

Shaping Our Place 2026

Local Development Framework

Core Strategy

Spatial Strategy  
Background Paper

January 2010



# Spatial Strategy Background Paper

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## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The spatial strategy is central to the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework for Herefordshire. It explains what the spatial vision and strategic objectives that have already been determined for the Core Strategy and which are reproduced in Appendix 1, will mean for the future development of Hereford, the market towns and the rural areas. It forms the backbone of the Core Strategy from which the policies and proposals will follow. This Background Paper provides a detailed explanation of the spatial strategy, which appears in the Core Strategy Place Shaping Paper consultation (January 2010). The role of the spatial strategy for Herefordshire is to set out:

- How much development there will be in Herefordshire;
- Broadly where it will be located and what choices have been made – the preferred strategy (the spatial element);
- When development will take place and how it will be delivered.

## 2.0 The spatial strategy

### 2.1 How much development?

2.1.1 The question of how much development will take place in Herefordshire is, to a significant extent, determined by national and regional policy requirements, and/or by local evidence identifying development needs. These factors result in more or less fixed parameters for the strategy from the outset. It is the Council's preferred strategy to provide sufficient development over the Plan period to meet both national and regional requirements **and** local needs. In response to the "how much development" question, this would result in levels of development for the County as a whole as set out in Figure 1. Amounts of development are taken directly from the regional plan – the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Phase Two Panel Report (September 2009), unless otherwise shown and relate to the plan period 2006-2026, unless otherwise stated.

**Figure 1 – How much development for Herefordshire**

Type of development	Amount
Homes	18,000 which equates to 900 per year. 8500 of these homes are to be built in Hereford. Priority will be given to the identification of brownfield land in finding new sites.
Affordable Homes	Herefordshire and Shropshire (excluding Telford and Wrekin) have to provide at least 700 affordable homes per year up to 2026. The proportion for Herefordshire is included in the 18,000 total.
Gypsy and Traveller sites	109 pitches countywide to 2017 (RSS Draft Phase 3 Option).
Jobs	37 ha of a balanced portfolio of readily available employment land in a rolling 5 year reservoir with an indicative long-term requirement of 148ha. Priority will be given to the identification of brownfield land in finding new sites.
Food retail	There is limited capacity for new strategic sites in Hereford or the market towns in this plan period, beyond that which is already planned. <sup>1</sup>
Non food retail	60,000 sqm in Hereford
Office	45,000 sqm in, or on edge of Hereford
Minerals	0.283 mt sand and gravel, 0.848 mt crushed rock (subject to Phase 3 Review) <sup>2</sup>
Waste <sup>3</sup>	Municipal – require 33,750 t capacity (equates to site area of 1-2 ha with possible additional 2 ha for further recovery). Commercial – require 176,659 t capacity (equates to site area of 8-10 ha)

<sup>1</sup> Retail Study (June 2009)

<sup>2</sup> The Phase 3 Review of the RSS is ongoing. "Options" were produced for consultation in July 09.

<sup>3</sup> Minerals and Waste Study (May 2009)

2.1.2 With the quantity and type of development established at a County level, the real questions now relate to **where and how much** development will go to each place. This is a question over which the Council has a greater say based on emerging evidence and consultation with the local community.

**2.2 Broad locations and distribution of development – the preferred strategy**

2.2.1 The Core Strategy Developing Options Paper (June 2008) proposed four possible ways (Options A-D) of distributing development that would meet the County’s needs within given environmental and policy constraints that were known at the time. The options related to whether we focused the direction of new growth based on:

- A. The desire to promote Herefordshire’s economy (an economic option) with an eastern focus for development; or
- B. Prioritising the regeneration of areas of the County suffering from greatest social deprivation (a social option) with a dispersed focus for development; or
- C. The protection and enhancement of our distinctive environmental assets (an environmental option) with a concentrated focus of development; or
- D. A new or expanded settlement option which would not necessarily be a separate option to A, B or C above, but which may be necessary depending on the level of growth required by the revisions to the housing figures in the regional plan.

2.2.2 The broad levels of development suggested for each place is illustrated in Figure 2 below:

**Figure 2- Summary of growth impact of Options A- D**

Places	Options			
	A	B	C	D
<b>Herefordshire</b>	Focus on Hereford and the eastern side of the County	Focus on Hereford and Leominster and the market towns and sustainable settlements or groups of settlements with existing services or the potential to support new services.	Focus on Hereford, the market towns and specific areas of environmental enhancement	Focus on Hereford, the market towns and a new or expanded settlement
<b>Hereford</b>	Significant growth.	Significant growth	Significant growth	Significant growth
<b>Bromyard</b>	Focus for growth	Focus for growth	Focus for growth	Focus for growth
<b>Kington</b>	Limited growth			
<b>Ledbury</b>	Focus for growth			
<b>Leominster</b>				
<b>Ross on Wye</b>				
<b>The Rural Areas</b>	Levels of growth appropriate to the settlement size and function, character and environmental capacity in the hinterland settlements of Hereford, Ross on Wye, Ledbury and Bromyard.	Levels of growth appropriate to the settlement size and function, character and environmental capacity in sustainable settlements with existing services or those with potential to support new ones	Levels of growth appropriate to the settlement size and function, character and environmental capacity in sustainable settlements within areas on Figure 3, but related to identified needs for environmental enhancement in the local area.	Possible new or expanded settlement in an area yet to be determined.

2.2.3 In order to develop a **preferred strategy** of where development should be located and how much development should be allocated, each of the above options have been assessed against the following criteria which are requirements of national guidance on the preparation of Core Strategies:

- 1 The extent to which it would satisfy national and regional policy requirements
- 2 The outcome of ongoing community consultation
- 3 The findings of the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment (required under European law for all development plans) and
- 4 The findings of the emerging evidence base – a list of all the specific studies undertaken is detailed in Appendix 2, and
- 5 Cross boundary issues.

Taking into consideration all the factors included in 1-5 above (which are explained in section 2.3), the following “preferred strategy” is proposed.

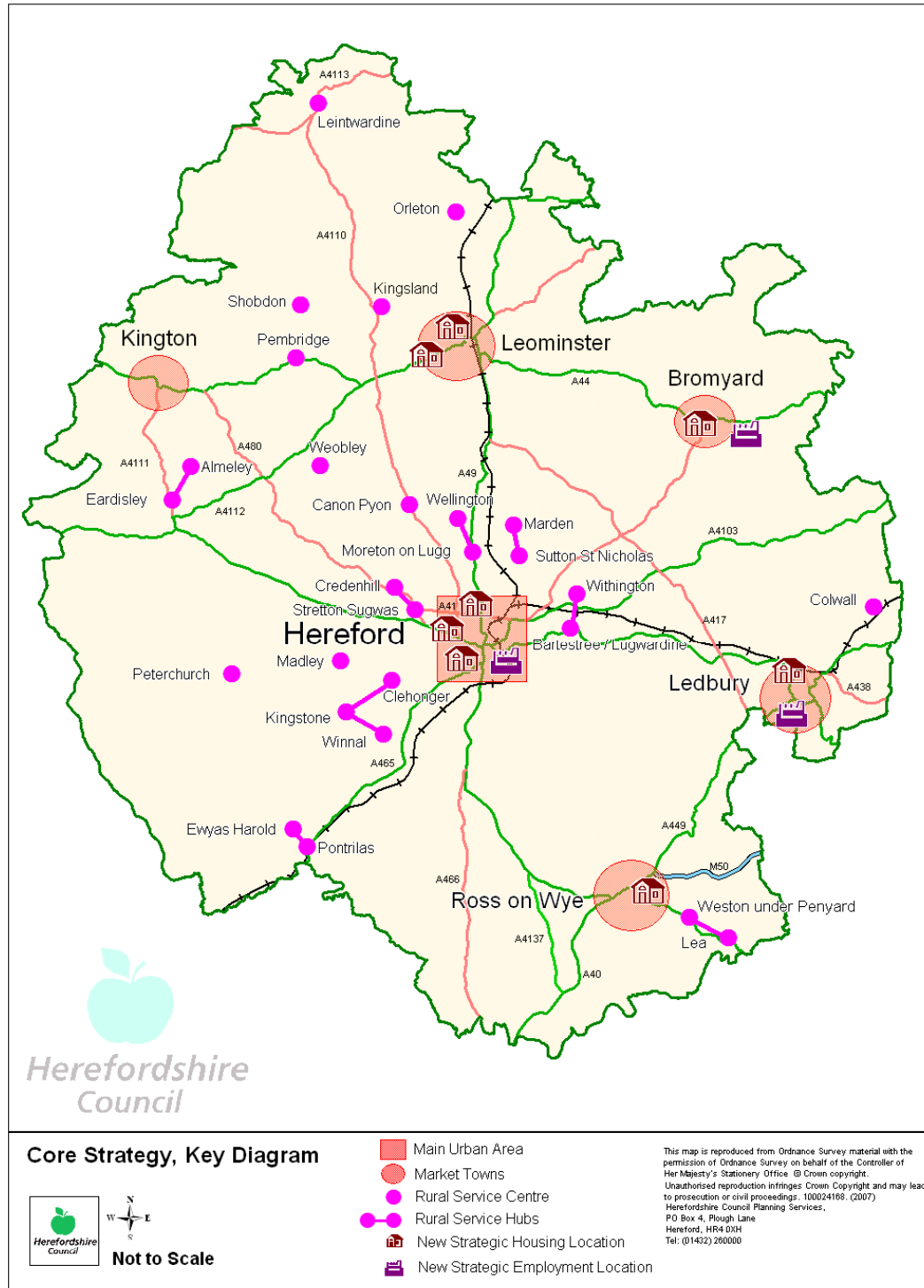
2.2.4 **The Council proposes to take forward a preferred strategy based on a combination of social, economic and environmental elements from Options A, B and C as set out in the Developing Options Paper, June 2008.** Such an approach will deliver the Core Strategy vision and 12 objectives developed and consulted upon so far (see Appendix 1). The preferred strategy, outlined in Figure 3, sets out a settlement hierarchy for the County, which in itself determines the broad location and distribution of development for Herefordshire to 2026.

### 2.2.5 **Figure 3 - The Preferred Strategy**

- To focus approximately half of all new homes (including affordable) with associated employment, retail, leisure, education and cultural development as well as new transport and green infrastructure in and around the main urban area of **Hereford** to support its regeneration and status as a Growth Point
- To focus the majority of remaining development at the market towns of **Leominster, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye, Bromyard and Kington** (with Leominster taking the greatest amount) to support their status as service centres to their rural hinterlands and to support rural regeneration including employment creation/diversification, delivery of and access to services (including affordable housing), realising the environment as an economic asset and reducing the need to travel
- To pursue targeted regeneration and possible modest extensions (including homes and jobs) at **Rural Service Centres and Hubs** to meet rural housing needs (including affordable), employment and community needs and to reduce the need to travel
- At **Local Centres** (to be defined or left to a criteria based policy) to allow small scale development to meet rural housing (including affordable) and employment needs and support local community services
- Elsewhere, development will be limited to rural exception housing needs (agricultural, forestry, farm diversification, replacements, conversions or rural affordable housing only) and diversification of farm businesses or rural businesses of an appropriate scale to protect the countryside for its own sake and address climate change
- Where possible, to pursue a sequential approach to development utilising brownfield land and buildings before greenfield land.
- To manage the release of housing and employment land to ensure delivery to meet targets and co-ordination with infrastructure provision

2.2.6 The preferred strategy is shown in indicative form in Figure 4 – the Key Diagram. Rural Service Centres (RSC) and Hubs are defined as places that serve as centres meeting the day-day needs of their rural hinterlands.

**Figure 4 – Key Diagram**



## 2.3 Reasons for the Preferred Strategy of Combining Options A, B and C

There are sound reasons for choosing a strategy that combines Options A-C of the Developing Options Paper (June 2008) and these are based on the assessment of all four criteria referred to in paragraph 2.2.3 above.

- 2.3.1 **Economic considerations** are addressed in the strategy by locating new high-quality, strategic employment land where new housing is being directed in areas of higher demand and where access to public transport is available. The locations have been chosen based on the directions for strategic housing growth, the objectives of the Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy and the outcomes of the Employment Land Study (October 2009). Whilst no large-scale strategic employment sites are proposed in the rural areas, new and existing employment in these places will be promoted and protected through a criteria based core policy to support rural regeneration and diversification.
- 2.3.2 **Social considerations** are included in the strategy by virtue of utilising a settlement hierarchy that focuses on promoting sustainable communities by locating the majority of new homes and jobs to urban areas (Hereford and the market towns) where access to services and facilities is directly available and where new development can bring community benefits to social infrastructure such as transport improvements, air quality and area regeneration. The strategy also addresses issues concerning rural regeneration, namely access to facilities and services for the rural areas and employment generation, by dispersing some growth to Rural Service Centres and Hubs and possibly Local Centres (which may be defined as part of the Core Strategy), where general day-day needs can be accommodated, new, affordable homes and jobs provided and services and community life supported. This approach conforms to national and regional policy on these issues and addresses the outcomes of the emerging evidence base.
- 2.3.3 **Environmental considerations** are addressed in the strategy by realising the environment as an economic and social asset and addressing the growing concern of climate change. Focussing the majority of development to Hereford and Leominster will enable significant developer contributions towards green infrastructure including, amongst others, a new country park in Hereford and green corridors linking Hereford to Leominster. This takes on board the outcomes of the Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 2.3.4 The preferred spatial strategy directly addresses the cross cutting theme of **climate change** by allocating half of all new homes to Hereford, which as the sub-regional focus for the County is where the main services to which people travel on a daily basis (including jobs, shops and leisure uses) are located. This is a departure from previous plans, which have gone for greater dispersal of development across the whole County. The remaining new homes are dispersed to the market towns and certain villages that already support a wide range of day-to-day services or are capable of doing so. This approach is based on the principle of reducing the need to travel by private car in order to lessen the harmful impacts of carbon dioxide emissions. In a rural County like Herefordshire where car travel is used by over 50% of the population, reducing the need for people to travel in the first place is going to be the best long term strategy of tackling climate change.
- 2.3.5 The use of water and its quality are also strategic issues for the County given the scale of growth proposed, the consequences of climate change and the fact that the Rivers Wye and Lugg, from where extraction takes place, are both European protected sites for their flora and fauna. The Water Cycle Study (August 2009) suggests that there is sufficient water supply for the preferred locations and levels of growth to 2026. However, water quality of the Rivers Wye and Lugg is affected by increased extraction and is an issue of concern. Both issues of supply and quality will have to be addressed (and any mitigation measures considered) through Appropriate Assessment as part of the Habitats

Regulations Assessment (HRA). This is an ongoing process being carried out as part of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy (see section 2.5.3).

2.3.6 The preferred strategy also directs new development to areas of the County's towns and villages at no significant risk of flooding. This approach protects people and the environment from future flood risk. In addition, new development will be required not to exacerbate the risk of flooding elsewhere by the use of sustainable drainage techniques through the use of a core policy on this issue.

2.3.7 The focus of the strategy, building on the vision (Appendix 1), is to accommodate development in a way which builds upon the theme of sustainable communities and promotes Herefordshire's environmental, historical and cultural assets. A table showing how the vision has been addressed in the strategy is included in Appendix 3.

2.3.8 As explained in Para 2.2.3 of this paper, a wealth of information has been used in developing the preferred strategy including national and regional policy, outcomes of consultation, outcomes from sustainability appraisal and appropriate assessment, emerging evidence and cross boundary issues. These are now addressed in detail.

### 2.3.9 ***National and Regional policy requirements:***

PPS1<sup>4</sup>(Sustainable Development): Planning should facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by:

- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life;
- contributing to sustainable economic development;
- protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities;
- ensuring high quality development through good and inclusive design, and the efficient use of resources; and,
- ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, livable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

PPS1 (Climate Change Supplement): In providing for the homes, jobs, services and infrastructure needed by communities, and in renewing and shaping the places where they live and work, spatial strategies should secure the highest viable resource and energy efficiency and reduction in emissions as well as securing the fullest possible use of sustainable transport for moving freight, public transport, walking and cycling; and, which overall, reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

PPS3 (Housing): The Government's key housing policy goal is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live.

PPS7 (Development in rural areas): This sets the national policy of strictly controlling new building development in the open countryside away from existing settlements to protect the countryside so it may be enjoyed by all, for its own sake. Nevertheless, authorities should support countryside-based enterprises that support the rural economy and aid rural regeneration. PPS7 also requires that local authorities make sufficient land available, either within or adjoining existing settlements, to meet the needs of local people.

PPS13 (Transport): requires local planning authorities to accommodate housing principally within existing urban areas which are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling; and in rural areas, locate most development for housing, jobs, shopping, leisure and services in local service centres which are designated in the plan to act as focal points

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<sup>4</sup> PPS relate to the governments Planning Policy Statements on various topics – see [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

for housing, transport and other services, and encourage better transport provision in the countryside.

#### RSS Policy CF2 (Settlement Strategy)

The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision Draft (2007) defines Hereford as a settlement of significant development for employment, health, education and other services reflecting its capacity to accommodate additional development without significant harm to local communities and in sustainable locations. The market towns of Herefordshire are identified as locations for development of a smaller scale, with development in villages to cater for local needs and local regeneration only. It specifies that villages that still have a range of facilities should be prioritised.

#### RSS Policies RR3 and RR4 (Market Towns and Rural Services)

These policies relate to market towns and rural services respectively and encourage local authorities to develop detailed policies for the regeneration of their rural areas in their Local Development Frameworks (Herefordshire forms part of a Rural Regeneration Zone-Policy RR1).

#### RSS Policy CF5 (Re-use of land and buildings) – updated by Panel report.

Local planning authorities should seek to contribute to the achievement of a regional minimum target for development on previously developed land – set at 60% for the region. The target needs to be kept under review in the light of monitoring housing provision.

#### RSS Policy PA11 (Town Centres)

Hereford is identified as a strategic centre where large-scale retail, office, cultural, sport, tourist and community uses should preferably be located.

#### RSS Policies PA14 and PA15 (Economic Development)

Local planning authorities should make sure that economic development is concentrated in towns and other large settlements accessible to their rural hinterlands. Plans should also include positive policies to promote agriculture and farm diversification.

The Mathew Taylor Review of the Rural Economy and Affordable Housing (July 2008) recommends that the government and local authorities do more to ensure that those who work in the countryside, can also live there. The report's recommendations have been broadly supported by central government.

The Herefordshire Local Transport Plan 2: refers to proposals for a relief road as part of a package of transport measures for relieving congestion in Hereford.

Hereford is also a named Government Growth Point, with over £2m of funding to date, committed to the implementation of a Programme of Development to support the sustainable development of the city.

### **2.3.10 What you told us at Developing Options stage about the Strategic Options:**

Responses to the Core Strategy Developing Options Paper questionnaire (see Core Strategy Developing Options Paper Analysis Schedules at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ldf) for details) revealed:

#### *Spatial Options*

- Broad support for Option A above Options B, C and D with 40% agreeing that a focus on the economy was the best option of the four (compared to 28% for Options B and C, and 4 % for Option D respectively).
- A focus on a new or expanded settlement was by far the least popular option amongst respondents.

- However, some 90 respondents commented that Options A-C were not mutually exclusive and preferred that there should be a combination of all 3.
- The combined options approach can also be seen in the results to the questions on the individual options with roughly equal proportions (75%) of respondents agreeing that Options A, B and C were realistic options when considered in their own right.

Disadvantages of the Options were seen to be:

- Option A - neglect of the rural west of the County, could lead to rural deprivation and the need for infrastructure improvements.
- Option B - need for improvements to public transport, greater emphasis on the economy and more focus on rural regeneration.
- Option C - whether it could be a stand-alone option with some respondents preferring a combination of Options A, B and C, although almost as many people commented that the environment should be the focus, but is a cross cutting theme.

#### *Distribution of development*

- With respect to the distribution of development outside of Hereford, the preference was to direct the majority of growth to the market towns but allow some growth in a limited number of sustainable rural settlements (with a focus on brownfield land first). Support for this approach was commonly provisional upon improved infrastructure accompanying any new development.

### **2.3.11 Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment:**

The Sustainability Appraisal carried out at Core Strategy Developing Options Stage (June 2008), concluded that Strategic Options B and C performed better than A in terms of economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainability. Option A had benefits in meeting economic development needs but fell down on meeting social and economic objectives in the rural west of the County. The full report is available on the Council's website [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ldf).

A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) on the Developing Options Strategic Options A-D was carried out to assess any likely significant effects on European protected sites either within or adjoining the County. 20 sites were originally included in the screening for likely significant effects from the Strategic Options and following assessment, 11 sites were included to be carried through to the next assessment stage. The greatest impacts were considered to be on the Rivers Wye and Lugg sites, where development pressures from any of the Options may affect water flow and quality. The full report is available on the Council's website at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ldf).

Further to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) carried out at Developing Options stage, an SA and HRA have been carried out on the Place Shaping Paper consultation which has informed the overall preferred strategy and the place-shaping options and policy directions outlined in the document.

**Sustainability Appraisal of the Place Shaping Paper** - Overall the spatial strategy is considered to be moving towards sustainability when assessed against SA objectives (these are set out in the General Scoping Report of the Local Development Framework which can be found on the Council's website). The option of directing the additional housing (1200 dwellings) allocated by the regional plan report to rural areas was assessed as moving marginally away from sustainability objectives. However, the Panel Report makes clear in paragraph 8.149 that the additional housing is to secure rural affordability and rural renaissance. Overall, the strategy is still considered to be moving towards sustainability with respect to the distribution of housing and employment development.

Unclear effects remain concerning issues regarding the impact of the strategy on water quality of the Rivers Wye and Lugg, protected bat species at Ross-on-Wye, the transport implications for Hereford and impacts of certain strategic allocations on landscape quality. This is due to a lack of information/evidence base in order to fully assess these issues. They will need further clarification before Core Strategy submission.

**Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Place Shaping Paper** - The most critical European protected sites likely to be affected by the strategy are the Rivers Wye and Lugg, the Wye Valley Woodlands and the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat sites. Due to a lack of information/evidence base at this stage it is concluded that the spatial strategy could have a potential effect on the European protected sites from the amount and location of development proposed. However, it is considered that mitigation measures, including improvements to sewage treatment works, inclusion of sustainable drainage systems and specific site design requirements are likely to negate these adverse effects. However, any potential cumulative impacts of the whole strategy on any of the following European sites would need to be fully assessed before Core Strategy submission: Rivers Wye and Lugg, Severn Estuary, Llangorse Lake, Wye Valley Woodlands and the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat sites. If sufficient evidence cannot be found to support the preferred strategy in having no significant adverse effects on the European protected sites in the County, then the only reasonable alternative would be to reduce the amount of new homes to be built this plan period as per regional plan policy SR4 introduced in the Inspector's Panel Report at the RSS Phase 2 Examination.

### **2.3.12 Findings of the evidence base (see list in Appendix 2):**

The following information has been taken from the State of Herefordshire Report, 2009 unless otherwise stated.

#### **Social considerations**

- Herefordshire's population is expected to grow by 15,200 over the period 2007-2026, despite an increase in deaths over births. The majority of this growth will be from migration from other parts of the country of families, businesses and the retired acknowledging the fact that Herefordshire is a county where people want to come to live and work.
- Just under a third of the total population lives in Hereford City; just over a fifth (22%) in the market towns. The remaining (just under a half) live in villages, hamlets and other isolated dwellings outside of the built up areas.
- There will be more rapid growth in older age groups (65 to 74 onwards) locally than nationally, with falls in all other age groups. This will affect the type of housing that we need to provide.
- A substantial increase in numbers of older people with a social care dependency is expected by 2020. Again, this will affect housing type needed.
- The rate of new homes built since 2001 has fluctuated above and below the strategic allocation required.
- The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has revealed that there is sufficient land in the county to meet regional requirements for the plan period, however this will include the need to utilise land that has been deemed "significantly constrained" due to landscape considerations or access difficulties, for example.
- In terms of building on previously developed land, the Council has exceeded the Government's targets (60%) since 2002, and for the last 5 years has achieved the Unitary Development Plan target of 68%.
- Between 1996 and 2008/9, 1430 affordable homes were completed at an average of 110 dwellings per annum, which is below the rate required to meet the UDP targets. Herefordshire has the worst affordability ratio for all local authorities in the West Midlands.<sup>5</sup> There is significant need for Affordable housing across the whole

<sup>5</sup> Annual Monitoring Report 2007/8 (Herefordshire Council)

of Herefordshire and an imbalance in the type of housing available in Hereford and the market towns.<sup>6</sup> The issue of affordable housing is addressed in Para 3.2 of this document.

- 45% of all new homes built since 1996 have been built outside of Hereford and the Market Towns in the villages and countryside.<sup>7</sup> This percentage will have to change if the regional allocation for Hereford is to be achieved.
- More than half of the County's settlements have less than 50 houses in them reflecting the scattered nature of the rural settlement pattern.<sup>8</sup> This presents particular challenges for service delivery.
- Access to key services in rural parts of Herefordshire is notably worse than for rural areas in other parts of the country.
- Studies have shown that for people living in rural areas journeys to work are longer than for getting to most services but for both urban and rural dwellers. Over 50% of residents travel to work by car.<sup>9</sup>
- The Open Space Study has identified deficiencies in particular types of open space in Hereford and the market towns.<sup>10</sup>
- The Water Cycle Study had identified that many sewerage treatment works in the County are at capacity, with the exception of Ross on Wye and Ledbury
- The Transport Study (August 2009) shows that the increase in travel demand over the plan period is forecast to worsen the congestion within the city of Hereford. Adding the additional trips associated with the RSS housing requirements will exacerbate these congestion problems, leading to longer journey times and extensive queuing. The Study concludes a relief road will alleviate this forecast congestion and the preferred option on cost and efficiency terms would be an eastern route.
- Further studies are being commissioned to look at the impacts of sustainable transport and demand management strategies on the options for and against a relief road in Hereford as well as the possible impacts of an eastern or western route.

#### **Economic considerations**

- Herefordshire's GVA (Gross Value Added – this is a measure of growth) is increasing but at a slower rate than regionally and nationally.
- Herefordshire has a slightly lower proportion of high and medium technology manufacturing jobs than regionally.
- Herefordshire's earnings are low compared to regionally and nationally and the gap is getting wider.
- Self-employment in Herefordshire is higher than in West Midlands and England as a whole.
- The Employment Land Study has revealed that there is a need for new employment land allocations in Hereford, Leominster, Ledbury and Bromyard with the promotion of expansion of existing businesses and diversification in rural areas also needed.<sup>11</sup>
- High levels of income deprivation are experienced in certain areas of Leominster and Hereford City.
- Rural areas in Herefordshire are less likely to receive a decent level of broadband service compared to urban areas.
- The retail study has identified a need for new food shopping provision in Leominster and a limited amount in Kington whilst non-food shopping provision may be needed towards the end of the plan period in Hereford, Ross, Ledbury and Leominster.

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<sup>6</sup> Strategic Housing Market Assessment (June 2008)

<sup>7</sup> Annual Monitoring Report 2007/8 (Herefordshire Council)

<sup>8</sup> Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper July 2009 (Herefordshire Council)

<sup>9</sup> Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper July 2009 (Herefordshire Council)

<sup>10</sup> PPG 17 Study (date?)

<sup>11</sup> Employment Land Survey September 2009 (Drivas Jonas)

### **Environmental considerations**

- Levels of CO2 per head of population are higher than the West Midlands and England as a whole, largely as a result of high emissions from road transport
- Herefordshire produces more waste and more waste goes to landfill than most other local authorities. The waste strategy identifies that further waste facilities will be needed in the plan period
- The SFRA has highlighted the need to produce Catchment Flood Management Plans and Surface Water Management Plans to reduce flood risk, both fluvial and surface water.<sup>12</sup>
- The Water Cycle Study (required as part of Growth Point status) concludes that Surface Water Management Plans are required for Hereford and Leominster in view of the housing pressures in these areas and their historical flood risk.
- The Water Cycle Study also highlights that Herefordshire currently has sufficient capacity in its water supply to accommodate the proposed growth in the County.
- Two of the County's watercourses are designated as of "poor ecological status", which will have implications for mitigation measures where new housing is proposed and sewerage capacity affected.
- The Green Infrastructure Strategy suggests a new country park for the county, storage areas for flood alleviation in the NW of the county and a green corridor between Hereford and Leominster, amongst other proposals.
- The various landscape assessments carried out for the purposes of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) show that the County's market towns of Ledbury, Ross, Kington and Bromyard are severely constrained with respect to development due to their surrounding landscape of medium - high and high sensitivity.

#### **2.3.13 Cross Boundary Issues:**

A review of the issues arising in bordering authorities has been carried out and this is contained in a separate paper - the Cross Boundary Issues Report (January 2010) which can be found on the Council's website in the Forward Planning pages. The main issues arising which will need to be considered further as the Core Strategy process progresses include:

#### ***Malvern Hills District Council***

- *Waste arrangements, including work on the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy with Worcestershire County Council;*
- Integrated management of the Malvern Hills AONB;
- Housing demand across the travel to work area;
- Address transport corridor constraints: intercity rail, including links to Birmingham and London.
- Rural Regeneration Zone (RRZ): need for co-ordination of activities; and policy development
- Renewable energy, particularly wind energy given the higher land straddling the county/district boundary;
- Green Infrastructure.

#### **Forest of Dean District Council**

- Employment, tourism, service and retail links;
- Housing demand across the travel to work area;
- Green Infrastructure;
- Wye Valley AONB.

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<sup>12</sup> The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (May 09)

### **Shropshire Council**

- Address transport corridor constraints: A49, including links to Central Wales and the north west of England;
- Housing demand across the travel to work area;
- Affordable housing, including joint working as part of WHMAP
- Accommodation arrangements for Gypsies and Travellers, including joint working as part of SHHOG.

### **Monmouthshire County Council**

- *Transport links;*
- *Housing demand across the travel to work area;*
- *Green Infrastructure;*
- *Wye Valley AONB.*

### **Powys County Council**

- *Employment, tourism, service and retail links;*
- *Cross border service provision, including health/leisure;*
- *Housing market areas;*
- *Transport links, potable water and sewerage demands;*
- *Green Infrastructure, and specifically the River Wye;*
- *Strategic flood management;*
- *Accommodation arrangements for Gypsies and Travellers.*

### **Brecon Beacons National Park Authority**

- *Tourism links;*
- *Hay-on-Wye.*

## **2.4 Increased target of new homes from Regional Plan Panel Report**

In raising the housing target for Herefordshire from 16,600 to 18,000 new homes, the panel stressed that the extra housing is primarily needed to address affordability of housing issues in rural areas and in this respect is earmarked for the areas outside of Hereford. Therefore the preferred option is to disperse development outside of the market towns in the remainder of the rural areas to support rural regeneration. Although overall less sustainable in terms of reducing the need to travel, this option could help to support improved accessibility to local services provided sufficient levels of development were directed to settlements with a reasonable level of existing services to ensure developer contributions of the scale needed to help provide/maintain services. Again, however, such development could impinge on the historic character of settlements and so a master planning approach would be beneficial. The Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan would need to address the issue of the location of such rural development. According to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment there is unlikely to be sufficient capacity for new homes to meet the regional housing target for the rural areas without the need to direct development to a second tier below that of RSC/Hubs. Hence this means either identifying “Local Centres” or using a criteria based policy along the lines of that set out in the Place Shaping Paper section on Rural Areas.

## **2.5 Alternative strategic options not taken forward**

### **2.5.1 Reasons for rejecting Option D of the Developing Options Paper**

To build a new or expanded settlement has been rejected for this plan period to 2026. This option received little support at the Developing Options stage with only 4 % of respondents preferring this option. Indeed, the region stated that this option would not be in conformity with the existing regional plan in respect of Hereford’s status as a Settlement of Significant Development where the majority of development should be directed. In addition, such an

option could seriously undermine the vitality and viability of the existing market towns in the County.

A number of possible locations for a new settlement were put forward in the responses to the Developing Options Paper including at the A49 between Hereford and Leominster; around Ross on Wye; at Leominster itself and at Ewyas Harold. Whilst these locations were considered for a possible new or expanded settlement, in each case it has been concluded that the considerations of adverse impact on Hereford and the County's existing market towns outweighed the benefits of the option. In addition, no developer has come forward with a proposal for a new or expanded settlement anywhere in the County and without this backing, delivery of such an option would be unrealistic.

These concerns also appeared in the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment carried out at Developing Options stage. Option D, whilst performing well in terms of benefit for the environment by preserving the existing historic market towns and providing opportunities for addressing climate change, fell short in terms of possible adverse impacts on the economies of existing settlements in the County. This is due to the scale such a new or expanded settlement would have to be, to be considered viable in economic terms.

#### **2.5.2 Directing all development to villages**

The option of allocating all development to villages rather than Hereford and the market towns was raised at consultation, but this was not considered realistic given the requirements of policies CF2, RR2 and 3 of the regional plan. The option of putting the majority of growth outside of Hereford to villages was considered in Question 32 on Rural Areas of the Developing Options Paper but the majority of respondents preferred the option of directing development to the market towns and a limited number of sustainable settlements. Indeed this approach conforms to policy CF2 and RR3 of the regional plan. Bypassing the market towns completely in terms of new development is not considered a sustainable option and would not meet the vision and objectives of the Core Strategy.

#### **2.5.3 Directing development to settlements with railway stations**

The option of developing only those places with railway stations, or with the capacity to have them, was also suggested at developing options stage consultation. This was partly addressed through sub-option (iii) of Option B in the Developing Options Paper with reference to settlements with sustainable "public transport". This option is being addressed in part in the preferred strategy with a large proportion of the County's growth being directed to Hereford and Leominster, and a lesser proportion to Ledbury, towns which have existing railway stations. However, to ignore the market towns of Ross, Bromyard and Kington completely in terms of new development would not meet regional plan policies CF2 and RR3 with regards to promoting rural regeneration for those towns or their hinterlands or for meeting local housing needs. In a county like Herefordshire, which is very poorly provided for in terms of rail connections, establishing a strategy purely on rail – base locations would not result in a sustainable pattern of development to meet the social and economic needs of the whole county.

#### **2.5.4 Options regarding higher housing target not taken forward**

As it became clear that the Panel Report were recommending a higher housing target of an extra 1400 homes for Herefordshire, options were considered about how to distribute the extra dwellings. The Panel Report states that the dwellings are intended to address rural affordability issues and 1200 dwellings were to be directed outside Hereford. Three options were then considered regarding the extra 1200 homes:

- 1) Concentrate the extra homes to Ross and Ledbury based on evidence emerging from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment;
- 2) Disperse to villages around Ross and Ledbury;
- 3) Disperse to rural settlements across the County.

Spatial Strategy Background Paper – January 2010

As stated in Para 2.4, Option 3 was favoured.

### 1) Concentrate development in or on the edge of the market towns of Ross and Ledbury

This would be the most sustainable option as these areas have the most services and facilities after Hereford and Leominster, particularly jobs, shops, and health facilities. However, concerns have been expressed by Welsh Water at the recent Habitats Regulation Assessment workshop that there are constraints on future water supply for the Ross area, which could stifle future development. For both Ross and Ledbury, a significant increase in the scale of housing expansion around the town would have to be balanced against issues of landscape and historic environment considerations. These latter two issues of water supply and landscape constraints may render this option unrealistic.

**2) Disperse development to the villages around the towns of Ross and Ledbury where it was environmentally acceptable to do so and within close proximity to it – within say 5km.** At this stage we do not know whether these villages have capacity to take this extra growth as the SHLAA for all the villages has not been finalised so it is difficult to say whether this is a realistic option. However, issues of water supply at Ross on Wye and landscape character at Ross on Wye and Ledbury, would still be relevant and are deemed to render this option unrealistic.

## 3.0 What the strategy means for Herefordshire

### 3.1 New Homes

The **housing** element of the strategy is reflected in Figure 4 below, which details the broad distribution of homes across the County. The fourth column details the actual amounts of new homes required when taking into account dwellings completed, under construction or granted planning permission but not started since 2006, the start date of the regional plan requirements. The final column details the number of new homes considered to be required on strategic sites (i.e. generally greater than 500 dwellings site size in Hereford and generally greater than 100 in the market towns). The calculations determining the fourth column for this Figure are shown in Appendix 4.

**Figure 4 – Broad distribution of new homes in Herefordshire**

Hierarchy	Settlement	Number of new homes as per Spatial Strategy	Number of new homes (all sites) required as at 1.4.09 *	Estimate of new homes needed on strategic sites
Main urban area	Hereford	<b>8,500</b>	<b>6,250</b>	<b>5,300</b>
Market Towns	Leominster	2,500	1,800	1,700
	Ledbury	1000	950	900
	Ross on Wye	1000	500	350
	Bromyard	500	300	250
	Kington	200	50	0
		<b>5,200</b>	<b>3,600</b>	<b>3,200</b>
Rural Areas	Rural Service Centres	<b>4,400</b>	<b>2,700</b>	<b>0</b>
	Local Centres			

	<b>Total</b>	<b>18,100</b>	<b>12,550</b>	<b>8,500</b>

Takes into account completions, planning permissions and UDP allocations adjusted for lapses of planning permissions (figures are rounded)

### 3.1.1 Affordable housing

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has identified that there is a need for affordable housing across the whole of the County. It is likely, following from the Examination in Public into the regional plan that the requirement for affordable housing provision for the County, will amount to a third of all new dwellings being required to be “affordable” i.e. being subsidised in some way for people being unable to buy or rent in the open housing market to work towards meeting the need. The Core Strategy will need to ensure delivery of this amount of housing. This will be achieved through a Core Policy of requiring affordable housing on all strategic sites and other sites of particular thresholds at a percentage yet to be determined. An Affordable Housing Viability Study and Local Housing Assessment are currently being undertaken to ascertain possible new thresholds and percentage targets (which will update those in the current UDP) to meet requirements of the regional plan. In addition, allocations for affordable housing may be necessary, but these will be detailed in the Hereford Area and Market Towns and Rural Areas DPDs, although facilitated by a Core Policy. An exception site policy for smaller scale affordable housing developments will also be included.

### 3.1.2 Phasing

The Submission Core Strategy will include a policy on phasing of housing development which will need to reflect the regional plan panel reports recommendations regarding ‘back-loading’ of development towards the end of the plan period to reflect current economic circumstances. This will be reflected in the housing trajectory set out in that document. Sufficient land will be identified to meet the five and ten year housing supply in line with national policy. However, windfall sites developed will count towards meeting targets and this may require future adjustments to the housing trajectory via the Annual Monitoring Report. Also included will be an indication of the split between the level of housing to be built on greenfield land and brownfield land. The level of greenfield land required is likely to be higher than levels achieved in recent years due to the regional requirement for new housing for the county. This will ultimately have an adverse knock on effect in terms of loss of high quality agricultural land in the county.

## 3.2 New Jobs

3.2.1 The regional plan panel report recommends that there is a need to have a rolling reservoir of 37ha of readily available employment land for a 5 year period. The panel also recommend that a 10 year supply of land should also be identified (i.e.74ha) and that the indicative requirement of total employment land for Herefordshire for the Plan period (2006-2026) should be 148ha (37 hectares x4). This reflects an increase from that originally proposed at Phase 2 Preferred Options stage.

3.2.2 The Employment Land Study reports that overall there is good quantity of existing employment land supply within Herefordshire as a whole (around 112ha) when compared against forecast minimum requirements using small area forecasting techniques. However, projecting past completion rates forward provides a different picture of requirements with a modest surplus in employment land supply for Herefordshire. This forecast was undertaken prior to the panel report increasing the indicative target to 148ha. The Study stresses the need to apply the small area forecasting model as an absolute minimum land requirement and that in reality, a much larger amount of land will be required to ensure continuing economic development and an adequate portfolio of sites. The study can be viewed on the Council’s website.

3.2.3 In county-wide terms and taking into account employment land completions over the past 3 years since 2006 (45.5ha), the indicative requirement for the remaining period would drop to 102.5ha. As there is around 112ha of employment land currently with planning

Indicative requirement of total employment land as per RSS Panel Report (2006-2026)	148 ha
Less completions 2006-2009	45.5 ha
	-----
<b>Total requirement</b>	<b>102.5 ha</b>
Employment land with planning permission or currently allocated in UDP	<b>112 ha</b>

3.2.4 However, the employment policy direction may result in a loss of some poor/moderate employment land that is currently being protected in the County and not all land identified is necessarily “readily available” at present. There is also a need for an adequate and balanced portfolio of readily available sites, and the total regional plan figure remains indicative only, it is felt prudent to make specific strategic allocations in Hereford and some of the market towns at this time. Those at Ledbury and Bromyard are broadly replacements for existing sites and again follow recommendations of the Employment Land Study. The next stage of the employment evidence base is to establish what quantity of land is “readily available” through joint working with our Economic Development section and establishing a monitoring framework to introduce into the Annual Monitoring report. If sufficient land is not readily available, then further allocation may be necessary through the Core Strategy of other Development Plan Documents.

The above employment requirements will be achieved by using strategic allocations in the Core Strategy and other policies to:

- Safeguard existing better quality employment land,
- Focus most new provision in Hereford (in association with urban extensions) and market towns in tandem with housing growth,
- Promote live/work units,
- Promote employment uses in rural areas, including enabling appropriate economic diversification proposals in recognition of the county’s designation as a Rural Regeneration Zone in the regional plan, and
- Monitor and review supply through the Annual Monitoring Report.

### 3.3 New Shops

Hereford is identified in the regional plan panel report as a Strategic Sub-Regional Centre providing the main focus for higher level retail, commercial, cultural and service activities. New non-retail capacity of around 60,000 sqm in Hereford has been identified. Below this level the market towns of Kington, Ledbury, Leominster, Ross-on-Wye and Bromyard form the “non-strategic centres” meeting local needs referred to in regional planning policy PA12B. There are no strategic level retail developments proposed in the market towns during this plan period, but this situation will be reviewed as part of the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan.

### 3.4 New Infrastructure

#### *Transport infrastructure*

The A49 in central Hereford is subject to increasing congestion and has been formally declared an Air Quality Management Area due to the extent of vehicle pollution derived from the level of congestion. It is envisaged that the scale of new homes will need to be supported by a package of balanced transport measures to include improved public transport provision, walking and cycling, park and ride facilities and a new relief road. These measures are considered necessary to enable Hereford to fulfil its role as a Settlement of Significant Development as highlighted in the regional plan Panel Report.

The precise extent and detailed route of a relief road will need to be further examined in the light of landscape impact, noise and air pollution and impact on European protected sites as well as against and/or alongside other sustainable transport options and overall cost. This issue is dealt with in greater detail in the Place Shaping paper (January 2010). Other necessary transport infrastructure required as a result of development in the county will be consulted upon and delivered through the Local Transport Plan and the relevant Area Plans.

#### *Water supply*

The Water Cycle Strategy states that there is sufficient capacity in the current system for the proposed level of growth in the County for this plan period, although there are issues in specific locations.

#### *Sewerage capacity*

Full information upon sewerage capacity is not yet available with regards to the feasibility and cost of upgrading that would be needed to support housing development. There are specific issues which will need addressing in Hereford and Bromyard, in particular, given the proposed level of growth for these locations. Continuing dialogue will be required with the water companies to ensure that these infrastructure requirements are taken into account and programmed into the implementation strategy accompanying the Submission Core Strategy.

#### *Surface Water Management*

This needs to be addressed through the production of specific plans in Hereford and Leominster with respect to fluvial and non-fluvial flooding given the significant levels of growth proposed in these areas. These will be addressed as part of the production of the Area Plans.

#### *Green Infrastructure*

Green infrastructure is a component of spatial planning that is applicable at all scales to create attractive and functional places to live and work. At a broad, strategic county level the following infrastructure has been identified in the developing Green Infrastructure Strategy (see Appendix 2):

- Reinforcing the integrity and significance of the principal river corridors in the county and particularly the Rivers Wye and Lugg.
- Making landscape scale linkages and corridors of green infrastructure between existing assets and centres of population, for example, between Hereford and Leominster, between the Malvern Hills AONB and Hereford or between Bromyard and Ledbury, utilising the Frome and Leadon catchments.
- Providing new country parks that best serve existing and expanding centres of population.
- Maintaining, expanding and linking urban parklands.
- Effectively utilising existing environmental assets to create dynamic landscapes capable of adapting to climate change and providing water management systems, for example, utilising the Rivers Lugg and Arrow valleys to the north and west of Leominster to control river levels.

#### *Education*

The provision of a higher education facility in the county is referred to in strategic objective 3. This issue is addressed specifically in the Place Shaping Paper section.

#### *Health Facilities*

No need has been identified for new strategic health provision as a result of the growth in the County.

#### *Communications Infrastructure*

Much of Herefordshire is limited in terms of the speed of broadband coverage that is currently provided. New universal, high speed broadband infrastructure is essential for business effectiveness, public sector service delivery, social networking, education and so on. The delivery of universal high speed broadband infrastructure will be promoted alongside the delivery of new development in this plan period funded, where possible, by developer contributions.

### **3.5 When will development take place and how will it be delivered?**

3.5.1 New homes, jobs, shops and leisure facilities should be provided when and where they are needed. In addition, they should bring forward community facilities and infrastructure when and where they are needed through developer contributions and possibly the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This timely provision of development will need to be co-ordinated with infrastructure provider's strategies e.g. Welsh Water in the case of a new/expanded sewerage works for Hereford. Critically, they will need to be provided in a way that conserves and enhances the high quality natural, built, historical and cultural assets of the County. This will be achieved by encouraging excellence in the quality of development. An Implementation Plan will be developed which will explain how the spatial strategy and policies of the final Core Strategy will be implemented and monitored. This will include an infrastructure delivery programme and will be prepared in conjunction with the Herefordshire Partnership. The Core Strategy will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report.

3.5.2 Achieving sustainable communities, given the scale of development to 2026 will require careful planning, timely delivery and co-ordinated implementation. New infrastructure requirements will need to be highlighted at the outset. Provision of the preferred strategy will be through a co-ordinated approach of public/private sector bodies with a range of partnerships, funding and collaborative working.

## **4.0 Place Shaping**

4.1 This section sets out briefly what the preferred strategy means in general terms for the "places" within Herefordshire.

### **4.2 The strategic approach for Hereford**

Hereford is recognised in the RSS as a Settlement of Significant Development for employment, health, education and other services reflecting its capacity to accommodate additional development without significant harm to local communities and in sustainable locations. It is on this basis that certain key parameters, including 8,500 new homes for the city in conjunction with improvements to the transport infrastructure, have been set and it would therefore be inconsistent to pursue a long term strategy that is not in accordance with the intended role of the city set out in the regional plan. Concentrating development in this way would develop and support the renaissance of the city in the long term by capitalising on existing services and other infrastructure and providing greater opportunities for improving and increasing them e.g. helping to bring forward the relief road, affordable housing, new green infrastructure, flood alleviation and so on...

As part of the urban extensions to Hereford, new employment land (including offices) will also be directed to provide jobs alongside housing. The existing major employment area at Rotherwas will be extended and supported. New large-scale retail and office development will be directed to Hereford as the central shopping focus for the County as part of the adopted policies for regeneration of the city centre set out in the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007. This will help address leakage of shoppers to destinations outside the County.

### **4.2 The strategic approach for the Market Towns**

4.2.1 The primary aim for the market towns from the vision is to re-enforce their role as key service centres for their rural hinterlands and to promote linkages between them and

Hereford. By directing development there, existing and new services/infrastructure can be supported.

4.2.2 The decision to focus the largest single allocation of new homes to Leominster specifically, has been based on the recognition of its economic importance located on the A49 Corridor, its excellent public transport links, including rail station and the fact that an urban extension will bring transport benefits in the form of a southern link road. The latter will benefit the centre of the town in terms of reducing congestion and improving air quality. Relative to the County's other market towns it is also the least constrained, environmentally<sup>13</sup>. There was considerable support for growth to the southwest of Leominster in conjunction with a new link road at Core Strategy Developing Options Stage consultation.

4.2.3 Each of the remaining market towns will receive some development but the quantity and type will reflect their respective roles and environmental development constraints with the result that Ledbury and Ross on Wye (larger in scale and population terms and with higher demand for new homes and jobs) will support quantitatively more development than Bromyard and Kington. According to emerging evidence, Ross on Wye has high demand for housing but appears to be struggling in retail performance and therefore, a new influx of housing would address these concerns. Ledbury again has high demand for housing and benefits from having a rail station so is a highly sustainable place for new development. However, both towns are constrained by environmental designations and flooding risks. The amounts for each town thus far are balanced by their respective needs, opportunities and constraints. At Developing Options stage, respondents felt that if growth was necessary, then the preference for Ledbury, Kington, Bromyard and Ross was a dispersed approach to development of smaller sites around the town. Limiting further growth to existing brownfield sites within the towns was also strongly favoured. However, the Town Council in Bromyard felt, as part of engaging in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment process, that existing sites within the town should not be built on, rather urban extension sites around the town should be preferred. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has revealed a lack of small sites within the market towns, however, and this has meant an alternative approach to developing the towns has been required.

### **4.3 The strategic approach for the Rural Areas**

4.3.1 Some development is directed to what are called "rural service centres" (RSCs) and Hubs. These are villages or groups of villages which are dispersed across the County and have a range of services and are considered to be places where development will support the need to meet local market housing requirements and needs for affordable housing as well as promote rural regeneration through small-scale retail or employment development. New development will help to support the retention, or creation of, local services. The location and level of development allocated to each service centre will be determined through engagement in the development of the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan following on from the Core Strategy – some settlements may accommodate modest extensions through a master planning approach. The issue of the precise location of settlement boundaries will be addressed in the Hereford Area and Market Towns and Rural Areas Plans.

4.3.2 Of the remaining settlements, local centres may be defined specifically or through criteria based approach. Such villages may be capable of accommodating limited housing (including affordable) or employment which must contribute directly towards rural regeneration or other community benefits i.e. through meeting proven housing needs and/or providing for the retention/provision of a community facility/service. In all cases, the impact on the environment and landscape must be acceptable or adverse impacts be mitigated against.

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<sup>13</sup> Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (August 09) – see constraint maps for Ross, Ledbury, Bromyard and Kington

4.3.3 Elsewhere, all remaining settlements will be limited to “exception” housing needs such as agricultural, forestry or other farm diversification, replacements, conversions or small-scale affordable housing only where a local need is proven. At developing options stage, many respondents stated that they wanted us to protect the countryside and local distinctiveness by preventing large development in unsustainable rural locations whilst still aim to protect and promote local rural facilities and support rural communities.

## Appendix 1 – Vision and Objectives

A detailed Background Paper on the Vision and Objectives (November 2009) which explains how they have been developed and consulted upon to date, can be found on the Council's website at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/corestrategy).

### Final Vision

***Herefordshire will be a place of distinctive environmental, historical and cultural assets and local communities, with sustainable development fostering a high quality of life for those who live, work and visit here. A sustainable future for the County will be based on the interdependence of the themes of social progress, economic prosperity and environmental quality with the aim of increasing the County's self-reliance and resilience.***

### 1. Social Progress

*By 2026, decent, affordable homes, jobs, health and community facilities and other necessary infrastructure will have been provided in urban and rural areas to meet the needs of all sections of the population creating safe, inclusive places and robust communities that promote good health and well-being. The opportunities and benefits from open space, leisure, shopping, sport, art, heritage, learning, health and tourism facilities and assets will be maximised enabling more active lifestyles and the retention of our young people, and an improved quality of life. Residents and workers in urban and rural areas will have a reduced need to travel by car with opportunities for "active travel" i.e. walking and cycling promoted, along with improved accessibility to public transport. In Hereford, congestion will be managed and public transport improved through a balanced package of transport measures including the provision of a relief road, park and ride facilities and bus priority schemes. Residents will have the opportunity to contribute to the shaping of their place through continuous engagement in plan making.*

### 2. Economic Prosperity

*By 2026, Herefordshire will have a thriving local economy, with a balanced and diversified business base incorporating more knowledge-based and high-tech businesses and a more adaptable and skilled workforce. A genuine commitment by all businesses to sustainable development will underpin a unique quality of life. New employment land will have been provided to complement new homes and support higher-waged jobs enabling existing and future businesses to grow and thrive. A communications infrastructure based on fibre optics will be in place to allow a similar level of broadband service everywhere in the county, with the major employment locations enjoying broadband services matching the best in the country. Educational developments (including higher education) will bolster and support local resources and strengths, such as environmental technologies, creative industries, agriculture, food production, forestry, equestrian expertise and tourism as well as support improved skills training, development and local job opportunities. Hereford will be a strong, sub-regional shopping, employment, leisure and cultural focus for the County. Comprehensive proposals for regeneration in and around the city centre will complement the historic core in providing homes, jobs, shops and leisure facilities and transport improvements. As a result the city will be a vibrant destination of choice for shoppers and visitors alike. The market towns will be distinctive, thriving service centres that are better linked to their hinterland villages through enterprise hubs, service provision and transport accessibility. Our village-based services will be supported through new development (including live-work units) in appropriate locations to foster sustainable communities and promote rural regeneration. Herefordshire will be a sought after destination for quality leisure visits and sustainable tourism by more fully utilising, but respecting, the county's unique environmental assets such as the River Wye.*

### **3. Environmental Quality**

*New development will be designed and constructed in ways to ensure that local distinctiveness is reinforced. The wider impacts of climate change will be addressed by reducing carbon emissions, minimising pollution and the risk of flooding, ensuring availability of natural resources, and by providing appropriate waste management facilities and renewable energy schemes. Networks of connected, well managed and accessible natural green spaces will provide a range of enhanced leisure and health benefits within and between towns, villages and the countryside. Local food production and processing will be fostered whilst supporting stewardship of soils and water, biodiversity and the characteristic Herefordshire landscape. The area's historic and environmental resource, including its natural beauty and quality of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, built environment and cultural heritage, will be protected and enhanced. It will underpin and foster growth and innovation in businesses and jobs; being accessed, appreciated and actively supported by more people, for more purposes, in all walks of life.*

### **Final Objectives**

The objectives have been substantially reworded since the Developing Options Paper version (June 2008). The main differences in this final version of the objectives relate to the creation of two further objectives in total, resulting from the splitting of original objective No's 7 and 9, to create separate objectives on Hereford, the Market Towns and Rural Areas and on the issue of climate change.

### **Social Progress**

1. To meet the housing needs of all sections of the community (especially those in need of affordable housing), by providing a range of quality, energy efficient homes in the right place at the right time.
2. To improve the health, well-being and quality of life of all residents by ensuring new developments positively contribute towards better access to, provision and use of, improved public open spaces, sport and recreation, education, cultural and health facilities.
3. To support existing education, life-long learning and the retention of our young people through the provision and/or improvement of higher education, skills development and training facilities.
4. To reduce the need to travel and lessen the harmful impacts from traffic growth, promote active travel and improve quality of life by locating significant new development where access to employment, shopping, education, health, recreation, leisure and other services are, or could be made available by walking, cycling or public transport.
5. To improve access to services in rural areas and movement and air quality within urban areas by ensuring new developments support the provision of an accessible, integrated, safe and sustainable transport network and improved traffic management schemes.

### **Economic Prosperity**

6. To provide more local, better paid job opportunities to limit out-commuting and strengthen the economy by attracting higher value-added, knowledge based industries and cutting-edge environmental technologies to new/existing employment land and enabling existing businesses to grow and diversify, facilitated by the universal provision of a high bandwidth broadband service.
7. To strengthen Hereford's role as a sub-regional focus for the county, through city center expansion as part of wider city regeneration and through the provision of a balanced package of transport measures including park and ride, bus priority schemes and a relief road including a second river crossing.
8. To improve the economic viability of the market towns, villages and their rural hinterlands by facilitating employment generation and diversification, improving delivery and access to services (including affordable housing and improved ICT) and realising the value of the environment as an economic asset.
9. To develop Herefordshire as a destination for quality leisure visits and sustainable tourism by enabling the provision of new, as well as enhancement of existing, tourism infrastructure in appropriate locations.

### **Environmental Quality**

10. To achieve sustainable communities and protect the environment by delivering well designed places, spaces and buildings, which use land efficiently, reinforce local distinctiveness and are supported by the necessary infrastructure including green infrastructure.

11. To address the causes and impacts of climate change by ensuring new development: uses sustainable design and construction methods to conserve natural resources, does not increase flood risk to new or existing property, increases the use of renewable forms of energy to reduce carbon emissions, minimises waste and pollution, manages water supply and conservation and conserves and protects biodiversity and geodiversity.

12. To conserve, promote, utilise and enjoy our natural, built, historic and cultural assets for the fullest benefits to the whole community by safeguarding the County's current stock of environmental assets from loss and damage, reversing negative trends, ensuring best condition and encouraging expansion, as well as appropriately managing future assets.

## Appendix 2 - Evidence Base Studies

Evidence Base	Purpose	Status (Jan 2010)	Availability
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment <b>(SHLAA)</b>	A study to identify as many potential housing sites as possible from 2009 -2026 and to explore any constraints that might affect there suitability, viability or availability for development.	Completed	On website
West Sub-regional Housing Market Assessment <b>(SHMA)</b>	To provide a detailed sub-regional market analysis of housing need and demands	Completed	On website
Local Housing Market Assessment <b>(LHMA)</b>	To further the SHMA providing more detailed information of housing need and demand within Herefordshire	Ongoing	
Affordable Housing Viability Study	An assessment of affordable housing viability to support the development of future planning policies	Ongoing	Expected January 2010
Sub-regional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment	A study to identify the pitch need requirements for both Gypsies and Travellers until 2017	Completed	On website
Water Cycle Study	An assessment of water supply and infrastructure in the County	Ongoing	
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment <b>(SFRA)</b>	To inform policy framework in respect of new development	Completed	On website
Employment Land Review	An assessment of current and future employment needs in the County	Completed	On website
Retail Study	Study looks at health checks for Hereford and the market towns, current floorspace and future needs for retail and leisure	Completed	On website
Green Infrastructure Study	Identifies issues, opportunities and deficiencies for environmental enhancements and connections	Completed	
Green Infrastructure Strategy	A basis for developing long-term project objectives for an enhanced green infrastructure network	Ongoing	
Open Space Study / Strategy	To enable the provision of good quality accessible open spaces, sport and recreational facilities.	Ongoing	Study on website
Transport Study – Hereford Multi Modal Model Forecasting Report	To examine the implications of potential new development and its impacts on the road network.	Completed	On website

<b>Evidence Base</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Availability</b>
Rapid Townscape Assessment – Phase 1 Hereford	To provide an overview of historic townscape character and an informed basis for new housing.	Complete	On website
Rapid Townscape Assessment – Phase 2 Market Towns	To provide an overview of historic townscape character and an informed basis for new housing.	Ongoing	Due to be completed by March 2010
Preliminary study for Historic Environment Development Impact and Designs Study <b>(HEDIDS)</b> – Phase 1	To identify historic environment constraints on the location of new development and to promote the historic landscape for innovative design of new places and communities.	Ongoing	
Historic Environment Development Impact and Designs Study <b>(HEDIDS)</b> for Hereford. Phase 2 detailed study	To assess the landscape capacity to assimilate new housing.	Ongoing	2010/11
Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis	To assess the landscape capacity to assimilate new housing.	Ongoing	
Building Biodiversity into Herefordshire's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	To identify Biodiversity constraints, sensitivities and opportunities in relocation to potential new housing development. (Hereford and Market Towns)	Ongoing	
Central Hereford Historic Townscape Characterisation	To provide a greater understanding of Hereford's archaeology to inform city centre regeneration.	Ongoing	
Waste and Minerals	To provide an assessment of the development requirements for mineral workings and waste facilities up until 2026	Completed	On website

## Appendix 3 – How the spatial strategy addresses the Core Strategy Vision

Vision priority	Objective Number	Spatial Strategy
<b>Social</b>		
New, affordable homes, jobs, health and community facilities to meet needs	1,2, 6, 7 and 8	Providing 18,000 new homes and associated infrastructure, approximately a 1/3 of which will be affordable. Protecting and providing employment land in Hereford and the market towns and rural areas to allow for new job opportunities. Monitoring the release of housing and employment land.
Maximise benefits of open space, leisure, shopping, sport, art, education, health and tourism facilities	2, 3, 9 and 12	By directing the majority of new development to existing centres, existing and new facilities can be supported and enhanced
Improve accessibility to public transport and reduce the need to travel, especially by the private car	4 and 5	By directing the majority of new development to main centres where jobs and other services/facilities are already located, the need to travel is reduced.
Reduce congestion and improve public transport in Hereford	5 and 7	Existing congestion is addressed through new transport infrastructure provision as part of a balanced package
Promote continuous engagement in plan-making with the community	-	This is being achieved through community consultation on the Place Shaping Paper itself.
<b>Economic</b>		
Promote a diversified business base incorporating more knowledge based and high-tech businesses.	6, 7 and 8	Through targeted regeneration and urban expansion in Hereford and some of the market towns and through promoting rural regeneration
Promote a more adaptable and skilled workforce.	3	Through specific educational improvements in Hereford
Provide new employment land in tandem with new homes	4	Through directing employment land provision to those areas of housing growth
Improve broadband service	6	Specifically through developer contributions via a policy direction on Infrastructure Delivery
Enhanced higher education provision	3	Through specific educational improvements in Hereford
Support and strengthen Hereford's role as a sub-regional focus through regeneration	7	By directing new homes, new jobs, new shops, green infrastructure, transport improvements and city area regeneration
Enhance the role of market towns as service centres and support sustainable rural communities through new development, service provision and better transport accessibility	8	By directing new homes, new jobs, new shops, green infrastructure and transport improvements to the market towns and defined rural service centres/local centres
Promote sustainable tourism	9	By protecting the countryside for its own sake and recognising the environment as an economic asset

<b>Environmental</b>		
Reinforce local distinctiveness	10	Specifically through a local distinctiveness policy on this issue
Address climate change	11	By directing the majority of development to existing centres of employment and other services so reducing the need to travel. Also, by avoiding areas at risk from flooding through a specific policy on this issue. By promoting the use of brownfield land prior to greenfield land.
Provide new green infrastructure	12	Directing substantial new development to Hereford and the market towns will help to support new green infrastructure in these places e.g. a new country park in Hereford.
Conserving natural and built resources	11 and 12	By protecting the countryside for its own sake and through a specific policy on protecting the built environment. By promoting the use of brownfield land prior to greenfield land.

## Appendix 4 – Distribution of new homes

### Hereford

RSS requirement 2006 -2026	8,500
Built 2006-2009 (net)	887
Commitments (under construction, planning permissions or UDP allocations)	1170
Number of additional new homes required	6443
Estimate of new homes on non strategic sites (to be identified in Hereford Area Plan)	1150
<b>Indicative number of new homes on strategic sites</b>	5,300
<b>Potential dwelling capacity identified on developable SHLAA sites (totals rounded to nearest 50)</b>	9,215

### Bromyard

RSS requirement 2006 -2026	500
Built 2006-2009 (net)	48
Commitments (under construction, planning permissions or UDP allocations)	163
Number of additional new homes required	289
Estimate of new homes on non strategic sites (to be identified in Hereford Area Plan)	50
<b>Indicative number of new homes on strategic sites</b>	250
<b>Potential dwelling capacity identified on developable SHLAA sites (totals rounded to nearest 50)</b>	72

### Kington

RSS requirement 2006 -2026	200
Built 2006-2009 (net)	54
Commitments (under construction, planning permissions or UDP allocations)	104
Number of additional new homes required	42
Estimate of new homes on non strategic sites (to be identified in Hereford Area Plan)	50
<b>Indicative number of new homes on strategic sites</b>	0
<b>Potential dwelling capacity identified on developable SHLAA sites (totals rounded to nearest 50)</b>	96

### Ledbury

RSS requirement 2006 -2026	1,000
Built 2006-2009 (net)	28
Commitments (under construction, planning permissions or UDP allocations)	13
Number of additional new homes required	959
Estimate of new homes on non strategic sites (to be identified in Hereford Area Plan)	40
<b>Indicative number of new homes on strategic sites</b>	900
<b>Potential dwelling capacity identified on developable SHLAA sites (totals rounded to nearest 50)</b>	1,500

## Leominster

RSS requirement 2006 -2026	2,500
Built 2006-2009 (net)	126
Commitments (under construction, planning permissions or UDP allocations)	567
Number of additional new homes required	1807
Estimate of new homes on non strategic sites (to be identified in Hereford Area Plan)	100
<b>Indicative number of new homes on strategic sites</b>	1,700
<b>Potential dwelling capacity identified on developable SHLAA sites (totals rounded to nearest 50)</b>	3,040

## Ross-on-Wye

RSS requirement 2006 -2026	1,000
Built 2006-2009 (net)	197
Commitments (under construction, planning permissions or UDP allocations)	362
Number of additional new homes required	441
Estimate of new homes on non strategic sites (to be identified in Hereford Area Plan)	100
<b>Indicative number of new homes on strategic sites</b>	350
<b>Potential dwelling capacity identified on developable SHLAA sites (totals rounded to nearest 50)</b>	1,217

## Rural Areas

RSS requirement 2006 -2026	4,400
Built 2006-2009 (net)	840
Commitments (under construction, planning permissions or UDP allocations)	844
<b>Indicative number of new homes on strategic sites</b>	2,700
<b>Potential dwelling capacity identified on developable SHLAA sites (totals rounded to nearest 50)</b>	5,757

### Definitions:

Net commitments adjusted for lapse rate on planning permissions and allocations

Net builds are the total completions minus any dwellings lost through demolitions or conversions.

Estimate of non-strategic sites identified through SHLAA (discounted for non-delivery)