framework of sustainable development and having regard to the character and appearance of the buildings. To my mind, no particular qualification of the provisions is necessary.

*Single affordable dwellings in rural areas - 830*

5.70.7 The objector feels that single affordable dwellings in rural areas should be permissible if they can be shown to support the thrust of Policy S2 (including revitalising agriculture and land management) and can promote innovation in sustainable and low-impact development. In line with Government policy, I note that Policy H8 already supports agricultural dwellings in appropriate circumstances. In other respects, I would expect the thrust of Policy S2 to be met in most cases by concentrating development in established settlements. Less common types of development could be considered on their merits bearing in mind the overriding principle of the sustainability of the location.

*Local need in the countryside - 1074*

5.70.8 Where there is a demonstrable need for a farmer's son or daughter to remain on the home farm, an agricultural dwelling could be permitted under Policy H8. However, as indicated in Annex A of PPS 7 at Paragraph 1, it is the needs of the enterprise concerned that are relevant, not the personal preferences or circumstances of any of the individuals involved. Bearing in mind my comments in Paragraph 5.70.1 and 5.70.2 above, there is no justification for modification of the Plan.

*Allowing affordable housing on suitable sites in rural locations - 1102*

5.70.9 In the Revised Deposit Draft, Policy H10 has been amended such that rural exception housing could be permitted within or adjoining any established rural settlement. To my mind, this reflects Government policy and no further modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Access to facilities and public transport - 1102*

5.70.10 I appreciate that rural services and facilities are contracting and are being eroded. Nevertheless, proximity to local amenities would help reduce the need to travel, especially by car, as well as help provide support and custom. There is inadequate justification for the removal of criterion 5 in Policy H10.

*Circumstances where more than one dwelling is justified - 1102*

5.70.11 To my mind, the policy is appropriately directed at meeting specific and identified needs in very small settlements. Where larger scale needs can be identified, these should be directed to the main villages and named smaller settlements. These could accommodate developments of more than one affordable dwelling more sustainably.

*Bringing the exceptions policy into play at an early stage - 1193*

5.70.12 Policy H10 has a very specific purpose. It is directed at supplying affordable houses in rural areas on sites that would not normally be released for development. As such, I do not see any direct relationship with the availability or otherwise of windfall sites. No modification of the Plan is needed.

*Land at Brimfield – 435, 597*

5.70.13 I have dealt with the subject matter of these objections in Paragraph 5.40.31 of my report. No modification of the Plan is needed.

*Whether Policy H10 is overly restrictive - 653*

5.70.14 Policy H10 would allow affordable housing to be provided at smaller settlements such as Burley Gate. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Landowners bringing forward developments - 653*

5.70.15 It appears to me that the provisions of Paragraph 5.5.15b are intended to apply to individual applications for affordable dwellings. However, other applicants could be caught by the same provisions which could apply, for example, to a development by a registered social landlord or philanthropic landowner on an exception site adjoining one of the main villages. I am recommending an appropriate modification. Under the terms of Policy H10, all developments will still need to demonstrate a contribution to a genuine and quantified local need as well as provide affordable housing for enjoyment in perpetuity.

*Housing needs survey for settlements such as Burley Gate - 653*

5.70.16 To my mind, the demonstration of local need is necessary in relation to any application for housing on a rural exception site. I appreciate that surveys in sufficient detail are not available for all areas. However, to my mind, that does not mean that this consideration can be put to one side. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Less control in the wider rural area - 711*

5.70.17 The objector would wish to see less control in the wider rural area with affordable housing being related to sustainable land uses. In this regard, I note that Policy H8 already provides for agricultural and forestry dwellings and for dwellings associated with rural businesses. The policy reflects the strict controls envisaged in PPS 7. Whilst individual developments can always be considered on their individual merits, I consider that broader provision for affordable housing would not accord with Government policy.

*Housing for local people outside settlements - 979*

5.70.18 The reasons for directing affordable housing to established rural settlements are set out in Paragraphs 5.70.1 and 5.70.2. It is the principles of sustainable development that are of overriding importance rather than the personal

preferences or circumstances of individuals. I see no reason for widening the circumstances under which local needs would be recognised.

*Restricting affordable housing alongside normal housing - 1079*

5.70.19 Rural exception sites are sites which, but for an affordable housing need, would not be released for housing. Paragraph 18 of PPG 3 states that the sites should be "solely for affordable housing". The UDP reflects this provision and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Housing quality and choice - 1120*

5.70.20 I appreciate that self-help housing and the like is not an option that is specifically explored in the development plan. Nevertheless, I consider that a suitable context is set for all appropriate forms of affordable housing and housing in the countryside. To this extent, and in line with Government policy, there is an emphasis on directing developments to locations within or adjoining established rural settlements. Less common types of development can be considered on their individual merits in the light of the principles of sustainable development. However, I see no need to widen the general scope of the Plan.

*Isolated new housing in the countryside - 1120*

5.70.21 I recognise that a dispersed pattern of development is typical of much of Herefordshire. Be that as it may, for reasons identified in Paragraph 5.70.1 and 5.70.2 above, current policy aims to direct affordable housing to locations within or adjoining established settlements. It may well be that isolated small dwellings in the vernacular tradition could be built elsewhere. However, such developments would fail to reflect the locational principles underlying current policy. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.70/1 Substitute the following for the first word of Paragraph 5.5.15b: "In the case of individual affordable dwellings, there".

5.70/2 Do not make any other modification in respect of the objections.

## **5.71 GYPSIES AND OTHER TRAVELLERS - POLICY H12 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.5.20 TO 5.5.23**

### **Objections**

P733/1773	Herefordshire Association of Local Councils
P1007/3089	Malvern Hills AONB (Conditionally Withdrawn)
P1124/3618	Herefordshire Travellers Support Group
P618/1380	Mr B Clutterbuck
RP1504/11165	Mr K G Grumbley

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- A detailed traveller policy is required. (733)
- The policy needs strengthening. (1007)

- There should be quantitative targets for the provision of accommodation for gypsies and other travellers. (1124)
- There should be a single policy covering caravans or mobile homes and gypsies and other travellers. (618)
- Whether permanent sites and large sites should be precluded. (1504)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Detailed traveller policy - 733*

5.71.1 The objection states that the traveller policy is inadequate and indicates that a detailed policy is required. However, in the absence of any further details, there is inadequate justification for modifying the Plan.

#### *Strengthening the policy - 1007*

5.71.2 Amendments to the policy and text were made at the revised deposit stage. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no further action is necessary.

#### *Quantitative targets - 1124*

5.71.3 In the light of this objection, a possible addition to the Plan was discussed at the inquiry. This draws attention to the requirements of the Housing Act 2004. I appreciate that the objector would wish to see a policy that is more positive and supportive of provision. However, to my mind, the key matters would be addressed in the amendment and through implementation of the relevant requirements. I recommend accordingly.

#### *Single policy - 618*

5.71.4 To my mind, Circular 1/94 (and Circular 01/2006) recognises that special attention needs to be given to the needs of gypsies of nomadic lifestyle. It follows that they are deserving of a specific policy in the UDP. The needs of gypsies and other travellers are different from those of the occupiers of caravans or mobile homes.

5.71.5 With regard to previously developed sites, I recognise that these should be utilised by gypsies wherever appropriate. However, given the difficulties that are likely to be encountered in finding sites within settlements, I consider that it is appropriate to contemplate sites outside defined settlements.

#### *Permanent and large sites - 1504*

5.71.6 The objector, at the revised deposit stage, has suggested a number of changes. The effect of those which relate to amendments to the Plan, and which are duly made, would be to preclude permanent sites and large sites. However, bearing in mind the policy in Circular 1/94 (and Circular 01/2006), it is appropriate to make provision for permanent gypsy sites. In addition, there may be a case for approving a larger site on routes frequented by travellers. As such, the policy should not be restricted to small sites.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.71/1 Add the following new paragraph after Paragraph 5.5.20: "The Housing Act 2004 now requires Local Authorities to include within their Local

Housing Assessments the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. In addition, Government planning policy is increasingly favouring the identification of sites for Gypsies and Travellers in Development Plan Documents. Herefordshire Council recognises these emerging requirements which will be taken forward in the preparation of new Development Plan Documents forming part of the Local Development Framework. In the interim, however, the following policy is still required in order to consider the merits of planning proposals."

5.71/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.72 SUSTAINABLE RESIDENTIAL DESIGN - POLICY H13 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.6.1 TO 5.6.4

### Objections

W323/2849	CTC Right to Ride, Ledbury
P746/11015	Bloor Homes Ltd
P769/1915	Cradley Parish Plan Project and Village Design Statement Steering Group
P864/2350	Transport 2000
P865/2420	Cyclists' Touring Club
P975/11176	Persimmon Homes (South Midlands) Ltd
P977/11008	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P1000/11262	House Builders' Federation
P1068/3240	Cradley Parish Council
P1071/3283	English Nature (Conditionally Withdrawn)
W280/1271	Mr R Gill

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- The policy should reflect the Transport Hierarchy. Design standards should be stated. (323, 864, 865)
- Energy efficiency in new housing is governed by the Building Regulations. (746)
- There should be a clear undertaking to prepare development briefs. (769, 1068)
- There is a need to provide cycle storage in new housing development. (864, 865)
- There should be modified reference to sustainable drainage measures. (975, 977, 1000)
- Reference should be made to sustainable drainage techniques. (1071)
- All proposals should be considered with reference to the Village Design Statement. (280)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusion

*Transport hierarchy and design standards – 323, 864, 865*

5.72.1 In the Revised Deposit Draft, a number of amendments reflecting the objections have been made. For example, in criterion 4, there is now explicit

reference to cyclists, to motor vehicles and to the transport user hierarchy. In my opinion, this part of the objections has been met and no modification is necessary.

5.72.2 With regard to design standards, overall guidance on movement is included in the Design and Development Requirements SPG. Additional guidance applicable to all developments is also being prepared by the Council. To my mind, it is not necessary to have separate guidance on all aspects of movement, accessibility and transport.

*Energy efficiency in new housing – 746*

5.72.3 I appreciate that energy efficiency in new housing is a matter covered by the Building Regulations. However, it appears to me that the reference in Policy H13 covers a broader range of matters including, for example, sustainable energy generation. The provisions are in line with PPG 3 (Paragraph 56) and RPG 11 (Policy QE3). No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Preparation of development briefs – 769, 1068*

5.72.4 I would expect most development proposals to be judged against the general policies in the Plan without reference to a development brief. Briefs would, of course, be appropriate in respect of certain key sites; but it would be impractical and unnecessary to prepare briefs for most windfall sites, including the unallocated Old School site at Cradley. Relevant matters in supplementary planning guidance, which might take the form of a village design statement adopted by the planning authority, would be material considerations in the determination of planning applications. However, this is a general principle that it is not necessary to set out within the Plan.

*Cycle storage in new housing development – 864, 865*

5.72.5 To my mind, matters relevant to cycle storage are set out in various parts of the Plan. Examples include Policy DR3 (Movement), Policy T7 (Cycling) and Paragraph 8.7.5. Additional reference within Policy H13 is not necessary.

*Modified reference to sustainable drainage measures – 975, 977, 1000*

5.72.6 Policy H13 should be read in conjunction with Policy DR4 (Environment). Policy DR4 accepts that alternatives to sustainable drainage techniques could be considered “where sustainable techniques cannot demonstrably be provided”. In the light of this acknowledgement, it is not necessary to change the wording of Policy H13.

*Including reference to sustainable drainage techniques - 1071*

5.72.7 Reference to sustainable drainage measures is now included in the Revised Deposit Draft. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no further action is necessary.

*Reference to Village Design Statement - 280*

5.72.8 Paragraph 5.6.4 of the Plan already recognises the potential role of village design statements. Their consideration has not been omitted from the process of assessing sustainable residential design and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATION

5.72/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.73 RE-USING PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND AND BUILDINGS - POLICY H14 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.6.5 TO 5.6.9

### Objections

P605/3033	Three Counties Planning
P743/11232	Ledbury Town Council
P790/1986	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P846/4851	Country Land and Business Association
P187/435	W O and O E Price
P381/3799	Mr D J and I R Powell
P689/1693	Mrs M Bailey
P973/2867	Mr B Price

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- There ought to be a criteria based policy and explanation of previously developed land. (605)
- Reference to avoiding over intensive development should be re-instated. (743)
- Affordable housing should be especially promoted at empty properties and on wasted space. (790)
- Redundant farmstead should be classed as brownfield sites. (846)
- Whether Policy H14 and the related text are unduly inflexible. (187)
- The use of vacant and underused land should be maximised particularly when it relates to former agricultural buildings. (381)
- Reference to avoiding over intensive development is unhelpful. (689)
- The use of previously developed land should be linked more closely with sustainable development. (973)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Criteria-based policy and explanation of previously developed land - 605*

5.73.1The objection states that there ought to be a criteria based policy with regard to the expressions "reuse", "redevelopment" and previously developed land". However, in the absence of any further explanation, there is inadequate justification for modification of the Plan.

5.73.2The term "previously developed land" is defined in the Glossary. However, this is under the heading of "Brownfield land / previously developed land". Cross-reference under a separate heading would be useful. Reference to the Government's definition could also be considered.

*Re-instating reference to over intensive development - 743*

5.73.3 Policy H14 already refers to the necessity to respect the character and appearance of the locality as well as residential amenity. To my mind, these are the principal reasons why over intensive development should be avoided. Separate and additional reference is not necessary.

*Promoting affordable housing - 790*

5.73.4 To my mind, affordable housing needs are adequately addressed in the Plan. There is no particular need to promote affordable housing where previously developed land and buildings are involved especially where this could be at the expense of other legitimate interests and developments. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Redundant farmsteads as brownfield sites - 846*

5.73.5 In my opinion, it would be appropriate for the Council's definition of brownfield land to reflect that adopted by the Government. In this respect, redundant farmsteads do not fall within the PPG 3 definition of previously developed land. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Flexibility of Policy H14 and the related text - 187*

5.73.6 The re-use of previously developed land and buildings in the countryside, outside settlements, would still be subject to the terms of Policy H7. The objector would wish to see the removal of this restriction. However, to my mind, this would be inappropriate. Previously developed land outside a settlement is likely to be in an unsustainable location. No modification of the Plan is appropriate.

*Maximising the use of vacant and underused former agricultural land - 381*

5.73.7 Vacant and underused former agricultural buildings do not come within the definition of previously developed land. To maximise the use of such land under the terms of Policy H14 would not be appropriate.

*Unhelpful reference to avoiding over intensive development - 689*

5.73.8 In the Revised Deposit Draft, the reference in Policy H14 to avoiding over intensive development has been omitted. The objection has been met and no further action is necessary.

*Linking the use of previously developed land with sustainable development - 973*

5.73.9 I do not consider that Policy H14 needs to be linked more closely with a sustainable development strategy. From my reading of the Plan, it is clear that only certain types of settlement are regarded as sustainable locations for additional development. There is no suggestion that re-use of previously developed land for its own sake is necessarily the most sustainable option. Other considerations, including local needs, are also relevant and are a factor in the assumed amount of development on windfall sites.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.73/1 In the Glossary, under a new heading of "Previously developed land", insert: "See 'Brownfield land / previously developed land'." Refer to the definition in PPG 3.

5.73/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.74 DENSITY - POLICY H15 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.6.10 TO 5.6.11

### Objections

P11/310	Wall, James and Davies (Solicitors)
P790/1987	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P1000/3013	House Builders' Federation
W460/957	Ms S Bond
P689/1694	Mrs M Bailey

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether densities in rural areas should be lower. (11)
- Account should be taken of developments by Registered Social Landlords. (790)
- The density requirements are too rigid. (1000)
- A density of 30 dph is too high for sites outside Hereford and the market towns. (460)
- Lower densities should be avoided. (689)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Lower densities in rural areas - 11*

5.74.1 From the Council's statement, it is clear that new housing development in the rural areas should "make the most efficient and effective use of the site area available, consistent with the housing provision policies". However, a quantitative minimum density is not intended to apply. The amendment proposed would clarify the situation. I do not consider that any other modification is necessary in addressing the concerns of the objector.

#### *Developments by Registered Social Landlords - 790*

5.74.2 I appreciate that developments by Registered Social Landlords are often at a density higher than the minima set out in Policy H15. However, the policy does not set any maximum densities and I see no particular need for reference to higher densities by Registered Social Landlords or others.

#### *Rigid density requirements - 1000*

5.74.3 I do not consider that the density requirements are too rigid. In line with Government guidance, it is appropriate to make efficient use of land and to refer to minimum densities in this regard. However, the provisions of the Plan make appropriate allowance for other circumstances and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Densities outside Hereford and the market towns - 460*

5.74.4 As indicated above, the minimum density of 30 dph is not intended to apply to sites in the rural areas. The Council supports the amended wording put forward by the objector. I recommend accordingly.

*Lower densities should be avoided - 689*

5.74.5 Policy H15 says that new housing developments should make the most effective and efficient use of the site area available. If they do not, there could be grounds for refusing planning permission and densities lower than desirable would be avoided. In these terms, it is clear that the densities set out in the policy are minima. In addition, the reference to making the most effective and efficient use of land would apply to all developments including those on sites of less than 1 ha in area. I do not consider that there is any conflict with PPG 3 or that the policy needs to be modified.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.74/1 In Policy H15, add the following text at the end of the first paragraph: "in Hereford and the market towns:". Delete the words "Hereford and the market towns:" from the following part of the policy.

5.74/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.75 CAR PARKING - POLICY H16 AND PARAGRAPH 5.6.12

### Objections

W323/2850	CTC Right to Ride, Ledbury
P685/1687	Tufnell Town and Country Planning
P743/1800	Ledbury Town Council
P783/1943	Hereford Access For All
P790/1988	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P864/2351	Transport 2000
P865/2421	Cyclists' Touring Club
P983/2935	Holme Lacy Parish Council

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- There should be secure and sufficient space for cycle storage in residential developments. (323, 864, 865)
- Whether the policy should be more flexible. (685, 743, 983)
- Parking for people with disabilities is not dealt with. (783)
- Management by Registered Social Landlords could overcome any parking issues. (790)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

*Cycle storage in residential development – 323, 864, 865*

5.75.1 To my mind, matters relevant to cycle storage are set out in various parts of the Plan. Examples include Policy DR3 (Movement), Policy T7 (Cycling) and Paragraph 8.7.5. Additional reference within Policy H16 is not necessary.

*The policy should be made more flexible. (685, 743, 983)*

5.75.2 In my opinion, the maximum provision of 1.5 off-street car parking spaces per dwelling referred to in Paragraph 62 of PPG 3 is intended to be an average applied across all types of schemes. Higher provision could be made in areas poorly served by public transport, such as many rural areas. Lower provision could be appropriate in central urban areas. The standard is not necessarily intended to be applied across individual schemes. Revision of the policy and of Paragraph 5.6.12 is necessary to reflect this interpretation and to help meet the objections. However, it is clear that parking policies should not be expressed as minimum standards (PPG 3, Paragraph 60). Any such reference would be inappropriate.

*Parking for people with disabilities - 783*

5.75.3 The guidance in PPG 3 needs to be read in conjunction with PPG 13. Paragraph 52 of PPG 13 states that there should be no maximum standards for development "other than parking for disabled people". In addition, Paragraph 51 states that local authorities should require developers to provide designated parking spaces for disabled people in accordance with current good practice". I am recommending an addition to Policy H16 that would address the point.

*Management by Registered Social Landlords - 790*

5.75.4 I appreciate that Registered Social Landlords are in a position to allocate properties to those without their own car. However, I do not consider that related matters need to be specifically addressed. In this regard, and as indicated in the Council's statement, there is sufficient flexibility within the policy and in the related text to deal with particular circumstances.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.75/1 In Policy H16 replace the words "provision of 1.5 spaces per dwelling" with: "provision of an average of not more than 1.5 spaces per dwelling".

5.75/2 Substitute the following for the fourth sentence in Paragraph 5.6.12: "The intention is to restrict average off-street parking provision to not more than 1.5 spaces per dwelling."

5.75/3 In Policy H16, after the words "with no minimum level of provision", add the words "other than parking for disabled people".

5.75/4 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## **5.76 SUB-DIVISION OF EXISTING HOUSING - POLICY H17 AND PARAGRAPH 5.6.13**

### **Objections**

P790/1989	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P864/2352	Transport 2000
P865/2422	Cyclists' Touring Club

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- There is potential conflict with Policy H16. (790)
- A flexible approach to the provision of amenity space should be adopted. (790)
- There should be a modified cycle storage policy. (864, 865)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

#### *Conflict with Policy H16 - 790*

5.76.1 In the Revised Deposit Draft, Policy H17 has been amended to make clear that parking provision would be in accordance with Policy H16. I believe that this part of the objection has been met and no further action is necessary.

#### *Provision of amenity space - 790*

5.76.2 Policy H17 indicates that a "satisfactory" standard of amenity space is required. To my mind, the wording is sufficient flexible to take into account the circumstances of any particular case. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

#### *Cycle storage policy - 864, 865*

5.76.3 To my mind, matters relevant to cycle storage are set out in various parts of the Plan. Examples include Policy DR3 (Movement), Policy T7 (Cycling) and Paragraph 8.7.5. Additional reference within Policy H17 is not necessary.

### RECOMMENDATION

5.76/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## 5.77 ALTERATION AND EXTENSIONS - POLICY H18 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.6.14 TO 5.6.15

### Objections

P11/549	Wall, James and Davies (Solicitors)
P253/527	Withington Parish Council
P605/3034	Three Counties Planning
P685/1685	Tufnell Town and Country Planning

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Whether the policy should be more flexible. (11)
- Extension should be permitted where there is a need and where any historical features can be safeguarded. (253)
- Extensions and alterations should not be limited in the way envisaged. (605)
- The policy is too prescriptive. (685)

## **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

### *More flexible policy - 11*

5.77.1 The first point made by the objector is that the "original dwelling" could be taken as that subsisting on 1 January 1975. For my part, I appreciate that the date of 1 July 1948, as in the Revised Deposit Draft, is some time ago. Nevertheless, it is a date that is enshrined in the legislation and, if adopted, would assist in the interpretation of the policy. There is inadequate justification for the objector's alternative.

5.77.2 On a second point, the objector suggests use of the word "normally" and hence allow for second or later extensions. To my mind, the purpose of the policy is to set the general rule. That does not preclude variations from the rule where circumstances dictate. In any event, the policy does not preclude second or later extensions. No modification of the policy is necessary.

5.77.3 The objector's third point is that extensions to properties within settlement could be treated differently. I appreciate that, within settlements, extensions may have a lesser impact. However, all proposals are required to be in keeping with their surroundings. In my opinion, the matter is covered by this proviso and no modification is needed.

### *Permitting extensions where there is a need - 253*

5.77.4 I appreciate that the affordability of a property is a function of a wide variety of factors. Nevertheless, all other things being equal, I would expect a smaller property to be less expensive than a larger one. To my mind, it is perfectly reasonable for the Council to seek to control the size of extensions and so influence affordability, maintain a stock of smaller dwellings and safeguard a characteristic feature of the rural landscape.

5.77.5 As to permitting extensions "where there is a need", I would not expect applicants to have to show a need in any event. In terms of safeguarding historical feature, there may be instances where there are benefits that override the policy. However, this point does not have to be recognised within the Plan. In conclusion, and in response to the duly made objection, no modification of the Plan is necessary.

### *Limiting extensions and alterations - 605*

5.77.6 Whether a scheme is in keeping with the locality is an important consideration. However, there are other important matters. These include effects upon the character of the original building and on residents' living conditions. Such matters would go unchecked under the objector's proposal. Given also that to demonstrate need would not normally be required under current Government policy, no modification of the Plan is necessary or appropriate.

### *Prescriptive policy - 685*

5.77.7 I do not consider that the policy is too prescriptive. To my mind, it covers most situations. There will always be circumstances where material considerations point in a different direction. This could happen if, for example, design interests suggested that the original building *should not* be the dominant feature. However, there is no need to legislate for such exceptions as part of the policy.

5.77.8 On a second point, the objector questions use of the term "private amenity open space". In my opinion, it is useful to distinguish between open amenity space

and other amenity space such as a balcony. However, I would normally expect reference to be made to "private open amenity space". I recommend accordingly.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

5.77/1 In Policy H18, change "private amenity open space" to "private open amenity space".

5.77/2 Do not make any other modification in response to the objections.

## 5.78 OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS - POLICY H19 AND PARAGRAPHS 5.6.16 TO 5.6.20

### Objections

P754/1849	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd
P977/2922	Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd (Conditionally Withdraw)
P1017/3134	Lower Bullingham Parish Council
P1089/3451	Walker Stuart Planning Solutions
P734/1781	Mr R B Kilvert

### Summary of Objections / Issues

- Every site should be considered on its merits. (754)
- There should be a robust assessment of needs as required by PPG 17. (977)
- Play areas and open spaces should be consolidated into one or two larger areas. (1017)
- Play areas should not be required for schemes as small as 10 dwellings. (1089)
- Whether older children are adequately catered for in new areas. (734)

### Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions

*Considering every site on its merits - 754*

5.78.1 The objector considers that, bearing in mind the requirement in PPG 17 for an assessment of needs, every site should be considered on its merits. There should be no automatic need for provision in schemes of 10 dwellings or more.

5.78.2 For my part, I appreciate that an assessment of needs is required in accordance with the advice in PPG 17. This is acknowledged in revised Paragraph 5.6.17 and does not need to be repeated in the policy. However, until that assessment has taken place, or in the absence of any information to the contrary, it is reasonable to assume that the residents of larger developments will need to be provided with open space and play areas. I consider that, for the time being, the provisions of the policy are appropriate and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Assessment of needs - 977*

5.78.3 In the Revised Deposit Draft, Paragraph 5.6.17 states that the standards will apply until such time as an assessment of need has been produced and local standards of provision established in line with PPG 17. The objection has been conditionally withdrawn and no modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Consolidating play areas and open spaces - 1017*

5.78.4 I can see that providing open space and play areas in one or two larger areas could result in reduced maintenance costs and neighbours' complaints. However, to my mind, it is important to make provision where it is needed. For example, provision for infants' play should be made in supervised areas close to the homes of the toddlers that the play areas are intended to serve. Bearing in mind that I would expect maintenance considerations and the potential effect on residents' living conditions to be taken into account at the approval stage, I see no need for modification of the Plan.

*Play areas for small schemes - 1089*

5.78.5 I appreciate that children's play can take place within individual gardens. However, bearing in mind that the Council's proposals draw on the experiences of previous local plans, there is inadequate evidence for concluding that achievement of many of the housing allocations is very unlikely with the requirements of Policy H19 in place.

*Catering for older children - 734*

5.78.6 The objector would wish "mini multi sports facilities" for older children to be included within Policy H19. However, I do not consider that the provision or funding of such schemes would be justified by developments of a size as low as 30 family dwellings. To my mind, the sort of facilities envisaged would normally serve a wider catchment. To require provision under Policy H19 would not be appropriate.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.78/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.

## **5.79 SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL POLICY MATTERS**

### **Objections**

W503/1031	S & A Davies
P898/2545	Herefordshire Green Party
P11/552	Wall, James and Davies (Solicitors)
P890/2582	Government Office for the West Midlands
P605/3031	Three Counties Planning
P790/1991	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P1184/3750	Mrs R Barnett
P790/1990	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium
P605/3041	Three Counties Planning

P1163/3687  
P846/2232

Mr R White  
Country Land and Business Association

### **Summary of Objections / Issues**

- There should be reference to the accommodation requirements of agri-businesses. (503)
- There should be a policy allowing for low impact development in the open countryside. (898)
- There should be a policy on residential annexes. (11)
- A policy to bring about a reduction in windfall development is needed. (890)
- There should be a policy for the provision of land within established and smaller settlements. (605)
- Whether there should be special consideration of key workers. (790)
- There should be a policy on the provision of dwellings to support tourist enterprises. (1184)
- There should be a policy supporting special needs / supported housing. (790)
- Housing should be allowed at non-viable hotels. (605)
- There should be a policy on houses that have lost existing use rights. (1163)
- There should be a policy on replacement dwellings. (846)

### **Inspector's Reasoning and Conclusions**

#### *Accommodation requirements of agri-businesses - 503*

5.79.1I appreciate that agriculture plays an important role in the overall prosperity of the Herefordshire economy and in the social well being of the community. However, Paragraph 1 (iv) of PPS 7 indicates that the Government's overall aim is to protect the countryside for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty. In such terms, I would expect the overall character of the landscape to be the paramount consideration (Policy LA2). It would be inappropriate to give general encouragement to forms of development that could be alien to the nature and appearance of the countryside.

5.79.2The accommodation and associated premises for a large seasonal workforce are likely to fall into this category. In addition, a location away from towns or villages would be less sustainable. As such, I would expect the extraordinary requirements of agri-businesses to be the subject of special justification. Bearing in mind also the uncommon nature of such proposals, and the uncertainties associate with the accommodation and development requirements, I consider that specific policy encouragement through the development plan would be inappropriate.

#### *Low impact development - 898*

5.79.3Paragraph 11 of PPS 7 indicates that, very occasionally, isolated new houses of exceptional quality and innovative design may be justified in the open countryside. I would expect such instances to be few and far between; also to be in keeping with the historic and architectural tradition of large country houses.

However, no encouragement is given in the case of low impact housing. Indeed, I can see particular problems in respect of the appearance of such developments, the unsustainability of their locations away from town or villages and the regulation and control of their use and occupancy.

5.79.4I can envisage developments of appropriate appearance where the materials and techniques used in the construction and on-going occupation of the premises outweigh other sustainability considerations. However, such instances are likely to be extremely rare and, in my opinion, should be treated as exceptions to the rule. I consider that the Plan sets out appropriate settlement policies and exceptions thereto. Less common types of development should be considered on their particular merits.

*Residential annexes - 11*

5.79.5To my mind, it is appropriate to exercise control over extensions in the interests of visual impact, privacy and the like. I can see that the need to accommodate dependent relatives could be a consideration in some cases. However, I would still expect the matters identified in the policy to be particularly relevant. To my mind, there is no overriding case for introducing potential exceptions. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Windfall development - 890*

5.79.6Under Paragraphs 35 and 36 of PPG 3, windfall sites are by definition previously developed sites. It would be inappropriate to make allowance for greenfield sites other than rural exception sites. In this regard, it is likely that some of the contribution assumed by the Council would indeed come from developments that would not involve land defined as previously developed. Barn conversions are a case in point. However, bearing in mind that most of the provision has already been made or is otherwise committed and that greenfield sites would be only a fraction of the remainder, I do not consider that remedial action is appropriate at this late stage of the adoption process.

5.79.7In any event, occasional development on greenfield sites in line with the strict criteria set out in the Council's policies is likely to be appropriate in the interests of building sustainable communities. The priority for development is brownfield land but such land may not always be available and other considerations may assume greater importance. In all the circumstances, I do not consider that a specific policy is needed that would bring about a reduction in windfall development.

*Provision of land in established and smaller settlements - 605*

5.79.8The objector states that, "A new policy ought to be put forward in the Plan with a criteria base for the provision of land within established and smaller settlements, particularly for specific infilling and limited expansion, in accordance with the tenets of PPG 7 "Housing in Rural Areas"". However, no further explanation is given. To my mind, appropriate infilling and expansion in defined rural settlements is already permissible under the terms of the Plan. There is inadequate justification for any modification.

*Key workers - 790*

5.79.9There is no evidence to suggest that special consideration of key workers is warranted in the context of Herefordshire. No modification of the Plan is necessary.

*Dwellings to support tourist enterprises - 1184*

5.79.10 Policy H8 already provides for the provision of dwellings associated with rural businesses. This would include tourist enterprises. In my opinion, a specific or broader policy is not necessary or appropriate.

*Special needs / supported housing - 790*

5.79.11 I appreciate that there are a wide range of special needs groups. However, I would expect most requirements to be met through the provision and use of general needs housing coupled with specialist care and support. It does not appear to me that specific policy provision or encouragement within the Plan is necessary.

5.79.12 With regard to standards such as are to be found in "Lifetime Homes", I would normally expect appropriate provision to be made through adaptation or by developers in response to market forces. To my mind, there is inadequate justification for seeking a proportion of lifetime homes in new housing developments.

*Housing at non-viable hotels - 605*

5.79.13 The objector considers that exception, rural and other special needs housing should be allowed at non-viable hotels. In this regard, rural exception housing is already addressed in Policy H10; and the re-use of previously developed land and buildings is covered in Policy H14. In other respects, the replacement of non-residential buildings with residential development in the countryside would be treated as new development (PPS 7 Paragraph 20 refers) and would be subject to the settlement policies in the Plan.

5.79.14 I appreciate that, in the case of hotels that have failed to compete in the tourist market for a variety of reasons, sensible consideration needs to be given to suitable alternative uses. However, I see no need for a specific policy in this regard. Development would be guided by the various provisions of the Plan.

*Houses that have lost their existing use rights - 1163*

5.79.15 I do not consider that, as a general rule, the reinstatement of houses that have lost their existing use rights should be allowed. Notwithstanding the loss of a potentially valuable resource, to do so would be likely to lead to the perpetuation of instances of poor planning including the siting of developments in unsustainable locations.

*Replacement dwellings - 846*

5.79.16 I do not consider that there should be general policy support for the re-use or replacement of derelict dwellings. To do so would be likely to lead to the perpetuation of instances of poor planning including the siting of developments in unsustainable locations. To my mind, appropriate provision is made through policies that include Policy H7 (Housing in the countryside outside settlements) and Policy H14 (Re-using previously developed land and buildings).

## **RECOMMENDATION**

5.79/1 Do not make any modification in response to the objections.