

# Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011 - 2031



**Adopted October 2015**



**Herefordshire  
Council**

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# Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2031

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The Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted at the Herefordshire Council meeting on 16 October 2015. It represents the vision for the County to 2031 and provides the context for future work on the preparation of the Hereford Area Plan, the Minerals and Waste Local Plan and the Travellers' Sites Development Plan Document.

**Cllr Philip Price**  
**Cabinet Member Infrastructure**

**Herefordshire Council**  
**October 2015**



## The Local Plan

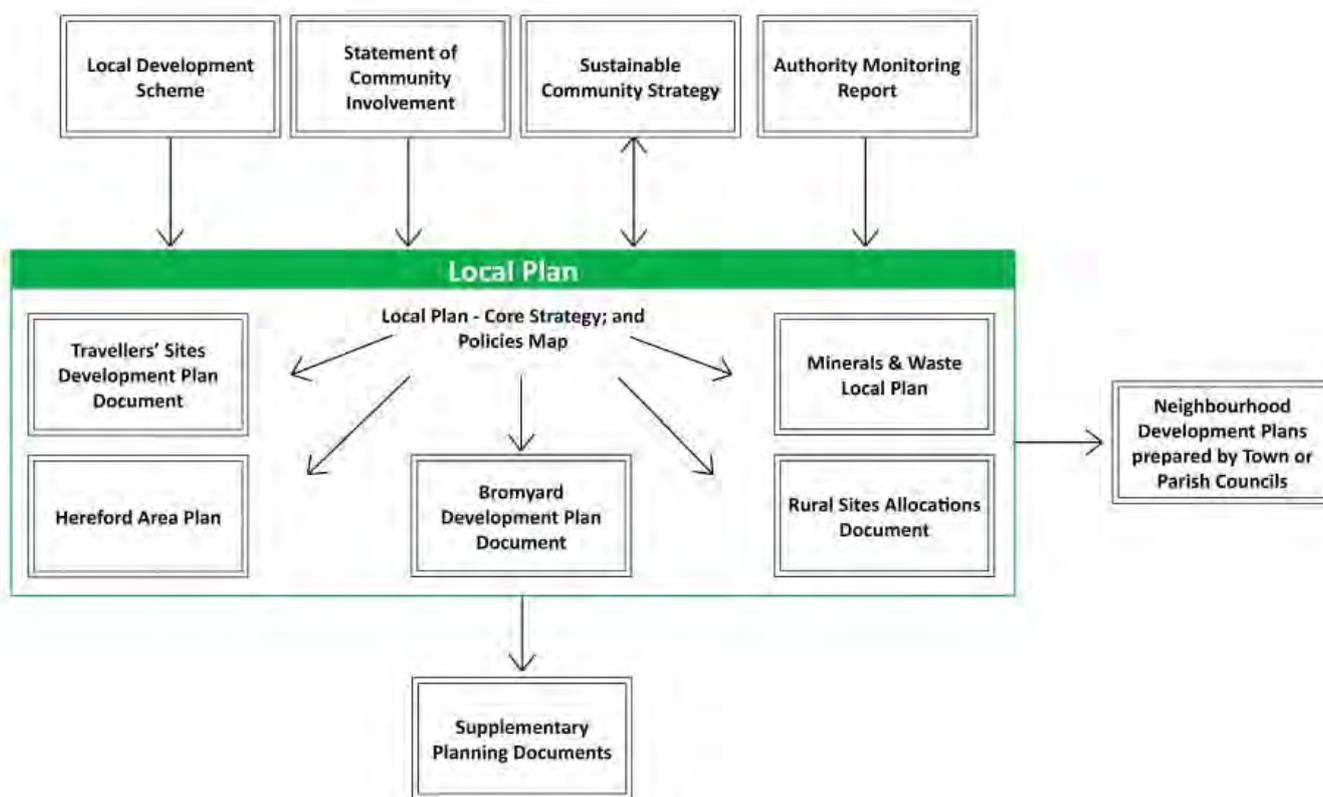
- 1.1 The council has prepared a **Local Plan** to guide development and change in the county up to 2031. The Local Plan is made up of a number of documents including the Core Strategy. A list of all the Local Plan documents and the timetable for their preparation are set out in the Local Development Scheme.
- 1.2 The Local Plan, in addition to dealing with the use of land, considers how the area functions and how different parts of the county should develop or change over the next 20 years in response to key issues, such as the need to:
  - deliver more, better quality homes (especially affordable homes) to meet growing needs in this 'high house price' compared to 'average income' area;
  - deliver improved infrastructure to support economic development and a growing population;
  - promote a thriving local economy with successful city, town and village centres and provide sufficient employment land to meet business needs and provide higher incomes through a wider range of better quality jobs;
  - protect, conserve and enhance valued natural, historic and built environments, including areas of outstanding natural beauty, special areas of conservation, open spaces as well as the county's intrinsic attractive character;
  - address issues arising from an ageing population and the reducing younger age population;
  - meet the challenge of climate change and adapt to its impacts such as increased risk of flooding and air pollution;
  - create places that actively promote and enable healthy lifestyles;
  - achieve sustainable development and reduce reliance on the private car whilst accepting the sparsely populated nature of the area and difficulty communities have in accessing services.
- 1.3 Working in partnership with other agencies that operate in the county is a key element of delivering the Local Plan. The Local Plan needs to show how the strategies for various sectors such as housing, employment, transport, retail, education, health, culture, recreation and climate change inter-relate and how they are likely to shape and affect different parts of the county.

## The Core Strategy

- 1.4 This first document in the production of the Local Plan is the Core Strategy. This is a very important part of the Local Plan because it shapes future development and sets the overall strategic planning framework for the county. The Core Strategy needs to balance environmental issues with economic and social needs and ensure that development is sustainable and does not cause irreversible harm to important resources and features. It sets a vision, closely aligned with the *Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy, June 2010*, as to how the county should look and function and how development needs will be met up to 2031.

- 1.5 The Core Strategy does not allocate land directly, but proposes broad strategic directions for growth in sustainable locations. A Hereford Area Plan and other Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) are proposed to follow the Core Strategy and will allocate large, medium and small sites to meet the identified development requirements for the county. Figure 1.1 shows how the Core Strategy forms part of the Local Plan and how it relates to other planning documents and the *Sustainable Community Strategy*.
- 1.6 When adopted, the Core Strategy policies will replace most Unitary Development Plan (UDP), 2007 policies. However, some of the policies contained in the previous UDP have been saved (see appendix 1) and will remain in force until replaced by other Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Development Plans. Together with the Hereford Area Plan DPD, Minerals and Waste Local Plan, Travellers' Sites Document (DPD) and other Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Development Plans, the Core Strategy will form the statutory "development plan" for Herefordshire. A Policies Map sets out the strategic designations in the county.
- 1.7 The Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) referred to in Figure 1.1 will be supporting documents which add to or expand upon policies e.g. the policy on infrastructure contributions, but do not include site allocations. They are subject to public consultation, but are not formally examined.

Figure 1.1 - The structure of the Herefordshire Local Plan



## Relationship with other strategies

- 1.8 Planning policies for Herefordshire have been prepared in the context of national planning guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG). Regard has also been had to other plans and strategies produced by the council and other organisations.
- 1.9 The principal role of the Core Strategy is to deliver the spatial planning strategy for Herefordshire based on the local characteristics of the area. It is based on the outcomes of the consultations that have taken place, other council plans, programmes and initiatives and also on the findings of the evidence base that has been prepared to support it. It is also underpinned by a Sustainability Appraisal which assessed the social, economic and environmental impacts of the Core Strategy throughout the development of the document and a Habitats Regulations Assessment which has assessed any impacts on protected European sites.

## Minerals and Waste

- 1.10 Minerals and waste policies will be dealt with through a separate Minerals and Waste Local Plan Development Plan Document (DPD). This will be produced taking account of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the minerals and waste sections of Planning Practice Guidance and up to date evidence base studies and ensuring close co-operation with neighbouring local authorities on cross-boundary issues. It will establish targets and planning policies relating to minerals and waste activities and associated development in Herefordshire to cover the plan period to 2031. The timetable for the production of this DPD will be included in a revised Local Development Scheme. Until the Minerals and Waste Local Plan is adopted, the minerals and waste sections of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan will be 'saved' and remain in force until replaced by the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

## Gypsies and travellers

- 1.11 A Herefordshire Travellers' Sites Document (DPD) will set out allocations and planning policies relating to the provision for travellers in the county to cover the plan period to 2031. This DPD is included in the Local Development Scheme.

## The Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.12 The *Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)*, 2010 sets out a long-term vision for the county up to 2020 and has been developed by the Herefordshire Partnership. The latter comprises a range of local people and organisations, including business groups and public sector bodies. The purpose of the SCS is to set a clear vision and direction focusing on improving the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the area, in addition to providing an overarching framework within which other local strategies will sit. The policies and proposals within the Core Strategy will help to deliver some of the SCS priorities. Equally, the themes from the SCS have helped to guide the strategic objectives of the Core Strategy.

## Neighbourhood Development Plans

- 1.13 With the introduction of Neighbourhood Development Plans through the Localism Act, communities will be positively encouraged to produce their own development plans for their area taking on board the strategic objectives of the Local Plan - Core Strategy. The Core Strategy has been prepared to provide a strategic base for Neighbourhood Development Plans, along with other Development Plan Documents, to allocate sites for employment, housing and other uses as well as providing more locally detailed policies.

Neighbourhood Development Plans will form part of the statutory development plan (but not the Local Plan) and be referred to within the council's Local Development Scheme.

- 1.14 Neighbourhood Development Plans are required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area in order to meet 'the basic conditions'. With this regard, the whole Core Strategy is defined as being 'the strategic policies contained within the development plan for the area' in terms of Paragraph 8 Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).
- 1.15 Significant progress is being made on a number of Neighbourhood Development Plans across the county. However, to ensure delivery, areas without a designed neighbourhood area by the adoption of the Core Strategy will be included within the 'Rural Area Site Allocation Development Plan Document'. Monitoring of neighbourhood plan progress will take place and consideration will be given to those areas not making progress to Regulation 14 draft by the Issues and Options stage of the Rural Area Site Allocation DPD for their inclusion within the document.

### **Community Right to Build**

- 1.16 The Community Right to Build enables community organisations to progress new local developments without the need to go through the normal planning application process, as long as the proposals meet certain criteria and there is community backing in a local referendum. Communities may wish to build new homes or new community amenities, and providing they can demonstrate local support through a positive referendum result, the Community Right to Build will give communities the powers to deliver this directly. All profits derived from a Community Right to Build must be used for the benefit of the community, for example to provide and maintain local facilities such as village halls. Communities which wish to use the new powers must produce and submit a Community Right to Build Order. A proposal can be developed as part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, or on its own.

### **Community Right to Bid**

- 1.17 The Community Right to Bid enables a community to nominate assets of community value, and if any of these assets are at risk, the community has a right to delay the marketing of the asset in order to raise funds to bid to buy community buildings. For example, this could be the village shop, public house, community centre, children's centre, allotment or library.
- 1.18 The council will continue to work with partners, the community and the voluntary sector to ensure that provision of services and facilities is maintained and enhanced; and expanded in areas identified for population growth, in areas of relative deprivation and in areas where a deficiency has been identified.

### **Local Transport Plan**

- 1.19 The council's *Local Transport Plan* (LTP) establishes the framework for the delivery of all aspects of transport and travel for Herefordshire. The development of the LTP and the Core Strategy has been a linked process. The council's LTP covers the first part of the Core Strategy period from April 2013/14 to 2015/16 and is an important local document which supports the delivery of the Core Strategy. The LTP will be updated to include key elements of infrastructure set out in the Core Strategy following its adoption.

### **Economic Development Strategy**

- 1.20 The council's *Economic Development Strategy 2011-2016, November 2011* is called *Enterprising County* and outlines the path and direction to foster economic vitality. Its vision is to increase the economic

wealth of the county through the growth of business. It aims to improve business sustainability, increase start-up and sustain growth; increase wage levels, range and quality of jobs; have a skilled population to meet future work needs; and develop the county's built infrastructure for enterprise to flourish.

### Local Investment Plan

- 1.21 The Herefordshire Local Investment Plan, 2011-2026 has been developed by Herefordshire Council in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency. It provides a strategic framework within which the organisations will work and invest together alongside partners in the public and private sectors to deliver the key priorities in meeting the vision for Herefordshire.
- 1.22 The Local Investment Plan focuses on meeting the Government's 'Total Place' agenda, which has an emphasis on a 'whole area' approach to commissioning and investment by all partners and demonstrates how joint investment by organisations and the private sector will be prioritised through agreed spatial and thematic priorities for regeneration, including transport, health, housing and education. The emerging Core Strategy has fed into the projects, proposals and evidence base in the investment plan.

### Other plans

- 1.23 Feeding into the Community Strategy and the Core Strategy are various other plans, such as parish and town plans and market town health checks, produced by the local communities of the county. Broadly, these types of plans identify the economic, environmental and social issues important to a particular area and set out a vision for how the community wants to develop. These plans are very useful in informing the overall proposals in the Core Strategy and by adding local detail and support to particular policies within it.
- 1.24 Future strategies and plans may become relevant during the plan period. In particular Herefordshire Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the county, has responsibility for the management of local flood risks. One of its duties is to develop a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and its main focus will be on addressing flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. In addition, Herefordshire Council is one of a number of organisations that is involved in the preparation of a county-wide Carbon Reduction Strategy in order to meet targets for reduction in line with the Climate Change Act 2008. This will seek a 34% reduction of carbon on 1990 levels by 2020.

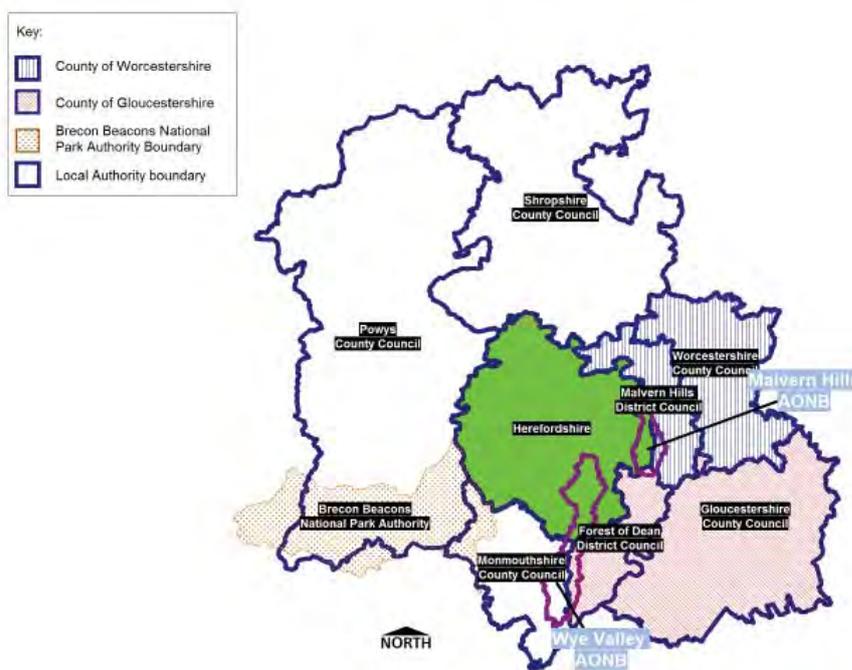
### Consultation

- 1.25 One of the main principles of development plan preparation is that local communities are involved from the outset. This approach is set out in national policy and in Herefordshire's Statement of Community Involvement 2007, which forms part of the Local Plan. To ensure early engagement on the preparation of the Core Strategy and the opportunity to comment and help shape it, the following key stages of consultation were undertaken:
- Issues Paper (Autumn 2007)
  - Developing Options (Summer 2008)
  - Place Shaping Paper (Spring 2010)
  - Preferred Options (Autumn 2010)
  - Revised Preferred Options (Autumn 2011)
  - Draft Core Strategy (Spring 2013)
  - Pre-Submission Publication (Summer 2014)
  - Main Modifications (Spring 2015)

## Working with other authorities and organisations

- 1.26 Herefordshire is a landlocked county that does not exist in isolation from its neighbours. The Core Strategy needs to take account of wider challenges, issues and opportunities affecting neighbouring areas, as well as in the wider region. Cross-boundary working has taken place during the preparation of the Core Strategy, both through on-going liaison with neighbouring authorities, at sub-regional level and through the review of proposals within adjoining local plans and other Development Plan Documents. This will continue with the development of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan – the document that sits alongside the Core Strategy and sets out all the infrastructure needs, funding and developer contributions required for Core Strategy projects and proposals to be realised. This on-going relationship with other authorities and organisations is essential to meet the legal requirement of the Localism Act 2011 (s110) – a ‘Duty to Co-operate’.
- 1.27 Herefordshire shares boundaries with five English local authorities and three Welsh local authorities. The English authorities are the two strategic planning authorities of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire County Councils, both of which are responsible for waste and minerals planning. Malvern Hills and Forest of Dean District Councils are the respective local planning authorities for their two tier structure. Shropshire County is a unitary authority. The three neighbouring Welsh authorities are Monmouthshire County Council, Powys County Council and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority.
- 1.28 Herefordshire contains parts of two protected landscapes of national importance: the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). These adjoin Monmouthshire and Worcestershire respectively (see Figure 1.2). The emerging Core Strategy must ensure a consistency of approach to development within both areas through its planning policies, joint working via the AONB partnerships and implementation of the AONB management plans.

Figure 1.2 - Herefordshire’s adjoining authorities and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty



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1.29 Economic influences are particularly significant in the county. The *Economic Development Strategy 2011* for Herefordshire highlights a number of objectives, some of which (such as enhanced skills, increasing wage levels and better infrastructure) are reflected in similar documents across the wider sub region. Historically, the county has a low economic output level compared to other authorities in the West Midlands and the United Kingdom as a whole. This is related to the type of businesses in the county and its relatively low wage levels, which results in less money being spent here. Herefordshire also experiences a net loss of people travelling beyond its boundaries to work. Two projects in Herefordshire linked to Core Strategy and Economic Development Strategy objectives, which exemplify co-operation with adjoining authorities and other bodies include: 1) the Fastershire Broadband Project and 2) the setting up of the Hereford Enterprise Zone.

- 1) The Fastershire Project involves close co-operation with Gloucestershire County Council to utilise government and private sector funding to provide access to faster broadband.
- 2) Herefordshire has formed a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) with Shropshire and Telford. The Marches LEP will be used to share resources to create benefits for local businesses and raise the profile of the area. One example of this is the creation of the Hereford Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas. The Enterprise Zone has a focus on the defence and security sector, with additional employment hubs focused on advanced technologies, environmental technologies and food and drink technologies.

### Evidence base

1.30 The Core Strategy is underpinned by a robust evidence base that is regularly reviewed to inform decision and plan making. The policies and proposals must be both informed by and assessed against relevant available evidence. The list of documents and sources making up this evidence base is set out in Appendix 2.

### Sustainability Appraisal, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment

- 1.31 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a government requirement for all Development Plan Documents. Sustainability is about ensuring the long term maintenance of well-being and the environment for our present and future communities. The process assesses the impact of the Core Strategy on the environment, people and the economy. It incorporates the requirements of the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Following consultation with key local, regional and national organisations such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England, sustainability criteria have been agreed covering issues such as; air quality; water quality and quantity; landscape; health and economic performance. This Core Strategy has been assessed against these sustainability criteria and the results can be found in the *Sustainability Appraisal*.
- 1.32 The Core Strategy has also been subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening to assess whether there would be likely significant effects on sites of international importance for wildlife (European designated sites). Where a land use plan is likely to have a significant effect on such sites, an appropriate assessment must be carried out of the implications in respect of their conservation objectives. The screening exercise has considered potential effects on European sites within and around Herefordshire. It concluded that some uncertain effects would require appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations. This assessment is contained in a separate Habitats Regulations Assessment Report.

## Monitoring and Review

- 1.33 Monitoring and review are key aspects of the approach to the preparation of Local Plans. Continuous monitoring enables an assessment of the effectiveness of the Core Strategy and the policies contained within it in terms of both delivering and controlling various types of development across the county. As part of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, the council is required to prepare Authority Monitoring Reports containing information on all the plans set out in the local planning authority's Local Development Scheme. One of the key functions of the report is to monitor policies contained within Development Plan Documents and to report on their performance, particularly where policies are not being implemented and why and also where policies specify a target of net additional dwellings or net additional affordable dwellings to be reached.
- 1.34 To assess the performance of the Core Strategy, a separate monitoring framework is set out at the end of each section and in Appendix 3 which will be implemented after adoption of the plan. This includes key plan indicators as well as those to monitor the sustainability of the plan. Where policies are not performing as intended, the annual monitoring process will suggest the actions that need to be taken to address the issues. It is intended that, in addition to annual monitoring, a five-yearly cycle of a more comprehensive review of the Core Strategy is established, with dates of 2019 and 2024. Review processes would need to commence in advance of the review dates to enable any new policies to be adopted in a timely manner.

## Flexibility

- 1.35 The Core Strategy has been written to enable development which takes place within the context of changing circumstances both nationally and across the county. General changes could include; changes to national policy and updates to the evidence base, as well as external impacts such as changes to migration trends, fuel prices, use of the internet and so on. More specifically, situations which may arise are: housing development failing to come forward as planned, infrastructure not being provided at the same time as development and market changes adversely affecting the viability of development.
- 1.36 The evidence base will be kept up to date and specific studies e.g. Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will be regularly reviewed. All of the policies are written to refer to national policy rather than repeat it and to refer to the evidence base. This allows the policies to be useable even where there are minor changes to higher level policies or the evidence base. Some policies also refer to further Development Plan Documents or Supplementary Planning Documents which may also update existing policies or allow for flexibility without changing the policy itself.
- 1.37 With respect to housing developments, various measures are already in place to ensure that sites come forward as planned, and measures that can be taken if they do not, include:
- The *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2012* is made up of a large number of smaller and medium sites with over 30,000 deliverable and developable sites identified, some of which could be brought forward if there are unforeseen constraints to larger strategic sites being developed as planned;
  - A Hereford Area Plan, Neighbourhood Development Plans and other Development Plan Documents are planned to be progressed by adoption of the Core Strategy and will include residential sites which will provide more certainty for sites coming forward in the middle and later part of the period.

- 1.38 If monitoring shows that residential sites are coming forward more slowly than planned, the Hereford Area Plan, Neighbourhood Development Plans and other Development Plan Documents will provide the opportunity to review other designations/policies to bring further sites forward if necessary. The mechanisms set out in Policy SS3 may also be used.

2.1 The Core Strategy is based on an understanding of Herefordshire’s unique characteristics, derived and continually evolving from the interaction between people and the environment, in addition to its relationship with adjoining areas, knowledge of past trends and how things are likely to change in the future. This section provides a profile of Herefordshire, its social, economic and environmental components and identifies the key issues and challenges we face.

2.2 Many of the key facts have been drawn from the Understanding Herefordshire Report 2013 unless otherwise stated. This can be viewed at: <http://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/>

## The place

2.3 Herefordshire is a large, predominately rural, landlocked county situated in the south western corner of the West Midlands region, on the border with Wales. It has a close relationship with neighbouring Shropshire and Worcestershire and there are a range of interactions taking place which cross Herefordshire’s boundaries in all directions, including service provision, transport links and commuting patterns.

Figure 2.1 - Herefordshire and surrounding counties



- 2.4 The county area covers 217,973 hectares. High hill ranges, including the Malvern Hills and Black Mountains, encircle much of the county at its perimeter. Away from these areas, the landscape is one of gentle rolling hills, dissected by wide river valleys with lower-lying plains in the centre. River crossing points have provided a natural focus for the development of many settlements, with others dispersed across Herefordshire's rich and diverse landscape.
- 2.5 The meandering river valley landscape which is the county's principal geographical feature is that of the River Wye; which enters Herefordshire near the Welsh town of Hay-on-Wye, flowing east to Hereford before leaving the county at the Wye Gorge, downstream of Ross-on-Wye. In addition to significant parts of the county being drained by the Wye river system, the River Wye, together with its valley setting, is in part, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and integral to Herefordshire's identity.
- 2.6 At the county's heart is the city of Hereford which is the main centre for civil and ecclesiastical administration, health, education and leisure facilities, shopping and employment. The five market towns of Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye, surround the city with a regularity that harks back to medieval times. Outside these urban areas, nucleated villages and smaller settlements, farms and other isolated properties characterise much of Herefordshire.

### Social progress - key facts

Population:	183,600 <sup>1</sup>
Density:	0.8 persons per hectare (84 per square kilometre)
Population growth:	+5% in the decade since 2001 <sup>2</sup> Estimated growth of 12% by 2031 <sup>3</sup>
Age structure:	1 in 5 people (21.3%) are aged 65 or over. Since 2001 residents aged 90 or over grew by almost 40% whilst those aged 5-15 years fell by 12% <sup>4</sup>
Ethnicity:	6% of residents are from ethnic groups other than 'white British'
Deprivation:	A fifth of households (14,500) live in poverty, mostly in urban areas
Access to services:	Close to two thirds of the county are amongst the 25% most deprived areas in England with respect to geographical barriers to services. These areas are predominantly rural (Figure 2.2)
Education:	57.5% of pupils achieve 5 A*-C GCSEs 'A' level results in or close to upper quartile nationally

<sup>1</sup> Mid-2011 estimate based on the 2011 Census from the Office for National Statistics

<sup>2</sup> 2011 Census: population & household estimates for Herefordshire

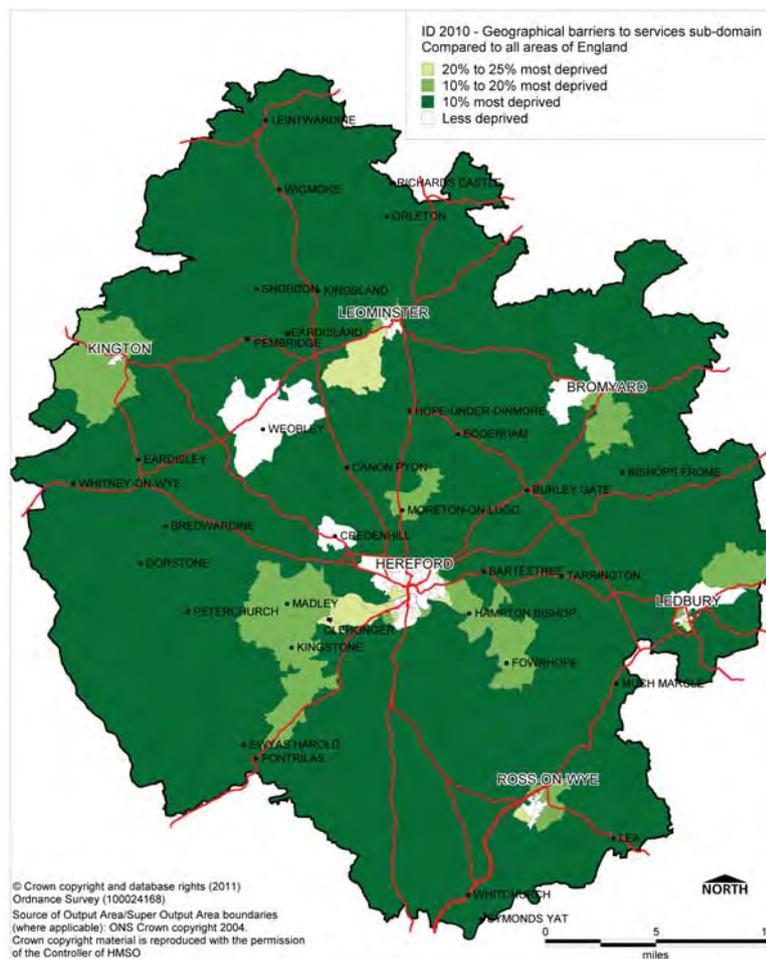
<sup>3</sup> Update to *Local Housing Requirement Study* – March 2012

<sup>4</sup> 2011 Census: population & household estimates for Herefordshire

**The people**

- 2.7 Herefordshire’s resident population is 183,600 (2011). This is the first estimate based on the 2011 Census and represented a growth of 5% between 2001 and 2011 (slower than the previous two decades and below the national average of 7% for the same period). The population is estimated to grow by about 12% by 2031<sup>5</sup>.
- 2.8 Herefordshire has a sparse population, with the fourth lowest overall population density in England (ninth in England and Wales). Just under a third of Herefordshire residents live in Hereford, with about a fifth in the five market towns and nearly half in the surrounding rural areas. Despite other counties having a lower overall population density, Herefordshire has the greater proportion of its population living in ‘very sparse’ areas (25%)<sup>6</sup>.

**Figure 2.2 - Map showing the areas of Herefordshire that are amongst the most deprived in England (Geographical Barriers to Services sub-domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010)**



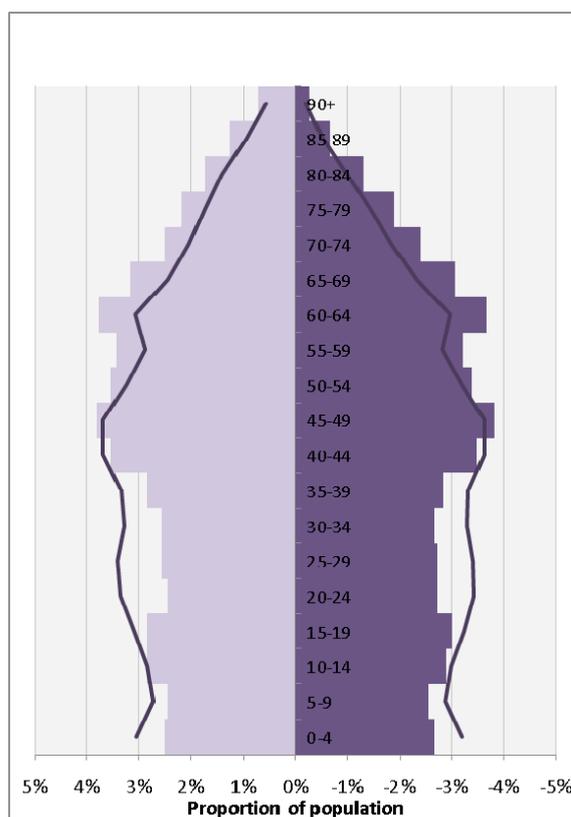
Source: Department of Communities and Local Government

<sup>5</sup> Update to *Local Housing Requirement Study* – March 2012

<sup>6</sup> Population Density - <http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/factsandfigures/subcounty>

- 2.9 This scattered population presents many challenges, both for residents in terms of dependence on the private car, increased household costs, access to services, often poor or no broadband access and social isolation, as well as for the delivery of services, particularly to community members already experiencing disadvantage.
- 2.10 Whilst Herefordshire is widely regarded as being an affluent county, this masks issues of deprivation, poverty and a continued widening of the gap between the most and least deprived. Close to two thirds of the county are amongst the 25% most deprived in England with respect to geographical barriers to services and the average income of residents is significantly below both the regional and national averages. There are pockets of severe deprivation in parts of Hereford and Leominster, as well as potentially 'hidden' deprivation in rural areas (Figure 2.2).
- 2.11 Like the national population structure, Herefordshire's population is ageing with one in five people aged 65 or over (compared to one in six nationally)<sup>7</sup>. Figure 2.3 shows how much older the age structure of Herefordshire is compared to England and Wales, with higher proportions of residents in all age groups from 45-49 upwards and less in the middle aged groups. Both national and local forecasts predict a further rise in the proportion of older people and thus a need to plan for the consequence of an ageing population, for example by providing for supported and extra care housing, and ensuring better access to health care and community facilities.

Figure 2.3 - Age structure of Herefordshire (bars) and England and Wales (lines), from the 2011 Census<sup>8</sup>



<sup>7</sup> 2011 Census: population & household estimates for Herefordshire

<sup>8</sup> 2011 Census: population & household estimates for Herefordshire

## Housing and transport

- 2.12 There are 79,122 households in Herefordshire (2011) and this is projected to increase by 20.3% by 2031<sup>9</sup>, contributing to the need to provide additional housing. Housing affordability is a key issue, with Herefordshire having the worst housing affordability ratio within the West Midlands. In 2011 house prices were 8.6 times annual earnings. High houses prices particularly relative to earnings (brought about by strong demand and a current housing offer that encompasses a high proportion of high value properties) has increased the need for lower priced market housing and all forms of affordable houses.
- 2.13 Planning for Herefordshire's ageing population and strong retirement market by the development of 'homes for life' to facilitate independent living and care needs will become increasingly important. At the same time, there is the opportunity to plan for more balanced and integrated communities by providing the right mix of housing and facilities to cater for people at different stages in their life cycle, and with different incomes and needs. This will require the provision of more affordable housing, more family sized and smaller homes for younger households, facilities for children and young people, and a wider range of employment opportunities for people of working age.
- 2.14 Herefordshire plays a strategic role in facilitating cross boundary links between England and Wales. Whilst vehicle flows along these strategic routes are considered low in a national context, when coupled with local movement, congestion, journey time delays and air pollution they are problematic, notably within Hereford. This is evidenced in the Draft Route-Based Strategy - Evidence Report for the Midlands to Wales and Gloucestershire section produced by the Highways Agency in February 2014. This states that the A49 through Hereford is a "key junction capacity issue" which should be afforded high priority. It is also an issue for higher than average collision rates through the city. Car ownership and dependency in the county is high due to the lack of public transport in rural areas and the need to access services and employment from these areas. The need for significant investment in transport infrastructure is acknowledged, although the current economic climate is likely to affect this.

## Education and training

- 2.15 In 2012 the portion of pupils achieving 5 A\*-C GCSEs including English and Maths was marginally below the national average (56.5% compared to 58.8% nationally). The performance of young people in full time education up to 19 has been strong in Herefordshire's schools and colleges, with performance consistently in or close to the upper quartile nationally for 'A' levels. Significant redevelopment projects at Hereford's colleges have also been completed and may improve access to courses and training. However access to further and higher education sites remains a key issue for such a rural county, with many young people leaving the county altogether to undertake formal higher education.

## Community safety

- 2.16 Herefordshire is generally a low crime area, with a 13% reduction in total crimes over the three years to March 2011. The highest level of all types of recorded crime is in the main population centres and residents in some of these areas experience a higher fear of crime. Road safety is a key concern for county residents.

<sup>9</sup> Update to *Local Housing Requirement Study March 2012* by GL Hearn

## Summary of social issues, problems and challenges

- Provide for all generations; promoting balanced and integrated communities
- Ensure the provision of the right mix of housing, including affordable housing to maximise community benefits
- Ensure the provision of and enhanced access to services, facilities, education and broadband in a rural, sparsely populated county
- Improve transport and communication infrastructures
- Reduce opportunities for crime

## Economic prosperity – key facts

Economic output:	Low and increasing at a lower rate than the West Midlands and England between 2001 - 2010 <sup>10</sup>
Business sizes:	Predominantly small, employing 10 or fewer staff
Business starts-up:	Low rate but businesses survive longer
Main industry sectors:	Wholesale & retail, manufacturing, health & social work
Employment:	76% of 16-64 year olds are economically active
Self-employment rate:	15% of working age population in 2008-2009 <sup>11</sup>
Unemployment:	2.5% (October 2012)
Average income:	Low – £20,080 (gross median annual earnings 2011)

## The economy

- 2.17 Herefordshire's economic output is low when compared regionally and nationally. The overall productivity of the county is affected by a relatively large proportion of employment being in sectors that tend to attract lower wages such as 'wholesale and retail' and 'accommodation and food services' and 'agriculture'<sup>12</sup>. There is comparatively low employment in knowledge based industries and out of county commuting for work, both of which affect output.
- 2.18 Herefordshire has a small business economy, with 87% of businesses employing 10 or fewer staff<sup>13</sup>. Business start-up rates are lower than England as a whole, although business survival rates are better. In 2011, the self-employment rate (14%) was in the top 10% nationally and along with home based businesses plays an important role in the economy, particularly in rural areas.

<sup>10</sup> Herefordshire Local Economic Assessment 2010

<sup>11</sup> Herefordshire Economic Assessment 2010

<sup>12</sup> Herefordshire Local Economic Assessment 2010

<sup>13</sup> Annual Business Inquiry 2008

- 2.19 In 2012, the three sectors which employ the greatest proportion of workers are: wholesale and retail trade (19%); manufacturing (16%); and human health and social work (15%). However, agriculture accounts for a greater proportion of employees (8%) when compared regionally and nationally (both 1%)<sup>14</sup>. With regard to employment locations, the majority of workers are employed in Hereford (42%) and the market towns 26% (of which Leominster accounts for 8% and Ross-on-Wye 7%)<sup>15</sup>. In 2011 the county's primary employment site, the Rotherwas Estate (on the edge of Hereford), was awarded Enterprise Zone status. This is an opportunity to provide a catalyst for economic growth through inward investment and skilled job creation.
- 2.20 The principal barrier to business growth and diversification, particularly in rural Herefordshire, is poor infrastructure, including poor broadband and mobile phone coverage. The £50 million Fastershire project, in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council, aims for all rural areas to gain access to at least 2Mbps (megabits per second) broadband speeds, with many people receiving much higher speeds.
- 2.21 Earnings are persistently low and the gap between Herefordshire's earnings and those of the West Midlands and England as a whole is getting wider. By contrast unemployment is lower when compared on these scales. Since 2009 the proportion of residents without any qualification has been higher in Herefordshire than in England as a whole<sup>16</sup>. A gap in skills and hard-to-fill vacancies are problematic for businesses. There also remains a demand for migrant labour. Herefordshire has a strong, diverse and independent third sector (voluntary, community & non-profit), with a wide range of voluntary organisations, community groups, social enterprises and housing associations contributing to county life.

#### Tourism

- 2.22 With fine, tranquil, rural landscapes where leisure activities can be enjoyed, cultural and historic interest, together with a calendar of varied events and a strong creative offer that includes local food produce, Herefordshire has much to appeal to visitors. Tourism has become an important part of the local economy with visits and tourist expenditure growing. In 2011 there were 5.1 million visitors, spending £466.8 million and 9% of employees in Herefordshire worked in tourism<sup>17</sup>. There remains potential to grow Herefordshire's tourism offer and further investment will have benefits for the county.

#### Revitalising town centres

- 2.23 Hereford is identified as a sub-regional centre and is the dominant centre for shopping and services for county residents. However it lacks a wide range of shopping (non-food goods) and entertainment facilities, thereby struggling to compete with neighbouring centres outside of the county (Worcester and Gloucester). The relocation of Hereford's livestock market and the opening of the Old Market mixed retail and leisure redevelopment in 2014 has transformed an under-utilised area, regenerated the local economy and enhanced the experiences offered by the city, strengthening its role in the county and region. The Old Market development also anchors the proposed urban village to the north. Hereford and the five market towns have a good provision of independent retailers and whilst being primarily locations for food shopping for residents, their historic environments and niche shopping also make them appealing to visitors. Revitalising the town centres and making them more attractive destinations for both residents and visitors will benefit the local economy and aid wider regeneration.

<sup>14</sup> Herefordshire Local Economic Assessment 2010

<sup>15</sup> Herefordshire Local Economic Assessment 2010

<sup>16</sup> Qualifications - <http://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/qer.aspx>

<sup>17</sup> Herefordshire - Steam Report 2011

## Summary of economic issues, problems and challenges

- Diversify the economy, creating more skilled jobs to reduce out of county commuting and retention of young educated residents
- Raise wage levels so reducing the earnings gap
- Overcome barriers to business growth and diversification
- Capitalise on educational achievements and improve rates of qualification
- Invest in and promote Herefordshire's tourism potential for the enjoyment of all
- Strengthen the roles of Hereford and the market towns as attractive centres for retail and leisure in the county and region

## Environmental quality – key facts

Natural environment:	2 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) 4 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) 77 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) 3 National Nature Reserves (NNR) 773 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) 131 Local Geological Sites
Historic environment:	5899 Listed Buildings <sup>18</sup> 263 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) 24 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens 64 Conservation Areas
Flooding:	10% of land within Flood Zone 2 (low to medium risk) 9% within a Flood Zone 3 (high risk)

## Natural environment

- 2.24 Herefordshire is considered to be the West Midlands' most rural county. The countryside is rich and varied, ranging from the high hills of the border areas and the dramatic steep sloping Wye Gorge, to the gentle rolling slopes of the Golden and Teme Valleys and the low lying river meadows of central Herefordshire. Large tracts of this landscape are of high quality with the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills having national AONB designation, whilst the area along the western boundary with the Brecon Beacons National Park is also of the highest quality it lacks any national designation. Many ancient local landscapes continue to survive intact in the face of development pressures and the county's remoter areas often possess a continuity and tranquillity that is increasingly scarce.
- 2.25 Due to its topography, geology and rivers the landscape of Herefordshire has preserved many natural features and traditional land uses resulting in a county rich in biodiversity and natural assets. Herefordshire's natural environment supports a wide range of habitats, including the ancient woodlands of the Wye Valley, the near natural River Wye, the forested ravine of the Downton Gorge and the county's

<sup>18</sup> This total is derived from the records for Herefordshire currently held in the National Heritage List. It is a dynamic figure which may fluctuate as new assets are designated and/or existing designations are reviewed.

treasured traditional fruit orchards. The richness of biodiversity within Herefordshire is reflected in the number of statutory (e.g. SACs, SSSIs & NNRs) and non-statutory sites (e.g. LWS) designated for nature conservation which cover 9% of the county.

- 2.26 The county's geology, resultant soil types and the vegetation they support have shaped a landscape which is highly fertile, particularly on low lying land, making food production an enduring primary activity. The Herefordshire landscape is a key economic asset creating not only an attractive place to live and work but also an important tourist destination.

#### Historic environment

- 2.27 Herefordshire possesses a rich historic environment which includes numerous Iron Age hill forts, sites of Roman towns, defensive features such as Offa's Dyke and the border castles, together with some of the best preserved traditional timber framed buildings in the country. The richness of the historic environment is reflected in the number of designated heritage assets encompassing a wealth of listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments and conservations areas. These add to the special built quality and environmental character of many areas of the county and their protection and enhancement is recognised as an important ingredient for economic and neighbourhood renewal.
- 2.28 The county's archaeological heritage is a valuable but fragile part of our historic environment. A large part of central Hereford is one of only five cities in England to be designated an area of archaeological importance. Despite having such nationally recognised heritage at its core, the great extent of Herefordshire's archaeological resource is not well surveyed or even assessed. Opportunities associated with developments and externally funded projects will continue to be secured to gain a better understanding of our archaeological heritage.
- 2.29 The wider value of historic landscapes is recognised through the designation of 64 conservation areas, which vary in character and size from tiny hamlets to villages to country house estates, market towns and Hereford's historic centre. Rather than one vernacular building style, Herefordshire has a diverse range of buildings of which perhaps the most well-known and distinctive is the 'black and white' timber framed traditional buildings of the northern half of the county.

#### Climate change

- 2.30 The threat of climate change means that the climate is likely to become unpredictable, probably with longer periods of both dry and wet weather and these may be more severe and intense. Significant areas of Herefordshire are low-lying and liable to flooding. Climate change will further increase the risk and events of flooding (including flash flooding) across the county. Additionally, climate change will result in a loss of biodiversity and landscape character, together with an impact on agricultural practices leading to increased water demand.
- 2.31 The potential impacts of climate change need to be taken into account in planning for all new development, both in terms of location and design. Increased energy and water efficiency will have to be taken on board along with water storage measures, sustainable drainage systems, and the provision of renewable energy generation.

## Air quality

- 2.32 There are relatively low levels of air pollution within Herefordshire, however two areas have been identified as Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) due to levels of the pollutant nitrogen dioxide (from vehicle emissions) exceeding national standards. These two areas are the A49 road corridor through Hereford and the area of the Bargates road junction in central Leominster. Emissions of carbon dioxide whilst decreasing remains higher per head of population (9 tonnes per capita) when compared nationally (7.6 tonnes per capita), 2010. Herefordshire's rural nature and high car dependency has an impact on air quality locally and more widely on climate change.

## Water environment

- 2.33 Flood risk is a key issue in Herefordshire and in some areas a significant constraint to new development. 10% of land is situated within flood zone 2 (low to medium risk) and 9% is situated within flood zone 3 (high risk) as identified by the Environment Agency. In addition to river flooding, runoff has increased as agriculture has intensified and more roads and houses have been built, degrading the natural permeability of the landscape and capacity to retain water.
- 2.34 As already indicated, the River Wye and its tributaries are amongst the most important natural assets of Herefordshire. However, phosphate levels in sections of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) are presently exceeding the conservation objectives for the river, degrading the ecosystem. This is the result of controlled waste water discharges associated with residential and industrial developments and agricultural practices in the catchment area. Therefore, to ensure all sections of the River Wye SAC (including the River Lugg section) meet the favourable condition phosphate target it is essential that future inputs are controlled. The catchment of the Wye covers a significant area of the county and a continuing programme of management and improvements is necessary to facilitate new development during the plan period.

## Summary of environmental issues, problems and challenges

- Protect, conserve and where possible enhance the county's rich natural and historic assets
- Address climate change and flooding
- Plan for the potential impact of climate change in new developments
- Ensure new developments are of high quality design and construction reflecting Herefordshire's distinctive character
- Use resources efficiently
- Improve air and water quality

- 3.1 The Core Strategy sets out a spatial strategy for Herefordshire for the period up to 2031. This is quite different to the land use planning approach of the previous development plan (Unitary Development Plan 2007). It includes:
- a definition of what sustainable development means for Herefordshire;
  - a vision for Herefordshire towards the end of the plan period;
  - a set of objectives to deliver the vision;
  - a spatial strategy that addresses the different needs and opportunities of different parts of Herefordshire; and
  - details of how the Core Strategy proposals will be monitored.
- 3.2 The council's strategy is based on targeting future development in places where specific needs and opportunities have been identified, thereby addressing key issues raised in the Herefordshire Context section. This approach seeks to accommodate economic and population growth with new housing and supporting infrastructure, whilst protecting and enhancing the attractive and distinctive character of the different areas of the county, so that sustainable development is achieved.

**Sustainable development**

- 3.3 Sustainable development is about meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Government has set three aims for sustainable development:
- contributing to building a strong, competitive and responsive economy;
  - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and
  - continuing to protect and enhance our natural, historic and built environment.
- 3.4 At the heart of the Government's policy in the National Planning Policy Framework March, 2012 is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The council intends to achieve this presumption in accordance with the following policy:

**Policy SS1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development**

When considering development proposals Herefordshire Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within national policy. It will always work proactively to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that improves the social, economic and environmental conditions in Herefordshire.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Core Strategy (and, where relevant with policies in other Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Development Plans) will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise - taking into account whether:

- a) any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in national policy taken as a whole; or
- b) specific elements of national policy indicate that development should be restricted.

## Vision and objectives

- 3.5 The Core Strategy has a vision and 12 objectives aligned under the themes of promoting social progress (supporting strong communities by meeting housing, education and health, transport and infrastructure needs), economic prosperity (supporting new jobs, area regeneration, business, tourism and retail) and environmental quality (addressing climate change, protecting and enhancing the environmental assets of the county). The objectives set the framework for the spatial strategy and policy guidance that follow later. They will be monitored annually to measure how well they are working.

### **Overall vision for the county**

*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.*

### **Vision for social progress in Herefordshire**

- 3.6 By 2031, 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 healthy, safe and secure, low crime, inclusive places and robust communities that promote good health and well-being, maintain independence and self-sufficiency and reduce social isolation.
- 3.7 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 helping to retain existing and attract new young people, supporting older people and an improved quality of life for all.
- 3.8 Residents and workers in urban and rural areas will have a reduced need to travel by private 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 choose facilities and bus priority schemes. Residents will have the opportunity to contribute to the shape of their local area through engagement in plan making.

### **Vision for economic prosperity in Herefordshire**

- 3.9 By 2031, 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 skilled and adaptable 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 incomes jobs enabling existing and future businesses to grow and thrive.
- 3.10 Communications infrastructure will be in place to enable a similar level of broadband service everywhere in the county, with the major employment locations enjoying broadband services matching the best in the country.
- 3.11 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.

3.12 Hereford will provide 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 contribute to the economic development of the county whilst being distinctive, thriving service centres that are better linked to their surrounding rural settlements 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.

3.13 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.

**Vision for environmental quality in Herefordshire**

3.14 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. The provision of appropriate waste management and recycling facilities and renewable energy schemes will be guided through the policies of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

3.15 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.

3.16 The area’s valued heritage and significant environmental resource, including its natural beauty and quality of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, built environment and cultural heritage, will be protected, conserved 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.

Figure 3.1 - Strategic objectives

Core Strategy Objectives		Core Strategy Policies
<b>Social Progress</b>		
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	SS2 SS3 Place Shaping Polices H1 H2 H3 H4 SD1 SD2 SD3 SD4
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, local food production and ensuring safer communities	OS1 OS2 OS3 SC1

Social Progress continued		
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	SC1
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	SS1 SS2 SS4
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	MT1
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	SS5 E1 E2 E3 Place Shaping Policies
7	To strengthen Hereford's role as a focus for the county, through city centre 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	HD1 HD2 HD3 HD4 HD5 HD6 E5 E6
8	To strengthen the economic viability of the market towns, rural settlements and their surrounding rural areas by facilitating employment generation and diversification, improving delivery and access to services through housing (including affordable housing) and improved ICT as well as realising the value of the environment as an economic asset	BY1 BY2 LO1 LO2 LB1 LB2 RW1 RW2 KG1 RA1-6 E4 E5 E6
8a	To support and to encourage the development and diversification of the county's historic strength in land-based industries, including agriculture and food production, to provide for the maintenance of a thriving, productive, efficient, competitive and sustainable agricultural sector, recognising the high importance of this sector to the county's economy as a whole and to the rural economy in particular.	SS5 RA6 E1
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	E4
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	SD1 SD3 SD4 LD1 LD2 LD3 ID1

Environmental quality continued		
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.	SS7 SD1 SD2 SD3 SD4 LD3
12	To conserve, promote, utilise and enjoy our natural, built, heritage and cultural assets for the fullest benefits to the whole community by safeguarding the county’s current stock of valued heritage and significant environmental assets from loss and damage, reversing negative trends, ensuring best condition and encouraging expansion, as well as appropriately managing future assets.	SS6 SS7 LD1 LD2 LD3 LD4

## The spatial strategy

### Background

- 3.17 The spatial strategy seeks to deliver the spatial vision and objectives for the county set out earlier in this section. The strategy has been developed through analysis of the results of the evidence base, the outcomes of several public consultations on different stages of the Core Strategy and the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the options/alternatives and policies throughout the plan production process. It provides a broad indication of the overall scale of development in the county up to 2031 and the infrastructure needed to support it. The role of the strategy is to achieve an appropriate balance between improving quality of life (social progress) and economic prosperity for all and the protection of the county’s environmental assets, making sure that any necessary change and development is sustainable in the interests of future generations. The explanation of the strategy is set out under the three themes of social progress, economic prosperity and environmental quality. These have been derived from the consideration of approaches at the early stages of the Core Strategy. The policies set out in this and the following sections seek to deliver the entire spatial strategy and provide the context for the preparation of other Development Plan Documents, including Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 3.18 Producing the Core Strategy has been about taking difficult decisions to achieve the long term vision for the county. During the production of the Core Strategy these decisions along with reasonable alternatives (which are outlined in Figure 3.2), have been assessed against the objectives of sustainable development and are explained further in the Final Sustainability (including Strategic Environmental Assessment) Report (SA/SEA).

Figure 3.2 - Key strategic decisions that the Core Strategy has taken and reasonable alternatives considered

Key decision	Alternatives considered	Stage of Core Strategy production	SA/SEA report reference
Focussing the majority of development to Hereford and the market towns with a combined strategy of considering social, economic and environmental goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Economic option</li> <li>2. Social option</li> <li>3. Environmental option</li> <li>4. New town or expanded settlement</li> </ol>	Developing Options and Place Shaping	Developing Options SA/SEA (Appendix B2-2) Place Shaping SA (Appendix B3-1 page 1)
Focussing the largest strategic allocation (after Hereford) to Leominster	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disperse growth around the town at smaller sites</li> <li>2. Limiting growth</li> </ol>	Developing Options	Developing Options SA/SEA (Appendix B3 page 41)
Promoting a western relief road route corridor as part of a new transport package for Hereford	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No relief road</li> <li>2. Promoting an eastern route corridor option</li> <li>3. Variations to the southern part of the western route corridor</li> <li>4. Promote a partial eastern route corridor instead of a western route corridor</li> </ol>	Preferred Option and Revised Preferred Option	Preferred Option SA/SEA Note for Hereford (page 17) and Revised Preferred Option SA Note (page 13)
Reducing the amount of housing proposed in the strategy overall from 18,000 to 16,500 by reducing the amount at Hereford and increasing the amount proposed in the rural areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make no changes</li> <li>2. Just change time period of plan</li> <li>3. Retain 18,000, but redistribute 2000 houses from Hereford to rural areas</li> <li>4. Retain 18,000 dwellings total, but redistribute 2000 houses from Hereford to the market towns</li> <li>5. Build more than 18,000 new homes up to 2031</li> <li>6. Reduce all the strategic sites in Hereford</li> </ol>	Revised Preferred Option	Revised Preferred Options SA/SEA (page11)
Revising the Preferred Option Rural Areas policy to allow for a more flexible approach to housing in the rural areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintaining the rural areas policy suggested at Preferred Option</li> <li>2. Allow unrestricted development to meet the housing demand</li> </ol>	Draft Core Strategy	Draft Core Strategy SA/SEA (pages 28 and 134)

- 3.19 It has been decided that not all development should be accommodated within the county's urban areas, and indeed this would not be the best approach to meeting housing needs across Herefordshire, which has such a dispersed settlement pattern. However, it has been determined to try to focus most development within and adjoining urban areas in the interests of sustainable development i.e. reducing the need to travel by private car where possible. The spatial strategy builds upon the existing settlement pattern of Herefordshire, with a focus on Hereford as the county's administrative centre and on other sustainable market towns. However, almost a third of all housing will be directed to the rural areas to help to sustain local services, generate new ones and support local housing provision for local communities. In accordance with the outcomes of the Revised Preferred Options, combinations of strategic urban extensions are identified in the Core Strategy in Hereford and the market towns and smaller (non-strategic) sites will be identified in the Hereford Area Plan, the Bromyard Development Plan, the Rural Areas Site Allocations Development Plan Document and Neighbourhood Development Plans. The aim is to maintain a network of sustainable settlements that meet the needs of communities whilst protecting and enhancing the distinctive environmental assets of the county.
- 3.20 The spatial strategy reflects the existing and future role and function of all settlements in Herefordshire. A hierarchy of settlements was identified through the consultations on Developing Options and Place Shaping Paper stages of production of the Core Strategy; with the majority of growth taking place in the urban areas of Hereford and the market towns at the highest level of the hierarchy. Following a revised methodology of the hierarchy below the market towns level after the Preferred Options stage, a more localised approach has identified settlements countywide where proportional levels of development may be acceptable. These are detailed in the Place Shaping section and include settlements considered sustainable due to their existing range of services, together with those settlements where some future development will offer the potential for them to become more sustainable, thus strengthening their role locally.
- 3.21 The existing urban areas are regarded as the most suitable locations for future development because of their existing easy access to services and facilities. This provides the opportunity to reduce out-commuting to other centres such as reducing the need to travel by private car for work or shopping, thus increasing 'self-containment'. Further development in Hereford and the market towns will help to maintain their role as service centres and contribute to their future regeneration, through provision of additional services and facilities required to support new development. This in turn, will help to sustain the rural areas that surround them.
- 3.22 The spatial strategy is 'housing, economic and environment- led.' In promoting growth, the strategy aims to undertake the following across the county:
- spearhead the regeneration of Hereford and our market towns;
  - help fund necessary new or improved infrastructure including a transport package to ease congestion in Hereford;
  - address issues around an increasingly ageing population structure and potential decline in the working age population;
  - address issues of housing affordability across the county but particularly in the rural areas;
  - tackle issues regarding accessibility to services in rural areas;
  - foster self-reliance, independence and resilience; and
  - address issues of water quality.
- 3.23 Adapting to and mitigating the effects of climate change are integral to the spatial strategy and cut across all policies. Addressing the impacts of climate change will be achieved by locating the majority of growth

in places with good, sustainable transport links and jobs and services, thereby reducing the need to travel by private car. Climate change is specifically addressed in the environmental quality theme of the spatial strategy. The spatial strategy is represented in the **Key Diagram** at the end of this section of the document.

### Achieving social progress

3.24 Social progress and improved quality of life will be delivered through identifying areas for growth and the general strategic policies which will address issues of housing need and demand; improving movement around the county; working towards improving health and education; improving access to services; and delivering sustainable communities with the necessary infrastructure.

#### Policy SS2 - Delivering new homes

A supply of deliverable and developable land will be identified to secure the delivery of a minimum of 16,500 homes in Herefordshire between 2011 and 2031 to meet market and affordable housing need.

Hereford is the focus for new housing development to support its role as the main centre in the county. Outside Hereford, the main focus for new housing development will take place in the market towns of Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross on Wye, on existing or new allocations to enhance their roles as multi-functional centres for their surrounding rural areas. In the rural areas new housing development will be acceptable where it helps to meet housing needs and requirements, supports the rural economy and local services and facilities and is responsive to the needs of its community. In the wider rural areas new housing will be carefully controlled reflecting the need to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

The use of previously developed land in sustainable locations will be encouraged. Residential density will be determined by local character and good quality design. The target net density across the county is between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare, although this may be less in sensitive areas.

The broad distribution of new dwellings in the county will be a minimum of:

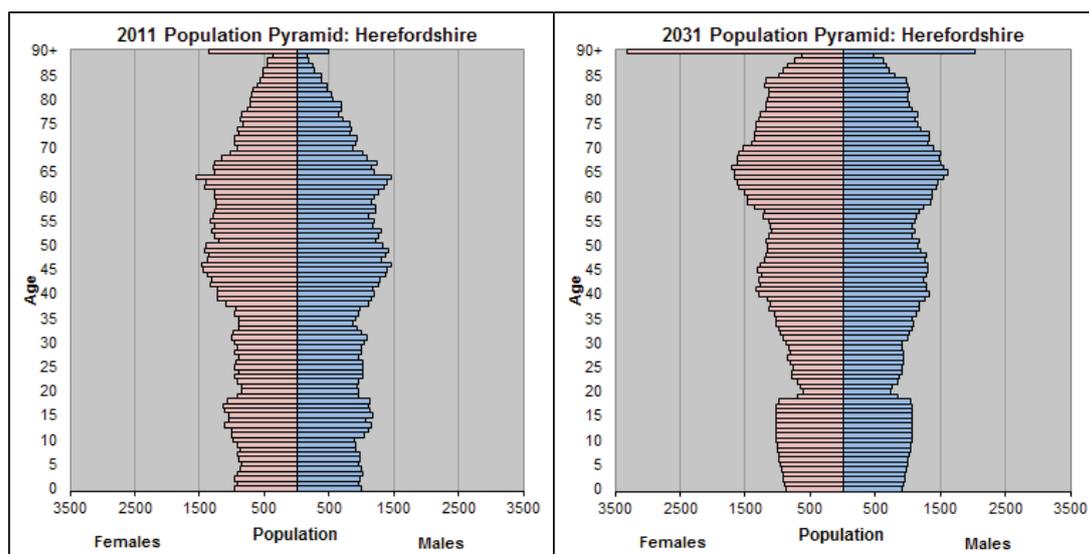
Place	Facilities	New Homes
Hereford	Wide range of services and main focus for development	6,500
Other urban areas – Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster, Ross on Wye	Range of services and reasonable transport provision – opportunities to strengthen role in meeting requirements of surrounding communities	4,700
Rural settlements – see list in Place Shaping section	More limited range of services and some limited development potential but numerous locations	5,300
<b>Total</b>		<b>16,500</b>

### Providing high quality homes

3.25 The Core Strategy housing provision requirement in Policy SS2 is based on the recommendations of the independent research from the *Local Housing Requirements Studies (2011, 2012 and 2014)*. These reports provided evidence-based guidance on the future level of housing needed in the light of changing economic and social trends. The provision of 16,500 homes over the period 2011 to 2031 will meet the objectively assessed need for the county set out in the 2014 study.

- 3.26 In 2011 Herefordshire had an estimated population of 183,600. The population grew by almost 5% in the period 2001-2011. However, the population structure has an above average proportion aged over 50 and a particularly low proportion aged 15-34, relative to the regional and national picture. Over the last 30 years, the proportion of the population aged over 34 has been increasing, whilst the numbers aged 15-34 has been declining. Population growth has been driven by growth in the number of people aged over 35. Looking at the components of population change 1999-2009, the death rate has generally exceeded the birth rate by an average of 240 persons per year resulting in natural decrease. This has been countered by net in-migration which averaged over 900 per annum and which has therefore driven population growth. Household size has been generally decreasing in recent years following the national trend for increasing single person households.
- 3.27 The level of housing provision proposed will support growth in the number of people in the working age population thereby supporting economic growth. Such a level would go towards addressing the imbalance in the population structure of the county by providing an appropriate mix of housing including encouraging the building of new homes for people of working age and younger families. However, this is an issue which will also need to be addressed beyond 2031 in subsequent plans.
- 3.28 Figure 3.3 shows the age structure of the population at 2011 and what it is projected to be following the implementation of the spatial strategy in 2031. The age structure of the population will still be top-heavy with the biggest increase in the over 65's, but this will not be uncommon with the rest of the region and the country as a whole.

**Figure 3.3 - Age Structure of the population 2011-31**



Source: 2011-mid year estimate, ONS. Crown copyright

Source: Hfds - 2010-based population forecasts. E&W - ONS 2010-based national population projections. ONS data is Crown copyright.

- 3.29 More specific details of the strategic locations regarding house types, density and design are included in the Place Shaping section. The Hereford Area Plan, the Bromyard Development Plan, the Rural Areas Site Allocations Development Plan Document and Neighbourhood Development Plans will identify non-strategic sites and will also consider the question of whether or not to define settlement boundaries in developing planning policies.

- 3.30 In terms of distribution of housing, Hereford is the service and economic centre of the county reflecting its higher population (58,500 people) and, being the most sustainable settlement, it should take the most growth. Therefore, strategic locations for new homes and employment land have been identified around the city in areas considered acceptable in environmental terms.
- 3.31 The decision to focus the largest single allocation of new homes to Leominster has been based on the recognition of its economic importance, located on the A49 Corridor, its excellent public transport links, including a railway 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, Leominster is also the least constrained environmentally.
- 3.32 The quantity and type of development, in terms of housing and employment land, allocated to Ross on Wye, Ledbury, Bromyard and Kington reflects their respective roles, needs, opportunities and environmental development constraints. Ledbury and Ross on Wye (larger in scale and population terms) will support quantitatively more development than Bromyard and Kington. This is explained further in the Place Shaping section.
- 3.33 The plan seeks to encourage new developments which support and enhance access to local services and tackle issues of rural housing affordability, giving consideration to the introduction of neighbourhood planning. The location and level of development allocated to settlements will be determined through the preparation of a Rural Areas Site Allocations Development Plan Document or Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 3.34 The National Planning Policy Framework states, as one of its core principles, that the planning system should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, provided that it is not of high environmental value. Given the level of growth planned for this plan period, it will not be possible to achieve development of a high percentage on brownfield land, but this will continue to be encouraged for future development proposals. The target net density in Policy SS2 has been based on a balance of issues, including the encouragement of the efficient use of land and the need to protect the county's environmental assets.

#### Meeting specific housing needs

- 3.35 The council has produced a *Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008* and a *Local Housing Market Assessment 2013*, which indicates that there is an urgent need to increase the provision of affordable housing in the county. However, whilst there is a very high need, this has to be balanced against the outcomes of the *Affordable Housing Viability Study 2011* and the *Economic Viability Study 2014*. Whilst affordable housing is a priority for the county, the need for new infrastructure to help economic growth is another priority. Levels of affordable housing and percentages and thresholds required, have been set to reflect the viability of achieving both priorities. In terms of delivery, a strategy focussed on growth and development of strategic sites is considered the best approach in order to get affordable homes built in the county over the plan period. The council has been looking at other forms of affordable housing delivery, including using public sector land assets and supporting direct delivery through Registered Providers. The place shaping policies and the general policy on affordable housing will deliver this part of the strategy.
- 3.36 A report on the *Housing and Support Needs of Older People 2012* in Herefordshire has highlighted a growing need for suitable homes for older people to live independently, as well as a need for specialist

housing with extra care to be built. These issues are addressed within place specific policies in the Place Shaping section and within policies on social progress in the General Policies section of this document.

- 3.37 *The Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showperson Accommodation Assessment, 2015* highlighted a need for further permanent pitches in the county. A Travellers’ Sites Document will be prepared following on from the Core Strategy to allocate pitches, but in the meantime an interim policy is set out in the policies on social progress in the General Policies section of this document.
- 3.38 The council recognises that individual or group self and custom build projects will contribute to the delivery of homes over the plan period. These may be in the form of affordable, low cost market and open market housing. The council will encourage and support this type of development where the proposals are in line with the relevant policies of the Core Strategy and neighbourhood plans. Specific sites may be allocated for this type of development in Area and Neighbourhood Development Plans where a demand for this type of development has been demonstrated.

**Housing trajectory**

- 3.39 In respect of the housing target for Herefordshire the expectation is that the highest rate of housing completions will be towards the latter end of the plan period.
- 3.40 Overall the delivery of the housing levels and distribution proposed in the Core Strategy is dependent upon necessary infrastructure being funded and delivered. A detailed trajectory is set out in Appendix 4. The delivery of housing will be monitored throughout the plan period and may need further re-adjustment and added detail to reflect progress on the delivery of the strategic housing sites and key elements of infrastructure.

**Policy SS3 - Ensuring sufficient housing land delivery**

A sufficient supply of housing land will be maintained to ensure the delivery of the Core Strategy housing target as set out in Policy SS2 over the plan period. The rate of housing delivery and supply will be assessed through the annual monitoring process. If monitoring demonstrates that the number of new dwelling completions is below the cumulative target figure over a 12-month monitoring period (1 April to 31 March) as set out in the housing trajectory in Appendix 4 the Council will prioritise increasing housing supply in the following monitoring periods using appropriate mechanisms which, depending on the scale and nature of potential under-delivery, will include:

- A partial review of the Local Plan – Core Strategy; or
- The preparation of new Development Plan Documents; or
- The preparation of an interim position statement and utilising evidence from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment to identify additional housing land.

A range of strategic housing proposals are identified which are key to the delivery of the spatial strategy. In addition there are elements of key infrastructure which will need to be provided to enable full delivery of the strategic housing targets. The council will work with developers and other stakeholders to ensure the timely development of these strategic proposals and the key infrastructure requirements.

### Policy SS3 - Ensuring sufficient housing land delivery continued

Appendix 5 sets out the relationships between the delivery of housing and the timing of the main infrastructure requirements. It also identifies actions necessary to safeguard the integrity of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) from adverse effects. The council will actively monitor the relationships identified in this appendix. Any material delays in the implementation of identified infrastructure or environmental safeguards and which will lead to under-delivery of housing supply will inform the implementation of the range of measures set out above to ensure plan-led corrective measures are put in place.

- 3.41 The delivery and supply of new housing will be monitored on a regular basis and through the annual monitoring process in particular. Appendix 4 sets out an indicative trajectory for total housing completions, which will provide a basis for monitoring completions over the plan period. In the event that the monitoring process demonstrates that the rate of completions have fallen below targets, an early assessment will be made as to the most appropriate mechanism to boost housing delivery depending upon the scale and nature of the issue. The stepped target of 600 dpa for the first five years of the plan (2011-2016), 850 dpa for years 6-10 (2016-2021), 900 dpa for years 11-15 (2021-2026) and 950 dpa for years 16-20 (2026-2031) would be the basis for monitoring and assessing land supply (including the five year housing land supply) throughout the plan period. For calculation of the five year housing land supply, due to persistent under delivery a buffer of 20% is considered appropriate.
- 3.42 To achieve the Core Strategy housing target there is a need to ensure that appropriate and necessary infrastructure is co-ordinated with the development. This will be particularly the case in respect of major elements of infrastructure such as the Hereford Relief Road.
- 3.43 In addition, the River Wye SAC currently includes sections where the water quality exceeds phosphate level targets and this prevents sections of the river from achieving favourable condition. It is also necessary to ensure that sections of river currently meeting the water quality targets do not fail as a result of new development. Natural England and the Environment Agency have prepared a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) which sets out to control and reduce phosphates in the SAC. The implementation of the actions in the NMP will facilitate the delivery of new development. Policy SD4 deals specifically with wastewater treatment and river water quality.

#### Windfalls

- 3.44 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) indicates that local planning authorities should draw on information from Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA) to identify:
  - sufficient specific sites to deliver housing in the first five years of the plan period with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; and
  - a further supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for years 6-10 and where possible, for years 11-15.
- 3.45 It goes on to say that sites with planning permission should only be included where there is robust evidence that the sites are developable and viable and are likely to contribute to housing delivery at the point envisaged. In respect of sites not specifically identified, the NPPF advises that allowances for 'windfalls', can be included in the five year supply if there is robust evidence of consistent local circumstances and reliable future supply.

- 3.46 In Herefordshire there is longstanding evidence that housing on ‘non-allocated’ sites has made a significant contribution to meeting housing needs and requirements. Such housing has not only come forward within urban parts of the county but also has been the major element of new housing in rural areas, where the conversion of agricultural buildings have contributed significant numbers of new homes.
- 3.47 It is therefore important to consider how windfalls, including the conversion of rural buildings, should be reflected in the housing land supply and residential targets for the county. The preparation of the SHLAA should mean that a higher proportion of sites will be identified as part of the supply figures and so only a modest windfall allowance is included within the housing targets of 2,000 dwellings, equating to 50 dwellings a year in rural areas with the same allowance for urban parts of Herefordshire.

**Movement and transportation**

- 3.48 The approach of the strategy for movement and transportation is two-fold. Firstly, the spatial strategy itself aims to direct the location of significant new development proposed through the plan to the more accessible locations in the county to promote the use of existing nearby services and facilitate the use of active travel (walking and cycling) as well as public transport. However, this principle needs to apply to all new significant development proposals that may come forward through the plan period. It will also require policies to minimise the impact of additional highway demand generated by new development on the transport network, so that journey times, journey time reliability, public realm and highway safety in the county do not deteriorate.
- 3.49 Secondly, the approach is to work with developers, the Highways Agency and transport providers to improve transport infrastructure, connections and choices in our main centres and rural areas (where reliance on the private car is often the only option). This is particularly important for local journeys in Hereford where a balanced package of measures including more walking and cycling, bus transport and a Relief Road would improve connectivity and travel choice, reduce congestion, enhance the public realm and foster local enterprise and tourism.
- 3.50 Herefordshire is a diverse county incorporating both rural and urban communities. The scale of the county, alongside its historic settlement pattern, places significant importance on movement and transportation. As recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework, transport and movement can play a positive role in contributing to sustainable development; whether through providing opportunities for greater public transport, or delivering air quality improvements by removing vehicular movements from pedestrian areas. Alongside this, the following pro-active strategic policies on movement and transportation can build upon objectives and policies within Herefordshire Council’s Local Transport Plan (LTP) to improve journey time and connectivity across the county. In partnership with the LTP the strategic policies are designed to deliver Herefordshire Council’s Core Strategy objectives of improving movement and transportation across the county.

**Policy SS4 - Movement and transportation**

New developments should be designed and located to minimise the impacts on the transport network; ensuring that journey times and the efficient and safe operation of the network are not detrimentally impacted. Furthermore, where practicable, development proposals should be accessible by and facilitate a genuine choice of modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.

### Policy SS4 - Movement and transportation continued

Development proposals that will generate high journey numbers should be in sustainable locations, accessible by means other than private car. Alternatively, such developments will be required to demonstrate that they can be made sustainable by reducing unsustainable transport patterns and promoting travel by walking, cycling and public transport.

Proposals to provide new and improved existing public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure will be supported. Where appropriate, land and routes will be safeguarded as required in future local or Neighbourhood Development Plans and developer contributions, which meet the statutory tests, sought to assist with the delivery of new sustainable transport infrastructure, including that required for alternative energy cars.

Herefordshire Council will work with the Highways Agency, Network Rail, bus and train operators, developers and local communities to bring forward improvements to the local and strategic transport network to reduce congestion, improve air quality and road safety and offer greater transport choices, including the provision of the following major schemes:

- ESG Link Road (safeguarded route) and Transport Hub;
- Hereford Relief Road;
- Leominster Relief Road;
- Connect 2 Cycleway in Hereford;
- Park and Choose schemes; and
- other schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Proposals which enable the transfer of freight from road to rail will be encouraged. Development proposals incorporating commercial vehicular movements that could detrimentally impact on the environmental quality, amenity, safety and character of the surrounding locality will be expected to incorporate evidence demonstrating how the traffic impacts are to be mitigated.

- 3.51 Herefordshire Council's Local Transport Plan sets out programmes of work for achieving the council's objectives for transport, accessibility and pollution control which positively contribute to addressing climate change. Development arising under the Core Strategy can play a positive role in delivering the objectives of the LTP; developers should provide evidence showing how their proposed developments will deliver against those objectives. Accordingly, development proposals will be supported where they respond to the opportunities and constraints detailed within the LTP.
- 3.52 By influencing the location of new development, land use can reduce the need to travel particularly by private car, and minimise its impact on the environment. At the same time the planning system must respond to the need for new transport infrastructure and recognise the challenges faced by rural settlements, where reliance on private motorised transport, for many people, is the only realistic option for travel. Accordingly, strategic developments will be located on or have access to existing passenger transport networks so that they are convenient, accessible, safe and attractive to use. Where appropriate, development proposals should be accompanied by travel plans and transport assessments outlining alternatives to private motorised transport use.

**Pedestrians and cyclists**

3.53 The role of walking and cycling in creating liveable places, promoting health improvements and social inclusion has not always been recognised. Despite this, almost all journeys include an element of walking. Ensuring that there is safe and convenient access to housing, jobs, education, health care, other services and local facilities for pedestrians and cyclists is an essential part of promoting social inclusion and the delivery of sustainable development. Consequently, Herefordshire Council will advocate developments which promote pedestrian and cycle friendly access, avoiding conflict with private motorised vehicles, and provide appropriate links to the green infrastructure network where possible.

**Public transport**

3.54 Connecting improvements to pedestrian and cycling facilities with public transport facilities provides greater transport opportunities and alternatives to reliance on private motorised transport. Herefordshire Council will work in partnership with the Highways Agency, Network Rail, bus and rail operators, developers and the community to achieve improvements to the public transport network. This may include improving both the quality and quantity of the service on offer. Land and routes will be safeguarded from inappropriate development and identified in site specific plans. Where appropriate, developer contributions will be sought to deliver improvements to the public transport network.

**Major transport schemes**

3.55 The strategically important schemes, including ESG Link Road, Transport Hub, Hereford Relief Road and Connect 2, are explained further in the Hereford part of the Place-Shaping section. The Leominster Relief Road is explained in detail in the Leominster part of the same section. The funding required for these schemes is detailed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

**Freight**

3.56 Road freight will continue to be the dominant mode of transport for freight distribution within Herefordshire due to its flexibility and accessibility. The county’s railway network is limited and few of its key industrial networks are adjacent, or in close proximity to, the four passenger railway stations. The existing railhead for minerals transport at Moreton-on-Lugg will continue to be protected. It is however, important to encourage increased movements by rail to alleviate the additional pressure that growth will place on the county’s roads, and to minimise any increase in carbon emissions associated with transport.

3.57 During the plan period, advancements in technologies may bring forward alternative transport technologies. Where such developments are not covered by national legislation, Herefordshire Council will support their development. Such proposals must be in accordance with the principles of other policies of the Core Strategy and demonstrate their contribution towards delivering sustainable transport solutions.

3.58 In order to deliver the strategic objectives outlined above, development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have incorporated the criteria contained within policy MT1 in the section on general policies.

3.59 Partnership working will ensure all major housing and employment sites are served by public transport and that rail services and infrastructure within Herefordshire is improved over the long term and that smarter travel choices are promoted in the short term. The place shaping policies and the general policy

on traffic management, alongside the Local Transport Plan, will also work towards delivering this part of the strategy.

### Education and Skills

- 3.60 Improved and expanded higher education provision in Herefordshire is envisaged as part of the strategy to help retain our young people and improve the skills base of the county. The place shaping policies and the general policy on community facilities will deliver this part of the strategy. Significant recent work has been undertaken to bring about the establishment of a university in Herefordshire. This proposal has widespread support in the Council, the wider community and with local businesses. The emerging proposal will do much to consolidate the role of Hereford as a traditional county town and which provides a vibrant and diverse range of services. Depending on the state of the project at that time there will be an opportunity for it to be included in greater detail in the Hereford Area Plan.

### Health and wellbeing

- 3.61 Health services are being developed through an integrated approach of providing for an increased need for age appropriate services (Understanding Herefordshire). This includes; access to community centres, keeping people independent in their own home and personalised services such as the provision of extra care homes and supported housing generally. Other objectives of this plan, such as improving the provision of open space to help combat obesity and mental health problems, and the provision of improved broadband technology to facilitate access to services, will all work together to provide for improved health and wellbeing in the future. The place shaping policies and the general policies on community facilities and housing will help to facilitate this approach.

### Access to services

- 3.62 Historically, Herefordshire performs poorly in national assessments measuring the accessibility to services for the population (see Herefordshire Context section). This is because of its size and very sparsely populated nature. It is envisaged that the strategy of focussing most growth to urban areas, coupled with improvements in technology, such as broadband availability alongside council initiatives such as Locality working, will address this issue. Some nine 'natural communities' or 'localities' have been identified as forming the basis for engagement and providing the opportunity to deliver joined-up customer access points for people.

### New and/or improved infrastructure

- 3.63 Necessary community infrastructure including transport, green spaces, leisure uses, health, emergency services and education facilities will be delivered alongside new homes through planning conditions and developer contributions or the Community Infrastructure Levy. This will ensure that sustainable communities are created and maintained and that health and well-being is promoted. The type and phasing of infrastructure required to support the growth strategy is set out in the accompanying Core Strategy Infrastructure Delivery Plan or IDP. This is backed up by a separate evidence base on Economic Viability, which reports that the infrastructure listed in the IDP to support the projects and proposals in the Core Strategy, are viable at the time of writing for developers to want to build.
- 3.64 Significant infrastructure projects are required to: deliver the strategy; ease congestion, improve broadband speeds and availability to foster economic growth; and improve the county's sewerage treatment to prevent adverse effects on water quality. These projects will require joint working by a range

of partners who will work with housing providers and the council to ensure new housing can be delivered as part of an overall approach to increased sustainability for the county. The place shaping policies and general policies, as well as that on infrastructure delivery, explain these projects in detail and will work towards delivering this part of the strategy.

## Key outcomes of the strategy for social progress

- 3.65 These are: meeting housing need and demand; improved access to services; improving the health and well-being of residents; and reducing the need to travel, delivering Core Strategy objectives 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

## Achieving economic prosperity

- 3.66 The elements needed for stimulating economic prosperity will be delivered through: encouraging the diversification of the county's employment base; area regeneration; improving connectivity; promoting shopping and tourism in the right places; and improving economic output.

## Employment provision

- 3.67 The *Economic Development Strategy (Nov 2011)* is an integral part of the Local Development Framework. Its vision is to increase economic wealth through the growth of business. This will be achieved through the following:

- Sustain business survival and growth;
- Increase incomes and the range and quality of jobs;
- Have a skilled population to meet future work needs;
- Develop the county's built infrastructure for enterprise to flourish.

- 3.68 Herefordshire's economic output is low compared to regionally and nationally; in 2012 GVA per head in Herefordshire was £15,300 compared to £17,400 in the West Midlands and £21,900 across England. This is partly a result of persistently lower wages in the county with median weekly earnings for people who work in Herefordshire of £385, significantly lower than those in the West Midlands region (£470) and England (£512). Low wage levels are borne out in housing affordability issues.

- 3.69 The low value economy is partly a function of the county's economic structure. There are a high proportion of employees in manufacturing (accounting for 16% of employee jobs compared to 8% across England), but these are primarily in low and medium technology activities, including food and beverage production, rather than higher value-added activities. The wholesale and retail trade are also strongly represented (accounting for 19% of employee jobs compared to 16% across England) and this includes jobs in tourism-related sectors. The agricultural sector is also well represented. There is a low level of employment in finance, IT and other business activities, which has been a key growth sector nationally in recent decades. The county has a high proportion of small and medium sized enterprises and the council will offer continuing support for such businesses in future.

- 3.70 A keynote feature of the economic structure is a low representation of higher-value private sector businesses. This is a structural economic weakness, which partly reflects the county's relatively remote location in a national or regional context, together with the size of its population and key centre (Hereford) and the nature of the area's road and rail links. However this needs to be set against supply-side regeneration measures, including proposals in the Core Strategy for additional employment

land provision, together with regeneration projects, such as the regeneration of the Livestock Market in Hereford, the designation of the Hereford Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas and the future development of existing committed sites such as Model Farm in Ross-on-Wye.

- 3.71 In overall terms, the numbers working in land-based industries accounts for a much greater proportion than regionally or nationally. However, agriculture has a track record in diversification. For example; the use of polytunnels for a greater range of fruits, increased quantities of produce, improved quality and a lengthened growing season, which has enabled many farmers to stay in business. Land-based industries are seen as a strength of the county since they foster other business enterprises such as renewable energy technologies and creative industries.
- 3.72 Evidence of commuting patterns suggests that there is a moderate net outflow of people to work, although the level of self-containment of travel to work patterns was relatively high. Travel to work patterns highlight that Bromyard and Ledbury have a net outflow of workers. This issue is reflected in the allocations of employment land to these centres.
- 3.73 The Employment Land Study 2012 states that the emerging Core Strategy has an overall target of 148 hectares (ha) of available employment land over the plan period, which includes a rolling five year reservoir of 37 ha. Based on the output of projecting past completion rates, the overall target of 148 ha outlined in the emerging Core Strategy would provide a robust level of supply and would enable a wide range and choice of employment sites across the county to be provided throughout the plan period. Higher quality land referred to in this policy is that defined as “best” and “good” in the 2012 Study and is subject to more detailed discussion in policy E2. Appendix 6 sets out details regarding the provision of strategic employment land and its delivery and monitoring and review.

#### **Policy SS5 - Employment provision**

Existing higher quality employment land countywide will be safeguarded from alternative uses. A continuous supply of 37ha of readily available employment land will be made available over a 5 year period, with an overall target of 148ha of employment land over the plan period. New strategic employment land, in tandem with housing growth and smaller scale employment sites, will be delivered through the plan period. New strategic employment land locations are identified at Hereford (15ha); Leominster (up to 10ha), Ledbury (15ha), and Ross-on-Wye (10ha). The Hereford Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas will continue to provide the largest focus for new employment provision in the county. Proposals for employment land provision at Bromyard and Kington will be brought forward through Neighbourhood Development Plans or other Development Plan Documents.

The continuing development of the more traditional employment sectors such as farming and food and drink manufacturing will be supported. The diversification of the business base, through the development of knowledge intensive industries, environmental technologies and creative industries as well as business hubs, live-work schemes and the adaptive design of residential development, will be facilitated where they do not have an adverse impact on the community or local environment. The provision of high speed broadband to facilitate diversification will be supported.

#### **Area regeneration**

- 3.74 Hereford is the county’s main economic centre and as such has the potential to influence the prosperity of the whole area. A combined approach to regeneration means investment in covering travel, housing, employment land development and job creation can make a significant difference to the county. It is an

objective of the Core Strategy that the role of Hereford as the main business, service and visitor centre for the county will be maintained and enhanced through the expansion of the city centre as part of wider city regeneration. This will include new retail, leisure, tourist and commercial development and new sustainable transport infrastructure. The designated Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ) at Rotherwas will further support an enhanced economic outlook with the aim of promoting a more diverse employment base. An extra 5 ha of employment land has been designated as part of a mixed use development at the Lower Bullingham urban extension to support the HEZ. This is an addition to the policy since Revised Preferred Option stage.

- 3.75 Each of the market towns has their own distinct qualities, reflective of their position in the county and the organic growth of their industries. Ledbury and Ross both benefit from access to motorway links, whilst Leominster and Ledbury have connections to the rail infrastructure. There are clusters of industry within all the market towns, providing valuable employment. Tourism opportunity is a strong feature of all the market towns, which have their own unique selling points. The regeneration of the wider economy of the county's market towns will be prioritised in order to support their viability as key service centres for their rural hinterlands, by ensuring they remain the focus for appropriate levels of new homes and jobs. Whilst no strategic employment sites are proposed in Kington over this plan period, smaller scale employment sites will be encouraged and identified through either Development Plan Documents or Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 3.76 The rural economy is populated by small businesses, often sole traders or the self-employed working from home. This is higher than the national average and is driven by increasing opportunities to use technology to work from any location. Businesses in rural areas support the sustainability of local services and communities (Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing, July 2008). Therefore in the rural areas, businesses will be supported by taking into account local demand, the ability to retain, grow or diversify employment opportunities and options to reuse existing buildings and sites, as well as contribution to the sustainability of the area.

**Sustainable tourism**

- 3.77 Tourism is worth £469m to the county's local economy (2011). Over 4.7 million visitors come per year mainly for short stays to take advantage of the outstanding countryside, rich heritage and cultural offer. This supports 8,480 jobs. "Visit Herefordshire" is the agency in the county that promotes tourism and alongside the council works to develop it as a visitor destination. The delivery of high quality tourist, cultural and leisure development will be supported in the county where it capitalises on existing assets, develops sustainable walking, cycling or heritage routes, benefits local communities and the economy and is sensitive to Herefordshire's natural and built environmental qualities and heritage assets. The place shaping policies and the general policy on tourism will deliver this part of the strategy.

**Connectivity**

- 3.78 A key principle of the Core Strategy is that intensive trip generating development should be built in the most accessible locations. The co-location of employment, shopping, leisure, transport and other facilities means that people can carry out multiple activities in a single journey and there will be a boost to the local retail economy.
- 3.79 New transport infrastructure countywide (to include a western relief road around the city to facilitate a package of sustainable transport measures within the city) and faster, more accessible ICT/Broadband infrastructure will be delivered to facilitate the generation and diversification of employment opportunities and to improve accessibility to education and training opportunities.

## Retail

- 3.80 For some time, the retail economy has been losing ground to competition from outside the county from other major centres like Gloucester, Cheltenham and Worcester. To try and address this, Hereford Futures and the council has promoted the development of the £90 million retail scheme in Hereford city centre. This includes a new department store, supermarket and smaller shops, which is fully funded by the private sector.
- 3.81 The Core Strategy defines a network and hierarchy of centres which forms the basis for the retail strategy for the plan. This hierarchy has been confirmed in the Town Centres Study update 2012 as follows:

Figure 3.4 - Retail hierarchy

Principal centre	Secondary centre	Local centres	Neighbourhood centres
Hereford	Bromyard Ledbury Leominster Kington Ross-on-Wye	Bartestree/Lugwardine Barons Cross Rd, Leominster Bodenham Colwall Cradley Credenhill Eardisley Ewyas Harold Fownhope Kingsland Kingstone Leintwardine Marden Pembroke Peterchurch Weobley Withington	Belmont Bobblestock Bullingham* Chilton Square College Green Folly Lane (Whittern Way) Grandstand Road Holme Lacy Road Holmer West* Hinton Road Old Eign Hill Oval Quarry Road Three Elms* Whitecross

\*Neighbourhood centres at Bullingham, Holmer West and Three Elms will be required as part of the urban extensions at these locations

- 3.82 The Core Strategy will encourage appropriate town centre and retail investment in Hereford and the market towns of Bromyard, Ledbury, Leominster, Kington and Ross-on-Wye, as well as supporting local services such as village shops, pubs and post offices throughout the rural areas. Regardless of their retail and commercial offer all these centres play a significant role in providing local services and facilities which has many benefits in social, economic and environmental terms.
- 3.83 This hierarchy recognises the importance of Hereford as the principal shopping centre within the county, serving an extensive rural hinterland. The city centre provides the main location for retail activity in the county, as well as the focus for commercial and administrative services. In addition, a range of leisure, tourism and entertainment opportunities are available in Hereford, which help to enhance footfall within the city centre and will consolidate the recent improvements in vitality following the opening of the Old Livestock Market retail/leisure scheme.

- 3.84 The scale and retail offer of the five market towns varies according to their population size and location, but in broad terms they perform similar functions and play an important role in serving their own populations and rural catchments. The strategy for each market town is outlined in the place shaping section.
- 3.85 Retail development will be concentrated in the town centre but will be complemented by other uses such as restaurants, cafes, appropriate leisure uses and businesses. Primary shopping areas, which will include both primary and secondary frontages, will be identified through Neighbourhood Development Plans or other Development Plan Documents.
- 3.86 Neighbourhood centres also play an important role in providing day to day convenience needs for nearby residential areas and generally provide small food stores, other services and community facilities. These centres also have an important role to play both as community hubs and also in helping to reduce harmful emissions by being accessible by foot and bicycle. Specific place-based policies identify where new neighbourhood centres are required to serve strategic developments.
- 3.87 In the rural areas, village shops and other facilities meet both daily shopping 'top up' needs and help to facilitate the independence of those who are not able to travel farther afield. They are important to the vitality of rural communities, acting as a focus and informal meeting place, and provide a valuable service, particularly to those without their own transport. The policies in the place shaping section and the general retail policies will deliver this part of the strategy.

### Key outcomes of the strategy for economic prosperity

- 3.88 These comprise: more local and better paid employment opportunities, so limiting out commuting; business diversification and growth; a more vibrant and robust Hereford City and more economically self-contained market towns and rural areas; and a strengthened role and contribution to the economy for tourism. These deliver Core Strategy objectives 6, 7, 8, 8a and 9.

### Improving environmental quality

- 3.89 The strategy for improving environmental quality will support the creation of sustainable communities through protecting existing built, heritage and natural environment assets, the better use of resources and addressing the causes and effects of climate change.
- 3.90 A high quality environment has a key role to play in delivering the spatial strategy. Herefordshire has an important cultural heritage, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and a river of international ecological importance. The high quality environment is important to the quality of life of Herefordshire residents and has a fundamental role in attracting visitors and investment. Green infrastructure, such as open space, biodiversity, geodiversity and other semi-natural features will be protected and enhanced, including networks of green wildlife corridors and spaces. Green infrastructure has an important role in our adaption to climate change and contributing to carbon neutral development.
- 3.91 The maintenance of the county's environmental quality and its improvement, where necessary, will be through the preservation, management and enhancement of its environmental assets and safeguarding the natural and cultural environment in an integrated way that supports the health and wellbeing of its inhabitants. Although the approach will be based upon addressing issues at a landscape scale, there will be instances where detailed features and assets should be conserved when they contribute to local distinctiveness.

- 3.92 The range of environmental factors is considerable and high quality assets extend throughout the county. Balancing the provision of necessary development requirements within such circumstances often requires a rigorous approach to determining the most appropriate option in terms of minimising adverse environmental effects. As a consequence, developers need to work with the council and local communities to assess environmental factors in an integrated manner, with appropriate information informing decisions from the outset and with mitigation and compensatory measures being advanced where necessary. In addition, where opportunities exist to improve environmental quality, these should be pursued.
- 3.93 In undertaking assessments, the values attached to local distinctiveness by communities can include social and economic perceptions as well as environmental characteristics. Where produced, local guidance should inform the design process. A series of documents exist that provide planning guidance and advice on biodiversity, archaeology and landscape character. Management plans have been prepared for both Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty within the county and conservation objectives set for sites of international and national biodiversity interest.
- 3.94 The scale of development within the Core Strategy cannot be met solely through re-using previously developed land and buildings. Accordingly, greenfield sites will be developed during the plan period but the spatial strategy will continue to direct development to the most sustainable locations. Development proposals will be expected to avoid detrimental impact to designations and locally distinctive assets. Where evidence identifies potential impact, development proposals will be required to include mitigation measures appropriate in size, scale and effectiveness. Where the nature of individual assets is site specific, off-site compensation will only be considered in exceptional cases.

#### **Policy SS6 - Environmental quality and local distinctiveness**

Development proposals should conserve and enhance those environmental assets that contribute towards the county's distinctiveness, in particular its settlement pattern, landscape, biodiversity and heritage assets and especially those with specific environmental designations. In addition, proposals should maintain and improve the effectiveness of those ecosystems essential to the health and wellbeing of the county's residents and its economy. Development proposals should be shaped through an integrated approach to planning the following environmental components from the outset, and based upon sufficient information to determine the effect upon each where they are relevant:

- landscape, townscape and local distinctiveness, especially in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- biodiversity and geodiversity especially Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- historic environment and heritage assets, especially Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings;
- the network of green infrastructure;
- local amenity, including light pollution, air quality and tranquillity;
- agricultural and food productivity;
- physical resources, including minerals, soils, management of waste, the water environment, renewable energy and energy conservation.

The management plans and conservation objectives of the county's international and nationally important features and areas will be material to the determination of future development proposals. Furthermore assessments of local features, areas and sites, defining local distinctiveness in other development plan documents, Neighbourhood Development Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents should inform decisions upon proposals.

### Creating sustainable communities

- 3.95 The strategic growth areas avoid locations at high risk of flooding wherever possible, to protect against loss of life and recurring damage to property. Flood alleviation measures will be used where flood avoidance is not possible. New development will provide for a range of type and size of sustainably constructed and well-designed buildings to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, contribute to climate change adaptation, enhance energy efficiency and respect local distinctiveness.
- 3.96 The protection of residential and local amenity is essential to ensuring local communities are and remain sustainable. Amenity considerations include such issues as noise, air quality and lighting amongst others. Within the wider context, the issues of tranquillity and intrinsically dark landscapes may also be material considerations.
- 3.97 Whilst this strategy will inevitably result in the loss of areas of open land, the approach has generally been to avoid land of high sensitivity in landscape terms or biodiversity interest or land of high agricultural value (although given the scale of development around Hereford this has not always been possible – an issue that is reflected in the Sustainability Appraisal).
- 3.98 New parks and green spaces in Hereford and the market towns will be delivered to provide facilities for recreation and sport, as well as contributing to the local green infrastructure network, promoting biodiversity and to enhance community health and well-being. Other, necessary new or enhanced community facilities including sustainable transport choices will be delivered in association with new development to improve access to services and reduce the need to travel long distances by private car. Relevant policies in the place shaping section and the general local distinctiveness policies will deliver this part of the strategy.

### Protecting the environment

- 3.99 The location of new development proposed should deliver sites that, protect and/or enhance Herefordshire’s natural, built, heritage and cultural assets in the county’s cathedral city, historic market towns, smaller settlements and distinctive countryside. In addition Natural England has prepared conservation objectives for each Special Area of Conservation within the county; it is also consulted upon proposals that might affect Special Areas of Conservation and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and will be aware of management principles that may be relevant to the maintenance and achievement of their favourable conservation status. Management Plans have been prepared for both the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These documents will be relevant to the assessment of effects of development upon these important assets. The most rigorous approaches to assessing the effect of development should be taken for those areas with international and national designations, including proposals in areas outside but having an effect upon them, in accordance with the protection afforded to such areas in the National Planning Policy Framework. Sites and features of local importance should also receive an appropriate level of protection when determining the effects of proposals upon the environment and local distinctiveness. Subsequent policies set out the approach that should be applied in relation to these and a number of supplementary planning documents are also referred in their supporting statement which will also be relevant. Appendix 8 provides lists of those which have been identified at the time of drafting this Core Strategy.
- 3.100 Proposals for new/improved infrastructure to protect water quality, especially of the Rivers Wye and part of the Lugg which are European protected Special Areas of Conservation, will need to ensure the special features of these sites are maintained, despite the requirement for increased sewage treatment capacity from new development.

### Better use of resources

- 3.101 The percentage of previously developed land to be developed over the longer term of the plan period will be much lower than experienced in recent years (which exceeded the national target of 60%) at around 40%. This reflects the scale of strategic land release proposed during this plan period.
- 3.102 The introduction of renewable energy generation into larger development schemes will be promoted, where viable, to reduce the use of carbon producing fuels. Water management schemes and the use of sustainable drainage measures in new developments will strive towards water neutrality despite increased demands for water usage from new development.
- 3.103 Where necessary to achieve the objectives of this plan, areas of lower quality agricultural land will be utilised in preference to the best and most versatile agricultural land, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (Para 112), where possible. Changes in agricultural practices and food supply need to be recognised in terms of supporting resilience. In addition, the utility of providing gardens and allotments to support green infrastructure, food productivity and a low carbon economy will also contribute to the vision for the county.
- 3.104 New waste facilities are to be integrated into sites suitable for industrial use close to the origin of such waste. Proposals to minimise waste, including re-use, recycling and treatment, will need to have been considered in the design of new large scale developments. The strategy of promoting better use of resources is dealt with in policies of the Place Shaping and general environmental policies sections. In addition, the Minerals and Waste Local Plan will provide guidance relating to the safeguarding of mineral resources.

### Addressing climate change

- 3.105 Tackling climate change in Herefordshire will be a difficult challenge. The predominantly rural character of the area often makes access to a range of services extremely difficult and increases reliance on the private motor car. This in turn can have a major impact on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, the main greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. These emissions can also have an impact on air quality, particularly in the urban area of Hereford city centre. As well as providing more sustainable transport choices, there is a necessity to facilitate the increased use of renewable and low carbon energy sources and encourage in appropriate cases measures such as the provision of electric car charging points. Together these can go some way towards reducing Herefordshire's dependency on fossil fuels. Enabling the level of development in the strategy has to be balanced against the challenge of protecting the high quality of the built and natural environment, including our best agricultural land where at all possible. Ensuring that new development is resilient to the effects of climate change is also important, for example, including measures to safeguard water quality, reduce water consumption and deal with increased flood risk and surface water flooding. The *Climate Change Background Paper* explains the challenges facing the county, including possible effects on agriculture, flood risk, transport and so on.
- 3.106 As climate change is acknowledged as a very broad and complicated issue, government legislation will continually be reviewed in order to ensure that Core Strategy policies are demonstrating appropriate measures to reduce our impacts to climate change.

### Policy SS7- Addressing climate change

Development proposals will be required to include measures which will mitigate their impact on climate change.

At a strategic level, this will include:

- focussing development to the most sustainable locations;
- delivering development that seeks to reduce the need to travel by private car and which encourages sustainable travel options including walking, cycling and public transport;
- designing developments to reduce carbon emissions and use resources more efficiently;
- promoting the use of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy where appropriate;
- supporting affordable, local food production, processing and farming to reduce the county’s contribution to food miles\*;
- protecting the best agricultural land where possible;

Key considerations in terms of responses to climate change include:

- taking into account the known physical and environmental constraints when identifying locations for development;
- ensuring design approaches are resilient to climate change impacts, including the use of passive solar design for heating and cooling and tree planting for shading;
- minimising the risk of flooding and making use of sustainable drainage methods;
- reducing heat island effects (for example through the provision of open space and water, planting and green roofs);
- reduction, re-use and recycling of waste with particular emphasis on waste minimisation on development sites; and
- developments must demonstrate water efficiency measures to reduce demand on water resources.

Adaptation through design approaches will be considered in more locally specific detail in a Design Code Supplementary Planning Document.

\*From field to table – a sustainable food and drink strategy for Herefordshire 2011

#### Key outcomes of the strategy for environmental quality

3.107 These comprise: recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside; respecting local distinctiveness; funding new green infrastructure; and addressing the causes and impacts of climate change. These link to Core Strategy objectives 10, 11 and 12.

#### Delivering and monitoring the spatial strategy

3.108 To implement the spatial strategy, a delivery strategy is set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which accompanies the Core Strategy. This is supported by the Implementation, Monitoring and Delivery Plan in Appendix 3.

3.109 Where changes are made to national planning policy the annual monitoring process will be used to identify if the policies set out in the spatial strategy require review. The following monitoring indicators will be used by the council to assess the effectiveness of the strategic policies:-

### Social

- housing completions by size, type and tenure and location – assessed in relation to 5 year periods in order to ensure that there remains a flexible supply of available and deliverable land for housing across the county;
- transport patronage by mode;
- housing densities in urban and rural areas.

### Economic

- employment land floor space by type and location;
- number of live-work units granted permission;
- accessibility to Broadband;
- number of new jobs created;
- employment and income levels in relation to regional and national averages;
- business survival rate at 3 years;
- GVA per head.

### Environmental

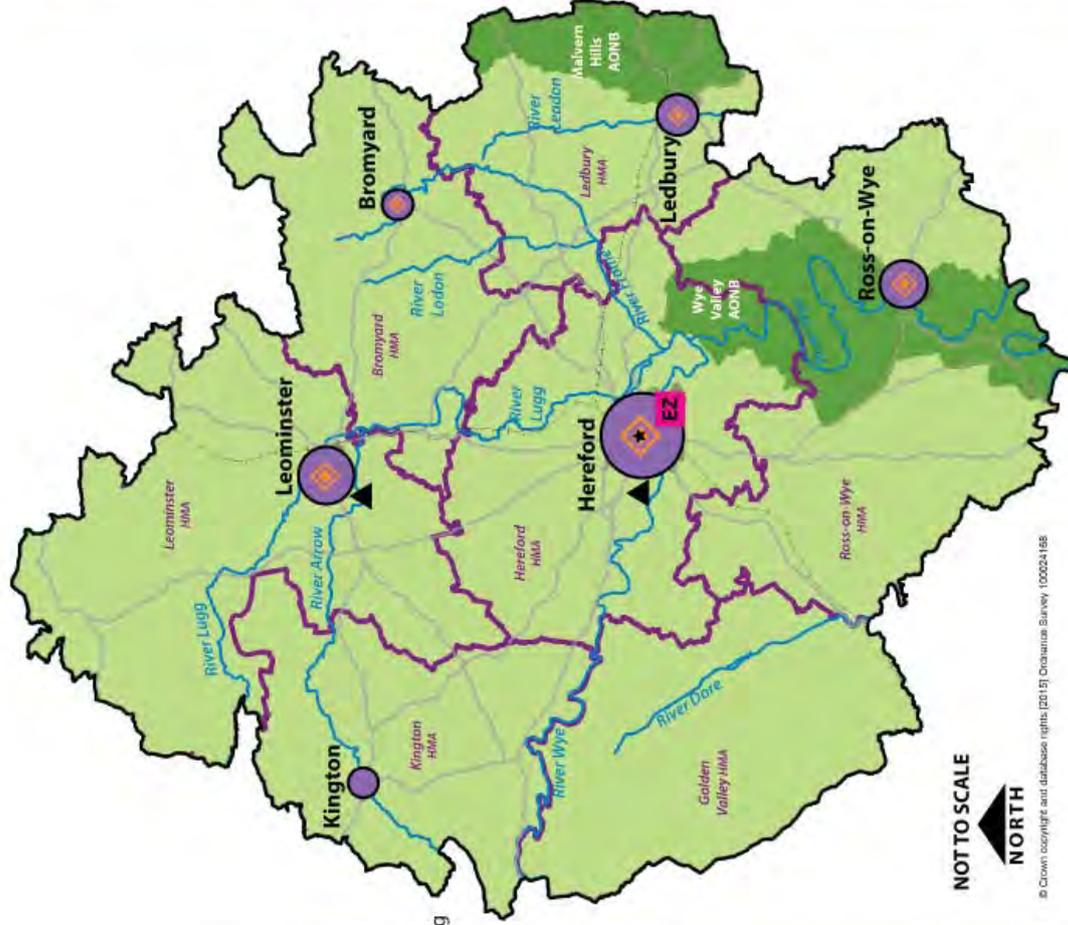
- the percentage of all new development completed on previously developed land;
- total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita (Department of Energy and Climate Change);
- number of decentralised energy schemes granted permission.

### Key diagram

- New homes and facilities
- New land for jobs
- Hereford Enterprise Zone
- Transport improvements in and/or around settlements
- City centre regeneration area including new shopping, learning gateway, new homes
- AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)
- County boundary
- Housing Market Area (HMA)
- Main River
- Main road
- Railway network

**Principal centre**  
Hereford is the principal centre for health, employment, shopping and leisure

**Secondary centre**  
Kington, Leominster, Bromyard, Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye are the secondary centres offering more local facilities



Broad locations	Homes	Land for jobs
Hereford	6500	15ha
Bromyard	500	5ha***
Kington	200	-
Ledbury	800	15ha
Leominster	2300	10ha
Ross-on-Wye	900	10ha*
<b>Rural part of Housing Market Area (HMA)**</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
Golden Valley	304	To be determined in other development plan documents and/or neighbourhood development plans, and through Policy A6.
Bromyard	364	
Hereford	1870	
Kington	317	
Ledbury	565	
Leominster	730	
Ross-on-Wye	1150	
<b>Total</b>	<b>16500</b>	

\* Existing UDP employment allocation  
 \*\* HMAs exclude the city and town wards  
 \*\*\* To be determined through Bromyard Development Plan

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NOT TO SCALE  
 NORTH

## Introduction

4.1 This section sets out proposals for:

- Hereford
- Bromyard
- Kington
- Ledbury
- Leominster
- Ross-on-Wye
- Rural Areas

4.1.1 For each area policies and proposals are set out, including a range of broad locations where larger scale or strategic development is proposed. The Core Strategy does not identify specific development sites. For the purpose of the Core Strategy, a strategic location is generally defined as around 500 or above homes for Hereford, around 100 or above homes within the market towns or around 5 hectares or above for employment land.

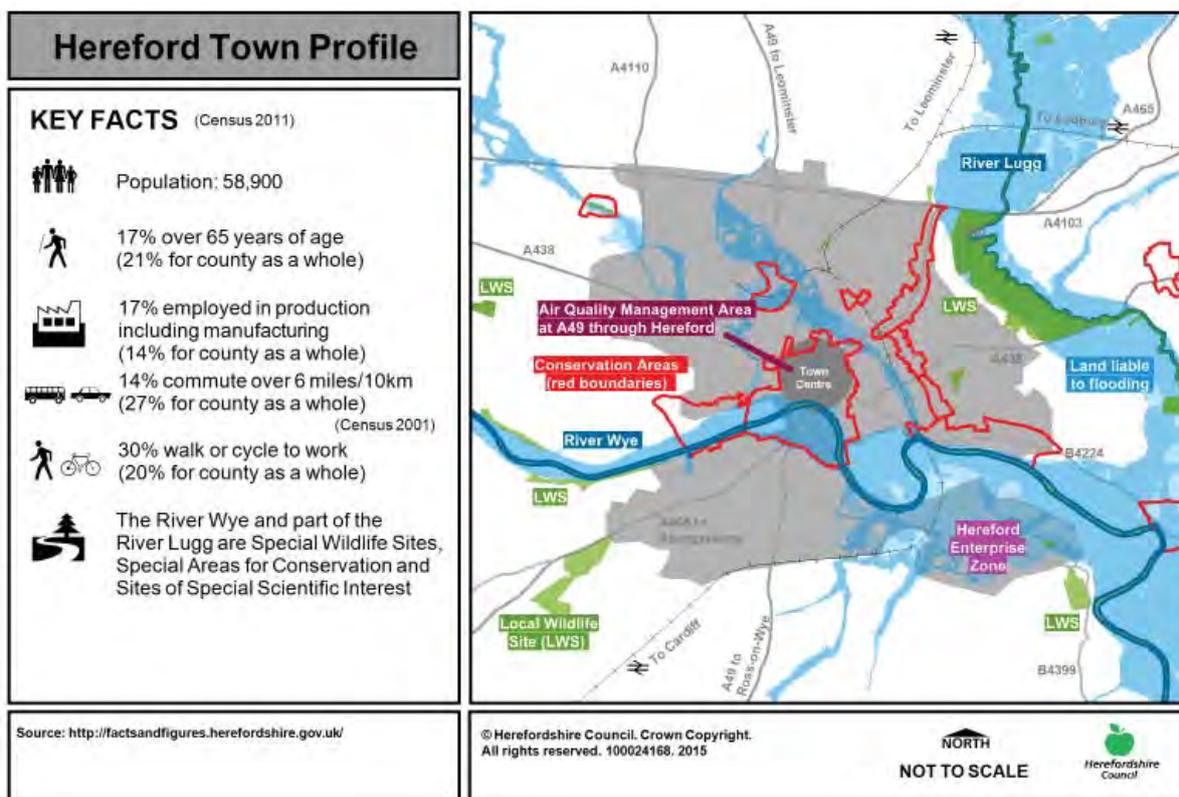
## Hereford

### The vision for Hereford

- 4.2.1 By 2031, Hereford will consist of healthy, safe, secure, low crime and sustainable communities with a wide range of homes and employment opportunities for all, which are well serviced by a range of community facilities, green infrastructure and public transport. The imbalance of housing types and income levels across Hereford, particularly within South Hereford, where there is a high concentration of affordable housing and income deprivation, will be addressed by providing a greater balance and mix of properties and employment opportunities across the city and at the urban extensions.
- 4.2.2 New communities and neighbourhoods will be successfully integrated with existing communities and the surrounding countryside. Residents will have greener environments and energy efficient homes which contribute to reducing the county's carbon footprint. Education and community facilities will be provided within walking distance of residential areas. Developers will be encouraged to have early engagement and consultation with the community including the city/town/parish council.
- 4.2.3 Congestion in Hereford will be eased by a number of measures. Newmarket Street, Blueschool Street and Commercial Square will be upgraded for pedestrians enabling a range of environmental enhancements, air quality improvements and sustainable transport measures to be implemented. The dependency on the private car will be reduced with a network of cycleways, footpaths and bus priority lanes to enable people within the city to move between home, work, school and other facilities by foot, cycle and bus. A transport hub will enable bus, train, taxi facilities to be linked. Park and Choose/cycle areas will be provided to reduce reliance on private cars to access the city centre. A Relief Road will be key element to a congestion free city by enabling an alternative trunk route, providing additional highway capacity to implement sustainable transport measures and reducing the level of through traffic in the city centre.
- 4.2.4 Hereford will be a strong sub-regional shopping, employment, educational, leisure and cultural focus for the county. Comprehensive proposals for regeneration in and around the city centre will complement the historic core by providing homes, jobs, education, shops and leisure facilities, urban greening and transport improvements. This will make the city a vibrant destination of choice for shoppers and visitors alike.

- 4.2.5 The high educational standards within the county will be capitalised upon by the provision of higher education facilities and additional good quality employment land to encourage higher value employers.
- 4.2.6 Hereford will be home to innovative design and sustainable construction which complements the existing historic character. Sightlines and heights of new buildings will be sensitive to the city skyline. Areas of the city, its near-countryside setting and wider rural areas will be well connected by a network of high quality open areas, green spaces and green infrastructure. New residential and employment areas will be integrated into the existing urban fabric and surrounding countryside.
- 4.2.7 To achieve this vision, the following policies will ensure that Hereford maintains and enhances its role as a strategic centre. Within the context of the wider Plan in general, and Policies HD1 to HD6 in particular “Hereford” should be regarded in policy terms as the area to be identified within the Hereford Area Plan. The policies reflect its capacity to accommodate additional development without significant harm to local communities and in sustainable locations. Concentrating the largest portion of the county’s development in Hereford will help to develop and support the regeneration of the city in the long term, by capitalising on existing services and other infrastructure and providing greater opportunities for improving and increasing them. Policies HD2, HD4, HD5 and HD6 and the supporting text explain the requirements for the development at the urban extensions in terms of associated infrastructure and facilities.

Figure 4.1: Hereford Town Profile



### Policy HD1- Hereford

Hereford will accommodate a minimum of 6,500 new homes within the plan period and a minimum of 15ha of new employment land.

Major residential development will take place in the following locations:

- 800 new dwellings in Hereford City Centre (HD2)
- 500 dwellings at the Northern Urban Expansion Area (HD4)
- 1,000 dwellings at the Western Urban Expansion Area (HD5)
- 1,000 dwellings at the Southern Urban Expansion Area (HD6)

The remaining housing requirement of around 3,200 dwellings will be provided through the implementation of existing commitments, windfall development and the development of non-strategic sites allocated through the production of the Hereford Area Plan or Neighbourhood Development Plans.

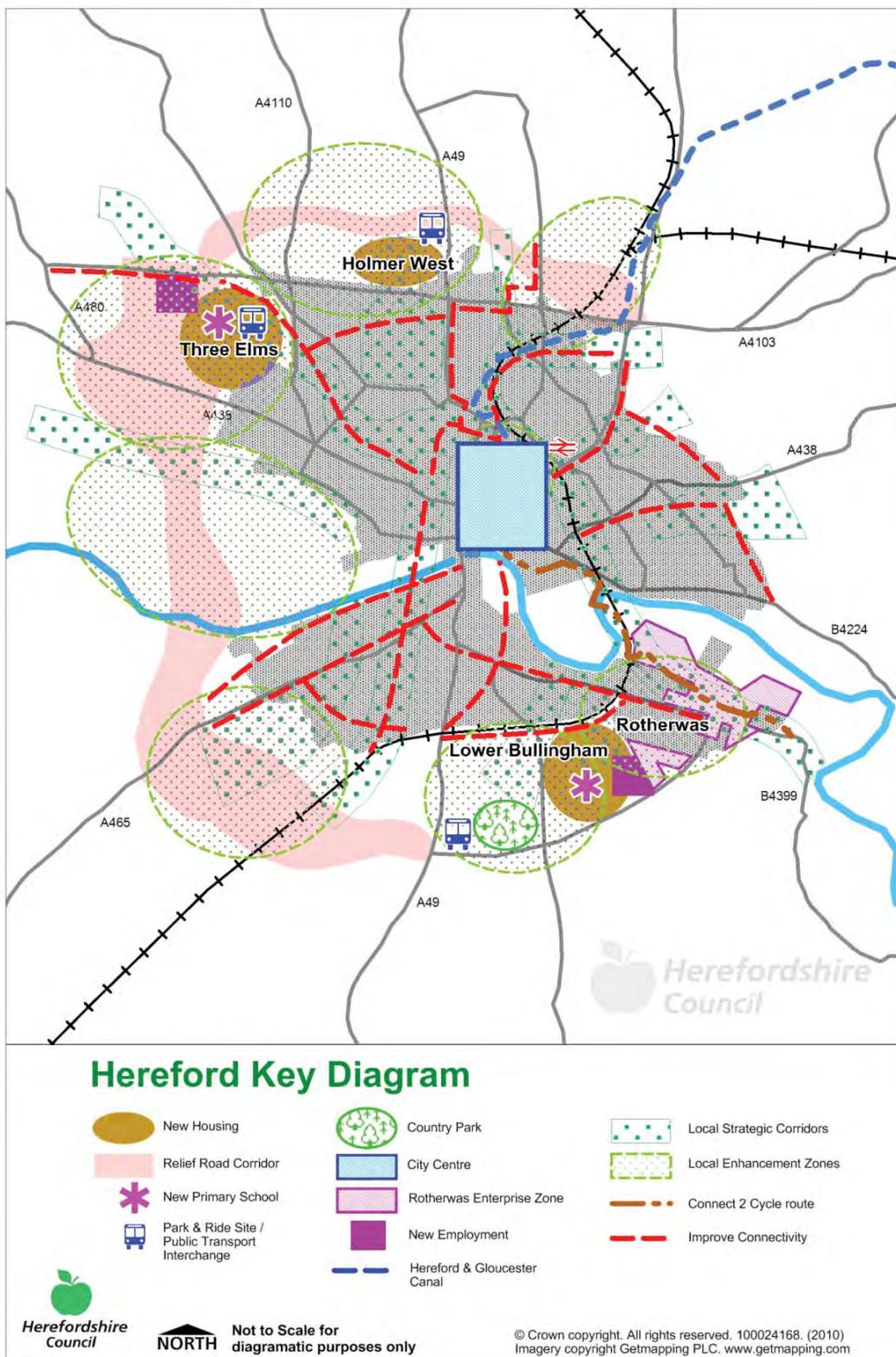
Major employment development will take place in the following locations:

- 10ha of employment land at the Western Urban Expansion area
- Around 5ha of employment land at the Southern Urban Expansion area.

Further employment land provision will be made in accordance with Policy HD7.

- 4.2.8 Policies SS3 and Appendix 5 together with HD2, HD4, HD5 and HD6 and their explanatory text also set out the particular issues for each area and their infrastructure requirements. However the delivery of development under all these policies will require improvements to the water supply and waste water treatment systems.

Figure



4.2.9 Non-strategic policies and proposals will be contained within the Hereford Area Plan, Minerals and Waste Local Plan, master plans and additional supplementary guidance. These documents will include consideration of:

- non-strategic housing and employment allocations;
- type and mix of energy efficient housing to be provided on non-strategic sites;
- need for additional or improvements to existing open space, play areas and sports and recreation facilities following further evidence base studies currently being prepared;
- the boundaries of the primary shopping areas and the primary and secondary frontages;
- need for further non-strategic retail floorspace;
- enhancement proposals for the historic core and heritage assets including archaeology;
- conservation and design to enhance the city centre and surrounding areas;
- additional sustainable transport measures and car park management;
- need for any renewable energy proposals;
- need for additional waste management facilities;
- need for additional tourism facilities and accommodation in the city;
- design and density policy by character area;
- enhanced night time economy;
- health and well-being;
- need for surface water management in Hereford;
- need for a new police headquarters site and facility and for a new fire station; and
- non-strategic sport, leisure and recreation policies and proposals.

#### Hereford city centre

- 4.2.10 Hereford city centre plays an important role in contributing to the economic, cultural and social performance of the wider city and the county as a whole. It has a rich heritage which makes it an attractive location for residents and visitors alike.
- 4.2.11 The strategic growth policy for Hereford's central area has been influenced by the Hereford City Centre Regeneration Strategy, which sets out a ten-year ambition up to 2018 containing broad views and aspirations for the successful future of the city. The successful and sustainable future of the city relies upon maximising its current strengths and realising opportunities for the regeneration and redevelopment of the city centre. The role of Hereford as the main business, service and focal point for the county will be maintained and enhanced through the expansion of its retail, commercial, leisure and residential functions.
- 4.2.12 Policy HD2 will strengthen Hereford's role as a focus for the county and outlying areas. Hereford will become a stronger shopping, employment, leisure, education and cultural focus for the county. In addition to new retail and leisure opportunities, city expansion and regeneration proposals will also provide new homes (including affordable ones) and tackle existing movement and flooding constraints, improving the city for residents and visitors. Maintaining and enhancing the city's historic heritage and environmental assets will be high priority issues, as will the sustainability of the new development for existing and future generations.
- 4.2.13 The Core Strategy aims to improve Hereford's status as a sub-regional shopping destination by enhancing and improving existing facilities and integrating new development into the historic centre. The Eign Gate and Edgar Street regeneration areas are the focus for achieving this aim, and these areas will be defined in detail in the HAP. Development in the Edgar Street regeneration area will be developed in

accordance with a masterplan to ensure the delivery of a high quality mixed use development. This will be informed by the existing masterplan which sets out an overarching vision of how the area will be developed and along with the *Infrastructure Delivery Plan* identifies the required supporting infrastructure to enable the successful delivery of the project.

### Policy HD2 – Hereford city centre

The city centre will accommodate around 800 new homes, the majority to be located within a new urban village. Further residential development will take place through the implementation of existing commitments, re-development of existing brownfield sites, re-use of upper floors above commercial premises, infill development and site allocations through the Hereford Area Plan. A target of 35% of these new homes will be mixed tenure affordable with a density that is compatible with the sustainable urban location of the site.

The urban village will be served by safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle links to other areas of the city, the new transport interchange, the Courtyard Arts Centre and nearby areas of green space. A new Link Road will also serve development parcels forming part of the urban village connecting Edgar Street to the west and Commercial Road to the east (with a spur linking Blackfriars Street to the south), as well as assisting in reducing traffic within the core of the city.

Newmarket Street, Blueschool Street and Commercial Square will be re-designed to become safe and attractive routes for pedestrians and cyclists, with improved public transport facilities and enhanced connectivity between the historic city centre and regeneration area partly facilitated by the construction of the new link road.

The urban village will be complemented by other uses and infrastructure forming part of the wider regeneration area creating a sustainable mixed use development which respects and where possible enhances the historic environment. These include the following:

- land and contributions towards a canal basin forming the terminus of the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal, which is being delivered by the Hereford & Gloucester Canal Trust;
- each stage of development which adjoins Widemarsh Brook will maximise opportunities for enhanced biodiversity, to provide flood relief and sustainable surface water drainage solutions and optimised as a green infrastructure link;
- Herefordshire Council in partnership with public transport operators will deliver an integrated transport interchange close to the railway station to maximise opportunities for sustainable travel;
- opportunities for new commercial, tourism, education (including tertiary facilities), leisure, health, civic and police and fire uses will be available to meet any identified need;
- Herefordshire Council will work with the tenant(s) of Edgar Street football stadium to explore opportunities for a sports led mixed-use redevelopment and
- new public car parking facilities.

In order to maintain and enhance the viability and vitality of the city centre, new retail uses will be focused to the core of the city centre as defined below. Any identified need for further major retail development over the plan period will be met within the Eign Gate and that part of the Edgar Street regeneration area which lies within the defined town centre, including the Old Market, along Blueschool Street and through the refurbishment and re-development of the Buttermarket.

## Policy HD2 – Hereford city centre continued

Within Hereford city centre, new developments including changes of use will be approved where they:

- provide new commercial and office space in appropriate city centre locations including above existing retail and commercial premises;
- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the city centre. Proposals for town centre uses outside the defined town centre will be subject to the sequential test and applications for development over 700m<sup>2</sup> gross floor space will require an impact assessment to determine whether there could be any adverse impacts on the town centre;
- improve overall accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport;
- provide new, or enhanced sport, recreation and leisure facilities for local residents and visitors;
- provide new and improve existing cultural and tourism attractions and facilities, which respect the city's historic character and local distinctiveness;
- enable the provision of a canal basin with associated wharfage and visitor centre;
- enable the protection, conservation and enhancement of Hereford's heritage assets, their significance and setting, including archaeology, with particular regard to the historic street patterns and the skyline.

### New homes

- 4.2.14 Policy HD2 promotes living in the city centre. This has many advantages, including good accessibility levels for residents to a range of services and facilities, encourages walking and cycling and makes best use of existing properties by using vacant and underused spaces above shops and offices. This approach will contribute to the vitality of the city centre as its role is broadened from mainly daytime shopping and business uses to create an inclusive 'evening' economy beyond normal working hours. This will make it a more attractive place to live, as well as boost the local economy.
- 4.2.15 The development of the urban village will provide the majority of the 800 new homes in the city centre. These will comprise a mixture of apartments and family housing at a minimum average density of 50 dwellings per hectare. 35% of these homes will be affordable, with different types of tenures available, to satisfy identified local needs. Housing will be delivered that meets the needs of all sections of the community, including housing for older persons – a need highlighted in the study of the *Housing and Support Needs of Older People in Herefordshire 2012*. All homes will be constructed to high energy efficiency standards in accordance with other policies in this plan.
- 4.2.16 The urban village will require associated infrastructure in order to address flooding issues. A key element of this will be the production of an integrated surface water management strategy. This should inform the design and layout of development and help deliver sustainable drainage and flood risk reduction measures taking into account the development of the other strategic sites in Hereford. Access and traffic constraints will also need to be addressed. The need for good pedestrian and cycle links to other parts of the city, including the railway station and retail and leisure areas, is vital to a successful urban village development.
- 4.2.17 The residents of all new homes will have access to public open space and, where possible, there should be green corridors to link the site to other green areas. Opportunities exist to make an attractive feature of the canal basin and its corridor within the new residential area.

**New jobs**

- 4.2.18 The *Employment Land Study Update (2012)* confirms the role of Hereford city as the main business centre for the county and identifies the need to promote small-scale sustainable employment opportunities in and on the edge of the Hereford city area. It also recommends that opportunities for new office development in the city centre should be enhanced.
- 4.2.19 The development of new commercial and office facilities will take place within the city centre as part of the regeneration scheme. This approach is also supported by the *Employment Land Study Update (2012)*, which concludes that the regeneration as a whole will create a better environment for existing businesses and raise the rates of company formation.
- 4.2.20 Proposals for office uses outside the city centre will be subject to the sequential approach, as outlined in policy E5. Proposals for offices which have a gross floor space of 700m<sup>2</sup> or over outside the city centre will be required to provide an impact assessment which meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy E5.

**Movement**

- 4.2.21 The regeneration in the north of the city centre will be enabled by the construction of a new link road which will connect Edgar Street, Widemarsh Street and Commercial Road. This new road will create safe access through Edgar Street regeneration area; unlocking development plots, whilst also significantly reducing the large volumes of traffic on the inner ring road. This will improve pedestrian links between the historic city core and the old livestock market area and accessibility within and across the northern section of the Edgar Street regeneration area.
- 4.2.22 Newmarket Street, Blueschool Street and Commercial Square will be upgraded for pedestrians and cyclists in order to create a safer and more visually attractive environment. An integrated public transport interchange will be provided in the vicinity of the railway station, which will become a central point for access to all modes of transport, providing transfer opportunities for trains, buses, taxis, private and hire cars, mobility vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.
- 4.2.23 The *Local Transport Plan* aims to support growth of the city by improving traffic management and promoting walking and cycling for the majority of trips. The strategy identifies a number of strategic and non-strategic transport measures and smarter travel initiatives to encourage modal shifts from private cars to public transport, walking and cycling.

**Green infrastructure and open space**

- 4.2.24 The city has a number of natural heritage assets with the River Wye flowing through it with its associated landscape, biodiversity, recreation and tourism benefits. The River Wye is a designated Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest. Development proposals must meet the requirements of Policy SD4, which will ensure that the achievement of water quality targets for the county's rivers will be met. This is a key environmental objective of the Core Strategy. The wider river corridor provides a special setting for the city and brings opportunities for open space and green infrastructure. Its distinctiveness helps to provide an attractive location to live and work, which needs to be protected and enhanced. New development should respect this natural heritage. The importance of managed green spaces as a positive element in city living is recognised, with these assets providing opportunities for recreation, leisure and tourism. These natural and managed assets make an important contribution to the

green infrastructure of the city centre and wider area and should be protected and enhanced. Opportunities for new and enhanced green infrastructure within the city; particularly associated with the River Wye corridor and the Edgar Street regeneration area, should form part of any new proposals.

- 4.2.25 The *Green Infrastructure Strategy 2010* identifies an enhancement zone in the city centre at the confluence of a number of strategic green infrastructure corridors and includes the Edgar Street regeneration area. The strategy highlights a number of important biodiversity features, including the Widemarsh Brook, the 'Police Meadow' and the railway corridor, where there will be numerous opportunities to enhance, as well as create additional green infrastructure, as part of the redevelopment of this area.

#### Education facilities

- 4.2.26 Contributions and/or community infrastructure levy monies will be sought from new development for the enhancement of primary and secondary education facilities to accommodate increased demand from new residents. The city centre will play a role in providing greater access to higher education. At the time of adoption there is an ambition to create a University in Hereford, the principal of which is fully supported by Policy SC1.

#### Heritage

- 4.2.27 Hereford's heritage must be viewed as a valuable asset as the city expands and changes. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how heritage assets, their significance and setting, will be protected, conserved and where appropriate enhanced. Hereford is fortunate to have a wealth of historic buildings, archaeological remains, historic streetscapes, such as Widemarsh Street and St Owens Street and open spaces, which provide valuable settings for historic buildings, for example; at the Cathedral Close and the plots of the adjoining Canons' houses. Within Hereford there is the nationally designated Hereford Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI). Additionally, opportunities exist to enhance the setting of existing heritage assets including the City Wall and Blackfriars Friary/Coningsby Hospital site. Public realm works to Newmarket Street and Blueschool Street will also provide the opportunity to improve the setting of the City Wall, an important historic asset.
- 4.2.28 In addition to central and local government guidance on the protection of heritage assets, there are a number of background studies undertaken to form part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy. The findings and recommendations of these studies must be referred to as part of any masterplanning of new proposals in the city and they will be central to the appropriate future development of Hereford. These include the following:
- *Hereford Rapid Townscape Assessment 2010*: which identifies areas of local interest, sites for potential development and enhancement and factors that contribute to the loss of character
  - Hereford Urban Archaeology Strategy comprising the Hereford Urban Archaeological Database, Characterisation of the *Historic Townscape of Central Hereford 2010*, the Research Framework (2012) and the Strategy itself (2013) – a form of historic landscape characterisation, undertaken in an urban context, examining the townscape from an archaeological perspective, and
  - *Hereford Town Centre: Streetscape Design Strategy 2009* guidance on the development, management and maintenance of new and existing streets.

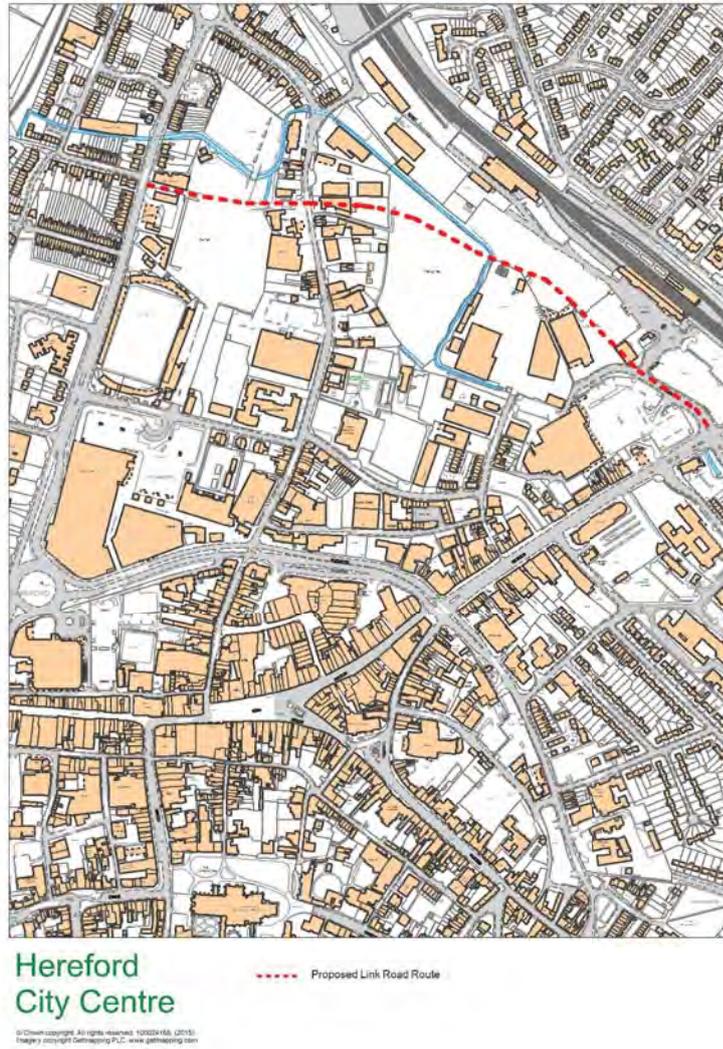
**Retail**

- 4.2.29 The *Town Centres Study Update 2012* confirms Hereford as the principal shopping centre within the county. Although the report acknowledges that Hereford has been affected by the downturn in the economy along with many other town centres in the United Kingdom, it finds that the city centre shows signs of resilience and its outlook is good. The opening of the Old Market (2014) added to the existing mix of national multiples and independent traders and strengthens Hereford's role as a principal centre, providing economic benefits and reducing unsustainable travel and retail expenditure leakage to other cities such as Worcester, Cheltenham, Bristol and Cardiff.
- 4.2.30 The city centre of Hereford, referred to as 'town centre' for the purposes of Policy E5 includes primary and secondary frontages which will be defined by the Hereford Area Plan (HAP). Retail development will be concentrated in the town centre. Applications for proposals which have a gross floor space of 700m<sup>2</sup> or over, outside the defined centre, as defined by the HAP, will be required to provide an impact assessment which meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and policies E5 and E6.
- 4.2.31 Following the opening of the 'Old Market' (2014) the findings of the *Town Centres Study Update 2012*, indicates that opportunities remain for new retail development in the city centre, particularly within the Eign Street regeneration area. Therefore at the time of adoption there is no need to allocate additional development sites for retail or other uses within the city. However this situation will be reassessed when the Hereford Area Plan is produced. The Hereford Area Plan will also provide an opportunity to reconsider the extent of the town centre and primary and secondary retail frontages.

**Leisure and tourism**

- 4.2.32 Tourism plays an important role in Hereford's economy and it will be promoted through the planned mixed-use regeneration of the city. Opportunities to attract more tourists, who make an important contribution to the local economy, will be supported where appropriate. The business tourism potential can be further developed through the promotion of new meeting/conferencing facilities, which make better use of existing assets, such as the Courtyard Theatre for example. *The Marches Hotel Study (2012)* identifies capacity for new hotels as well as the potential for the redevelopment and/or extension of existing hotels. Opportunities to promote tourism and recreation activities on the River Wye in Hereford will be encouraged where they are in accordance with policy E4 on Tourism.
- 4.2.33 Opportunities will be facilitated through the Core Strategy and Hereford Area Plan for other leisure and tourism uses within the extended city centre.
- 4.2.34 Any proposals for leisure uses outside the town centre, having a gross floor space of 700m<sup>2</sup> or over, will be subject to the sequential test and be required to provide an impact assessment which meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and policy E5.

Figure 4.3 – Hereford City Centre



### Surface water management and flooding

- 4.2.35 A proportion of the Edgar Street regeneration area lies within Flood Zone 3. The Yazor Brook flood alleviation scheme has now been completed, which provides some flood relief to the Edgar Street regeneration area and outlying areas. Secondary measures are required to ensure that any development in this area is safe and will not increase flood risk to third parties. Further measures will also be implemented within the city that will improve surface water drainage and any residual flooding impacts. This may include opportunities in other parts of the city to attenuate flood flows from existing watercourses. Developers will also be required to provide surface water management plans to ensure sustainable surface water drainage solutions are adopted and risk of flooding is minimized as well as a detailed Flood Risk Assessment to ensure flood risk improvement. The restoration of the canal may also

provide an opportunity to mitigate flood risk in the longer term. In flood risk terms, sequentially, the Edgar Street regeneration area is considered acceptable for redevelopment proposals, including residential development described in policy HD2. Issues of low flows in the Yazor and Widemarsh Brooks also require consideration. Regard will also be had to the impact of development on the water quality issues in relation to the River Wye SAC in accordance with policy SD4.

### Movement

- 4.2.36 Facilitating access and maximising connectivity within the city by all transport modes is essential to reduce congestion, support future prosperity and enable growth within Hereford. The Core Strategy is complemented and supported by the Local Transport Plan within the city on the basis of a transport strategy for Hereford.
- 4.2.37 Transport modelling undertaken to understand the extent of existing traffic issues and how the city's growth can be supported in the long-term has indicated that new highway infrastructure supported by a "package of sustainable transport improvements" are required. Sustainable transport measures on their own, without new highway infrastructure will not accommodate the additional travel demand derived from the planned growth in the Core Strategy.
- 4.2.38 The convergence of the county's highway network in Hereford means that the city's roads must accommodate both long distance and local traffic. The city network has only one main river crossing which, combined with the levels of local through traffic, results in increasingly prolonged periods of congestion. As a result, the A49 between Asda and Newtown roundabouts, the inner ring road and much of Whitecross Road have been declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
- 4.2.39 The scale of future development proposed for Hereford and the county will place further demand on the city's constrained highway network infrastructure resulting in increased periods of congestion and consequentially greater environmental problems, unless the demand for short distance car journeys can be reduced by encouraging more people to walk, cycle or use public transport within Hereford.

### Policy HD3 - Hereford movement

Herefordshire Council will:

- improve Hereford's economy by increasing connectivity to the national and local transport networks by reducing congestion and improving journey time;
- improve health, wellbeing and the environment by improving air quality and reducing noise through maximising opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes, particularly for short distance journeys.

Herefordshire Council will use a variety of funding mechanisms to deliver the following:

- packages of transport improvements focussing on key routes into the city delivering a range of public realm improvements and improving access and connectivity for sustainable mode users;
- behavioural change campaigns which will complement infrastructure delivery to encourage sustainable mode use and healthy lifestyles;

### Policy HD3 - Hereford movement continued

- reduced reliance on car use by incorporating sustainable mode routes within new developments and connecting them with existing networks;
- improvements to public transport infrastructure enabling improved access and integration between bus and to rail services;
- convenient, safe and secure car parking facilities which attract shoppers and visitors and deter commuter parking in the city centre, through the development of Park and Choose sites; and
- a Relief Road to the west of Hereford to reduce the volume of traffic from the city centre and enable the delivery of walking, cycling and bus improvements on the existing highway network. The road will be designed and developed in such a way which avoids and mitigates adverse impacts or physical damage to or loss of habitats, noise pollution and vibration, light pollution, air pollution, flood risk and water quality on the River Wye SAC, as well as residential amenity and business interests. Consideration of the impact of the road on heritage assets, their significance and setting, as well as the historic character of the wider landscape will also be required. Further assessments will be undertaken as part of the Hereford Area Plan and subsequent planning application(s).

The pace of delivery of transport and movement infrastructure will be aligned with that of housing provision in accordance with policy SS3.

4.2.40 The Hereford Transport Strategy includes a programme of infrastructure and services to facilitate growth proposals including:

- real time information on core bus network and stop upgrades;
- active travel network;
- extension of Destination Hereford project;
- Hereford transport hub;
- city centre refurbishments;
- bus priority measures;
- rail track and signal improvements between Hereford and Malvern; and
- facilities to support electric and low carbon vehicles.

Particular transport infrastructure necessary to bring forward the Core Strategy proposals are detailed in the *Infrastructure Delivery Plan*.

- 4.2.41 A key element of the long-term Hereford transport strategy is the requirement for a Relief Road. This vital addition to the city's transport network will enable the reallocation of existing highway for bus priorities and walking and cycling measures and the re-routing of the existing A49 Trunk Road (managed by the Highways England) removing longer distance traffic from the centre of the city.
- 4.2.42 The *Hereford Relief Road – Study of Options (Aug 2010)* reviewed all route options and assessed the impacts of the routes in relation to environmental, engineering and traffic impacts. The inner western corridor is the preferred corridor for the Relief Road based on the study's overall assessment.
- 4.2.43 The report indicates that the impact on biodiversity at the River Wye crossing can be largely mitigated through the use of wide span structures and avoidance of direct working in the watercourse.

- 4.2.44 The first section of the Relief Road to be constructed will be the section between the A49 and A465, as part of the South Wye Transport Package (as identified in the *Local Transport Plan*). The second section will link the A465 and the A4103 and include a bridge crossing of the Wye. This section will be co-ordinated with the delivery of the Western Urban Expansion at Three Elms. The final section would link the A4103 to the western and eastern sides of the A49 in the north of Hereford. Costs of the link sections are highlighted within the study.
- 4.2.45 Detailed alignment of the road will be shown in the Hereford Area Plan. Close working with key statutory stakeholders and any necessary assessments will be undertaken in preparing the HAP and subsequent planning application(s) to ensure the avoidance of impact on natural assets and appropriate identification of mitigation measures, particularly in relation to impacts from physical damage/loss of habitat, noise pollution and vibration, light pollution, air pollution and water quality on the River Wye SAC. The design and exact location of the proposals will need to fully take account of flood risk to ensure no detriment to third parties. Regard should also be had to any impact on Source Protection Zones. Consideration of the impacts on the historic environment will also be required with particular regard being paid to any designated heritage assets, including their significance and setting, archaeological interest, and the historic character of the wider landscape.
- 4.2.46 In addition, it will be essential to work closely with the Highways Agency to ensure that all opportunities are realised to re-route trunk road traffic to the new Relief Road. This will reduce the intrusion of commercial and longer distance traffic through the city centre, reduce existing air quality problems and provide the council with greater control of the existing city transport network.

### Hereford urban expansion areas

- 4.2.47 Three expansion areas and associated infrastructure, services and facilities are proposed. The broad location of these is shown in Figure 4.2: Hereford Key Diagram and the proposals are described in the following paragraphs.

#### Northern Urban Expansion (Holmer west)

- 4.2.48 A location to the north of the city has been identified as a strategic urban expansion area. This area is broadly located north of the A4103 and west of the A49 extending westwards towards the A4110 comprising predominantly of agricultural land.
- 4.2.49 Holmer West will be planned on a comprehensive basis. This will include variations in layout, density and design to achieve a form and character to the development that respects the landscape sensitivity, and existing natural and historic features of the area.

#### Policy HD4 – Northern Urban Expansion (Holmer West)

Land at Holmer West will deliver a comprehensively planned sustainable urban expansion. The new development will be sensitively integrated into both the existing urban fabric of Hereford, and the wider landscape, through high design and sustainability standards. The development will be expected to provide:

- 500 new homes, at an average density of up to 35 dwellings per hectare, comprising a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the *Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment*;

### Policy HD4 – Northern Urban Expansion (Holmer West) continued

- a target of 35% of the total number of dwellings shall be affordable housing;
- Park and Choose site (land and infrastructure) adjacent to the western side of the A49 in close proximity to the Hereford Relief Road and land or a contribution to facilitate the construction of the adjoining phase of the Hereford Relief Road;
- walking and cycle routes and green infrastructure corridors linking to the Park and Choose site the existing public right of way network and existing education and community facilities and employment sites in the locality;
- appropriate new green buffers and linear green routes, particularly along Ayles Brook;
- measures to mitigate flood risk both for the new homes within the expansion area and for the benefit of existing residents and businesses in other parts of the city through the incorporation of sustainable urban drainage solutions, as part of the green infrastructure network and measures to control water levels within Ayles Brook;
- appropriate provision of and contributions towards indoor and outdoor sports and play facilities, open space and allotments;
- where appropriate a contribution towards pre-school facility and contributions towards the enhancement of existing primary and secondary school provision and any identified need for other community infrastructure/facilities; and
- sustainable standards of design and construction.

This expansion area will be accessed primarily off the A4103 Roman Road. The area will be planned in a comprehensive manner to show the layout of development and the required infrastructure. Appendix 5 sets out the relationship between the development of urban expansion areas and the provision of key new infrastructure.

#### New homes

- 4.2.50 This policy will deliver a minimum of 500 new homes will be provided within the Holmer west area. All will be built to high energy efficiency standards. A target of 35% will be affordable. Housing will be delivered that meets the needs of all sections of the community including housing for older persons – a need highlighted in the study of the *Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire 2012*. The design and styles of the new housing will complement the built and landscape character of the locality and the scale and density will be reflective of the topography and prominence of the area. The development will need to be laid out and all homes and community buildings constructed to a high sustainability standard to ensure energy and water usage is minimised and sustainably sourced materials are used where practicable. This will include the use of renewables and other low carbon energy sources.

#### Movement

- 4.2.51 The new area will be required to encourage sustainable modes of travel and discourage car use. It will be primarily accessed from Roman Road with the option of a further access link to the northern Hereford Relief Road corridor and Park and Choose. The scheme will be reliant on walking and cycling routes and bus priority to access the city and existing community facilities.
- 4.2.52 A Park and Choose site is planned on part of the northern expansion area, alongside the A49, which will work in combination with the proposed western and southern Park and Choose facilities. The design and siting of the Park and Choose should take into account any impact on the landscape.

### Landscape and heritage

- 4.2.53 The landscape character assessment defines this broad location as being ‘principal settled farmland’. The expansion area is of a high to medium sensitivity on the higher northern portion of the land. However, as the land falls away southwards towards Ayles Brook, the landscape is less sensitive to change. Careful consideration must be given to the impact of the development on the landscape and vistas. Landscape characteristics should be used to direct new development to the most appropriate areas, which is likely to concentrate most built development to the lower, southern three quarters of the expansion area. The masterplan should identify measures which will successfully integrate the new development into the landscape setting including opportunities for enhancement to restore and reinforce the landscape character.
- 4.2.54 Listed buildings and a Scheduled Ancient Monument at St Bartholomew’s Church and Holmer House lie to the east of the expansion area. New development should be designed to ensure that the impacts on the significance and the setting of these heritage assets are minimised and that opportunities for enhancement are pursued and regard should be had to the Herefordshire Historic Land Characterisation project. There is potential for significant buried archaeological remains to survive within this area as parts are of it are adjacent to the Roman Road and aerial photographs indicate the presence of former settlements here. Earthworks also indicate the presence of medieval settlements.

### Green infrastructure and biodiversity

- 4.2.55 The *Green Infrastructure Strategy 2010* identifies the expansion area as predominantly arable in use. It lies within a local enhancement zone (HerLEZ3) and incorporates strategic corridor HerLSC3. The strategy identifies a number of opportunities to enhance existing green infrastructure, including establishing robust linear habitats along Ayles Brook, planting new hedgerows and traditional orchards and appropriate planting to soften the transition between settlement and open countryside. A network of green infrastructure will be required with linear green routes which can be used for biodiversity and conservation as well as sustainable transport routes, leisure and flood management. The expansion area’s natural characteristics and features together with the area’s heritage assets should form the basis for new green infrastructure and open space proposals. Opportunities exist for the retention and enhancement of field boundaries and other linear features, and for the maintenance and enhancements of connectivity between habitats.

### Community, recreation and education facilities

- 4.2.56 Appropriate community facilities will be provided within the area to support the identified need to support the new development. Contributions will be sought where appropriate for primary and secondary education facilities in order to accommodate children living in the expansion area. There will also be a need for contribution towards expanded pre-school provision within existing primary schools or the provision of a new pre-school facility as part of the expansion area.
- 4.2.57 The *Open Space Study 2007* highlights there is an under provision in the north of the city of natural and semi-natural green space. The *Play Facilities Strategy 2012* identifies provision north of the city as being ‘average’ with particular gaps in the provision for older children. Therefore the development will be expected to incorporate acceptable levels of open space and play facilities in accordance with Policies OS1 and OS2 and additional semi natural green space. Provision for community allotments will also be required to assist in meeting the shortfall in provision across the city.

## Fluvial flooding, surface water management and drainage

- 4.2.58 The expansion area is within Flood Zone 1 which has a low probability risk of flooding, with the exception of the southern eastern boundaries defined by the Ayles Brook which is identified as being in Flood Zone 3. Ayles Brook is an existing source of flooding to properties, community facilities and highway infrastructure south of the site. Therefore a detailed Flood Risk Assessment to model the Ayles Brook, to accurately ascertain the degree of flooding from this watercourse, will be required. This assessment will inform decisions regarding the developable area of the site and the required mitigation measures. Overall, the developer will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures, primarily through the development of sustainable urban drainage systems, are incorporated within the development to mitigate flood risk for existing residents. The area suffers from low water pressure and therefore an upgrade to the mains water supply to serve the area may be required. Improvements in the capacity of the public foul drainage network in the locality will also be required to serve the new development.

## Western Urban Expansion (Three Elms)

- 4.2.59 Land on the outskirts of Hereford, north west of the city centre, is identified as a location for a major mixed use urban expansion of the city. The area is broadly located between the A4103 to the north and A438 to the south, immediately west of Yazor Road extending westwards towards the new livestock market. The land is currently predominantly being used for agriculture and is of low/medium landscape sensitivity. Yazor Brook runs through the land and the brook corridor is designated a flood zone. The existing residential areas of Three Elms and Kings Acre are adjacent and Huntington Conservation Area is within the development area.
- 4.2.60 The expansion area referred to as Three Elms will be planned on a comprehensive basis, informed by a development brief and masterplan prepared through the Hereford Area Plan. This will include variations in layout, density and design to achieve a form and character to the development that respects the landscape sensitivity and existing natural features of the area and the setting of Huntington Conservation Area.
- 4.2.61 In planning for urban growth to the west of the city, it will be essential that the development integrates both visually and physically with the remainder of the city and existing neighbouring communities.

### Policy HD5 – Western Urban Expansion (Three Elms)

Land at Three Elms will deliver a comprehensively planned sustainable urban expansion. The new development will be sensitively integrated into both the existing urban fabric of Hereford, and the wider landscape, through high design and sustainability standards. The development will be expected to provide:

- a minimum of 1,000 homes, at an average density of up to 35 dwellings per hectare, comprising a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the *Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment*;
- a target of 35% of the total number of dwellings shall be affordable housing;
- delivery of land and infrastructure to facilitate the construction of the adjoining phase of the Hereford Relief Road;
- a minimum of 10 hectares of employment land, comprising predominantly of a mixture of use class B1, B2 and B8 located near to the new livestock market with access to the Hereford Relief Road and Roman Road;

## Policy HD5 – Western Urban Expansion (Three Elms) continued

- land and infrastructure for Park & Choose facilities;
- a new linear park along the Yazor Brook corridor connecting with the existing green infrastructure links east of the expansion area, the public rights of way network within and adjoining the expansion area and informal recreation space;
- a series of new green infrastructure connections which enhance the biodiversity value of the area and also serve as pedestrian cycle links through the development, including optimising the use of the disused railway line to connect with the transport interchange, schools, community facilities, employment land and the remainder of the city;
- provision for new bus links through the expansion area;
- development of bespoke, high quality and inclusive design, including accommodation that will meet the needs of older persons and contributes to the distinctiveness of the site and surrounding environment;
- the provision on site of appropriate sports and play facilities, formal and informal open space, community orchards, woodland planting and allotments;
- integration of Huntington village into the development area in a way which respects, protects, conserves and, where possible, enhances the setting of the Conservation Area and heritage assets;
- 210 primary school places with additional pre-school accommodation;
- an extension of Whitecross High School to increase capacity from a 6 form entry to 7 form entry school, with commensurate school playing field provision;
- a neighbourhood community hub to meet any identified need for small scale convenience retail, community meeting space, health provision, indoor sports and other community infrastructure/facilities where appropriate;
- sustainable urban drainage and flood mitigation solutions to form an integral part of the green infrastructure network;
- opportunities to mitigate flood risk arising from Yazor Brook for existing residents and businesses within the city; and
- sustainable standards of design and construction.

The area will be planned in a comprehensive manner to show the layout of development and the required infrastructure. Appendix 5 sets out the relationship between the development of urban expansion areas and the provision of key new infrastructure.

### New homes

- 4.2.62 This policy will deliver a minimum of 1,000 new homes will be provided within the western expansion area. Around 35% of the total number of dwellings will be affordable housing to be distributed in small clusters across the development. Housing will be delivered that meets the needs of all sections of the community, including housing for older persons – a need highlighted in the study of the *Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire 2012*.
- 4.2.63 This expansion area will be developed in smaller clusters to create new neighbourhoods that dovetail in with existing communities adjoining the development area. It is anticipated that the residential element of the new growth will be to the east of the Hereford Relief Road, adjacent to the existing urban fabric.

### New employment

- 4.2.64 The provision of additional 10 hectares of employment land will balance the existing provision to the south of the city within the Hereford Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas and to the north at Moreton Business

Park. Employment land should be provided close to the new livestock market, with potential access on to the Hereford Relief Road and A4103 and pedestrian/cycle links to the development area and city beyond. This land is relatively flat, will have good road frontage and is sufficiently large to offer opportunities for large and small scale businesses, thus adding to the diversity of employment land options around the city. The expansion area will also offer opportunities for live work units.

### **Sustainable construction and resources use**

- 4.2.65 All homes, community and employment buildings will need to be constructed to a high sustainability standard to ensure energy and water usage is minimised and sustainably sourced materials are used where practicable. This will include the use of renewables and other low carbon energy sources and the feasibility of combined heat and power systems will also be investigated.

### **Movement**

- 4.2.66 A package of transport measures in the area will assist in creating a development which is less dependent on the private car whilst providing safe and convenient access to the local and future strategic road network (Hereford Relief Road). The new urban extension will be designed to inhibit traffic and facilitate more sustainable travel choices. Key to achieving this will be the creation of new pedestrian and cycle links through the development area connecting with existing links within the city and local community facilities. Where necessary, the development will also be required to upgrade existing links to make them more user friendly for pedestrians and cyclists. Additionally, the provision of new, or enhancement of, existing bus links to serve the new community will also be required, including the introduction of bus priority measures both within the development and on the existing highway network.
- 4.2.67 Vehicular access options will need to be informed by a traffic assessment but opportunities exist to connect to Roman Road, Three Elms Road and Kings Acre Road as well as the new Relief Road.
- 4.2.68 The development will also include a Park and Choose site with ancillary facilities such as secure cycle lock ups.

### **Green infrastructure**

- 4.2.69 A network of green infrastructure is planned within the western expansion area. Green corridors which can be used for biodiversity and conservation enhancement as well as leisure and sustainable transport routes will be required.
- 4.2.70 Linear green spaces will also be provided along existing footpaths to link key features within the development, including the Park and Choose site, to existing facilities such as schools, employment and retail areas. The old railway and Yazor Brook linear green spaces should link to existing footpaths and cycleways through Moor Park and into the city via Plough Lane. Opportunities to link heritage assets as part of the green infrastructure network should also be explored.

### **Heritage**

- 4.2.71 Within the expansion area, the development will need to respect and where possible enhance the setting of Huntington Conservation Area and the rural character of Huntington Lane. Key attributes such as the built heritage within the conservation area, the landscape setting of the village and the width, hedgerows and alignment of the lane will be safeguarded and enhanced whilst also ensuring the development fully assimilates with these features. The potential for survival of significant buried archaeological remains

within the expansion area is high. The development will also be required to conserve and where possible enhance other heritage assets. The historic linkages in this area should not be obscured and new development should maximise the potential for vistas that take in the key landmark and historic feature of Credenhill Park Wood. Regard should be had to the historic landscape characterisation project in relation to the design of the development.

### **Community hub and facilities**

- 4.2.72 A community hub would address the needs of the new homes and the existing residents of Three Elms, Kings Acre, Bobblestock and Moor Park. This hub could provide a range of multi-agency use facilities, including a health centre, pre-school education, community rooms and local convenience retail. To serve as a hub, it will be situated near the new school, with safe direct pedestrian and cycle access to existing communities.

### **New education facilities**

- 4.2.73 210 primary school places will be required to meet the educational needs of the new population generated by the development.
- 4.2.74 Whitecross High school is the principal secondary school likely to serve the development. This school is currently at capacity and therefore the development will also deliver an extension of the school to create capacity for an additional form (150 pupils). This is most likely to entail building on the existing school playing fields and therefore new playing fields to serve the larger school will need to be provided adjoining the school.

### **Surface water management and fluvial flooding**

- 4.2.75 The Yazor Brook corridor is designated as floodplain which also extends to a wider land area at the eastern end of the expansion area. The Water Cycle Study and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment have highlighted that a strategy to address both the sustainable management of new surface water discharges from the urban extension and measures to mitigate against fluvial flood risk will be required. This is likely to encompass surface water attenuation features which will be an integral part of the development and will provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement. A detailed flood risk assessment will be required to address these issues. Yazor Brook is also an existing source of flooding to properties, community facilities and highway infrastructure east of the expansion area and the development will also need to include measures to assist in reducing this existing flood risk, in accordance with national policy and technical guidance on the management of flood risk. The area suffers from low water pressure and therefore an upgrade to the mains water supply to serve the area may be required.
- 4.2.76 With regard to the Whitecross High School expansion, flood management and mitigation will also be required. Opportunities to utilise existing and new playing fields for flood betterment will be explored.

### **Minerals**

- 4.2.77 The expansion area is subject to a safeguarding policy in respect of mineral reserves (sand and gravel). Applications for development will be assessed in this respect using the saved UDP policy M5 until this is replaced by the Minerals and Waste Local Plan policy.

## Southern Urban Expansion (Lower Bullingham)

- 4.2.78 A strategic location to the south of the city at Lower Bullingham has been highlighted as an expansion area for urban growth. This location is to the east of Hoarwithy Road between the railway line and the Rotherwas Access Road.
- 4.2.79 The expansion area referred to as Lower Bullingham will be planned on a comprehensive basis, informed by a masterplan prepared through the Hereford Area Plan. This will include variations in layout, density and design to achieve an organic form and character to the development that respects the landscape sensitivity and existing natural features of the area.

### Policy HD6 - Southern Urban Expansion (Lower Bullingham)

Land at Lower Bullingham will deliver a comprehensively planned sustainable urban expansion. The new development will be sensitively integrated into both the existing urban fabric of Hereford, and the wider landscape, through high design and sustainability standards. The development will be expected to provide:

- a minimum of 1,000 new homes, at an average density of up to 35 dwellings per hectare, comprising a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the *Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment*;
- a target of 35% of the total number of dwellings shall be affordable housing;
- around 5 hectares of employment land comprising a mixture of use class B1, B2 and B8 to complement Hereford Enterprise Zone;
- suitable vehicular access to the site principally from the B4399;
- Park and Choose site (land and infrastructure) adjacent to the A49/ Rotherwas Access Road roundabout;
- green infrastructure corridors through the area to include strategic greenways along Red Brook and Norton Brook and links with Withy Brook;
- creation of a country park to incorporate new footpaths linking with the existing public right of way network in the locality, woodland and orchard planting;
- development of bespoke, high quality and inclusive design, including accommodation that will meet the needs of older persons and contributes to the distinctiveness of the site and surrounding environment;
- the provision on site of appropriate sports and play facilities, open space, community orchards and allotments;
- 210 primary school places and where appropriate contributions towards new additional pre-school facilities;
- a neighbourhood community hub, including small scale convenience retail and provision of and/or contributions towards any identified need for other community infrastructure/facilities, including community meeting space and health provision, indoor and outdoor sports, where appropriate;
- sustainable urban drainage and flood mitigation solutions to form an integral part of the green infrastructure network;
- new direct walking, cycling and bus links from the urban extension to the Park and Choose to the west, Hereford Enterprise Zone to the east and existing communities and the city centre to the north;
- sustainable standards of design and construction; and
- the protection, conservation and, where possible, enhancement of the heritage assets, their significance and setting. An evaluation of the archaeological importance of the area should be provided to ensure appropriate protection of heritage assets and inform the detailed development proposals.

## Policy HD6 - Southern Urban Expansion (Lower Bullingham) continued

The area will be planned in a comprehensive manner to show the layout of development and the required infrastructure. Appendix 5 sets out the relationship between the development of urban expansion area and the provision of key new infrastructure.

### New homes

- 4.2.80 This policy seeks to deliver a minimum of 1,000 new homes with a minimum of 35% of the total number of dwellings will be affordable housing, to be distributed in small clusters across the development. Housing will also be delivered that meets the needs of all sections of the community including housing for older persons – a need highlighted in the study of the *Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire 2012*. The housing will be predominantly two storeys in height, reflecting the residential character of the locality.

### Sustainable construction and resources use

- 4.2.81 All homes, community and employment buildings will need to be constructed to a high sustainability standard to ensure energy and water usage is minimised and sustainably sourced materials are used, where practicable. This will include; the use of renewables and other low carbon energy sources. The feasibility of combined heat and power systems will also be investigated, possibly in combination with the Hereford Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas.

### New employment

- 4.2.82 The Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ) lies adjacent the expansion area and will provide opportunities for local employment. Part of this designation includes land within this urban extension. To assist with the delivery of future employment land on the HEZ, provision for around 5 hectares of employment land is included as part of the urban extension. This would largely relate to land west of Watery Lane and be linked to the new housing and the remainder of the employment area by new walking and cycling routes. The composition of employment uses will need to complement that to be provided on the remainder of the HEZ but the site offers the opportunity for sustainable small scale businesses with good access and road frontage.

### Movement

- 4.2.83 The provision of new road infrastructure, along with a package of sustainable transport measures, is necessary for Hereford to deliver its full housing and economic growth. Sustainable transport measures are also required to assist in creating a development which is less dependent on the private car. New growth areas will be designed to inhibit traffic and encourage more sustainable modes of travel and contribute to new and the enhancement of existing highway and sustainable transport infrastructure.
- 4.2.84 It is expected that the principal vehicular access to the development is via Rotherwas Access Road and likely to take the form of a new roundabout. Access to the north into the city and to the employment to the east will be restricted to and/or prioritised for buses, walking and cycling.
- 4.2.85 New cycle ways and footpaths will need to link the development to the existing and new employment areas, community facilities, local schools and the city centre. This will include a new link to the Connect

2 Greenway cycle route. Collectively, this will provide residents with safe and pleasant routes to walk and cycle. Key to the transportation strategy will also be the expansion of the existing bus network into the site to further encourage sustainable travel choices.

- 4.2.86 As part of the development, a southern Park and Choose site is required in the vicinity of the A49 / Rotherwas Access Road roundabout to complement those proposed north and west of the city aside other expansion locations. Provision will also need to be included for a small parking area to serve the country park. The design and siting of the Park and Choose should take into account any impact on the landscape.

### Landscape and green infrastructure

- 4.2.87 The *Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis* highlights the southern section of the site is of higher landscape sensitivity and is vulnerable to change, forming part of rising land to Dinedor Hill. This will require careful design in any masterplan. The protection of the setting of the Iron Age hill fort, Dinedor Camp, and the ridge extending eastwards into Rotherwas Park requires careful consideration as part of the master planning process. The expansion area is however, largely contained to the south by the Rotherwas Access Road, which effectively forms a visual barrier to the more sensitive landscape beyond.
- 4.2.88 The expansion area will need to be designed to incorporate a network of green infrastructure. This will serve as biodiversity and landscape enhancement corridors as well as sustainable transport routes. The *Green Infrastructure Strategy* has highlighted a strategic corridor along Red Brook, Norton Brook and Withy Brook as an enhancement zone. Opportunities for enhancement include reinforcing the biodiversity value of the linear features including the railway and water corridors and establishing landscape buffer areas. Further green infrastructure will need to be provided to safely connect the new homes to the country park proposed as part of the urban extension and other community facilities in the locality. Opportunities to link heritage assets as part of the green infrastructure network should also be explored.
- 4.2.89 The existing rural nature of Watery Lane and Lower Bullingham Lane should be protected and will provide new opportunities for sustainable transport links to connect to wider footpaths to Dinedor Hill, the historic Hill Fort, Rotherwas Park and beyond.

### Heritage

- 4.2.90 Recent field investigations in the locality have revealed a number of archaeological finds of significance, including the Bronze Age feature known as the Rotherwas Ribbon. Further archaeological field evaluation will be required to inform the masterplan for the expansion area and it may be appropriate to include this area as part of a green corridor. Any statutory designation afforded to this site will influence the master planning process.

### Community, recreation and education facilities

- 4.2.91 Local communities will be more sustainable if they have access to necessary local services and facilities that meet their needs. A community hub is required to address the needs of the new homes and adjacent neighbourhoods in the south Hereford area. This hub will provide a range of facilities including community rooms for public and multi-agency use, local convenience retail, health care and pre-school education.

- 4.2.92 The development will require the provision of a new 210 place primary school within the urban extension along with sustainable travel links to the secondary school in the locality to meet the educational needs of the increased population generated by the development.
- 4.2.93 Land to the west of the urban extension will be required to deliver a new country park. This will comprise of an area of land to be transferred to Herefordshire Council containing a series of informal paths connected to the existing public right of way network and the Park and Choose site beyond. The country park will include measures to restore degraded landscape to include new tree planting and biodiversity enhancement along Norton Brook which is also identified as a strategic green infrastructure corridor connecting with Withy Brook and the enhancement of the setting of Bullinghope village.
- 4.2.94 Open space, play and sport facilities will need to be provided on site in accordance with the requirements of policy OS1 informed by the *Play Facilities Strategy*, *Playing Pitch Strategy*, *Sports Facilities Framework and Open Space Study*.

#### Surface water management and fluvial flooding

- 4.2.95 The northern part of the urban extension adjacent the railway line and along the brook corridor is designated as Flood Zone 3. The site is also bisected by a number of smaller watercourses such as the Withy and Red Brooks. The impact of the development on these will also need to be assessed as part of the Flood Risk Assessment. The *Water Cycle Study* and the *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment* have highlighted that a strategy to address both the sustainable management of new surface water discharges from the urban extension and measures to mitigate against fluvial flood risk will be required. This is likely to encompass surface water attenuation features, which will be an integral part of the development and will provide opportunities for biodiversity enhancement.

#### Hereford Employment Provision

##### Policy HD7 – Hereford Employment Provision

Hereford will continue to provide focus for employment provision in the county. Employment supply at Hereford will be delivered through:

- the expansion of the city centre as part of wider city regeneration which will include commercial uses including new office provision and creating a better environment for existing businesses. Proposals for office uses outside of the city centre will be subject to the sequential test, as set out in paragraph 24 of the NPPF;
- continuing development of employment land at Hereford Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas to strengthen the enterprise zone, with particular focus on defence and knowledge sectors, creating added benefit for companies who locate in the area;
- encouraging small scale environmental and knowledge based employment development opportunities; and
- provision of new areas of employment land particularly through the development of strategic urban extensions.

- 4.2.96 Hereford provides a significant focus for employment provision in the county. Proposals such as city centre regeneration and the development of employment sites as elements of strategic urban extensions will provide new opportunities for job creation during the plan period. In addition to new areas of

employment land the protection and continued development of existing employment land will also be an important contributor to the economic prosperity of Hereford. The following areas provide important elements of the portfolio of employment land in and close to the city.

#### **Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ)**

- 4.2.97 The Rotherwas industrial estate is located south-east of Hereford and is over 120 hectares in size and has over 125 companies operating within it. As part of meeting the employment needs and the development of the economy in Herefordshire, the Rotherwas industrial estate was awarded Enterprise Zone status in 2011. The site has a range of classes of employment land and buildings ranging from 'best', 'good' and 'moderate' in the *Employment Land Study 2012* and a number of specific sites within the estate, which are allocated in the Enterprise Zone Masterplan as sites for new B1, B2 and B8 development.
- 4.2.98 The HEZ was originally nominated by the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership, anticipating that the scheme will become a catalyst for enhanced economic growth throughout the Marches through the creation of highly skilled jobs and encouragement of overseas investment into the area. The aspiration of the HEZ Board is to develop part of the site into a centre of excellence for the defence and security sector, with additional employment hubs focused on advanced technologies, environmental technologies and food and drink technologies.

#### **Westfields trading estate**

- 4.2.99 The Westfields trading estate is a 25 hectare site located in the northern region of Hereford. The entire site is rated as 'good' in the *Employment Land Study 2012* and contains a number of different sized units, although it would benefit from new investment in employment buildings with many older units being present. This site contains a small amount of development opportunities, as well as redevelopment opportunities.

#### **Three Elms trading estate**

- 4.2.100 Three Elms trading estate is located north of Hereford and occupies 3 hectares of land, which has shown good employment land take-up, with few vacant sites. The trading estate is designated as 'good' in the *Employment Land Study 2012* and there is the opportunity to expand the estate by an additional 10ha as part of further housing development to the north of Hereford. The additional 10ha of employment land is likely to cater for a range of different sizes of B1, B2 and B8 employment uses.

#### **Holmer Road**

- 4.2.101 The industrial precinct on Holmer Road is located to the north of Hereford and is approximately 16 hectares in size and contains a number of larger, as well as smaller, employment units. The site is designated as 'moderate' in the *Employment Land Study 2012* and contains land available for further B1, B2 and B8 employment development.

#### **Moreton Business Park**

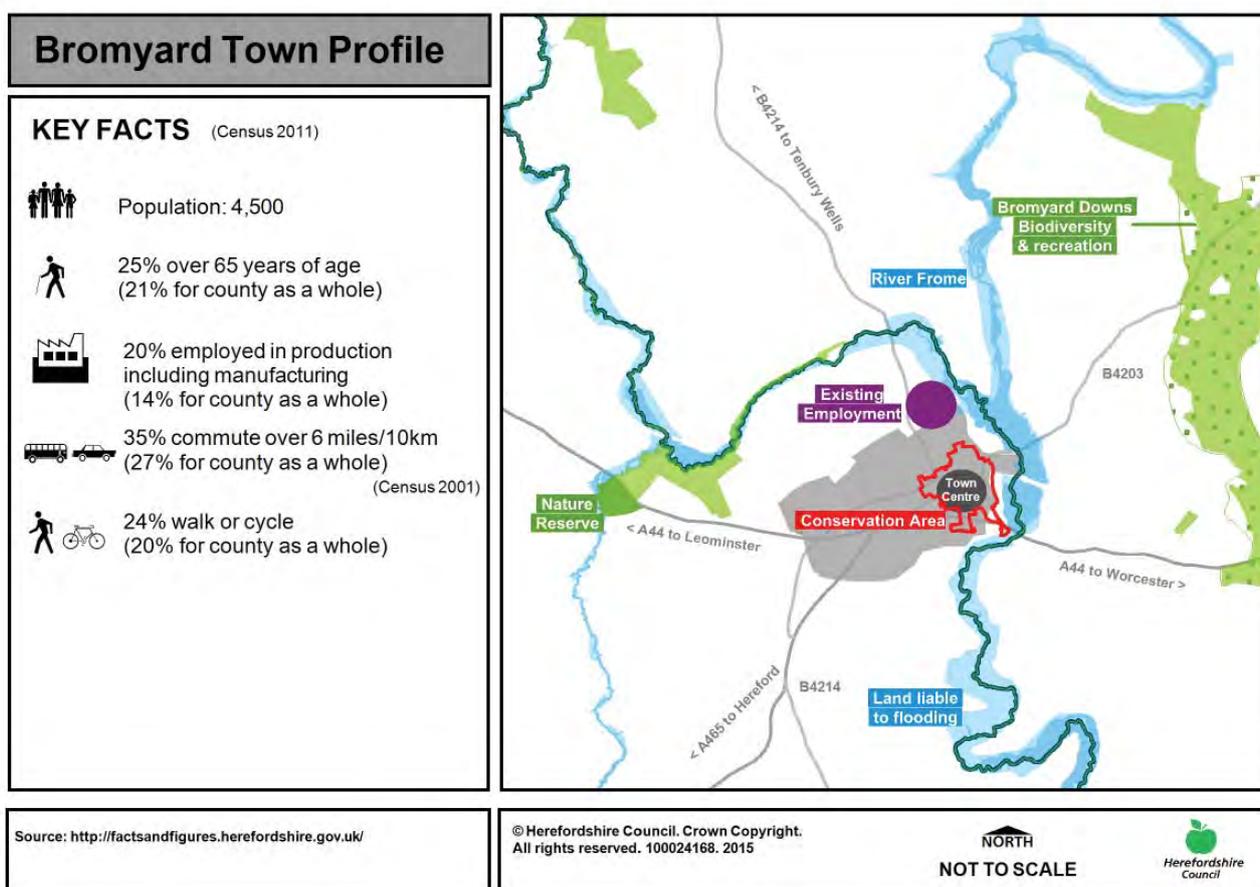
- 4.2.102 Although this business park is located 7km north of Hereford, it is one of the county's largest employment sites and is sufficiently close to Hereford to assist in meeting the current and future employment needs. This site presently comprises 60,000m<sup>2</sup> of predominantly B1 and B8 floorspace, a planning permission has been granted for around a further 51,000 m<sup>2</sup> of mixed B1, B2 and B8 floorspace, totalling an additional 21 hectares.

## Market Towns

### Bromyard

4.3.1 As part of the vision for Herefordshire, Bromyard will continue to fulfil a diverse range of important roles as a focus for residential, employment, recreational and cultural uses. The town will continue to act as a service centre for the surrounding rural area. The strategy promotes the continued development of the town, taking into consideration its needs, opportunities and constraints. This vision is manifested in strategic objectives 1, 4, 6, 8 and 10, which for Bromyard, centre on meeting housing need (including affordable housing), reducing the need to travel, facilitating employment generation and diversification and improving delivery and access to services. The spatial strategy for Bromyard is balanced against its unique needs, opportunities and constraints which are represented in the town profile map in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4 Bromyard Town Profile



## Background to policies

- 4.3.2 To achieve the vision for Bromyard, a strategic urban extension for residential development is proposed in the north west area of the town. In addition, new employment land of around 5 hectares will be identified through a Bromyard Development Plan. The proposed housing at Hardwick Bank is located on mainly 'high' and 'medium-high' sensitivity landscape according to the *Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis 2010*. High landscape constraints are predominant all around Bromyard and flooding issues also constrain development to the east of the town. The environmental constraints of Bromyard must be balanced with the need for new development. The spatial strategy proposes to direct some development to Bromyard to support its service centre role, meet local housing needs and provide further employment opportunities for the local community. Policies BY1 and BY2 set out how the spatial strategy for Bromyard will be delivered and managed and are illustrated in the Bromyard Key Diagram – Figure 4.5.

### Policy BY1 - Development in Bromyard

Bromyard will accommodate a minimum of 500 new homes together with around 5 hectares of new employment land during the plan period. The majority of new development will be located in the north western areas of the town with a minimum of 250 new homes. Around 5ha of employment land will also be required to come forward through the Bromyard Development Plan. Further development will take place through the implementation of existing commitments, windfall development and sites allocated through the Bromyard Development Plan.

Within Bromyard, new development proposals will be encouraged where they:

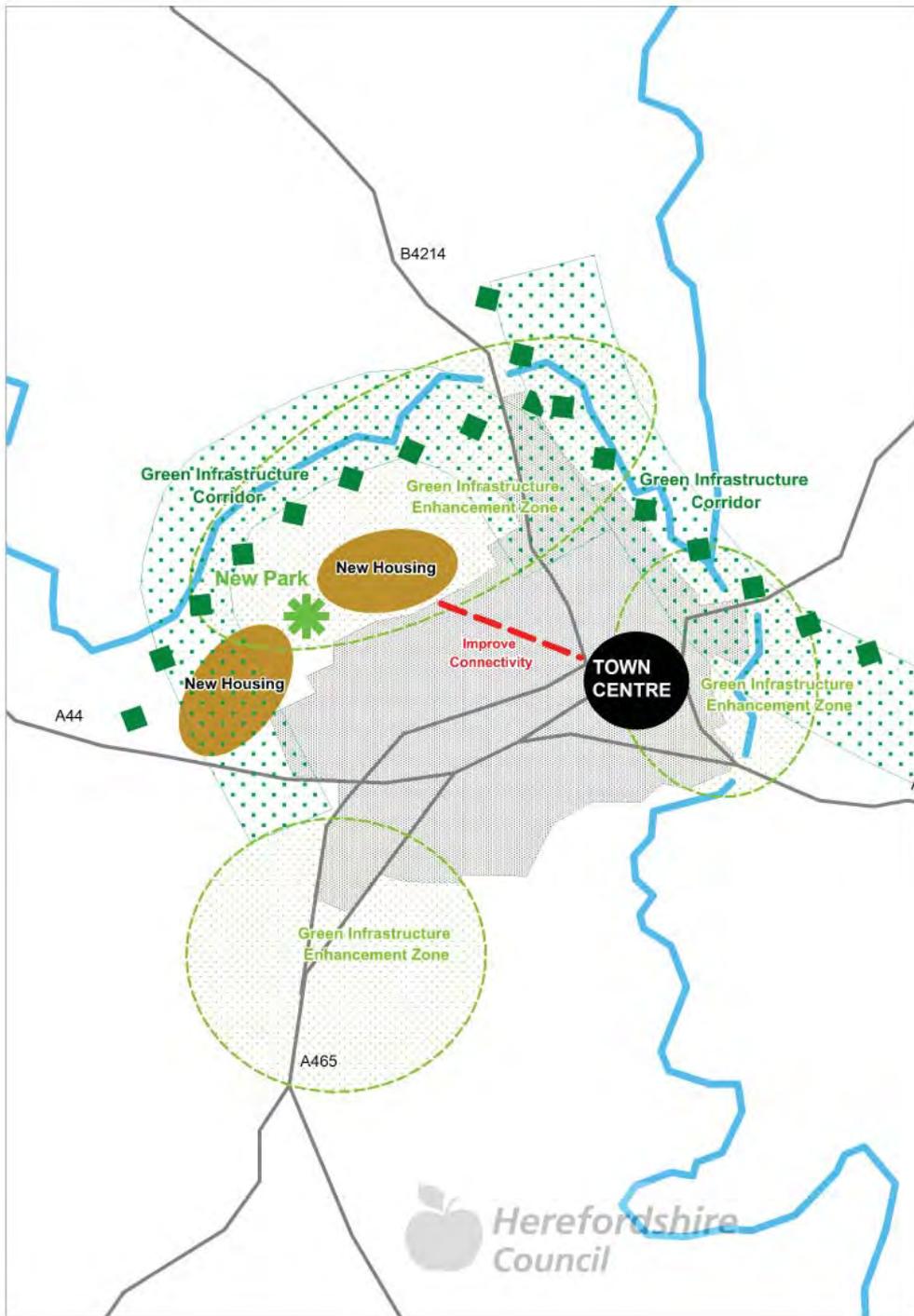
- can accommodate small scale employment sites including live/work units within and around the town;
- protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 200m<sup>2</sup> in gross floor space and located outside of the defined town centre will need to be supported by an impact assessment, to determine whether there could be any adverse impacts on the town centre;
- provide for the sustainable conservation and enhancement of its green infrastructure and natural environmental resources such as water; there should be no adverse impact on water quality in the River Frome;
- facilitate a genuine choice of modes of travel including public transport, cycling and walking as alternatives to the private car;
- contribute to identified needs for new or improved community facilities as a result of new development;
- take account of the ability of existing and proposed infrastructure including foul drainage, water supply and water resources, and the highway network to serve the development proposed without undue environmental impact;
- contribute to the quality of Bromyard's local environment, including its landscape and historic character; and
- have demonstrated engagement and consultation with the community including the town/parish council.

## Policy BY2 – Land at Hardwick Bank

Land at Hardwick Bank will deliver a comprehensively planned sustainable urban extension to the town and will be expected to deliver:

- a minimum of 250 new homes at an average density of up to 35 dwellings per hectare comprising a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of Policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the Hereford Local Housing Market Assessment;
- a target of 40% of the total number of dwellings shall be affordable housing;
- a new formal park to form part of the residential development complemented by new play and sports facilities and allotments;
- the development areas should be linked by a suitable vehicular access, likely to take the form of a roundabout, onto the A44. The development areas should also be serviced by a residential road which will allow for opportunities to extend development beyond the plan period and serve as a future route to other parts of the local highway network;
- the residential roads leading off Winslow Road should be utilised to provide sustainable links to the town (including pedestrian and cycle links) as well as public transport links between the area and the town centre;
- the provision of and contributions towards any identified need for new/improved community facilities. This shall include improvements to classroom provision for the local primary school which should incorporate publicly accessible youth facilities;
- a high standard of design and layout which respects the townscape, landscape and green infrastructure of the area;
- sustainable standards of design and construction;
- incorporate significant landscape buffers to mitigate the impacts of the development areas on the wider landscape;
- an evaluation of the archaeological importance of the area in order to ensure appropriate protection of heritage assets and inform the detailed development proposals; and
- a comprehensive sustainable urban drainage system which includes measures such as rain gardens and swales to manage ground and surface water drainage and safeguard against any increased flood risk.

Figure 4.5: Bromyard Key Diagram



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## New homes

- 4.3.3 A minimum of 250 new homes will be provided within the Hardwick Bank area, north-west of the town. The strategic location is expected to be developed on an area of higher ground which slopes steeply to the north and west, down to the River Frome. The environmental suitability of including additional land south of the A44 and/or eastwards towards the B4214 will also be considered and consulted upon following completion of further technical analysis of these areas. It is anticipated that the layout of any site will incorporate the existing historic field pattern to respect the local distinctiveness of the area. It is important that the scheme is brought forward as a comprehensively planned development to enable the proper planning of the site and not prejudice any future development. All homes will be built to high design standards with energy efficient measures in place. It is expected that 40% of the homes will be affordable and with an appropriate mix of housing, informed by the *Local Housing Market Assessment* in order to meet the needs of all sections of the community including housing for older persons – a need highlighted in the study of the *Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire 2012*.

## New jobs

- 4.3.4 The policy to deliver around 5 hectares of employment land through the Bromyard Development Plan will help create greater and more diverse employment opportunities for Bromyard. Any employment development is likely to need significant landscaping to mitigate any visual impact. If employment land is adjacent to existing housing, it will be necessary to co-ordinate both developments to achieve greater economies of scale and ensure neighbouring land uses are compatible. This may include the restriction of the employment areas next to the residential to use class B1 or suitable live/work units. The Bromyard Development Plan will seek to identify the required employment land of five hectares. Given the level of constraints in Bromyard the delivery of employment land over the plan period will be closely monitored and reviewed if necessary. The policy enabling small scale employment/mixed use opportunities as part of housing development will allow for a more sustainable development reducing the need to travel. Further small scale sites for employment use will be identified through the Bromyard Development Plan.

## Movement

- 4.3.5 The A44 Leominster Road will provide the primary access to housing and employment areas likely to be in the form of a roundabout serving land to the north and south of the A44. The visual and landscape impact of the access will also require mitigation with significant new landscaping.
- 4.3.6 The highway infrastructure within the new development area should also facilitate a connection for vehicular access which will serve the proposed new land uses over the plan period. It must also be designed so as not to prejudice the delivery of additional development beyond the plan period and the eventual completion of a full road connection from the A44 to Tenbury Road.
- 4.3.7 The new development should have a network of cycle ways and footpaths that are easily accessible and connect with the town centre, existing employment sites, community facilities and the surrounding countryside. This is particularly important given the peripheral location of the development area. Car parking will be addressed through the Bromyard Development Plan.

## Green infrastructure, biodiversity and open space

- 4.3.8 In addition to new play facilities to serve the additional population created, a new park will form part of the residential development at Hardwick Bank. This will be designed for both informal recreation and

biodiversity enhancement purposes. There will be a network of green infrastructure routes through the area with linkages to the park to encourage sustainable travel choices. Access to the River Frome and surrounding countryside will also form part of the enhanced linkages.

- 4.3.9 Due to the sensitive nature and landscape visibility of the housing and employment locations particularly from long distance views from the north west and east, strong landscape mitigation measures will be required. This will include the restoration of the degraded landscape character through the conservation and enhancement of hedgerows, with new planting to include hedgerow oak trees, planting of new orchard to replace degraded orchard land to the north of the A44 and elsewhere and new landscape buffers around the western and northern boundaries.

#### **Community and educational facilities**

- 4.3.10 The local primary school will require additional classroom provision as well as additional contributions to pre-school, post 16, youth and special educational services. Additional community requirement needs include improvements to the fire service, police service and improvements to existing community buildings. Such requirements should be met by developer contributions.

#### **Heritage and archaeological value**

- 4.3.11 The conservation area of Bromyard has been identified as an area at risk. It is important that new development respects and where possible enhances, the character of the area.
- 4.3.12 Recent field investigations in the area have revealed moderate to high potential for the presence of currently undiscovered prehistoric remains. Further archaeological field evaluation will be required to inform the proposed development of the area.

#### **Retail**

- 4.3.13 The *Town Centres Study Update 2012* concluded that new retail convenience (food store) and comparison retail development within the centre should be encouraged, but this is unlikely to be of scale to warrant any new retail allocation in the town for the plan period.
- 4.3.14 The town retains a modest amount of comparison goods expenditure from existing residents and any opportunity to increase this part of the offer will be dependent upon the market having the necessary confidence in the town. New homes in Bromyard with enhanced means of access into town should strengthen support for the town centre's vitality and viability. The size threshold of 200 m<sup>2</sup> set out in Policy E5 indicates when impact testing will be required.

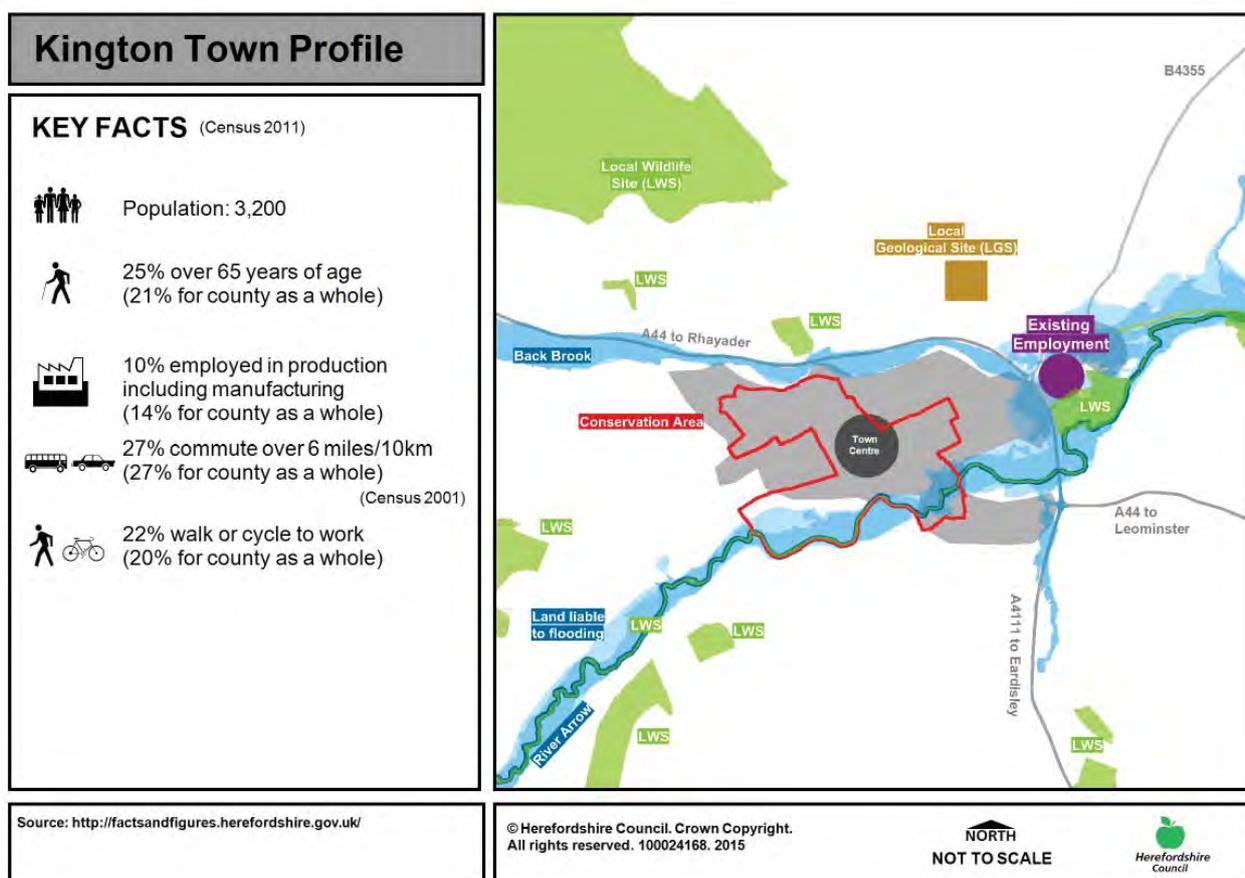
#### **Surface water management**

- 4.3.15 Whilst the east of Bromyard is prone to fluvial flooding, the urban extension area is located to the north and south west of the town on land outside the flood risk zones. However, development in this location will need significant assessment to ensure that there is no increased risk of flooding. This must be addressed through a comprehensive surface water management plan.

## Kington

4.4.1 The vision for Kington places significant emphasis upon the creation of new homes, employment opportunities, delivery of and access to services, including affordable housing, reducing the need to travel to other centres, and utilising the natural and historic environment as economic assets (see Figure 4.6). As one of the county’s five market towns it contributes to the Core Strategy’s strategic objectives 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 12. Consequently, Kington’s role in providing facilities and services to its hinterland should be maintained and, where possible, enhanced. However as the smallest of the market towns and with significant environmental and locational constraints, the challenges that the town faces are such that it will need to be flexible in terms of the way it both encourages and accommodates development. Integral to the spatial approach will be the need to support rural regeneration both specifically within the town itself and also for the area it serves.

Figure 4.6: Kington Town Profile



## Background to policy

- 4.4.2 Although Kington will need to accommodate new housing as part of the spatial strategy, no proposals for strategic housing locations are proposed. Low building completion rates coupled with the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2012 indicate significant constraints upon the need and opportunities for any strategic locations both within and around the town. Similarly, provision for employment will be on the basis of small scale proposals and a flexible approach to home-working. The role of the town centre as the location for shops, supported by service and tourism facilities should not be undermined by developments that might affect its viability. A range of other supporting community facilities is also required to ensure balance between development pressures and needs in terms of infra structure.

### Policy KG1 – Development in Kington

Kington will accommodate around 200 new homes during the plan period. A Neighbourhood Development Plan will allocate sites to meet this level of housing. In addition, provision for new employment uses should be brought forward to meet needs from within the Kington and West Herefordshire Housing Sub-Market Area.

Development proposals for Kington will be encouraged where they:

- deliver affordable housing in accordance with the requirements of Policy H1;
- provide a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of Policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the *Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment*;
- enable an overall density of up to 35 dwellings per hectare;
- enable home working;
- make available small scale employment sites, brought forward in balance with housing within the Kington and West Herefordshire Housing Sub-Market Area;
- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 200m<sup>2</sup> in gross floor space and located outside the defined town centre will need to be supported by an impact assessment in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, to determine whether there could be any adverse impacts on the vitality and viability of the Kington town centre;
- make provision for green infrastructure and amenity space, including play facilities, community access to open space, and the linking of habitats into ecological networks within and surrounding the town;
- make provision for or improve walking and cycling links to the town centre, schools, shopping and employment;
- protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic character of Kington, in particular the Conservation Area and its significance and setting, including particular features, its heritage assets, important buildings, scenic views and the landscape features surrounding the town; and
- have demonstrated engagement and consultation with the community including the town/parish council.

## New Homes

- 4.4.3 Approximately 200 new homes will be delivered in Kington between 2011 and 2031, with sites allocated through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. Sites within the existing confines of the town are constrained in terms of flooding. Developing peripheral sites will require compromise in terms of effect upon the landscape. Choice of sites should seek those with least impact and where the provision of significant landscape and townscape mitigation measures can best be achieved. Phasing will be necessary

to overcome current infrastructure constraints. Given the level of constraints in Kington, the delivery of housing over the plan period will be closely monitored. If this monitoring process indicates that it will not be possible to deliver the required level of housing, the Council will use appropriate mechanisms to address the situation in accordance with policy SS3. This may include a review of this policy.

- 4.4.4 The *Affordable Housing Viability Study, 2010* concluded that prices are relatively high in the Kington Housing Market Area and therefore a target of 35% affordable homes would be the most appropriate within the town, with an appropriate mix of housing, informed by the latest *Local Housing Market Assessment* in order to meet the needs of all sections of the community including housing for older persons – a need highlighted in the study of the *Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire 2012*.

#### **New Jobs**

- 4.4.5 The policy encourages the development of small scale employment opportunities at Kington, which would benefit both the town and its surrounding rural area. It may not be possible for such provision to be located within or even immediately adjacent to the existing town. The consideration of such sites should not adversely affect the town's setting and other environmental features. Enabling working from home in accordance with Policy E3 – Home Working may reduce the level of need although the provision for small scale employment opportunities is expected to remain.

#### **Movement**

- 4.4.6 Kington is a relatively compact settlement where access can be gained relatively easily to its central area and facilities elsewhere through walking or cycling. The location of new development should seek to maintain this character. A particular characteristic of the town centre is its network of historic walled lanes which should form the core for any footpath strategy. Where possible, improvements should be made to promote sustainable modes of transport, in particular walking and cycling which can be combined with green infrastructure proposals including better access to greenspace. The principle of shared spaces will be encouraged on Kington High Street in accordance with Policy MT1.

#### **Retail**

- 4.4.7 Herefordshire *Town Centre Town Centres Study Update 2012* suggests the expenditure forecast for Kington over the plan period is unlikely to be of a scale to require proposals for further convenience floor space. Many of the smaller units within the town could absorb more turnover within existing floor space. The size threshold of 200 m<sup>2</sup> indicates when impact testing will be required. The Neighbourhood Development Plan will determine the level of flexibility given to uses within the town centre area.

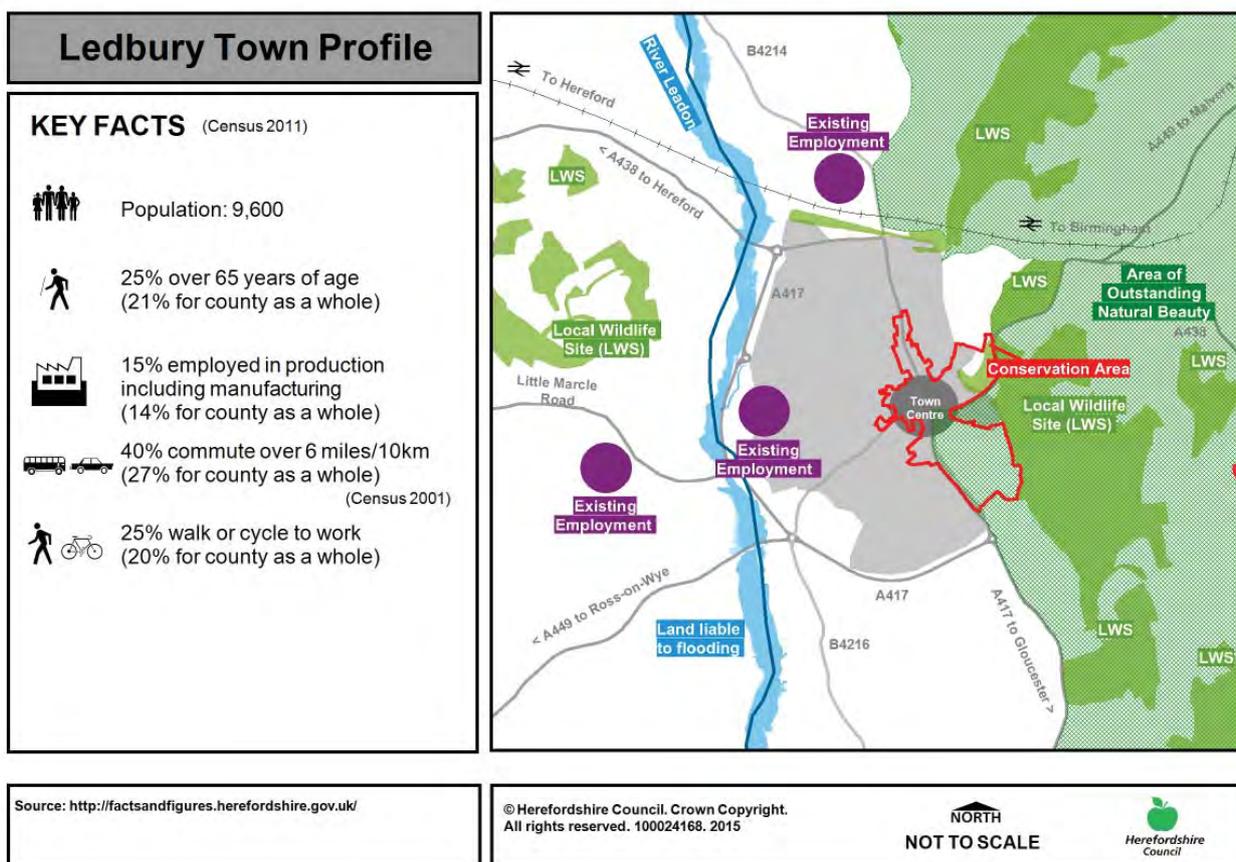
#### **Utilities, Community Facilities Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Heritage**

- 4.4.8 Utilities, the river floodplain, heritage assets, setting and landscape all pose constraints upon development within and around the town although some also add to the attractiveness of its character providing potential benefits to local people and visitors. In addition, evidence base studies have identified open space needs and green infrastructure requirements. The level of new development proposed both within and surrounding the town should support the current provision of community facilities. In addition to phasing development to address utility constraints developers may also need to assist proposals for surface water management in particular locations depending upon which sites are brought forward. All these issues need to be addressed comprehensively and in detail through any Neighbourhood Development Plan or other Development Plan Documents.

## Ledbury

4.5.1 Within the overall vision for Herefordshire, Ledbury will continue to be supported in its role as a thriving service centre to its surrounding rural area in the east of the county. This vision is manifested in strategic objectives 1, 4, 6, 8 and 10. For Ledbury, the focus will be on meeting housing needs including affordable housing, reducing the need to travel by private car, facilitating the provision of new jobs to stem out-commuting, improving delivery of and access to services, and realising the value of the local environment as an economic asset through promoting sustainable tourism and high quality housing. The spatial strategy, which proposes sustainable development for the town (in terms of new homes and employment opportunities), is balanced against Ledbury's unique needs, opportunities and constraints as represented in the town profile – Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7: Ledbury Town Profile



## Background to policies

4.5.2 To achieve the strategy, an urban extension of new homes is proposed to the north of the town and new employment land to the west. This approach will address the specific issues and opportunities identified

in the town profile for Ledbury, namely: addressing high affordable housing need; high levels of commuting for jobs; and the significant environmental constraints affecting the setting of the town, which is enclosed on the east side by the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and floodplains of the Leadon Valley and adjoining sensitive landscapes to the west. Policies LB1 and LB2 set out how the spatial strategy for Ledbury will be delivered and managed and are explained in the Ledbury Key Diagram, Figure 4.8.

### Policy LB1- Development in Ledbury

Ledbury will accommodate a minimum of 800 new homes balanced with a minimum of 15 hectares of new employment land during the plan period. The majority of new housing development will be focussed to the north of the town as set out in Policy LB2 and the strategic location for new employment of around 12 hectares to the west of the town, south of Little Marcle Road. Further development will take place through the implementation of existing commitments, infill development, and sites allocated through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. A number of sites which have future potential for development have been identified in the *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)*.

Within Ledbury, new development proposals will be encouraged where they:

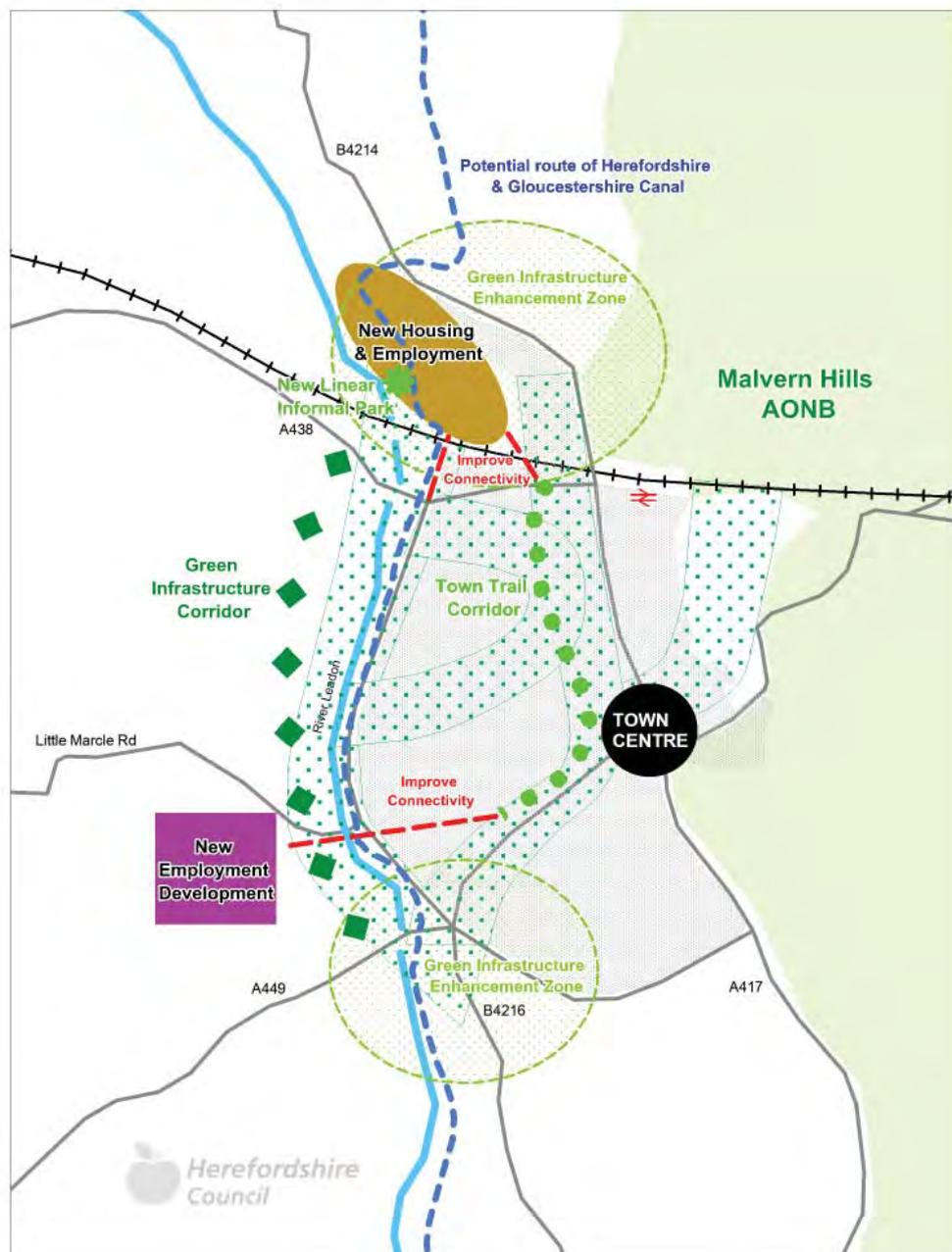
- allow for suitable small scale employment sites including live work opportunities within or adjoining the town;
- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the existing town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 400m<sup>2</sup> in gross floor space and located outside the town centre will need to be supported by an impact assessment to determine whether there could be any adverse impacts on the town centre;
- improve accessibility within Ledbury by walking, cycling and public transport, particularly where they enhance connectivity with, for example, local facilities, new employment areas and the town centre;
- contribute to addressing deficiencies in community facilities and/or allow for infrastructure improvements (including broadband) in the town, to promote sustainable development;
- reflect and enhance the characteristic built historic elements of Ledbury, such as its stone, brick and timber-framed buildings, medieval plan form, conservation areas and setting overlooking the Leadon Valley;
- protect and enhance its green infrastructure, including connections to the public right of way network and biodiversity, particularly the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the east and the Leadon Valley to the west;
- protect and enhance the setting of the town from eastern and western viewpoints; and, where this is not possible, incorporate appropriate mitigation measures; and
- have demonstrated engagement and consultation with the community including the town council.

## Policy LB2 - Land north of the Viaduct

Development proposals north of the viaduct in Ledbury will be expected to bring forward the following to achieve a sustainable mixed use urban extension of the town:

- mixed use development of around 625 new homes, at an average density of around 40 dwellings per hectare, comprising a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of Policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment;
- around 3 hectares of employment land, restricted to Use Class B1;
- a target of 40% of the total number of dwellings to be affordable housing;
- land and contributions to facilitate a restored canal to be delivered in partnership with the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust;
- a new linear informal park to link to the existing town trail, riverside walk, recreational open space and existing allotments;
- the provision of developer contributions towards any identified need for new/improved community facilities/infrastructure improvements. This shall include a new 210 place primary school within the development (or an expansion of the existing primary school) and new recreational open space, play, indoor and outdoor sport facilities;
- provision of satisfactory vehicular access arrangements, the details of which will be determined at planning application stage;
- appropriate mitigation to safeguard the amenity of future occupants from unacceptable levels of noise and to safeguard the continued operation of existing businesses adjoining the area;
- development of bespoke, high quality and inclusive design, including accommodation that will meet the needs of older persons and that contributes to the distinctiveness of this part of Ledbury and respects the setting and significance of the listed viaduct and the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- safeguards to ensure there is no adverse impact on water quality and quantity in the River Leadon;
- new walking, cycling and bus links from the urban extension directly to the town trail and riverside walk under the viaduct, the railway station and town centre to create linkages to nearby development and existing community facilities;
- sustainable standards of design and construction; and
- a comprehensive sustainable urban drainage system which includes measures such as rain gardens and swales to manage ground and surface water drainage and safeguard against any increased flood risk.

Figure 4.8: Ledbury Key Diagram



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## New homes

- 4.5.3 The policy for Ledbury focuses on delivering high quality, sustainably constructed new homes to meet housing need and demand, especially for that of smaller open market housing and affordable housing, in this high house price area. It also aims to balance new development against the environmental constraints of this historic market town. The strategy to deliver new homes mainly in a single location is not only economically viable but also limits development mainly to land of medium-low landscape sensitivity and of lesser environmental merit, with regard to agricultural and biodiversity value. The listed viaduct adjoining the area also represents an opportunity to create a bespoke design solution and high quality townscape to meet the needs of all sections of the community including housing for older persons – a need highlighted in the study of the *Housing and Support needs of Older People in Herefordshire 2012*. Housing will be phased to tie in with the construction and provision of essential new community infrastructure in line with Policy SS3. The remaining housing requirement for Ledbury will be delivered through existing commitments, windfalls and the allocation of sites through a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

## New jobs

- 4.5.4 The policy to deliver around 12 hectares of employment land to the south of Little Marcle Road will help facilitate greater employment opportunities for Ledbury residents, promoting its role as a multi functioning centre and reduce the need for commuting by private car. This area of arable land adjoins existing employment land and sports pitches and is of low landscape sensitivity and biodiversity value. Acceptable access can be achieved from Little Marcle Road, whilst new sustainable transport links can be created into the town including safe crossings of the by-pass. Structural landscaping will be required along the western and southern boundaries to mitigate the visual impact of new buildings. The land will particularly provide opportunities for medium and large size business requiring large land areas, including the expansion of existing businesses.
- 4.5.5 Land north of the viaduct will also include around 3 hectares of employment land (in addition to any existing commitments), which will be restricted to use class B1 (light industry, offices, research and development) in order to complement the larger employment area. Small-scale sites for employment use will also be identified through a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 4.5.6 The figures for employment (as with housing) are targets for the whole plan period and will be monitored through the annual monitoring process to assess performance and the need for any management measures.

## Movement

- 4.5.7 The policy approach for movement in Ledbury is based on reducing the need to travel by private car. This will be achieved by locating new development within walking and cycling distance of existing and new facilities (including the railway station) and improving and extending sustainable transport routes. New employment land and other policies in the Core Strategy, as well as the forthcoming Neighbourhood Development Plan, will also promote local employment opportunities. This will help address the issue of reducing the need to travel. Herefordshire Council (through the *Local Transport Plan*) proposes to work in partnership with bus operators and developers to ensure housing and employment locations are served by public transport and that service frequencies linking to Hereford are maintained.

- 4.5.8 Vehicular, pedestrian, cycle and bus access to the housing site will need to be provided with additional sustainable transport links to the station. A reduction in the speed limit along the Bromyard Road and improvements to the Hereford Road/Bromyard Road junction are also likely to be required to improve the design, safety and efficiency of this road and junction. These, and any other highway improvements, will be informed by a traffic assessment, and will be considered as part of the Council's determination of planning applications on the site.
- 4.5.9 The issue of car parking supply and demand at the railway station and in the town centre will be addressed through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. With regards parking to serve the railway station, the opportunity may exist for an underground overspill car park on land north of the railway line which could be funded through community infrastructure levy monies, subject to landowner agreement.

#### **Green infrastructure and open space**

- 4.5.10 Developing land to the north of the viaduct addresses aspirations of the *Green Infrastructure Strategy* which identifies the area as an Enhancement Zone, representing a possible intersection of the riverside linear park and the town trail green infrastructure corridors. It enables the introduction of new, accessible green space through the provision of a linear park, on-site recreational open space and part of a strategic canal route all of which will address the issue of deficiencies in open space in Ledbury as identified in the *Open Space Study* and *Playing Pitch Strategy*, as well as promote biodiversity. The strategic employment area also offers opportunities to reinforce the green infrastructure enhancement zone.
- 4.5.11 This approach realises the value of the environment as an economic asset, as the urban extension will create better access to and enjoyment of new green infrastructure for residents and tourists alike. A review of open space needs and existing designations in Ledbury will be undertaken as part of a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

#### **Community and educational facilities**

- 4.5.12 Improving the delivery of and access to, services is addressed in this policy through requirements for new infrastructure. This will be either directly delivered by a developer or through developer contributions, including either a new primary school at the urban extension or an expansion of the existing primary school, canal, riverside park, outdoor sports pitches and other community facilities. A centrally located, equipped, multi age play area will also be provided on the urban extension, along with new outdoor sports facilities, further enhancing the opportunities for active play. An upgrade to the public water supply infrastructure to serve the new housing and employment growth may also be required.
- 4.5.13 Opportunities will also be sought to secure the reinstatement of other sections of the former Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal within/adjoining the town through a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

#### **Heritage and archaeological value**

- 4.5.14 A landmark feature of Ledbury is its railway viaduct which is Grade II listed. Any development of the viaduct site will need to respect the setting and significance of the viaduct, yet regard it as a positive feature to be integrated within, and inform the detailed master planning and design of, any scheme.

## Retail

- 4.5.15 The policy for shopping in Ledbury, based on the evidence in the *Town Centres Study Update 2012*, is to maintain the existing, thriving centre which is based on a mixture of popular high street and independent stores. New homes and households in Ledbury will strengthen this support for the town centre and improvements to sustainable modes of transport into the town centre via the existing town trail will also support this approach.
- 4.5.16 The *Town Centres Study Update 2012* indicates a need for further convenience shopping floor space in the town up to 2031 and further comparison retail from 2026. The study also concludes that there is an opportunity to increase the specialist nature of some of the independent shops which attracts a large amount of people from the wider surrounding area. Initiatives such as the *Ledbury: From Field to Fork Initiative* will assist in supporting this aim. As is required by paragraph 23 of the NPPF, an area near to the edge of the town centre area at Bye Street/Lawnside Road is identified as a possible location for additional convenience retail floor space in any sequential search, but is not included as a site-specific proposal of the Core Strategy. Should any proposals be advanced for this area it will be subject to the retention or the replacement of the existing community facilities, including the swimming pool, either on the site or in an appropriate and accessible location elsewhere within the town. Any replacement facilities must be completed prior to the loss of existing facilities. The need highlighted in the *Town Centres Study Update 2012* will be reviewed regularly against expenditure capacity and the identification of any specific proposals to meet the needs will be considered through a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

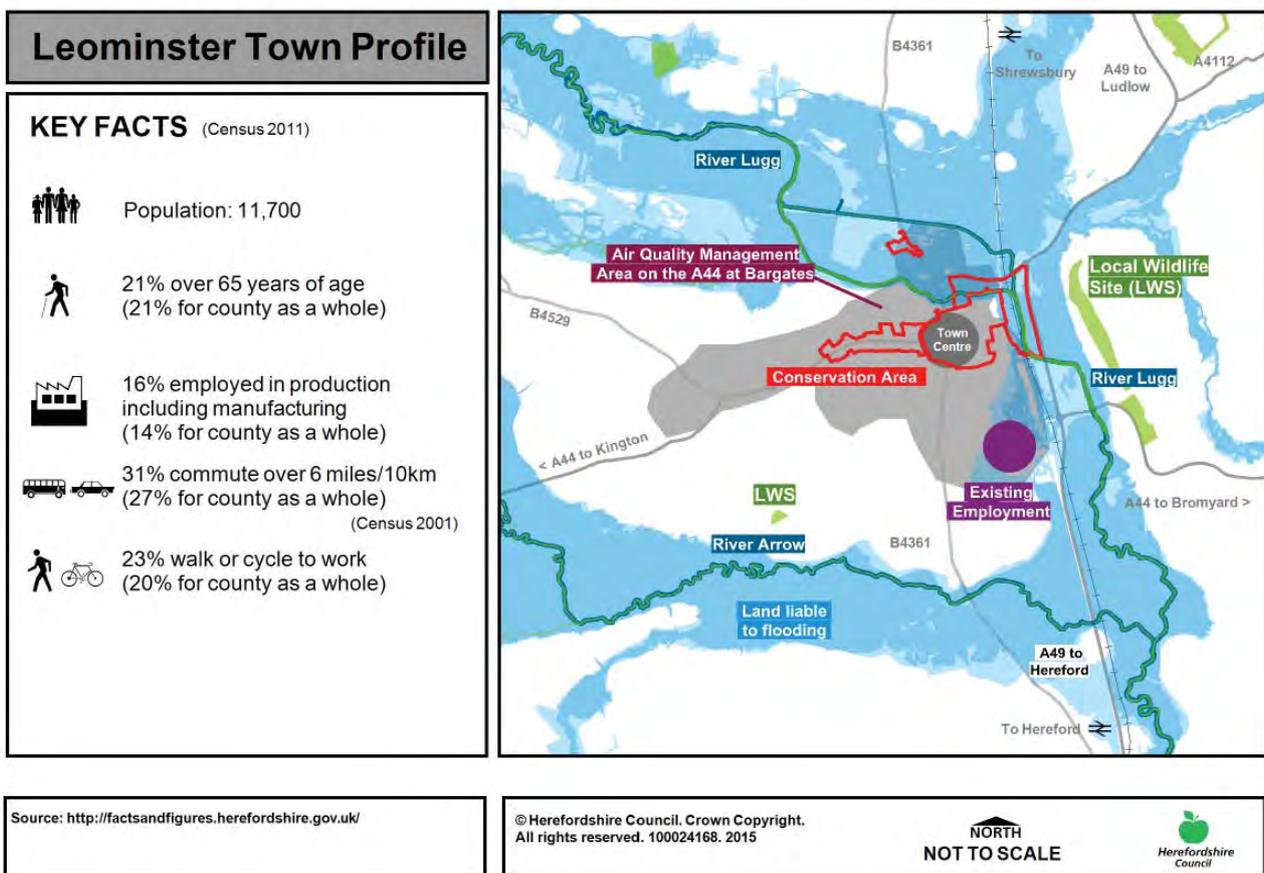
## Surface water management and fluvial flooding

- 4.5.17 The west of Ledbury is prone to flooding from the River Leadon. The physical development within the urban extension and employment area will need to demonstrate through a flood risk assessment that the housing, employment, play and sports facilities avoids the areas that are vulnerable to flooding and does not increase flood risk for any existing residents and businesses. Additionally, the urban extension and employment area should include a sustainable surface water drainage management system, incorporating features such as swales and ponds, sensitively integrated with the development, to achieve existing or better than existing greenfield runoff rates.

## Leominster

- 4.6.1 Leominster, as the main centre in the north of the county, will continue to fulfil a diverse range of important roles as a centre for residential, employment, cultural, retail, tourism and recreational uses. Leominster will continue to act as a service centre to the surrounding rural areas. This strategy seeks to promote the continued development of the town, taking into consideration its needs, opportunities and constraints.
- 4.6.2 This vision is manifested in strategic objectives 1, 4, 6, 8 and 10, which for Leominster, centres on meeting housing need (including affordable housing), reducing the need to travel, facilitating employment generation and diversification, improving delivery and access to services and realising the value of the environment as an economic asset.

Figure 4.9 Leominster Town Profile



## Background to policies

- 4.6.3 Residential development is proposed to the south-west of the town. The decision to focus the largest single strategic allocation of new homes to Leominster has been based on the recognition of its economic importance located on the A49 corridor; that it is the least constrained market town; its good public transport links, including the railway station; and that an urban extension will bring transport benefits in the form of a relief road. The latter will benefit the centre of the town in terms of reducing congestion and improving air quality.
- 4.6.4 The residential growth proposed for Leominster will ensure a sustainable population for the town and the Core Strategy's policies will provide opportunities for and the encouragement of appropriate economic growth as well as the provision of appropriate community facilities, environmental enhancement and protection as reflected in the Leominster Key Diagram – Figure 4.10.

### Policy LO1 – Development in Leominster

Leominster will accommodate a minimum of 2,300 new homes throughout the plan period, (2011-2031) of which a minimum of 1,500 dwellings will be provided in a single strategic urban extension to the south-west of the town. The remaining dwellings will be provided through existing commitments, smaller scale non-strategic sites within the existing built up area; those which come forward through the Leominster Neighbourhood Development Plan, or sites judged as having development potential which are identified in the *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment*.

The Leominster Enterprise Park will continue to serve the employment needs of Leominster, which will include a further extension of up to 10ha to the south of the enterprise park. The release of the additional land will be phased across the plan period depending upon the availability or otherwise of land within the existing enterprise park.

In Leominster new development proposals will be encouraged where they:

- continue the development of the Leominster Enterprise Park and encourage proposals for suitable small scale employment sites within the town;
- maintain and enhance the viability and vitality of the town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 400m<sup>2</sup> in gross floor space and located outside of the defined town centre will need to be supported by an impact assessment in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework to determine whether there could be any adverse impacts on the vitality and viability of Leominster town centre;
- ensure that developments do not exacerbate air pollution levels within the designated air quality management area at Bargates;
- ensure that development does not undermine the achievement of water quality targets in accordance with Policy SD3 and SD4; and
- have demonstrated engagement and consultation with the community including the town/parish council.

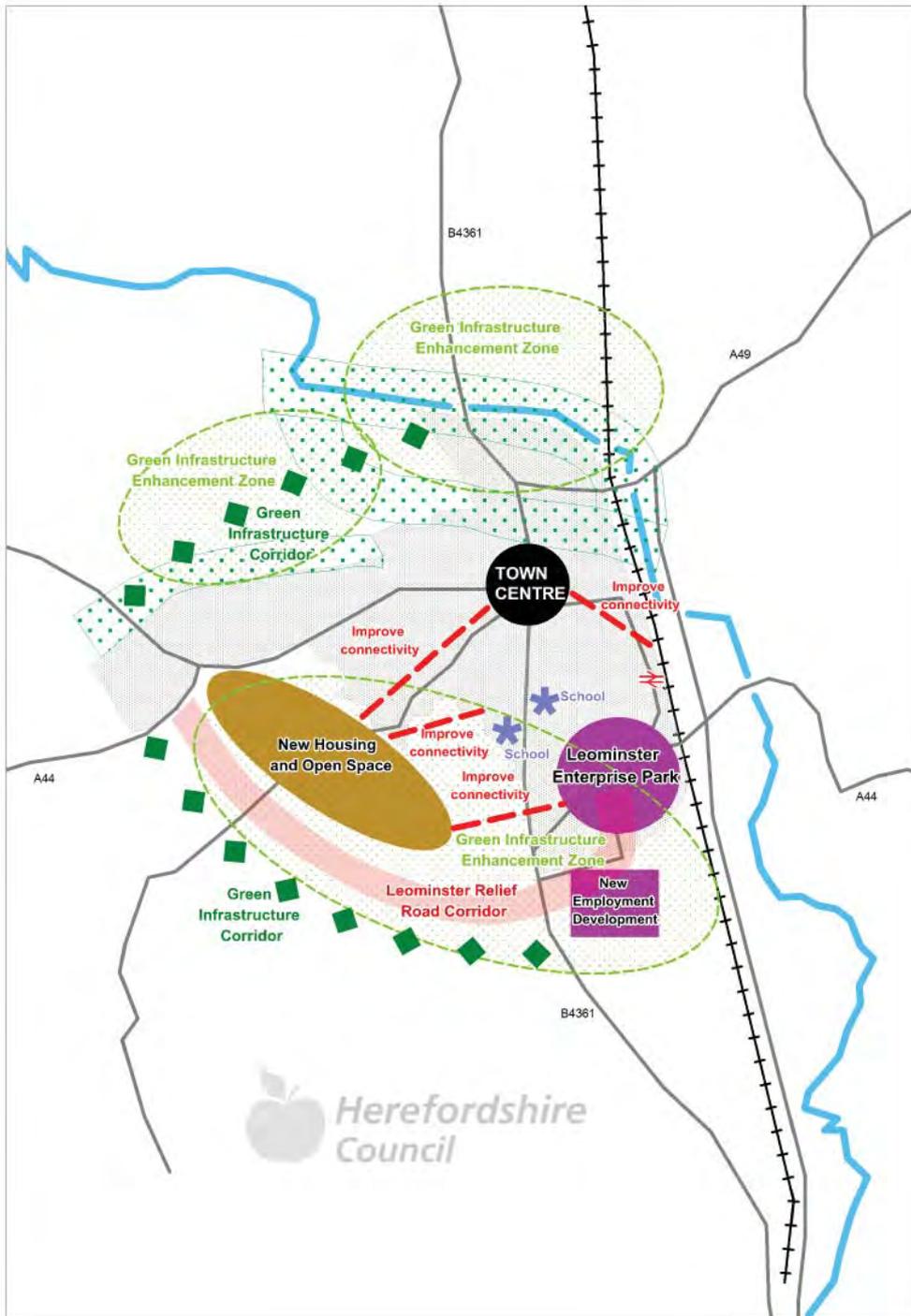
## Policy LO2 – Leominster urban extension

Land south west of Leominster will deliver a comprehensively planned sustainable urban extension and will be expected to deliver:

- a minimum of 1,500 new homes at an average density of up to 35 dwellings per hectare comprising a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of Policy H3, and the needs identified in the latest version of the Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment;
- an affordable housing target of 25% will be required as an opportunity to address the range of homes currently available in the town;
- Leominster relief road linking the Worcester Road roundabout directly to the A44, to help relieve traffic congestion within the town and improve air quality in the Bargates area;
- small scale neighbourhood retail facilities;
- potential for employment opportunities as demand arises in the form of use class B1 and live/work units;
- provision of appropriate community and youth facilities within a community hub;
- provision of a new 420 place primary school and pre-school facilities;
- appropriate provision of on-site open space, sports and recreation provision (in addition to Cockcroft Hill). This shall include fully accessible semi-natural and natural greenspace; play provision for all age groups, indoor and outdoor sports provision (some of which may be off site); allotments and new orchard planting;
- new green infrastructure walking and cycling links to the town centre, schools, the Enterprise Park and local public right of way network;
- retention of the highly sensitive landscape areas and geological features of Cockcroft Hill (which encompasses Ryelands Croft) by retaining this site as natural open space;
- sustainable standards of design and construction;
- a comprehensive sustainable urban drainage system which includes measures such as rain gardens and swales to manage ground and surface water drainage and safeguard against any increased flood risk; and
- an evaluation of the archaeological importance of the area in order to ensure appropriate protection of heritage assets and inform the detailed development proposals.

The land available for development to the south-west of Leominster will also enable the housing needs of the town to be met beyond the plan period.

Figure 4.10: Leominster Key Diagram



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**New homes**

- 4.6.5 Land to the south of Leominster provides the most appropriate location for meeting the future strategic housing requirements of the town. A minimum of 1,500 new homes will be provided within the urban extension up to 2031 together with a range of other facilities to enable the development to meet the needs of its residents and integrate with the existing town. The development will be comprehensively master-planned to create a series of neighbourhoods integrated with the town. Density and design will vary across the development with all homes constructed to minimise their energy use and CO<sub>2</sub> footprint.
- 4.6.6 It is recognised that there is a need for affordable homes across the county. It has been identified through the *Affordable Housing Viability Study* that land values are lower within Leominster, therefore a target of 25% affordable homes would be the most appropriate within the town. An appropriate mix of housing will be needed, informed by the most up to date *Local Housing Market Assessment*, in order to meet the needs of all sections of the community including housing for older persons.
- 4.6.7 The development of the urban extension provides an opportunity to create a scheme which is sensitive to the landscape of this edge of town whilst meeting the needs of all sections of the community, including those of working age, who will be close to existing and new employment opportunities, and also older people.
- 4.6.8 The land south of Leominster is sufficient not only to meet the housing target for the current plan period but is also likely to help meet the housing needs of the town through further development post 2031 supported by new highway infrastructure and community facilities.

**New jobs**

- 4.6.9 There remains a reasonable supply of employment land on Leominster Enterprise Park and at Southern Avenue but it is envisaged that vacant employment land in the Leominster Enterprise Park will be taken up during the early stages of the plan period. As a result, in order to accommodate employment needs over the plan period, Leominster will require an extension of the Leominster Enterprise Park to the south, which will provide up to 10ha of employment land. There is also the opportunity to provide additional smaller B1 class live/work units which could be integrated into the urban extension.

**Movement**

- 4.6.10 The Bargates area of the town suffers from congestion and without new road infrastructure the potential growth of Leominster would be limited. In addition, the Bargates area is also designated as an Air Quality Management Area as a result of poor air quality and new road infrastructure would enable much of the heavy vehicular traffic to be diverted from this area.
- 4.6.11 The urban extension provides the opportunity to provide new road infrastructure as an integral element of the development. A relief road connecting the Worcester Road roundabout to the A44 at Baron's Cross will be constructed. Much of the link from the B4361 Hereford Road to the Worcester Road roundabout has already been constructed, with a small area of approximately 200 yards needed to complete the link. The entire relief road will be designed to provide an alternative direct and more convenient route for vehicles and avoid the need for through traffic to pass through the town centre, and in particular, the Bargates junction. The relief road is also likely to require new roundabout junctions on the B4361 and A44 and an extension of the highway infrastructure in the south west corner of the Enterprise Park.

- 4.6.12 In addition to the provision of new road infrastructure the urban extension also provides an opportunity to encourage more sustainable modes of transport within the town through new footpaths and cycle routes developed to ensure that good linkages and opportunities to integrate with the existing networks are provided, particularly to the primary schools, high school, the town centre and the Enterprise Park.

#### Green infrastructure and open space

- 4.6.13 The potential housing allocation located to the south west of the town is a mixture of medium-low and medium-high sensitivity landscape areas according to the *Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis*. However such landscape constraints are lower than sites to the north and west of Leominster. It will be necessary to provide landscape mitigation particularly along the outer edge of the residential and employment development areas adjoining open countryside and Cockcroft Hill. Cockcroft Hill incorporates the Ryelands Croft Local Geological Site, a locally important landscape and geological feature and will therefore need to be retained as semi-natural open space.
- 4.6.14 Leominster has an under provision of semi-natural greenspace, play facilities, parks, gardens and outdoor sport space according to the *Open Space Study* and *Playing Pitch Strategy*, and hence there is the opportunity to provide a number of open space, sports and recreation facilities within the urban extension in addition to Cockcroft Hill. The development will also generate a need for additional allotments which will be met and designed into the urban extension.

#### Community and educational facilities

- 4.6.15 There will be a need for additional community facilities or hub within the south west extension to achieve a sustainable development. This may include a doctor's surgery, a community hall, youth facilities and small scale retail. This will ensure that journeys that need to be made regularly can be made within the new development.
- 4.6.16 The additional housing provided by the urban extension will place a need for 420 new primary school places. In addition, there will be a need for a children's centre for the early years which could form part of the community hub. In terms of high school places, the Earl Mortimer College has adequate capacity to cover the new growth of the town. These new facilities will help create a more sustainable community.

#### Heritage and archaeological value

- 4.6.17 Archaeological potential has been identified, in Leominster, particularly at land south of Barons Cross where there are earthworks. The proposed route of the relief road needs full assessment prior to any works taking place on the south west extension. The Sustainability Appraisal highlighted that any archaeological concern on the proposed site needed to be addressed, and detailed field evaluation will be required.

#### Retail

- 4.6.18 As part of the *Town Centres Study Update 2012* it is identified that Leominster has some convenience and comparison retail floorspace need which increases over the plan period. In terms of convenience retail, this could create the opportunity for an additional food store development in the town centre, which would draw more shoppers into the centre and complement the existing independent convenience shops. Small scale convenience retail will be provided within the urban extension to meet the day to day needs of the residents of the new development.

- 4.6.19 The need for comparison retail proposals is more limited with a modest capacity towards the end of the plan period. The study indicated that the priority should be to steer any new floorspace to the town centre as far as this is practical, and only to permit out-of-centre facilities if they would materially enhance the retail offer of the town and assist in retaining catchment residents' expenditure. Impact assessments will be required for developments of 400m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace and greater and this is reflected in Policy E5.
- 4.6.20 The study also identifies a number of sites that provide redevelopment opportunities to accommodate retail development during the plan period and should be considered first in a sequential test in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework:
- Broad Street Car Park at Arkwright Close;
  - Broad Street Car park, rear of Fire Station;
  - The Original Factory Shop, 52 Broad Street.
- 4.6.21 More detailed assessment of the need for future retail provision for Leominster, including the need to allocate sites will be provided through the preparation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The extent of the town centre and the primary shopping area, (made up of the primary and secondary frontages) will be defined as part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

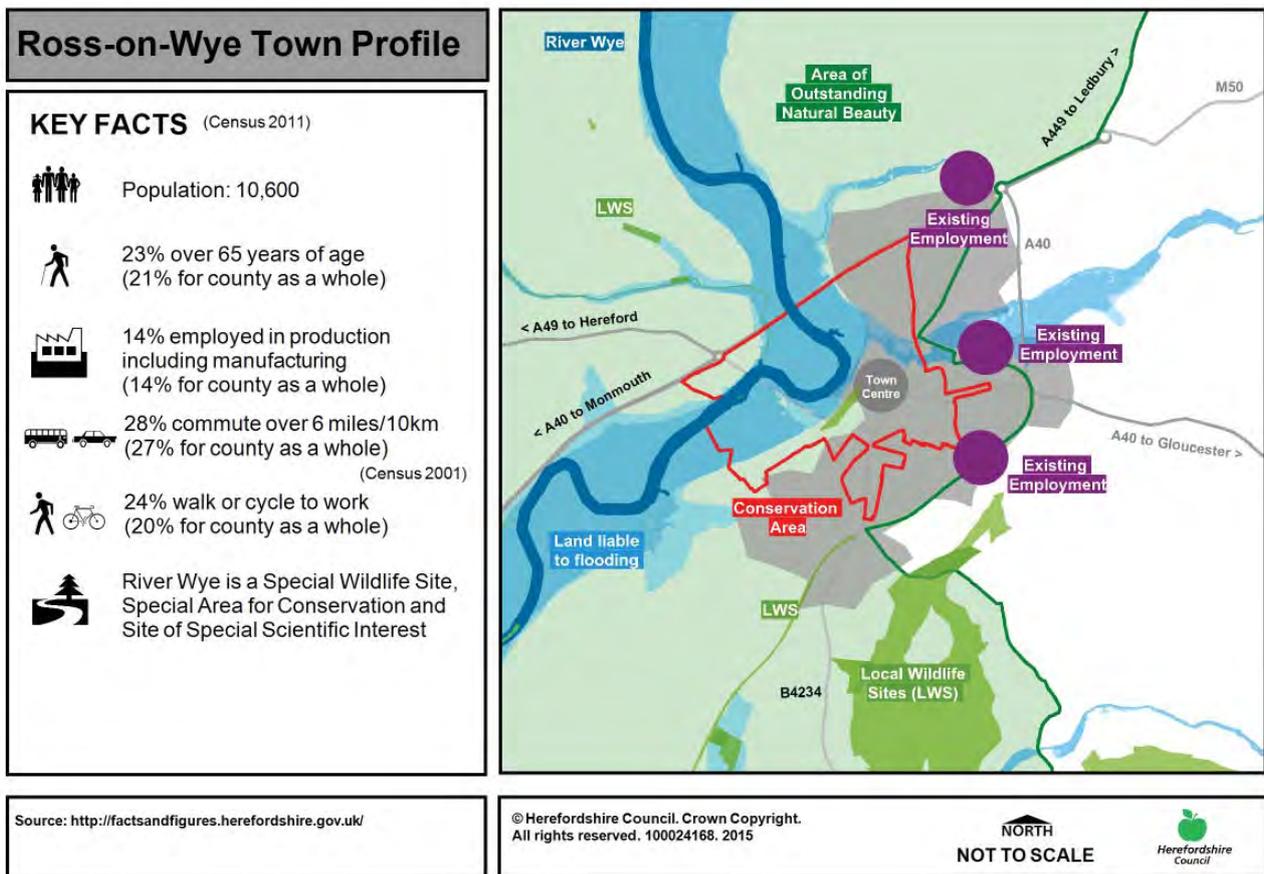
#### **Surface water management, water quality and fluvial flooding**

- 4.6.22 There are extensive areas at risk of flooding in Leominster, particularly to the north of the town. Leominster lies near the confluence of two major river systems, the Lugg and the Arrow, which further downstream becomes the River Lugg Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 4.6.23 The *Water Cycle Study* identifies that developers would need to ensure there are no adverse impacts as a result of any new development, this could be managed to mitigate the effects on the SAC through adequate control measures and additional capacity in water treatment infrastructure and surface water management. Sections of the River Wye SAC where the water quality targets are already exceeded will be subject to measures to reduce nutrients in line with the targets. All new development proposals including the Leominster urban extension must not compromise the ability of the Nutrient Management Plan to deliver the necessary overall reductions along these stretches.

## Ross-on-Wye

- 4.7.1 Within the overall vision for Herefordshire, Ross-on-Wye, as the market town serving the south of the county, will be supported in continuing to fulfil a diverse range of roles as a centre for residential, employment, recreational and cultural services. The town will also continue to act as an important service centre for the surrounding rural area. The connections to the motorway network make Ross-on-Wye an important gateway into the county and it is also a tourist destination in its own right. The strategy seeks to promote the sustainable development of Ross-on-Wye, taking into consideration its needs, opportunities and constraints.
- 4.7.2 This vision is manifested in strategic objectives 1, 6, 8 and 10 which, for Ross-on-Wye, focuses on enabling some strategic growth on the town's peripheries and also some smaller scale growth in and around the town itself. The proposed development of Ross-on-Wye is planned taking account of the town's very significant environmental constraints, including the floodplain of the River Wye, and the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Figure 4.11: Ross-on-Wye Town Profile



## Background to policies

- 4.7.3 To achieve the strategy, an urban extension of new homes is proposed to the southeast of the town at Hildersley. This location has a limited capacity, in order to avoid encroachment on the wooded hillside to the south and the constraint of an active rifle range to the west. It does, however, have the potential for sustainable transport links to the town centre without creating a need for new strategic highway links, it is within walking distance of the proposed employment site at Model Farm and can be designed to minimise landscape impacts on the setting of the town.
- 4.7.4 The remainder of new homes for Ross-on-Wye will be provided on a range of, primarily, smaller sites of less than 100 dwellings, in and around the town. The location of these can be further detailed through a forthcoming Neighbourhood Development Plan or other Development Plan Document.
- 4.7.5 The potential for new employment development will remain at Model Farm. This combined approach to housing and employment will help to address the issues of high affordable housing need and significant levels of commuting, whilst working within the environmental constraints of Ross-on-Wye.

### Policy RW1 – Development in Ross-on-Wye

Ross-on-Wye will accommodate a minimum of 900 new homes, balanced with approximately 10 hectares of allocated employment land during the plan period, in accordance with the spatial strategy. A strategic housing location will focus a minimum of 200 new homes to the south east of the town. The remaining requirement for homes will be delivered on sites allocated through a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Within Ross-on-Wye, new development proposals will be encouraged where they:

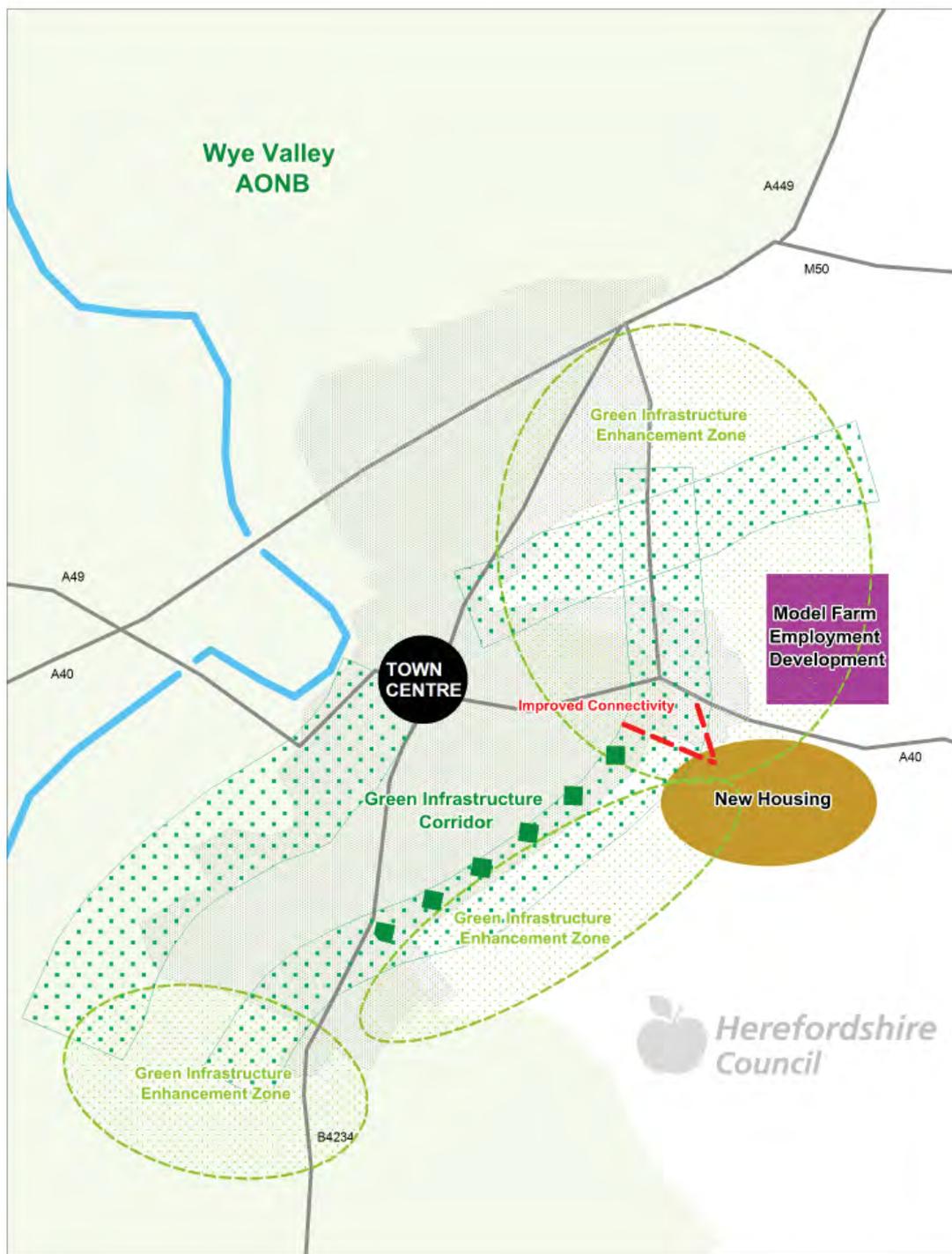
- allow for suitable employment sites, including live-work opportunities within or adjoining the town;
- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 400m<sup>2</sup> gross floor space and located outside the town centre will need to be supported by an impact assessment to determine whether there could be any adverse impacts on the town centre;
- improve accessibility within Ross-on-Wye by walking, cycling and public transport, particularly where they enhance connectivity with local facilities, the town centre and existing employment areas;
- contribute towards new or improved community facilities and/or allow for infrastructure improvements in the town to promote sustainable development;
- reflect and enhance the characteristic natural and built historic elements of Ross-on-Wye, such as its red sandstone and timber framed Tudor buildings and boundary walls, the medieval plan form, conservation area and natural setting overlooking the River Wye;
- enhance green infrastructure and biodiversity, particularly the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the River Wye; and
- have demonstrated engagement and consultation with the community including the town/parish council.

## Policy RW2 – Land at Hildersley

The strategic residential development on land to the south east of Ross-on-Wye at Hildersley will be required to include the following to deliver a comprehensively planned sustainable urban extension of the town:

- a minimum of 200 new homes at an average density of up to 35 dwellings per hectare, comprising a mix of market and affordable house sizes and types that meet the requirements of Policy H3 and the needs identified in the latest version of the Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment;
- a target of 40% of the total number of dwellings shall be affordable housing;
- the provision of and contributions towards any identified need for new/improved community facilities/ infrastructure improvements. This shall include contributions towards the provision of: additional pre-school places; additional classrooms at John Kyrle High School for secondary, post 16 and youth/ community infrastructure and further special educational needs provision;
- the provision of a sport/recreation space either on or off site as an alternative to the existing on site John Kyrle High School playing field;
- the creation of new green infrastructure within the development area to benefit residents, local bat populations and other flora and fauna;
- new pedestrian and cycle links from the area towards the town and nearby employment sites, to ease road congestion and limit CO<sub>2</sub> emissions;
- appropriate mitigation measures to be implemented, which ensure that acoustic and safety issues relating to the proximity of the adjacent firing range are satisfactorily addressed;
- adverse impacts on the Water Source Protection Zone should be avoided or mitigated, including through the incorporation of sustainable urban drainage solutions such as rain gardens and swales; and the production by the developer of a Surface Water Management Plan;
- avoid and mitigate adverse impacts from noise and air pollution and vibration (during both construction and occupation of new homes) on the River Wye SAC, Wye Valley Woodlands SAC and the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC; and
- development of bespoke, high quality and inclusive design, including accommodation that will meet the needs of older persons and that contributes to the distinctiveness of this part of Ross-on-Wye and enhances the setting of the adjacent Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Figure 4.12: Ross on Wye Key Diagram



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## New homes

- 4.7.6 The policy for Ross-on-Wye focuses on delivering high quality, sustainably constructed new homes to meet housing need and demand, especially for smaller open market housing and affordable housing, in this high house price area. It also aims to balance new development against the environmental constraints of this historic market town. The strategy to deliver new homes in a dispersed manner between a single strategic site and other smaller sites within and around the town is economically viable and spreads the effect of new buildings across this sensitive town and its surroundings, which is predominantly within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 4.7.7 The development of the strategic extension at Hildersley represents an opportunity to create a scheme which is sensitive to the landscape of this edge of the town and that can provide additional biodiversity benefits to the local protected bat population, whilst meeting the needs of all sections of the community, including those of working age who will be close to existing and new employment opportunities. New homes will also benefit older people – a need which was highlighted in the study of the *Housing and Support Needs of Older People in Herefordshire 2012*.
- 4.7.8 The development at Tanyard Lane will provide upgrades to road infrastructure including a new roundabout and traffic calming measures, which will allow sites identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment such as ‘Over-Ross’ to come forward during the plan period. The housing requirement to be met through the development of smaller non-strategic sites in and around Ross-on-Wye will be delivered through existing commitments, windfalls and/or the allocation of sites through a Neighbourhood Development Plan and/or other Development Plan Documents.

## New jobs

- 4.7.9 The policy to deliver employment land to the north of the strategic housing location at Model Farm will help facilitate greater employment opportunities for the residents of Ross-on-Wye. This employment area is located at an important entrance to the town and consists of a farm and surrounding agricultural fields with a field buffer to the nearby residential area to the west. A high quality development for B1, B2 and B8 uses will be accommodated, which should include appropriate landscaping to form a key element of any proposal, providing an appropriate eastern edge which is open to long distance views.
- 4.7.10 The developer of Model Farm will need to ensure that the Environment Agency is satisfied that adequate pollution prevention measures are in place to protect ground and surface waters on this site, since it is located on a source protection zone of the Alton Court aquifer.
- 4.7.11 The need for additional employment land to serve the needs of Ross-on-Wye and surrounding areas will be monitored during the Plan period. Any identified additional need will be addressed through: development coming forward in accordance with policies SS5, RW1, E1 and E3 of the Plan; a review of the Local Plan Core Strategy; or a Neighbourhood Development Plan or other Development Plan Document for the area.

## Movement

- 4.7.12 The policy approach for movement in Ross-on-Wye is based on reducing the need to travel by private car. This will be achieved by locating new development within walking and cycling distance of existing and new facilities and improving and extending sustainable transport routes. New employment land and other policies in the Core Strategy, as well as any Neighbourhood Development Plan or other Development Plan

Document will also promote local employment opportunities, which will help address the issue of commuting for jobs. The council (through the *Local Transport Plan*) proposes to work in partnership with bus operators and developers to ensure housing and employment locations are served by public transport and that service frequencies linking to Hereford are maintained. The issue of car parking will be addressed through a Neighbourhood Development Plan or other Development Plan Document.

- 4.7.13 The development at both Model Farm and the Hildersley strategic location will access directly onto the A40. The developers of both areas will be required to make a contribution to the design of the local roads to achieve acceptable traffic movements between the sites and the town centre and adjoining road networks. Developers should ensure that suitable pedestrian and cycle connections to encourage sustainable movements between the areas and the town centre are incorporated in to the schemes.
- 4.7.14 Since a significant amount of residential development will take place on other sites dispersed around the town, developers must ensure that the council and/or Highways Agency are satisfied that the necessary mitigation measures and/or contributions towards alterations and improvements to the local road networks and sustainable modes of travel are made.

#### **Green infrastructure and open space**

- 4.7.15 The urban extension is located on an area of medium-low landscape value, and is generally flat, low-lying land, of mixed landscape character, contained within the rising land and wooded Penyard Hills to the south. The Town and Country Trail acts as a green corridor along the south-eastern boundary of the town. Potential new links between such green corridors and the urban extension will be encouraged.
- 4.7.16 The urban extension falls within 10km of two SACs: the Wye Valley Woodlands and the Forest of Dean Bat Sites. A specific study of bat activity on the Hildersley area in 2010 found that development could take place without incurring adverse impacts on these SACs. However, the proposed landscaping and open space provision within the Hildersley urban extension should be located and designed so as to provide additional and appropriate bat foraging opportunities where possible. The bats currently use the Town and Country Trail as a foraging corridor therefore links between the urban extension and this pathway would be beneficial to the protected bats.
- 4.7.17 The Hildersley location contains a sports field, under the ownership of Herefordshire Council, for use by John Kyrle High School. Any redevelopment of the recreation field at Hildersley for residential use must be in accordance with Policy OS3 – Loss of open space, sports or recreation facilities.

#### **Community and educational facilities**

- 4.7.18 Improving the delivery of and access to services is addressed in this policy. The additional housing within Ross-on-Wye will create a need for further early years, secondary school, post 16, youth/community and special educational needs provision. Such requirements should be met through developer contributions towards off site facilities.

#### **Heritage and archaeological value**

- 4.7.19 It is not anticipated that development at Hildersley will have a significant impact on any heritage assets. For any smaller residential sites proposed within and around the town development management considerations to protect heritage interests will apply. Ross-on-Wye's central area is contained within a Conservation Area and the majority of the town is within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## Retail

- 4.7.20 The policy for retail in Ross-on-Wye, based on the evidence in the Town Centres Study Update 2012, is to maintain its existing busy shopping centre, which is based on a mixture of popular high street chains and independent stores. New homes and households in Ross-on-Wye will strengthen and provide support for the town centre.
- 4.7.21 The town centre for Ross-on-Wye is identified on the 'saved' Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan proposals map. This will be reviewed through the identification of Primary Shopping Areas in the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Saved policies can be viewed in Appendix 1
- 4.7.22 The Town Centres Study Update 2012 indicates that with the assumed implementation of existing planning permissions, there is not a need for further convenience or comparison retail capacity over the plan period. This means that any new additional retail floorspace will be dependent on changed shopping patterns or the attraction of new trade to the town. The need for retail provision will, however, be reviewed regularly against expenditure capacity and sites will be identified through a Neighbourhood Development Plan and/or other Development Plan Documents if required.

## Surface water management and fluvial flooding

- 4.7.23 The Hildersley area has been identified by the Environment Agency as being on a Secondary Aquifer and the majority of the preferred strategic development location lies within an outer groundwater source protection zone. Consequently, measures should be taken to ensure that this important source of water is not adversely affected by any future development.
- 4.7.24 Other dispersed residential development in and around Ross-on-Wye should ensure that areas prone to flooding from the River Wye are avoided and that any potential future flooding risk is appropriately addressed through appropriate sustainable urban drainage systems, which include rain gardens and swales.

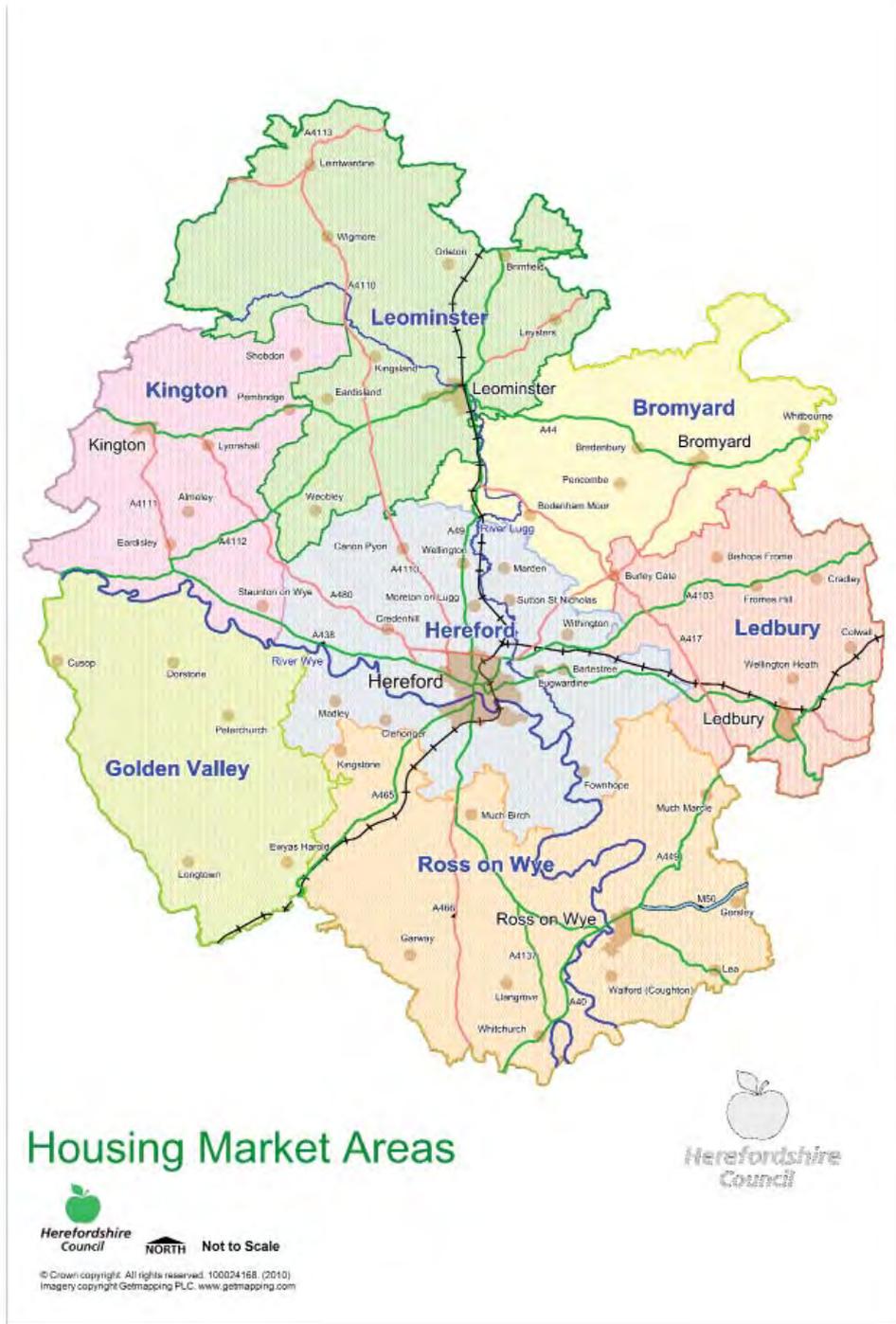
## Herefordshire's Rural Areas

- 4.8.1 The council's strategy for the rural areas outside Hereford and the market towns recognises the many challenges in securing their long term future in a sustainable manner. The concept of sustainability is based upon a range of social, economic and environmental factors which includes the presence of employment, market and affordable housing, facilities and services, access to sustainable transport, as well as factors such as social fabric reflecting community cohesion, interdependence and commitment.
- 4.8.2 Sustainable development is about positive growth. Improved sustainability is central to achieving a strong living and working rural Herefordshire and meeting objectives 1, 5, 8, 8a,10 and 12 of the Core Strategy.
- 4.8.3 To achieve this aim, the rural policies seek to enhance the role the county's rural areas have traditionally played as accessible, sustainable centres for their rural catchments. Therefore the positive growth of settlements through the development of appropriate rural businesses and housing, including affordable housing, that contributes towards their maintenance and strengthening will be supported.

### A housing strategy for Rural Areas based on Housing Market Areas (HMAs)

- 4.8.4 Within this large, predominantly rural county, different areas of Herefordshire have their own identities shaped by a variety of factors and affinities that have evolved through time. A significant aspect of this particular local character is the settlement pattern. As the pattern of rural settlements varies, a more localised approach to the rural areas has been developed for the Core Strategy.
- 4.8.5 The approach adopted builds upon work undertaken on Housing Market Areas (HMAs) through the *Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008*, *Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment 2013* and *Local Housing Requirement Study 2012*. These assessments of Herefordshire's housing market have identified that there are spatial variations. The county can be divided into seven areas based upon common housing market characteristics including tenure, house type profile, incomes and affordability, and house prices. It also reflects geographical proximity, patterns of household movement (migration) and travel to work patterns. The seven Housing Market Areas of Herefordshire are illustrated in Figure 4.13.
- 4.8.6 The rural area of each HMA has differing future housing needs and requirements. The approach adopted in this plan sets out to respond to these needs and requirements in a flexible and responsive way. Together with the roll out of the neighbourhood planning agenda, this strategy will empower communities to evolve as sustainable places whilst respecting their fundamental rural character.
- 4.8.7 Herefordshire's seven HMAs are broadly focused on Hereford and the market towns (except for the Golden Valley) and utilise ward boundaries. The term 'rural HMAs' refers only to the rural parts of the defined HMAs.

Figure 4.13: The Housing Market Areas of Herefordshire



- 4.8.8 Housing development in rural areas will be delivered through Neighbourhood Development Plans, any required Rural Areas Site Allocations Development Plan Document and a combination of existing commitments and windfall development. The council's *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment* indicates there is potential for the level of development proposed in this policy.
- 4.8.9 Past rates of housing completions in the rural areas suggest that this level of growth is appropriate and achievable. Historically it is evident that much rural housing has come forward on small sites, often for individual dwellings, being allowed through the application of planning policy rather than the allocation of housing sites. Additionally, significant numbers of new housing continues to be delivered through the conversion of rural buildings, many being redundant agricultural buildings on farmsteads. Paragraph 48 of NPPF indicates that an allowance may be made for windfall if there is compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source. There is clear evidence over many years that such sites have delivered an important element of the county's housing supply and as such a modest windfall allowance for rural areas has been included of 1000 dwellings (50 per annum).
- 4.8.10 The minimum rural HMA target represents a level of growth for parishes, as a percentage and which is proportionate to existing HMA characteristics.
- 4.8.11 The *Rural Housing Background Paper* (March 2013) sets out in its Appendix 2 the assessment of each rural HMA undertaken. The data will be subject to review during the plan period.
- 4.8.12 All settlements identified in Figures 4.14 and 4.15 will have the opportunity for sensitive and appropriate housing growth. The primary focus for this housing will be in those settlements highlighted in Figure 4.14. In the remaining, typically smaller settlements of each HMA, as set out in Figure 4.15, particular attention will be given to ensure that housing developments should respect the scale, form, layout, character and setting of the settlement concerned. By virtue of their size and character many of these settlements do not have a traditional village or nuclear centre and in many cases have a dispersed settlement pattern which would need to be respected in the design of new housing proposals. This will ensure the delivery of schemes that are locally distinctive.

### Policy RA1 – Rural housing distribution

In Herefordshire's rural areas a minimum of 5,300 new dwellings will be provided between 2011 and 2031 to contribute to the county's housing needs. The development of rural housing will contribute towards the wider regeneration of the rural economy.

New dwellings will be broadly distributed across the county's rural areas on the basis of seven Housing Markets Areas (HMA) as illustrated in Figure 4.13. This acknowledges that different areas of Herefordshire have different housing needs and requirements.

The 5,300 dwellings will be delivered throughout the rural HMAs as set out in the table below. The indicative housing growth targets in each of the rural HMAs will be used as a basis for the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans in the county. Local evidence and environmental factors will determine the appropriate scale of development.

**Policy RA1 – Rural housing distribution continued**

Rural HMA	Approximate number of dwellings 2011 - 2031	Indicative housing growth target (%)
Bromyard	364	15
Golden Valley	304	12
Hereford	1870	18
Kington	317	12
Ledbury	565	14
Leominster	730	14
Ross-on-Wye	1150	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>5300</b>	

**Housing in Herefordshire's settlements**

- 4.8.13 National policy supports a sustainable approach to development in rural areas which is locally responsive, reflecting local housing needs with an emphasis on supporting services, employment and facilities in villages, avoiding new isolated homes in the countryside.
- 4.8.14 As set out earlier in this section, each rural HMA was evaluated through combining the application of a localised benchmark (median settlement size in each rural HMA), together with an assessment of services. This approach will enable settlements in the rural areas to accommodate appropriate and environmentally sensitive sustainable housing development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.8.15 One hundred and nineteen settlements have been identified across the county to be the main focus of proportionate housing development in the rural areas. These are listed in Figure 4.14. Within these settlements carefully considered development which is proportionate to the size of the community and its needs will be permitted.
- 4.8.16 Residential development will be located within or adjacent to the main built up area(s) of the settlement. This will ensure that unnecessary isolated, non-characteristic and discordant dwellings do not arise which would adversely affect the character and setting of a settlement and its local environment.
- 4.8.17 Given the importance of the Herefordshire landscape, and particularly the Malvern Hills and Wye Valley Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty<sup>1</sup>, new dwellings should make a positive contribution to their rural landscape by being built to a high standard, incorporating appropriate materials and landscaping. High

<sup>1</sup> Malvern Hills AONB Guidance on Building Design

quality design that is sustainable and reinforces the locally distinctive vernacular will be particularly encouraged. Innovative and/or contemporary design will also be supported where it is appropriate to its context, it makes a positive contribution to the architectural character of the locality and achieves high levels of sustainability in terms of energy and water efficiency, as set out in Policy SD1. All residential development proposals will need to consider the capacity of the drainage network in the area and the impact of future development on water quality in accordance with Policy SD4.

- 4.8.18 Residential development will be expected to contribute to the future housing needs of each HMA by providing an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes having regard to the *Local Housing Market Assessment* and other relevant evidence sources. Developments should be sensitively and inclusively designed to reflect the lifelong housing needs of the local community. They should also contribute, where appropriate, to the provision of infrastructure, affordable homes and improving community cohesion.
- 4.8.19 Housing affordability is a significant issue in rural Herefordshire. This situation is exacerbated by an existing housing mix that is heavily skewed towards higher value properties, together with demand from people moving to rural areas and restricted scope for new house building. As a result there is a need for market housing priced at a level that can be afforded by local people.
- 4.8.20 On this basis, housing proposals will be expected to reflect the range that is required for the settlement concerned. In relation to proposals that seek specifically to meet identified local housing needs, those proposed developments must be based on appropriate, compelling evidence of how the proposal meets that need. A planning obligation will restrict the occupation of dwellings on this basis to ensure their long term availability for those with local housing needs.
- 4.8.21 A proactive approach has been taken to neighbourhood planning within the county. At February 2015, there were 88 designated neighbourhood areas in the county and significant progress is being made in the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans. These plans will be the principal mechanism by which new rural housing will be allocated. The proportional growth target within policy RA1 will provide the basis for the minimum level of new housing that will be accommodated in each Neighbourhood Development Plan. The target represents a level of growth for parishes, as a percentage, that is proportionate to existing HMA characteristics. The main focus for development will be within or adjacent to existing settlements indicated within fig 4.14 and 4.15. In parishes which have more than one settlement listed in Figure 4.14 and 4.15 the relevant Neighbourhood Development Plan will have appropriate flexibility to apportion the minimum housing requirement between the settlements concerned. This will allow for a locally flexible approach that will respect settlement characteristics, the distribution of local facilities and other local factors. This approach will accord with paragraph 55 of the NPPF which indicates that where there are groups of smaller settlements in rural areas, the development in one location may support services in a location nearby. The adoption of this approach will allow distinctive solutions which reflect the varied geographies in the county.

**Policy RA2 – Housing in settlements outside Hereford and the market towns.**

To maintain and strengthen locally sustainable communities across the rural parts of Herefordshire, sustainable housing growth will be supported in or adjacent to those settlements identified in Figures 4.14 and 4.15. This will enable development that has the ability to bolster existing service provision, improve facilities and infrastructure and meet the needs of the communities concerned.

The minimum growth target in each rural Housing Market Area will be used to inform the level of housing development to be delivered in the various settlements set out in Figures 4.14 and 4.15. Neighbourhood Development Plans will allocate land for new housing or otherwise demonstrate delivery to provide levels of housing to meet the various targets, by indicating levels of suitable and available capacity.

Housing proposals will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

1. Their design and layout should reflect the size, role and function of each settlement and be located within or adjacent to the main built up area. In relation to smaller settlements identified in fig 4.15 proposals will be expected to demonstrate particular attention to the form, layout, character and setting of the site and its location in that settlement and/or they result in development that contributes to or is essential to the social well-being of the settlement concerned;
2. Their locations make best and full use of suitable brownfield sites wherever possible;
3. They result in the development of high quality, sustainable schemes which are appropriate to their context and make a positive contribution to the surrounding environment and its landscape setting; and
4. They result in the delivery of schemes that generate the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required in particular settlements, reflecting local demand.

Specific proposals for the delivery of local need housing will be particularly supported where they meet an identified need and their long-term retention as local needs housing is secured as such.

Figure 4.14: The settlements which will be the main focus of proportionate housing development

<b>HMA</b>			
<b>Bromyard</b>	<b>Golden Valley</b>	<b>Kington</b>	<b>Ledbury</b>
Bodenham Bodenham Moor Bredenbury Bringsty Burley Gate Hope under Dinmore Linton Pencombe Risbury Stoke Cross/Stoke Lacy Stoke Prior Whitbourne	Bredwardine Clifford Cusop Dorstone Ewyas Harold Longtown Michaelchurch Escley Moccas Peterchurch Preston on Wye Vowchurch	Almeley Brilley Eardisley Lyonshall Norton Canon Pembridge Staunton on Wye Shobdon Titley Whitney on Wye Winforton	Ashperton Bishops Frome Bosbury Colwall Cradley Eastnor Fromes Hill Lower Eggleton/Newtown Putley Wellington Heath
<b>Leominster</b>	<b>Hereford</b>	<b>Ross-on-Wye</b>	
Adforton Bircher Brampton Bryan Brimfield Bush Bank Dilwyn Eardisland Kimbolton Kingsland Leintwardine Leysters Lingen Lucton Luston Monkland Orleton Richards Castle Shirlheath Weobley Wigmore Yarpole	Bartestree/Lugwardine Bishopstone Burghill Canon Pyon Clehonger Credenhill Eaton Bishop Fownhope Hampton Bishop Holme Lacy Little Dewchurch Madley Marden Mordiford Moreton on Lugg Stretton Sugwas Sutton St Nicholas Swainshill Tarrington Tillington Wellington Westhope Withington	Bromsash Brampton Abbots Bridstow Crow Hill Garway Goodrich Gorsley Hoarwithy Kingstone Kingsthorpe Kings Caple Lea Linton Little Birch Llangrove Much Birch Much Dewchurch Much Marcle Orcop Hill Peterstow Pontrilas Pontshill St Weonards Weston-under-Penyard	Walford (Coughton) Whitchurch Wilton Winnal Woolhope Wormbridge Wormelow

Figure 4.15: Other settlements where proportionate housing is appropriate.

<b>HMA</b>			
<b>Bromyard</b>	<b>Golden Valley</b>	<b>Kington</b>	<b>Ledbury</b>
Docklow Edwyn Ralph Hatfield Munderfield Ocle Pychard Pudleston Steensbridge Ullingswick	Abbeydore Bacton Blakemere Lower Maes-coed Priory Wood Rowlestone Tyberton	Hergest Holme Marsh Kinnersley Letton Staunton on Arrow Woonton	Canon Frome Coddington Eggleton Mathon Monkhide Much Cowarne Stretton Grandison
<b>Leominster</b>	<b>Hereford</b>	<b>Ross-on-Wye</b>	
Ashton Aymestrey Brierley Cobnash Combe Moor Eyton Ivington Kinsham Leinthall Earls Leinthall Starkses Little Hereford Moreton Mortimers Cross Middleton on the Hill Stapleton Upper Hill Walford Wharton Yatton	Burmarsh Breinton Byford Dinedor Dormington Grafton Kings Pyon Ledgemoor Little Tarrington Litmarsh Mansel Lacy Moorhampton Munstone Pipe and Lyde Preston Wynne Priors Frome Ruckhall Shelwick Shucknall Stoke Edith Twyford Common Vauld Westhide Weston Beggard Withington Marsh Yazor	Aconbury Allensmore Aston Ingham Bishopswood Broad Oak Brockhampton Cobhall Common Didley Glewstone Harewood End Howle Hill Kilpeck Llancloudy Llangarron Llanwarne Much Birch/The Axe and Cleaver Orcop Rushall St Owens Cross Symonds Yat (West)	Three Ashes Thrupton Upton Crews Welsh Newton Common

## Housing in Herefordshire's countryside

- 4.8.22 National guidance emphasises the importance of not promoting unsustainable patterns of development in rural areas and avoiding the provision of new isolated homes.
- 4.8.23 Where appropriate, settlement boundaries (or a reasonable alternative) for those settlements listed in Policy RA2 will be defined in either Neighbourhood Development Plans or the Rural Areas Sites Allocation DPD. In the period leading up to the definition of appropriate settlement boundaries the Council will assess any applications for residential developments in Figure 4.14 and 4.15 against their relationship to the main built up form of the settlement. Outside of these settlements new housing will be restricted to avoid unsustainable patterns of development. Residential development will therefore be limited to those proposals which meet the criteria listed in Policy RA3. Proposals should seek to make use of existing buildings through conversion and adaption in preference to new development. This approach accords with Paragraph 55 of the NPPF.

### Policy RA3 – Herefordshire's countryside

In rural locations outside of settlements, as to be defined in either Neighbourhood Development Plans or the Rural Areas Sites Allocations DPD, residential development will be limited to proposals which satisfy one or more of the following criteria:

1. meets an agricultural or forestry need or other farm diversification enterprise for a worker to live permanently at or near their place of work and complies with Policy RA4; or
  2. accompanies and is necessary to the establishment or growth of a rural enterprise, and complies with Policy RA4; or
  3. involves the replacement of an existing dwelling (with a lawful residential use) that is comparable in size and scale with, and is located in the lawful domestic curtilage, of the existing dwelling; or
  4. would result in the sustainable re-use of a redundant or disused building(s) where it complies with Policy RA5 and leads to an enhancement of its immediate setting; or
  5. is rural exception housing in accordance with Policy H2; or
  6. is of exceptional quality and innovative design satisfying the design criteria set out in Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework and achieves sustainable standards of design and construction; or
  7. is a site providing for the needs of gypsies or other travellers in accordance with Policy H4.
- 4.8.24 Occupancy controls will be applied to dwellings arising from the expansion of rural business enterprises, as well as to agricultural and forestry dwellings (Policy RA4) and will be secured from the start by a Section 106 Agreement.
- 4.8.25 Replacement dwellings will only be permitted provided that the existing building has established and continuing residential use rights and has not been abandoned. Proposals should ordinarily be sited in a similar position as the original dwelling unless there is technical justification to consider an alternative location within the existing lawful domestic curtilage. To safeguard the character and appearance of the rural landscape from the visual impact of large buildings, the size of any replacement dwelling will be of a comparable total cubic volume (measured externally) to the existing dwelling. To minimise the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area, the design of the dwelling and any associated development should respect the local character of the area and/or make a positive contribution to the rural landscape. As such the mass, scale, height and external appearance of the resultant development should be taken into account. Permitted development rights may be removed from replacement dwellings.

- 4.8.26 All residential development proposals will need to take account of capacity of the drainage network in the area and the impact of future development on water quality in accordance with Policy SD4.

#### Rural enterprise dwellings in Herefordshire's countryside

- 4.8.27 One of the few circumstances in which isolated residential development in the countryside may be justified is when accommodation is required to enable rural enterprise workers to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work to provide essential supervision and management. The need to make an exception to the general policy approach to development in the countryside in order to meet the requirements of rural businesses has long been recognised and this approach to rural workers has been endorsed by the National Planning Policy Framework (2012).

#### Policy RA4 – Agricultural, forestry and rural enterprise dwellings

Proposals for dwellings associated with agriculture, forestry and rural enterprises will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there is a sustained essential functional need for the dwelling and it forms an essential part of a financially sustainable business, and that such need cannot be met in existing accommodation. Such dwellings should:

1. demonstrate that the accommodation could not be provided in an existing building(s);
2. be sited so as to meet the identified functional need within the unit or in relation to other dwellings; and
3. be of a high quality, sustainable design which is appropriate to the context and makes a positive contribution to the surrounding environment and rural landscape.

Where evidence of the economic sustainability of the rural enterprise is not proven or where an enterprise is not yet established, planning permission for temporary accommodation may be granted for a maximum period of three years to enable the sustainability of the enterprise to be assessed. Successive extensions will not normally be granted. Temporary accommodation should be carefully sited within the unit or in relation to other dwellings.

Dwellings permitted in accordance with this policy will be subject to occupancy controls secured through a Section 106 Agreement. In some situations it will be appropriate to use legal agreements to tie other dwellings to the unit and/or restrict the occupancy of other dwellings within the farm/business unit.

Applications for the removal of occupancy conditions (or section 106 Agreements) will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated the dwelling is surplus to the current and sustained original business needs, as well as other rural enterprises in the locality and there has been a genuine and unsuccessful attempt to market the property at a realistic price (for rent or sale) which has been independently verified.

- 4.8.28 Applications for planning permission for new dwellings advanced through this policy will be based on an accurate assessment of the needs of the rural enterprise. Rural enterprises comprise land related businesses including agriculture, forestry and other activities that obtain their primary inputs from the site, such as the processing of agricultural, forestry and mineral products together with land management activities and support services, tourism and leisure enterprises. The sustainability of the business will be scrutinised to ensure any essential need established can be sustained so the criteria set out in Policy RA4 are not abused.
- 4.8.29 Therefore, in terms of agricultural or forestry dwellings it will be essential to firstly establish that stated intentions to engage in agriculture are soundly based, reasonably likely to materialise and capable of being sustained for a reasonable period of time. Where proposals are advanced in association with

non-agricultural rural enterprises it should also be established that the business could not exist without close and continual supervision, for example where a worker is required day and night for supervision, inspection or emergency responses. Security is not of itself sufficient to justify a dwelling but it may be a contributing factor in association with others.

- 4.8.30 All applications will be required to demonstrate that a dwelling at the enterprise is essential by showing a functional need for the occupier to be present at the business for the majority of the time.
- 4.8.31 Where the economic sustainability of the rural enterprise is not proven or where an enterprise has not been established, planning permission for a caravan or other temporary accommodation may be granted for a limited period. This is to enable the economic sustainability of the enterprise to be proven through the development of the business, including investment, planned on a sound financial basis. At the end of the temporary period a reassessment of the sustained essential functional needs of the business, together with the financial sustainability of the enterprise will be reviewed.
- 4.8.32 To avoid a proliferation of dwellings in the countryside, occupancy controls will be secured through Section 106 Agreements attached to dwellings advanced through this policy. Where a second dwelling is necessary for the essential management of a rural enterprise, the council will restrict the occupation/ separate sale of any existing dwellings on the holding which are in the ownership or control of the applicant or their registered business/partners. Similarly, where appropriate, planning obligations may be used to prevent the future separation of a farmhouse(s) from any adjoining farm buildings and land. These measures may be taken to ensure that new proposals for additional dwellings do not allow existing farm dwellings to be removed from the rural worker housing stock, protect the countryside against the pressure for new homes and to prevent the original justification for the additional dwelling being undermined.
- 4.8.33 Where the need for a dwelling is established on the basis of proven essential need, preference should be given to the use of suitable existing buildings through conversion. Where this is not possible, any new development should relate closely to the activities for which there is a need. In most cases this will mean that the new dwelling should be sited in close proximity to existing buildings. Isolated locations or locations that could encourage farm fragmentation in the case of dwellings for agricultural enterprises should be avoided. The location and siting of temporary accommodation will itself be considered on the basis of permanent accommodation being provided. Where other development relating to the enterprise is being proposed at the same time as part of an overall scheme, siting of all development will be considered on a comprehensive basis.
- 4.8.34 Where applications are made to remove occupancy conditions (or obligations) on dwellings when an essential on-site worker is no longer required, applications will be required to demonstrate that the condition is no longer appropriate. Accordingly applicants should demonstrate there is no functional need and thus the dwelling is surplus to both the current and sustainable needs of the original rural enterprise, as well as other rural enterprises in the locality. Evidence should be provided that genuine attempts have been made to market the property for sale or rent at a realistic price that reflects its occupancy restriction for a period of at least 12 months. The council will require the marketing price to be independently verified by the District Valuer prior to the commencement of marketing.

#### **Re-use of rural buildings**

- 4.8.35 Policy RA5 recognises that the re-use of existing rural buildings has an important role to play in promoting economic prosperity and sustainable development in rural areas. Such proposals can result in the creation of local accessible jobs, the provision of premises for business start-ups and/or expansions, improving

business networks and supporting farming through diversification schemes. The re-use of buildings can also provide environmental benefits by making use of existing resources and at the same time conserving buildings of heritage value.

### Policy RA5 – Re-use of rural buildings

The sustainable re-use of individual and groups of redundant or disused buildings, including farmsteads in rural areas, which will make a positive contribution to rural businesses and enterprise and support the local economy (including live work units) or which otherwise contributes to residential development, or is essential to the social well-being of the countryside, will be permitted where:

1. design proposals respect the character and significance of any redundant or disused building and demonstrate that it represents the most viable option for the long term conservation and enhancement of any heritage asset affected, together with its setting;
2. design proposals make adequate provision for protected and priority species and associated habitats;
3. the proposal is compatible with neighbouring uses, including any continued agricultural operations and does not cause undue environmental impacts and;
4. the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction; and
5. the building is capable of accommodating the proposed new use without the need for substantial alteration or extension, ancillary buildings, areas of hard standing or development which individually or taken together would adversely affect the character or appearance of the building or have a detrimental impact on its surroundings and landscape setting.

Any planning permissions granted pursuant to this policy will be subject to a condition removing permitted development rights for future alterations, extensions and other developments.

- 4.8.36 Redundant rural buildings in Herefordshire vary greatly in terms of scale, design and materials depending on their original use. Some are situated within villages, but the majority are located in the countryside. They may occasionally be single buildings but more commonly are grouped together in farmsteads or other clusters. Many are former agricultural buildings which are no longer required for their original purpose. Others may relate to different activities such as corn mills or other industrial buildings. Most of these buildings have heritage value and are referred to in the policy as ‘heritage assets.’
- 4.8.37 Policy RA5 is not intended to support the rebuilding of rural buildings which have fallen into a derelict state. At this point, their significance has usually been lost. Buildings should therefore be structurally sound and capable of bona fide conversion for the proposed use without major reconstruction. A full structural survey may be required to demonstrate whether this is the case.
- 4.8.38 Many rural buildings, particularly those previously used for agricultural purposes, provide valuable wildlife habitats including for legally protected species such as bats and barn owls. Applications for planning permission for the re-use of these buildings will need to demonstrate that an appropriate wildlife survey has been carried out and will be required to make adequate provision for wildlife mitigation and enhancement measures within their design and setting. They must also demonstrate appropriate species-protection measures before, during and after the conversion process.
- 4.8.39 Where required applicants will also be required to demonstrate that proposed uses respect the character of the buildings, are suitable for the rural environment, address sustainable transport issues and do not have a negative impact on the amenity of local residents and environment and in terms of noise, light and

air pollution. Detailed design requirements for proposals for the re-use of individual buildings and farmsteads must ensure that schemes respect the historic character and interest of the buildings, its relationship with other buildings and heritage assets, and its place in the wider landscape. Overall, schemes should keep new openings to a minimum; respect internal features and spaces; and avoid introducing non-traditional features such as dormer windows, chimney stacks, porches or unsympathetic materials.

- 4.8.40 Redundant rural buildings may also provide good opportunities for the development of live/ work units and these can potentially make a positive contribution to the rural economy. Therefore these will be encouraged in accordance with Policy E1 and the criteria of Policy RA5.

#### Rural economy

- 4.8.41 The rural areas have consistently played a strong role in local, regional and national food and drink production, particularly in areas such as agriculture and farming. Other uses within the rural economy consist of local businesses and services, village shops and public houses, tourism activities and accommodation, home working businesses, military uses, as well as farm diversification enterprises. The strengthening of the rural economy is also important in retaining a skilled labour force. In order to allow the rural economy to grow the following policy provides flexibility for start-ups and continuation of business enterprises, business diversification and home working. It also embraces new technologies and methods to allow the rural economy to prosper.

#### Policy RA6 - Rural economy

Employment generating proposals which help diversify the rural economy such as knowledge based creative industries, environmental technologies, business diversification projects and home working will be supported. A range of economic activities will be supported, including proposals which:

- support and strengthen local food and drink production;
- support and/or protect the vitality and viability of commercial facilities of an appropriate type and scale in rural areas, such as village shops, petrol filling stations, garden centres and public houses;
- involve the small scale extension of existing businesses;
- promote sustainable tourism proposals of an appropriate scale in accordance with Policy E4 - Tourism;
- promote the sustainable use of the natural and historic environment as an asset which is valued, conserved and enhanced;
- support the retention of existing military sites;
- support the retention and/ or diversification of existing agricultural businesses;

Planning applications which are submitted in order to diversify the rural economy will be permitted where they:

- ensure that the development is of a scale which would be commensurate with its location and setting;
- do not cause unacceptable adverse impacts to the amenity of nearby residents by virtue of design and mass, noise, dust, lighting and smell;
- do not generate traffic movements that cannot safely be accommodated within the local road network; and
- do not undermine the achievement of water quality targets in accordance with Policies SD3 and SD4.

- 4.8.42 The rural economy will be strengthened by providing flexibility for new and expanding rural businesses. Policy RA6 sets out a range of criteria that will need to be met to ensure that resulting developments are of an appropriate scale and location and do not significantly impact upon the environmental quality of the area.
- 4.8.43 The Wye Valley AONB and the Malvern Hills AONB are recognised by the National Planning Policy Framework as areas where development should be restricted. Guidance on proposed developments in AONBs is set out in Paragraph 116 of the NPPF. Policy LD1 of this plan also sets out guidance on how development proposals should seek to safeguard the character and appearance of these areas.
- 4.8.44 Tourism plays a role within the rural economy. The varied tourism facilities enable existing farms and rural businesses to diversify as well as accommodating the needs of visitors.
- 4.8.45 Isolated employment sites may be appropriate for small extensions and/or redevelopment. A justification should be provided to demonstrate the need for these additions. Proposed developments will need to take into account other relevant policies within this plan.

### **Delivery and monitoring of the Place Shaping Policies**

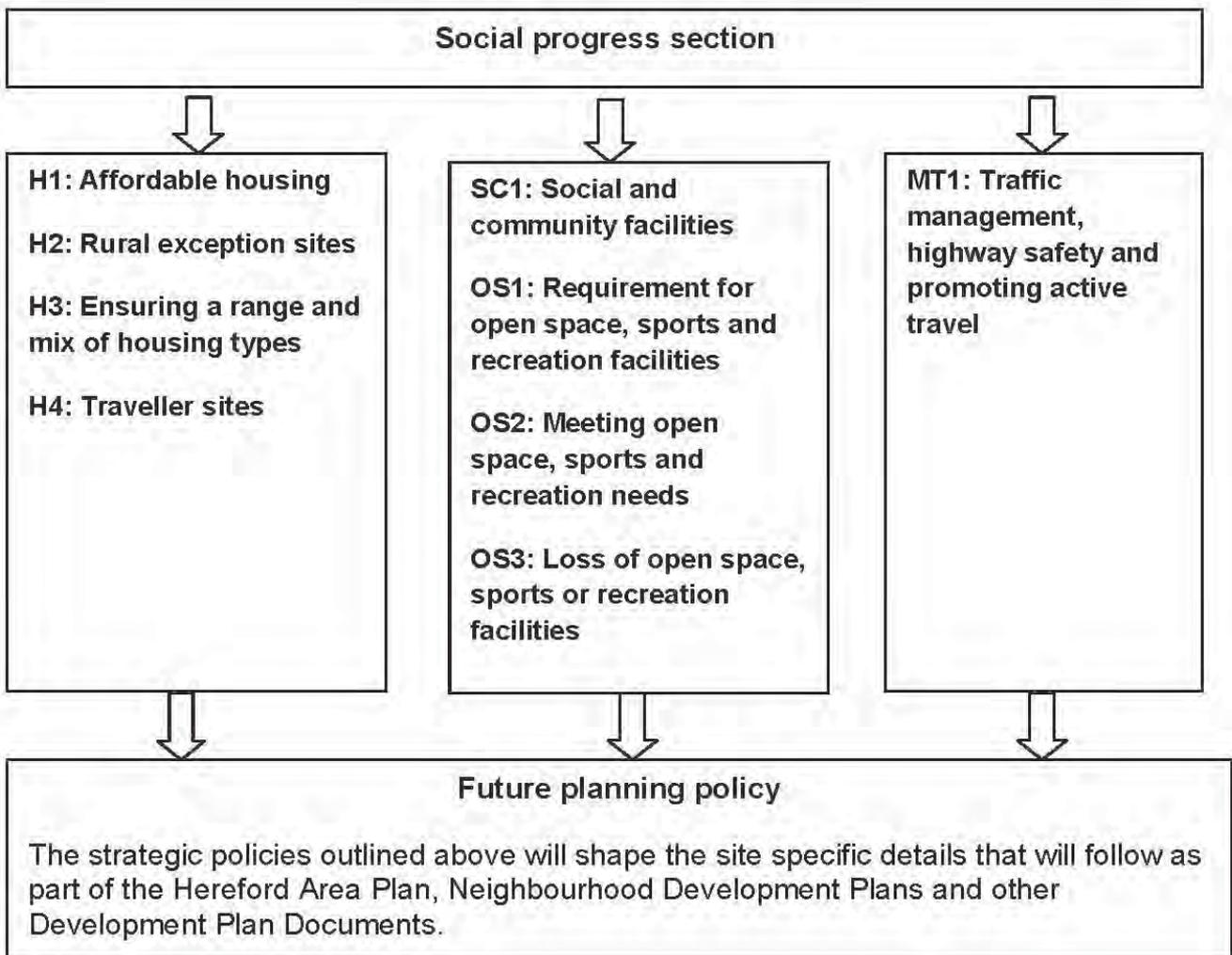
- 4.8.46 These policies will be delivered by:
- the Infrastructure Development Plan and developer contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy
  - the development management process
  - Hereford Area Plan, Bromyard Development Plan, Neighbourhood Development Plans, other Development Plan Documents as appropriate and Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 4.8.47 In addition to the indicators listed in the Spatial Strategy and General Policies' sections, the following indicators will be used to measure the effectiveness of the policies:
- utilising the AMR to develop an indicator of housing completions by HMAs and rural HMAs.

The General Policies are divided into three different sections: Social Progress, Economic Prosperity and Environmental Quality

### 5.1 Social progress

#### Introduction

5.1.1 Social progress is about improving the well-being of our communities. The Core Strategy’s vision for social progress is a long-term one, seeking to deliver decent affordable homes, social and community facilities and other necessary infrastructure in urban and rural areas. There are five objectives which develop this vision (strategic objectives 1-5 in the spatial strategy section) and this section sets out a series of policies on affordable housing, social and community infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation, and traffic management to deliver these objectives, alongside Policies SS1 to SS7 and the Place Shaping policies.



## Affordable housing

- 5.1.2 There is a significant need for affordable housing within Herefordshire and the planning system can assist the delivery of affordable homes. Policy H1 establishes affordable housing targets whilst specific place based policies in Section 4 of this document set out targets for individual strategic housing developments.
- 5.1.3 Within the county, the need for affordable housing has been investigated through the *Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008* (SHMA) which introduced the broad housing needs of the county. A *Local Housing Market Assessment* (LHMA) was completed in 2011 and updated in 2013, which draws on and develops the SHMA to provide a local assessment of housing requirements for the seven local housing markets across Herefordshire. In addition to the LHMA, parish level housing needs surveys are undertaken to identify needs at a very local level, to support the development of affordable housing. The need for affordable homes across the county is significantly high, but the viability of delivering affordable homes over the plan period has been recognised in order to provide an achievable target in the Core Strategy.
- 5.1.4 Affordable housing is housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market. It encompasses housing provided at below market prices and allocated on the basis of need, to people who are unable to purchase or rent houses available generally on the open market without financial assistance. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
- 5.1.5 Affordable housing can include a range of rented and home ownership housing options which meet local housing need. By seeking to provide a range of housing options, the council can help to address the needs of those seeking to gain a first step on the property ladder, reduce the demand for social rented housing, free up existing social rented homes, provide wider choice for households and ensure that sites have a mix of tenures.
- 5.1.6 The National Planning Policy Framework divides affordable housing into three categories:
- social rented for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime;
  - affordable rented housing subject to rent controls that require no more than 80% of the local market rent; and
  - intermediate homes for sale and rent, provided at a cost above social rent but below market levels.
- 5.1.7 Affordable housing under these definitions can include both individual and multiple dwellings, those constructed under self-build projects funded by registered providers or community housing groups as well as individual projects providing low cost housing that does not exceed affordable levels – as defined in the council published ‘Provision of Affordable Housing Technical Data.’ In such cases planning conditions will be imposed to ensure that housing is retained in perpetuity for future local housing needs.
- 5.1.8 Housing provided under these categories whether for rent or sale must be made available at a price level that can be sustained by local people in housing need. It is important to emphasise the distinctions between the roles of the different categories of affordable housing and not to treat one as a substitute for the other. It is important to set criteria identifying what constitutes local housing need. This is in order that proposals for additional dwellings coming forward can be clearly shown to be contributing to this requirement – and thus to the aim of sustaining urban and rural communities.

### Policy H1 - Affordable housing – thresholds and targets

All new open market housing proposals on sites of more than 10 dwellings which have a maximum combined gross floor space of more than 1000m<sup>2</sup> will be expected to contribute towards meeting affordable housing needs.

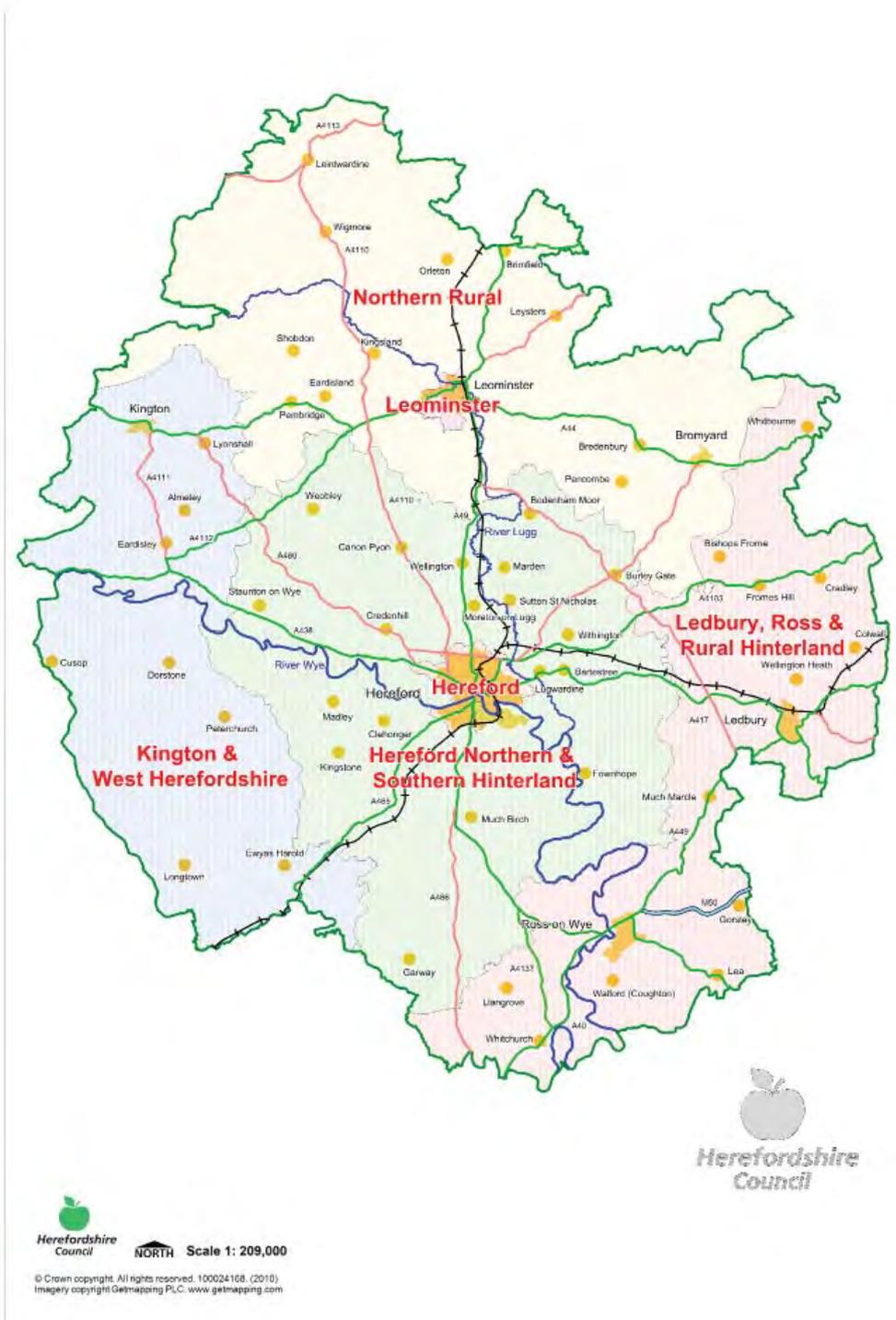
The amount and mix of affordable housing including those on strategic housing sites will vary depending on evidence of housing need as identified through the latest housing market assessment, and, an assessment of the viability of the development. The following indicative targets have been established based on evidence of need and viability in the county's housing market and housing value areas:

1. a target of 35% affordable housing provision on sites in the Hereford, Hereford Northern and Southern Hinterlands, and Kington and West Herefordshire housing value areas;
2. a target of 40% affordable housing provision on sites in the Ledbury, Ross and Rural Hinterlands; and Northern Rural housing value areas (which includes Bromyard);
3. a target of 25% affordable housing provision on sites in the Leominster housing value area.

Any affordable housing provided under the terms of this policy will be expected to be available in perpetuity for those in local housing need.

- 5.1.9 Affordable housing targets and thresholds have been informed by an *Economic Viability Assessment 2014* including the likely impact upon overall levels of housing delivery and aim of creating mixed communities. The work on viability involved the definition of housing value areas which are areas where housing values/prices are broadly similar. These can be seen in figure 5.1. The relationship of postcode areas to Housing Value Areas can be found in Appendix 7.

Figure 5.1 - Housing Value Areas



- 5.1.10 The findings of the *Local Housing Market Assessment 2013* (LHMA) have also been taken into account so that the resultant policies on affordable housing are locally relevant and viable. The supporting evidence will be maintained by updating the housing market assessment work and viability and housing value areas on a three yearly basis.
- 5.1.11 The LHMA indicates that there remains a significant need for social housing across the county. However the viability of housing schemes also has to be taken into account in determining both the required percentage and an appropriate mix of tenures of affordable housing. Overall target percentages have been established for different parts of the county and are set out in Policy H1. In locations where achieving high levels of social rented housing would impact upon the viability of new housing schemes, increasing the percentage of intermediate housing will be considered where the overall affordable housing target can be maintained. Evidence to justify this would need to be demonstrated as part of the consideration of a development proposal.
- 5.1.12 A supplementary Planning Document will provide additional guidance and set out the details of how the affordable housing policies will be implemented. The guidance will include:
  - advice regarding the need for affordable housing;
  - affordable house prices and rents in Herefordshire;
  - the negotiation process;
  - securing affordable housing and controlling occupancy; and
  - contributions to off-site provision.
- 5.1.13 There is a need to ensure that planning policy provides for a mix of affordable housing to reflect differing household needs and future demographic trends. There are a number of intermediate housing products, including shared ownership, which is likely to be particularly appealing to would-be first-time buyers who do not have sufficient funds to access the open market.
- 5.1.14 The council recognises that the provision of affordable housing is more difficult in **rural areas** where often the scale and location of new development is more restricted. Policy H2 enables the provision of affordable housing outside of villages, in areas where there is generally a restraint on open market housing, so as to help meet affordable housing needs in rural areas in perpetuity.

**Policy H2 - Rural exception sites**

Proposals for affordable housing schemes in rural areas may be permitted on land which would not normally be released for housing where:

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

In order to enable the delivery of affordable housing some market housing may be permitted as part of the development to subsidise a significant proportion of affordable housing provision. However, evidence will be required – by way of a financial appraisal, in order to demonstrate that the proposed scale of market housing is that required for the successful delivery of affordable housing.

- 5.1.15 Rural exception schemes need to take full account of environmental considerations including design, siting and materials and avoid sensitive locations where development would not be permitted for reasons of landscape or visual impact. Similarly a site's location should not place additional financial burdens upon households occupying the scheme such as through isolation or increased costs in gaining access to local services and facilities, for example schools and employment. Given that these schemes may be located in or around small villages, the scale of development should reflect the locality.
- 5.1.16 National planning policy indicates that consideration should be given to whether allowing some market housing on exception sites would facilitate the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs. Open market housing should be limited to an absolute minimum in such schemes and only in order to make the scheme viable. The preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans and/or other Development Plan Documents will also provide an opportunity to identify sites for affordable housing.

### Range and mix of housing

- 5.1.17 There is a clear need to provide for balanced and sustainable communities in Herefordshire. Housing affordability issues in the county are compounded by the housing offer, with a high proportion of detached housing and properties in higher council tax bands. The supply of properties which younger households might be able to afford to buy is limited; only 13.5% of housing is in social sector ownership (affordable) compared to 19.5% across the West Midlands.

#### Policy H3 – Ensuring an appropriate range and mix of housing

Residential developments should provide a range and mix of housing units which can contribute to the creation of balanced and inclusive communities. In particular, on larger housing sites of more than 50 dwellings developers will be expected to:

1. provide a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all households, including younger single people;
2. provide housing capable of being adapted for people in the community with additional needs; and
3. provide housing capable of meeting the specific needs of the elderly population by:
  - providing specialist accommodation for older people in suitable locations;
  - ensuring that non-specialist new housing is built to take account of the changing needs of an ageing population;
  - ensuring that developments contain a range of house types, including where appropriate, bungalow accommodation.

The latest Local Housing Market Assessment will provide evidence of the need for an appropriate mix and range of housing types and sizes.

- 5.1.18 The *Local Housing Market Assessment 2013* (LHMA) recommends that planning policies are not overly prescriptive with regard to requiring a specific mix of housing sites. Specific policies for the strategic sites refer to meeting needs identified in the LHMA. The range of house types provided across the county will be monitored to ensure an appropriate mix of housing is provided, however it is recognised that meeting specialist needs is more likely to be achievable on sites of 50 dwellings and above.
- 5.1.19 The *Herefordshire Older People's Survey 2012* outlined that there is an increasing requirement for new housing to cater for older people. Addressing this need will be met through a combination of measures

including the provision of specialist accommodation in locations where the principle of residential development is accepted; and by ensuring that general housing provision is designed in such a way that enables easy adaptation to meet the requirements of all households.

**Traveller sites**

- 5.1.20 It is important that the accommodation needs and requirements of all sections of the community are considered in developing planning policies. Government planning policy is increasingly favouring the identification of sites for travellers. Herefordshire Council recognises these requirements which will be taken forward in the preparation of a new Travellers’ Sites Document. In the interim however, the following policy is required in order to consider the merits of planning proposals.
- 5.1.21 For the purposes of this policy the definition of “travellers” means “gypsies and travellers” and “travelling show people” as defined in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, CLG 2015.

**Policy H4 – Traveller sites**

The accommodation needs of travellers will be provided for through the preparation of a Travellers’ Sites Document (DPD) which will include site specific allocations.

In the absence of an adopted DPD, or where proposals for sites are brought forward on non-allocated land, proposals will be supported where:

1. sites afford reasonable access to services and facilities, including health and schools
2. appropriate screening and landscaping is included within the proposal to protect local amenity and the environment
3. they promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community
4. they enable mixed business and residential accommodation (providing for the live-work lifestyle of travellers)
5. they avoid undue pressure on local infrastructure and services
6. in rural areas, the size of the site does not dominate nearby settled communities and
7. they are capable of accommodating on-site facilities that meet best practice for modern traveller site requirements, including play areas, storage, provision for recycling and waste management.

In rural areas, where there is a case of local need for an affordable traveller site, but criterion 1 above cannot be fulfilled, then an exception may be made and proposals permitted, provided such sites can be retained for that purpose in perpetuity.

- 5.1.22 The approach to planning for travellers through the preparation of a Travellers’ Sites Document will reflect the increased involvement of traveller and settled communities in determining the location of development. Traveller sites include those considered necessary to meet the residential needs of gypsies and travellers who will remain in a location permanently or for substantial periods, transit sites for those moving through the area as well as plots for travelling show people.
- 5.1.23 The Travellers’ Sites Document, which is programmed in the Council’s Local Development Scheme (2015), for adoption in spring 2016, will include the following:
  - an assessment of current need for permanent residential pitches with an indication of the process for updating need on a regular basis;

- pitch targets for travellers;
- deliverable sites for residential pitches for the period 2014-19 to set against targets;
- identification of broad locations for further developable residential sites for travellers over the period 2019-2031;
- identification of need for, and approach to, the provision of transit sites for the plan period;
- consideration of the need for, and approach to, provision for travelling showpersons within the county for the plan period;
- consideration of the need for a rural exceptions policy to enable sites to be brought forward solely as affordable gypsy and traveller sites; and
- consideration of support for the authorisation of long-term unofficial sites where they meet the criteria in policy H4 above or the making available of alternative provision where they are lost for whatever reason.

- 5.1.24 A pitch is defined as the 'area of land on a gypsy and traveller caravan site developed for a single family.' A plot means a pitch on a "travelling showpeople" site (often called a "yard"). This terminology differentiates between residential pitches for "gypsies and travellers" and mixed-use plots for "travelling showpeople", which may/will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment.
- 5.1.25 As at January 2015\*, there are 114 authorised residential pitches within Herefordshire with a further 21 pitches on unauthorised, but tolerated sites. Numbers of caravans on these sites have fluctuated over the past two years from 148 to 161 and averaging 157. Some pitches accommodate more than one caravan.
- \* Caravan count conducted by Herefordshire Council (January 2015)
- 5.1.26 The private sector may need to provide for further residential site needs until the Travellers' Sites Document is adopted in 2016 and policy H4 sets out the basis upon which planning permission will be granted during this period. The criteria in this policy may also apply when the defined need for residential gypsy and traveller sites has been met, yet further need is accepted.
- 5.1.27 In the same way that a rural exception policy is applied to housing development, rural exception sites can also be applied to affordable traveller sites and the Travellers' Sites Document will consider this issue. A rural exception site policy enables small sites to be used, specifically for affordable traveller sites in perpetuity, in small rural communities, that would not normally be used for traveller sites.
- 5.1.28 The assessment of need for transit sites or plots for travelling show people will be reviewed as part of the work for the Travellers' Sites Document. Should any need arise in the interim; proposals will need to satisfy the criteria set out in Policy H4.
- 5.1.29 In bringing proposals forward it will be important to ensure that sites are appropriately landscaped in order to limit their visual impact and should provide access to local facilities and services such as shops, schools and healthcare. It is also important to recognise that provision is included to meet the live-work nature of gypsies and travellers and adequate provision is made for play space for children.

#### **Social and community facilities**

- 5.1.30 The Core Strategy aims to achieve sustainable communities across Herefordshire and improve the well-being of its people. This requires an effective balance between the provision of new housing and employment and providing the social and community facilities required to support growth. There is a need to support and seek improvements to local services and facilities; particularly in rural areas where

facilities have been in decline since the post-war period. Less prosperous groups in remote rural areas are arguably in a worse position than similar income groups in towns, because their access to services, employment, leisure and shopping facilities is severely limited. For people living in the rural areas, access to essential facilities and services depends on access to a car or living close to a public transport route.

- 5.1.31 The lack of local services and facilities in rural areas and their increasing concentration in the towns has been identified as a key issue in Herefordshire. Included within the ambitions of the Herefordshire Community Strategy, are the retention and improvement of services and facilities and the provision of excellent training and learning opportunities - for people of all ages within the county.
- 5.1.32 Social and community facilities can be defined as physical facilities for different individuals and communities, which are provided by a range of organisations (public, private and voluntary). They provide for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community. These facilities play an important role in the development of a vibrant community by creating a sense of place and providing a place for people to meet and interact socially. They also offer services that are essential for education, health and well-being; and support community cohesion and benefit the general quality of life of residents.
- 5.1.33 Social and community facilities can include: public services, community centres and public halls, arts and cultural facilities including theatres, public art and heritage centres; policing and criminal justice facilities, fire and ambulance services, health and education facilities including GP surgeries and NHS walk-in centres; public houses, local shops, public toilets, youth centres, social care facilities including day centres and child care facilities; places of worship, and services provided by the community and voluntary sector - for example scout and guide premises.

**Policy SC1 – Social and community facilities**

Development proposals which protect, retain or enhance existing social and community infrastructure or ensure that new facilities are available as locally as possible will be supported. Such proposals should be in or close to settlements, have considered the potential for co-location of facilities and where possible be safely accessible by foot, by cycle and public transport.

New development that creates a need for additional social and community facilities that cannot be met through existing social facilities - will be expected to meet the additional requirements through new, or extension of existing, provision or by developer contributions which meet the relevant tests of paragraph 204 of the NPPF .

Proposals involving the provision or expansion of social and community facilities will be expected to provide publicly accessible toilets (including facilities for disabled people and baby changing).

Existing facilities will be retained, unless it can be demonstrated that an appropriate alternative facility is available, or can be provided to meet the needs of the community affected; or it can be shown that the facility is no longer required, viable or is no longer fit for purpose; and where appropriate, it has been vacant and marketed for community use without success. Viable alternative facilities must be equivalent to those they replace, in terms of size, quality and accessibility.

The provision or improvement of higher education facilities and the continuing enhancement of existing, or provision of new, training and skills facilities will be actively promoted.

- 5.1.34 Population growth will generate a range of service needs throughout Herefordshire, particularly concentrated within the major growth locations, and it is essential that these service needs are supported by appropriate levels of social and community infrastructure. This should come forward either as an integral part of the development (adaptable, mixed use and made available at an early stage), or by way of a developer contribution/Community Infrastructure Levy monies which meet the relevant tests of paragraph 204 of the NPPF.
- 5.1.35 Notwithstanding the diverse spatial requirements of local clubs, societies and faith communities, the council is moving towards the co-location of community premises such as meeting halls, places of worship and schools - for example, a mix of community uses/resources at one location to encourage efficient use of space and integrated provision to meet the needs of all sectors of our community. The council recognises however, that whilst shared space will be a suitable way forward for some, there are many who require their own space for activities, including worship and teaching.

#### Loss of existing facilities

- 5.1.36 Local retail premises, village halls, churches and public houses, particularly in the rural areas are often at the heart of the community and provide a place for the local community to meet, to use function rooms, to socialise and to fulfil the day to day convenience needs of the local community. In some locations it is becoming increasingly difficult to retain services, shops and public houses; however it is essential that support is given to enable businesses to continue to serve the local community. In such cases, flexibility should be given to enable local shops, services or public houses to diversify into ancillary retail and tourism opportunities or community ownership through the 'Community Right to Bid' process. This flexibility may enable the business to continue to serve the local community. Where a business is shown to be no longer viable, the first alternative should be to investigate whether an alternative community use is possible. In order to demonstrate that alternative community uses have been considered, evidence of marketing for a period of at least 12 months should be provided with any proposals involving the loss of community facilities.

#### Education and skills

- 5.1.37 Some of the main socio-economic outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy are to improve educational attainment, increase the number of young people entering education or training at 16 and create a highly skilled workforce. These are also wider regeneration objectives of various agencies and important components of delivering the economic vision for Herefordshire. The council is therefore exploring the potential for a university gateway at Hereford in order to provide opportunities for local people to access jobs in growth sectors, including green technologies and help the city become a magnet for businesses in knowledge intensive industries. In doing so, the skills of the current labour market will be improved and the knowledge and research infrastructure aligned with particular growth sectors of the economy.

#### Culture

- 5.1.38 The council also acknowledges the contribution that culture can make to the economy. Culture is fundamental to the character of Herefordshire, with national and local research showing that it is important to people, and has the potential to make us happier and healthier; as well as providing opportunities for social interaction and learning. However, the rural nature of Herefordshire, with its dispersed communities and limited public transport, means that access to cultural facilities can be difficult. One of the aims of Herefordshire's Cultural Strategy 2008-18 is to facilitate easy and affordable access to high quality cultural activities and facilities for all.

### Reducing the need to travel

5.1.39 The provision of community facilities in local areas across the county will ensure better access for people, which in turn reduces the need to travel; while the co-location of some facilities and services will help to ensure the effective use of resources, and encourage joined-up service delivery and shared maintenance and management costs. In this respect, the council aims to support the delivery of new services and facilities, through partnership working with service providers and the local community; and through development opportunities that arise from local authority and private sector regeneration projects. Furthermore, the council is working with local communities to develop Neighbourhood Development Plans, to ensure that community needs and priorities are matched to the services that are offered in their local areas.

### Provision of public toilets

5.1.40 A lack of toilet facilities can have an impact on the lives of older people, parents and carers with young children, disabled people and people with chronic health problems; by preventing or restricting their opportunities to take part in everyday activities like shopping and leisure pursuits. The council is developing a community toilet scheme to enable local businesses like pubs, restaurants and shops, to work together with the council to make more clean, safe and accessible toilets available to the public.

### Co-location of services and facilities

5.1.41 Co-locating public and community services in shared buildings or on shared sites provides a number of benefits for both the community, as users of the services and for the council and its partners, as providers of services. The population of Herefordshire is forecast to continue to grow, with an ageing population structure and this will put increasing pressure on existing services. At the same time, the current economic climate and competing demands for space and resources means that a different approach towards locating services and facilities may be needed, especially if we want to ensure that infrastructure is provided in the most sustainable and accessible locations in the county. In practice this could mean linking nurseries, schools and colleges; widening the range of health and social care services available at health centres, or by providing education, training or IT services in libraries.

### Open space, sports and recreation

5.1.42 Open space, sports and recreation facilities are an essential part of sustainable communities. They need to stand the test of time, be where people want to live, and enable people to meet their sporting and recreational aspirations and potential. Planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are fundamental to delivering the broader objectives of achieving:

- networks of accessible, high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities in both urban and rural areas, which meet the needs of residents and visitors, are fit for purpose and are economically and environmentally sustainable;
- an appropriate balance between new provision and the enhancement of existing provision; and
- reasonable certainty for developers and land owners in relation to the requirements and expectations of local planning authorities in respect of open space, sport and recreation provision.

5.1.43 Herefordshire is fortunate to have a broad range of open space, sports and recreation facilities which are both in public and private ownership. Open space, sports and recreation typology definitions include (but are not limited to) formal and informal parks and gardens, school sports grounds, public rights of way,

allotments, semi-natural areas (including orchards), sports playing fields, cemeteries and churchyards, amenity areas, indoor sports halls, children’s play facilities, village halls, civic spaces, country parks, green infrastructure corridors and canals.

5.1.44 Unfortunately, not all communities within Herefordshire are sufficiently catered for in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility of open space; so it is essential that new developments within the county meet the needs of new communities as well as protect and enhance existing facilities which are valued by existing communities.

**Policy OS1 - Requirement for open space, sports and recreation facilities**

The provision of appropriate open space, sports and recreation facilities will arise in the following proposals for planning applications:

1. all new residential dwellings; or
2. retail and employment proposals where there is need to provide informal areas of amenity greenspace for the use of employees and visitors; and
3. residential institutions, student accommodation, assembly and leisure, hotels or hostels.

5.1.45 The need for open space, sports and recreational facilities will be considered on a site by site basis. Open space, sports and recreation facilities will need to be placed on site and be integral to the functioning of the development. Off-site contributions will be sought, where appropriate, on an equally beneficial basis for the local community and will include provision for appropriate maintenance (as defined by the local planning authority) of the open space, sports or recreation facility.

5.1.46 For employment and/or retail proposals, formal open space, sports and recreation facilities (see Glossary) will not be required. However appropriate informal areas of amenity greenspace may be required for the use of employees and visitors for breaks, and will be assessed on a site by site basis. If there is a nearby open space within safe walking distance which would cater for the needs of the employees, a contribution of the equivalent cost of providing the on-site area as identified above to improve existing off-site provision, may also be considered. Users of residential institutions e.g. care homes will also require the provision of on-site amenity greenspace, particularly where the facility hosts families and children. For residential accommodation providing for the needs of people with severe mobility impairments, a reduction of required provision will need to be provided (on a pro-rata basis) according to the needs of the residents using the accommodation.

**Policy OS2 – Meeting open space, sports and recreation needs**

In order to meet the needs of the community, provision for open space, sports and recreation facilities will be sought, where appropriate, taking into account the following principles:

1. any new development must be in accordance with all applicable set standards of quantity, quality and accessibility as defined; and
2. provision of open space, sports and recreation facilities should be located on-site unless an off-site or partial off-site contribution would result in an equally beneficial enhancement to an existing open space, sports and/or recreation facility which is of benefit to the local community.

- 5.1.47 In order to identify shortfalls against a local standard of provision and set out future requirements, Herefordshire Council has undertaken a local assessment of existing provision of open space, sports and recreation needs which is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and standards set by relevant organisations such as Fields in Trust, Sport England and Natural England. The council is updating its evidence base in order to incorporate local standards into either a supplementary planning document, other Development Plan Document and/or Neighbourhood Development Plans. This evidence base will be used to secure appropriate planning contributions to aid development of open space, sports and recreation facilities throughout Herefordshire.
- 5.1.48 Wherever possible, the new provision of open space, sports and recreation facilities should help strengthen the link with green infrastructure corridors. New provision which repairs any previous fragmentation or isolation of sites as part of green infrastructure corridors will be looked upon favourably.

### Policy OS3 – Loss of open space, sports or recreation facilities

In determining the appropriateness of proposals which results in the loss of an open space, sports or recreation facility, the following principles will be taken into account:

1. clear evidence that the open space, sports or recreation facility is surplus to the applicable quantitative standard;
2. the loss of the open space, sports or recreation facility results in an equally beneficial replacement or enhanced existing facility for the local community;
3. the loss of the open space, sports and recreation facility is for the purpose of providing an ancillary development which improves the functioning, useability or viability of the open space, sport and recreation use, e.g. changing rooms, toilets, grandstand accommodation, assembly and function uses;
4. the loss of the open space, sports or recreation facility will not result in the fragmentation or isolation of a site which is part of a green infrastructure corridor.

- 5.1.49 Any proposals resulting in a loss of an open space, sports or recreation facility should be able to clearly demonstrate that the facility is not only surplus currently, but taking into account the population needs of the community over the plan period. Proposals which also lead to the ‘thinning out,’ isolation or fragmentation of green infrastructure networks will also be resisted. “Equally beneficial replacements” of open space refers to quantity and quality in a suitable location.
- 5.1.50 In some cases, the loss of an open space sports and recreation facility may be appropriate where a proposal is for the purpose of providing ancillary open space, sports and recreation uses which are necessary to enable the continued viability, functionality or useability of the facility. Ancillary facilities will also need to meet applicable policies regarding appropriateness and siting of the development.
- 5.1.51 Open space, sports and recreation facilities not only benefit the health and well-being of the community, but can also bring great benefits to existing and new species-rich habitats supporting local biodiversity. A number of open space, sports and recreation facilities are located in green infrastructure corridors and act as important green links throughout the county. It is therefore important that we keep providing a range of open space areas such as semi-natural areas alongside open space, sports and recreation facilities to support their use and protection for future generations to enjoy.

## Traffic management

- 5.1.52 In order to deliver the strategic objectives outlined in Policy SS4 in the Spatial Strategy, development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have incorporated the traffic management and safety criteria set out in Policy MT1.
- 5.1.53 Herefordshire Council's *Local Transport Plan 2013-2015* (LTP) defines the following road hierarchy across the county:
- the strategic highway network - comprising the M50, A49, A465, and A40. The strategic highway links Hereford with the market towns and provides the principal routes into and throughout the county;
  - main distributor roads which comprise mainly A class routes that supplement the strategic network;
  - secondary distributor roads which comprise mainly B and C class roads that link movements to and from the main distributor network; and
  - local distributor roads that facilitate movement between rural settlements and parishes.

### Policy MT1 – Traffic management, highway safety and promoting active travel

Development proposals should incorporate the following principle requirements covering movement and transportation:

1. demonstrate that the strategic and local highway network can absorb the traffic impacts of the development without adversely affecting the safe and efficient flow of traffic on the network or that traffic impacts can be managed to acceptable levels to reduce and mitigate any adverse impacts from the development;
2. promote and, where possible, incorporate integrated transport connections and supporting infrastructure (depending on the nature and location of the site), including access to services by means other than private motorised transport;
3. encourage active travel behaviour to reduce numbers of short distance car journeys through the use of travel plans and other promotional and awareness raising activities;
4. ensure that developments are designed and laid out to achieve safe entrance and exit, have appropriate operational and manoeuvring space, accommodate provision for all modes of transport, the needs of people with disabilities and provide safe access for the emergency services;
5. protect existing local and long distance footways, cycleways and bridleways unless an alternative route of at least equal utility value can be used, and facilitate improvements to existing or provide new connections to these routes, especially where such schemes have been identified in the Local Transport Plan and/or Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and
6. have regard to with both the council's Highways Development Design Guide and cycle and vehicle parking standards as prescribed in the Local Transport Plan - having regard to the location of the site and need to promote sustainable travel choices.

Where traffic management measures are introduced they should be designed in a way which respects the character of the surrounding area including its landscape character. Where appropriate, the principle of shared spaces will be encouraged.

- 5.1.54 Development proposals should not inhibit the safe and efficient flow of the strategic network. The use of controls on access can positively contribute to the integration of sustainable modes of transport (walking,

cycling and public transport), and development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how the criteria in Policy MT1 have been incorporated within the design of the scheme in order to increase active travel across the county.

- 5.1.55 Alongside the above, development proposals should have regard to the council's LTP while promoting the principles set out in Herefordshire Council's Highway Development Design Guide for New Developments and the Department for Transport's Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2 – Wider Application of the Principles (2010) or subsequent documentation. Consideration will also be given to the Department of Transport Circular 02/2013 and Design Manual for roads and bridges or subsequent documentation.
- 5.1.56 Traffic management schemes should respect the local area including landscape character by providing an appropriate design solution, siting of infrastructure and use of materials as well as taking opportunities to improve the quality of the public realm as part of an integrated approach. This may include opportunities for rationalising the existing infrastructure and 'de-cluttering' the streetscape to the benefit of its appearance as well as functioning.
- 5.1.57 In appropriate locations, the use of shared space can provide an approach which can reduce delays and allow pedestrians to move more freely within the space. Shared space is a design approach that seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance of motor vehicles, primarily through lower speeds and encouraging drivers to behave more accommodatingly towards pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

#### **Delivery and monitoring of social progress policies**

- 5.1.58 These policies will be delivered by:
- the development management process;
  - preparation and implementation of the Hereford Area Plan, Neighbourhood Development Plans and other Development Plan Documents; and
  - developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure levy.

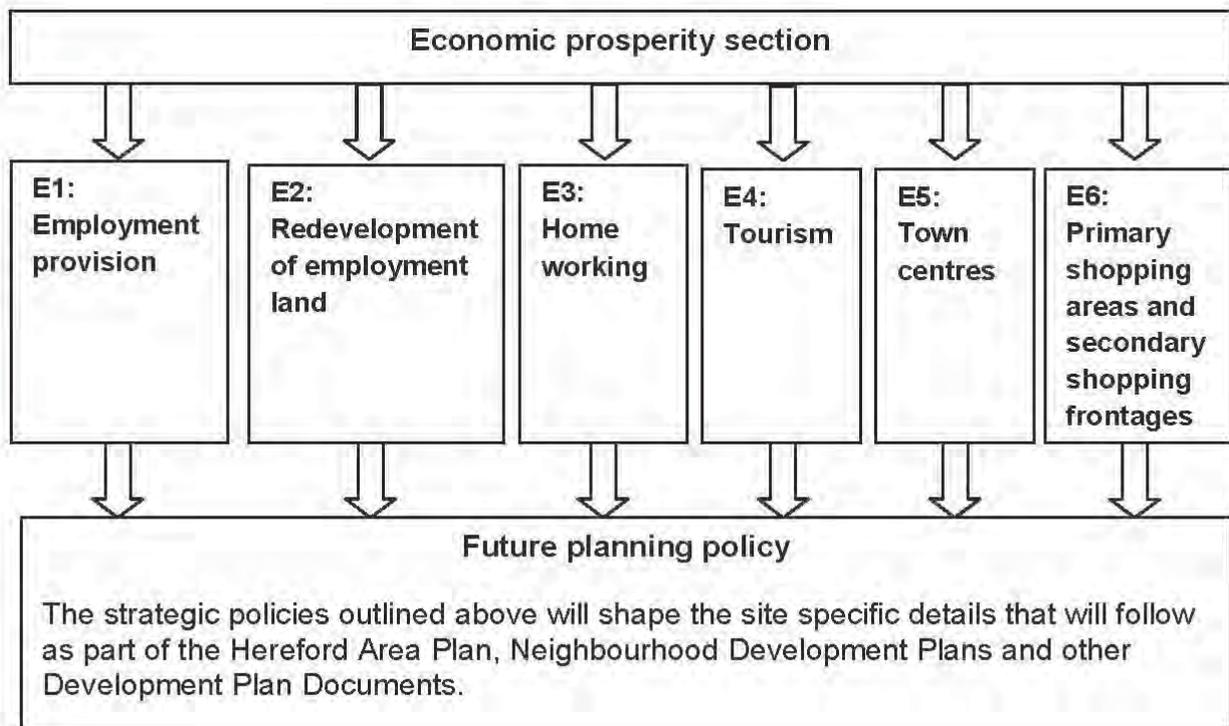
#### **Social Progress Monitoring Indicators**

- 5.1.59 The following indicators (in addition to those set out at the end of the spatial strategy) will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the policies through the Annual Monitoring Report:
- life expectancy of residents – Office for National Statistics (ONS);
  - affordable housing completions split by social and intermediate occupancy;
  - rural exception site completion;
  - house type and number of bedrooms (aspirational);
  - assessment of traveller site provision against the need identified in the council's Assessment of Accommodation Needs of Gypsies and Travellers;
  - recommendations of the Open Space Study and Playing Pitch Assessment which includes surveys of open space, sports and recreation facilities to assess useability, supply, access and maintenance;
  - number of planning applications proposing the loss of an open space, sports or recreation facilities; and
  - number of planning applications proposing new open space, sports and recreation facilities.

## 5.2 Economic prosperity

### Introduction

- 5.2.1 Ensuring a strong and diverse economy will help give people in Herefordshire more opportunities for work within the county (which could reduce the number of people needing to travel outside of it), retain a skilled labour force, particularly in rural areas, as well as help to reduce carbon emissions. Herefordshire is currently very reliant on agricultural and manufacturing industries being a centre for food and drink production and a home to large manufacturing operations. However, it is acknowledged that although we need to help strengthen these industries, that generally these types of industries are in decline and that some employment uses will need to diversify, particularly to environmental technologies, knowledge, tourism and service based industries in order to address this economic imbalance and enable the county to grow into the future.
- 5.2.2 The following policies relate to the theme of economic prosperity and include policies for the provision of employment land; safeguarding existing employment land; home working, tourism, town centres and primary shopping areas and frontages. They supplement the Spatial Strategy policy SS5 and the Place-Shaping policies. In particular, they address relevant Core Strategy objectives set out in the spatial strategy section.



## Provision of employment land

- 5.2.3 In line with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, building a strong and competitive economy is an objective that resonates in each of the policies concerning economic prosperity. Over the plan period, Herefordshire will continue to diversify employment opportunities, encourage the expansion of local business and reduce the need for travel. Already many employment areas in Herefordshire utilise links with the A49 trunk road, including sites in Hereford city centre, Ross on Wye, Leominster, Marlbrook and Moreton-on-Lugg. There will be a greater emphasis on extending and enlarging enterprise parks in Hereford and the market towns and allowing more flexibility in the rural areas for employment development such as home working and live/work units.

### Policy E1 - Employment provision

The focus for new employment provision in Herefordshire is to provide a range of locations, types and sizes of employment buildings, land and offices to meet the needs of the local economy. Larger employment proposals will be directed to the strategic employment sites of Hereford, the market towns and rural industrial estates where appropriate.

Development proposals which enhance employment provision and help diversify the economy of Herefordshire will be encouraged where:

- the proposal is appropriate in terms of its connectivity, scale, design and size;
- the proposal makes better use of previously developed land or buildings;
- the proposal is an appropriate extension to strengthen or diversify an existing business operation;
- the proposal provides for opportunities for new office development in appropriate locations.

The provision of viable live/work units as part of mixed use developments will also be encouraged.

- 5.2.4 It is important that plan policies enable new, sustainable provision of employment land in locations and of a scale that is appropriate. Whilst Herefordshire has a relatively high employment rate, it is important to make sure that adequate opportunities exist to improve the quality and range of employment available, so addressing the issue of low wages in the county.
- 5.2.5 A major element of the strategy for generating new and better paid jobs will be the provision of a deliverable range of land supply in appropriate locations and in the right amounts. 'Employment land' in this instance refers to those uses falling within the planning B use classes, that is, offices (B1), manufacturing (B2) and warehousing and distribution (B8). In addition, employment land is considered an appropriate location to accommodate waste facilities and similar sui-generis employment uses.
- 5.2.6 The following is a summary of the main new and existing strategic locations which will provide for local and inward investment and contribute to the future employment provision in the county over the plan period. There is also potential for smaller sites to come forward throughout the plan period away from these strategic locations, which will also be encouraged where appropriate.

#### Hereford

- 5.2.7 The city of Hereford will continue to provide a large proportion of the county's employment supply.

**Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ)**

The Rotherwas industrial estate is located south-east of Hereford and is over 120 hectares (ha) in size and has over 125 companies operating within it.

**Westfields Trading Estate**

The Westfields trading estate is a 25 ha site located in the northern part of Hereford.

**Three Elms Trading Estate**

Three Elms Trading Estate is located north of Hereford and occupies 3 ha of land.

**Holmer Road, Hereford**

The industrial precinct on Holmer Road is located to the north of Hereford and is approximately 16 ha in size.

**Market towns**

- 5.2.8 The market towns of Leominster, Bromyard, Kington, Ross-on-Wye and Ledbury will also continue to support employment development through the rest of the county at existing and/or new strategic employment sites, which will be the primary location of a range of employment premises providing a series of enterprise hubs to complement the Hereford Enterprise Zone. The main strategic employment locations in the market towns are as follows:

**Leominster Enterprise Park, Leominster**

- 5.2.9 The Leominster Enterprise Park is located to the south-east of Leominster and is designated by the *Employment Land Study 2012* as of 'best quality.' The site is 15 ha in size and caters for B1, B2 and B8 uses. It is envisaged to be fully developed during the first half of the plan period. Given housing growth in Leominster, it is likely that during the second half of the plan period, an additional 5-10 ha of employment land will be required by extending the Leominster Enterprise Park to the south.

**Southern Avenue, Leominster**

- 5.2.10 This site is adjacent to the Leominster Enterprise Park and is 33 ha in size and is rated by the *Employment Land Study 2012* as 'good.' The site has limited opportunities to provide additional employment opportunities, however it is a significant contributor to existing employment provision.

**Land between Little Marcle Road and Ross Road, Ledbury**

- 5.2.11 This location is to the south-west of Ledbury and will comprise approximately 12 ha of employment land which will come forward to support the existing population and proposed growth of Ledbury. The land adjoins existing employment land and is rated as 'moderate' and will cater for a mix of employment uses, particularly smaller based business which may help to reduce the need to travel for the local community.

**Model Farm, Ross-on-Wye**

- 5.2.12 This site, carried forward from the Unitary Development Plan 2007, is approximately 10 ha in size and is located to the east of Ross-on-Wye. The site is envisaged to deliver innovative knowledge based

industries and a high quality mix of B1, B2 and B8 employment. The site has excellent access to the A40/A49 and is classed as 'good.'

#### Rural areas

- 5.2.13 The areas outside of market towns are also supported for continuing economic growth, particularly in areas which allow for the diversification of uses either through strengthening food and drink production, adding to new environmental technologies or those that allow for home based start-up businesses. Policy RA6 and its explanatory text guide employment development within these areas.
- 5.2.14 There is however a small number of larger employment locations outside of Hereford and the market towns which will also continue to contribute to the provision of Herefordshire's employment needs, including:

#### *Moreton Business Park, Moreton-on-Lugg*

- 5.2.15 Moreton Business Park is a large employment site of 60 ha which is located on the A49 between Hereford and Leominster. The business park includes a mineral extraction site and other employment units which contain all employment classes. However it has recently seen an increase of B1 office use and B8 storage and distribution uses. There is also possibility to enhance rail infrastructure into the site for business use. The site is rated as 'good' with potential to be rated as 'best.'

#### Safeguarding existing employment land

- 5.2.16 'Best and Good' quality employment land in the county, as defined in the *Employment Land Study 2012* will continue to be safeguarded for employment generating uses and general industry. In circumstances where other employment land and sites are no longer viable, sufficient justification and evidence will need to be submitted - for example structural surveys demonstrating that the building is not fit for continued employment use, and redevelopment of the site for employment use is not viable or feasible. Where possible, flexibility will be given to enable the business the opportunity to diversify to other ancillary and complementary uses to enable the business to continue. Uses such as fitness centres, child care centres, residential and retail uses are generally not appropriate to be located within an employment site, unless they serve for the day-to day convenience needs of the site's employees and any residential use is part of a live/work scheme.
- 5.2.17 It is important that a range of employment land continues to be available within Herefordshire. Means by which this can be achieved include: safeguarding existing supply, enabling extensions to existing employment land and the development of additional employment land where appropriate.

#### **Policy E2 – Redevelopment of existing employment land and buildings**

Employment land and buildings rated as 'best' and 'good' using the methodology in the *Employment Land Study 2012* (or successor document) will be safeguarded from redevelopment to other non-employment uses.

Proposals which would result in the loss of employment land rated as 'moderate' will be permitted where:

1. the development of the site for other uses would not result in an overall shortage in the quality and quantity of employment land supply in the area; or

### Policy E2 – Redevelopment of existing employment land and buildings continued

2. there would be a net improvement in amenity through the removal of a non-conforming use from within a residential area, and where an alternative use would offer amenity benefits. For sites in existing employment use, consideration should also be given to the ability to relocate existing occupiers where this is necessary; or
3. the proposal would not result in a piecemeal loss of employment land where there is potential for a more comprehensive scheme;

In all cases:

- the viability of the development proposal must be confirmed through a comprehensive assessment; and
- there must be evidence of appropriate and active marketing of at least 12 months for a change of use of a B Class employment use and it can be shown that this marketing has been unsuccessful.

The provision of ancillary and complementary uses which help meet the day-to-day needs of employment sites and their employees and improve the sites' attractiveness to businesses, will be permitted where they are of a scale which does not impact on the overall supply of employment land.

- 5.2.18 Policy E2 seeks to protect the best quality employment land in Herefordshire from being lost to other uses. The Employment Land Study 2012 undertaken as part of the evidence base classifies employment land across Herefordshire in respect of its quality. The recommendations from this study provide the basis for the development of Policy E1 on Employment provision. Applications for the change of use of existing employment land and buildings not currently included in the Employment Land Study 2012 will be assessed using the same methodology as if they were included.

#### Home working

- 5.2.19 In addition to employment sites in predominately Class B employment areas; Herefordshire Council also encourages the development of live/work units and some material change of use in surrounding residential areas to allow for a small scale occupation to be carried out at a person's principal place of residence. Live/work units and allowing flexibility for home working enable small enterprises which are compatible with the residential environment to become established. If the business seeks to expand beyond what could be described as home working or a live/work unit, then larger facilities in surrounding areas, particularly in enterprise parks in surrounding towns should be utilised.

### Policy E3 – Homeworking

The value of home working will be recognised by allowing some material change of use to part of a dwelling, where the dwelling remains as the principle place of residence for the home worker; and recognising the potential to encourage and expand home working, by allowing small extensions or conversions where the proposed use and operation would be compatible with its location and heritage value, and where it would not adversely affect the amenity of the neighbourhood by any of the following:

- changes to the appearance of any building;
- noise disturbance from the use or any increased traffic and parking generated;
- unsociable hours of operation; and
- the storage of hazardous materials or emissions from the site.

## Tourism

- 5.2.20 The *Herefordshire STEAM Report 2011* shows that tourism makes an important contribution to the county's economy. Herefordshire has many historic and natural assets which are of national interest for example the Mappa Mundi and the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Hereford, the market towns and rural areas are popular destinations for a range of different types of visits and activities. Tourism in Herefordshire can help to strengthen the economy through diversification and new business development in both urban and rural areas.

### Policy E4 – Tourism

Herefordshire will be promoted as a destination for quality leisure visits and sustainable tourism by utilising, conserving and enhancing the county's unique environmental and heritage assets and by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. In particular, the tourist industry will be supported by a number of measures including:

1. recognising the unique historic character of Hereford and the market towns as key visitor attractions and as locations to focus the provision of new larger scale tourist development;
2. the development of sustainable tourism opportunities, capitalising on assets such as the county's landscape, rivers, other waterways and attractive rural settlements, where there is no detrimental impact on the county's varied natural and heritage assets or on the overall character and quality of the environment. Particular regard will be had to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty in the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
3. retaining and enhancing existing, and encouraging new, accommodation and attractions throughout the county, which will help to diversify the tourist provision, extend the tourist season and increase the number of visitors staying overnight. In particular proposals for new hotels in Hereford will be encouraged. Applicants will be encouraged to provide a 'Hotel Needs Assessment' for any applications for new hotels;
4. ensuring that cycling, walking and heritage tourism is encouraged by facilitating the development of long distance walking and cycling routes, food and drink trails and heritage trails, including improvements to public rights of way, whilst having special regard for the visual amenity of such routes and trails, and for the setting of heritage assets in their vicinity; and
5. the safeguarding of the historic route of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal (shown on the Policies Map), together with its infrastructure, buildings, towpath and features. Where the original alignment cannot be re-established, a corridor allowing for deviations will be safeguarded. New developments within or immediately adjoining the safeguarded corridor will be required to incorporate land for canal restoration. Development not connected with the canal that would prevent or prejudice the restoration of a continuous route will not be permitted.

- 5.2.21 By encouraging more overnight stays and associated increased expenditure, there is potential for revenue from tourism to make a greater contribution to the county's economic well-being. The provision of new accommodation and the enhancement of existing accommodation will help achieve this goal. Many visitors to the county come to enjoy the beautiful countryside and there is likely to be a demand for new facilities and accommodations associated with this. Whilst some small scale tourism associated development may be appropriate in rural areas, any significant new development for accommodation and facilities should be focused in Hereford and the market towns to maximise sustainable transport opportunities and to protect environmental amenity. Applicants will be encouraged to provide a 'Hotel Needs Assessment Report' to support their proposals. This assessment will inform whether the right standard of hotel is proposed with respect to market demand and need, so demonstrating its economic benefit to the area.

- 5.2.22 The disused Herefordshire and Gloucestershire canal corridor is the subject of a long term restoration project with the aim of re-opening the canal link between Hereford and the Severn at Gloucester, terminating in a canal basin in Hereford. Some sections have already been restored. The recreation, tourism and economic potential of the project are recognised and the canal corridor will continue to receive protection from development through Policy E4.
- 5.2.23 Policy E4 recognises the contribution that tourism makes to the Herefordshire economy and seeks to ensure that this continues and is enhanced through new developments which are of an appropriate scale, type and location.

### Town centres

- 5.2.24 Policy E5 encourages appropriate town centre investment in Hereford and the market towns of Bromyard, Ledbury, Leominster, Kington and Ross-on-Wye which will contribute to and enhance the vitality and viability of these centres.

#### Policy E5 – Town centres

Town centres will be the focus for retail, commercial, leisure, cultural and tourism uses. Proposals for such uses which contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centres of Hereford and the market towns will be supported provided that they:

1. do not adversely affect the primary function of the town centres as shopping destinations; and
2. are of a scale and design appropriate to the size, role, character and heritage of the centre.

Proposals for development outside the town centres will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the requirements of the sequential test, as set out in paragraph 24 of the NPPF, have been met and that the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the centres. An application will be refused if it fails the sequential test or an impact assessment.

The sequential test requires the above mentioned uses to be located within town centres. Where it is proven there are no available and suitable town centre sites, preference will be given to edge of centre sites before any out of centre site is considered. Where a sequential test adequately demonstrates that the only suitable and available site is an edge of centre or an out of centre location, preference will be given to sites that are well connected to the town centre and are easily accessible by sustainable transport modes.

An impact assessment for retail, leisure and commercial proposals outside of the town centres to assess their impact on investment in the area and on vitality and viability of the town centre may be required depending on the scale and location of the proposal, as specified in the policies in the Place Shaping section.

The use of upper floors within town centres for residential and office uses will be supported.

Within town centres, retail uses will be concentrated within the primary shopping areas (Policy E6).

- 5.2.25 The town centre boundaries are defined in the Place Shaping sections of this document. A review of these boundaries will be undertaken as part of Neighbourhood Development Plans and the Hereford Area Plan.
- 5.2.26 Policy E5 has been informed by the findings of the Town Centres Study Update 2012 which outlines the retail, office and leisure needs of Hereford and the five market towns to 2031. The report identifies

limited requirement for further retail and leisure development and advises that there is no need for out of centre retail allocations in Hereford or in the market towns. Where town centre uses are proposed in edge of centre or out of centre locations, a sequential approach to selecting sites will be adopted in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. Evidence will be required to demonstrate that all available town centre opportunities have been thoroughly assessed, and transparent reasons provided as to why the town centre sites are not suitable and available, before land and/or buildings in edge of centre and then out of centre locations are considered. The sequential approach will also apply to large scale extensions to existing retail and town centre uses, as well as proposals to vary or remove conditions restricting the range of goods that can be sold, where the site is located in an edge of centre or out of centre location. In considering the suitability and availability of sites, applicants will be required to demonstrate how they have adopted a flexible approach to the size, design and format of the proposal.

5.2.27 The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to set thresholds to determine the requirement for an impact assessment for applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of town centres. Individual thresholds have been set for Hereford and the market towns as follows, and are included within the individual Place Shaping policies:

Hereford	700 m <sup>2</sup>
Bromyard	200 m <sup>2</sup>
Kington	200 m <sup>2</sup>
Ledbury	400 m <sup>2</sup>
Leominster	400 m <sup>2</sup>
Ross-on-Wye	400 m <sup>2</sup>

5.2.28 The council will seek to agree the scope of any impact assessment with the applicant in advance to ensure that the assessment is proportionate to the proposal under consideration. Impact assessments will be expected to meet the requirements as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 26 and will also apply to extensions and proposals to vary or remove conditions restricting the range of goods that can be sold. Impact assessments should balance any identified benefits in terms of job creation, highways and accessibility improvements and so on against likely counter effects that may occur in the town centre as a result of the proposal.

5.2.29 The vitality and viability of town centres may also be enhanced by the use of upper floors over existing shops, for residential and office accommodation; and uses that assist in supporting the vibrancy of the town centres in the evenings such as restaurants and leisure facilities. Such uses will assist in increasing the footfall and general activity in the town centre.

**Retail**

5.2.30 A successful retail function contributes to the vitality and viability of the town centre, the maintenance of its historic fabric and its role as a tourist destination. The aim of the policy is to improve vitality and viability of the centres by improving the variety, choice and quality of shops and other services, and enhancing the overall attraction, safety, convenience and ambience of a town centre. Within the town centres, retail uses will be focused in the “primary shopping areas”. These will be defined in the Hereford Area Plan, Neighbourhood Development Plans or Development Plan Documents.

5.2.31 For edge of centre and out of centre retail locations that have satisfied the sequential test and impact assessments, conditions may be imposed where necessary to restrict the range of goods to be sold to bulky goods only and/or restrict the net floorspace that can be devoted to non-bulky goods. Conditions

may also be imposed setting a minimum size of unit and restricting the potential for further vertical or horizontal sub division. This is to prevent the proliferation of smaller shop units outside of the town centre without seeking permission from the local planning authority and will protect the vitality and viability of existing centres.

- 5.2.32 Regular markets in town centres can attract additional shoppers and enhance the vibrancy to town centres bringing additional benefits for the existing retailers. Most of these are of a temporary nature and use public spaces. They generally complement the character of the town centres and their retention and enhancement will be encouraged.

### Offices

- 5.2.33 The *Employment Land Study Update 2012* found that the majority of demand for offices in Hereford is for small office premises (less than 100 m<sup>2</sup>) and in the market towns is generally from local companies in the town centres. In all places demand was found to be low and therefore it is expected that this can be met through existing provision and the conversion of upper floors of properties.

### Leisure

- 5.2.34 *The Town Centres Study Update 2012* recommended that no further allocations for leisure facilities and other town centre uses are made in Hereford or in the market towns. However the provision of new leisure facilities in locations within town centres will be encouraged where they serve an identified community need or meet a shortfall in existing provision.

### Primary shopping areas and primary and secondary shopping frontages

- 5.2.35 Primary shopping areas will be made up of primary and secondary shopping frontages (except in Bromyard and Kington) and will be reviewed in the Hereford Area Plan (including the Old Market Area) or Neighbourhood Development Plans/Development Plan Documents. Until their review, the primary and secondary frontages as shown in the Place Shaping policies are carried forward from the Unitary Development Plan 2007 for development management purposes. Primary and secondary frontages will not be defined for Bromyard and Kington given the size of their centres and the distribution of uses within them. In these towns retail uses will be focused in the primary shopping areas when defined.

#### Policy E6 - Primary shopping areas and primary and secondary shopping frontages

The retail trading character of the primary shopping areas and primary and secondary shopping frontages will be protected and enhanced. Primary shopping frontages will continue to be dominated by retail shops (Class A1) whilst secondary frontages may include a greater mix of uses.

Proposals for uses within Classes A2- A5 (non-retail) in ground floor premises in primary and secondary shopping frontages will be permitted where the proposed use will not result in:

1. a continuous frontage of more than two non-retail units; and the overall proportion of non-retail uses exceeding 25% in primary shopping frontages and 50% in secondary shopping frontages.

Exceptions to the above thresholds may be considered where:

- in primary and secondary frontages the proposal would lead to the appropriate use of vacant or underused premises where it can be demonstrated that the premises are unlikely to be used for retailing and that a business case can be demonstrated for requiring such a location; or

### Policy E6 - Primary shopping areas and primary and secondary shopping frontages continued.

- in secondary frontages, the proposal results from an expansion of an existing non-retail use or would fall within Class D1-D2; or
  - it is demonstrated in the Hereford Area Plan and/or Neighbourhood Development Plans that an alternative threshold would be appropriate.
2. detraction from the character of the shopping frontage concerned, for reasons of location, unit size or frontage width. The reinstatement of historic frontages will be encouraged.

- 5.2.36 The overall emphasis on retail trading should be retained in order to maintain character and to protect the vitality and viability of the primary shopping areas of Hereford and the market towns. The concentration of retail trading activity within a limited area, with substantial runs of active retail frontage will contribute to the busy and vibrant character of the county's primary shopping areas. A variety of non-retail uses already exist within shopping areas and these can add to the diversity of uses in town centres. Different but complementary uses during the day and evening can reinforce each other, making town centres more attractive to local residents, shoppers and visitors. Non-retail uses include building societies, banks, estate agents, insurance and betting offices (uses falling within Use Class A2, financial and professional services), together with restaurants and cafes (Class A3), drinking establishments (Class A4) and hot food takeaways (Class A5). However whilst one non-retail use alone may not detract from the vitality of a street, the cumulative impact of such changes will do so. A concentration of non-retail uses can have the effect of breaking up the shopping area, isolating some shop units to the detriment of the centre as a whole. The further introduction of non-retail uses in the primary shopping areas therefore needs to be carefully balanced against the need to protect retail trading character.
- 5.2.37 The Hereford Area Plan and Neighbourhood Development Plans or Development Plan Document for Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye will review the boundaries of the primary and secondary shopping frontages. However as stated above, only a primary shopping area will be defined in the Neighbourhood Plans/Development Plan Document for Bromyard and Kington as recommended in the *Town Centre Study Update 2012*.
- 5.2.38 The introduction of non-retail uses falling outside Class A of the Use Classes Order will normally be opposed on the ground floor level of primary shopping areas so as to protect the combination of retail and associated services which characterise these frontages in the interest of protecting vitality and viability. However, secondary shopping frontages may provide an opportunity for some non-retail uses in Classes D1 and D2 in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, subject to the criteria of Policy E6.
- 5.2.39 Proposals will also be considered in terms of noise, appearance, traffic generation, servicing, parking and any other factors which may have a detrimental effect on the shopping street and residential amenity. Reference should be made to the Herefordshire Shop Front Design Guide 2011. Where historic frontages have been lost or degraded their repair and/or reinstatement will be encouraged. This can help to improve the quality and attractiveness of the centre and this contributes to its vitality and viability.

## Delivery and monitoring of economic prosperity policies

5.2.40 These policies will be delivered by:

- the development management process
- the Hereford Area Plan, Neighbourhood Development Plans and other Development Plan Documents and
- developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

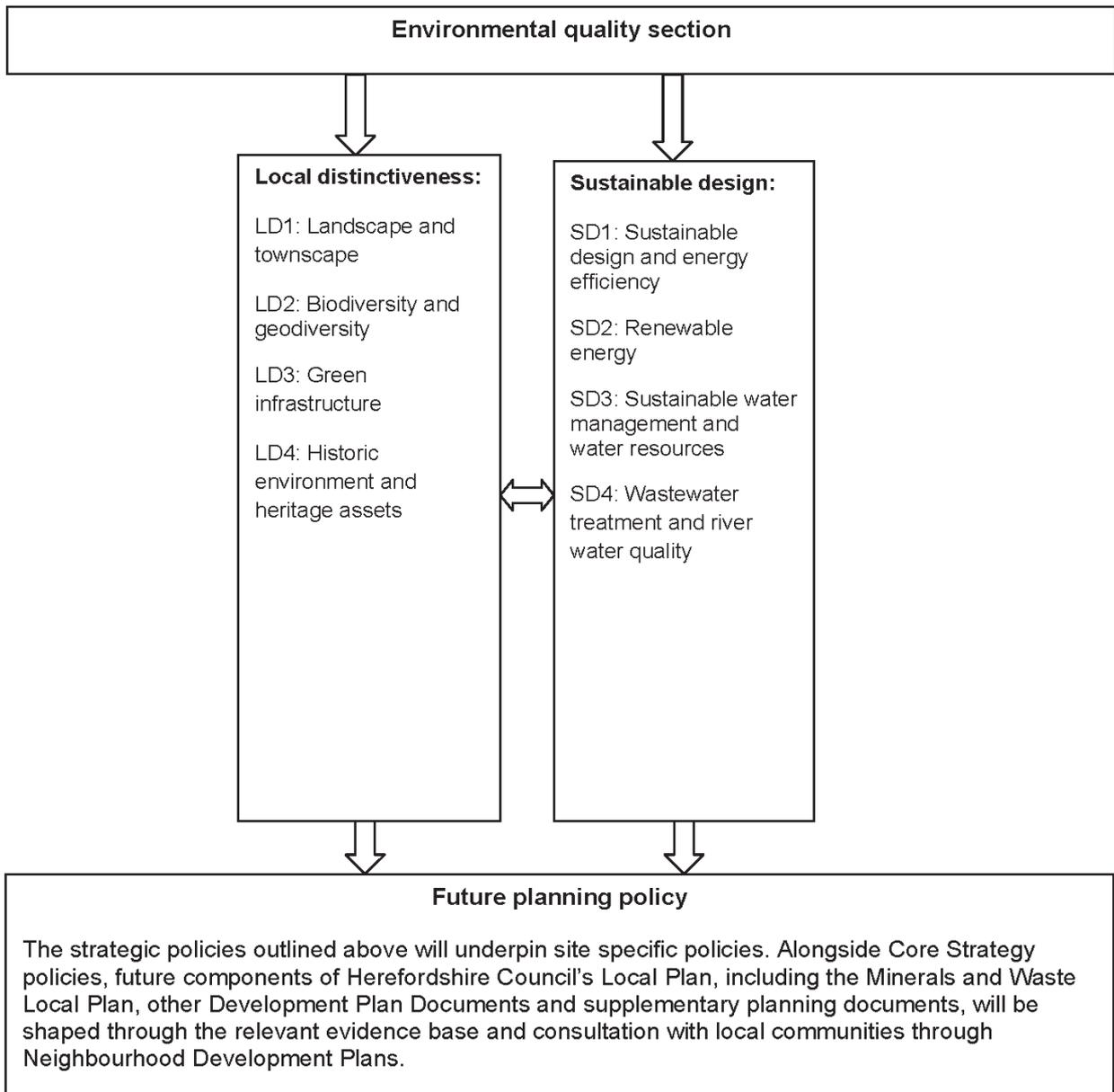
## Economic Prosperity Monitoring Indicators

5.2.41 The following indicators (in addition to those set out at the end of the Spatial Strategy section) will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the policies through the Annual Monitoring Report:

- the amount of employment land commitments, completions and reallocations, as monitored through the council's annual Employment Land Survey including expansions and relocations;
- the amount of vacant land and premises for employment use in the county;
- the amount of new employment development occurring in rural areas;
- new business registration rates;
- the amount of retail, office and leisure development completed within the monitoring period;
- the amount of retail, office and leisure floorspace permitted outside of city and town centres;
- the amount of permissions granted for change of use from A2 to residential or offices;
- the number of vacant units within town centres;
- the number of conversions of upper floors of retail and commercial premises to residential and office use;
- the number and type of visits to Herefordshire, and associated expenditure; and
- the number of people employed in the different tourism sectors.

### 5.3 Environmental quality

5.3.1 The role of this section is to aid the delivery of environmental objectives 10-12 of Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy and supplement spatial strategy policies SS6 and SS7 and the place-shaping policies. This will be achieved through incorporating and enhancing important locally distinctive assets within future developments while combating climate change and mitigating its impacts. There are clear links as shown, between all the four elements below; for example water management, geodiversity and renewable energy are all integral 'natural resources' and each policy should not be read in isolation. The way water, energy and minerals are utilised affects all developments.



### Local distinctiveness

- 5.3.2 To successfully deliver the Core Strategy vision in respect of environmental quality and local distinctiveness, this section provides a proactive strategy for the conservation, restoration and enhancement of environmental assets and the delivery of new green infrastructure to support policies SS6 and SS7.
- 5.3.3 Locally distinctive assets both natural and man-made, are finite and irreplaceable and any detrimental impacts can carry cultural, environmental, economic and social costs. A number of assets benefit from statutory designations within national and international legislation. Statutory designations range from large areas conserved for landscape, geodiversity or biodiversity importance, such as the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and River Wye Special Area of Conservation, to individual statutory listed buildings which are protected for their architectural or historical significance. Appendix 8 lists the designated sites in Herefordshire at the time of adoption.
- 5.3.4 Non-statutory designations and locally determined features are equally important to Herefordshire's local distinctiveness. Working with partner organisations, Herefordshire Council has identified important assets such as local wildlife sites, local geological sites and areas and buildings of local interest which contribute to Herefordshire's unique character. Non-statutory locally distinctive buildings and green spaces will be identified through forthcoming Development Plan Documents or Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 5.3.5 Conserving local distinctiveness is central to the purposes of designations at all levels and achieved substantially through the production and implementation of management plans, conservation strategies and objectives and guidance resulting from best practice and local assessments.

### Landscape and townscape

- 5.3.6 The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as "*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*". Herefordshire has a distinctive and varied landscape. Much of the area is rural in nature but varied in landscape character, including high hills, forest, commons and river meadows. Herefordshire contains a wide range of settlement patterns, different types of farmland and evidence of ancient landscape features. This diverse landscape is an integral element of Herefordshire's local distinctiveness.
- 5.3.7 Landscape is important, not just as scenery but because it links culture with nature, and the past with the present. It has many values, not all of them tangible (such as sense of place); and it matters to people – it is people who create and value landscape. All landscapes matter, not only those with national designations. They provide a range of services such as food, water, climate regulation and aesthetic enjoyment.
- 5.3.8 The concepts of conservation, restoration and enhancement have been set out as a strategic approach to landscape and townscape management. The principles are relevant when considering the management of individual sites where the landscape character may be dependent upon unique landscape features. Landscape survey and analysis are proactive tools for allowing new build developments to address the three principles. For development proposals there are often opportunities for measures to conserve landscape features such as trees, to restore features such as boundary hedges and to enhance the landscape character by other means such as woodland planting, creation of wetland areas or restoration of historic features. The preparation of landscape schemes and management plans

should address these three aspects in relation to the local landscape character and the relevant landscape type. Designated areas are detailed on the Policies Map. Specific conservation area boundaries can be found on the council’s website at the planning/conservation pages.

**Policy LD1 – Landscape and townscape**

Development proposals should:

- demonstrate that character of the landscape and townscape has positively influenced the design, scale, nature and site selection, protection and enhancement of the setting of settlements and designated areas;
- conserve and enhance the natural, historic and scenic beauty of important landscapes and features, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, nationally and locally designated parks and gardens and conservation areas; through the protection of the area’s character and by enabling appropriate uses, design and management;
- incorporate new landscape schemes and their management to ensure development integrates appropriately into its surroundings; and
- maintain and extend tree cover where important to amenity, through the retention of important trees, appropriate replacement of trees lost through development and new planting to support green infrastructure.

- 5.3.9 A number of landscape and townscape character assessments have been prepared supported by a Historic Landscape Characterisation and completed conservation areas appraisals. The *Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance 2009* (SPD) will be reviewed during the plan period. The SPD will build upon the detailed evidence base documentation; including Natural England’s Character Areas as well as more recently produced *Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis January 2010*, *Rapid Townscape Assessments (various)*, *Green Infrastructure Strategy February 2010* and other local studies covering the architectural and historic environment. In conjunction with the above, relevant Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans and associated guidance also provide more place-specific guidance which should inform development proposals from the outset.
- 5.3.10 The particular importance of trees is recognised within the planning system and the extent of tree cover is important to the county’s landscape and townscape. Tree surveys and arboricultural impact assessments may be necessary where it is important to assess and protect existing trees on or adjacent to sites where development proposals are being advanced.

**Biodiversity and geodiversity**

- 5.3.11 Biodiversity can be defined as the variety of sites, habitats and species within a specified locality and is influenced by factors such as geology, topography and climate. Geodiversity refers to the natural processes and constituent parts that have shaped the landscape and includes minerals, soils and water. Geodiversity is the variety of rock, minerals, fossils, soils, landforms and natural processes that have shaped the landscape.
- 5.3.12 Biodiversity and geodiversity assets provide an important contribution to the distinctiveness of an area. Herefordshire has a diverse range of geological features and wildlife habitats such as the Malvern Hills, the River Wye, ancient woodlands and traditional orchards. Wildlife is not confined to designated sites and many features serve as wildlife corridors, links and stepping stones. Ecological networks are vital to

the survival and dispersal of species. Herefordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity make a major contribution to the economy, supporting the tourism sector and providing a healthy and attractive environment for its residents.

### Policy LD2 – Biodiversity and geodiversity

Development proposals should conserve, restore and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity assets of Herefordshire, through the:

1. retention and protection of nature conservation sites and habitats, and important species in accordance with their status as follows:
  - a) Development that is likely to harm sites and species of European Importance will not be permitted;
  - b) Development that would be liable to harm Sites of Special Scientific Interest or nationally protected species will only be permitted if the conservation status of their habitat or important physical features can be protected by conditions or other material considerations are sufficient to outweigh nature conservation considerations;
  - c) Development that would be liable to harm the nature conservation value of a site or species of local nature conservation interest will only be permitted if the importance of the development outweighs the local value of the site, habitat or physical feature that supports important species.
  - d) Development that will potentially reduce the coherence and effectiveness of the ecological network of sites will only be permitted where adequate compensatory measures are brought forward.
2. restoration and enhancement of existing biodiversity and geodiversity features on site and connectivity to wider ecological networks; and
3. creation of new biodiversity features and wildlife habitats.

Where appropriate the council will work with developers to agree a management strategy to ensure the protection of, and prevention of adverse impacts on, biodiversity and geodiversity features.

- 5.3.13 Areas of biodiversity and geological importance and sensitivity should be protected and development should enhance local habitats and ecological networks. Development within close proximity to internationally, nationally and locally designated sites will need to incorporate sympathetic design components to enhance their nature conservation interests and to avoid or mitigate any adverse impacts. Internationally important sites present within the county include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); nationally important sites include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs); and locally important sites include Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites.
- 5.3.14 Dependent upon the scale and proximity of development proposals affecting biodiversity or geodiversity features, Herefordshire Council may require developers to produce a management strategy to ensure the continued protection of the features of interest. Such management strategies may include monitoring information. This will provide up-to-date information which will shape future policy reviews as well as inform future site specific plans.
- 5.3.15 The Core Strategy objectives will be delivered through supporting development proposals that add to Herefordshire's biodiversity. During the plan period Herefordshire Council will review its Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance utilising in particular the principles, opportunities and constraints detailed within the *Building Biodiversity into Herefordshire Council's Local Development Framework 2009*. Further areas of local biodiversity or geodiversity importance may be designated or extended during the plan period.

5.3.16 Details of the county’s biodiversity and geodiversity assets and features, some of which traverse the local authority’s administrative boundaries, are listed in Appendices 8e-k and further information is held at the Herefordshire Biological Records Centre. Core areas have been identified where there are clusters of biodiversity and geodiversity features of high conservation value as detailed in the *Herefordshire Ecological Network Map 2012*. Development within and adjacent to these core areas and associated buffer zones will need to be sympathetically designed to ensure there are no adverse impacts upon them. Alongside this, Herefordshire Council will seek contributions to enhance and link such core areas.

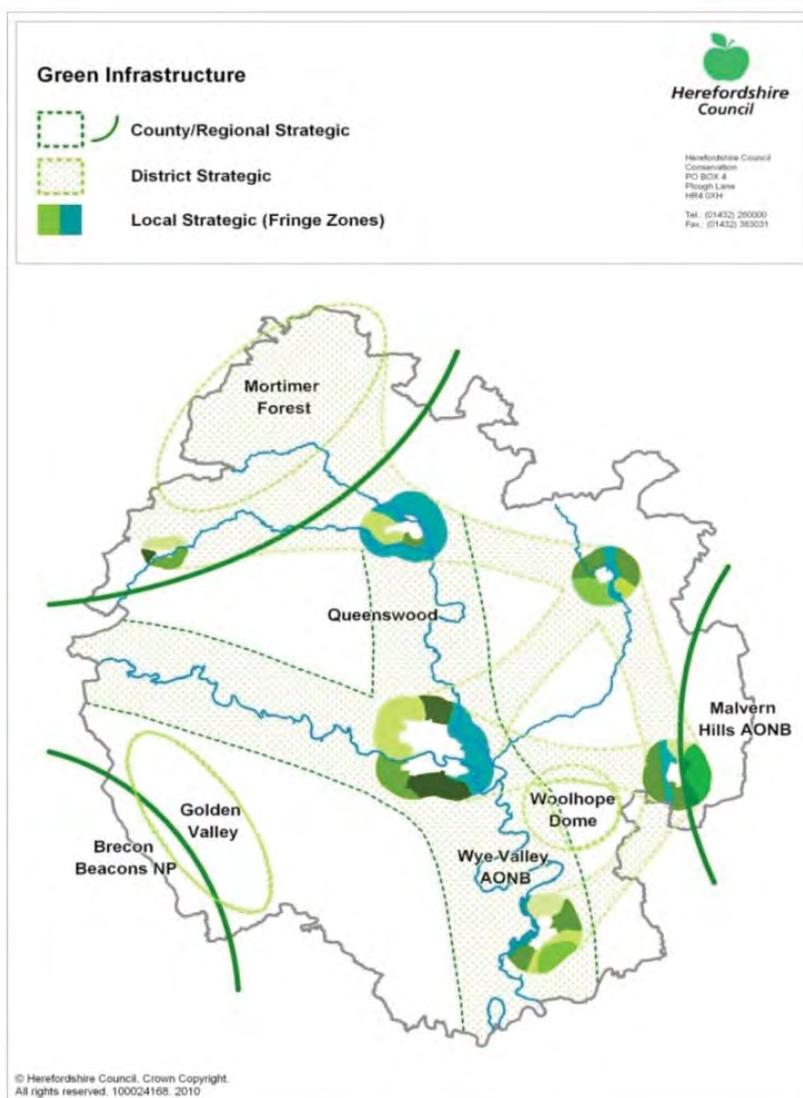
**Green infrastructure**

5.3.17 Green infrastructure is a multi-functional network of green spaces, links and assets within and surrounding the built environment, and providing connection to the wider countryside. As a major component of sustainable design it includes and contributes to health and wellbeing as well as biodiversity, culture and heritage across the county. It is not limited to urban areas and can be seen at different strategic levels as shown in the table below and the accompanying concept diagram, Figure 5.3.

**Figure 5.2: Hierarchy of Green Infrastructure Assets**

Geographic tier	Example of green infrastructure asset
County/Regional Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty</li> <li>• Sites of national and international nature conservation importance (e.g. SAC, SSSI)</li> <li>• Verges of trunk roads, motorways and railways</li> </ul>
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rivers and large streams and their floodplains</li> <li>• Local wildlife sites. Scheduled ancient monuments</li> <li>• Designed landscapes</li> </ul>
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public and private parks and gardens</li> <li>• Recreational grounds, cemeteries, playing fields and public green spaces</li> <li>• Public rights of way and cycle paths</li> </ul>

Figure 5.3: Green infrastructure concept diagram



Source: Herefordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy, February 2010

- 5.3.18 Herefordshire Council's *Green Infrastructure Strategy 2010* sets out a vision for green infrastructure across the county. It also provides a local framework around Hereford and the five market towns by defining strategic corridors, enhancement zones and fringe zones. These are areas where through sympathetic design and planning, a functional relationship between the urban and rural environments can be created and enhanced.
- 5.3.19 The development of new green infrastructure and preservation of existing assets will provide a variety of economic, environmental and social benefits. Economic benefits can be achieved through food production and productive landscapes, diversification of farming activities and attracting tourism.

Environmental benefits include habitat provision and connectivity, landscape protection, energy conservation and mitigation of climate change impacts. Social benefits of green infrastructure include places for leisure, garden food production, recreation, sport and exercise, all of which make a major contribution to health and wellbeing. Development can include corridors for movement through foot and cycle paths. It provides opportunities for improving the management of and interpreting natural and heritage assets and how they contribute to local distinctiveness. Increased access to green infrastructure can promote physical and mental health and well-being.

- 5.3.20 Green infrastructure can provide energy production, flood attenuation, maintenance of water quality, water resource management, cooling effects and many other benefits encompassed under the concept of ecosystem services. The council is committed to working with Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership to bring forward a shared vision using green infrastructure to improve ecological networks and wider economic and social benefits as part of an “ecosystems approach”.

**Policy LD3 – Green infrastructure**

Development proposals should protect, manage and plan for the preservation of existing and delivery of new green infrastructure, and should achieve the following objectives:

1. identification and retention of existing green infrastructure corridors and linkages; including the protection of valued landscapes, trees, hedgerows, woodlands, water courses and adjoining flood plain;
2. provision of on-site green infrastructure; in particular proposals will be supported where this enhances the network; and
3. integration with, and connection to, the surrounding green infrastructure network.

- 5.3.21 Development proposals should identify and protect existing green infrastructure. The Green Infrastructure Strategy 2010 and associated Study identify those features that contribute to the green infrastructure network. Proposals should take account of features within the site and also on adjacent sites as integration and connection with the surroundings is a key objective. Proposals should incorporate the retention and enhancement of features such as trees and hedgerows, together with long term management.
- 5.3.22 The inclusion of new planting, wildlife enhancement, creation and links, links to the countryside and river ways, green transport corridors, open spaces and recreational facilities and sustainable drainage systems within or associated with development proposals are important and valuable contributions to green infrastructure. Landscaping of development sites should feature planting of appropriate native species wherever possible, ensuring there is sufficient space for plants to grow to maturity. Opportunities for new elements include establishing grasslands, wildflower meadows, wetlands, orchards or woodland. New green infrastructure features could include promoting and extending the public rights of way network, increasing public access and providing interpretive information.

**Historic environment and heritage assets**

- 5.3.23 The historic environment is defined as all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora. Those elements of significance with statutory protection are referred to as designated heritage assets. Policy LD4 is applicable to heritage assets throughout Herefordshire whether formally designated e.g. listed buildings

and conservation areas, or not, ranging from individual structures and their settings, archaeological remains, to larger neighbourhoods of historic value, parks, gardens and other green spaces of local interest.

- 5.3.24 The historic environment and heritage assets are significant contributors to sustainable development. Important local buildings have a social value and can act as focal points for local communities. The historic environment is of cultural value as it illustrates the historical development of Herefordshire. Heritage assets also bring economic benefits as Herefordshire's well preserved historic environment is a major factor in its tourism industry and the county's quality of life can also serve to attract and retain investment. The sustainable re-use of existing buildings can also help mitigate climate change through reducing development pressures on greenfield sites, reducing demand for construction energy and materials and by minimising construction waste.

#### Policy LD4 – Historic environment and heritage assets

Development proposals affecting heritage assets and the wider historic environment should:

1. Protect, conserve, and where possible enhance heritage assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance through appropriate management, uses and sympathetic design, in particular emphasising the original form and function where possible;
2. where opportunities exist, contribute to the character and local distinctiveness of the townscape or wider environment, especially within conservation areas;
3. use the retention, repair and sustainable use of heritage assets to provide a focus for wider regeneration schemes;
4. record and advance the understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) and to make this evidence or archive generated publicly accessible and
5. where appropriate, improve the understanding of and public access to the heritage asset.

The scope of the works required to protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings should be proportionate to their significance. Development schemes should emphasise the original form and function of any asset and, where appropriate, improve the understanding of and public access to them.

- 5.3.25 Where important heritage assets are at risk or underutilised, development proposals for alternative uses which are sympathetic and contribute to the conservation of the heritage asset and its wider environment will be supported. Due to the site-specific nature of heritage assets, the Core Strategy does not seek to stipulate particular uses and each proposal will be evaluated on its individual merits.
- 5.3.26 During the Core Strategy plan period, Herefordshire Council will review the Archaeology and Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in particular in the light of any changes to the existing evidence base, the Historic Landscape Characterisation, emerging farmstead assessment guidance and growing knowledge of heritage assets contained within the council's historic environment record. This existing data and evidence base together with the *Rapid Townscape Assessments 2010* for the market towns and the *Hereford Streetscape Design Strategy 2009* should be used to shape development proposals from the outset. The evidence base will also guide forthcoming Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Development Plans which should be supported where necessary, with careful appraisal of sites within or adjacent to those villages where development may be proposed - in terms of effect on archaeological remains and the setting of historic assets.

5.3.27 Large scale developments should embrace the historic environment rather than regard it as a constraint. Utilising existing locally distinctive heritage assets within wider regeneration proposals can help create new developments that integrate positively with their surroundings, and can reinforce existing cultural and social characteristics. Where the loss of or substantial harm to a heritage asset or its significance is outweighed by the public benefits of a development proposal which is allowed to proceed, developers shall, in a manner proportionate to its importance, record and advance understanding of the heritage asset. This evidence shall be made publicly accessible normally through Herefordshire Historic Environment Record, a museum or other local archive as appropriate.

#### Sustainable design

5.3.28 Good design embraces more than simply the aesthetics of new development and includes how buildings are used, accessed and constructed. Equally, for development to be considered sustainable, it must embrace the move to a low carbon future through designing buildings that are more energy and water efficient and increase the use and supply of renewables. Herefordshire Council will seek to ensure that future developments are designed to enhance local distinctiveness but without stifling innovation and creativity, particularly with regard to energy efficiency.

5.3.29 High quality design and well planned developments can enhance community cohesion through maintaining or creating a sense of place. New development should be designed to preserve and enhance locally distinctive characteristics and positively contribute to the appearance of the locality. To achieve this, it is important that new development is successfully integrated into the existing built, natural and historic environment; however recognising that architectural styles change over time. Policy SD1 does not seek to stifle architectural innovation, contemporary design or reject advances in design and technology.

#### Policy SD1 – Sustainable design and energy efficiency

Development proposals should create safe, sustainable, well integrated environments for all members of the community. In conjunction with this, all development proposals should incorporate the following requirements:

- ensure that proposals make efficient use of land - taking into account the local context and site characteristics;
- new buildings should be designed to maintain local distinctiveness through incorporating local architectural detailing and materials and respecting scale, height, proportions and massing of surrounding development, while making a positive contribution to the architectural diversity and character of the area including, where appropriate, through innovative design;
- safeguard residential amenity for existing and proposed residents;
- ensure new development does not contribute to, or suffer from, adverse impacts arising from noise, light or air contamination, land instability or cause ground water pollution;
- where contaminated land is present, undertake appropriate remediation where it can be demonstrated that this will be effective;
- ensure that distinctive features of existing buildings and their setting are safeguarded and where appropriate, restored;
- utilise physical sustainability measures that include, in particular, orientation of buildings, the provision of water conservation measures, storage for bicycles and waste including provision for recycling, and enabling renewable energy and energy conservation infrastructure;
- where possible, on-site renewable energy generation should also be incorporated;

### Policy SD1 – Sustainable design and energy efficiency continued

- create safe and accessible environments, and that minimise opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour by incorporating Secured by Design principles, and consider the incorporation of fire safety measures;
- ensuring designs can be easily adapted and accommodate new technologies to meet changing needs throughout the lifetime of the development; and
- utilise sustainable construction methods which minimise the use of non-renewable resources and maximise the use of recycled and sustainably sourced materials;

All planning applications including material changes of use, will be expected to demonstrate how the above design and energy efficiency considerations have been factored into the proposal from the outset.

- 5.3.30 High quality design can significantly enhance the environment and amenity for new residents. Equally, the amenity and quality of life for existing residents can be adversely affected by insensitive, poorly considered design. To address this, buildings, extensions and spaces must be designed with regard to overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing impacts. Additionally, ensuring that new development is compatible with the surrounding locality requires more than simply scale and aesthetic qualities, and includes consideration of the impacts of noise and artificial light, ground conditions and air quality.
- 5.3.31 All developments must demonstrate how they have been designed and how they have incorporated measures to make them resilient to climate change in respect of carbon reduction, water efficiency and flood risk. Carbon reduction should influence design from the outset by ensuring the fabric of the building is as energy efficient as possible, for example, attaining thermal efficiencies through construction that achieves low U values and fuel efficiencies through the use of services such as efficient boilers. Good site planning can also aid greater energy efficiency in new development, for example, by seeking to maximise solar gain.
- 5.3.32 Revisions to the Building Regulations are introducing progressive increases in the energy efficiency requirements for new buildings. In terms of energy conservation, developments in sustainable locations that achieve accredited standards of energy conservation which cover a range of sustainability criteria will be supported, particularly where the level achieved materially exceeds the relevant Building Regulations and other relevant standards in place at the time.
- 5.3.33 Large-scale developments should demonstrate how opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation and sustainable waste management have also been considered and addressed within the design of the scheme. Such details should include an appraisal of all suitable renewable energy technology. Other developments will also be encouraged to consider whether on-site renewable energy opportunities might be available. Alongside this, the council supports the provision of renewable and low carbon technologies within existing developments, subject to such proposals according with other policies of the Core Strategy.
- 5.3.34 The efficient use of land is encouraged in the design policy; however it does not specify minimum development densities; these are referenced in Policy SS2. It is recognised that in highly accessible locations development proposals may be more sustainable and viable if constructed to higher densities than usually found elsewhere in the county, provided there is no detrimental impact upon existing local amenity. However in most instances, appropriate density will primarily be informed by the local context as well as site opportunities and constraints.

- 5.3.35 Accessibility for all members of society is fundamental to achieving sustainable development and inclusive design, and must be carefully considered in all development proposals. Development layouts should be designed to provide a high degree of permeability particularly for sustainable modes of travel within the site, and provide safe connections to adjoining land uses and local community facilities.
- 5.3.36 Sustainable design principles can also contribute to reducing crime and the fear of crime. Developers should consider whether the location and form of their development should adopt the principles set out in the document 'Secured by Design 2010 (Association of Chief Police Officers)' incorporating design measures such as ensuring a high level of natural surveillance, sensitive consideration of boundary treatments and clear delineation of public and private spaces, in order to aid the creation of a safer and more inclusive environment. In addition, provision should be made to allow ease of access for emergency services.
- 5.3.37 Council Directive 96/82/EC (the Seveso II Directive) requires that the objectives of the prevention of major accidents involving hazardous substances and limiting their consequences for man and the environment are taken into account in land use planning. Within the county, certain industrial sites and associated infrastructure fall within the scope of hazardous substances controls by virtue of the nature and quantity of substances used or stored; in considering applications for development in the vicinity of such sites regard will also be had to the risks arising. It is important that the presence of hazardous substances is compatible with the existing and proposed uses of the site and of land in the vicinity. In particular, appropriate distances should be maintained between establishments where hazardous substances are present or proposed and existing or proposed residential areas, areas of public use and areas of particular natural sensitivity or interest. Full account will be taken of advice from the Health and Safety Executive and the Environment Agency in dealing with applications for both hazardous substances consent and for development at or in the vicinity of land where such substances are present.
- 5.3.38 The age structure of the county is rapidly changing with an increasing elderly population. Increasing fuel prices is resulting in residents, particularly in rural areas, reviewing their home to work travel patterns, furthermore continual advances in technology means costly refurbishments of existing buildings is often required to meet modern requirements. It is therefore important that developments are flexibly designed to be adaptable to different and future occupational and technological needs and demands. This can include measures such as meeting lifetime homes and equivalent standards in residential design, providing infrastructure to meet the growth in demand for electric vehicles, providing adequate space for internal and external plant and facilitating home working and live/work opportunities.
- 5.3.39 Design guidance will be prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document to provide baseline standards across Herefordshire; expanding on the above design principles and to inform the preparation of masterplans, other Development Plan Documents, Neighbourhood Development Plans, parish plans, village design statements and planning applications.

#### **Renewable and low carbon energy generation**

- 5.3.40 An overarching principle of the planning system is to support the transition to a low carbon future. A significant means of achieving this goal is through the use of renewable energy sources. Renewable energy covers energy generated directly from natural sources, be it sun, wind or water, or indirect sources such as biomass and geothermal heat. The Climate Change Act makes the UK the first country in the world to have a long term legally binding commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The Act commits the UK to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 80%, from a 1990 baseline, by 2050. The UK

Renewable Energy Strategy (2009) sets a target for 15% of the UK's energy to come from renewable resources by 2020, which represents a seven fold increase from 2008. In respect of wind energy, National Planning Policy Guidance indicates that in order to gain planning permission suitable areas for wind energy development will need to have been allocated clearly in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, Herefordshire Council will consider whether to identify suitable areas for wind energy through the preparation of the Rural Areas Site Allocation Development Plan Document or other appropriate development plan document. Neighbourhood Development Plans also have the ability to consider identifying suitable sites for wind energy development.

- 5.3.41 Herefordshire is predominantly a rural county which benefits from the presence of many international and national designations, alongside highly valued local landscapes. While these designations limit the potential for strategic renewable and low carbon energy generation, opportunities are present in Herefordshire to support such measures and the exceptional circumstance for such provision needs to be recognised. For example, farm diversification schemes can provide opportunities for the implementation of renewable or low carbon energy projects. Neighbourhood Development Plans promoting community-led micro-generation schemes will be supported where they are in accordance with policy SD2 and other relevant policies of the Core Strategy.

### **Policy SD2 – Renewable and low carbon energy generation**

Development proposals that seek to deliver renewable and low carbon energy will be supported where they meet the following criteria:

1. the proposal does not adversely impact upon international or national designated natural and heritage assets;
2. the proposal does not adversely affect residential amenity;
3. the proposal does not result in any significant detrimental impact upon the character of the landscape and the built or historic environment and
4. the proposal can be connected efficiently to existing national grid infrastructure unless it can be demonstrated that energy generation would be used on-site to meet the needs of a specific end user.

In the case of energy generation through wind power developments, permission will only be granted for such proposals where:

- the proposed site is identified in a Neighbourhood Development Plan or other Development Plan Document as a suitable site for wind energy generation; and
- following consultation with local residents, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified can be fully addressed, and therefore the proposal has the backing of the local community.

### **Sustainable water management**

- 5.3.42 Sustainable water management means minimising our impact on the healthy functioning of the water cycle. Changes occurring to the climate mean that we are likely to experience an increase in the intensity, severity and frequency of extreme weather events such as droughts, storms and floods, which could dramatically impact on the way we need to manage water in the development of sustainable communities. There is a finite capacity within the environment, and it cannot simply provide more and more water as a result of increased consumption rates or overall demand. Equally there is a limit to the amount of waste water that can be safely returned to rivers without having a detrimental effect.

- 5.3.43 The issue of water management is especially important in Herefordshire with a number of watercourses benefiting from different levels of protection. The entire lengths of the River Wye and River Lugg are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, while the Wye and the Lugg from Hampton Court Bridge to its confluence are designated as a Special Area of Conservation under European legislation. Alongside this, all watercourses and groundwater, are covered by the European Water Framework Directive and are recognised as providing significant biodiversity, health and recreational benefits. Delivery of the Water Framework Directive is proposed through a “Catchment Based Approach” and the Local Plan should play a part in achieving its objectives.
- 5.3.44 Changes in rainfall patterns, land management and land use, combined with more frequent occurrence of extreme weather events will present increased flood risk. Although flooding cannot be wholly prevented, its impacts can be avoided or reduced through good planning and land management. To this end the susceptibility of land to flooding and surface water management are material considerations when assessing planning applications. Accordingly Herefordshire Council will support development proposals that accord with the principles of the *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2009* (SFRA), as well as national technical guidance on the sequential test and the exception test, and ensure that surface water drainage is also properly managed. Where flood risk assessments are undertaken they should include all sources of flooding, including fluvial flooding from ditches and water courses across the site.
- 5.3.45 The SFRA aims to ensure that planning policies and development land allocations will not increase the risk of flooding both within the development and the surrounding area, and to identify and promote measures that will minimise flood-risk and/or enhance flood resilience. The SFRA for Herefordshire refines the county’s flood risk areas by taking into account other sources of flooding and other strategies, such as the Wye and Usk Catchment Flood Management Plan and the River Severn Catchment Flood Management Plan.

**Policy SD3 – Sustainable water management and water resources**

Measures for sustainable water management will be required to be an integral element of new development in order to reduce flood risk; to avoid an adverse impact on water quantity; to protect and enhance groundwater resources and to provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity, health and recreation. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

1. development proposals are located in accordance with the Sequential Test and Exception Tests (where appropriate) and have regard to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2009 for Herefordshire;
2. development is designed to be safe, taking into account the lifetime of the development and the need to adapt to climate change by setting appropriate floor levels, providing safe pedestrian and vehicular access, where appropriate, implementing a flood evacuation management plan and avoiding areas identified as being subject to Rapid Inundation from a breach of a Flood Defence;
3. where flooding is identified as an issue, new development should reduce flood risk through the inclusion of flood storage compensation measures, or provide similar betterment to enhance the local flood risk regime;
4. development will not result in the loss of open watercourse and culverts should be opened up where possible to improve drainage and flood flows. Proposals involving the creation of new culverts (unless essential to the provision of access) will not be permitted;
5. development includes appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage surface water appropriate to the hydrological setting of the site. Development should not result in an increase in runoff and should aim to achieve a reduction in the existing runoff rate and volumes, where possible;

### Policy SD3 – Sustainable water management and water resources continued

6. water conservation and efficiency measures are included in all new developments, specifically:
  - residential development should achieve Housing - Optional Technical Standards - Water efficiency standards. At the time of adoption the published water efficiency standards were 110 litres/person/day; or
  - non-residential developments in excess of 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace to achieve the equivalent of BREEAM 3 credits for water consumption as a minimum;
7. the separation of foul and surface water on new developments is maximised;
8. development proposals do not lead to deterioration of EU Water Framework Directive water body status;
9. development should not cause an unacceptable risk to the availability or quality of water resources; and
10. in particular, proposals do not adversely affect water quality, either directly through unacceptable pollution of surface water or groundwater, or indirectly through overloading of Wastewater Treatment Works.

Development proposals should help to conserve and enhance watercourses and riverside habitats, where necessary through management and mitigation measures for the improvement and/or enhancement of water quality and habitat of the aquatic environment. Proposals which are specifically aimed at the sustainable management of the water environment will in particular be encouraged, including where they are required to support business needs such as for agriculture. Innovative measures such as water harvesting, winter water storage and active land use management will also be supported. In all instances it should be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse landscape, biodiversity or visual impact.

- 5.3.46 The ‘Sequential Test’ is set out in paragraphs 100-104 of the NPPF. This aims to ensure inappropriate development does not take place in areas at high risk of flooding by directing it away from areas at highest risk. Areas at risk of flooding are those falling within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as defined on the Environment Agency’s website. Flood Zone 1 is the area of low probability of flooding and should generally be used in preference to land in other zones. However land in Flood Zone 1 may also have critical land drainage problems which can be ascertained through Herefordshire Council’s Land Drainage team. Where no reasonable sites are available within Flood Zone 1 the ‘Exception Test’ may be applied. Where this test needs to be applied certain forms of development may be permitted in Flood Zones 2 and 3 depending upon their level of vulnerability. These are identified in Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.3.47 Policy SD3 also provides criteria for developers to consider when proposing development within areas identified as being at risk of flooding within the district. The policy identifies the need for development proposed within flood risk areas to take account of a number of measures to ensure that the development is safe and remains safe, in times of flood including:
- setting appropriate floor levels which should be above the 1% predicted plus climate change design flood level, incorporating an allowance for freeboard. Development should also consider in the design the risk from more extreme events. Where it is not feasible or practicable to set the floor levels, then other forms of flood resilience and resistance techniques may be considered as an alternative;
  - where overnight accommodation is included, the development should include a safe pedestrian access route which would be available during a 1% plus climate change design flood event. In considering this, regard should be given to the evidence in the SFRA and for ‘defended areas’ including an assessment of Flood Defence breach/overtopping scenarios. Other development should consider this as a residual risk;

- consideration of safe vehicular access; and
  - for developments implementing a flood evacuation management plan, where appropriate, to manage the risk to the development site itself and future users/occupiers during all flood events along with any remaining residual risks.
- 5.3.48 A key component to reducing the risk of flooding is the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all developments. Such systems can also assist in improving water quality. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 introduces the mandatory inclusion of SuDS within developments alongside the ability for the setting of national standards. Development proposals are to accord with these standards and where appropriate be accompanied by surface water management plans detailing the drainage proposals. Advice is contained within the SFRA.
- 5.3.49 Government legislation sets out the statutory introduction of Sustainable Drainage Advisory Bodies (SABs). SABs are designed to appraise and grant approval or refusal on proposed Sustainable Drainage Systems. Herefordshire Council will work in partnership with the SAB as well as the Environment Agency, to ensure that development proposals do not have adverse flood impacts.
- 5.3.50 With respect to water conservation and efficiency of use, Policy SD3 sets out targets for reduced consumption in association with new development, which in turn will result in decrease flow entering the sewer system. This approach will also help to reduce flows entering waste water treatment infrastructure, thereby assisting to manage the level of nutrients in the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (see Policy SD4). The Department for Communities and Local Government has published a 'water efficiency calculator' that applicants can use to demonstrate the water efficiency of proposed developments.
- 5.3.51 For employment development a standard of BREEAM 3 credits equivalent for water consumption is required. This equates to 40% reduction in water consumption over current building regulations. The Environment Agency has stated that all new non-residential development should meet the 'Good Practice' level of the AECB (Association for Environment Conscious Building) Water Standards. These measures will complement the measures set out in Policy SD4 - Wastewater treatment and river water quality.
- 5.3.52 The availability of water resources to meet demand during the plan period has been examined and Dwr Cymru-Welsh Water's Water Resource Management Plan identifies that there are sufficient water resources available to meet demand during this plan period.
- 5.3.53 While agricultural water use lies largely outside planning control, it is a significant contributor to the water cycle conditions within Herefordshire and its impacts need to be taken into account in the Core Strategy and other Development Plan Documents and Neighbourhood Development Plans. There is considerable potential for farmers to capture and store surplus water for future use thereby reducing the need to abstract water from other sources, while enhancing biodiversity. However, reservoirs in particular will alter landscapes and habitats on a permanent basis and care on siting and design is essential.
- 5.3.54 Land management practices can also play a vital role in managing flood risk and water quality at a local level; for example, the creation and restoration of wetlands and woodlands can reduce the level of flooding, and in some cases remove the risk of local flooding altogether. These practices also improve water quality in addition to producing wider environmental benefits, including encouraging an increase in wildlife species and habitats and reducing carbon.

- 5.3.55 A Herefordshire Water Steering Group was established and attended by Herefordshire Council, Dwr Cymru-Welsh Water, the Environment Agency and Natural England, in order to investigate how development might be accommodated within the limits set by the Habitats Regulations. It is expected that this group will be expanded in order to address issues arising from the preparation of a Nutrient Management Plan. One of the areas that it might consider is identifying best practice in the reduction of water use.

#### **Wastewater treatment and river water quality**

- 5.3.56 The water quality of Herefordshire's main rivers and their tributaries is of strategic importance and in particular, current unacceptable levels of nutrients along part of the rivers need to be addressed. This is important to the overall environmental objectives of the Core Strategy.
- 5.3.57 The Rivers Wye, Lugg, Teme and Clun are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), designated under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). Furthermore, the River Wye, including part of the River Lugg (downstream from Hampton Court Bridge), part of the River Clun (downstream of Marlow, Shropshire) and Downton Gorge on the River Teme are also designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).
- 5.3.58 Both levels of designation require efforts to be made to ensure the whole system, or catchment, achieves and then remains resilient in terms of supporting river habitats consistent with policy LD2 (Biodiversity and geodiversity). The Environment Agency has responsibility for water quality and ecological objectives set by European Directive 2000/60/EC, the 'Water Framework Directive,' which applies to surface waters and groundwater, and is preparing a River Basin Management Plan to deliver these. Natural England has responsibility for ensuring SSSIs and SACs achieve 'favourable condition.' Currently all parts of the river SSSIs are in unfavourable condition although some are recovering. All public bodies have a duty to contribute towards meeting these targets.

#### **Policy SD4 - Wastewater treatment and river water quality**

Development should not undermine the achievement of water quality targets for rivers within the county, in particular through the treatment of wastewater.

In the first instance developments should seek to connect to the existing mains wastewater infrastructure network. Where this option would result in nutrient levels exceeding conservation objectives targets, in particular additional phosphate loading within a SAC designated river, then proposals will need to fully mitigate the adverse effects of wastewater discharges into rivers caused by the development. This may involve:

- incorporating measures to achieve water efficiency and/or a reduction in surface water discharge to the mains sewer network, minimising the capacity required to accommodate the proposal, in accordance with policy SD3;
- phasing or delaying development until further capacity is available;
- the use of developer contributions/community infrastructure levy funds to contribute to improvements to waste water treatment works or other appropriate measures to release capacity to accommodate new development;
- in the case of development which might lead to nutrient levels exceeding the limits for the target conservation objectives within a SAC river, planning permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC in view of the site's conservation objectives; and

## Policy SD4 - Wastewater treatment and river water quality continued

- where the nutrient levels set for conservation objectives are already exceeded, new development should not compromise the ability to reduce levels to those which are defined as favourable for the site.

Where evidence is submitted to the local planning authority to indicate connection to the wastewater infrastructure network is not practical, alternative foul drainage options should be considered in the following order:

- provision of or connection to a package sewage treatment works (discharging to watercourse or soakaway);
- septic tank (discharging to soakaway).

With either of these non-mains alternatives, proposals should be accompanied by the following:

- information to demonstrate there will be no likely significant effect on the water quality, in particular of designated national and European sites, especially the River Wye SAC and the River Clun SAC; or
- where there will be a likely significant effect upon a SAC river, information to enable the council, in its role as a competent authority, to ascertain that the development will have no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC;
- in relation to water courses with national or European nature conservation designations, the inclusion of measures achieving the highest standard of water quality discharge to the natural drainage system including provision for monitoring.

The use of cesspools will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that sufficient precautionary measures will ensure no adverse effect upon natural drainage water quality objectives.

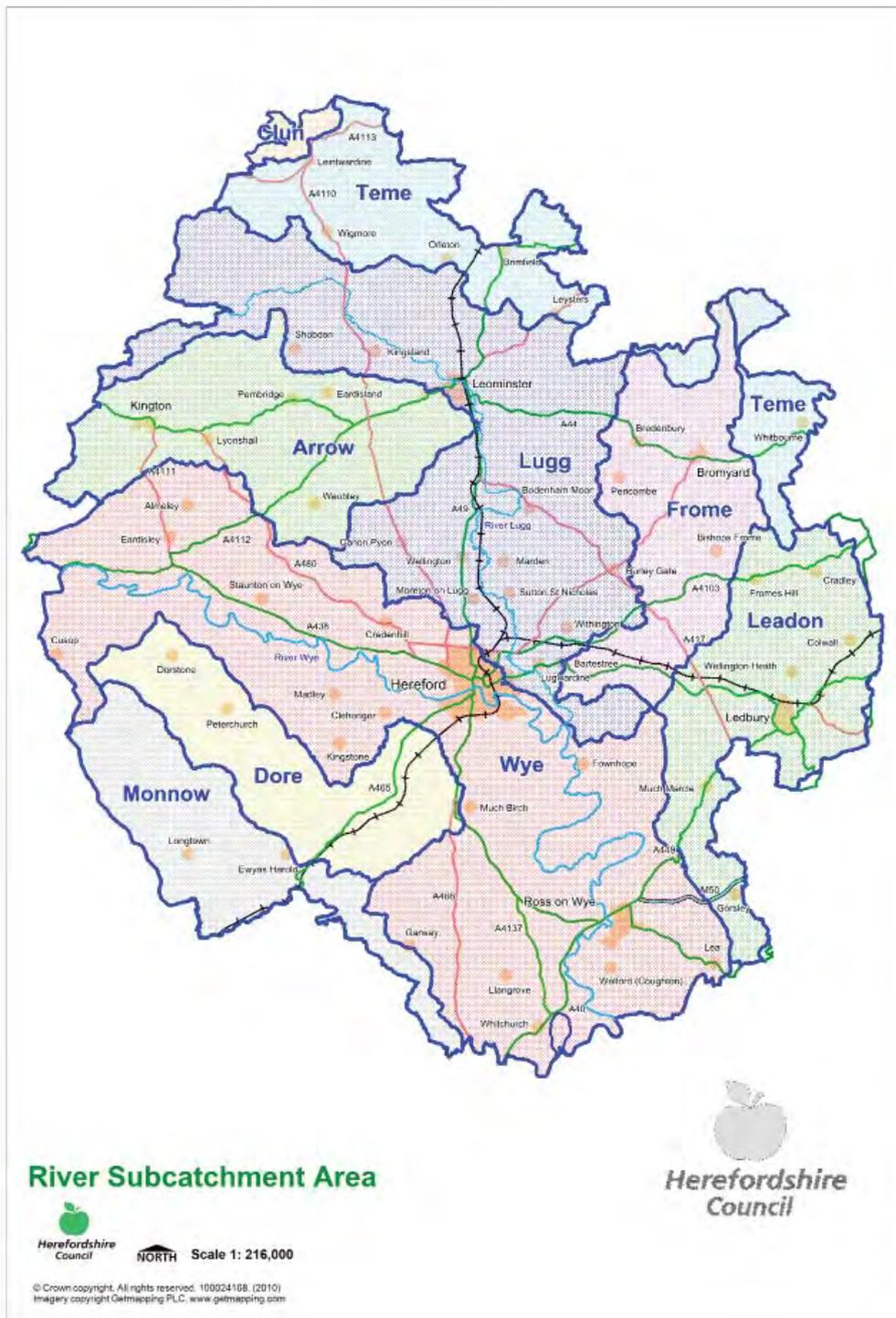
- 5.3.59 There is a duty upon Herefordshire Council, so far as it is able, to further the conservation and enhancement of the river SSSIs within its area. Each SSSI has its own 'conservation objectives,' which include targets that form the baseline against which its favourable condition is judged. The decisions the council takes can influence whether a site meets its targets or not. With respect to the river SSSI's, this includes decisions on foul and surface water drainage from development. Developers can assist by contributing to the resilience of ecological networks through their efforts to deliver green infrastructure under policy LD4. Maintaining a high quality environment will assist marketing of homes and the attraction of employment.
- 5.3.60 Herefordshire Council is a competent authority under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012 and there is a duty upon it to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive in exercising any of its functions. Furthermore, the LPA can only permit development which would have a likely significant effect (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) upon European sites after having undertaken an Appropriate Assessment. Subject to certain derogation tests, only development which can be shown to have no adverse effect on the integrity of European sites can be permitted.
- 5.3.61 In addition, there is also a duty on the council to help deliver Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives. It is imperative that proposals for growth do not adversely affect river water quality, and this includes that within associated watercourses flowing into the rivers and other 'controlled waters' (lakes, ponds and groundwater etc). Wastewater from most new development within the county will connect to sewage treatment works. Such treatment works are potentially point sources of pollution especially if

they are unable to achieve acceptable standards of discharge, either directly or indirectly into rivers. Septic tanks and other activities such as agricultural practices form more diffuse sources of potential pollution.

- 5.3.62 The county's rivers have a finite capacity to accommodate discharges arising from development before their water quality is adversely affected, and improvements to the management of waste water will be required to ensure both the achievement of the watercourses conservation objectives and the ability to deliver the scale of growth set out in the Core Strategy.
- 5.3.63 The Environment Agency and Natural England have prepared a Nutrient Management Plan aimed to control and reduce phosphate within the River Wye SAC and in doing so seek to identify actions to enable additional development. The Core Strategy will play a vital role in delivering the requirements of the Nutrient Management Plan, along with other mechanisms and measures. The Nutrient Management Plan and associated Action Plan identifies the management actions required to achieve the conservation objectives target for phosphate by 2027. Planning guidance will be prepared where necessary to cover relevant measures included within the Nutrient Management Plan, or any revisions to it, comprising the need for planning advice, detailed phasing requirements, options that might be funded through developer contributions, water quality and ecological condition of stretches along the SAC rivers, and monitoring arrangements.
- 5.3.64 Sections of the River Wye SAC where the water quality targets are already exceeded will be subject to measures to reduce nutrients in line with the targets. New development must not compromise the ability of the Nutrient Management Plan to deliver the necessary overall reductions along these stretches.
- 5.3.65 Sections that are currently meeting their phosphate targets will be subject to measures to ensure that future inputs of nutrients will not lead to failures.
- 5.3.66 Figure 5.4 identifies river sub-catchment areas within Herefordshire, set by the Water Framework Directive. Development within these areas has the potential to detrimentally affect water quality standards. High levels of phosphates have been identified as particular problems with concentration levels exceeding targets.
- 5.3.67 Herefordshire Council will expect developments to connect to existing sewage infrastructure. However, when this would compromise the ability to achieve favourable condition, and potentially be contrary to the Habitats Regulations, mitigation measures would be required if the development is to proceed.
- 5.3.68 Local water companies are responsible for providing and maintaining sewage treatment works at a standard to meet permitted conditions. Their asset management programmes will set out capital works to ensure compliance with discharge licences. Should such works be required then it may be necessary to phase new development within timescales set by these programmes. However, there may be an additional requirement for developer contributions or community infrastructure levy funding to make further improvements.
- 5.3.69 Increases in flows to sewage treatment works lead to increases in nutrients in watercourses, as discharges have set nutrient concentrations. Reducing flows to sewage treatment works through measures referred to in Policy SD3 can therefore contribute to reducing nutrient levels in the receiving watercourses. The separation of foul and storm water will have similar benefits.

- 5.3.70 Development seeking to use non-mains drainage solutions will need to explain why this is necessary in the light of the Government advice on mains drainage and Herefordshire Council's planning application requirements in respect of non-mains drainage (see Herefordshire Council website). Herefordshire Council will wish to be assured that such proposals will not adversely affect the quality of water within watercourses and in particular, will have no negative effect upon SAC rivers and, in this regard, will undertake Habitat Regulation Assessments where necessary using information required from and provided by developers. Measures proposed to mitigate any effect will be rigorously scrutinised; and monitoring arrangements may need to be put in place to ensure the chosen system is effective. Sustainable forms of water treatment such as reed beds may be used as alternatives to or in combination with foul water treatment and disposal. Full details should be provided to show these will achieve the required standard of discharge into the natural drainage system. The sensitivity of Herefordshire's environment is such that the use of cesspools should be avoided, however if this is deemed to be the only option then a rigorous assessment of potential effects will be required.
- 5.3.71 A number of rivers have water quality problems arising from sedimentation. Where operations requiring planning permission may cause or add to the problem then mitigation works such as trenches, wetlands, retention ponds, buffers, swales and other forms of sediment traps may need to be considered as part of sustainable water practices under policy SD3.

Figure 5.4 - River sub catchments



## Delivery and monitoring of the environmental quality policies

5.3.72 These policies will be delivered by:

- the Infrastructure Development Plan and developer contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy
- the development management process
- other Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans.

### Environmental quality monitoring indicators:

5.3.73 In addition to the indicators listed in previous sections, the following indicators will be used to measure the effectiveness of the general policies (some are aspirational):

- changes in the areas of designated nature conservation sites as a consequence of planning permission;
- proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has or is being implemented;
- number of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments on buildings at risk register (Historic England);
- net change in condition of SSSI's (Natural England);
- number of applications granted planning permission contrary to the advice of statutory agencies (e.g. English Heritage, Natural England or the Environment Agency);
- percentage of river length assessed as good biological or chemical quality (EA) in particular so far as they relate to the measures within the Nutrient Management Plan;
- phosphate levels within the River Wye SAC and adjoining tributaries that receive increased phosphates from Core Strategy growth;
- completed development that has resulted in loss/restoration/creation of Habitats of Principal Importance (Priority Habitats);
- percentage of total residential applications at below 30 dwellings per hectare;
- number of residential applications at less than 1.5 parking spaces per unit;
- the need for, frequency and outcomes of planning enforcement investigations/planning appeals concerning the aspects of local loss of locally important buildings within a conservation area;
- number of developments meeting and surpassing national design standards;
- maintaining Herefordshire Council's County Site and Monuments Register; and
- summary of proposals contributing to the Green Infrastructure Strategy from the above and any other measures.

## Delivery, Implementation and Monitoring

### Infrastructure contributions

- 6.1 New development can place additional demands upon physical, social and green infrastructure, such as roads and sewers, community buildings and parks. It is a well-established principle, in national guidance and legislation, that new development should contribute towards the provision of such infrastructure, to ensure existing communities are not disadvantaged by any increased pressure on facilities from new development.
- 6.2 Planning legislation provides for the funding of infrastructure from developers. The legislative framework is set out in section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by section 12 of the 1991 Planning and Compensation Act, Part 11 (Community Infrastructure Levy) of the Town and Country Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended 2011, 2012 & 2013). Government policy on planning obligations is also set out in paragraphs 203 to 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012.
- 6.3 Previously, Government made provision for a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to be introduced in Regulations that came into force in April 2010, now amended by the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2011, the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2012 and the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) Regulations 2013. Local authorities will be empowered to charge a levy on new developments to help finance the infrastructure needed to support growth. However, local authorities should have clear evidence about planned infrastructure, its cost, timing and other likely sources of funding, to underpin their development strategies. This will be provided through an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which will sit alongside the Core Strategy.
- 6.4 The IDP will need to be accompanied by a Charging Schedule for how the levy is calculated, which will be independently examined. In addition, a list of community infrastructure projects that the council has prioritised, for the infrastructure levy to be spent on, will be prepared (a CIL 123 list).
- 6.5 The use of planning obligations, known as section 106 contributions, (which Herefordshire has traditionally used) will still remain, but will only relate to those infrastructure requirements required as a direct result of the development and where they meet the following statutory tests:
1. necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
  2. directly related to the development; and
  3. fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 6.6 For clarity, CIL is a fixed tariff intended to be used for general infrastructure contributions whilst s106 obligations will be for site-specific mitigation. For the avoidance of doubt, infrastructure is defined as; those physical, social and green infrastructure projects required as a result of growth in the county. This includes housing, transport, sport and recreation, community facilities including education, health and emergency services, water and sewerage facilities, flood risk management, renewable energy generation, waste management, built environment and public realm improvements and green infrastructure.

### Policy ID1- Infrastructure Delivery

Provision for new and/or the enhancement of existing infrastructure, services and facilities to support development and sustainable communities, will be achieved through a co-ordinated approach.

Where necessary, in addition to planning conditions for essential on-site design requirements and critical infrastructure, developer contributions towards strategic infrastructure through s106 agreements and/or a future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), will be secured in accordance with national planning policies and other relevant legislation.

A Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will provide details of the type and scale of obligations that may apply.

- 6.7 All new development can impact on existing services and facilities in its local area, whether individually or cumulatively. This can have a direct impact on the need for new facilities either locally or on a larger, strategic scale. For example, new development on a single large site or on lots of smaller sites will have the same overall impact on the demands placed on the existing sewerage network. In this respect it is right to expect all new development to contribute to making communities safe, healthy and attractive places to live. Policy ID1 addresses this issue and will help to deliver a whole range of other policies in the Local Plan - Core Strategy.
- 6.8 The policy proposes that all new development is required to contribute to infrastructure needs. This will be achieved through a combined approach of using a set Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and planning obligations (section 106) for all development types to bring forward affordable housing (in conjunction with Policy H1) and other site specific infrastructure necessary for the development to take place.
- 6.9 Individual developments will not be charged for the same items of infrastructure through both CIL and planning obligations.
- 6.10 The CIL has been introduced to provide a fair and consistent mechanism for pooling contributions from all eligible developments towards infrastructure. It provides certainty, so that developers can calculate in advance of submitting a planning application, the level of contribution required. Although the tariff will usually be a financial contribution, there is also the option of transfer of land in lieu of a financial payment.
- 6.11 The levy is a fixed rate charge, based on square metres of net additional built floor space and is non-negotiable. The charge is levied on one or more dwellings and developments of more than 100m<sup>2</sup> of floor space. Exemptions include; affordable housing and charities. The CIL regulations allow the council to introduce charge variations by geographical zone within its area, by land use, or both. These are set out in the Charging Schedule. Some uses may be set at zero in some zones, as the variations reflect differences in viability.
- 6.12 The proceeds of the CIL will be spent on strategic and local infrastructure to support the development of the county. Developer contributions on their own will not be able to meet the entire cost of a major infrastructure project. Core public funding will continue to contribute.

- 6.13 The type of infrastructure that the tariff will be used to service is set out in an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP provides robust evidence of infrastructure requirements through to 2031, but the focus is on the measures that are needed within the first 5 years from the date of adoption, in the context of the longer term plan set out in the Core Strategy. The IDP schedule and required infrastructure is set out on an area basis to include Strategic County-wide, The Hereford Area, the Market Towns and the Rural Areas.
- 6.14 It is acknowledged that the IDP schedule cannot specify the entire infrastructure that will be provided in the county to 2031. Changed requirements may become apparent as new areas of development are designed in more detail and or ways of delivering services or facilities are reviewed. The IDP schedule is not intended as a one-off document. Through the life of the Core Strategy, changes to the policies and strategies of service providers and the introduction of new technology will have implications for infrastructure requirements and their costs. Public funding levels are also likely to vary over the life time of the Plan. The information contained in the IDP schedule will be kept under review and updated. The council, together with its partners, will need to look for innovative ways to fund and provide the necessary infrastructure. This is why it is called a “live document”.
- 6.15 A list of prioritised infrastructure projects, which the council have committed to, will be advertised on the council’s website in the form of a Regulation 123 list. This list will have been verified in terms of achievability and phasing of delivery through a separate evidence base dealing with Economic Viability, which will ensure that a balance is struck between the required infrastructure projects and the ability of the strategic sites to be delivered by the development industry.
- 6.16 Monies received in respect of the tariff and planning obligations will be monitored and reported on through the LDF Annual Monitoring Report. Joint working with internal and external delivery partners will be necessary to keep the Charging Schedule and Infrastructure Delivery Plan up to date and relevant.
- 6.17 The council accepts that there are may be occasions where development proposals are unable to meet all the relevant policy requirements and still remain viable. Where the council is satisfied that an otherwise desirable development cannot be fully compliant and remain viable, a reduced package of planning obligations may be recommended.
- 6.18 In order to enable the council to assess the viability of a proposal, the applicant will be required to provide any necessary cost and income figures to the council and pay the council’s full costs in appointing an independent assessment of the viability proposal.
- 6.19 In all cases, the council requires viability to be undertaken using a residual land value approach. This means that the starting point for a viability assessment is to be the existing use value (i.e. what the site is worth in its current condition for the use that it has planning consent for). Viability claims based on an over inflated price that has been paid for a site will not be accepted.
- 6.20 A Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document will be prepared to give more details of the council’s requirements which are to be met through planning obligations.

**Delivery**

- 6.21 The policy will be delivered through:
- the development management process;
  - the neighbourhood planning process;
  - partnership working with infrastructure providers;
  - an Infrastructure Delivery Group to administer project proposals and propose priorities;
  - a s106 Supplementary Planning Document;
  - a CIL Charging Schedule; and
  - a CIL 123 List.

**Implementation and monitoring of the Core Strategy**

- 6.22 The continuous monitoring of policies and proposals is essential to ensure that the Core Strategy achieves its objectives. The policies will be monitored principally through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), in the manner described at the end of each section of this document and in Appendix 3 – the Implementation, Monitoring and Delivery Plan. The AMR report will set out the basic achievements of the main policies and contain details about the implementation of the housing policies in particular.
- 6.23 If it appears that the policies are not being effective, the following actions will be taken:
- review of the policy or policies concerned and of the implementation mechanisms which may include a full or partial review of the plan; and
  - actions to speed up the delivery of land for development; and/or
  - identification of alternative or additional land through further Development Plan Documents and/or Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 6.24 The policies and proposals will also be assessed against key objectives and targets included in the Sustainability Appraisal to assess their contribution towards promoting sustainable development. There will be a section in the AMR dealing with this aspect.
- 6.25 Clearly, the Core Strategy must be able to respond to changing needs and circumstances. This will include assessing the potential impacts of new or updated national and local policy and guidance. There will be a section in the AMR dealing with this aspect.

## Glossary of Terms

Term	Meaning
<b>A</b>	
Active travel	An approach to travel and transport that focuses on physical activity (walking and cycling) as opposed to motorised means.
AECB The Sustainable Building Association	The Association of Environment Conscious Building. An independent not for profit organisation which promotes sustainable building.
Affordable Housing	Social Rented, Affordable Rented and Intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
Affordable Rented Housing	Rented housing usually owned and managed by housing associations but not subject to the national rent regime, but is subject to other rent controls.
Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA)	An area that a local authority has designated for action, based upon a prediction that national air quality objectives will not be met.
Anaerobic digestion	The process by which biodegradable material is broken down in the absence of oxygen in an enclosed vessel, yielding carbon dioxide, methane and solids / liquors, which can be used as fertiliser or compost.
Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	This assess whether targets and indicators in relation to a range of policy areas are being met.
Area Plan	A detailed development plan document setting out proposals for a specific part of the county (e.g. Hereford), including site allocations.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	A statutory landscape designation, which recognises that a particular landscape is of national importance. The special qualities of the AONB encompass natural beauty, amenity, heritage and landscape assets. The primary purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape. Parts of the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills AONBs lie within Herefordshire.
<b>B</b>	
Belmont Transport Package	The emerging Belmont Transport Package seeks to improve travel conditions along the A465 in Belmont, Hereford. When finalised, the package of measures will include a combination of both road and non-road transport improvements.
Best and most versatile agricultural land	Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.
Biodiversity	The variety of plants and animal life on earth, encompassing the diversity of habitats, species and genetic variation. Biodiversity provides our life support system as well as having social and economic value.
Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)	Local BAPs identify national and local targets for species and habitats conservation and actions.
Borders Broadband Project	A project to enable all rural areas within Herefordshire and Gloucestershire to gain access to at least 2Mbps (megabits per second) broadband speeds, with many people receiving much higher speeds. The project is a partnership between Herefordshire and Gloucestershire County Councils and telecoms provider BT.

Term	Meaning
<b>B Continued</b>	
BREEAM	Building Research Establishments Environmental Assessment Method is the most widely recognised method of assessing the environmental quality of a building design.
Brownfield Land	Both land and premises are included in this term, which refers to a site that has previously been used or developed. It may be vacant, derelict or contaminated. This excludes open spaces and land where the remains of previous use have blended into the landscape, or have been overtaken by nature conservation value or amenity use.
<b>C</b>	
Capacity (transport)	A measure of the volume of traffic that a point or link in transport infrastructure can accommodate, and often an evaluation of the extent to which that infrastructure is coping with the traffic that makes use of it; for example, underused, at or near capacity etc.
Carbon footprint	A measure of the impact human activities have on the environment in terms of the amount of greenhouse gases produced, measured in units of carbon dioxide.
Catchment Flood Management Plan	Produced by the Environment Agency; these give an overview of the flood risk across each river catchment and recommend ways of managing those risks now and over the next 50-100 years. They consider all types of inland flooding, from rivers, ground water, surface water and tidal flooding and also take into account the likely impacts of climate change, the effects of how land is used and managed, and how areas could be developed.
Census	An official count or survey of a population, typically recording various details of individuals. Last undertaken in 2011.
Climate Change	The term climate change is generally used when referring to changes in our climate, which have been identified since the early parts of the 1900's. The changes that we have seen over recent years, and those which are predicted over the next 80 years, are thought by many to be mainly as a result of human behaviour, rather than due to natural changes in the atmosphere.
Community facilities	Land and buildings uses to help meet health, education and social needs in terms of developing and maintaining the health and wellbeing of all.
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	A mechanism that empowers local authorities to apply a levy or charge on new developments in their areas to support community infrastructure delivery.
Community Strategy	This is a practical tool for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the local authority area. Such strategies are prepared allowing for local communities to identify and share their aspirations, needs and priorities.
Comparison retail	Clothing materials and garments, shoes and other footwear, materials for maintenance and repair of dwellings, furniture and furnishings, major household textiles, books, audio visual equipment, hardware and DIY supplies, chemist goods, jewellery, watches and clocks, bicycles and recreation goods.

Term	Meaning
<b>C continued</b>	
Condition (of SSSIs)	The <i>condition</i> of SSSIs is a reporting system for land with that designation, assessed by Natural England and established by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. There are six reportable <i>conditions</i> : favourable, unfavourable recovering, unfavourable no-change, unfavourable declining, part destroyed, and destroyed.
Connect2	The Hereford Connect2 Greenway proposal is for a shared use footway/cycleway between Hereford city centre, and the B4399 Holme Lacy Road via a new river crossing.
Conservation Areas	An area defined in the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) as being of special architectural or historical interest, requiring extra protection in planning terms, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
Conservation Objectives	Conservation objectives in relation to Special Areas of Conservation are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (The Habitats Regulations) and Article 6(3) of the European Union Habitats Directive 1992. They are used when either the appropriate nature conservation body (here Natural England) or competent authority (e.g. Herefordshire Council; the Environment Agency) is required to make an Appropriate Assessment under the relevant parts of the respective legislation. Conservation objectives for relevant sites can be viewed on the Natural England website.
Conservation status (of EU Natura 2000 sites and species)	<i>Conservation status</i> is a definition from the EU Habitats Directive for reporting on the condition of habitats and species identified as being of European Importance. In relation to habitats these form part of the 'Natura 2000 Network' and in Herefordshire are represented by Special Areas of Conservation. For both habitats and species various parameters are assessed and there are four levels of status: Favourable; Unfavourable – Inadequate; Unfavourable – Bad; and Unknown.
Convenience retail	Goods bought frequently or out of necessity, requiring minimum effort in selection and buying e.g. food, tobacco, newspapers and other goods of a standardised type for which there is a wide market.
Curtilage	The area, usually enclosed, encompassing the grounds and buildings immediately surrounding a home that is used in the daily activities of domestic life. A slightly different definition relates to listed buildings – please check with the planning department.
Custom Build	Custom build is when an individual or group of people work closely with a developer to build new homes. This could include fully commissioned homes or fitting out a previously constructed shell. (also see Self Build)
<b>D</b>	
Demand management	The application of strategies and policies to reduce or redistribute travel by road. A demand management approach has the potential to deliver better environmental outcomes, improved public health and stronger and more prosperous communities.
Destination Hereford	A project promoting sustainable travel choices for getting to, or around, Hereford.

Term	Meaning
<b>D Continued</b>	
Developer Contributions	This includes section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
Development Plan Documents (DPD)	Component parts of the Local Plan which makes up the Development Plan.
<b>E</b>	
Economic output	Output in economics is the quantity of goods or services produced in a given time period, by a firm, industry, county, region or country.
Edgar Street Grid (ESG) Masterplan	This sets out the principles for layout and design of the regeneration area. It shows the relationship between buildings and space; the connections between streets, squares and open spaces; the movement patterns; the height, massing and bulk of buildings; the distribution of uses; the location of street furniture and landscaping; and how well the new urban neighbourhood is integrated with the surrounding urban context.
Edge of centre (retail)	For retail development: a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres away from the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 50 metres of a public transport interchange.
Employment land	Land used for office, industrial and warehousing purposes.
Energy efficiency	Making the best or the most efficient use of energy in order to achieve a given output of goods or services, and of comfort and convenience. This does not necessitate the use of less energy, in which respect it differs from the concept of energy conservation.
Environmental assets	Features in the physical environment that are valued for a variety of cultural and scientific reasons.
Environmental capacity	The limit of acceptable environmental change within a defined area.
Enterprise Zone	An area in which incentives such as tax and planning concessions are offered to encourage investment and provide jobs.
European Landscape Convention (ELC)	Is a treaty produced by the Council of Europe and voluntarily signed and ratified by the UK government in 2006; the provisions of the ELC came into effect in March 2007. Articles 5 and 6 of the ELC highlight the need to develop policies and recognise in law the protection, management and planning of all landscapes.
Evidence base	The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the 'soundness' of the policy approach set out in Development Plan Documents, including physical, economic and social aspects of the area.
Exception sites	A location where development would not otherwise be granted planning permission under normal circumstances
Exception test (flooding)	In respect of flooding, if following the application of the sequential test, it is not possible for development to be located in zones with a lower probability of flooding, the exception test can be applied. NPPF paragraph 102 outlines the elements that have to be passed for development to be allocated or permitted.

Term	Meaning
<b>F</b>	
Favourable condition (conservation)	When designated nature conservation sites (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest) are managed in a way which maintains their nature conservation value, determined by reference to their 'conservation objectives', they are said to be in 'favourable condition'.
Floodplain	This is identified as the area of land at risk of flooding, when water flowing into a watercourse channel overtops its banks.
Flood zone	An area identified by the Environment Agency as being at risk of flooding, flood zone 3 having the greatest risk.
Formal open space	This refers to sites which have a clearly defined boundary, and which are 'gardened' frequently. Usually these are high profile or important sites and often accommodating high, or higher than average visitor usage.
Food web	A local network of links between people who buy, sell, produce and supply food.
Functional Need Test	A requirement for the occupier to be present with close and continual supervision at the business for the majority of the time and essential for the economically sustainable enterprise. Businesses should be established for at least three years and be currently financially sound.
<b>G</b>	
Geodiversity	The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.
Greenfield land	Land that has not been previously developed, often in agricultural use.
Green infrastructure	A planned and delivered network of green spaces and other environmental features designed and managed as a multifunctional resource providing a range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens.
Green space	A collective term used to describe all parks, public gardens, playing fields, children's play areas, woodlands, nature reserves, allotment gardens, linear and other open spaces.
GVA (Gross Value Added)	A measure of the value of goods and services produced in Herefordshire, used as an indicator of the state of the county's economy.
Gypsies and Travellers	When used in combination this means persons of a nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who, on the grounds only of their own or their family's or dependents' educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.
<b>H</b>	
Habitats Regulation Assessment	A Habitats Regulations Assessment is the assessment of the impacts of implementing a plan or policy on a Natura 2000 site. Its purpose is to consider the impacts of a land use plan against conservation objectives of the site and to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of the site. Where significant negative effects are identified, alternative options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.

Term	Meaning
<b>H continued</b>	
Hereford Futures	A partnership of public and private sector organisations leading and co-ordinating a range of regeneration projects in Hereford.
Herefordshire Biological Records Centre	The local centre for the collation, management and dissemination of biodiversity data necessary for the consideration of development proposals.
Herefordshire Economic Assessment	A comprehensive analysis of the local economy, including future prospects that may generate and attract inward investment into the county.
Herefordshire Learning Village	A purpose-built state of the art learning centre. The Learning Village will provide a co-ordinated range of courses that are specifically targeted to meet the needs of local employers, a business development unit and high technology engineering and craft workshop.
Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership	A partnership of organisations working together to implement and review the Biodiversity Action Plan.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated assets and assets identified by the local planning authority.
Historic Landscape Characterisation	Historic Landscape Characterisation is a new GIS-based archaeological method for defining the historic and archaeological dimension of the present-day landscape.
Historic parks and gardens	Gardens, parks and designated landscapes which are of national historical interest and which are included in English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England.
Home & Communities Agency	A public body that supports and funds new affordable housing and regeneration projects in England. Established by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as one of the successor bodies to the Housing Corporation.
Housing affordability	The ability of families and individuals to qualify for the purchase of a house which is especially dependent on wage levels and housing market prices in an area.
Housing Market Area	Areas identified as local housing markets within Herefordshire, through an analysis of key indicators such as; tenure and housing type profile, incomes, affordability, house prices, geographical proximity and travel to work patterns.
Housing quality indicators	A system used by the Homes & Communities Agency to measure the quality of housing schemes it funds. There are ten indicators which are used to assess the individual housing units and their design in detail, as well as assessing their context and surroundings.
Housing trajectory	This identifies how much potential housing can be provided and at what point in the future.
<b>I</b>	
Informal open space	Areas for unsupervised and unstructured outdoor play. These can consist of casual or informal playing space within housing estates, including safe shared space such as play streets or kick about areas. It includes outdoor equipped play areas for children of all ages, and play facilities that offer specific opportunities for outdoor play, such as BMX tracks.

Term	Meaning
<b>I continued</b>	
Infrastructure	A collective term for services such as roads, electricity, sewerage, water, social services, health facilities and recycling and refuse facilities.
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	This sets out details of the infrastructure required to support development in the future.
Intermediate housing	Homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels.
<b>L</b>	
Land bank	A means of implementing proposals that involves the acquisition, leasing or other method of land access; by which required parcels of land are assembled until development can proceed.
Landfill sites	The place where controlled waste is deposited. References to landfill may also refer to land raising and waste disposal.
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)	Grouping landscape into areas with similar character, based on physical and human influences. The assessment describes the physical, cultural and perceptual character of the landscape and identifies important or sensitive features. LCAs often identify objectives in respect of landscape planning, design and management of the areas.
Lapse rates	An estimate of the levels of planning permission which will expire without being implemented based upon an analysis of historic records.
Lifetime Homes	Lifetime Homes are ordinary homes designed to incorporate 16 design criteria that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost. Each design feature adds to the comfort and convenience of the home and supports the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life. See <a href="http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/">http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/</a>
Listed Buildings	Buildings that are identified for their special architectural or historic interest. Listed building consent is required to ensure that these features are protected. There are three categories of listing depending on the importance and special interest of the building: Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II.
Locality Working	This involves Herefordshire Council working at a local level, in partnership with communities, in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gain a fuller understanding of local needs and resources;</li> <li>• encourage service providers to work better together;</li> <li>• develop local solutions to improve the lives of residents.</li> </ul>
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	This is a public statement of a local authority's programme for the production of Local Development Documents.
Local Enhancement Zone	Areas identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy 2010, which would benefit from improvement in terms of green infrastructure
Local Geological Sites	Local Geological Sites are selected on a local or regional basis using nationally agreed criteria. These are based on the value of a site for educational purposes as well as historical and aesthetic value, particularly in promoting public awareness and appreciation of earth sciences.
Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA)	An area-wide analysis of housing demand and housing need.

Term	Meaning
<b>L continued</b>	
Herefordshire Local Housing Requirement Study	A study undertaken as an addendum to the Herefordshire Local Housing Needs Assessment to inform the developments for the Core Strategy including demographic projections for population, households and dwellings, taking account of past trends and forecasted economic performance.
Local Needs	Local needs housing is the housing developed to meet the needs of existing and concealed households living within the parish and surrounding parishes which is evidenced by the Housing Needs Survey for the parish, the Housing Register and the Local Housing Market Assessment.
Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP)	These are non-statutory, multi-agency partnerships, within local authority boundaries, bringing together different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors; allowing different initiatives and services to work together more effectively.
Local Transport Plan 3	A five-year integrated transport strategy being prepared by the council as highway authority, in partnership with the community; which seeks funding to help provide local transport projects.
Local Wildlife Site	Previously known as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation or County Wildlife Sites these are areas of land with significant wildlife value in a county.
<b>M</b>	
Market housing	Housing sold or rented at full market value.
Mitigation	Measures taken to reduce adverse impacts; for example, changing the way development is carried out to minimise adverse effects through appropriate methods or timing.
Monitoring	Process where outcomes of policies and proposals are checked on a continuous or periodic basis in order to assess their effectiveness and impact.
Multiple deprivation	Where people are deprived in respect of a number of attributes such as income, housing, healthcare and education.
<b>N</b>	
NHS Herefordshire	In 2008, Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire became the first local authority and primary care trust to form a new kind of partnership to achieve more efficient and better value for money services Herefordshire residents.
National Nature Reserve	Designated by Natural England these are sites for wildlife and/or geology national importance with legal protection.
National Planning Policy Framework	This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is the framework within which Herefordshire Council has produced the Local Plan – Core Strategy.
Neighbourhood Development Plan	The development plan written by a community which has come together through a local parish council to shape new development by saying where a development should be located and what it should look like. Introduced via the Localism Act 2011.

Term	Meaning
<b>O</b>	
Open space	All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs), which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
<b>P</b>	
Park and Choose	Facilities which seek to reduce town centre congestion and support more sustainable and active travel modes by encouraging motorists to leave their vehicles on the edge of the urban area, and continue their journey by a range of sustainable travel options. This may be by regular bus service, walking, cycling or car-sharing.
Passivhaus	A standard where the heating requirement is reduced to the point where a traditional heating system is no longer considered essential. Cooling is also minimised by the same principles and through the use of shading and in some cases via the pre-cooling of the supply air. The Passivhaus standard can be applied to residential dwellings, commercial, industrial and public buildings.
Permitted development rights	Rights to carry out certain limited forms of development without the need to make an application for planning permission.
Perpetuity	Meaning 'forever' regardless of changes in circumstances including land ownership.
Planning obligations	See section 106 Agreements.
Previously developed land (PDL)	See Brownfield land.
Primary shopping areas	These will be defined in the Area Plans and will include the primary and secondary shopping frontages.
Primary shopping frontages	Defined areas in town centres; likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods.
Public transport interchange	A place where there are facilities to allow people to change their method of transport from and to walking, cycling, buses and trains.
<b>R</b>	
Rain garden	A rain garden is a shallow depression, with absorbent, yet free-draining soil and planted with vegetation that can withstand occasional temporary flooding.
Regeneration	The redevelopment of decaying or run-down parts of older urban or rural areas, in order to bring them new life and economic vitality.
Registered social housing providers	Either not for profit or profit making organisations (subject to the same standards and address the same housing priorities) providing social housing and regulated by the Homes and Community Agency.
Renewable energy	Power derived from a source that is continually replenished, such as wind, wave, solar, hydroelectric and energy from plant material, but not fossil fuels or nuclear energy. Although not strictly renewable, geothermal energy is generally included.
Residual land value	In the context of this plan this is defined as the difference between the total value of a development scheme and all the costs of the development, including land acquisition.

Term	Meaning
<b>R Continued</b>	
Retail hierarchy	A hierarchy of shopping centres ranging from regional and sub-regional centres through to town centres, district and local centres.
River Wye SAC Nutrient Management Plan	Prepared by Natural England and the Environment Agency the Plan for the River Wye, this will aim to control and reduce phosphates in the SAC to facilitate the delivery of the proposed development.
Rural housing market area (HMA)	A term used in rural housing section to describe the rural element of each housing market area.
Rural Regeneration Zone	A vehicle for bringing together partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors to develop and implement a programme of economic regeneration for the area.
<b>S</b>	
Scheduled Ancient Monument	A nationally important archaeological site or monument given legal protection.
Secondary shopping frontages	Defined areas within town centres where there is greater opportunity for a wider mix of uses than in primary shopping frontages such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.
Section 106 agreements	An agreement by the local authority with a landowner/developer restricting or regulating the development or use of land either permanently or temporarily, in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).
Self-build housing	Self-build projects are where an individual or group of people directly organise and commission the design and construction of their new homes. (also see Custom Build)
Self-sufficiency (waste management)	The European Community (EC) Framework Directive on Waste and the EC Landfill Directive set out a common framework for action on waste. Waste management should protect human health and the environment by establishing an integrated network of waste facilities. Member States should promote self-sufficiency by dealing with waste as close as possible to its point of origin and promoting waste avoidance by recycling, reclamation and energy recovery.
Sequential approach	A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types of locations of land before others. For example, town centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites. In terms of employment a sequential approach would favour an employment use over mixed use and mixed use over non-employment uses.
Sequential test	In relation to flooding, this aims to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding.
Settlement hierarchy	Settlements defined by their role and function in a specified list.
Significant urban extensions	Large-scale housing growth on the periphery of towns.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	These are legally protected sites, designated by Natural England in view of their wildlife and geological value.
Social well-being	The provision of development to assist with medical or social support
Social rented housing	Subsidised housing provided by a Registered Provider or local authority allocated on the basis of need.

Term	Meaning
<b>S Continued</b>	
Soundness	Legislation does not define the term 'sound', however, the Planning Inspectorate consider it in the context of its ordinary meaning - 'showing good judgement' and 'able to be trusted', and within the context of fulfilling the expectations of legislation.
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	SACs are sites designated under the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of fauna and flora). Together with Special Protection Areas they form the Natura 2000 network of sites.
Stakeholders	Groups, individuals or organisations that may be affected by, or have a key interest in, a development proposal or planning policy. They may often be experts in their field or represent the views of many people.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	This sets out the standards to be achieved by the local authority in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Documents and planning applications. This SCI is a clear public statement enabling the community to know how and when they will be involved in the preparation of Local Development Documents, and how they will be consulted on planning applications.
Strategic locations	For this Core Strategy defined as around 500 homes in Hereford, around 100 homes in the market towns and around 5ha of employment land.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	A formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. Local authorities who prepare and adopt such a plan or programme must prepare a report on its likely environmental effects. They must consult environmental authorities and the public, and take the report and the results of the consultation into account during the preparation process, before the plan or programme is adopted.
Strategic Highway Network	A categorisation of the road network into different categories determined by the functions they perform.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	A key component of the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community's need for more homes. The Herefordshire SHLAA assesses the potential availability of land for housing across the county up to the end of the plan period, and explores any constraints that might affect their suitability, achievability or availability for development.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment	Sub regional market analysis of housing demand and housing need which identified the key drivers in the West Housing Market Area which covers Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Herefordshire.
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	Additional planning documents to provide further details on selected policy areas. These are not subject to examination but will be available for public consultation before being adopted. These can take the form of design guides or area development briefs and will be clearly cross-referenced to the relevant plan policy or proposal that it supplements.
Sustainable development	In broad terms, this means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS)	Measures introduced in developments which aim to minimise surface water run-off and the level of waste water generated by the development. These can include use of reed beds to filter water and water storage areas.

Term	Meaning
<b>S continued</b>	
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires Local Development Documents to be prepared with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic process that is used to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies set within a Local Development Document from the outset of the preparation process. This will ensure that decisions are made that accord with sustainable development.
South Hereford	This comprises the two wards of Belmont and St Martins & Hinton
<b>T</b>	
Town Centre Uses	Retail, leisure and commercial uses.
Travellers	When used on its own and for the purposes of planning policy 'travellers' means 'gypsies and travellers' and 'travelling showpeople' (see specific definitions for each of these).
Travelling showpeople	Members of groups organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependents' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers (see specific definition for these).
Traveller Sites	Sites either for settled occupation, temporary stopping places, or transit sites for people of a nomadic way of life, such as Travellers.
<b>U</b>	
Unfavourable Condition	See 'Condition'.
Unitary Development Plan	Adopted on 23rd March 2007, it guides development within the county and will be in use with most of its policies 'saved' until they are superseded by other emerging Local Plan documents.
<b>W</b>	
Waste Management Facilities	These include facilities for waste treatment and disposal.
West Midlands Region	An official region of England, covering the western half of the area traditionally known as the Midlands. It contains the second largest British city, Birmingham, and the larger West Midlands conurbation, which includes the city of Wolverhampton and large towns of Dudley, Solihull, Walsall and West Bromwich and a number of shire counties including Herefordshire.
Windfalls	Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.
<b>Z</b>	
Zero Carbon Development	Development that achieves zero net carbon emissions from energy use on site, on an annual basis.

