

4.0 Place Shaping

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.

4.2 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.

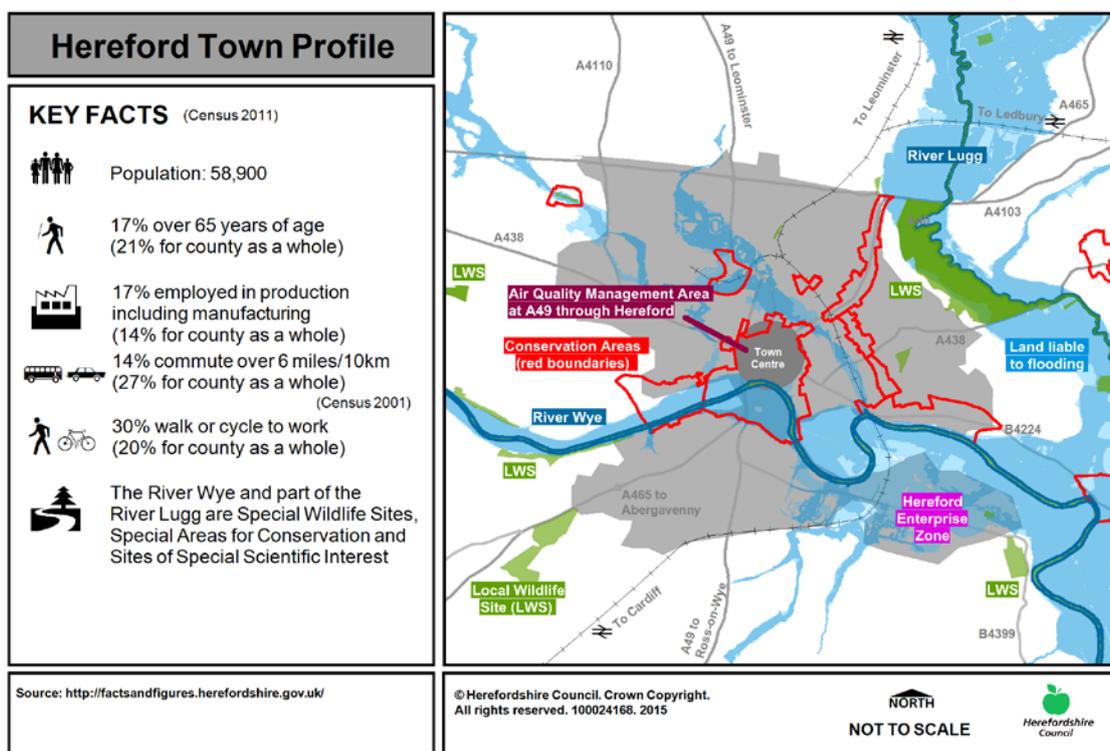
4.2.4 Hereford will be a strong sub-regional shopping, employment, educational, leisure and cultural focus for the county. Comprehensive proposals for regeneration in and around the city centre will complement the historic core by providing homes, jobs, education, shops and leisure facilities, urban 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 15 ha 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.

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 pedestrian 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.

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;

Policy HD2 cont/d

- 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 700m² 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 700m² 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 700m² 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

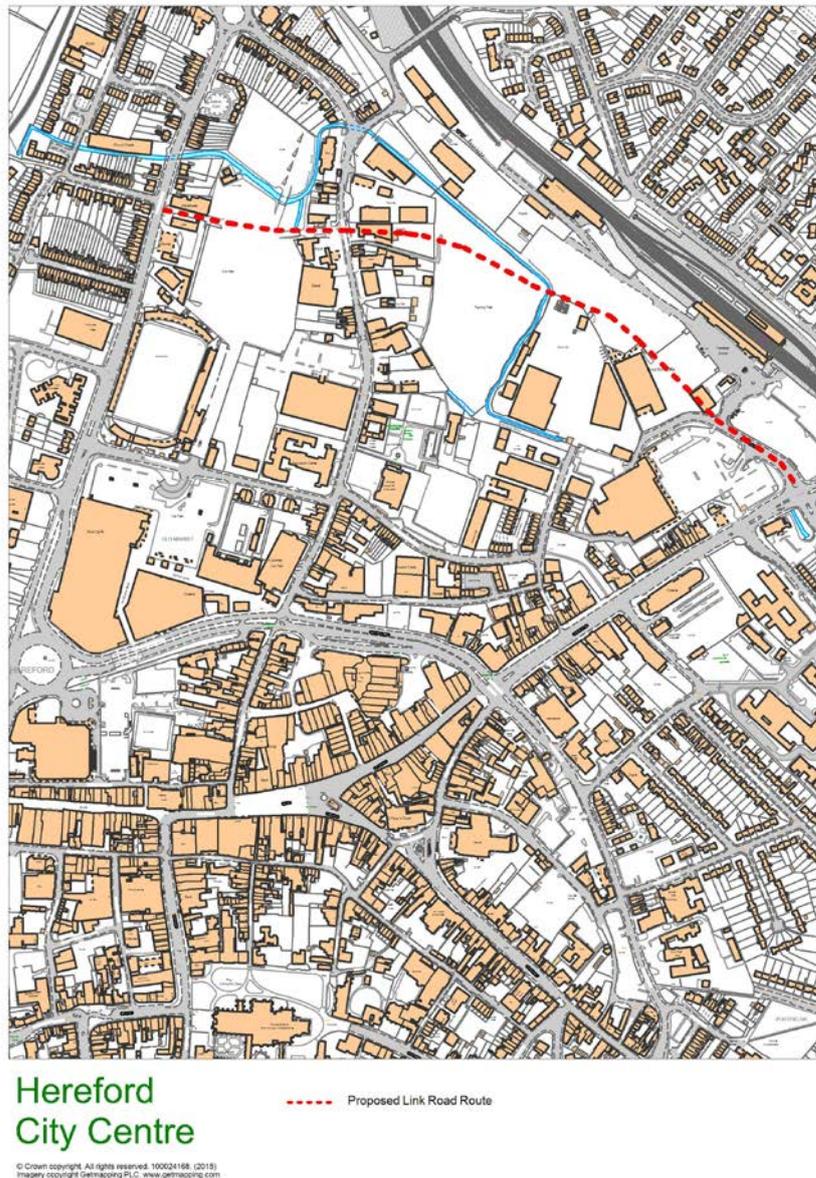
Leisure and tourism

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 700m² 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.
- 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*;
- 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;
- 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 and where appropriate contributions towards new pre-school facilities;
- 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 Hoarwathy 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.

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 10 ha 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

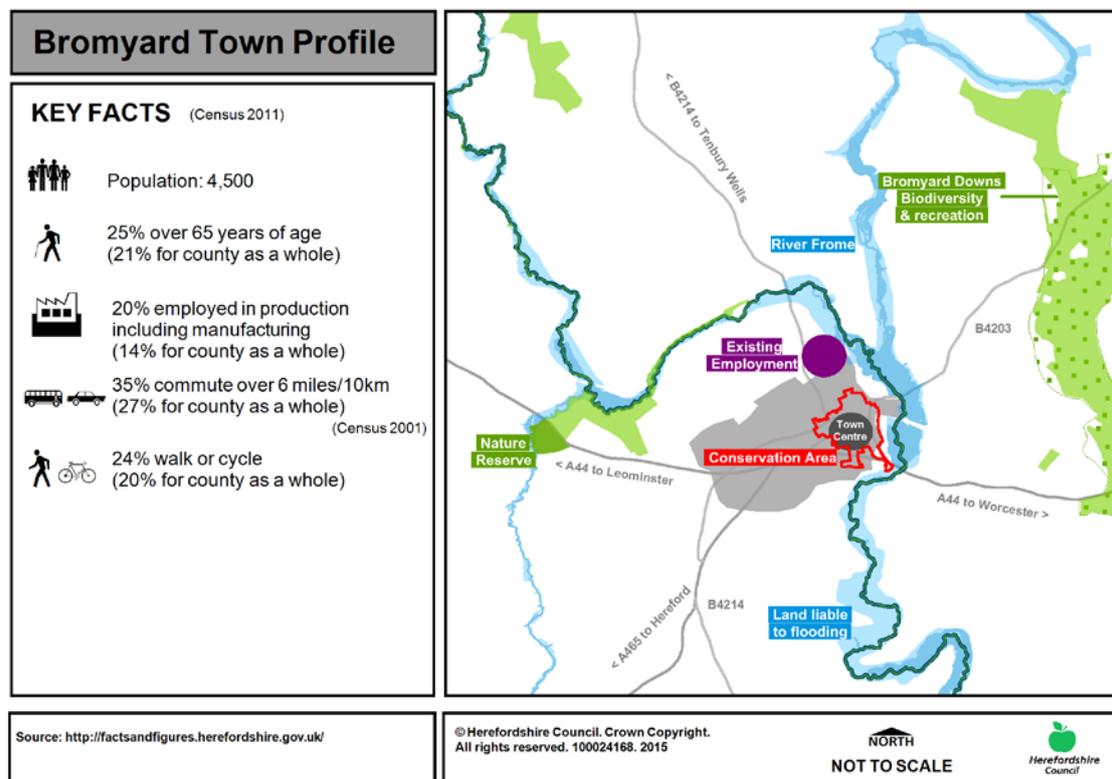
4.2.102 Although this business park is located 7km north of Hereford, it is one of the county's largest employment sites and is sufficiently close to Hereford to assist in meeting the current and future employment needs. This site presently comprises 60,000 m² of predominantly B1 and B8 floorspace, a planning permission has been granted for around a further 51,000 m² of mixed B1, B2 and B8 floorspace, totalling an additional 21 hectares.

Market Towns

4.3 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:

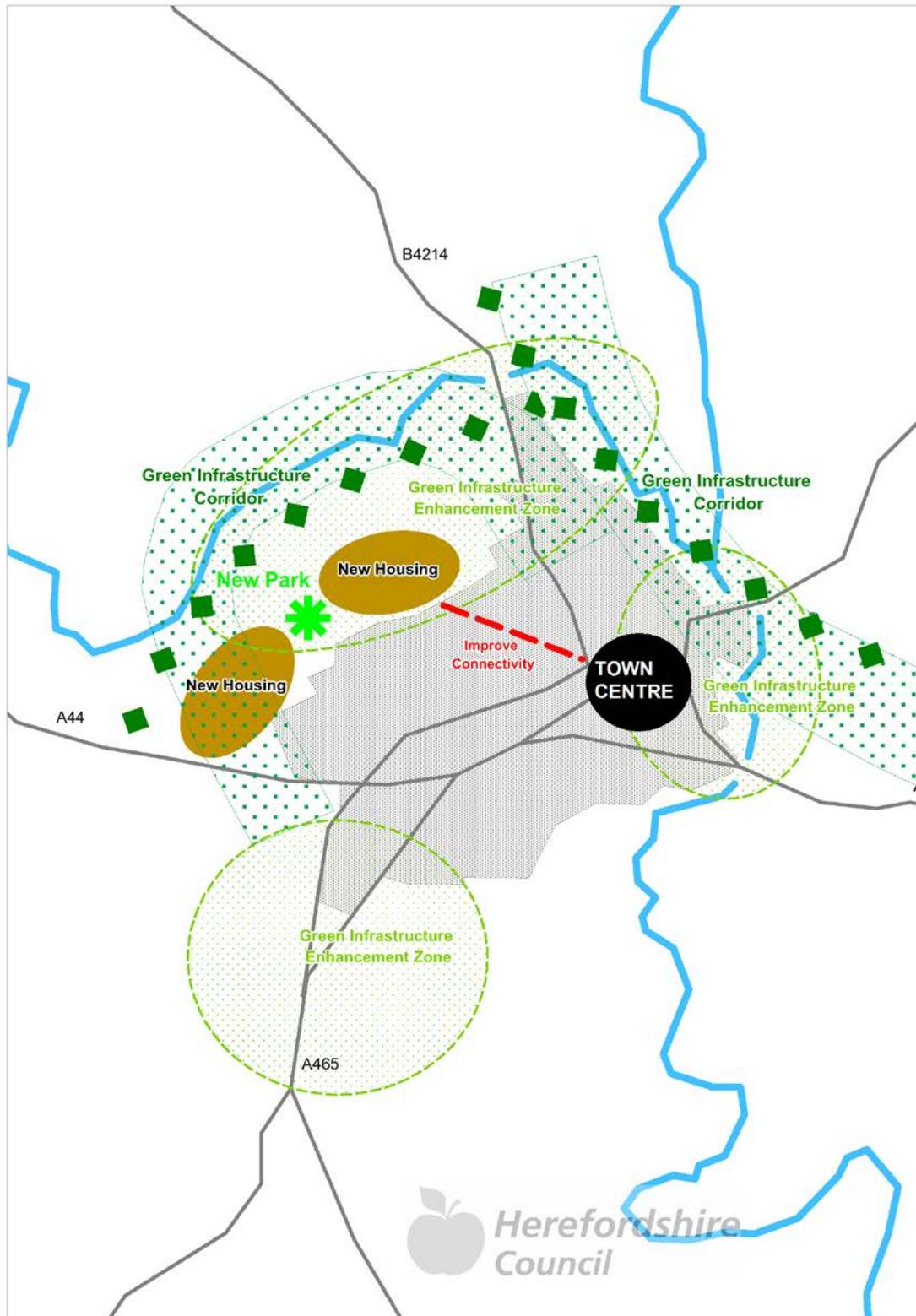
- can accommodate small scale employment sites including live/work units within and around the town;
- protect and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 200m² in gross floor space and located outside of the defined town 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 houses 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 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 m² set out in Policy E5 indicates when impact testing will be required.

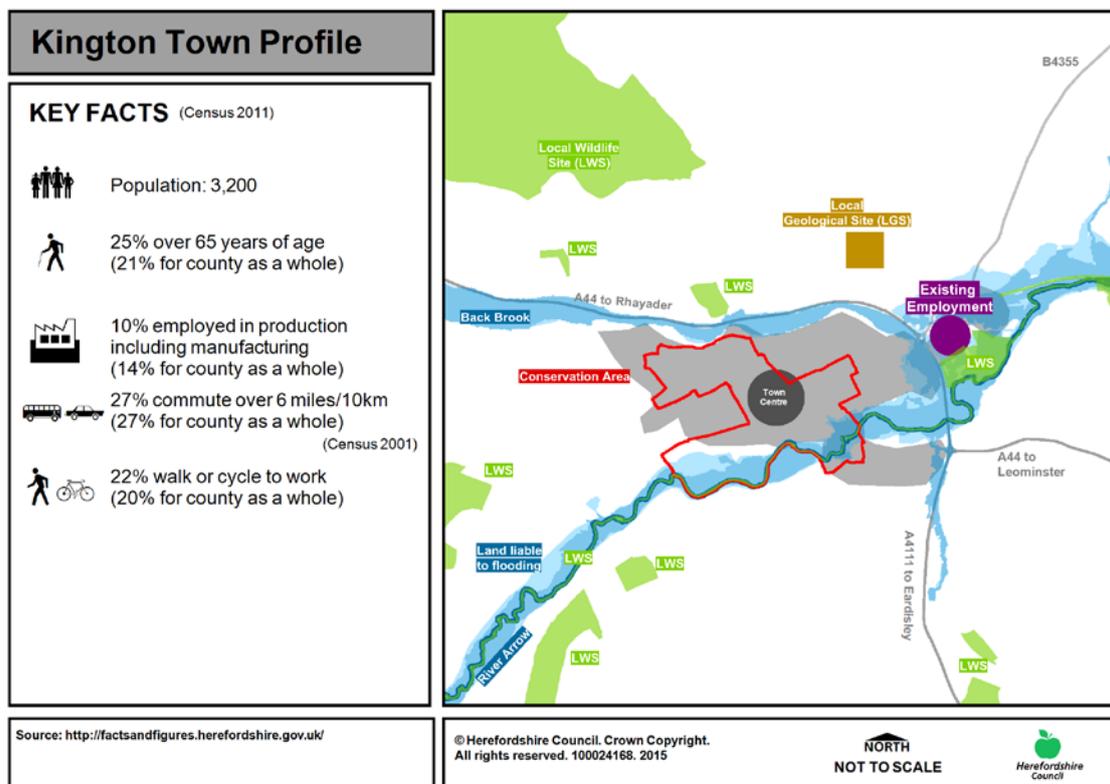
Surface water management

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.

4.4 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 infrastructure.

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 200m² 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 m² 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.

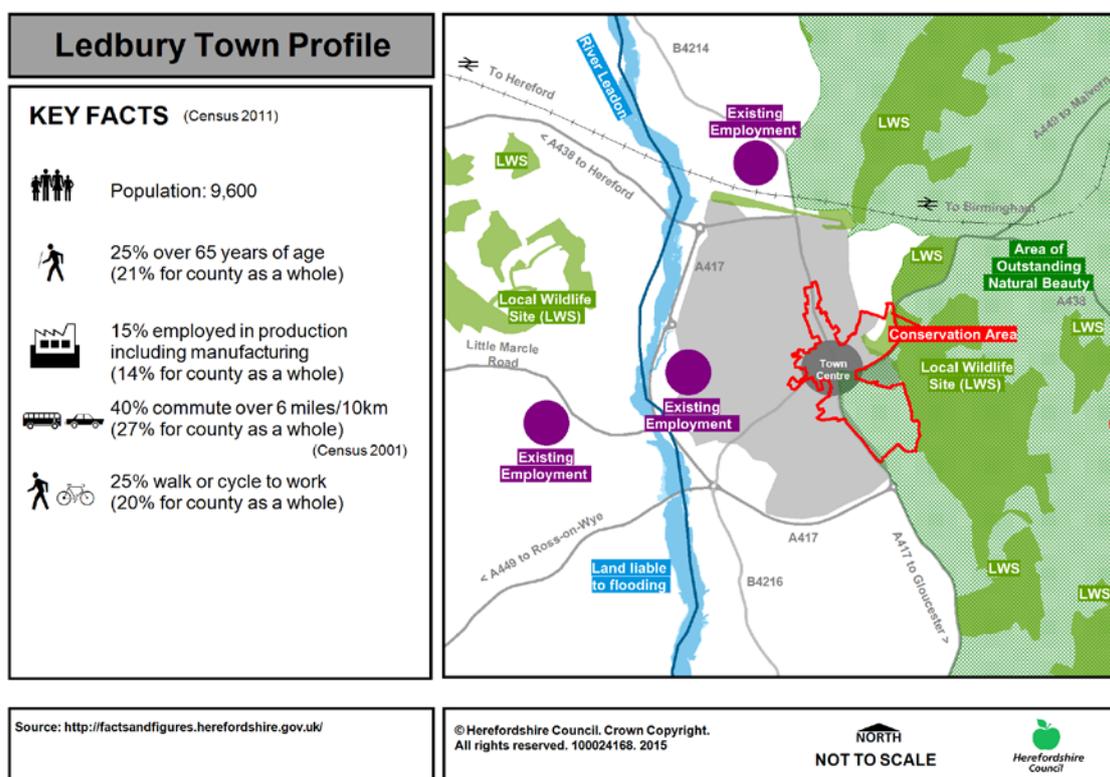
Utilities, Community Facilities Green Infrastructure, Open Space and Heritage

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.

4.5 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:

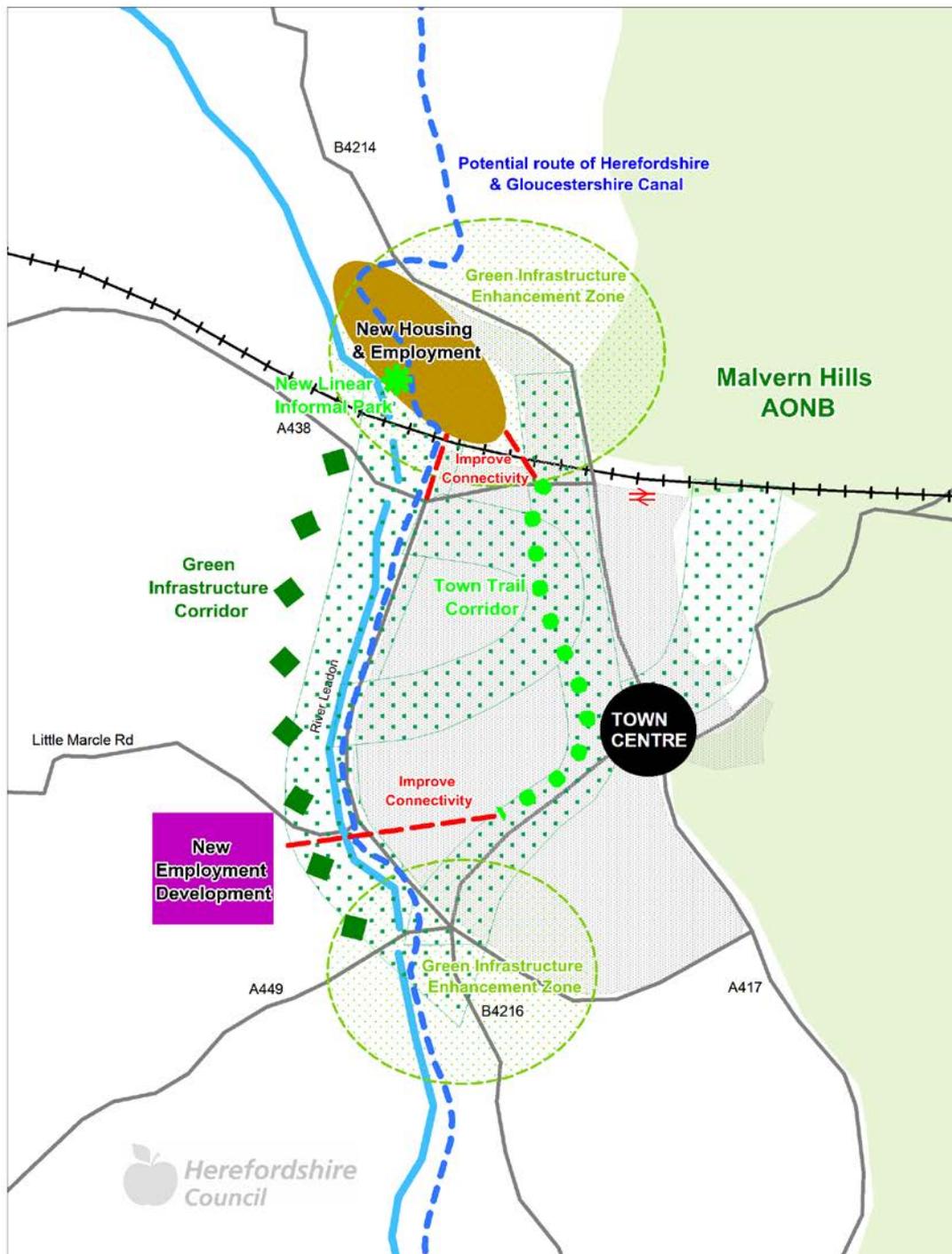
- allow for suitable small scale employment sites including live work opportunities within or adjoining the town;
- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the existing town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 400m² in gross floor space and located outside 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:

- a comprehensively planned, 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 levies, 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

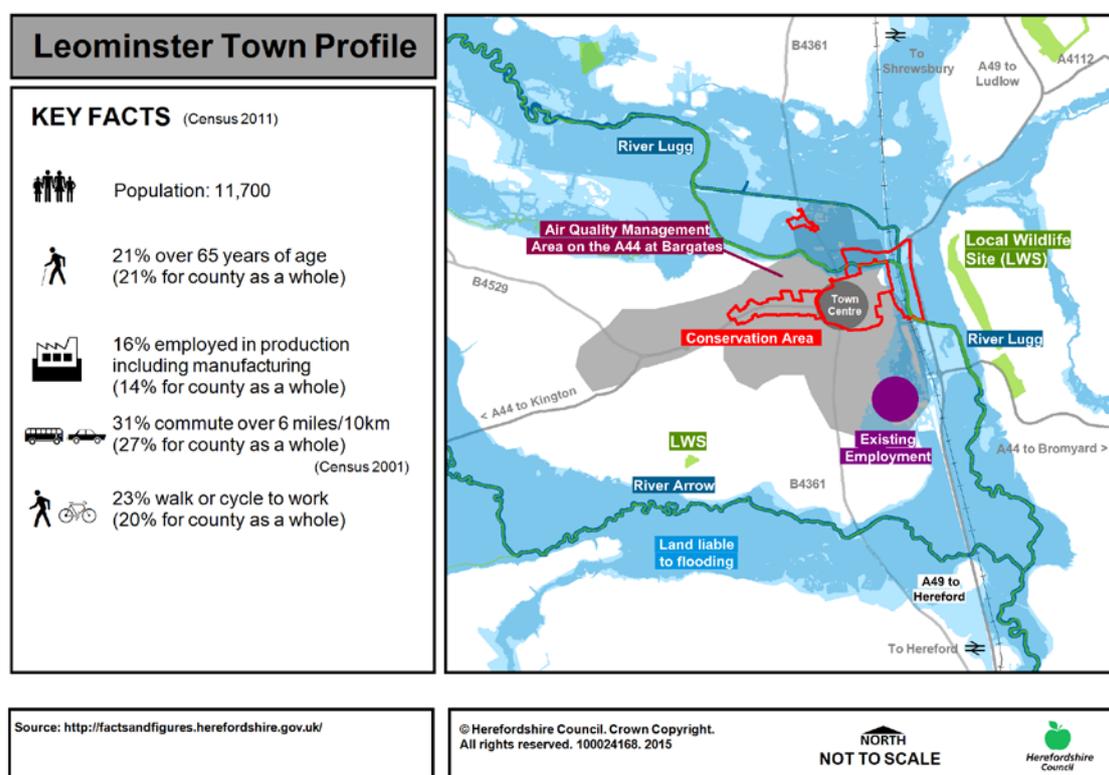
4.5.17 The west of Ledbury is prone to flooding from the River Leadon. The physical development within the urban extension and employment area will need to demonstrate through a flood risk assessment that the housing, employment, play and sports facilities avoids the areas that are vulnerable to flooding 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.

4.6 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 400m² 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.

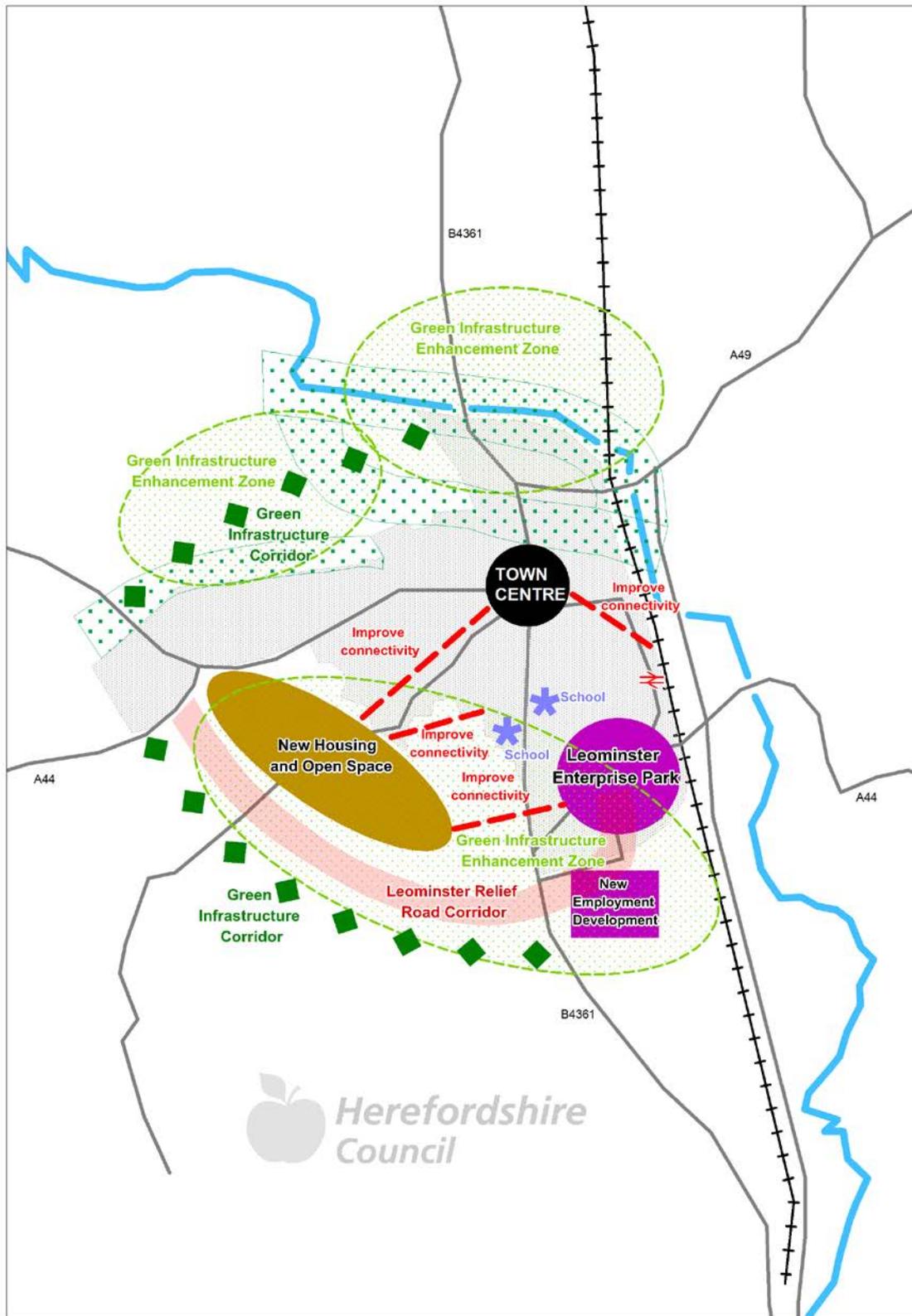
Policy LO2 – Leominster urban extension

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 CO₂ 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 400m² 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).

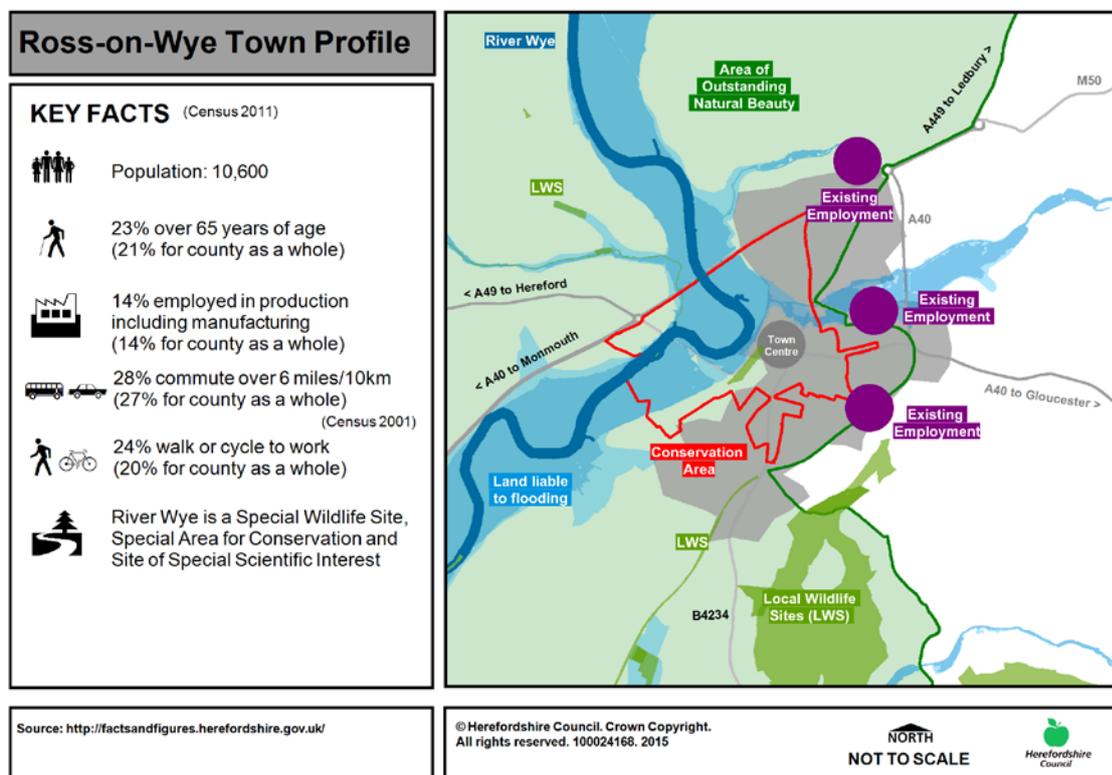
4.6.23 The *Water Cycle Study* identifies that developers would need to ensure there are no adverse impacts as a result of any new development, this could be managed to mitigate the effects on the SAC through adequate control measures and additional capacity in water treatment infrastructure and surface 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.

4.7 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:

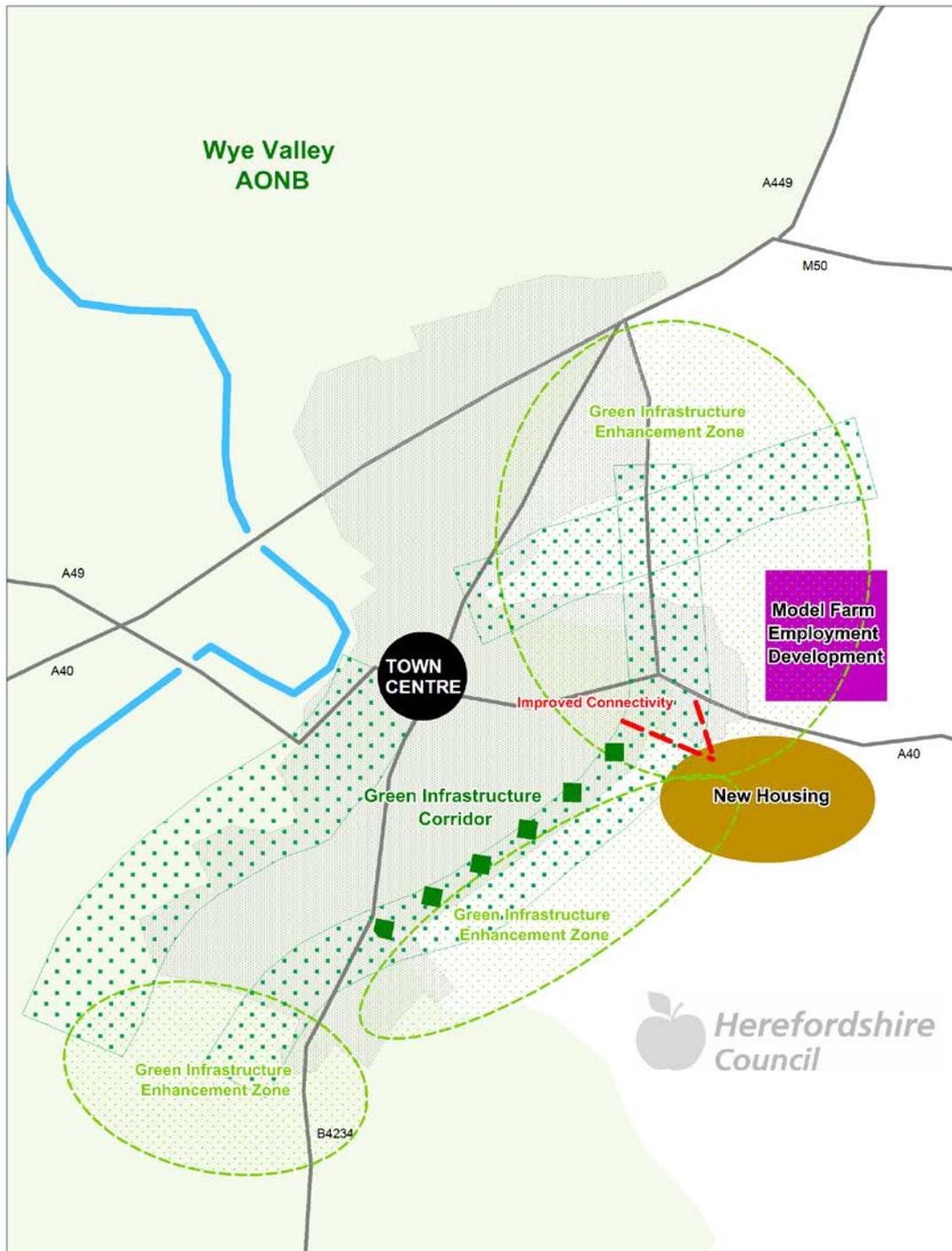
- allow for suitable employment sites, including live-work opportunities within or adjoining the town;
- maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. Proposals for new retail, leisure or office development of over 400m² gross floor space and located outside the town centre will 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 CO₂ 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.

4.8 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



Housing Market Areas



NORTH Not to Scale

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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) and 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.

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
	<hr/> 5300	

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 Beauty¹, new dwellings should make a positive contribution to their rural landscape by being built to a high standard, incorporating appropriate materials and landscaping. High 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

¹ Malvern Hills AONB Guidance on Building Design

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

HMA			
Bromyard	Golden Valley	Kington	Ledbury
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 Tittley Whitney on Wye Winforton	Ashperton Bishops Frome Bosbury Colwall Cradley Eastnor Fromes Hill Lower Eggleton/ Newtown Putley Wellington Heath
Leominster	Hereford	Ross-on-Wye	
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 Clelonger 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 Kingsthorne 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.

HMAs			
Bromyard	Golden Valley	Kington	Ledbury
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
Leominster	Hereford	Ross-on-Wye	
Ashton Aymestrey Brierley Cobnash Combe Moor Eyton Ivington Kinsham Leinthall Earls Leinthall Starkes 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 and 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