

7 TOWN CENTRES AND RETAIL

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 This chapter of the Plan encourages appropriate town centre and retail investment in Hereford and the market towns of Bromyard, Ledbury, Leominster, Kington and Ross-on-Wye, as well as supporting the local services provided by facilities such as village shops and post offices throughout the rural areas.
- 7.1.2 The Plan reflects the objectives of national planning policy with respect to town centres (PPS6). It also takes forward the relevant provisions of the Regional Spatial Strategy. This seeks to focus major retail, cultural, tourist, social and community, and leisure and office development within the region's network of town and city centres, including Hereford. Hereford is further identified as one of five sub-regional foci for development in the West Midlands. The Strategy also recognises the importance of the region's market towns and villages in acting as important service centres in their catchments. At the local level the Plan's approach is reflected in the Herefordshire Partnership's Economic Development Strategy, which supports enhancements to Hereford city centre such as the Edgar Street Grid proposals, discussed below.
- 7.1.3 Hereford is an important sub-regional shopping centre, serving an extensive rural hinterland. The city centre provides the main location for retail activity in the County as well as the focus for commercial and administrative services. In addition a range of leisure and entertainment opportunities are available in Hereford, providing a diversity of complementary uses. Hereford is supported by a hierarchy of centres, comprising the five market towns and a network of local and neighbourhood centres. Together, these play an important part in providing local services, and in reducing the need to travel. In the rural areas, village shops and other facilities serve to meet both daily shopping 'top up' needs and the requirements of those who are not able to travel further afield. They are important to the vitality of rural communities, acting as a focus and informal meeting place, and also assist in reducing the need to travel.
- 7.1.4 A review of development requirements for key town centre uses has been undertaken in order to assess how Hereford's role as a sub-regional centre can best be maintained and improved. This has identified requirements for the following: new retail floorspace, both in the city centre and in terms of retail warehousing; centrally located local government offices; a new integrated public transport facility; and commercial leisure, possibly a multiplex cinema. This chapter of the Plan identifies a package of proposals for Hereford city centre and environs which will assist in bringing forward development to meet these needs. An important element of these proposals is the Edgar Street Grid area. This is a 43 hectare site on the northern edge of the city centre, which has undergone a master planning exercise to facilitate and provide a framework for development.
- 7.1.5 Prevailing economic conditions within the County's market towns are considered to be such that there is no requirement to identify additional land for retail development. Suitable small scale retail schemes will generally be supported within Hereford city centre and market town centres.
- 7.1.6 Where large-scale retail uses are proposed in edge of centre or out of centre locations, the need for the development must first be demonstrated. Then, a sequential approach to selecting sites should be adopted and all potential city and town centre options assessed. Such an approach will also be applied to proposals for other key town centre uses. In addition, retail proposals will need to demonstrate their likely effect on city and town centre vitality and viability. The emphasis throughout will be on supporting the role of existing centres. The scope to encourage investment to regenerate deprived areas will also be considered.
- 7.1.7 The benefits of a well managed town centre are now well established. PPS6 supports town centre management and the creation of partnerships to develop, improve and maintain town centres. The policies and proposals of the Plan have been informed by a number of surveys and action plans that have been undertaken in the market towns. The Council will continue to undertake surveys of

its town centres. A background paper has been prepared to support the Plan's retail and town centre policies and proposals.

7.2 Aims and objectives

7.2.1 The policies in this chapter aim to:

- maintain the existing hierarchy of retail centres in the County
- maintain and enhance the role of Hereford as a major sub regional shopping centre
- ensure that retailing and other key town centre uses continue to contribute to the vitality and viability of Hereford city centre and market town centres
- provide the highest possible quality shopping and other services as required to meet the needs of the whole community
- protect and enhance the economic viability of local, neighbourhood and village centres
- help to reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private motor car.

7.2.2 The policies have the following more specific objectives:

- to ensure that central shopping and commercial areas (CSCA) continue as the main focus of shopping provision in Hereford and the market towns, where they are well served by public transport and readily accessible by the community as a whole by means other than the private car
- to ensure the availability of a wide range of shops, employment, services and facilities, having regard to the need to encourage diversity and variety in shopping area uses
- to guide the further introduction of non-retail uses in central shopping and commercial areas
- to ensure that development proposals for key town centre uses outside central shopping and commercial areas comply with the requirements of PPS6
- to guide and control the further provision of retail uses outside central shopping and commercial areas, including in the form of larger stores and local shopping centres
- to recognise and support the role of retailing in the regeneration of urban areas
- to safeguard and improve local and village centres that are readily accessible by walking and cycling.

7.3 Strategy and general policy

7.3.1 In line with national policy guidance, the Regional Spatial Strategy and in support of the Herefordshire Partnership's Economic Development Strategy, the Plan adopts a strategy to protect and enhance the vitality and viability and maintain the retail hierarchy within the County: Hereford, the market towns and local, neighbourhood and village centres. Chapter 2 of the Plan identifies not only the important role of Hereford in providing the commercial, administrative and retail hub for the County, but also the challenge of modernising the City and accommodating growth within the historic fabric. In turn, the Plan's guiding principles look to enhance the role of settlements as service centres, improve opportunities for access to services and guide new developments to locations that offer a choice of transport modes.

7.3.2 The County's retail hierarchy is defined as follows:

Sub Regional Shopping Centre

- Hereford

Market Towns

- Bromyard
- Ledbury
- Leominster
- Kington
- Ross-on-Wye

Local Shopping Centres

- Bartestree and Lugwardine
- Barons Cross Road, Leominster
- Bodenham
- Colwall
- Cradley
- Credenhill
- Eardisley
- Ewyas Harold
- Fownhope
- Kingsland
- Kingstone
- Leintwardine
- Marden
- Pembridge
- Peterchurch
- Weobley
- Withington

Neighbourhood Shopping Centres (within the urban areas of Hereford)

- Belmont
- Bobblestock
- Chilton Square
- College Green
- Folly Lane (Whittern Way)
- Grandstand Road
- Holme Lacy Road
- Hinton Road
- Old Eign Hill
- Oval
- Quarry Road
- Whitecross

Village Shops

- throughout the County, individual shops within villages provide essential services to local residents.

7.3.3 The following town centre strategy will be pursued through the policies and proposals of the Plan, as set out in this chapter and in other chapters including 4 (Development Requirements), 6 (Employment), 8 (Transport) and 9 (Natural and Historic Heritage):

- locate major generators of travel in Hereford and the market towns, where access by a choice of means of transport, not only by car, is easy and convenient
- attract investment in a variety of key town centre uses including retail, employment, entertainment services and facilities to Hereford and the market towns
- ensure that, where appropriate, development proposals for retail and other town centre uses demonstrate need, undertake a comprehensive retail impact study and comply with the sequential approach
- promote town centre management and town centre health checks
- safeguard and strengthen existing district, local and village centres, in both urban and rural areas, which offer a range of everyday community, shopping and employment opportunities
- maintain and improve choice to walk, cycle or use public transport and ensure an appropriate supply of attractive, convenient and safe parking for shopping and leisure trips
- reduce the impact of traffic within shopping streets, where possible through management and calming
- provide for the safety and security needs of pedestrians
- enable activity to take place within centres outside shopping hours
- ensure the character and appearance of conservation areas is maintained and enhanced
- attract investment into upgrading existing buildings and in delivering high quality new development
- encourage high quality design of both urban spaces and buildings
- ensure the access needs of all are taken into account
- provide secure facilities for cyclists.

7.3.4 More specifically, and as identified in the aims and objectives of this chapter, the policies and proposals of the Plan seek to maintain and improve the shopping hierarchy throughout Herefordshire. This involves:

- ensuring that new shopping developments are provided in a sustainable and effective manner
- guiding and controlling the development of the market towns to retain and improve town centre services to the benefit of local residents and the rural hinterland
- maintaining and improving district, local and village centres throughout the County to provide a community focus, satisfy day to day retail requirements and help towards reducing the need to travel
- guiding larger scale developments to ensure that the vitality and viability of Hereford and the market towns is protected, recognising that such requirements can be difficult to accommodate within historic centres.

Part I policy

S5 Town centres and retail

The range of shopping, employment, entertainment, social and other community services that are available in existing centres should continue to be available to all in locations accessible by a choice of means of transport. This will be achieved by:

1. protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of Hereford city centre, market town centres and local, neighbourhood and village centres throughout the County, with particular reference to maintaining the County's retail hierarchy and the role of Hereford city centre as a sub-regional shopping centre;
2. supporting continued investment in existing centres, maintaining an attractive environment, and encouraging high quality design and mixed uses including housing, particularly above shops;
3. locating key town centre uses that generate and attract many trips, including retail, entertainment and leisure, commercial and public offices, in or adjacent to existing centres where there is convenient access by a choice of means of transport; and
4. in edge of centre or out of centre locations, applying first a test of need and then, if need can be demonstrated, a sequential approach to retail and other proposals that generate and attract many trips. The likely impact of proposals on the Plan's strategy and on the vitality and viability of existing centres will also be considered, as will the accessibility of the site by a choice of means of transport, the likely effect of development on overall travel patterns and car use and the scope to encourage investment to regenerate deprived areas.

Guiding principles P2, P3, P9 and P11

7.4 City and town centres

Central shopping and commercial areas

- 7.4.1 Both PPS6 and the Regional Spatial Strategy emphasise that town centres should be the preferred location for new retail and office development and community activity, and this approach underpins the strategy of the Plan. The central shopping and commercial areas of Hereford and the market towns are the prime shopping areas for these city and town centres, and the Council is concerned to ensure that they retain their important retailing role and remain the focus for retail activity during the Plan period. A successful retail centre contributes to the vitality and viability of that centre, the maintenance of its historic fabric and to its role as a tourist destination.
- 7.4.2 Town centres are major attractors of journeys and have developed as public transport nodes resulting from the concentration of services and facilities located in them. Development in town centres can therefore encourage the use of public transport or enable one car journey to serve several purposes, thereby reducing transport emissions and air pollutants.
- 7.4.3 The central shopping and commercial areas for Hereford and the market towns have been identified on the proposal map and serve to indicate the extent of the 'town centre' for application of the sequential approach.

TCR1 Central shopping and commercial areas

The central shopping and commercial areas of Hereford and the market towns will be retained and protected as the prime focus for retail, leisure and commercial activity in order to ensure the continued vitality and viability of these city and town centres.

Vitality and viability

7.4.4 The vitality and viability of central shopping and commercial areas depends on a wide range of factors, including:

- retaining and developing a wide range of attractions and amenities
- creating and maintaining a safe, attractive and secure environment
- ensuring good accessibility to and within the centre for all
- attracting continuing investment in development or refurbishment of existing buildings.

7.4.5 Vitality and viability can be enhanced in many ways so as to extend the variety, choice and quality of shops and services, and to improve the overall attraction, safety, prevention of crime, convenience and ambience of a town centre. The market towns in the County have officers who are responsible for developing and improving the prosperity, health, vitality and viability of the towns and their hinterland parishes. This is achieved through co-ordination of the activities undertaken by the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. A primary role for these officers will be to undertake health checks. Land use planning can make a significant contribution to vitality and viability through a variety of measures which will complement other initiatives arising through town centre management, such as street art, security and safety improvements and town centre promotions.

TCR2 Vitality and viability

The vitality and viability of Hereford city centre and the market towns will be maintained and enhanced by the following means:

- 1. directing proposals for new shopping and commercial uses within Part A of the Use Classes Order to the central shopping and commercial areas where opportunities exist through development, redevelopment or change of use;**
- 2. supporting the introduction of complementary uses which add to diversity and activity;**
- 3. controlling the introduction of non-retail uses in accordance with policies TCR3-6 having regard to the need to balance retail and non-retail uses;**
- 4. encouraging the use of upper floors, particularly for residential purposes;**
- 5. seeking planning obligations to secure improvements to the public realm including public art, contributions to traffic management and environmental enhancement schemes, helping to make town centres more attractive places to visit; and**
- 6. ensuring that town centres are accessible to all.**

Non-retail uses in shopping frontages

7.4.6 An important element of the attractiveness of the central shopping and commercial areas of Hereford and the market towns is the provision of a wide range of shops within a compact area, so maximizing choice and fostering comparison shopping and competition; from which consumers benefit. The concentration of retail trading activity within a limited area, with substantial runs of retail frontage and varied and changing window displays, is also responsible in large part for the busy and vibrant character of the County's CSCA's. Whilst one non-retail use alone may not detract from the vitality of a street, successive changes in its wake may eventually do so. A concentration of non-retail uses can have the effect of breaking up the shopping area, isolating some shop units to the detriment of the centre as a whole. The overall emphasis on retail trading, particularly in the main

shopping streets of the primary shopping area, should be retained in order to protect the vitality and viability of the centres of Hereford and the market towns and to maintain their character.

- 7.4.7 A variety of non-retail uses are present throughout the central shopping and commercial areas and indeed add to the diversity of uses in town centres. Different but complementary uses, during the day and evening, can reinforce each other, making town centres more attractive to local residents, shoppers and visitors. These non-retail uses include building societies, banks, estate agents, insurance and betting offices (uses falling within Use Class A2, financial and professional services), together with restaurants and cafes (Class A3), drinking establishments (Class A4) and hot food takeaways (Class A5). The further introduction of such uses in the main shopping streets, whilst extending diversity, needs to be carefully balanced against the need to protect retail trading character and to ensure that these frontages continue to be dominated by shops. To this end, the Plan defines a series of primary and secondary shopping frontages within the central shopping and commercial areas. These frontages, shown on the proposals map, also incorporate a cohesive network for major pedestrian movements within the centres concerned.
- 7.4.8 In assessing the impact of proposed Class A2 – A5 uses within the primary shopping frontages, regard will be had to a range of criteria designed to assess the impact of the proposal on retail trading character and vitality and viability. In order to allow integration of non-retail uses in a dispersed manner and to avoid any clustering effect which could harm the retail trading character of the frontage, Class A2 - A5 uses should not become established in blocks of more than two units or cause the proportion of non-retail uses to exceed 25% of the length of the relevant frontage. The relevant frontage will normally be the defined lengths as shown on the proposals map. Cases may arise however where it is appropriate to consider the proposal within the context of only part of a defined frontage, or within a wider context such as both sides of a shopping street. Relevant considerations in such cases will be:
- location of the proposal within the defined frontage
 - the significance of any breaks within defined frontages which may be created by entrances, public buildings or other features
 - street width and the presence or absence of street furniture or traffic movement.
- 7.4.9 Proposals will also be considered in terms of noise, appearance, traffic generation, servicing, parking and any other factors which may have a detrimental effect on the shopping street and residential amenity.
- 7.4.10 In the secondary shopping frontages, retail and non-retail service uses are more mixed. In such areas, the diversity and variety of shopping area uses should be sustained and fostered in the interests of protecting vitality and viability. Retail uses remain important. The criteria referred to above for primary shopping frontages will be applied; however, the proportion of non-retail uses to retail uses has been increased to 50%. In this way, additional provision is made for financial and professional services and food and drink uses (Use Classes A2 - A5) in these areas.
- 7.4.11 In the case of Bromyard, no primary shopping frontages have been defined reflecting the size, form and function of the town's central shopping and commercial area. Bromyard's shopping centre is unique in character, differing from the other market towns. It is dominated by a mixture of small independent shops, service outlets and non-retail uses which are dispersed within the shopping streets which have been defined as secondary shopping frontages. New retail proposals within the central shopping and commercial area should only be resisted if they seriously affect conservation, amenity or highway considerations.
- 7.4.12 The introduction of non-retail uses falling outside Class A of the Use Classes Order will normally be opposed on the ground floor level of primary and secondary shopping frontages so as to protect the combination of retail and associated services which characterise these frontages in the interest of protecting vitality and viability. An exception is made in the case of amusement centres with prizes seeking to locate in secondary shopping frontages (see policy TCR7).

- 7.4.13 Where non-retail uses are introduced into the primary and secondary shopping frontages, the Council will seek to ensure where appropriate that effective window displays are provided in order to maximise visual attraction and minimise the effect of a break in the shopping frontage.

TCR3 Primary shopping frontages

The retail trading character of each of the primary shopping frontages in Hereford and the market towns (excluding Bromyard) will be protected. These frontages should continue to be dominated by shops (Class A1). Proposals for uses within Classes A2 – A5 in ground floor premises within the primary shopping frontages will be assessed having regard to the following criteria:

1. the proposed use does not result in a continuous frontage of more than two non-retail units and will not cause the proportion of non-retail uses in the relevant frontage to exceed 25%, taking into account both existing and permitted non-retail representation in the frontage concerned. Exceptions to this requirement may be considered where the proposal would lead to the appropriate use of vacant or under-used premises where it can be demonstrated that it is unlikely to be used for retailing; or where for reasons of location or frontage width the proposal will not detract from the shopping character of the frontage concerned;
2. the prominence of the premises within the street scene, including location, unit size and frontage width;
3. the impact of the proposal on the centre's vitality and viability;
4. the need to avoid the introduction of dead frontage; and
5. the provision made for servicing and for the resolution of environmental considerations in the case of Class A3 – A5 uses.

TCR4 Secondary shopping frontages

The secondary shopping frontages in Hereford and the market towns should continue to provide a location for a range of shopping area uses. Proposals for uses within Classes A2 – A5 in ground floor premises within the secondary shopping frontages will be permitted provided that:

1. the proposed use will not result in a continuous frontage of more than two non-retail units and will not cause the proportion of non-retail uses in the relevant frontage to exceed 50%. Exceptions to this requirement may be considered where the proposal would lead to the appropriate use of vacant or under-used premises where it can be demonstrated that it is unlikely to be used for retailing; or where the proposal results from the expansion of an existing non-retail use; or where for reasons of location or frontage width the proposal will not detract from the shopping character of the frontage concerned;
2. the proposal otherwise respects the shopping pattern and special character of the frontage concerned; and
3. suitable provision is made for servicing and for the resolution of environmental considerations in the case of Class A3 – A5 uses.

TCR5 Uses outside Class A of the Use Classes Order

Uses falling outside Class A of the Use Classes Order will not normally be permitted in ground floor premises within the primary and secondary shopping frontages.

TCR6 Non-retail uses (Classes A2 - A5)

Where planning permission is granted for non-retail uses in the primary and secondary shopping frontages, the Council will ensure by condition that effective window displays are incorporated into the proposals where appropriate.

Amusement centres

- 7.4.14 A distinction may be made between amusement centres with prizes and those without prizes, since this basic difference in operation affects the overall requirements of the use and its presentation on site. Prize type amusement centres can be compatible with neighbouring retail operations in central areas, having the overall appearance of a retail unit through effective window displays of goods which are available inside. Such operations may therefore be acceptable, provided that nuisance will not be caused and that the overall retail trading character of the street will not be disturbed. An effective window display will be secured in accordance with policy TCR6. Since such centres largely depend on passing trade rather than attracting people to a locality themselves, they will not be allowed in the primary shopping frontages having regard to the need to retain retail trading character, vitality and viability.
- 7.4.15 The games machine type of amusement centre has different requirements and is more likely to cause nuisance to surrounding properties. Since no goods or commodities as such are offered to the public it cannot be considered as 'retail' or compatible with a retail operation and will not therefore be permitted in the primary or secondary shopping frontages.

TCR7 Amusement centres

Proposals for amusement centres with prizes will:

- 1. not be permitted in the primary shopping frontages of Hereford and the market towns; and**
- 2. be permitted in ground floor premises within the secondary shopping frontages, providing that the premises is not immediately adjacent to an existing or permitted non-retail use and subject to considerations of visual amenity, noise and disturbance.**

Proposals for amusement machine centres in the primary and secondary shopping frontages will not be permitted in order to protect retail trading character, viability and vitality.

Small scale retail development

- 7.4.16 In addition to the larger scale developments identified in this Plan for Hereford city centre, there is scope for small scale retail developments within the central shopping and commercial areas of Hereford and the market towns. Small intimate shopping developments provide different but complementary shopping environments to that offered by larger national multiple developments, extending the diversity and retail offer of the centre as a whole and contributing to vitality and viability. Such schemes could comprise building refurbishment, extensions and small scale developments. They should be in accordance with other Plan policies dealing with buildings of architectural or historic importance, conservation areas, archaeology and townscape; take into account the aim to retain and provide residential accommodation in city and town centres, and resolve issues of servicing and access.

TCR8 Small scale retail development

Proposals for small scale retail development within the central shopping and commercial areas of Hereford and the market towns, including change of use proposals, will be permitted provided that they are in accordance with other relevant policies of the Plan.

7.5 Key town centre uses – need and the sequential approach

Large scale retail and leisure development outside central shopping and commercial areas

- 7.5.1 Some retail operations may not be readily accommodated within the heart of Hereford and the market towns. For example, stores selling bulky non food items, such as carpets, furniture and large electrical appliances often require extensive showroom areas in which to display their goods. Readily accessible car parking is also necessary, especially in the case of DIY stores, because of the nature of the goods they sell. This is sometimes difficult to accommodate within the confines of a historic centre.
- 7.5.2 A requirement for between 11-15,000 sq m (net) of additional retail warehouse floorspace has been identified for Hereford within the period of the Plan. The majority of this should be located on the site identified at Holmer Road. This proposal is set out below at policy TCR25.
- 7.5.3 In meeting the remaining requirement and any further introduction of large scale retail uses, applications will be assessed in terms of the following policy, which provides developers with certainty as to how any development proposals outside town centres will be assessed.
- 7.5.4 Proposals which would be located at an edge of centre or out of centre location are required to demonstrate both a retail need for additional facilities and that a sequential approach has been applied in selecting the location for the site. Applicants will have to consider the impact on nearby centres and provide evidence on the accessibility of the site by a choice of means of transport and any significant environmental impacts.
- 7.5.5 Need can be expressed in both quantitative and qualitative terms. However, greater weight will be placed on the quantitative need for new retail provision, which is defined in terms of additional floorspace required for a type of good in that location. Where both comparison and convenience goods are proposed to be sold within the same development evidence will be required to prove the need for each type of good.
- 7.5.6 If need can be demonstrated then a sequential approach to site selection will be required.
- 7.5.7 This is to be applied to the location of all key city and town centre uses and comprises an assessment of the availability and suitability of land and buildings within the following locations in turn:
- first preference: land and buildings within the central shopping and commercial areas
 - second preference: land and buildings in an edge-of-centre location relative to a primary shopping frontage (Hereford, Ledbury, Leominster, Ross-on-Wye and Kington) or secondary shopping frontage (Bromyard). In the case of retail proposals, this means within easy walking distance taking into account physical barriers i.e. approximately 200-300 metres; longer distances (up to 500 metres) are considered appropriate for other uses such as offices, entertainment and leisure
 - third preference: out-of-centre locations which are well served by public transport. Out of centre is a location that is clearly separate from a town centre but does not lie outside the defined settlement boundary.

- 7.5.8 It is emphasised that proposals will be required to demonstrate that a genuine sequential approach to site selection has been followed and that all available opportunities have been thoroughly assessed before land and/or buildings in a location of a lower preference are brought forward. The sequential approach will also apply to large scale extensions to existing retail and town centre uses, wherever these are located, which may impact on vitality and viability. In addition, developers and retailers will need to be more flexible about the format, design, scale of development and the amount of car parking, tailoring these to fit the local circumstances.
- 7.5.9 In order to protect the viability and vitality of existing centres, conditions may be imposed where necessary to restrict the range of goods to be sold, such as the sale of non bulky goods such as clothing, toys, and footwear outside central shopping and commercial areas. Conditions may also be set in terms of the size of units and the potential for further vertical or horizontal sub division. This is to prevent the proliferation of smaller shop units without further reference to the local planning authority.
- 7.5.10 Increasingly, leisure proposals are coming forward for such uses as fitness suites, sports facilities, ten pin bowling alleys and cinemas which by virtue of their scale and associated travel generation fall to be assessed under the sequential approach. These schemes typically take the form of a single relatively large scale building with associated car parking and may include ancillary retail and refreshment facilities. Developers will be expected to demonstrate need and a sequential approach to the site selection as described above for retail development. Specific provision is made within Hereford for leisure proposals. The following policy complements Plan policies in chapter 10, which deal with other aspects of recreation and sport, focussing on open uses.

TCR9 Large scale retail and leisure development outside central shopping and commercial areas

Proposals for large scale retail and leisure development outside the central shopping and commercial areas of Hereford and the market towns will only be permitted where:

- 1. it can be demonstrated that there is a need for the development in the location proposed, with a retail need for both comparison and convenience goods shown if both are proposed within the same development;**
- 2. it can be demonstrated that a sequential approach has been taken to site selection, and that land and buildings in each of the following categories have been thoroughly assessed in turn and found to be not available before considering less central locations:**
 - within central shopping and commercial areas**
 - edge-of-centre locations**
 - out-of-centre locations which are well served by public transport;**
- 3. the proposal is compatible with and does not undermine the Plan's central shopping and commercial area strategy or the overall Plan strategy;**
- 4. the proposal will not seriously harm the vitality and viability of existing central shopping and commercial areas, either by itself or in conjunction with other recent and proposed retail development;**
- 5. the site is easily and safely accessible to customers and staff by a choice of modes of transport and will not lead to an increase in the use of the private car; and**
- 6. the proposal is not sited within open countryside or on land allocated or safeguarded for another use.**

Office development

- 7.5.11 Hereford city centre and the market towns provide a focus for commercial, administrative and business activity in the County, as well as key locations for the provision of sustainable employment opportunities. Financial and professional services in particular perform an important economic role in town centres; here, they are convenient and accessible for customers and are well located in relation to public transport provision. The small scale office accommodation available in town centres is particularly suited to this kind of business and historic buildings can create an attractive, prestigious setting for visitors to professional practices. With this in mind, the Plan provides for the retention of existing office floorspace in Hereford city centre and market town centres unless certain conditions can be met.
- 7.5.12 As for large scale retail development, a sequential approach should be followed in determining the location of larger office developments which are likely to be major generators of travel either for staff and/or customers or clients. Proposals will be required to demonstrate that a genuine sequential approach to site selection has been followed and that all available opportunities have been thoroughly assessed before land and/or buildings of a lower preference are put forward. Office developments should not be located in the open countryside, save in the special circumstances outlined in policy E14.
- 7.5.13 It is recognised that some buildings are no longer appropriate for office use and consideration will be given to conversion to housing. Where this is the case, the Council will consider the individual circumstances and the applicant may be required to produce market and financial evidence to justify the loss of office floorspace. This will apply particularly to more modern buildings.

TCR10 Office development

Proposals for office development will be permitted where:

- 1. the proposal falls within a central shopping and commercial area, complies with policies TCR3 and TCR4 and meets environmental and conservation requirements as set out in other Plan policies;**
- 2. for larger scale proposals outside these areas, it can be demonstrated that a sequential approach has been taken to site selection, and that land and buildings in each of the following categories have been thoroughly assessed in turn and found to be not available, before considering less central locations:**
 - within central shopping and commercial areas**
 - edge-of-centre locations within 500 metres of a central shopping and commercial area**
 - out-of-centre locations which are well served by public transport;**
- 3. the site is easily and safely accessible to customers and staff by a choice of modes of transport and will not lead to an increase in the use of the private car; and**
- 4. the proposal is not sited within the open countryside, except in the case of large dwellings proposed for conversion in accordance with policy E14, or on land allocated or safeguarded for another use.**

TCR11 Loss of existing offices

Proposals involving the loss of existing offices within Hereford city centre and market town centres will only be permitted where:

- 1. it can be demonstrated that there is no demand or need for the floorspace; or**

2. the replacement development and/or land use is of acknowledged benefit to the centre concerned.

Other retail policies

Local and neighbourhood shopping centres

- 7.6.1 There are a number of local and neighbourhood shopping centres, as identified in the retail hierarchy, situated in residential areas throughout Hereford and the County's larger villages. They provide shops and other services to meet the needs of the local area and offer a particularly important and convenient service for those who are less mobile, especially older people and disabled, families with small children and those without access to a car. Local and neighbourhood shopping centres can also serve to reduce the need to use a car for shopping, reducing traffic congestion and contributing to a cleaner environment. Limited growth in these centres will be permitted in order that local needs continue to be met. Where new residential development takes place, the provision of new local shopping facilities to serve these areas will be encouraged where this is justified. Local shopping centres should not grow to the extent that they threaten the vitality and viability of existing city and town centres, or compromise the County's retail hierarchy.

TCR13 Local and neighbourhood shopping centres

Additional shopping floorspace will be permitted in existing local and neighbourhood shopping centres where:

- 1. the proposal is consistent with the scale and function of the centre and its place in the retail hierarchy and meets people's day to day needs so reducing the need to travel;**
- 2. such development would contribute to the continued and efficient operation of those centres, or the scale of new residential development makes the provision of new local shopping facilities desirable; and**
- 3. the vitality and viability of existing centres is not threatened.**

Village commercial facilities

- 7.6.2 Local shops, post offices and public houses perform a vital economic and social function in sustaining rural communities, not only meeting daily shopping 'top up' requirements but also providing a community focus for the local area. They should be retained wherever possible. Where village shops are located within village centres, a positive approach will be taken to applications for conversion and extensions to shops, designed to improve viability. Shops ancillary to rural petrol stations can also fulfil a useful role, although care should be taken to ensure that they do not adversely affect easily accessible convenience shopping available to the local community (see policy TCR18).
- 7.6.3 On appropriate sites new retail and commercial developments will be encouraged within village centres where proposals meet an identified local need, do not harm vitality and viability of the identified centres and support and maintain the County's retail hierarchy.
- 7.6.4 In recent years, village shops have diminished in numbers as a result of loss of trade and high operating costs. Competition from larger retailers, increases in car ownership and rationalisation of rural post offices have all contributed to the decline. The recognition of the importance of maintaining villages as sustainable and viable communities forms the basis of the rural housing policies in the Plan and applications for the change of use of shops to dwellings or other uses will be carefully assessed against these factors. In particular their importance to the community will be taken into account. Such proposals will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the business is no longer viable commercially and that all means of retaining the shop have been

thoroughly investigated. As part of this investigation, evidence will need to be provided that the business has been marketed for at least a year at a price which reflects the existing use and its location, that the business has been advertised for sale in relevant trade journals and magazines and that it can be demonstrated that no interest has been shown.

TCR14 Village commercial facilities

Proposals for new retail and commercial developments and the conversion and extension of existing village commercial facilities will be considered favourably subject to proposals:

- 1. being of a scale appropriate to the area; and**
- 2. not threatening the vitality and viability of existing centres or comprising the County's retail hierarchy.**

Applications for change of use leading to the loss of such facilities will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer viable and unlikely to become so, that all means of retaining the facility have been explored taking into account the importance of the facility to the local community.

Hot food take-away outlets

- 7.6.5 New hot food take-away outlets and restaurants often seek to locate in town centres, local centres and adjoining residential areas. In town centres regard will be had to policies TCR3 and TCR4, with car parking requirements assessed in accordance with policy T11 and the Council's standards. It will often be inappropriate to require off street car parking where hot food take-away outlets are proposed in town centre locations. Where these proposals are seeking to locate in close proximity to residential properties, environmental problems may arise through traffic, smell and litter as well as a high turnover of customers often at unsociable hours. Where appropriate a suitable restriction of business hours will be imposed for new take-away outlets. Where proposals fail to satisfactorily meet the criteria identified below, permission will be refused.

TCR15 Hot food take-away outlets

Hot food take-away outlets (Class A5) will be permitted where the proposal:

- 1. does not have an unacceptable effect on residential amenities by virtue of giving rise to new or exacerbating existing local problems resulting from traffic generation, highway safety, noise, smell or other amenity considerations; and**
- 2. provides suitable servicing facilities and incorporates appropriate car parking in accordance with policy T11.**

Garden centres

- 7.6.6 Garden centres are retail outlets selling plants, some of which will be grown on the premises, and other garden products such as greenhouses, garden furniture, tools and paving. The range of goods sold has tended to extend in recent years to include in some cases pets; gifts, food and drink, books, and clothing; many garden centres also incorporate refreshment facilities. Traditionally, garden centres are usually located on the urban fringe or are free-standing in the open countryside; whilst they may have grown incrementally from a plant nursery operation, the tendency has been for an increasing emphasis on leisure and comparison shopping aspects to be incorporated in their overall operation. Planning permission is not usually required for operations where most of the goods sold are grown on the premises, but will be needed when the scale of goods 'brought in' increases.

- 7.6.7 Garden centres often require large areas of land accommodating both buildings and open areas for the sale and display of plants and other goods. These needs, together with associated access and parking requirements and advertising, mean that garden centres can be visually intrusive and potentially detrimental to landscape and rural character. Proposals for the expansion of existing garden centres, or for new centres, will therefore be carefully assessed, particularly where development is proposed outside settlement boundaries or on greenfield land (see policy E15). Plan policy in respect of design will be particularly important in ensuring that schemes are of a scale, form and design in keeping with the character of their surroundings, and that appropriate materials are used.
- 7.6.8 Proposals which would lead to a significant increase in the amount of retail floorspace dedicated to the sale of comparison goods will be contrary to the Plan's overall retail strategy. In such cases, consideration will be given to application of the sequential approach. The creation of new retail activity in the open countryside and unrelated to a settlement will only be acceptable if it is clearly ancillary to a plant nursery operation. In all cases where planning permission is required, conditions may be imposed in respect of the range and extent of goods to be sold, in the interests of protecting the vitality and viability of existing city and town centres.
- 7.6.9 Whilst DIY retail warehouses frequently include garden centres as an ancillary part of their overall operation, this policy is intended to apply to traditional garden centres and not those attached to non food retail stores.

TCR16 Garden centres

New garden centres or the expansion of existing garden centre operations will only be permitted where the proposal:

- 1. is within or adjacent to a settlement boundary, with good accessibility to an existing settlement; and**
- 2. is not intrusive within the landscape and is not detrimental to rural character, residential amenity or to the capacity or rural character of the local road network.**

Proposals in isolated countryside locations or which involve a significant increase in comparison goods floorspace will not be permitted.

Farm shops

- 7.6.10 Farm shops serve a vital function in rural areas, helping to meet demand for fresh produce and providing new sources of jobs and services, so contributing to the diversity of economic activity in the countryside. As with garden centres, the sale of unprocessed goods produced on the farm within existing buildings and with a minimal quantity of other goods 'brought in' will usually be regarded as an ancillary use which does not require specific planning permission. However, use as a farm shop selling a significant amount of produce from elsewhere is a separate use requiring planning permission.
- 7.6.11 In assessing such proposals, regard will be had to the desirability for the farmer of providing a service throughout the year; the potential impact on nearby village shops; and the likely impact of traffic generated on what may be an inadequate rural road network, together with access and parking arrangements. Overall, farm shops should not develop into operations of such a scale that could create visual intrusion, for instance through advertising, relatively large volumes of traffic, parking problems and disturbance to local residents. Proposals will be considered under the following policy, together with policy E12 (farm diversification) which gives guidance on scale, uses and the need to respect rural character, and emphasises the re-use of existing buildings in preference to new development. In cases where the development of an unrestricted retail use on a farm would be likely to result in significant adverse effect on a nearby village shop, conditions may be imposed in respect of the range of goods which may be sold.

TCR17 Farm shops

Planning permission will be granted for farm shops selling produce which is not mainly produced on that farm provided that the proposal:

- 1. is small scale, taking place within existing farm buildings wherever possible;**
- 2. is not intrusive within the landscape and not detrimental to rural character, residential amenity, highway safety or to the capacity or rural character of the local road network; and**
- 3. causes no unacceptable impact on nearby village shops.**

Petrol filling stations

- 7.6.12 Petrol filling stations may be desirable on or adjacent to major traffic routes where they are within or adjacent to built-up areas and settlements. Proposals within the open countryside or which adversely affect the landscape and setting of settlements and the amenity of residential areas are not appropriate. Proposals for petrol filling stations will need to address road safety and access issues, and ensure the satisfactory resolution of environmental considerations.
- 7.6.13 In recent years there has been a growing trend for petrol filling stations, in particular, to widen the range of services and products on sale to accommodate general convenience shopping. This can be of use to the passing motorist and can serve a valuable function in settlements with no or very limited retail facilities and can enable the provision of community facilities in accordance with policy CF5. However, such developments may have a detrimental impact upon existing local shops. These may not be in such a prominent location for retailing, but otherwise offer easily accessible convenience shopping to all in the local community. This is particularly important in rural areas where often the village shop provides a focal point in economic and social terms, offering ready access to shopping and other facilities to those sections of the community without access to a car. In urban areas, protection of local neighbourhood shops is no less important, since the availability of local facilities reduces the need to use the private car. The retail function of petrol filling stations should therefore generally remain ancillary to their main function, and the impacts of such proposals on nearby local stores will be a significant consideration. Applications should be accompanied by a supporting statement on retail need and impact as appropriate.

TCR18 Petrol filling stations

Proposals for new petrol filling stations will only be permitted where the proposal is within or adjacent to settlements, on or adjacent to major traffic routes, and will not adversely affect the local environment and residential amenity. Proposals in the open countryside or which are prominent in the landscape will not be permitted.

Proposals which include retail facilities attached to a petrol filling station will only be permitted provided that they:

- 1. satisfy identifiable local shopping needs;**
- 2. are restricted to convenience goods and comparison goods associated with motoring;**
- 3. can demonstrate that they will not adversely impact on existing local shopping facilities; and**
- 4. are ancillary to the main use as a petrol filling station.**

7.7 Hereford

Development requirements

7.7.1 It is a primary aim of the Plan to retain Hereford's status as a sub regional shopping centre and maintain, enhance and improve existing facilities. In order to achieve this, an assessment of the City's development needs up until 2011 has been undertaken, and a range of requirements identified. They are set out in detail in the background paper. In summary, they comprise:

(a) retail

7.7.2 Retail requirements are as follows:

- an additional 14-16,000 sq m (net) of city centre comparison retail floorspace, with a qualitative need for larger and suitably configured units to attract modern multiple retailers within the central shopping and commercial area
- an additional 11-15,000 sq m (net) of retail warehouse floorspace
- no significant requirement for further convenience floorspace.

(b) multiplex cinema

7.7.3 There is an estimated demand for a medium sized development providing some eight screens, to complement existing cinema facilities.

(c) public transport interchange facility

7.7.4 As part of the process of preparing the Local Transport Plan, a consultants study has been undertaken to assess the scope for integration of public transport services in Hereford (the Public Transport Interchange Study). Following this Study, the Local Transport Plan identifies a series of short and medium term improvements to public transport facilities. In the longer term, the Study recommends that a single interchange site for bus services be identified within the city centre. Bus interchange facilities are currently dispersed throughout the city centre, principally comprising the City Bus Station at Bewell Street and the Country Bus Station at Commercial Road, with other facilities at Shire Hall, Maylord Orchards, Broad Street, and the railway station. Subsequently, the

Hereford Transport Review has revisited provision for improved bus services in the city (see chapter 8 Transport for details).

(d) local government offices

- 7.7.5 To assist in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, the Council is actively seeking to establish central offices within Hereford. Further work is being undertaken on specification requirements. It is estimated that in the order of 12-14,000 sq m (net) of floorspace will be required for this purpose during the Plan period.

(e) library

- 7.7.6 The Council is also progressing a scheme to establish a new library within Hereford city centre. A potential location is identified in the civic quarter within the Edgar Street Grid area (see below).

(f) Hereford United Football Club

- 7.7.7 The ground of the Hereford United Football Club at Edgar Street, on the edge of the city centre, is in need of modernisation and suitable proposals are included in the Plan.

Proposals

- 7.7.8 In seeking to provide for the requirements identified above, a number of sites are brought forward by the Plan. Overall, these provide a range of development opportunities designed to ensure the continued vitality and viability of Hereford city centre and support its role as a sub regional destination for shopping, leisure and other purposes. The proposals have a strong regeneration theme, with the opportunity being taken to establish a positive planning policy framework to support the redevelopment for a range of town centre and other uses of previously developed land in and around the city centre.

- 7.7.9 The development of city centre and edge-of-centre sites within an historic city is a challenging exercise and will require innovative design approaches to overcome site constraints. Proposals will need to integrate well with the existing urban fabric to create exciting, visually attractive schemes reflecting positively on the rest of the city. A range of other Plan policies will also apply to proposals coming forward on these sites. In most cases a transport assessment will be required. Plan policies on the historic environment will be important, including listed building, conservation area and archaeological considerations, together with those on development requirements and design. Planning and development briefs will be prepared to guide proposals.

Edgar Street Grid

- 7.7.10 A key aspect in meeting the identified requirements is the regeneration of the area known as the Edgar Street Grid. The Grid comprises 43 hectares of land bounded by Edgar Street to the west, Newmarket Street and Blueschool Street to the south, Commercial Road to the east and the railway line to the north. The area includes a number of significant uses including the Livestock Market, Hereford United Football Club, the railway station, and a number of buildings of architectural and historic importance such as the Blackfriars Friary. The area also accommodates a wide range of industrial, commercial and residential uses.

- 7.7.11 The Grid presents a unique opportunity to develop an under-utilised area of land, strengthening the role of Hereford as a sub regional shopping centre and ensuring that the city plays a full role in the wider rural economy. To explore this opportunity, in 2003 the Council and Advantage West Midlands commissioned a masterplan exercise for the area, the results of which have been incorporated as appropriate into Plan policies and a future supporting Supplementary Planning Document that sets out a design framework. The masterplan represents a major, long term regeneration programme which aims to integrate the area with the city centre, stimulate a new civic and cultural presence, enhance Hereford's retail and tourism offer, and facilitate city living through the establishment of a vibrant and high quality location. Where industrial and commercial

businesses need to be relocated to achieve Grid proposals, the opportunity exists to utilise existing employment land in Hereford, safeguarded under the Plan's employment policies. In many cases, existing uses including residential will remain and should be integrated into the overall scheme as this proceeds.

7.7.12 The masterplan sets out a number of objectives which should be pursued for the Grid area:

- reinforce the vitality and quality of the city centre
- reinforce existing land uses around the site boundary to integrate it more effectively with its context
- enhance the pedestrian environment and provide better access across and into the site for pedestrians
- break down barriers between the area and the city centre
- provide new public space
- provide adequate car parking for new uses and to serve the city centre
- reinforce key vistas and views from the site to city centre landmarks
- promote improvement in the quality and convenience of alternative modes of transport to the car
- manage access by car, as part of an overall city wide transportation strategy

7.7.13 To assist in achieving the above, the Plan includes a number of development and land use proposals based on the Grid master plan:

- retail led development to support and enhance Hereford's shopping offer, with attractive, accessible pedestrian links into the rest of the city centre and on to the Courtyard Theatre. To this end, the Plan identifies a regeneration area within the city centre which includes the Livestock Market as well as land to the south of the Grid at Bewell Street and Berrington Street
- a new Canal basin in the northern part of the Grid area, providing a key focal point around which a range of uses including residential, commercial, leisure, bars and a hotel are proposed. In the longer term, the Grid is estimated to be capable of accommodating 600 dwellings, of which 180 will be provided within the Plan period in this area
- the reinforcement of the historic core around Widemarsh Street and Coningsby Street
- the retention of the Football Club within the Grid area, through re-orientation of the stadium incorporating a range of commercial and leisure facilities
- a new civic quarter incorporating public offices, library, public information and visitor amenities at Blueschool Street
- transport proposals including the long term potential to downgrade the inner ring road; a new road link between Edgar Street and Commercial Road to serve the redevelopment and relieve traffic on the existing inner ring road, and the extension of Canal Road to connect to the new link road and provide a new route between the railway station and the city centre
- the provision of enhanced public transport access with pick up and drop off facilities throughout the area.

7.7.14 These proposals are set out below in a series of site specific policies which will guide development in a comprehensive and cohesive manner. The final regeneration scheme should be well integrated and successfully link into the existing fabric of the city.

Planning obligations

7.7.15 The Plan policies for the Grid area include a number of requirements to support regeneration. Developers will be expected to make financial contributions to these through policy DR5 of the Plan. Contributions may be expected from schemes outside the Grid area where appropriate, including those arising elsewhere in the city centre. Further information is being set out in a Supplementary Planning Document. The main requirements are:

- provision of new and improved pedestrian/cycle routes to ensure good linkages through the site connecting the Grid developments to the existing fabric of the city, including the Courtyard Theatre
- contribution to the provision of park and ride facilities to serve Hereford and improve access to the area
- public realm improvements including enhancements to the railway station providing improved access for pedestrians, cyclists and drop off facilities, and to the historic area around the Coningsby Hospital and the Blackfriars Friary
- provision of enhanced public transport facilities
- the road link between Edgar Street and Commercial Road and extension of Canal Road
- provision of Canal basin, wharfage and visitor centre
- a flood alleviation scheme utilising the Widemarsh Brook
- relocation of the Hereford Livestock Market
- provision of public offices and a library.

7.7.16 In order to enable and assist with land assembly, the Council may wish to use its compulsory purchase powers.

Hereford Livestock Market – relocation

7.7.17 A key aspect of the Plan's strategy and the regeneration of the Edgar Street Grid is the relocation of the Hereford Livestock Market. Nationally, the trend has been for livestock markets to relocate out of town, reflecting the increasingly quasi-industrial nature of their core activities and modern requirements for access, health and safety, animal welfare, parking and operational space. In Hereford, the Market has been on its present site since the mid 1950's, furthering an obligation under a Charter dating from 1597 to enable the buying and selling of goods and livestock in the City. However, the current market facility has become outdated, and is poorly equipped and located for modern day operations and trading. Relocation to a new site with facilities provided to improved modern standards is proposed in order to address these issues as well as the changing requirements of animal welfare and health and safety legislation. Relocation will ensure a continued role for the Market as an important service centre to the local agricultural community, as well as allowing the existing site to be more advantageously used to support and extend the range of services offered by the city centre. To help facilitate relocation, the Hereford Markets Act allows a new market to be formed if required outside and beyond the city boundary limits as defined and restricted under the historic Charter.

7.7.18 Initial research was undertaken to ascertain the requirements of any new facility in terms of size, infrastructure and location, including an extensive survey to identify and shortlist possible relocation sites, taking into account a wide range of planning factors. From these studies of trading information and locations of livestock throughout the County, in general terms a location to the north west of the City offers the best accessibility for both sellers and buyers of livestock. However, despite a continuing site search it has not proved possible to identify a suitable site. The Plan, therefore, includes the following criteria based policy. Additionally and in response to representations made to the Deposit Draft Plan, the Council commissioned a further study. That report concluded that the livestock market has outgrown its existing site and as it remains to be a vital and valuable part of the rural farming community in Herefordshire, a new site was the preferred option.

7.7.19 The size of the required site is around 8 hectares, to allow for sales areas and pennage, car / lorry parking and facilities, and associated lairage. Lairage comprises pasturage for livestock remaining overnight prior to transportation, and is similar to agricultural use requiring little visual change in the appearance of land. The amount of land required for built development (including areas of open hard standing) would be 4 to 5 hectares.

7.7.20 It is likely that any site proposed would be required to be treated as an exception to planning policy, in order to meet the specific requirements of the Livestock Market. Consequently the only ancillary uses that could also be permitted would be those directly associated with the Market

operation. This could include uses such as agricultural suppliers (including machinery supplies and repairs), and veterinary and financial services. Any retail sale of goods falling within Class A1 of the Use Classes Order will be restricted to goods required for the operation of an agricultural business.

- 7.7.21 Many environmental issues could be mitigated through site layout and landscaping. An environmental impact assessment of the development is likely to be required prior to any planning permission being granted. In addition, a transport assessment will be needed.

TCR19 Hereford Livestock Market – relocation

Planning permission for proposals for a relocated Hereford Livestock Market will only be granted where the proposal meets the following criteria:

- 1. the site is restricted for use as the new Hereford Livestock Market and necessary ancillary uses only;**
- 2. the site is of a size and nature capable of adequately accommodating the identified needs of Hereford Livestock Market, and will not have a detrimental effect on the surrounding area or its immediate setting;**
- 3. the site is well related to the primary road network where the development will not create an unacceptable impact upon the highway network and a satisfactory access can be provided;**
- 4. the site can be adequately serviced by the provision of infrastructure and services, to include the necessary supply of water and for the satisfactory treatment and/or disposal of trade effluent and surface water;**
- 5. the scheme must include proposals for sustainable drainage and incorporate measures to ensure that such run-off does not contaminate local water courses or ground water;**
- 6. the built development, car parking and lairage should be located and of good design to respect its surroundings and character in order to protect local amenity and minimise landscape impacts; and**
- 7. a comprehensive and suitable landscaping scheme is provided to help assimilate the development into the surrounding area and to safeguard landscape character.**

Eign Gate regeneration area

- 7.7.22 The identification of land for retail development to ensure the continued viability and vitality of the city centre as a sub regional shopping destination is a key concern of the Plan. An important element of the attractiveness of Hereford's central shopping and commercial area is the wide range of shops within a compact area, maximising choice and fostering competition. To maintain and extend this and meet identified requirements, it is important that new opportunities are identified or made available within the central shopping and commercial area.

- 7.7.23 Land within the Eign Gate regeneration area will provide a unique opportunity for provision of Class A1 retail uses to support the overall vitality and viability of Hereford city centre. The area extends from St. Nicholas Street and King Street in the south to Blackfriars Street in the north. Edgar Street forms the western boundary, with Widemarsh Street and Broad Street marking the eastern boundary. The area incorporates the primary shopping frontages of Eign Gate and Widemarsh Street, lies within the central shopping and commercial area and is well related to High Town with the potential to improve city centre linkages. The area includes listed buildings

and parts of the City Wall Scheduled Ancient Monument, with elements of a historic street pattern. With the exception of the Livestock Market, the area falls within the Central Conservation Area.

- 7.7.24 The size and location of this area is such that it has the potential to significantly enhance the social and economic functions of the city centre, supporting not only its sub regional shopping role but also acting as a catalyst for regeneration of the remainder of the Edgar Street Grid. These positive benefits stand to be secured in part through development of the area itself, but also by ensuring that links to other areas are provided. Schemes should create inviting pedestrian linkages into the rest of the city centre to the east, especially High Town, and complement access improvements throughout the Edgar Street Grid. The area also has potential for additional public car parking provision to serve the city centre. A high quality of design that reflects the surrounding townscape and respects the historic fabric will be required. For policy purposes the area is subdivided into three broad sectors, namely the Livestock Market; Bewell Street, and Berrington Street. At the same time, schemes should be able to demonstrate a positive contribution to the wider objective of the Plan's town centre and retail strategy. Development proposals must provide a flood risk assessment in accordance with policy DR7 and PPS25.
- 7.7.25 The Livestock Market site is to be developed for Class A1 retail uses. The site will require comprehensive treatment with a high standard of individual building and urban townscape design reflecting its gateway location. The overall approach should enhance the location, encourage the development of high quality pedestrian, cycle and public transport access, and provide safe, attractive and effective links to the rest of the city centre and elsewhere. Through the development of the Market site there is a significant opportunity to establish strong pedestrian links between the city centre and existing leisure uses to the north, notably the Courtyard and the football ground.
- 7.7.26 The Livestock Market site presently accommodates an existing stall market. There is a commitment to retain this use upon redevelopment. It is acknowledged that this matter should be considered when the nature of the other principal uses that are proposed for the Market site and the details of scheme design are known. If the stall market use is to be relocated, it will be necessary to secure a suitable alternative location within or adjacent to the city centre.
- 7.7.27 The Livestock Market site has been identified as a possible location for new public transport interchange facilities. A number of issues will need to be addressed in achieving this proposal, including development requirements, access and operational constraints, and the need to protect the fabric of the historic core. The opportunity exists to secure an innovative, visually attractive development, promoting public transport use and linking into other Plan proposals. Other locational opportunities may also arise. Any proposals for the interchange that are brought forward should satisfy the policies of this Plan, particularly in terms of historic heritage and transport, including policy T1.
- 7.7.28 At Bewell Street, city centre comparison shopping uses within Class A1 will be sought should a development opportunity arise.
- 7.7.29 The Berrington Street area is also identified for city centre comparison shopping along with other uses including residential, leisure and commercial. In this way, the redevelopment of this area will:
- assist in regenerating this part of the city
 - boost retail trading activity in the west of the city centre
 - improve linkages with other recent regeneration developments and initiatives in the riverside area to the south, as well as other aspects of the Grid proposals
 - support the central shopping and commercial area.

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.

- 7.7.30 To assist in bringing forward a lively and interesting development proposal and to contribute to diversity and the evening economy, an element of residential development should be included. A capacity of 25 dwellings has been estimated in terms of the Plan's housing allocations (policy H2).
- 7.7.31 Early consultations will need to take place between developers and the Council's archaeology unit in order to discuss the undertaking of assessments and field evaluation in line with policy ARCH1.
- 7.7.32 Details of proposals contained within the Edgar Street Grid that will be provided by or with the assistance of developers through planning obligations are set out above. The Class A1 retail development proposed in the Eign Gate regeneration area is seen as a major financial contributor towards these obligations.

TCR20 Eign Gate regeneration area

Land within the Eign Gate regeneration area provides a major opportunity for development to support the vitality and viability of the city centre. The area is identified as the preferred location for Class A1 retail development and associated car parking provision as set out below. Development in this area must:

- 1. improve and extend the retail offer of Hereford city centre, contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre and secure environmental improvements;**
- 2. provide a comprehensive scheme based on Class A1 retail uses for the Livestock Market, treating the site as a whole;**
- 3. provide for city centre comparison shopping uses within the Bewell Street area should the opportunity for change arise;**
- 4. provide for city centre comparison shopping within the Berrington Street area, as well as residential, leisure and commercial uses which add to the diversity of uses on offer in the city centre;**
- 5. ensure that safe, effective and attractive pedestrian and cycle links both within and outside the area are provided or enhanced to High Town, the River Wye to the south and other elements of the Edgar Street Grid;**
- 6. contribute to the achievement of the Plan's town centre and retail strategy;**
- 7. respect residential amenity and the historic fabric of the area, including listed buildings, archaeology and the historic street pattern;**
- 8. provide a high standard of design merited on this important central location; and**
- 9. contribute financially to the planning obligations identified ensuring the overall aims of the Edgar Street Grid proposals are met.**

Canal basin and historic core

- 7.7.33 This area is situated in the north eastern part of the Grid area between Widemarsh Street and the railway station and historically included the terminus basin of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal. The area is currently occupied by playing fields and a timber yard, with other development including industrial, residential and retail use. In the south lies the historic Blackfriars Friary, preaching cross and gardens, together with Coningsby Hospital (both scheduled as Ancient Monuments). In addition the Widemarsh Brook runs through the site. The area is prone to flooding, with the playing fields providing flood storage. A flood alleviation scheme will need to be prepared to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency.

- 7.7.34 The area provides an opportunity to develop a high quality waterside development in the heart of the city. The revival of a terminus for leisure based canal activity as part of a comprehensive development proposal brings with it the following benefits:
- provision of a destination and focal point in the north of the Grid area
 - provision of a flood alleviation scheme for this site and adjoining sites utilising Widemarsh Brook
 - the opportunity for a water front mixed development, aiding regeneration
 - the provision of a potential tourism opportunity on the edge of the city centre, utilising both the Canal basin area and the Coningsby Hospital and Blackfriars Friary and gardens
 - provision of new public links and routes through the site and creation of attractive areas of public open space adjacent to the Canal basin.
- 7.7.35 To this end a mixed use scheme is proposed comprising high density housing, Canal basin, wharfage, and visitor centre, and complementary retail/leisure uses including bars, restaurants, and a hotel. It is expected that 180 dwellings will be provided within the Plan period in this location, including the provision of flats, town houses and affordable housing. A high quality design is required reflecting its waterside location and industrial heritage.
- 7.7.36 A key element of the overall scheme is the extension of Canal Road to connect to the new link road and provide a new thoroughfare between the railway station and the city centre. A route for this road is protected through policy T10 of the Plan. Financial contributions will be sought from developers towards this road and other planning obligations for the Grid as a whole as detailed above.
- 7.7.37 As part of this proposal, Widemarsh Brook is to be diverted and opened up as an attractive amenity and ecological resource to provide a key visual and physical link for pedestrians and cyclists between Widemarsh Street and Canal Road and onto the railway station. Widemarsh Brook is to make provision for flood alleviation. A flood risk assessment will be required for the site. The biodiversity aspects of the brook will need to be given careful consideration.
- 7.7.38 The historic core of the area comprising the Coningsby Hospital and Blackfriars Friary and gardens are proposed to be substantially improved and extended to provide an attractive destination at the heart of the Grid area, together with improved pedestrian and cycle links in all directions.
- 7.7.39 A comprehensive approach is required which delivers a high quality scheme for the area. The strong architectural and design themes associated with the Canal will offer an important direction to design approaches consistent with the Plan's emphasis on achieving high quality modern design solutions respecting their setting. A development brief will be provided which will give further detailed guidance on site issues. 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 the necessary works. Development proposals must provide a flood risk assessment in accordance with policy DR7 and PPS25.

TCR21 Canal basin and historic core

Land to the east of Widemarsh Street is identified for residential development, the provision of a Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal basin with associated wharfage and small-scale retail and leisure uses including a hotel, bars and restaurants and a visitor centre. All development proposals must:

- 1. be prepared on a comprehensive basis for the site as a whole providing a high quality of design as well as inclusion of new road proposals as identified in policy T10 of the Plan;**
- 2. include provision for 180 dwellings including affordable housing;**

3. demonstrate that the retail proposals will not seriously harm the vitality and viability of Hereford city centre either by itself or in conjunction with other recent and proposed retail development;
4. realign and enhance the Widemarsh Brook to provide an amenity space and footpath link through the site;
5. provide a flood alleviation scheme for the site to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency; and
6. provide a financial contribution to the planning obligations identified ensuring the overall aims of the Edgar Street grid proposals are met.

Hereford United Football Club/Merton Meadow

- 7.7.40 This area is bounded by Edgar Street to the west, by the rear of residential properties fronting Edgar Street and Newtown Road to the north, by Blackfriars Street to the south, and by Widemarsh Street to the east. The line of the proposed Edgar Street/Commercial Road link road, safeguarded under policy T10, runs through the area.
- 7.7.41 The Edgar Street frontage of the football ground forms a visually uninviting aspect to the street scene at this important entrance to the city along Edgar Street. Its position relative to the Courtyard Theatre tends to isolate the Theatre from the city centre and the Edgar Street Grid.
- 7.7.42 Hereford United Football Club is an important community facility for Herefordshire and has a well-established presence in the city. The ground is in poor condition and in need of modernisation and there has been pressure over recent years for the relocation of the Club from its site at Edgar Street to an out of city site. Such a move would be linked to redevelopment of the Club's present site. However, the Club's present location provides a complementary town centre use, assists in improving diversity and widening the choice of experience available within Hereford. The use integrates well with the city centre and is served by both public transport and car park facilities. The Council wishes to retain the Club in the city.
- 7.7.43 It is proposed to re-orientate the football ground to the north of the area providing a high profile frontage onto the proposed link road. A landmark development is required which will create a gateway feature at this approach into the city centre. Linked to this redevelopment it is proposed that the scheme include a conference room, bar facilities, an enhanced Club shop, accessible car parking and other sports related uses. Development proposals should provide for temporary facilities for Club use to be made available during the construction period.
- 7.7.44 In addition, other complementary leisure uses would be supported which contribute to and reinforce the city centre offer including a multiplex cinema with associated food and drink facilities. Given provision for the key cultural and leisure components, office and residential development will also be supported.
- 7.7.45 Strong visual and physical links will be required as part of any proposal, serving to link the city centre, the railway station and the Courtyard Theatre.
- 7.7.46 Further details to guide development on this site will be provided in a development brief. Financial contributions will be sought from developers towards planning obligations for the Grid as a whole as detailed above. Development proposals must provide a flood risk assessment in accordance with policy DR7 and PPS25.

TCR22 Hereford United Football Club/Merton Meadow

Hereford United Football Club, Merton Meadow and adjoining land is identified for cultural and leisure development. Development proposals should include:

- 1. the re-orientation and redevelopment of the existing Football Club stadium to a site at the northern edge of the proposal area;**
- 2. new road proposals as identified in policy T10 of the Plan;**
- 3. complementary leisure based development including a multiplex cinema, accompanied by related Class A3 to A5 developments and car parking provision. These developments should not undermine the retail strategy of the Plan;**
- 4. office and residential uses;**
- 5. a high standard of design at this important gateway location;**
- 6. pedestrian and cycle links to key sites adjoining the proposal area; and**
- 7. a financial contribution to the planning obligations identified ensuring the overall aims of the Edgar Street grid proposals are met.**

Civic quarter

- 7.7.47 This area is located between Blueschool Street and Coningsby Street within the central shopping and commercial area. Pedestrian access across the inner ring road is restricted. There is also limited permeability through the site, especially north to south. The area is home to a mix of uses accommodated in buildings of varying scale.
- 7.7.48 The area provides an opportunity to create a high quality development that addresses Blueschool Street in a positive way and guides pedestrians into the heart of the Edgar Street Grid. The main land use envisaged is a series of commercial/public offices and library possibly incorporating some ground floor ancillary retail and leisure uses.
- 7.7.49 Redevelopment will need to be comprehensive, ensuring integration with the rest of the city centre. Development should address the difficulties posed to pedestrians by the inner ring road and promote movement through the area into the remainder of the Edgar Street Grid. The downgrading of the inner ring road will enable not only integration of the area within the city centre but also offer an opportunity to create an active and vibrant frontage. Proposals should reflect the historic character of Hereford using appropriate building design and materials. Further details to guide development on this site will be provided in a development brief. In addition financial contributions will be sought from developers towards planning obligations for the Grid as a whole as detailed above. Development proposals must provide a flood risk assessment in accordance with policy DR7 and PPS25.

TCR23 Civic quarter

Land in the civic quarter is identified for comprehensive development based on public and commercial offices. All development proposals must:

- 1. provide a high standard of design merited in this gateway location;**
- 2. ensure that safe, effective and attractive pedestrian links are provided to the south and through the site into the remainder of the Edgar Street Grid;**
- 3. reflect the historic character of Hereford; and**

4. contribute financially to the planning obligations identified ensuring the overall aims of the Edgar Street Grid proposals are met.

Land for retail warehousing

- 7.7.50 The majority of the requirement for 11-15,000 sq m (net) of additional retail warehousing floorspace over the Plan period will be met by site allocation. Proposals that come forward on other land will be considered through policy TCR9.
- 7.7.51 The most sequentially appropriate site for retail warehousing is at Holmer Road. This site is adjacent to the A49 and will complement existing retail warehouse facilities in the area thus facilitating linked trips. A transport assessment will need to accompany any proposal. This should demonstrate that the scheme is capable or readily capable of being accessed and served by the local highway network without unacceptable traffic capacity, safety or environmental impacts arising, taking into account the contribution made by public transport, cycling and walking. Proposals should seek to improve links for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

TCR25 Land for retail warehousing

Land at Holmer Road is identified for development for large scale retail warehousing.

Land at Commercial Road

- 7.7.52 The integration of bus interchange facilities within the City may release the Country Bus Station site on Commercial Road for redevelopment and in this event a mixed use scheme including leisure and office uses should be sought for the site. Commercial Road has become one of the main locations for leisure and entertainment activities in the city centre.
- 7.7.53 Plan policies on design and conservation, notably historic buildings and archaeology, will be important in considering proposals. In order to encourage the use of public transport and make the most of the development opportunities of land in the city centre, no private non residential car parking should be provided as part of this redevelopment scheme. Development proposals must provide a flood risk assessment in accordance with policy DR7 and PPS25.

TCR26 Land at Commercial Road

Land at Commercial Road is identified for a mixed use office/leisure development. Due to the close proximity of the site to the city centre and the availability of public transport and existing car parking facilities, no private non residential car parking is to be provided.