

Shaping Our Place 2026

Local Development Framework

Core Strategy

Policy Direction Paper  
Movement in Herefordshire

January 2010



# **LDF CORE STRATEGY: POLICY DIRECTION BACKGROUND PAPER**

**Policy:** Movement in Herefordshire

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## **Preferred Policy Direction**

The preferred policy direction for movement will:

1. Require enhanced walking and cycling routes and public transport opportunities where appropriate to new developments linking existing routes;
  2. Protect and promote improvements for rail passengers including reopening stations;
  3. Protect and promote opportunities for freight movements;
  4. Promotion of travel plans for urban extensions and larger sites;
  5. Encourage green infrastructure and extend public rights of ways to facilitate walking and cycling.
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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report provides background information and evidence to support the policy directions that form part of the Core Strategy Place Shaping Paper. The full policy wording will form part of the pre-submission Core Strategy.
- 1.2 The Core Strategy will set out the vision and objectives for the Herefordshire Local Development Framework (LDF), together with the 'place shaping policies' at a strategic level, explaining how the county as a whole is expected to develop up to 2026.
- 1.3 The remainder of this report seeks to address the following questions:
  - What is the current situation (issue)?
  - What is the national, regional and local policy framework?
  - What is the available evidence base indicating?
  - What can the Core Strategy do?
  - What were the results / indications for the Developing Options Consultation?
  - What further consultation will take place?
  - What conclusions can be drawn?
  - What happens next?

## **2.0 The need for the policy**

- 2.1 Transport and communication infrastructure is a key issue for Herefordshire, as it impacts on employment, health, access to services, quality of life and the county's economic development. The county is particularly dependent on road transport because of limited public transport links within and outside the county.

- 2.2 An estimated 10,500 vehicle kilometres per head were travelled on Herefordshire roads in 2007, representing a 7% increase compared with 2002. Road usage for Herefordshire remains consistently higher than the general trend for the West Midlands and England as a whole. However, this level of increase is comparable to other shire counties in the region.
- 2.3 Despite the appeal of living in a rural environment, the sparsely distributed population of the county makes the accessibility of services a key issue. 76 out of the 116 Lower Super Output Areas in Herefordshire fall within the 25% most deprived in England in terms of geographical access to services. Accessibility to public transport has been highlighted as an issue. This is particularly poor in the northern and western parts of the county, where many residents, especially the elderly are dependant on third sector run community transport schemes. Developing and sustaining rural transport networks is important for Herefordshire to improve accessibility to both jobs and services.
- 2.4 Although Herefordshire is a rural agrarian county, it does experience traffic congestion and delays in and around the central area of Hereford, resulting from extra pressure on the city's roads network during peak times. The A49 trunk road passes through the centre of Hereford and congestion problems on this route have resulted in a long section being designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). A relief road has been proposed, to relieve this pressure and help the city meet its role as a sub-regional centre.
- 2.5 The county itself is relatively remote in terms of access to the national transport network. The M50 provides a link to the M5 in the south, and the A49 (T) is the main north-south corridor linking the north west of England and south Wales to the rest of the overcrowded motorway network. A number of other roads cross the County providing routes to and from Wales for through traffic, eastward connections to and from Worcester and links to a number of settlements in Herefordshire; the A40 (T), A44, A465, A4103 and A438.
- 2.6 Herefordshire has limited access to rail services, with stations only at Hereford, Leominster, Ledbury and Colwall. A dual track route runs north/south through Hereford and Leominster providing services to Shropshire and the northwest region, and southwards to Newport and Cardiff. A route also links Hereford to Worcester via Ledbury and Colwall, giving direct services to and from Birmingham, Oxford and London. The line is mainly single track, with a passing loop at Ledbury.
- 2.7 The total number of entries and exits at local stations increased by 21% between 2004 and 2007. This was similar to the increase seen across all stations in the UK (23%) but greater than for stations in the West Midlands (16%). The smaller increase in the West Midlands is likely to be a result of a reduction in the use at Birmingham New Street station, which accounts for a large proportion of usage.
- 2.8 Out of the four stations in Herefordshire, it was Leominster that saw the greatest increase in usage over the period (51%), followed by Colwall (27%), Hereford and Ledbury increased by 17% and 13% respectively. Perhaps not surprisingly, it is Hereford that has the greatest overall usage, with a total of 854,475 entries and exits in 2006-07.
- 2.9 In terms of buses, the results of the latest Herefordshire Satisfaction Survey (2008) show that 54% of residents used their local bus service in the last 12

months. This is an increase from 45% in 2007. In April 2008, everyone who is eligible for concessionary bus travel in England became entitled to free off-peak travel on all local buses anywhere in England, and this may in part be responsible for this increase in usage. Only 6% of residents used local bus services almost everyday and 13% used them at least once a week, both an increase on 2007 (4% and 10% respectively).

- 2.10 The Core Strategy will play a key role in helping to promote sustainable modes of travel, not least walking and cycling which are environmentally friendly and have health benefits; increasing the amount of cycling trips alone would reduce levels of congestion. Between 2004-05 and 2006-07 the number of cycle trips increased dramatically taking the level much beyond Herefordshire's target. However, this number saw a sharp decline in 2006-07 which can be partially attributed to a reduction in cycle usage during the summer months due to the bad weather and summer floods typically when cycle use is at its peak.
- 2.11 Over the next plan period car use will inevitably increase, and how this demand is managed will be crucial in addressing the likely growth in congestion, the economic viability and desirability of the county and the impacts upon air quality.

### **3.0 The policy framework**

- 3.1 In the UK, the Department of Transport (DfT) is the governmental department responsible for this area of policy. The department's aim is to ensure that transport works for everyone and this means a transport system which balances the needs of the economy, the environment and society. In support of this aim the DfT has developed five strategic objectives, which focus on the core areas of its business:
1. To support national economic competitiveness and growth, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks.;
  2. To reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of avoiding dangerous climate change;
  3. To contribute to better safety, security and health and longer life-expectancy through reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport, and promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health;
  4. To promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society;
  5. To improve quality of life for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a healthy natural environment.
- 3.2 The DfT is also committed to Public Service Agreement (PSA) 5 to help meet policy proposals. This covers the period 2008–2011 and seeks to deliver reliable and efficient transport networks that support economic growth. Successful delivery of PSA 5 will enable improvements in the reliability and capacity of those parts of the transport system where networks are critical in supporting economic growth, and where there are clear signals that these networks are not performing.

## **National transport policy**

- 3.3 The Government's ten year Transport Plan (Transport 2010) was published in July 2000. It is an investment plan for delivering the policies set within the Transport White Paper, produced in July 1998. The vision set out in the plan is that by 2010 there will be a transport system which provides:
- Modern, high quality public transport, both locally and nationally. People will have more choice about how they travel, and more will use public transport;
  - More light rail systems and attractive bus services that are fully accessible and integrated with other types of transport;
  - High quality Park and ride schemes so that people do not have to drive into congested town centres;
  - Easier access to jobs and services through improved transport links to regeneration areas and better land use planning;
  - A modern train fleet, with reliable and more frequent services, and faster trains cutting inter-city journey times;
  - A well-maintained road network with real-time driver information for strategic routes and reduced congestion;
  - Fully integrated public transport information, booking and ticketing systems, with a single ticket or card covering the whole journey;
  - Safer and more secure transport accessible to all;
  - A transport system that makes less impact on the environment.

### The Stern Review and Eddington

- 3.4 Much has changed since the publication of Transport 2010 and two in-depth studies commissioned by the Government add lots of good information to the transport evidence base.
- 3.5 The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change, published on 30 October 2006, discusses the effect of climate change and global warming on the world's economy. The review says developed countries need to cut their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by between 60-80 per cent by 2050. It is apparent that there is an economic case for this, and perhaps a moral one, as unchecked global warming would not only lead to increased loss of land and life from flooding and rising sea-levels, but also to drought and malnutrition, and to the extinction of many species.
- 3.6 Whilst reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions does have an economic cost, Stern estimates this at a global cost of 1 per cent of GDP, if we tackle the challenge in the most economically efficient manner, although for developed countries like the UK this cost could be higher. The Stern review is not about sacrificing all economic growth to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>, but about tackling climate change in the most cost-effective way possible, in order to deliver future economic and social objectives.
- 3.7 The Eddington Study goes hand in hand with the Stern Review and confirms that there is a vital link between transport and the economy. It advocates a focused approach, targeted on congested and growing cities and their catchment areas, and key inter-urban links and international gateways where congestion poses the most serious threat to economic growth.

- 3.8 Eddington concludes that national connectivity is good, so there is no need to criss-cross the country with new links or to seek dramatic reductions in journey-times between cities. He makes clear also, that whilst investment in new infrastructure will sometimes be the only answer to a transport problem, there are other options that should be explored including pricing, regulation and traffic management, encouragement of smarter travel choices, travel planning and development of new technologies. Although Eddington is clear that transport capacity will have to increase, the study's prescription is not for wholesale 1989-style tarmac spreading.
- 3.9 Importantly, this analysis does not alter the fact that increased air, port, rail and road capacity will be needed to sustain economic growth. It does however, mean that we need to ensure that transport supports all the key elements of sustainable development.

#### Delivering a Sustainable Transport System

- 3.10 The Government outlined its proposed approach to long-term transport planning in *Towards a Sustainable Transport System*, which was published in 2007, in response to the Eddington Study and the Stern Review.
- 3.11 The subsequent report entitled *Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (2008)* explains how the Government aims to put this into action in a way that both tackles the UK's immediate problems and shapes the transport system to meet the longer term challenges that are said by some to be critical for the nations prosperity and way of life.
- 3.11 *Delivering a Sustainable Transport System* outlines the key components of national infrastructure and discusses the difficulties of planning over the long-term in the context of uncertain future demand, as well as describing the substantial investments aimed at tackling congestion and crowding on transport networks.
- 3.12 The report outlines five goals for transport, focusing on the challenge of delivering strong economic growth while at the same time reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Each of the five goals were emphasised in the Eddington study and take full account of transport's wider impact on climate change, health, quality of life and the natural environment.
- 3.13 In short, the Government wants the transport system to:
1. Support national economic competitiveness and growth, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks;
  2. Reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of tackling climate change;
  3. Contribute to better safety security and health and longer life-expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health;
  4. Promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society;
  5. Improve quality of life for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a healthy natural environment.

- 3.14 Government anticipates that progress will be made against each of these objectives, even though there will be inevitable tension between the different goals when considering decisions about future investment. In particular, supporting economic growth, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions are likely to be the most challenging to deliver in parallel, at least in the short-term.
- 3.15 It is possible, too, that there will be a strong synergy between different goals. For example, measures that improve the links between cities will also benefit the economies of the surrounding regions and help to reduce regional economic imbalance. Similarly, measures that encourage modal shift to public transport, walking and cycling are likely to make a positive contribution to economic growth (by tackling congestion), reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing the local environment, as well as improving public and personal health.

### **The Planning Act (2008) and PPG13**

- 3.16 Integrating spatial and land use planning with transport is key to promoting sustainable patterns of development and economic growth. By influencing the location of new development efficient land use can reduce the need to travel, particularly by car, and minimise its impact on the environment. At the same time the planning system needs to be able to respond to the need for new transport infrastructure.
- 3.17 Most recently, the Government implemented a fundamental reform of the development consent system for nationally significant infrastructure projects in accordance with Planning Act, which was granted Royal Assent on 26 November 2008. This led to the establishment of the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC), an independent body which makes decisions on applications concerning nationally significant infrastructure projects relating to railways, harbours and airports. The commission's remit is to provide a more efficient, transparent and accessible planning system for such projects.
- 3.18 The DfT is working closely with the IPC at present, and it is intended that the recommendations of the Stern Review and the Eddington Study will be carried forward through the preparation of three National Planning Policy Statements, for national networks (strategic roads and railways and strategic rail freight interchanges), ports and airports. In the meantime Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 (PPG13): Transport will remain in operation.
- 3.19 National planning policy on transport in PPG13 highlights the key link between land use planning and transport. Its main objective is to integrate planning and transport, including promoting sustainable transport choices, promoting accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling, and reducing the need to travel.

### **Other relevant planning policies**

- 3.20 Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1): Delivering Sustainable Development aims to develop strong, vibrant and sustainable communities. It states that development plans should contain clear, comprehensive and inclusive access

policies – in terms of both location and external physical access. They should address accessibility for all members of the community to jobs, health, housing, etc, by ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access them on foot, bicycle or public transport, rather than having to rely on access by car, while recognising that this may be more difficult in rural areas.

- 3.21 PPS3: Housing requires new housing developments to be easily accessible and well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services. It advises local planning authorities to take a design-led approach to the provision of car-parking space, which is well integrated with high quality public realm, and streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly.
- 3.22 PPS6: Planning for Town Centres sets out guidance for town centres, which includes making them accessible to all and well-served by a choice of means of transport. It states that good access to town centres is essential. Jobs, shopping, leisure and tourist facilities and a wide range of services should therefore be located in town centres wherever possible and appropriate, taking full advantage of accessibility by public transport. In selecting appropriate sites for allocation or assessing proposed development, local planning authorities should have regard to whether the site is or will be accessible and well served by a choice of means of transport, especially public transport, walking and cycling, as well as by car; and the impact on car use, traffic and congestion.
- 3.23 In rural areas, town centre development should be focussed in local service centres, where there is a potential to maximise accessibility by public transport and by walking and cycling, whilst ensuring that the lack of public transport facilities does not preclude small-scale retail or service development, where these would serve local needs.
- 3.24 PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas provides the policy context for planning for rural areas, including country towns and villages and the wider larger undeveloped countryside. One of the key principles relates to accessibility. It states:

‘Accessibility should be a key consideration in all development decisions. Most developments which are likely to generate large numbers of trips should be located in or next to towns or other service centres that are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, in line with the policies set out in PPG13. Decisions on the location of other developments in rural areas should, where possible, give people the greatest opportunity to access them by public transport, walking and cycling, consistent with achieving the primary purpose of the development.’

### **Regional guidance**

- 3.20 At a regional level, the West Midlands Regional Transport Strategy provides the long-term context for integrating land use and transport policy and identifies transport investment priorities for the region. The Regional

Transport Strategy is incorporated in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS), which was published in June 2004 and provides the framework for the preparation of Local Development Documents and Local Transport Plans across the region.

#### West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy

- 3.21 The WMRSS recognises that there is a need to be innovative and find ways of simultaneously achieving social, environmental and economic objectives. These interlinked objectives are, in essence, the primary purpose of the application of transport policy, and are directly reflected in the shared priorities which guide Policy T1, particularly those of air quality, accessibility and congestion.
- 3.22 There is general support for the integration of planning and transport, with an overarching aim to reduce the need to travel by promoting both incentives and demand restraint to achieve modal shift from the car.
- 3.23 As outlined in the Eddington Study, transport is not an end in itself, and consequently the location of development is highly important for sustainable access. For that reason the WMRSS urges local planning authorities to ensure that, where possible, development can be served by existing public transport and existing infrastructure.
- 3.24 Cross-border linkages have been taken into account which is particularly important given that the 2008 Wales Spatial Plan Update reveals several economic, social and environmental interdependencies between England and central Wales, including transport and access to services.

#### **Sub-regional guidance**

- 3.25 Within Herefordshire there are four documents which directly relate to this topic:
- The Sustainable Community Strategy;
  - The Local Area Agreement;
  - The Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan;
  - The Herefordshire Local Transport Plan 2.
- 3.26 The **Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy** sets out aspirations for the county by 2020 and how we might achieve them. The strategy also acts as Herefordshire's Local Agenda 21 Plan and Regeneration Strategy and is closely integrated with the emerging LDF for the county.
- 3.27 The **Vision** is that Herefordshire will be a place where people, organisations and businesses working together within an outstanding natural environment will bring about sustainable prosperity and well being for all.
- 3.28 The **Local Area Agreement (LAA)** is closely aligned with the Sustainable Community Strategy and is structured around five themes:
- Economic and Enterprise;
  - Children and Young People;

- Healthier Communities and Older People
  - Safer and Stronger Communities;
  - Environment.
- 3.29 Within each theme there are a number of outcomes, underpinned by performance indicators which are regularly monitored to show progress towards the achievement.
- 3.30 Two important LAA priorities 2008-11 are to:
- Improve access to integrated public and community transport, reduce traffic congestion and encourage alternatives to car use;
  - Improve the availability of sustainable services and facilities and access to them;
  - Increase safety for road users in the county;
  - Lead a local contribution to climate change reduction.
- 3.31 The existing **Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP)** has been operating as part of the LDF since its adoption on 23 March 2007. Once the UDP expires in March 2010, only the policies which have been formally saved will continue in effect. In January 2009, the council formally commenced work on the process of saving policies, taking into account the close links that exist between UDP policies, the WMRSS and the Sustainable Community Strategy, and the need to ensure effective planning control whilst the Core Strategy is in preparation.
- 3.32 All policies concerning transport contained in Chapter 8 of the UDP have been submitted to the Secretary of State to be saved, and a decision on the saved policies is expected on the saved policies in early 2010.
- 3.33 The transport policies contained in this chapter aim to:
- Ensure the safe, efficient and sustainable movement of people and goods;
  - Reduce or minimise the need to travel, particularly by private car;
  - Reflect the priorities of the hierarchy of transport modes set out in the Local Transport Plan;
  - Enable public transport availability to support policies for the location of new development;
  - Integrate modes of travel and other land uses to enhance modal choice and easier and more efficient access;
  - Improve personal safety and safeguard and improve the local environment.
- 3.34 These policies have the following more specific objectives:
- To safeguard land for the provision of new transport routes, improvement of existing routes and provision of associated facilities across all modes, promoting modal integration wherever possible;
  - To provide for and encourage new and improved routes for walking and cycling;
  - To encourage the transfer of freight from road to rail;
  - To seek to direct road freight movement to suitable routes, limiting environmental impacts in both urban and rural areas;

- To restrict car parking in congested urban areas and in conservation areas;
  - To support the retention and extension of public transport;
  - To promote workplace and school travel plans and safer routes to school.
- 3.35 Policy S6 sets out the UDP's general policy in relation to transport and is based upon enabling and securing safe, efficient and sustainable transport movement of people and goods. To this end, the UDP complements Herefordshire's **Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP2)**, which covers the period 2006/07 to 2010/11. The LTP2 contains an integrated transport strategy for Herefordshire, defining a five-year programme of transportation measures. It considers the transport issues affecting the county and includes a number of policy statements.
- 3.36 There is a requirement for the LTP2 and the UDP to be complimentary and fully integrated both in terms of strategic transport policies and detailed policy guidance. This has been achieved through a range of mechanisms, including the work of a Herefordshire Partnership thematic group addressing transport.
- 3.37 Transport modes are supreme and the LTP2 has developed a modal hierarchy demonstrating commitment to securing a sustainable and integrated transport system which is accessible to all. This hierarchy, in order of the highest priority, is set out below:
- Pedestrians and people with mobility difficulties;
  - Cyclists and public transport users;
  - Commercial/business users and powered two wheelers;
  - Car borne shoppers and coach borne visitors;
  - Car borne commuters and visitors.
- 3.38 In terms of rail strategy, the LTP2 seeks to provide even better access to rail services especially for those with mobility difficulties. However, there are no plans for infrastructure improvement or service development within Herefordshire with external rail strategies proposing the maintenance of the status quo.

## 4.0 Evidence base

- 4.1 Over the last few years and as part of its LDF the council has been preparing a wide range of background studies as evidence to support its Core Strategy. The Hereford Multi-Modal Model Forecasting Report, commissioned from JMP Consultants Ltd by Herefordshire Council and the Highways Agency, examines the implications of potential housing development up to 2026 as proposed in the WMRSS and its impact on the road network within Hereford and its surrounding area.
- 4.3 The objectives of the study can be summarised as follows:
- To determine the impact of national transport demand forecasts on the operation of the Hereford highway network;
  - To investigate the effects of the additional housing requirements, and their allocations, on the operation of the highway network;

- To provide details of any relief to congestion provided by a relief road running either to the west or to the east of the city;
- To identify areas of capacity constraint in terms of delay;
- To evaluate and compare network conditions under each scenario;
- To assess the level of stress on the network in terms of network operation parameters and link flows.

4.4 Five demand scenarios were considered within the study:

- Do-Minimum – with growth in travel demand forecast by TEMPRO
- Do-Something 1 to Do-Something 4 – with growth in travel demand forecast by TEMPRO, plus additional trips associated with the Growth Point housing and employment allocations – four different distributions of housing and employment have been tested.

4.5 These were each tested with three network scenarios:

- No relief road – a future-year network without an outer distributor road;
- Relief road west – a future-year network with an outer distributor road on a western alignment;
- Relief road east – a future year network with an outer distributor road on an eastern alignment.

4.6 The study reveals that the increase in travel demand, as forecast by TEMPRO, is likely to have a significant detrimental effect on the operation of the Hereford highway network and that additional trips associated with the Growth Point housing allocations would exacerbate existing congestion problems, leading to longer journey times and extensive queuing.

4.7 Adding a relief road on either alignment, is likely to provide relief from the adverse effects, but of the four options tested, it is the option with a relief road on the eastern alignment and with the Do-Something Demand Option 3 (north-south focus) that produces the best overall highway network performance.

4.8 Whilst the modeling work has indicated the need for a relief road to enable the level of development identified in the spatial strategy, a wide range of further technical work needs to be undertaken in order to identify the preferred route corridor. This work is ongoing, but the council has already carried out an initial assessment of the areas to the east and west of Hereford City for the purpose of the Place Shaping Paper. The following provides an overview of the key environmental characteristics of the eastern and western corridors.

#### Western corridor route

4.9 Some 80% of the corridor route is considered to fall within the highest category of landscape sensitivity. Despite its proximity to the edges of Hereford, part of the corridor is said to be relatively tranquil with low to medium levels of light pollution.

4.10 The potential for biodiversity is high with significant areas of woodland, watercourses and hedgerow patterns. In particular, the River Wye is both a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation

(SAC). A number of priority habitats are present together with a range of priority species. Options for the relief road route would need to take account of, and mitigate, the potential for fragmentation and isolation of habitats. However, it is considered that the western corridor has less ecological constraints than that to the east.

- 4.11 On a slightly separate note, the potential for buried archaeology is considered to be high and with a number of listed buildings nearby, some of which are associated with designated landscapes. Settlement throughout this corridor is widely dispersed but frequent and the scale of enclosure suggests continuous and prolonged agricultural activity.

#### Eastern corridor route

- 4.12 Much of the corridor to the east of Hereford is of the highest landscape sensitivity. A large part is low-lying within a floodplain, and this may influence the form of construction and thus impact upon the landscape. Generally a flatter course would be possible. The eastern approaches of the city are relatively tranquil whilst levels of light pollution vary reflecting both the topography and greater mix of development types around this particular part of Hereford's approaches.

- 4.13 Not only will an eastern route have to cross the River Wye, which is a SSSI and SAC, but it would need to traverse the River Lugg floodplain, an area of extremely high biodiversity value. The River Lugg is another SSSI and SAC with the Lugg Meadows also designated a SSSI. This route corridor has a greater area of designated ecological sites and sensitivities than a route to the west.

- 4.14 The potential for buried archaeology is also high and a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments are present. Conservation areas exist just beyond the western and eastern fringes of the route corridor. The corridor contains a limited number of designated landscapes.

#### Evidence drawn from other strategy documents

- 4.15 The local strategy documents referred to earlier make clear that rural Herefordshire experiences a diverse range of transport problems due to its geographical characteristics, and the location of the main areas of population.

- 4.16 The main problems can be summarised as follows:

- Poor access to facilities and employment areas leading to social exclusion;
- High car dependency and usage;
- Increasing length of journeys to work;
- Poor pedestrian and disabled access links;
- Reliability and frequency of bus services and lack of quality passenger waiting facilities;
- Intrusion of heavy lorries in rural areas, particularly in relation to the historic villages of north west Herefordshire;
- Localised air quality and congestion problems at Bargates in Leominster (now an AQMA);
- Lack of facilities for cyclists, particularly in the market towns;

- Too much car use for journeys to school;
- Road safety on rural roads, including trunk roads.

## 5.0 What can the Core Strategy do?

- 5.1 The Core Strategy can bring about improvements in transport and movement by delivering the aspirations of the Sustainable Community Strategy. To achieve this, the following long-term headline spatial vision is proposed:

*“By 2026, Herefordshire will be a place of distinctive environmental, historical and cultural assets and local communities, with sustainable development fostering a high quality of life for those who live, work and visit here. A sustainable future for the county will be based on the interdependence of the themes of social progress, economic prosperity and environmental quality with the aim of increasing the county’s self-reliance and resilience.”*

- 5.2 There are twelve objectives which underpin this vision, five of which directly concern transport and movement:

**Objective 2:** *To improve the health, well-being and quality of life of all residents by ensuring new developments positively contribute towards better access to, provision and use of, improved public open space, sport and recreation, education, cultural and health facilities.*

Key issues addressed:

- Providing for the needs of all generations;
- Provision of, and access to, important services and facilities;
- Improving transport infrastructure, choices and movement.

Sustainable Community Strategy priorities:

- Reduce traffic congestion and improve health through integrated transport provision, including opportunity for maximising walking, cycling and public transport;
- Ensure fair access to the services which Herefordshire residents’ need.

**Objective 4:** *To reduce the need to travel and lessen harmful impacts from traffic growth, promote active travel and improve quality of life by locating significant new development where access to employment, shopping, education, health, recreation, leisure and other services are, or could be made available by walking, cycling or public transport.*

Key issues addressed:

- Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding;
- Improving air quality;
- Improving transport infrastructure, choices and movement.

Sustainable Community Strategy priorities:

- Reduce traffic congestion and improve health through integrated transport provision, including opportunity for maximising walking, cycling and public transport;
- Act to mitigate climate change and its consequences including promoting adaptation where this is necessary and appropriate;
- Increase road safety.

**Objective 5:** *To improve access to services in rural areas and movement and air quality within urban areas by ensuring new developments support the provision of an accessible, integrated, safe and sustainable transport network and improved traffic management schemes.*

Key issues addressed:

- Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding;
- Improving air quality;
- Improving transport infrastructure, choices and movement.

Sustainable Community Strategy priorities:

- Reduce traffic congestion and improve health through integrated transport provision, including opportunity for maximising walking, cycling and public transport;
- Act to mitigate climate change and its consequences including promoting adaptation where this is necessary and appropriate;
- Increase road safety;
- Ensure fair access to the services which Herefordshire residents' need.

**Objective 7:** *To strengthen Hereford's role as a sub-regional focus for the county, through city centre expansion as part of wider city regeneration and through the provision of a balanced package of transport measures including park and ride, bus priority schemes and an outer distributor road including a second river crossing.*

Key issues addressed:

- Provision of and access to important services and facilities.

Sustainable Community Strategy priorities:

- Reduce traffic congestion and improve health through integrated transport provision, including opportunity for maximising walking, cycling and public transport;
- Ensure fair access to the services which Herefordshire residents' need.

**Objective 11:** *To address the causes and impacts of climate change by ensuring new development: uses sustainable design and construction, methods to conserve natural resources, does not increase flood risk to new or existing property, increases the use of renewable forms of energy*

*to reduce carbon emissions, minimise waste and pollution, manages water supply and conservation and conserves and protects biodiversity and geodiversity.*

Key issues addressed:

- Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding.

Sustainable Community Strategy priorities:

- Act to mitigate climate change and its consequences including promoting adaptation where this is necessary and appropriate;
- Reduce traffic congestion and improve health through integrated transport revision, including opportunity for maximising walking, cycling and public transport.

## **6.0 Developing Options Consultation Results**

- 6.1 Public engagement is an important element of developing the Core Strategy and a Developing Options Consultation took place through the summer of 2008 in order to determine the options which the council should address in more detail.
- 6.2 The consultation period ran from 16 June to 8 August 2008 and residents, statutory consultees and other interested bodies were encouraged to examine and comment upon, among other things, the council's draft spatial vision and objectives.
- 6.3 The Developing Options Paper asked the following questions in respect of Movement in Herefordshire:
1. What new transport infrastructure is required in Hereford to accommodate growth and how will it be provided?
    - a. Deliver a blended package of transport and public transport improvements including an outer distributor road;
    - b. Develop a package of public transport measures to enable growth without the provision of an outer distributor road.
  2. If an outer distributor road were to be built, would you favour a route to the east or west of the city?
- 6.4 While there was strong support for the provision of an outer distributor road among respondents (79%), views on the preferred route were polarised.
- 6.5 Some respondents made additional comments in respect of the development of Hereford. Many of their comments relate to the regeneration of Edgar Street Grid, but there was a general consensus that further growth is hindered by poor transport links and that some form of relief road should be the council's main priority.
- 6.6 None of the 'free text' comments are considered to represent alternative options, as the majority of respondents merely justified their reasons for selecting option A in preference to option B or vice-versa.

## Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulation Assessment

- 6.7 As part of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process of the whole Core Strategy, the objectives were appraised in April 2008 at the Developing Options stage. The results of that exercise were published in June 2008 and the objectives relating to transport and movement were considered to be in conflict with SA Objective 12, which broadly relates to the theme of reducing waste and minimising the use of non-reusable materials.
- 6.8 Although the likely effect of option A (para 6.3) was considered to be moving towards sustainability, the likely effect of option B was considered to be neutral, as societal attitudes towards the use of public transport in preference to private vehicles are largely unknown.
- 6.9 The Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) reveals that both options would contribute to vehicle emissions, notwithstanding the likely reduction in traffic congestion.

## **7.0 Further consultation undertaken and Sustainability Appraisal**

- 7.1 Over the next few months, the council will be undertaking further consultation with relevant internal departments and external organisations in order to finalise a preferred policy. The list of consultees can be found at Appendices 1 and 2 of this report.
- 7.2 In August 2009, the council undertook four SA workshops in order to assess the sustainability of the emerging preferred direction for transport and movement policies. The emerging policy direction was considered to be moving towards sustainability and a full copy of the SA and HRA of the Place Shaping Paper can be found on the council's website.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 In conclusion, the national, regional and local transport policy agendas are very clear. Successive economic studies commissioned by the Government, the Regional Transport Strategy, the UDP and the LTP2 all carry the same theme of promoting the most sustainable modes of travel whilst discouraging the least sustainable.
- 8.2 With the exception of the UDP and the LTP2, Herefordshire's aspirations in relation to transport and movement are set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the LAA. The aim of the Core Strategy is to make these aspirations happen on the ground by delivering the transport infrastructure necessary to enable Hereford to grow in a sustainable way, whilst minimising the need to travel, and providing a choice of more sustainable modes of transport.
- 8.3 Most recently, transport consultancy JMP completed a Multi-Modal Forecasting Model, which examined the implications of potential housing development up to 2026 as proposed in the WMRSS and its impact on the road network within Hereford and its surrounding area. The study revealed

that the increase in travel demand associated with the additional housing would have a harmful effect on the operation of the Hereford highway network and that consequently; a relief road would be needed.

- 8.4 On this basis, and in light of the results of the Developing Options Consultation, policies in the Core Strategy should promote the delivery of a blended package of transport and public transport improvements including the provision of a relief road, park and ride and improved walking and cycling.
- 8.5 The plan should also include a criteria-based policy which promotes sustainable communities whilst ensuring that prospective developments maximise opportunities for enhanced walking and cycling, as well as using public transport.

## **9.0 Way forward**

- 9.1 Herefordshire Council needs to demonstrate that there are clear mechanisms for monitoring the outcomes of policies (including transport policies) within its Core Strategy.
- 9.2 It is not the purpose of this report to propose indicators to measure all transport outcomes, but pending the Core Strategy's adoption, the policies for transport will need to be reviewed annually for the following purposes:
- To take account of policy changes at the national, regional or local level;
  - To establish whether or not progress has been made in the provision of a relief road.
-

## **Appendix 1: List of internal consultees**

Ben Watts - *Transportation Planning Officer*

Bruce Evans - *Area Engineer Development Control (South)*

Adrian Smith - *Area Engineer Development Control (Central)*

Dave Davies - *Area Engineer Development Control (North)*

Simon Hobbs - *Senior Accident Investigation Engineer*

Jim Davies - *Public Transport Manager*

Amanda Barton - *Team Leader Integrated Transport*

## **Appendix 2: List of external consultees**

Highways Agency

Hereford and Worcester Fire Brigade

Hereford and Worcester Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

Rural Community Council for Hereford & Worcester

County Association of Local Councils

West Mercia Constabulary

Network Rail (West)

Railtrack (Great Western)

Arriva Trains Wales

Great Western Trains Co Limited

Central Trains Limited

Herefordshire Bus Operators Forum

Sustrans West Midlands Office

Campaign to Protect Rural England

## **Appendix 3: Bibliography and Further Reading**

### **National documents**

*Planning Act 2008*, London: HMSO

DfT (2008): *Delivering a Sustainable Transport System - Main Report*, London: DfT

DfT (2007) *Towards a Sustainable Transport System: Supporting Economic Growth in a Low Carbon World – Main Report*, London: DfT

HM Treasury (2006) *The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change*, London: HMSO

HM Treasury (2006): *The Eddington Transport Study*, London: HMSO

### **Planning policy statements/guidance notes**

DCLG (2006): *PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development*, London: HMSO

DCLG (2006): *PPS3 – Housing*, London: HMSO

DCLG (2005): *PPS6 – Planning for Town Centres*, London: HMSO

DCLG (2004): *PPS7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*, London: HMSO

ODPM (2001): *PPG13 – Transport*, London: HMSO

### **Regional documents**

GOWM (2008) *Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (Incorporating Phase 1)*, London: TSO

### **Sub-regional documents**

The Herefordshire Partnership (2009): *The State of Herefordshire Report*, Hereford

Herefordshire Council (2009): *Core Strategy - Developing Options Analysis Schedules*, Hereford

Herefordshire Council (2009): *Core Strategy - Developing Options Paper Sustainability Appraisal*, Hereford

Herefordshire Council (2009): *Core Strategy - Habitat Regulation Assessment*, Hereford

Herefordshire Council (2008): *Shaping our Place 2026 - Core Strategy Developing Options Paper*, Hereford

The Herefordshire Partnership (2008): *Herefordshire Story of Place Local Area Agreement 2008-2011*, Hereford

The Herefordshire Partnership (2006): *The Community Strategy for Herefordshire “A Sustainable Future for the County”*, Hereford

**External technical studies (consultants)**

JMP Consultants Ltd (2009): *Hereford Multi-Modal Model – Forecasting Report*, Birmingham

**Background papers**

Herefordshire Council (2009): *Core Strategy - Developing the Vision and Objectives Background Paper*, Hereford