

# 5 HOUSING

## 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This chapter of the Plan sets out policies and proposals dealing with new housing development in both urban and rural areas of the County. The overall approach is to concentrate most new housing developments within urban areas; to maximise the use of previously developed land; and to monitor the process to ensure that housing provision meets the criteria set out in the Plan. In addition, the chapter considers issues of affordability, tenure and ownership; the satisfaction of local housing needs, and the design and environmental impact of new housing.

5.1.2 A background paper has been prepared to support the Plan's housing policies and proposals. The paper details the methodology and results of several studies and other work (including public consultation) which has been used to develop and inform the Plan:

- population and household projections
- Housing Need Studies
- analysis of past build rates and housing land availability
- 'Planning for the New Millennium' public consultation 1999
- selection of rural settlements criteria
- Town and Parish Council consultations
- sustainability appraisal
- Transportation Study of development options at Hereford and Leominster, undertaken for the Council by consultants
- a Housing Capacity Study undertaken in 2001.

5.1.3 The Plan's housing policies have been developed jointly with and support the objectives of the Council's Housing Strategy. This is particularly the case in terms of ensuring the sustainability of new housing development and the provision of land for social housing in both urban and rural parts of the County. Both the strategy and the housing policies of the UDP were developed through the former Housing Ambition Group of the Herefordshire Plan. In turn, both the UDP and the Housing Strategy have been developed against a background of joint working at regional level.

## 5.2 Aims and objectives

5.2.1 The policies in this chapter aim to:

- fulfil the requirements for additional dwellings to satisfy local household growth, including those needing affordable housing, as well as migration into Herefordshire in accordance with the policies of the Regional Spatial Strategy
- promote the re-use of previously developed land and buildings for housing purposes, in preference to the use of greenfield land
- promote a sustainable pattern of development.

5.2.2 The policies have the following more specific objectives:

- to ensure that sufficient new housing is made available in sustainable locations primarily within urban areas and larger rural settlements, taking into account relative accessibility by public transport and the availability of services
- to ensure that the additional provision offers a mix and range of housing types to meet the variety of needs and requirements in any area, including affordable housing
- to encourage rural regeneration
- to promote good design and the more efficient use of land

- to integrate new housing into the existing built fabric harmoniously.

### 5.3 Strategy and general policy

5.3.1 Key housing issues facing Herefordshire are identified in chapter 2 of the Plan and the background paper. The primary issue concerns the scale of new housing provision in the County and the identification of sustainable locations to satisfy this requirement. Approximately 5,000 dwellings (4,993) were built in the period 1996-2001. Having regard to the provisions of the Regional Spatial Strategy, a maximum of 7,200 dwellings will need to be completed between 2001 and 2011. This requirement is expressed in terms of annual average rates of housing provision. The total provision for the Plan period is therefore a maximum of 12,200 dwellings. The allocatable element will mainly go to Hereford and the market towns on the grounds of sustainability and maximising the use of previously developed land.

5.3.2 In addition to completions in the period 1996-2001, housing provision over the Plan period will arise from the following elements:

- i) Housing commitments in the form of planning permissions and adopted Local Plan allocations in April 2001. Not all of these will result in new housing units. Some permissions may lapse and others coming forward for renewal may not gain planning permission when assessed against the policies of this Plan. A discount rate has therefore been applied, based on past lapse rate of 5%. The figure of 1217 dwellings identified in Table 1 (total of 2001 commitments) indicates the anticipated number of completions between 2001 - 2011.
- ii) From 'windfall' planning permissions estimated as likely to be granted under Plan policy. The estimate of windfall provision has been reached having regard to past rates of windfall development, the urban housing capacity studies undertaken during the preparation of the Plan, and the Council's Empty Homes and Wasted Space Strategy. The figure includes windfall dwellings which are expected to arise from currently unidentified sites in the main villages and smaller settlements identified in policies H4 and H6. In planning for future housing provision, it is important that estimates of windfall developments are included at the outset to avoid the risk of over allocating housing land.
- iii) By allocating land to accommodate the remaining dwellings required. In doing so, the Plan seeks to maximise the use of previously developed, land and buildings in preference to the use of greenfield land.
- iv) Other housing development. During the Inquiry into the UDP, a number of sites were identified as being potentially suitable for housing development. These are: Broomy Hill, Hereford (36 dwellings); The Greyfriars, Hereford (22 dwellings); land off Yazor Road and north of the former Whitecross School, Hereford (148 dwellings); land at Whitecross Road, Hereford (47 dwellings); and land at Merrivale, Ross-on-Wye (21 dwellings). In order not to delay adoption of the Plan, these sites have not been allocated under the UDP. They would be the subject of development plan documents under the forthcoming Local Development Framework. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that completions on these sites will count towards the strategic housing requirement.

As can be seen from Table 5.1 below, the provision to which reference has been made amounts to some 12,458 dwellings against a 'requirement' of about 12,200 dwellings. However it is expected that not all allocated sites will be completed by the end of the Plan period. Given that 12,200 dwellings is to be regarded as a maximum figure, it is considered that the strategic housing requirement will be met through the various identified provisions.

**Table 5.1: Dwelling completions 1996-2011, Herefordshire**

1996-2001 Dwelling completions	Anticipated dwellings from:	2001-2011	Total 1996-2011
	2001 commitments *	1217	
	Windfalls	2829	
	UDP allocation	3145	
	Other	274	
4993	Total	7465	12,458

\* Sites with planning permission at April 2001, including sites allocated in Local Plans where development was commenced at that date and adjusted to include a 5% lapse rate.

5.3.3 The Plan's general housing policy S3 defines the strategic distribution of the additional housing in the County within the Plan period. A key feature is the determination of a hierarchy of settlements in accordance with the overall development strategy of the Plan. The strategy sets out the priorities for locating development. The aim had been to make a proportionate distribution of housing across the county. The highest number of houses on allocated sites would be achieved in Hereford, then the market towns and finally the main villages. As well as reflecting the strategy, the distribution in policy S3 takes into account:

- the results of the 'Planning for the New Millennium' public consultation
- further consultations with Town and Parish Councils
- Housing Capacity Study
- Housing Need Studies
- analysis of past build rates and housing land availability
- sustainability appraisal
- Transportation Study.

5.3.4 For the future, the Regional Spatial Strategy identifies Hereford as one of five sub-regional foci where longer term strategic development should be located. The function to be fulfilled is to be determined through further study. The function of the market towns should not generally be to accommodate growth from the Major Urban Areas of the West Midlands. In the rural areas, the provision of new housing should generally be restricted to meeting local needs and/or to support local services.

5.3.5 Within the overall housing provision there is estimated to be a requirement for 2,300 affordable dwellings arising from emergent households in the existing population (Housing Need Study). The Plan includes policies to support the provision of affordable housing in conjunction with general market housing provision and through the use of the rural exception policy. A significant proportion of the demand for affordable dwellings will be located in the market towns, reflecting the level of demand arising in them as well as catering for an element of nearby rural need.

5.3.6 The provision of sufficient housing to meet local needs in the rural areas outside the market towns is a fundamental issue in a sparsely populated and extensive County such as Herefordshire. Because of the small population numbers in any one area and the generally even spread of local housing requirement arising from the population, it is not practically possible to allocate sites for such housing. Instead, much will arise from 'windfall' planning permissions granted on an individual basis. The Plan seeks to divert this development into the main villages and the smaller settlements which are relatively more sustainable.

5.3.7 In the wider rural area, outside main villages and smaller settlements, residential development is strictly controlled in order to protect the landscape and the wider environment. However, in

this context an important aim of the Plan is to encourage and support the rural economy through rural regeneration, and the housing policies of the Plan have been designed to support this.

- 5.3.8 In all of the locations identified in the policies the aims are the development of housing which relates to the provision of public transport as an alternative to the use of the private car and provides for the needs of local communities.

**Part I policy**

**S3 Housing**

Provision will be made for additional dwellings to be built at an annual rate of 800 dwellings a year for the period 2001-2007 and for 600 dwellings a year beyond 2007. Having regard to existing commitments and the likely supply of dwellings arising from windfall sites, a maximum of about 12,200 dwellings would thereby be built over the period 1996-2011. Priority will be given to the use of previously developed land, ahead of urban extensions, including making the most effective use of existing buildings through conversion and bringing vacant property back into use. The target is for 68% of housing completions in the period 2001-2011 to be on previously developed land.

**Dwelling completions**

1996-2001	approximately 5,000 dwellings
2001-2007	approximately 4,800 dwellings at 800 dwellings a year
2007-2011	approximately 2,400 dwellings at 600 dwellings a year

A four tier housing location strategy has been adopted. Most provision will be concentrated in Hereford (the first tier) and the market towns (the second tier) principally from a combination of allocated sites, urban capacity sites and some urban extensions. The third tier locates housing on allocation sites in the more sustainable main villages. In addition, there will be some windfall development mainly on capacity sites in these villages. The fourth tier of the strategy caters for other rural housing needs essentially through windfall developments on infill plots in named smaller settlements.

The distribution of housing is as follows:

Hereford	3,781 dwellings
Leominster	1,037 dwellings
Ross-on-Wye	693 dwellings
Ledbury	956 dwellings
Bromyard	480 dwellings
Kington	275 dwellings
Main villages	3,044 dwellings
Wider rural area	1,918 dwellings

In addition, it is anticipated that approximately 274 dwellings (253 in Hereford and 21 in Ross-on-Wye) will be built on other sites not allocated at this stage.

Housing will be provided to meet the needs of communities throughout the County, including the need for affordable housing (about 2,300 dwellings in the Plan period) and for the provision of a range of dwelling types and sizes, and taking advantage of opportunities to create and maintain sustainable and integrated communities. In selecting and appraising locations for housing development, consideration will be given to:

1. accessibility to employment and local services by transport modes other than the car; and
2. the capacity of existing infrastructure including public transport, utilities and social and educational facilities to absorb and serve the development

**proposed.**

*Guiding principle P4*

## 5.4 Housing provision

### 5.4.1 Hereford and the market towns

Hereford and the market towns of Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye are the main urban service centres of the County, accessible to differing degrees by a choice of means of transport. They consequently form the main locations for the anticipated housing growth in the County, accounting for 59% of housing development. The required number of dwellings to be provided in each settlement is set out above in policy S3.

**Table 5.2: Dwelling completions 1996-2011, Hereford and market towns.**

<b>1996-2001 Dwelling completions</b>	<b>2001-2011 Anticipated dwellings from:</b>	<b>Total 1996-2011</b>
<b>Hereford</b>		
	2001 commitments	247
	Windfalls	763
	UDP allocation	1833
	Other *	253
938	Hereford total	3096
		4034
<b>Leominster</b>		
	2001 commitments	57
	Windfalls	188
	UDP allocation	505
287	Leominster total	750
		1037
<b>Ross-on-Wye</b>		
	2001 commitments	32
	Windfalls	120
	UDP allocation	289
	Other	21
252	Ross-on-Wye total	462
		714
<b>Ledbury</b>		
	2001 commitments	42
	Windfalls	70
	UDP allocation	38
806	Ledbury total	150
		956
<b>Bromyard</b>		
	2001 commitments	29
	Windfalls	75
	UDP allocation	139
237	Bromyard total	243
		480
<b>Kington</b>		
	2001 commitments	75
	Windfalls	87
	UDP allocation	40
73	Kington total	202
		275
2593	Market towns total	4903
		7496

\* For details of 'Other' sites see paragraph 5.3.2 iv)

- 5.4.2 The boundaries of Hereford and the market towns are shown on the proposals map. The boundaries define the extent of existing urban land uses and also take into account the proposals of this Plan. Outside of these boundaries land is considered in policy terms as countryside. Generally such land is in agricultural use. Policy E15, in protecting greenfield land, gives priority to the use of previously developed sites and to land within the boundaries of existing urban areas. The proposals of this Plan make provision for necessary development over the Plan period and hence the development of such land will not normally be justified. In addition the boundaries generally mark a well defined urban edge, the extension or encroachment of which into the open countryside will not usually be necessary. Exceptionally, development outside and adjacent to these boundaries may be considered, in the following circumstances: for recreational or educational purposes where land within the urban area cannot be found, for development related to agriculture, or where it makes beneficial use of previously developed land and buildings adjacent to the boundary (sites capable of accommodating up to ten dwellings). In all cases other Plan policies will be taken into account.
- 5.4.3 Within the boundaries of the urban areas, established residential areas have been defined. The residential character of these areas will be protected. It is expected that the majority of windfall housing development arising within Hereford and the market towns will occur within these areas. The provision of housing on windfall sites - land and buildings which have not been specifically identified as available for residential development – is an important source of overall housing supply. The use of windfall sites aids regeneration and assists in reducing the amount of greenfield land needed for development. It is important however that these aspects are balanced with the need to protect existing residential environments and urban character. Windfall proposals should therefore comply with the housing design and other policies of the Plan in order that development respects existing residential character and amenity and avoids an over intensive form of development.
- 5.4.4 The anticipated supply of housing from commitments and windfalls during the remainder of the Plan period will not be sufficient to satisfy the requirements of policy S3 for these settlements. Consequently, a number of allocations have been made in the form of both previously developed land, identified through the urban housing capacity study, and greenfield sites where these are required to meet a settlement's needs.
- 5.4.5 Affordable housing including both low cost market and social housing will be sought on windfall sites above the thresholds specified in policy H9. Indicative targets have been established for the allocated sites, having regard to the Housing Needs Study. Site suitability and local circumstances, including site economics, will also be taken into account in considering individual schemes. There will be other requirements which developers will be expected to provide as part of their housing proposals depending upon the size and location of the site. For example, this may take the form of new infrastructure, community facility provision, landscaping and open space requirements. In many instances a development brief will need to be prepared prior to the commencement of the development.
- 5.4.6 The allocated sites are as follows:
- Hereford
- (a) Bradbury Estate, Putson (estimated capacity 600 dwellings)
- 5.4.7 This 20.5 hectare former military base is one of the County's largest brownfield sites. The redevelopment of the site should involve a mixed use scheme consisting mainly of housing, with open space and recreation facilities, community and local retail uses. There are many issues which require careful consideration including traffic impacts and infrastructure, open space provision, community facilities, archaeology, contamination and landscaping. Any planning approvals granted will be expected to deliver 36% affordable housing. Any proposals will also need to demonstrate that the Council's development options report, which was prepared in consultation with the local community, has been addressed. A review of the capacity of the site, which was guided by PPG3, indicates that the entire camp is estimated to be able to accommodate approximately 600 dwellings.
- (b) Land at Belmont (estimated capacity 60 dwellings)

5.4.8 To enable and bring forward the implementation of the Haywood Country Park (policy RST5) an additional allocation of 60 dwellings is proposed on 2 hectares of greenfield land west and adjacent to Kingfisher Road on the south side of the Belmont housing estate. Necessary arrangements should be made to ensure that the housing proposal delivers the required park land (7.8ha) and makes provision for its layout and use as an informal recreational facility. This should include public access around the park and into adjoining public land. Development of this site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Improvements were planned for March 2006.

(c) General Hospital (estimated capacity 90 dwellings)

5.4.9 This site, which was identified as a proposed housing allocation in the Deposit Draft Plan, has now been completed.

(d) Land at Friars Street (estimated capacity 112 dwellings)

5.4.10 This 1.6 hectare site comprises a former flour mill, together with a bus depot and social club. The majority of the site is being developed and is nearing completion. Some 0.7 hectares remain without planning permission. The dwelling capacity indicated takes into account the dwellings currently under construction and the likely capacity of the remainder of the site. Development of this site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Improvements were planned for March 2006.

(e) Land at Barrs Court Road (estimated capacity 62 dwellings)

5.4.11 This site which was included as an allocation in the Deposit Draft Plan has now been completed.

(f) Land at Walton Close (estimated capacity 20 dwellings)

5.4.12 This site which was included as an allocation in the Deposit Draft Plan has now been completed.

(g) Land at Bullinghope (estimated capacity 300 dwellings)

5.4.13 This 13 hectare site includes land for structural landscaping and forms the largest greenfield housing site in the Plan and lies directly adjacent to the Marches railway line (Hereford – Newport) south of the city at Bullinghope. This land lies between Bullingham Lane and Hoarwithy Road and is crossed by the Withy Brook to the east. Access to this development of 300 dwellings would be via Bullingham Lane and Hoarwithy Road with new cycle and pedestrian routes within the development to link to those existing and the bus routes in the adjoining residential areas. Development within this area would be conditional on the delivery of the Rotherwas Access Road, the route of which is safeguarded through Plan policy T10 and now has planning permission. The release of housing development land will be subject to appropriate planning obligations and conditions of planning permission being in place to enable and ensure construction of the Rotherwas Access Road. In recognition of this requirement on the development, no affordable housing is being sought. The housing will be required to be designed and laid out to take account of existing residential amenity and issues of health and safety in respect of the railway line and Withy Brook, providing a range and mix of dwelling units with useable open space in accordance with Plan Policies. A development brief will be required.

(h) Land at Holmer (estimated capacity 300 dwellings)

5.4.14 This site lies within the rural parish of Holmer and Shelwick. Its release will need to be guided by a development brief. The 10 ha site lies east of more recent development promoted through the South Herefordshire District Local Plan and is situated between Attwood Lane and Munstone Road directly north and adjacent to the Hereford City boundary defined by the Roman Road. Access to the site would be limited to the A4103 Roman Road to retain the rural nature of Munstone Road. To restrict the spread of development and to retain landscape character its northern boundary is limited and defined by the local ridgeline where a green

corridor and tree cover will be required as part of the comprehensive landscape treatment to screen the development from views from the north. Additionally, and as guided by the development brief the overall layout and design would need to incorporate housing of diminishing densities to ensure the necessary transition to countryside to reflect landscape character. To protect the amenity of existing residential properties developers will be required to make appropriate use of landscaping and open space provision. Footpaths and walkways within and through the development should be so designed to link up to public transport and adjoining countryside routes. In addition to an element of affordable housing and a mix of dwelling units and useable open space in accordance with Plan policies, the proposal will be required to underground existing H.V. electricity lines, take account of land drainage and local road flooding. Additionally, developers will be required to address provision of additional land necessary for an extension to the existing Holmer and Shelwick burial ground. A contribution towards road improvements at the eastern end of Roman Road and rail crossing will be required.

(i) Victoria Eye Hospital (estimated capacity 24 dwellings)

5.4.15 This site, which was identified as a proposed housing allocation in the Deposit Draft Plan, is now nearing completion.

(j) Whitecross High School (estimated capacity 60 dwellings)

5.4.16 The Plan proposes land off Three Elms Road for the replacement Whitecross High School (policy CF8) and this has now been completed. The school's former site off Baggallay Street (4.8 hectares) with the footprint of the school buildings amounting to approximately half of the site area is now being proposed for a mixed housing development of approximately 60 dwellings. Together with community buildings/facilities (converted from the existing buildings) and the majority of the current playing fields being retained for use by the local community where a need and deficiency has been identified. Whilst the main access would be via Baggallay Street, the mixed use developments will be required to link into the existing footpath/cycleway adjacent to Yazor Brook to enable safer routes to schools, adjacent employment areas and links to other residential areas. The housing development will be required to have particular regard to the ecological interests of the brook, any local flooding and health and safety concerns as required by other Plan policies. Development of this site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Should this site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements. A development brief has been prepared and approved by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document to guide the redevelopment of the site.

5.4.17 In addition, proposals within the Town Centres and Retail chapter of the Plan for the mixed use development of land in and around the city centre include the following estimated residential capacities:

- Berrington Street (policy TCR20, 25 dwellings)
- Canal basin and historic core (policy TCR21, 180 dwellings)

Leominster

(a) Barons Cross Camp (estimated capacity 425 dwellings)

5.4.18 This former wartime camp located on the western edge of the town comprises previously developed land, extends to around 12 hectares and has been estimated could eventually accommodate some 425 dwellings in total. As such the site forms the largest proposed housing site in the north of the County, and should be developed on a comprehensive basis. The UDP Transportation Study indicates that the local highway network and in particular traffic flows around the Dishley Street/Bargates junction are subject to capacity constraints, with related issues in terms of air quality on the A44/Bargates corridor. Development of the site will require transport measures to be put in place including junction enhancements, highway safety improvements, public transport provision and pedestrian and cycling measures. Subject to the nature of the transport measures put forward and to the resulting capacity of the local road network, it may be necessary to limit development on the site within the Plan period through a phasing approach. Completion of the development would then be achieved in

conjunction with more significant improvements to the highway system, likely to include new road infrastructure to which the relevant stage of the scheme on this site would be required to contribute. Such phasing would allow some development to proceed in the interim, make use of brownfield potential and satisfy the town's overall requirement in terms of need and demand. It would also allow, through a Plan review, a comprehensive study of future development land requirements to accommodate the town's growth beyond 2011 and necessary related road infrastructure. To complement this longer term planning requirement, reference has been included within the transport chapter to a zone of interest that gives consideration to expected new road infrastructure and in particular a new road link from the B.4361 Hereford Road to the A44 south west of Barons Cross.

- 5.4.19 The overall proposal will be guided in more detail through the preparation of a development brief covering this and the adjacent garage site (see below). The brief will serve to specify a range of overall requirements to be provided by the scheme as a whole. As well as the transport measures set out above, the Plan proposal will require provision of a range of housing types and sizes to meet local housing needs, including those for affordable housing and to meet the needs of specific groups such as older people; open space provision and landscaping, and inclusion of community facilities to meet identified needs including provision for 'early years' education. Development of this site is also constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Should this site be developed in advance of Welsh Water's Capital Investment, developers may be required to fund improvements.

(b) Garage site at Barons Cross (estimated capacity 30 dwellings)

- 5.4.20 The development of this site of around 0.6 hectare on the western side of the A44 and B4529 junction for housing provides an opportunity to enhance the approach into the town. Development will need to have regard to adjacent proposals and be incorporated in the development brief. Welsh Water have advised that the development of this site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Should this site be developed in advance of investment by Welsh Water, developers may be required to fund the essential improvements.

(c) Land east of Ridgemoor Road (estimated capacity 50 dwellings)

- 5.4.21 The development of this land, which is approximately 3 hectares in size, was proposed in the Leominster District Local Plan and is continued as a proposal in this Plan. In developing the site it will be necessary to ensure appropriate protection of the River Lugg SSSI through the provision of a wildlife corridor of a depth of at least 10 metres from the channel of the River. In addition consultation with the Environment Agency will be required to ensure that appropriate site ground levels are set and a flood risk assessment will be required from the developer, including an assessment of the adequacy and maintenance of the flood bank. It will also be important to achieve an appropriate buffer between the residential area and the adjacent industrial operation, which will also provide an opportunity to meet the open space and recreational requirements of the site and adjacent area. Furthermore, it is important that a comprehensive approach is adopted towards access arrangements to serve the combination of uses in the area. Development of this site is also constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Should this site be developed in advance of Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to contribute to any necessary improvements.

Ross-on-Wye

(a) Land at Tanyard Lane (estimated capacity 150 dwellings)

- 5.4.22 This 8 hectare partly previously developed site is located on the eastern edge of Ross-on-Wye and is bounded by a residential development to the north and west, a caravan park to the south and a bypass to the east. Its development will be guided by the supporting development brief as adopted in January 2005. The site has strong defensible boundaries and from a landscape perspective its value has been reduced by the developments that have taken place on either side. Vehicular access to the site would be from the A40 whilst additional pedestrian and cyclist links to the town centre will also be required within the layout proposals. The vehicular access would also be expected to make safe and appropriate provision to serve the adjacent caravan park as the alternative to the current arrangement should this be required to eliminate the necessity for additional accesses. A comprehensive

landscaping scheme incorporating open space provision will be required to take particular account of adjoining residential amenity to the north west and the by-pass to the east. Additionally, the design and layout should protect the views of St Mary's spire from the A40, ensure that the southern streamside trees are protected and that a topographical survey is undertaken to assess land which should be protected and land where single storey development should be provided given the form and proximity of the adjoining residential development. The site lies adjacent to the flood area of the Rudhall Brook. It is imperative that any development proposal does not increase surface water run off into the Brook. A surface water limitation scheme will need to be developed to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency and the Council's engineering section. Finally, and in relation to access, the scheme will be required to make appropriate financial contributions to alterations necessary to achieve at least nil-detriment in traffic terms at Overcross roundabout, to the north of the site. Accordingly arrangements to secure developer contributions from this site will need to be secured to enable roundabout alterations prior to the occupation of the development. Development of this site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Welsh Water has included in its capital expenditure works to resolve the sewerage constraints in the town. If the site is brought forward for development in advance of this programme, developers may be required to finance advancement of the capital works.

(b) Former Alton Court Brewery (estimated capacity 43 dwellings)

- 5.4.23 This 0.3 hectare site lies within the established commercial area of the town within the Conservation Area off Station Street and originally housed the Alton Court Brewery, a substantial four storey building which has now been demolished. An exclusively housing regeneration scheme which improves the quality of the town centre is appropriate. The site lies within the town's Conservation Area and a high quality design will be required linking the Safeway development into the town centre. The small building fronting onto Brookend Street is a listed building. Welsh Water have advised that a mains sewer traverses the site and will need to be diverted prior to the site being developed. The site also has an underground water course and storage tanks and cellars. A flood risk assessment needs to be prepared to show the developable area of the site and to demonstrate measures to protect the development from flooding. A high density scheme, in the region of 43 dwellings, would be suitable which maximises the potential of the site. Planning permission was granted in 2005 for a sheltered accommodation scheme comprising 43 apartments. The applicant has entered into a Section 106 agreement which provides for an off-site contribution to the provision of affordable housing and limits the age of the occupants of the apartments.

(c) Cawdor Gardens (estimated capacity 30 dwellings)

- 5.4.24 This 1.7 hectare site lies to the north of the town centre off Greytree Road. The principle of development has been established on the site with the granting of outline planning permission in March 1992 for 40 residential units. This permission has since expired; however, a housing development including the provision of affordable housing would be supported on this site. The site is elevated and lies within the Conservation Area and the AONB. A sensitive scheme is therefore required. Although the provision of safe access to the site is possible this will need detailed consideration as part of the preparation of a development brief; elements of Cawdor Arch will need to be protected and made a feature of any proposal for the site. Development proposals will need to include arrangements within the scheme to retain the allotments that currently occupy the site. If this cannot be achieved on site a satisfactory alternative site will need to be provided by the developers in line with policy RST4. Development of this site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Developers may be required to fund any improvements if the site is brought forward prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works.

(d) Vine Tree Farm (estimated capacity 66 dwellings)

- 5.4.25 This 2.6 hectare site is located on the southern edge of the town and is accessed off the Walford Road opposite the Vine Tree Public House. Planning permission has been granted for 66 dwellings and the site is now under construction.

Ledbury

(a) Abattoir site (estimated capacity 38 dwellings)

- 5.4.26 This 0.6 hectare brownfield site was included as an allocation within the Deposit Draft Plan and its development has now been completed.

#### Bromyard

(a) Land at Porthouse Farm (estimated capacity 87 dwellings)

- 5.4.27 This 3.7 hectare site is located on previously used and now derelict agricultural land to the north of the existing Porthouse Farm Industrial Estate. The site is bounded by the B4214 Tenbury Road to the west, the former railway line to the east and a triangular shaped field containing two dwellings to the north. A significant landscape buffer strip of some 0.8 hectare is proposed for the southern boundary of the site to divide the proposed residential development from the existing employment uses. Given the gateway location of the site at the northern edge of the town a high standard of design will be required. The site is considered suitable for a development of approximately 87 houses including some affordable housing to meet local housing requirements. In respect of possible noise or fumes from the adjacent industrial estate, applicants will be required to demonstrate that, in any particular scheme, the legitimate interests of future residents and existing employers are not prejudiced.

(b) Highways depot (estimated capacity 30 dwellings)

- 5.4.28 This 1.3 hectare part brownfield site is located on the northern side of the A465 Hereford Road at the south western entrance to the town. The eastern part of the site is used for pastoral purposes while the western area is an under utilised Council highways depot. To the north and south are existing residential areas and to the west is Bromyard Secondary School. The development of the site offers an opportunity to improve the visual appearance of this gateway into the town and so a high standard of design will be required. The site is suitable for a medium density development of around 30 units and should incorporate an element of affordable housing. Given uncertainty over the timescale for the relocation of all highways depot functions a phased development may be appropriate with a single access from the A465. However, the site should be developed in a comprehensive manner in conjunction with land attached to Ashfields to the north (see below). Welsh Water have indicated that the sewerage treatment system in the town suffers from hydraulic overloading and a hydraulic model will be required. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(c) Land attached to Ashfields (estimated capacity 10 dwellings).

- 5.4.29 This 0.3 hectare site is occupied by a dwelling in substantial grounds. The site should be developed in conjunction with the Highways Depot site to the south (see above) and is suitable for medium density development of around 10 units. Welsh Water have indicated that the sewerage treatment system in the town suffers from hydraulic overloading and a hydraulic model will be required. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(d) Tanyard, Pump Street (estimated capacity 12 dwellings)

- 5.4.30 This 0.2 hectare brownfield site is located in an area characterised by a mix of residential / commercial uses to the south of the central shopping area of Bromyard. The site is bounded to the west by listed buildings fronting Pump Street. The site is also within an area of archaeological interest and an appropriate level of investigation will be required to be carried out. Given the previous use of the site as a tanyard, contamination is likely to be present and site investigations and mitigation measures may be required prior to development. Given its town centre location and townscape importance, a high density sensitively designed development of around 12 units is appropriate. Welsh Water have indicated that the sewerage treatment system in the town suffers from hydraulic overloading and a hydraulic model will be required. Planning permission for 12 dwellings has now been granted on this site, which is now under construction.

Kington

(a) Land west of old Eardisley Road (estimated capacity 40 dwellings)

- 5.4.31 This site lies on the western side of the old Eardisley Road in the south of Kington. However, in order to minimise the impact of development of the site upon the townscape and to provide some open space for the wider community, not all of this site, which is more than 3.5 hectares in size and could accommodate a significant number of dwellings, should be developed. Development close to the northern edge of the site would have greatest impact and therefore should be protected from development. Welsh Water have indicated that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public waste water treatment works. Should this site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements. A development brief will be prepared to provide detailed guidance for the development of the site.

#### **H1 Hereford and the market towns: settlement boundaries and established residential areas**

The provision of housing in Hereford and the market towns of Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury, Bromyard and Kington will be restricted to within the defined settlement boundaries. Within these boundaries, the established residential areas should remain primarily residential in character and other uses proposed should be compatible with this primary use and appropriate for the site. Residential development will be permitted within these areas where compatible with the housing design and other policies of the Plan.

#### **H2 Hereford and the market towns: housing land allocations**

In order to ensure that the housing requirements set out in policy S3 are met, the following sites are identified for development for housing. The development of these sites will be expected to provide a mix and range of housing types to meet the variety of housing requirements of the County. In considering development on non-allocated sites, priority will be given to applications on urban capacity sites and previously developed land. An indicative affordable housing target has been set for each of the sites which will form the basis for meeting wider identified housing needs.

<b>Site</b>	<b>Estimated dwelling capacity</b>	<b>Target of affordable dwellings (35%)</b>
<b>Hereford :</b>		
<b>Bradbury Estate, Putson</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>216</b>
<b>Land at Belmont</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>General Hospital</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Land at Friars Street</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Land at Barrs Court Road</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Land at Walton Close</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Land at Bullinghope</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Land at Holmer</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Victoria Eye Hospital</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Whitecross High School</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Berrington Street</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Canal basin and historic core</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Leominster:</b>		
<b>Barons Cross Camp</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>Garage site at Barons Cross</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Land east of Ridgemoor Road</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>18</b>

<b>Ross-on-Wye:</b>		
<b>Land at Tanyard Lane</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Former Alton Court Brewery Site</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Cawdor Gardens</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Vine Tree Farm</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Ledbury:</b>		
<b>Abattoir site</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Bromyard:</b>		
<b>Land at Porthouse Farm</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Highways Depot</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Land attached to Ashfields Tanyard, Pump Street</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>12</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Kington:</b>		
<b>Land west of Old Eardisley Road</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2844</b>	<b>820</b>

*Main villages*

5.4.32 Outside Hereford and the market towns, and reflecting both the Plan's overall development strategy and the requirements of policy S3, provision is made for some general market housing in the rural areas of the County. It is anticipated that in making such an allocation, development pressure on the wider rural areas will be reduced by a process of diversion of demand into what are more sustainable settlements. The settlements identified in this policy, termed main villages, have both the potential of providing a relatively good level of public transport, linking to Hereford and the market towns as the main locations for employment and other services, and are also settlements with a significant level of community facilities.

5.4.33 Table 5.3 sets out the overall anticipated pattern of provision.

**Table 5.3: Dwelling completions 1996-2011, main villages.**

<b>1996-2001 Dwelling completions</b>	<b>2001-2011 Dwellings arising from:</b>	<b>Total 1996-2011</b>
	2001 commitments	407
	Windfalls	759
	UDP allocation	301
1577	Total	1467
		3044

5.4.34 Settlements have been identified as main villages by applying a set of criteria designed to assess the community sustainability of each settlement and their roles as local service centres. The criteria used include:

- settlement size: population of 250 or over
- availability of public transport to allow a journey to work to Hereford or a market town or a minimum 5 day per week service for other purposes to these destinations
- the presence of existing local facilities in the settlement, including public house, church, shop/post office, village hall, school, bank, medical services and sports facilities

- availability of opportunities for local employment.

5.4.35 The process of this assessment is fully set out in the housing background paper.

5.4.36 In order to define the extent of development in main villages, settlement boundaries have been identified. In defining boundaries the following factors have been taken into account:

- previously defined boundaries in adopted Local Plans, and whether amendment was necessary to allow for further development
- avoiding unnecessary encroachment into the open countryside and ribbon development
- recent developments and existing commitments
- natural boundaries and physical features
- areas where there are known flooding constraints
- visual appearance and the value of important views into and out from the settlement
- any recognisable village form.

5.4.37 Residential development outside of the defined settlement boundaries will not be permitted, save for schemes coming forward under the rural exceptions approach (policy H10). Development for employment, recreational and community purposes may also be acceptable outside but adjacent to settlement boundaries (policies E10, RST1, CF5).

5.4.38 Residential development in main villages may come forward on either allocated sites or on windfall sites, the scope for which has been identified through the housing urban capacity study. A full range of housing will be permitted in main villages, including general market and affordable low cost market or social housing. In many instances the proposals advanced through this policy will be relatively small. However, the development of both allocated and windfall sites again allows the opportunity to provide an element of affordable housing as part of meeting the wider County need. Affordable housing will be sought on both allocated and windfall sites above the thresholds specified in policy H9. Indicative targets have been established for the allocated sites, having regard to the Housing Need Study. Site suitability and local circumstances will also be taken into account in considering individual schemes.

5.4.39 There will be other requirements which developers will be expected to provide as part of their housing proposals depending upon the size and location of the site. For example, this may take the form of new infrastructure, community facility provision, landscaping and open space requirements. Such requirements will be able to be informed by parish plans, village appraisals and village design statements, where these have been undertaken. In many instances a development brief will need to be prepared prior to the commencement of the development.

5.4.40 The allocated sites are as follows:

(a) Frome Valley Haulage Depot, Bishops Frome (estimated capacity 15 dwellings)

5.4.41 This 0.35 hectare brownfield site is located at the southern entrance to the village fronting the B4214. The previous haulage depot use has resulted in the site being occupied by a range of storage buildings and hardstanding. Given its gateway location, and the proximity of listed buildings to the east, development proposals should be to a high standard of design. The site is suitable for high / medium density development of around 15 units incorporating an element of affordable housing. The Environment Agency have advised that development should be set at 600 mm above locally determined flood levels. Welsh Water have indicated that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public waste water treatment works. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(b) Former bus/coach depot, Canon Pyon (estimated capacity 12 dwellings)

5.4.42 This site on the eastern side of A4110 road in Canon Pyon is one of the few areas of previously developed land identified for housing in the rural parts of the County. The site lies

adjacent to the village hall and is well located to village facilities. As part of the proposal, consideration should be given to providing safe pedestrian access to the nearby open space/recreation area. A development brief will be prepared to provide more detailed guidance upon the design and layout of the site. Welsh Water have indicated that development of this site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system and waste water treatment works. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(c) Covent Garden, Colwall (estimated capacity 20 dwellings)

- 5.4.43 This 0.9 hectare site lies within the Conservation Area to the north of Colwall Stone adjacent to the Downs School. This well contained site is considered suitable for a housing development incorporating approximately 20 dwellings of which some will be required to meet affordable housing needs within the parish. The land currently forms a recreation site associated with the Downs School and its development can only proceed if alternative recreation facilities are provided close to the area to ensure no net loss of recreation land. A comprehensive landscape scheme is required which includes substantial additional tree planting to maintain the well-wooded character of Colwall. Brockhill Road is lined with mature trees which are extremely important to the visual quality of the road and are protected by a TPO. These trees need to be protected as part of any proposal. A high quality of design is required which relates and integrates well with its surroundings. The site is about one metre below the level of Brockhill Road which could be an important factor in reducing the impact of any proposed development. To allow access from Brockhill Road onto Walwyn Road improvements may be required to the current access arrangements without having an impact on the character of the area.

(d) Land opposite the Co-op, Cusop (estimated capacity 25 dwellings)

- 5.4.44 This 1 hectare agricultural site lies opposite an industrial estate to the north of Cusop on the main approach road into Hay on Wye. The site is suitable for a housing development incorporating some affordable housing to meet local requirements. A high quality scheme is required which is sensitive to the site's position at the gateway into the village. Open space should be included within any proposal for the site. The site contains some areas of semi-improved grassland which will need to be considered in any scheme. Welsh Water have indicated that development of this site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(e) Land adjacent to Lower House Farm, Ewyas Harold (estimated capacity 10 dwellings)

- 5.4.45 This 0.31 hectare site adjacent to Lower House Farm was previously highlighted as a housing allocation within the South Herefordshire District Local Plan. Despite development not being commenced in the previous plan period, it is considered that this is one of the most appropriate small development sites in the village. Welsh Water have indicated that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(f) Land rear of Plough Inn, Little Dewchurch (estimated capacity 12 dwellings)

- 5.4.46 This site of approximately 0.7 hectare consists of the garden to the Plough Inn, some derelict land and an area of agriculturally improved grassland. The mature hedgerows around the agricultural field form a natural boundary to the top of the hill and from the nearby AONB and would need to be retained. The new development will need to take into account of surrounding residents amenity and be sensitively designed to reflect the setting and architectural qualities of the Plough Inn. Access can be gained to the site from the Hereford to Hoarwithy C Class road next to the Plough Inn. Welsh Water have indicated that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system and waste water treatment works. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(g) Land north of B4352, Madley (estimated capacity 20 dwellings)

5.4.47 This 0.83 hectare site is located on the north side of the B4352 and is currently an agricultural field. It is anticipated that this site would accommodate 20 dwellings and include some affordable housing to meet local requirements. There is a public footpath which crosses the site which should be retained in any development scheme. An appropriate proportion of public open space should also be included in the layout. The northern boundary should be landscaped in order to preserve the visual approach to the village from the north. Access to site should be via the B4352. Welsh Water have indicated that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of Kingstone sewage treatment works. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(h) Land at Paradise Farm, Marden (estimated capacity 23 dwellings)

5.4.48 This 0.64 hectare site on gently rising land is located on the western side of the village just before the bridge crossing of the River Lugg. The land was previously a housing proposal site within the South Herefordshire District Local Plan but has not been brought forward for development. More recently the site has been the subject of a planning application for a mixed housing development to include affordable housing. Given the latest understanding that the site is no longer constrained and is to be made available for development it is included in the Plan as a replacement for previously identified land adjacent to the primary school.

(i) Land adjacent to Callow View, Much Dewchurch (estimated capacity 10 dwellings)

5.4.49 A need has been identified by the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee for a new community hall in Much Dewchurch. This site has been highlighted for a small amount of housing, community hall and associated car parking. To ensure a mixed development, the new housing will not be allowed to commence before the village hall has been completed.

(j) Land adjacent to the Birches, Shobdon (estimated capacity 30 dwellings)

5.4.50 With an area of some 2.3 hectares on the southern side of the B4362 road on the western side of Shobdon, the development of this land would enable the existing development at the Birches to have better pedestrian/cycling links and become more integrated with the centre of the village. In order to ensure that the development will have a minimal visual impact, extensive areas of open space, around the higher land in central parts of the site, and significant landscaping, particularly along the southern boundary of the site, will be required. A development brief will be prepared to provide more detailed guidance upon the design and layout of the site. Welsh Water have indicated that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system and waste water treatment works. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(k) Land opposite Primary School, Sutton St. Nicholas (estimated capacity 15 dwellings)

5.4.51 This 3.5 hectare site lies opposite the Sutton Primary School. A need has been identified for a replacement primary school at Sutton St Nicholas for some time with extensive site search being undertaken. This land opposite the existing school has now been identified for housing, a replacement primary school and community facilities, including playing fields with the support of the Parish Council. As the site comprises of a large open field, a strong landscape boundary will be required on its north-eastern boundary. A high quality scheme will be required on this important gateway site into Sutton St Nicholas. Welsh Water have indicated that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system and waste water treatment works. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(l) Church Farm, Wellington (estimated capacity 20 dwellings)

5.4.52 This 1 hectare gateway site lies on the eastern approach into the village. The site is partly occupied by an intensive livestock unit forming a range of dairy farm buildings including milking parlour, covered yards, slurry storage and feed storage. It is understood that this unit

is surplus to requirements. This site lies wholly within the Conservation Area adjacent to the local primary school and opposite a range of listed barns and St Margaret's Church. The removal of this intensive livestock unit will have environmental and amenity benefits and will assist in improving the entrance to the village. The site is considered suitable for a housing development of approximately 20 dwellings including some affordable housing provision to meet local housing requirements. A high quality scheme is required reflecting the gateway location of the site. This should include a comprehensive landscaping scheme which ensures that long distance views to the village including the church spire and the Conservation Area from the south and east from the A49 trunk road are improved. Significant landscaping will be required on the south eastern boundary and development proposals will need to ensure that the present enclosure is fully protected. Some additional car parking for the school and road improvements adjacent to the school are also expected. In addition, the housing scheme will be expected to contribute to the provision of recreation facilities including the provision of a children's play area properly equipped and fenced on adjoining land which is allocated within policy RST5. Future housing schemes which are developed within the village will also need to give consideration to contributing to this facility. A flood risk assessment needs to be prepared to show the developable area of the site and to demonstrate measures to protect the development from possible flooding. Welsh Water have indicated that development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage system and waste water treatment works. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(m) Land off Auberrow Road, Wellington (estimated capacity 12 dwellings)

5.4.53 This 0.4 hectare site is located off Auberrow Road on land which is currently occupied by farm buildings and a dairy unit. The site is bounded by residential development to the north and east, with pasture fields to the south and west, and lies within the Conservation Area. The site is considered suitable for a high quality housing development of approximately 12 units including some affordable housing to meet local housing requirements. The site will be accessed from the existing farm access off Auberrow Road which is located between the farm and the entrance to St Margaret's Close. No other access off Auberrow Road will be permitted. Landscaping will form an important element of the scheme with a significant landscaping belt being required to the south and west. This will prevent any further development spreading into the open fields which lie adjacent to the site and will create a soft edge to the development. The dairy unit lies adjacent to residential properties. As part of the development the existing dairy unit will need to be relocated. This will remove a conflicting land use and will assist in improving the amenity of adjoining residents. In addition, consideration should be given through policy H19 of the Plan to a financial payment for the provision of recreational facilities on land south of Church Farm protected through policy RST5 of the Plan or on such other site as may be agreed by the Council in substitution.

(n) Land rear of the surgery, Weobley (estimated capacity 6 dwellings)

5.4.54 This site has now been partly developed, with 4 dwellings completed and 2 committed. The remaining land without permission is too small to allocate.

(o) Land adjacent to Weobley Methodist Church (estimated capacity 12 dwellings)

5.4.55 This 0.4 ha site is located within the built up area of Weobley and is occupied by an orchard and pastoral fields. The site forms the south western quarter of a proposed housing development contained in the Leominster District Local Plan. The other elements of this proposal have been completed. Access to the site should be taken from one of the existing residential accesses which adjoin the site. The site is within the Conservation Area and opposite Weobley Castle Scheduled Ancient Monument, so a high standard of design will be required, in addition to consultation with English Heritage. The site is also within an area of archaeological interest and so an appropriate level of investigation will be required. The existing orchard is of importance to the character of the Conservation Area and so development will be restricted to the western part of the site. The site is suitable for medium density development of around 12 units incorporating an element of affordable housing. Welsh Water have advised that sewerage and sewage treatment facilities in the village are at or nearing capacity. In terms of sewage treatment in particular, the existing works can only accommodate an additional 20 houses in the village.

(p) Land at Upper Weston, Weston under Penyard (estimated capacity 19 dwellings)

5.4.56 The site at Upper Weston now has planning permission for 19 dwellings of which 7 are for affordable housing.

(q) Land adjacent to Whitestone Chapel, Withington (estimated capacity 25 dwellings)

5.4.57 This 0.8 hectare site is located in the southern part of Withington and comprises two fields in pastoral use. The site is in a highly visible location adjacent to the A4103 and so a high standard of design will be required. Development should present a strong planted boundary to the A4103 and seek to retain existing landscape features within the site and on its northern, western and eastern boundaries. The development of the site also presents an opportunity to improve parking and access arrangements for the adjacent Chapel. Given the nature and built form of the surrounding area, a medium density development of around 25 units is appropriate, incorporating an element of affordable housing. Development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage pumping station. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

(r) Land adjacent to Village Hall, Withington (estimated capacity 15 dwellings)

5.4.58 This 0.5 ha site is located on the north western edge of Withington and is covered in scrub and overgrown orchard trees. The site is recognised as being of nature conservation interest and so development should create a wildlife habitat within the site as a mitigation measure. The northern boundary of the site forms an important edge to the village and so a strong landscape boundary will be required. It is anticipated that the site should be developed at a medium density of around 15 units incorporating an element of affordable housing. Development of the site is constrained by the capacity of the public sewerage pumping station. Should the site be developed prior to Welsh Water undertaking the works developers may be required to fund essential improvements.

#### **H4 Main villages: settlement boundaries**

**The following settlements are identified as main villages. The provision of housing in the main villages will be restricted to sites within the identified settlement boundary, save for exception schemes (policy H10). Residential development will be permitted on both allocated and windfall sites within these boundaries, where proposals are in accordance with the housing design and other policies of the Plan.**

<b>Almeley</b>	<b>Little Dewchurch</b>
<b>Bartestree</b>	<b>Lugwardine</b>
<b>Bishops Frome</b>	<b>Luston</b>
<b>Bodenham (The Moor)</b>	<b>Lyonshall</b>
<b>Bosbury</b>	<b>Madley</b>
<b>Brimfield</b>	<b>Marden</b>
<b>Burghill</b>	<b>Moreton-on-Lugg</b>
<b>Canon Pyon</b>	<b>Much Dewchurch</b>
<b>Clehonger</b>	<b>Orleton</b>
<b>Colwall</b>	<b>Pembridge</b>
<b>Cradley</b>	<b>Peterchurch</b>
<b>Credenhill</b>	<b>Shobdon</b>
<b>Cusop</b>	<b>Staunton-on-Wye</b>
<b>Dilwyn</b>	<b>Sutton St.Nicholas</b>
<b>Eardisland</b>	<b>Tarrington</b>
<b>Eardisley</b>	<b>Walford (Coughton)</b>
<b>Ewyas Harold</b>	<b>Wellington</b>
<b>Fownhope</b>	<b>Weobley</b>
<b>Goodrich</b>	<b>Weston-under-Penyard</b>
<b>Gorsley</b>	<b>Whitbourne</b>

Kingsland	Whitchurch
Kingstone	Wigmore
Lea	Withington
Leintwardine	Yarpole

#### H5 Main villages: housing land allocations

In order to ensure that the housing requirements set out in policy S3 are met, the following sites are identified for development for housing up to 2011. The development of these sites will be expected to provide a mix and range of housing types to meet the variety of housing requirements of the County. An indicative affordable housing target has been set out for each of the sites which will form the basis for meeting wider identified housing needs.

Site	Estimated dwelling capacity	Target of affordable dwellings (35%)
Frome Valley Haulage Depot, Bishops Frome	15	5
Former bus/coach depot, Canon Pyon	12	4
Covent Garden, Colwall	20	7
Land opposite the Co-op, Cusop	25	9
Land adjacent to Lower House Farm, Ewyas Harold	10	4
Land rear of Plough Inn, Little Dewchurch	12	4
Land north of B4352, Madley	20	7
Land at Paradise Farm, Marden	23	8
Land adjacent to Callow View, Much Dewchurch	10	4
Land adjacent to the Birches, Shobdon	30	8
Land opposite Primary School, Sutton St. Nicholas	15	5
Church Farm, Wellington	20	7
Land off Auberrow Road, Wellington	12	4
Land rear of surgery, Weobley	6	2
Land adjacent to Weobley Methodist Church	12	4
Land at Upper Weston, Weston-under-Penyard	19	7
Land adjacent to Whitestone Chapel, Withington	25	9
Land adjacent to Village Hall, Withington	15	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>103</b>

#### *Housing in smaller settlements*

- 5.4.59 The anticipated pattern of dwelling provision in the wider rural areas outside the market towns and the main villages, provided for under policies H6 to H8, is set out below.

**Table 5.4: Dwelling completions 1996-2011, rural areas.**

1996-2001 Dwelling completions	2001-2011 Dwellings arising from:		Total 1996-2011
	2001 commitments	328	
	Windfalls	767	
	UDP allocation	0	
823	Total	1095	1918

- 5.4.60 It has been recognised that there is a need for small-scale housing growth in the wider rural areas of the County to satisfy local housing needs. The need for such housing development

is a common factor repeated throughout the public consultations undertaken in the preparation of the Plan. National planning policy guidance requires that there should be adequate housing provision made to meet the needs of the whole community, to provide wider housing opportunity and a choice and mix of housing. In respect of this latter issue the mix of housing in the wider rural areas is heavily skewed towards higher value properties. In comparison to the urban areas of the County, the rural areas have about half the urban proportion of housing in Council tax bands A and B with significantly higher proportions in the higher bands E,F and G. Consequently, the mix and availability of housing is unbalanced in the rural areas. In seeking to address this issue it is clear that housing development should seek to redress the balance and improve the mix in these areas.

- 5.4.61 The fourth tier of the housing strategy addresses this issue by limiting the building and plot size of new housing development thus materially reducing the price of such property. In order to support community needs, the opportunities for such development are directed to the more sustainable smaller villages in the wider rural areas. In these settlements, limited new residential development will be permitted in the form of small infill opportunities. For the purposes of this Plan, infilling is defined as the development of small gaps (no more than 30 metres) within the built up area of the settlement without compromising the character and built form of those settlements. Exceptionally developments on plots in larger gaps in frontages will be permitted for the provision of affordable housing, where there may be a need for a greater number of dwellings. Developments should not detract from the character of the village or surrounding area, for instance by destroying important open spaces or undesirably contributing to ribbon development.
- 5.4.62 The scale of any one new dwelling will be restricted to a maximum habitable space of 90 sq m in the case of a three bedroom house and 100 sq m in the case of a four bedroom house. These figures are based on the normal floorspace allowances made by registered social landlords when applying for Housing Corporation support. It is also proposed to limit the overall plot size to a maximum of 350 sq m in order to ensure that house values remain at the lower end of the house price range in the area. This approximates to the achievement of a density of about 30 dwellings per hectare in line with policy H15. In order to limit the enlargement of such development, with a consequent increase in value and price, it is proposed to restrict the permitted development rights of such property.
- 5.4.63 Taken together, these measures will assist in meeting the needs of local people and extending the range and mix of housing provision in rural areas. These infill developments, when added to conversion and replacement opportunities, will help ensure that the rural areas can contribute towards housing targets without compromising protection of the local environment.
- 5.4.64 The identification of smaller settlements has, as with main villages, been developed from a set of criteria designed to assess the community sustainability of each settlement and their roles as local service centres. The criteria used include:
- Settlement size: population of 100 or over
  - The presence of existing local facilities in the settlement, including employment opportunities, public house, church, shop/post office, village hall, school, bank, medical services and sports facilities (generally each settlement contains 3 or more facilities).
- 5.4.65 The process of this assessment is fully set out in the housing background paper.

#### **H6 Housing in smaller settlements**

**In the following settlements, proposals for residential development on plots arising from the infilling of small gaps between existing dwellings within the settlement will be permitted, where:**

- 1. the dwelling size is limited to a habitable living space of 90 sq m (3 bedroom house) or 100 sq m (4 bedroom house);**
- 2. the plot size is limited to a maximum area of 350 sq m; and**

**3. the infill gap is no more than 30 metres frontage.**

In considering such planning applications priority will be given to applications on previously developed land.

Developments on an appropriate infill plot larger than 30 metres frontage will be permitted for affordable housing where a proven local need has been successfully demonstrated.

Planning permission for the extension of dwellings approved under this policy will not be permitted. Planning permissions will be subject to a condition removing permitted development rights for the conversion of an ancillary garage into habitable accommodation, or for erection of any extension or detached buildings within the curtilage.

Proposals should be compatible with the housing design and other policies of the Plan and respect the character and scale of the settlement concerned.

<b>Ashperton</b>	<b>Monkland</b>
<b>Bishopstone</b>	<b>Mordiford</b>
<b>Brampton Bryan</b>	<b>Much Birch</b>
<b>Bredenbury</b>	<b>Much Marcle</b>
<b>Bredwardine</b>	<b>Pencombe</b>
<b>Burley Gate</b>	<b>Peterstow</b>
<b>Dorstone</b>	<b>Pontrilas</b>
<b>Fromes Hill</b>	<b>Preston-on-Wye</b>
<b>Garway</b>	<b>Richard's Castle</b>
<b>Holme Lacy</b>	<b>Stoke Lacy/Stoke Cross</b>
<b>Hope under Dinmore</b>	<b>Stoke Prior</b>
<b>Kimbolton</b>	<b>Stretton Sugwas</b>
<b>Kings Caple</b>	<b>Swainshill</b>
<b>Kingsthorpe</b>	<b>Upton Bishop</b>
<b>Lingen</b>	<b>Wellington Heath</b>
<b>Llangrove</b>	<b>Woolhope</b>
<b>Longtown</b>	<b>Winforton</b>

*Housing in the countryside outside settlements*

- 5.4.66 Outside the settlements identified in the above policies and in the wider countryside it is important that residential development is strictly controlled in order to protect the landscape and the wider environment. Residential development will thus be limited to that which meets an essential agricultural, forestry or other economic or farm diversification requirement or accompanies the establishment or growth of a rural enterprise; or which results from the conversion of an existing rural building, or which is linked to the replacement or extension of an existing dwelling. Housing units could also arise through the provision of sites for Gypsies and other Travellers (policy H12). Occupancy controls will be applied by means of planning condition or obligation to dwellings arising from the expansion of business enterprises, as well as to agricultural and forestry dwellings (policy H8). Wherever possible, proposals should be sited in a settlement and seek to make use of existing buildings through conversion and adaptation in preference to new development.

**H7 Housing in the countryside outside settlements**

**Proposals for housing development outside Hereford, the market towns, the main villages and smaller settlements will not be permitted unless:**

- 1. the development is clearly necessary in connection with agriculture or forestry and cannot be located in a settlement and complies with policy H8; or**

2. **it is a necessary accompaniment to the establishment or growth of a rural enterprise, and complies with policy H8; or**
3. **it results from the re-use of a rural building in accordance with policies HBA12 and HBA13; or**
4. **it is a replacement for, comparable in size and scale with and on the same site as an existing building with established residential use rights; or**
5. **it is an extension to an existing dwelling in accordance with policy H18; or**
6. **it is a site providing for the needs of Gypsies or other Travellers in accordance with policy H12; or**
7. **it is rural exception housing in accordance with policy H10.**

**Development should be in accordance with the housing design and other policies of this Plan.**

*Agricultural and forestry dwellings and dwellings associated with rural businesses*

- 5.4.67 One of the exceptional circumstances in which residential development in the open countryside may be acceptable is where the demands of agriculture or forestry make it essential for farm or forestry workers to live at or in close proximity to their place of work. The need to make an exception to the general policy approach to development in the open countryside in order to meet agricultural requirements has long been recognised. There may also be occasions where the need arises to achieve living accommodation for the essential supervision and management of an existing non-agricultural business as part of rural regeneration. It will be important to ensure that these concessions are not abused since this could weaken the overall approach and lead to further pressure for sporadic development in the countryside.
- 5.4.68 Applications for planning permission for new dwellings advanced through this policy will be thoroughly scrutinised. In terms of agricultural or forestry dwellings it will be essential to establish that stated intentions to engage in agriculture are genuine, reasonably likely to materialise and capable of being sustained for a reasonable period of time. Where proposals are advanced in association with non-agricultural businesses 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.
- 5.4.69 All applications should be accompanied by full supporting information appraising the need, prepared by an appropriate and qualified person. Appraisals should include a functional assessment, showing why it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for workers to be readily available at all times, and may also be supported by financial information to give further evidence of need and business viability. Businesses should have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one year, be currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so. The supporting information should also clearly demonstrate why existing accommodation in the locality, either on the farm or within existing settlements, is unsuitable or unavailable, and explore any other means of meeting the need.
- 5.4.70 The provision of retirement homes for farmers cannot be used to justify a new dwelling on the basis of agricultural need. Provision will be directed to the settlements identified in policy H4 and policy H6.
- 5.4.71 Where the need for a dwelling is established on the basis of proven need, preference should be given to the use of suitable existing buildings through conversion. Where this is not possible, any new development should be sited so as to be well related to existing buildings, in order to avoid isolated or sporadic development in the open countryside. Proposals which are unusually large or expensive to construct in relation to the size and needs of the business or to the income it can provide in the long term will not be permitted.

- 5.4.72 Where need is not proven by an appraisal, or where an enterprise has not been established, planning permission for a mobile home or other temporary accommodation may be granted for a limited period. This is to allow the situation to be clarified and need to be proven, for instance through the longer-term establishment of the enterprise. The location and siting of temporary accommodation will itself be considered on the basis of permanent accommodation being provided. Where other agricultural development is being proposed at the same time as part of an overall scheme, siting of all development will be considered on a comprehensive basis.
- 5.4.73 Where planning permission is to be granted for an agricultural or forestry workers dwelling, this will be subject to a condition restricting the occupancy of the dwelling to those employed or last employed in agriculture or forestry. This is in order to ensure that the dwelling concerned is kept available to meet the needs of other farm businesses in the locality if no longer required by the original business, thus avoiding a proliferation of dwellings in the countryside. Consideration will also be given to similarly restricting the occupancy of other dwellings forming part of the farm unit in order to ensure that new proposals do not allow existing farm dwellings to be removed from the agricultural housing market. Such restriction could be achieved by condition or via a planning obligation. Where a new enterprise is concerned, the occupation of an agricultural dwelling will be prevented by condition until other works necessary for the establishment of the business have been completed. Dwellings proposed in association with non-agricultural businesses will be permitted only where there is a clear intention to provide employment opportunities and applicants accept that living accommodation will be bound to the business by planning condition or planning obligation.
- 5.4.74 It is important that the grant of planning permission for an agricultural dwelling is not subsequently exploited by the disposal of the property on the open market. This would undermine the basis of the policy and reduce the stock of low priced accommodation available to the farming community. Accordingly, applications for the removal of agricultural occupancy conditions will only be permitted where it can be shown that there were insufficient grounds for its original imposition, or that the dwelling is surplus to both current and foreseeable long term needs. Such needs include those of other farm and forestry operations in the locality as well as the original business. Evidence should be provided that genuine attempts have been made to market the property for a reasonable period at a value which reflects its occupancy restriction.

#### **H8 Agricultural and forestry dwellings and dwellings associated with rural businesses**

**Proposals for agricultural dwellings and dwellings associated with other rural businesses arising under policy H7 will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that a long term genuine need exists for the dwelling as an essential part of a financially viable business, and that such need cannot be met in existing accommodation. Such dwellings should:**

- 1. make use wherever possible of existing buildings in preference to new development;**
- 2. be carefully sited within the unit or in relation to other dwellings;**
- 3. be of a scale and design which is appropriate to its surroundings; and**
- 4. be of a size commensurate with the established functional requirement.**

**Where the evidence of a long-term need for a dwelling is inconclusive or where the enterprise has not been established, planning permission for temporary accommodation may be granted for a maximum period of three years. Successive extensions will not normally be granted. Temporary accommodation should be carefully sited within the unit or in relation to other dwellings.**

**Planning permission for a new dwelling permitted in accordance with this policy will be subject to an occupancy condition. Agricultural occupancy restrictions may also be**

applied to any existing unfettered dwellings within the farm unit under the applicant's control and which need at the time of the application to be used in connection with the farm. In the case of new enterprises, any associated agricultural dwelling will be subject to a condition that the dwelling shall not be occupied until other works necessary for the establishment of the enterprise have been completed. Dwellings permitted in association with non-agricultural businesses will be bound to the business by condition or planning obligation.

Applications for the removal of agricultural occupancy conditions will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the original condition was unreasonably imposed or that there is no longer a current or foreseeable need for an agricultural dwelling either on the holding or in the locality, and that there has been a genuine and unsuccessful attempt to market the property at a realistic price.

## 5.5 Housing opportunity and choice

### *Affordable housing*

5.5.1 For the purpose of the Plan and in reaching decisions on planning applications, affordable housing may be provided through one of two routes. The following definitions were agreed at regional level by the West Midlands Local Government Association (WMLGA) in 1999 for adoption in development plans, and give a clear guide to the mechanisms to be used in providing such housing:

- Subsidised housing provided by an organisation, such as a registered social landlord or local authority allocating on the basis of need. While such dwellings will normally be made available for rent, they may also include subsidised home ownership, such as shared ownership, where a registered social landlord or local authority retains a continuing interest
- Low-cost market housing, helping to meet the needs of first time buyers, single people, older people, and other low income households, who cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally available on the open market.

5.5.2 Affordable housing under this definition can include both individual and multiple dwellings constructed under self-build projects funded by the registered social landlords and individual projects providing low-cost housing. In such cases planning conditions will be imposed to ensure that such housing is retained in perpetuity for future local housing needs.

5.5.3 Housing provided under these categories whether for rent or sale must be made available at a price level that can be sustained by local people in housing need. It is important to emphasise the distinctions between the roles of the different categories of affordable housing and not to treat one as a substitute for the other.

5.5.4 It is important to set clear criteria identifying what constitutes local housing need. This is in order that proposals for additional dwellings coming forward can be clearly shown to be contributing to this requirement - and thus to the aim of sustaining rural communities.

5.5.5 An affordable local housing need will be taken to exist when an individual is unable to compete on the open housing market and can clearly fulfil one or more of the following aspects of need within a parish:

- existing residents needing separate accommodation in the parish, such as those leaving tied accommodation or newly emergent households
- people whose work provides important services to the parish and need to live closer to the local community
- people who are not necessarily resident but have long standing links with the local community (older people needing to move back to a village for support)

- people with the offer of a job in the locality who cannot take it up due to the lack of affordable housing within the County.
- 5.5.6 Within the County, the need for affordable housing has been investigated through a strategic housing needs study, carried out to quantify the amount and type of housing need in the County (Herefordshire Housing Needs Study 1999). The study, which is part of a continuing process, indicates that over the Plan period there is a requirement to provide some 2,300 affordable dwellings throughout the County to meet the requirements of emergent households. In addition to this emergent need, existing housing need occurs throughout the County primarily due to mismatch and house condition problems. It is not possible for the planning process to meet all local housing need therefore this Plan has been prepared to address meeting emergent need only. In broad locational terms, the study identifies that 53% of the demand arises in the market towns and larger villages with the remainder falling within the rural areas. Here, the study shows that the net demand for affordable housing is widespread but at a low level, with an typical average 5 year requirement of about 2-3 units in any one parish. Therefore, the satisfaction of this rural need will be most appropriately and economically located in the more sustainable settlements as identified in policies H4 and H6.
- 5.5.7 Some 505 social dwellings were developed 1996-2001, and a further 48 dwellings at this time were committed through the public and/or housing association sectors. On this basis, there is a need for a further 1,750 affordable dwellings to be provided through the policies of this Plan. Affordable housing can be delivered through a variety of policy approaches. These include the indicative targets for specific housing allocations as identified in policies H2 and H5 and via windfall sites arising under policies H1 and H4 which meet the relevant thresholds of policy H9. For the avoidance of doubt, affordable dwellings delivered through the 'exceptions' approach (policy H10) are exempt from the overall allocation and cannot be taken as contributing to the Plan's affordable housing requirement.
- 5.5.8 A more detailed housing needs survey will need to be undertaken to support a planning application for an affordable housing scheme. This will establish the level of affordable housing need at any one time in the parish and if appropriate its surrounding parishes. In order to meet the County's emergent affordable housing needs and taking on board site specific issues it is anticipated that on allocated sites and on larger windfall sites that approximately 35% of all housing will be for affordable housing. Developers are encouraged to undertake pre application discussions with the Council's Planning and Strategic Housing services prior to submitting a planning application.
- 5.5.9 Arrangements should be made to ensure that the benefits of the affordable housing will be enjoyed by subsequent occupants as well as the initial occupiers. This will most commonly be through the involvement of a registered social landlord. In other cases, planning conditions and obligations will be used.
- 5.5.10 Affordable housing should normally be provided on site as part of the proposed development. In this way, affordable homes can help in securing an appropriate mix and balance of dwelling size, type and cost in development schemes. However in exceptional circumstances consideration may be given to the provision of such housing on another site in the immediate locality in lieu of provision on the subject site. In such situations, financial or other contributions from the developers will be required and will be secured by planning obligation. It is recognised however that in Herefordshire the lack of suitable alternative sites is likely to restrict opportunities for alternative provision elsewhere.
- 5.5.11 Supplementary planning guidance has been prepared to give more detailed information on the provision of affordable housing through the planning process. This guidance deals with:
- the need for affordable housing
  - affordable house prices and rents in Herefordshire
  - the negotiation process
  - securing affordable housing and controlling occupancy
  - contributions to off-site provision.

- 5.5.12 It is expected that provision from the allocated sites will not in itself be sufficient to meet the identified need for affordable housing in the County. There will be instances where currently unidentified (windfall) housing capacity sites are brought forward which are suitable for an element of affordable provision. Size thresholds have been defined for such sites, above which affordable housing will be sought. In urban areas the threshold is set at sites of 15 or more dwellings or more than 0.5 hectares; in rural areas the threshold is set at 6 or more dwellings or more than 0.2 hectares. In assessing whether a site meets the threshold requirements regard will be had to policy H15 (density).
- 5.5.13 The threshold levels in both urban and rural areas reflect the preponderance of applications for small sites experienced throughout Herefordshire, and are justified more fully in the background paper. Sites brought forward in these circumstances will be evaluated to determine their suitability for accommodating an element of affordable housing, having regard to the prevailing need for such housing and the local site constraints.

#### **H9 Affordable housing**

**The provision of affordable housing will be sought through negotiations with developers of both allocated and windfall housing sites. Such housing should, wherever possible, be provided as a mix of affordable housing types, having regard to local needs, and contribute to a mixed and balanced scheme overall in terms of dwelling size, type and affordability.**

**Indicative targets for affordable housing have been set for specific sites identified in policies H2 and H5. Affordable housing at an indicative target of 35% will also be required on suitable windfall sites above the following size thresholds:**

- 1. in Hereford and the market towns (excluding Kington) and settlements above 3,000 population, sites for 15 or more dwellings or more than 0.5 hectare in extent; or**
- 2. elsewhere in the County in settlements identified in policy H4 (including Kington) of less than 3,000 population, proposals for housing development on sites of 6 or more dwellings or more than 0.2 hectares in extent.**

**In considering the suitability of sites above these thresholds to provide affordable housing, regard will be given to:**

- a. the proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport;**
- b. whether there will be particular costs associated with development of the site; and**
- c. whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in development of the site.**

**In all cases where affordable housing is to be provided, arrangements must be made to ensure that the benefits of affordable housing will be enjoyed in perpetuity by initial occupiers and subsequent occupants.**

#### *Rural exception housing*

- 5.5.14 In addition to the provision of affordable housing to be sought on allocated and windfall sites under Plan policies, there will remain a need to provide for additional land to be released for affordable housing to help meet local needs in the rural areas. The following policy makes it possible for limited additional land to be made available, in rural areas on sites which would not otherwise be released for housing, in order to provide affordable housing to meet local needs in perpetuity. The basis of the policy is thus to allow exceptions to other Plan policies dealing with housing provision in the rural areas. Such 'rural exception' sites can make a small but important contribution to the supply of rural affordable housing. It is unlikely that there will be need for more than one such scheme in any one parish during the Plan period.

In addition existing unimplemented planning applications will need to be taken into account in terms of justifying housing need.

- 5.5.15 To qualify as a rural exception scheme, proposals need to demonstrate that a local need for affordable housing exists in the parish, in terms of the local need criteria set out in paragraph 5.5.5 and that a proposal is located within or adjacent to an established rural settlement. The policy is intended to reflect difficulties in securing an adequate supply of land for affordable housing in rural areas, not immediately adjacent to the County's larger settlements where market conditions are different and where provision for affordable housing is made by other housing policies of the Plan. This criterion excludes Hereford, Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury and Bromyard from consideration.
- 5.5.16 Exception schemes for more than one dwelling will only be permitted in and around Kington and settlements identified in policy H4 or as specified in policy H6. However, it is recognised that there may occasionally be an identified long-term need for an individual affordable dwelling in other locations. Where a proposal for a single dwelling is advanced within or adjacent to a settlement outside of those locations identified in policies H2, H4 and H6 planning permission will only be granted where it complies with the criteria of this policy. Single affordable dwellings proposed beyond those settlements identified in H2, H4 and H6 will only be permitted in locations with a recognisable settlement form with some existing provision of local community facilities. It is not the intention of this policy to permit isolated new housing in the countryside.
- 5.5.17 In the case of individual affordable dwellings, there is a requirement that clear evidence of the local affordable need is submitted with any application (see the local need criteria set out in paragraph 5.5.5), including details of attempts to find local accommodation. Applicants will need to demonstrate that they have registered with either Herefordshire Council or their approved lettings/allocation agency, that all housing options have been fully considered and no other option is available. As part of assessing the need for an affordable dwelling the market value of any owned freehold or leasehold property and the circumstances regarding the disposal of any property within the previous two years will be taken into account. In addition, and in order to help retain the affordability of the housing in the long term, the size and plot limits set out in policy H6 will be applied to these proposals unless there is clear evidence that there is a need for a larger dwelling.
- 5.5.18 Exception schemes need to take full account of environmental considerations, including design, siting and materials, and avoid sensitive locations where development would not be permitted for reasons of landscape or visual impact. Similarly a site's location should not place additional financial burdens upon households occupying the scheme through isolation or increased costs in gaining access to local services and facilities such as schools and employment.
- 5.5.19 Housing units coming forward on this basis are additional to the provision of housing to meet the requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy. However, when the Plan is rolled forward the contribution made by rural exception schemes will be taken into account of in the calculation of housing need which remains to be met. Mixed developments on exception sites, comprising for example general market housing which may be used to cross-subsidise affordable units, would be contrary to the aims and basis of the policy and will not be permitted.
- 5.5.20 Arrangements will need to be undertaken to ensure that the benefits of affordable housing will be enjoyed in perpetuity by subsequent occupants in local need as well as by the initial occupiers. Further advice and guidance is contained within the Council's supplementary planning guidance on affordable housing.

#### **H10 Rural exception housing**

**Exceptionally, affordable housing may be permitted on land within or adjoining an established rural settlement which would not normally be released for development, provided that:**

1. the scheme will contribute to meeting a proven genuine and quantifiable local need for affordable housing as ascertained from an up-to-date local affordable housing needs survey. In the case of a single affordable dwelling, clear evidence of a long-term local need will be required;
2. it is evident that local housing conditions could not otherwise satisfy the need;
3. the scheme respects both the character and size of the settlement concerned and the identified scale of need;
4. arrangements are made to ensure that the benefits of affordable housing, for single dwellings as well as larger schemes, will be enjoyed in perpetuity by subsequent occupants in local need as well as by the initial occupiers;
5. the site's location affords reasonable access to facilities and where possible public transport;
6. proposals do not involve mixed developments consisting of open market housing to offset the lower return on affordable housing on the same site; and
7. in settlements other than Kington (policy H2), the main villages (policy H4) or smaller settlements (policy H6) the proposal is limited to the construction of a single affordable dwelling which does not exceed the dwelling and plot size limits set in policy H6 unless clear evidence is provided to indicate a need exists for a larger dwelling.

#### *Residential caravans*

- 5.5.21 Residential caravans or mobile homes can be considered to be a lower cost alternative to permanent dwellings. However, this aspect must be balanced against their visual and environmental impact on the character of an area and the landscape. However, in some special circumstances they can provide a temporary solution to short term accommodation problems, for instance as a temporary precursor to a permanent agricultural need dwelling or rural business, where that need is not yet proven, or to facilitate property renovation. In locational and siting terms, proposals for residential caravans coming forward on this basis will be required to satisfy the requirements for permanent dwellings as set out in the other policies of the Plan, and will only be permitted on sites where permanent housing proposals would be acceptable.

#### **H11 Residential caravans**

**Proposals for the use of caravans or mobile homes for permanent residential use will be subject to the same locational requirements as permanent residential development. Temporary planning permission for caravans or mobile homes may be permitted to meet special identified short-term needs under policy H8.**

#### *Gypsies and other Travellers*

- 5.5.22 The Housing Act 2004 requires Local Authorities to include within their Local Housing Assessments the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. In addition, Government planning policy is increasingly favouring the identification of sites for Gypsies and Travellers in Development Plan Documents. Herefordshire Council recognises these requirements which will be taken forward in the preparation of new Development Plan Documents forming part of the Local Development Framework. In the interim, however, the following policy is still required in order to consider the merits of planning proposals.
- 5.5.23 Herefordshire Council together with a number of external organisations established a Traveller Policy Task Group in order to produce a comprehensive countywide strategy for traveller issues. The resulting Travellers' Policy was adopted by the Council in November 2002 with a

resolution to review and further develop the policy on an annual basis.

- 5.5.24 The provision of new Gypsy/Traveller sites is recognised in policy H7 as one of the exceptional circumstances where development may be permitted outside of defined settlements. However, although sites may be acceptable in rural settings their impact upon the character of the countryside should be minimised, particularly within the County's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Sites should be well landscaped in order to limit their visual impact and should be in locations with access to local facilities and services such as shops and schools. Small sites (up to 5 or 6 caravans accommodating pitches for individual or extended families) will be preferred, as they can be unobtrusive and easier to manage. Permanent dwellings on Gypsy/Traveller sites will only be permitted in locations where such proposals would accord with other housing policies of this Plan.
- 5.5.25 The nature of sites will vary in terms of the location, size, characteristics and level of service according to the type of site needed. Three types of site are identified in Government advice:
- residential sites for settled occupation, with infrastructure including provision of sanitation and other services. Such proposals should also identify areas for work and storage within the site, having regard to the safety of the occupants and their children
  - temporary stopping places, with basic facilities such as hardstandings, convenient drinking water supply, a means of sewage disposal and refuse collection point
  - transit sites, with facilities to minimise impact and avoid health hazards (e.g. refuse collection point, access to a drinking water supply and sewage disposal).

## **H12 Gypsies and other Travellers**

**Proposals for the development of sites intended to provide for the accommodation needs of Gypsies or other Travellers will be permitted where:**

- 1. the site is within reasonable distance of local services and facilities;**
- 2. sites for settled occupation should be small, as should temporary or transit sites, unless there is a need to provide a site on a route frequented by groups travelling in large numbers;**
- 3. adequate screening and landscaping is included within the proposal in order to ensure that the proposal does not result in an adverse impact upon the character and amenity of the landscape, particularly within the Malvern Hills and Wye Valley AONB, conservation areas or other sensitive locations; and**
- 4. they contain appropriate levels of residential amenity, including safe play areas for children and provide satisfactory work and storage areas.**

## **5.6 Design**

### *Sustainable residential design*

- 5.6.1 The Plan's overall approach to design is set out in policy DR1. This sets out the need for all developments to achieve architectural and urban design solutions which reflect and enhance local distinctiveness, retain site features, and respect their landscape and townscape context. The policy also requires schemes to include a design statement as part of the planning application, setting out design principles and the regard that has been had to the wider context of a site. Further policy guidance relevant to design and layout is given in policies DR2 (Land use and activity), DR3 (Movement), and DR4 (Environment). These policies cover such issues as the accessibility of developments by modes of travel other than the car, the promotion of mixed-use schemes, and the protection and enhancement of a wide range of environmental resources. Other Plan policies will also be relevant, including policy LA6 (Landscaping) and RST4 (Safeguarding existing recreational open space).

- 5.6.2 In terms of new residential environments, it is appropriate to supplement the above policies by giving more specific policy guidance. The following policy sets out a checklist of considerations which, taken together with the other policies in this section, seek to achieve a more sustainable and more efficient use of land including previously developed sites and buildings whilst safeguarding environmental quality – both existing and proposed. The policies will be applied to residential development at all scales.
- 5.6.3 The creation of sustainable residential environments includes but extends beyond architectural, landscape and urban design. The starting point is the visual appearance of a proposal and its relationship to the local landscape and townscape context – including the local pattern of streets and spaces, building traditions, materials, geology and ecology. Residential environments are first and foremost places to live in, and should therefore be designed with the needs and amenity of people in mind. Proposals should give emphasis to this by, for instance, the ‘designing out’ of crime; the provision of open spaces and landscaping; and by giving priority to the needs of pedestrians and children, including road safety. Finally, there is considerable scope for environmental resources to be respected and conserved in residential schemes, and this extends to both the construction and operational phases of a development. Opportunities include:
- conservation of water through rain-water harvesting, grey water recycling and sustainable drainage techniques
  - conservation of energy through the layout, orientation, built form and insulation of buildings, and the use of renewable energy sources within the development
  - emphasis on minimising resource use in the construction and use of buildings, through for instance the use of local construction materials and methods, which will help support the local economy and reduce transport requirements; the minimisation of waste, and building designs which make the most of natural rather than artificial lighting and ventilation.
- 5.6.4 Supplementary planning documents will be prepared to give further guidance on these issues. Development briefs will generally be prepared in respect of allocated sites, as well as in respect of larger windfall sites where justified. Parish plans, village appraisals and village design statements may also serve to define the character of rural settlements. The design statements to be prepared for individual schemes and which are required as part of the consideration of planning applications should bring these matters together in the context of specific proposals and sites.

### **H13 Sustainable residential design**

**Proposals for residential development at all scales should maximise their contribution to sustainable residential design and high quality living environments. In particular proposals will be expected to:**

- 1. take an integrated and comprehensive approach to design, layout and landscape which respects the townscape and landscape context of the site and the distinctive character and appearance of the locality;**
- 2. provide for interesting and attractive environments through the imaginative layout of buildings, landscaping and open spaces, making full use of existing site features;**
- 3. create environments which are safe and secure for all members of the community;**
- 4. design for movement and traffic management in ways that give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and, where appropriate, public transport, above the movement and parking of motor vehicles, in accordance with the transport user hierarchy;**
- 5. address the energy efficiency of new housing, including energy conservation measures, sustainable energy generation, layout and orientation;**

6. **make provision for recycling and composting in the use of dwellings;**
7. **provide for the conservation of resources such as water;**
8. **make provision for sustainable drainage measures for both surface and foul water;**
9. **include landscaping and open space proposals in accordance with other Plan policies as an integral element of the scheme;**
10. **avoid building on open space with recreational and amenity value; and**
11. **provide for acceptable levels of residential amenity including privacy both within the scheme and in respect of nearby properties.**

**Design statements should address these issues in setting out the design principles adopted and the regard had to context.**

#### 5.6.5 *Re-using previously developed land and buildings*

An important part of the Plan's strategy is to give priority to the use of previously developed land and buildings for housing, in preference to the use of greenfield land. The priority extends to a variety of potential sources for new housing units:

- sub-division of existing housing
- empty homes (normally individual dwellings)
- previously developed land and buildings
- intensification of existing urban area
- redevelopment of existing housing and other areas (generally groups of dwellings)
- conversion of commercial buildings and use of upper floors above shops.

5.6.6 Assessments of the likely potential housing units from these sources have been made as part of the urban capacity study and have been taken into account in allocating land for housing. To complement this and maximise the contribution that these sources can make to housing provision, it is important to establish a positive planning policy to encourage individual proposals to come forward to allow this priority to be realised. Within this context, policy H17 deals with the sub-division of housing units whilst policy TCR2 encourages the use of upper floors in town centres for residential purposes.

5.6.7 It is estimated that there are some 700 long-term empty properties (vacant for more than a year) in the County at any one time. The definition of what effectively constitutes new housing stock is difficult in these circumstances; most of the empty properties are, for planning purposes, considered to be part of the existing stock. As part of the Council's Empty Homes and Wasted Space Strategy, finance has been set aside for the specific purpose of assisting with the regeneration of town centres by bringing the space above shops into residential use. It is not possible to estimate the long-term success of this project as its funding is limited. About 15 additional dwellings per annum are estimated as likely to arise from this source.

5.6.8 It is important that the encouragement being given to the use for housing purposes of previously developed land and buildings is clearly set within the Plan's overall housing provision policies. The greatest potential clearly lies within the County's urban areas and to a lesser extent the main villages. Outside of these locations, housing development on any substantial scale would not be sustainable and will not be supported. Conversions of existing buildings and basements will need to be undertaken in such a manner as to meet the Council's standards of Fitness for Human Habitation under the Housing Act 1985.

5.6.9 In cases involving major sites within rural settings, where the footprint of the existing building occupies only a restricted portion of an otherwise open site, the scale and layout of any re-use or redevelopment proposals should be framed against other Plan policies, including those for the protection of the countryside. Residential development in the open countryside will be strictly controlled under the terms of policy H7.

#### **H14 Re-using previously developed land and buildings**

**Proposals for the re-use, redevelopment, conversion or change of use of previously developed land and existing buildings for residential purposes will be permitted where:**

- 1. the proposal is consistent with the housing provision and other policies of this Plan; and**
- 2. the proposal respects the character and appearance of its location, and protects existing and proposed residential amenity.**

**In the case of new housing development proposed as part of a wider regeneration scheme, the scheme as a whole achieves an environmental improvement to the immediate area.**

#### *Density and car parking*

- 5.6.10 As part of the drive to make the best use of previously developed land and thereby minimise greenfield land take, new housing developments will be required to maximise the net housing density achieved on site. Guideline densities have been established for sites of one hectare or above. These are expressed as net site densities following PPS3. On sites below one hectare, whilst densities should be maximised, the effect of site factors and constraints make guidelines inappropriate.
- 5.6.11 In the urban areas of Hereford and the market towns, housing developments will be expected to achieve net overall densities of at least 30 dwellings per hectare. On town centre sites and those adjacent to town centres, where there is good public transport accessibility, it is expected that higher densities will be secured. The choice of an appropriate density for a particular scheme should also be informed by the characteristics of the area. In the main villages and elsewhere in the rural area it is recognised that the character of the settlement and the scale of development will require a locally determined response to housing density, taking into consideration the character and context of the local area.
- 5.6.12 Car parking requirements are also a significant determinant of the amount of land required for new housing. Plan policy T11 sets out the principles that will be applied generally. In the case of housing schemes, specific guidance is given in PPG3 and is reflected in the policy below. [Note: The following policy reflects PPG3, which was replaced after the modifications stage of the Plan by PPS3]. The intention is to restrict average off-street parking provision to not more than 1.5 spaces per dwelling. In schemes with a mix of dwelling types, this approach will allow larger dwellings to have a greater than average parking allocation. The parking requirement is subject on an individual site basis to reductions to reflect such factors as the availability of public transport, proximity to town centres, and the type of housing being provided. Overall levels less than the maximum should be provided in schemes designed for older people, students and single people, or where the conversion of existing properties is involved where off-street parking could restrict scheme design. There are no minimum standards of provision.

#### **H15 Density**

**New housing developments should make the most effective and efficient use of the site area available, consistent with the housing provision policies and the characteristics of the area. In order to secure the efficient use of land, the following guideline net site densities have been set for sites of one hectare or above in Hereford and the market towns:**

**Town centre and adjacent sites, between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare  
Other sites, at least 30 dwellings per hectare.**

## **H16 Car parking**

**New housing developments will be subject to a maximum off-street car parking provision of an average of not more than 1.5 spaces per dwelling, with no minimum level of provision other than parking for disabled people. Site densities and off-street parking provision should reflect site location, the type of housing to be provided, the types of household likely to occupy the development, and the availability of public transport.**

### *Sub-division of existing housing*

- 5.6.13 The sub-division of larger dwellings into flats and bedsits, predominantly in the urban areas, can increase the supply of affordable lower cost housing, particularly for single person households, and represents a more efficient use of the existing housing stock. In principle, such development will be supported provided that adequate residential amenities can be achieved. However, the conversion of single family dwellings into several units can increase noise levels, disturbance and demand for car parking, and lead to an over intensification of use. Such adverse impacts can occur either through single proposals or through the cumulative impact of a proliferation of schemes. The Council has two registration schemes for Houses in Multiple Occupation; together, these cover the whole County and control the standards for different types of houses in multiple occupation including houses converted into self-contained flats. Regard will be had to these standards where planning permission is required. In addition, units of accommodation must be fit for human habitation in accordance with the Housing Act 1985.

## **H17 Sub-division of existing housing**

**The sub-division of suitable residential buildings or the use of a building as a house for multiple occupation will be permitted provided that:**

- 1. adequate and appropriate car parking and access is available as set out in policy H16;**
- 2. there is a satisfactory standard of accommodation provided including internal layout and private amenity space; and**
- 3. the proposal has no undue adverse impact on the character of the property and its curtilage, the amenity and privacy of neighbouring dwellings, and the amenity and general character of the area.**

### *Alterations and extensions*

- 5.6.14 Proposals for the alteration or extension of residential properties can have a significant effect on the character of the original building, the surrounding area and the amenities of adjoining residents. It is important that the scale, siting and design of such development respects these aspects, so as to ensure adequate levels of privacy and environmental quality. The resulting levels of off-street parking provision should meet the requirements of policy H16. In rural areas, traditional smaller dwellings such as farmworkers cottages make an important contribution to the supply of affordable housing in the countryside, and extension proposals should be modest in scale to ensure that this continues. In considering applications for alterations and extensions, regard will be had to the floorspace limitations set out in policy H6 and the need to retain a substantial stock of affordable housing in the County.
- 5.6.15 This policy will also be applied to proposals for annexes, other ancillary accommodation and buildings incidental to the enjoyment of a dwelling, where planning permission is required.

## **H18 Alterations and extensions**

**Proposals for the alteration or extension of dwellings or for buildings incidental to the enjoyment of a dwelling will be permitted where:**

- 1. the original building (that is, as at 1 July 1948 or as originally built if constructed later than this date, and not including any subsequent extensions) would remain the dominant feature;**
- 2. the proposal is in keeping with the character of the existing dwelling and its surroundings in terms of scale, mass, siting, detailed design and materials;**
- 3. the proposal would not be cramped on its plot, including having regard to provision of suitable private open amenity space, and would not adversely impact on the privacy and amenity of occupiers of neighbouring residential property; and**
- 4. the level of resulting off street parking provision is in accordance with policy H16.**

#### *Open space requirements*

- 5.6.16 The need for open spaces to be provided within new residential developments is recognised, as is the important role that such spaces have within the overall hierarchy, complementing the provision of formal recreational uses elsewhere within the County. To be acceptable, residential schemes should provide usable and distinct open spaces with clear functions which:
- meet recreational, public open space and amenity requirements, achieving at least the minimum standards required
  - recognise and provide for the varying needs of different age groups likely to arise
  - cater for as broad a range of activities as possible
  - are designed as an integral part of any development
  - are planned so as to provide a secure environment to encourage their use.
- 5.6.17 The following requirements for recreational and public open space are based on the standards adopted under Plan policy RST3. These refer to the National Playing Fields Association standards for outdoor playing space, requiring the provision overall of 2.4 hectares of outdoor playing space per 1000 population, subdivided into 0.8 hectare for children's playing space and 1.6 hectare for youth and adult use. Policy RST3 also sets a standard of 0.4 hectare of public open space per 1000 population. These standards will be applied until such a time as an assessment of need has been produced and local standards of provision established in line with PPG17.
- 5.6.18 Through the following policy, provision which meets these overall standards will be sought through a hierarchical approach which takes into account the size of the site, the nature of the accommodation provided, and existing facilities in the locality. For instance, the type of housing may influence the type and extent of provision – children's play space would be inappropriate in sheltered housing schemes, where an emphasis on amenity, sitting out and walking areas is likely to be more suitable. Reduced provision might also be appropriate in smaller housing units designed for one or two people.
- 5.6.19 In addition, the provision of incidental amenity open space forming an integral part of schemes will be required. Such provision, together with that arising from visibility splays and roadside or footpath verges, will not be considered as contributing to recreational or public open space requirements arising under policy RST3.
- 5.6.20 Developers will be required to provide for the future maintenance of open space and equipment provided. A supplementary planning document will be prepared to implement this policy and further detail requirements.

#### **H19 Open space requirements**

**Residential development will be required to incorporate outdoor playing space and public open space in accordance with the minimum standards set out in policy RST3, according to the type of housing to be provided, the quantity and quality of any existing provision within the immediate locality, and the following specific minimum requirements:**

- 1. schemes of 10-30 family dwellings: to be provided with small children's/infants' play area, properly equipped and fenced;**
- 2. schemes in excess of 30 family dwellings: as above, plus older children's informal play space; and**
- 3. schemes in excess of 60 family dwellings: as above, plus outdoor playing space for youth and adult use and public open space to at least the minimum standard.**

**Developments below 10 dwellings will be expected to provide appropriate levels of open space on a pro-rata basis.**

**The provision of children's play space will not be required for dwellings specifically designed for older people or for single bedroom dwellings.**

**Open space should be well related to the development it is intended to serve and be useful, safe and secure, and accessible to all. Open space requirements should normally be provided on site. Where this is not practicable, financial contributions to new or improved provision elsewhere in the locality may be made. In addition to the requirements for recreational and public open space, all schemes (including those below 10 dwellings) should include appropriate amenity open space, determined according to the particular needs of the development.**