

# A G E N D A

## Planning Committee

Date: **Friday, 23rd May, 2008**

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Time: **10.00 a.m.**

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Place: **The Council Chamber, Brockington,  
35 Hafod Road, Hereford**

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Notes: Please note the **time, date** and **venue** of the meeting.

*For any further information please contact:*

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Regulatory, Tel 01432 260248  
E-mail: [pmartens@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:pmartens@herefordshire.gov.uk)*

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**County of Herefordshire  
District Council**



# AGENDA

## for the Meeting of the Planning Committee

To: Members of the Committee appointed at Council on 16 May

	Pages
<p><b>1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b></p> <p>To receive apologies for absence.</p>	
<p><b>2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)</b></p> <p>To receive details any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.</p>	
<p><b>3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>GUIDANCE ON DECLARING PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS AT MEETINGS</b></p> <p>The Council's Members' Code of Conduct requires Councillors to declare against an Agenda item(s) the nature of an interest and whether the interest is personal or prejudicial. Councillors have to decide first whether or not they have a personal interest in the matter under discussion. They will then have to decide whether that personal interest is also prejudicial.</p> <p>A personal interest is an interest that affects the Councillor more than most other people in the area. People in the area include those who live, work or have property in the area of the Council. Councillors will also have a personal interest if their partner, relative or a close friend, or an organisation that they or the member works for, is affected more than other people in the area. If they do have a personal interest, they must declare it but can stay and take part and vote in the meeting.</p> <p>Whether an interest is prejudicial is a matter of judgement for each Councillor. What Councillors have to do is ask themselves whether a member of the public – if he or she knew all the facts – would think that the Councillor's interest was so important that their decision would be affected by it. If a Councillor has a prejudicial interest then they must declare what that interest is and leave the meeting room.</p>	
<p><b>4. MINUTES</b></p> <p>To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2008.</p>	1 - 16

<b>5. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS</b>	
	To receive any announcements from the Chairman.
<b>6. NORTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE</b>	17 - 18
	To receive the attached report of the Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee meeting held on 9 April and 07 May, 2008.
<b>7. CENTRAL AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE</b>	19 - 20
	To receive the attached report of the Central Area Planning Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 April and 14 May 2008.
<b>8. SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE</b>	21 - 22
	To receive the attached report of the Southern Area Planning Sub-Committee meeting held on 30 April 2008.
<b>9. DCNE2008/0633/F - ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING BUILDINGS, NEW WAREHOUSE, CONCENTRATE STORE, GATEHOUSE, FUEL TANK STRUCTURES, ACCESS ROAD AND RE-ARRANGEMENT OF HARDSTANDING AREAS AT ROBERTSON'S BUSINESS PARK, LITTLE MARCLE ROAD, LEDBURY, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR8 2JT</b>	23 - 36
	For: Universal Beverages per Cartledge Meller Ltd, Lockington Hall, Lockington, Derby DE74 2RH
	<b>Wards:</b> County-wide
<b>10. WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL SPATIAL: PHASE TWO REVISION</b>	37 - 50
	To determine a response to the Phase Two Revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy.
	<b>Wards:</b> County-wide
<b>11. HEREFORDSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: CORE STRATEGY: DEVELOPING OPTIONS PAPER</b>	51 - 158
	To consider the contents of the Herefordshire Core Strategy Developing Options paper.
	<b>Wards:</b> County-wide
<b>12. STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT</b>	159 - 174
	To consider and agree for further technical assessment, the emerging findings of an initial study of land with potential for housing development within Herefordshire.
	<b>Wards:</b> County-wide
<b>13. PLANNING PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS</b>	175 - 182
	To update Committee on this important national initiative and to agree a local protocol.



**14. ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW 2008**

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To facilitate the Annual Development Review of planning application sites.

**Wards:** County-wide

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

4 July 2008



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## **COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**BROCKINGTON, 35 HAFOD ROAD, HEREFORD.**

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COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the meeting of Planning Committee held at  
The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,  
Hereford on Friday, 11 April 2008 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Present:** Councillor TW Hunt (Chairman)  
Councillor RV Stockton (Vice Chairman)

**Councillors:** PGH Cutter, H Davies, GFM Dawe, DW Greenow,  
JW Hope MBE, B Hunt, G Lucas, RI Matthews, R Mills, RH Smith,  
AP Taylor, DC Taylor, WJ Walling, PJ Watts and JD Woodward

**In attendance:** Councillors WLS Bowen and JB Williams

**108. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors ACR Chappell, PM Morgan and JE Pemberton.

**109. NAMED SUBSTITUTES (IF ANY)**

Councillor RH Smith was appointed named substitute for Councillor PM Morgan.

**110. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

**111. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 29th February, 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

**112. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Sian Clark, new Democratic Services Manager, to the meeting.

The Development Control Manager provided the committee with the following changes to Development Control procedures:-

On 14 March 2008 the rules on permitted development were relaxed in respect of solar heating panels. Outside conservation areas householders can now put solar heating panels up to 200 mm thick on any or all walls and roofs of their house provided that they do not, thereby, increase the height of the building. Previously in Herefordshire planning applications had been required where the householder intended to cover more than 25% of the roof of the house

With effect from 1 April 2008 the new Supplementary Planning Document came into effect on Section 106 agreements. Applicants are already being informed that all applications where Section 106 agreements are likely to be required must include draft heads of terms with the applications when they are first submitted.

On 4 April the Government released details of new planning application fees which

came into effect on 7 April. Typical changes include:

Application type	Old Fee	New Fee
Householder	£135	£150
Single New House	£265	£335
Confirming discharge of planning conditions	No fee	£25 (for householder development) £85 (for all other development)

Planning application fees are set by government – there is no local discretion. This is the first rise in fees since April 2005. These fee increases were anticipated and have been taken into account for budget purposes. A new fee for discharging planning conditions was also introduced on 7th April, with a new government circular published on 10th April explaining how it is meant to be used.

On 7th April the new National Planning Application Form, known as 1-APP came into use. By 5th May it will be compulsory; from that date any application not lodged on the 1-APP form will be invalid. The 1-APP form currently has 28 variations and replaces the six different types of forms previously used by Herefordshire Council

On 7th April the new Planning Application Requirements (Local) also came into effect, as approved by the Committee on 29th February. A new set of standard planning conditions was being introduced during April. Taken together these changes amount to a major change in development control procedures.

**113. NORTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** That the report of the meeting held on 12 March 2008 be received and noted.

**114. CENTRAL AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** That the report of the meeting held on 19 March 2008 be received and noted.

**115. SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE**

**RESOLVED:** That the reports of the meetings held on 5 March and 2 April 2008 be received and noted.

**116. POLYTUNNELS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

The Team Leader Local Planning presented a report about a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which set out planning guidance on polytunnel development. He said that it was included within the Council's Local Development Scheme (January 2008) and had been produced in line with the regulations of the new planning system introduced under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The SPD was aimed at expanding upon and providing additional information and guidance in support of policies contained within the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan. The document would replace the Council's Voluntary Code of Practice to control polytunnels which had been suspended In July. He outlined the preliminary consultation and information gathering which had taken place involving parish councils, statutory undertakers, interested organisations, growers and



stakeholders. He advised that the SPD was aimed at assisting all those involved about the requirements and issues to be addressed in any polytunnel development through:

- helping to clarify the forms of development that would require planning permission;
- setting out the planning issues associated with the erection of polytunnels;
- setting out the UDP policies that will need to be addressed;
- make clear the additional information that would need to accompany an application; and
- Set out the Council's pre-application planning guidance.

Team Leader Local Planning thanked those involved in the preparation of the draft, particularly the Principal Planning Officer, Roland Close. The Committee discussed various aspects of the report and agreed with the consultation proposals put forward within it.

**RESOLVED**

**THAT the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) be requested to agree the publication of the Draft Supplementary Planning Document for consultation purposes.**

**117. MODEL FARM SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

A report was presented the Team Leader Local Planning about a Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) comprising a development brief for land at Model Farm, Hildersley, Ross-on-Wye. He said that the document was included within the Council's Local Development Scheme (January 2008) and was produced in line with the regulations of the new planning system introduced under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. He advised that the site of some 15 hectares had been identified in the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP) under policy E3 as an allocated employment site. The SPD had been prepared by consultants on behalf of Ross Area Partnership and Herefordshire Council. It had been produced to expand upon and provide additional information and guidance in support of policies contained within the UDP. It formed a development brief which expanded upon the outline planning permission granted in January 2008 and he explained the main issues involved and that the SPD would:

- provide guidance on the existing planning policy framework which would influence the delivery of any future planning application;
- identify the development requirements and constraints of the site;
- provide guidance on the delivery of high quality design and landscaping principles for the site;
- provide guidance on the delivery of access and movement to, from and within the site; and
- ensure that the development can become fully integrated with the

surrounding area.

The Committee welcomed the proposals put forward in the report and felt that the type of employment development that would be provided in the scheme would be a considerable asset to the Town and to the County.

**RESOLVED THAT:**

**the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) be requested to agree the publication of the Draft Supplementary Planning Document for consultation purposes.**

**118. DEVELOPMENT CONTROL: ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2007/08**

The Development Control Manager presented his report about Development Control performance for 2007/08 and prospects for 2008/08. He explained the main issues that it covered and answered questions from Members.

**RESOLVED THAT:**

**the report be received and noted.**

**119. DCSE2008/0119/O - SITING OF BUNGALOW IN REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING RESIDENTIAL CARAVAN AT LAND AT TREWAUGH FARM, THREE ASHES, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR2 8LY**

The Southern Team Leader said that the Southern Area Planning Sub-Committee was minded to grant planning permission contrary to recommendation. The Sub-Committee had given weight to the existence of the lawful development certificate for a caravan on the site, which could be replaced by another temporary structure such as a "log cabin" style caravan. The suggestion made by the agent that the occupant of the caravan would be able to assist in the running of the farm and was a close family member of the occupant of the main farmhouse was also taken into account. The support of the Parish Council was also taken into consideration. It was, however, noted that the normal requirements of the functional and financial tests for a new farmworker's dwelling had not been established in this case. He reported the following updates:

Letter from Paul Smith Associates, 19 St. Martins Street, Hereford:

On planning policy, I would remind you that in *R v Rochale MBC ex p Milne (2001) 81 P & CR 27*, Sullivan J. said:

"..I regard as untenable the proposition that if there is a breach of any one policy in a development plan a proposed development cannot be said to be "in accordance with the plan"....

*For the purpose of Section 54A it is enough that the proposal accords with the development plan considered as a whole. It does not have to accord with each policy and every policy therein."*

In light of this and UDP policy H11 that treats caravans on the same basis as dwellings I suggest that you should draw no distinction between the two in this application.

Furthermore, I believe that the proposal accords with UDP policy S1 (3), (4), (S5) and (13), policy S2 (1) and (2) to greater extent than the compelling my

client's to occupy the residential caravan or any replacement caravan, mobile home or log cabin which could be reinstated with your Council's express permission. Without question, a bungalow would be far more energy-efficient and longer lasting than these alternative units of accommodation.

In light of this and that this proposal would not, in your officers opinion, cause any harm in site specific terms, I cannot identify any harm caused by this proposal. I stand by my earlier comments that there is a contradiction within the UDP in that policy H11 treats caravans the same as dwellings yet policy H7 seems to oppose the replacement of one with the other. Policy H11 carries no less weight than policy H7.

Lastly, my purpose of submitting the Cornwall appeal decision with the planning application was to demonstrate that my arguments carry considerable weight in very similar circumstances to those that exist with this application.

The view of the Southern Team Leader was that the agent had not interpreted policy correctly. The lawful development for the use of the land for one caravan was not the same as a permission for a permanent building. There was a fundamental difference in planning law between a material change of use for the stationing of the caravan on the land, and an operational development for the building of a house. The latter as proposed was contrary to H7 in all respects. The agent/applicant had not put forward a case for an agricultural worker's dwelling, no functional or financial case had been made, and the proposal was not put forward as affordable housing in accordance with policy H.10. The proposal met none of the criteria in policy H7 and, as a new dwelling in the rural area outside any recognised settlement, it was contrary to all the relevant criteria in the Development Plan..

In accordance with the criteria for public speaking, Mr Smith, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application.

The Committee discussed the details of the application and noted the points that had been raised about it. The Committee noted the policy issues at stake but were of the view that the dwelling would be for a member of the family who would be contributing to the operation of the farm and that an exception could therefore be made. The Southern Team Leader said that this would cause a problem in the future when the family member no longer occupied the dwelling. He pointed out that there was also the issue of the existing permission which existed for a caravan on the site. Councillor RH Smith was of the view that this could be dealt with through a Section 106 Planning Obligation. Councillors PGH Cutter and JB Williams felt that any new dwelling should be tied to the existing agricultural building through suitable conditions.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the planning application be approved subject to the following conditions and any further conditions felt to be necessary by the Head of Planning Services:**

- (i) extinguishment of the existing lawful development certificate.**

**120. DCSW2007/3846/O - RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, POND, PARKING FOR VILLAGE HALL AND SURGERY. PROPOSED LANDSCAPING AND TREATMENT PLANT. DEMOLITION OF PACK HOUSE, REMOVAL OF STATIC CARAVANS, COURT FARM, MUCH BIRCH, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR2 8HT.**

It was reported that the application had been referred to the Committee because the Southern Area Sub-Committee was mindful to approve it contrary to policy and officer advice. The Sub-Committee felt that although the proposal did not accord with the policies of the Unitary Development Plan, in this case an exception should be made because:

1. there was an unmet need for affordable and specialist housing in the rural areas;
2. Much Birch had many facilities which made it a suitable settlement for additional housing including a primary school, church, community hall and doctors' surgery. The village is also on a main bus route;
3. the site was very unkempt and untidy and a well designed new housing scheme would be a significant improvement. Furthermore, the site had been previously identified as development land;
4. the development would bring a specific benefit of additional parking facilities for the church, surgery and village hall; and
5. the biodiversity reason for refusal could be overcome with appropriate conditions.

The Southern Team Leader presented the following updates:

An ecological survey has been received which states that there is no evidence of bat use in the buildings on the site and that the potential for it to support any is low. It is also stated in the report that nesting birds are protected in the breeding season,

The Council's Ecologist confirms the findings of the mitigation survey recently received. However, the Council's Ecologist understands that a survey for Great Crested Newts has not been completed, and therefore that remains an outstanding issue as reflected in the second reason for refusal

In accordance with the criteria for public speaking, Mr Griffin, the applicant's agent, spoke in support of the application.

Councillor RH Smith, the Local Ward Member, felt that the proposals would serve to fulfil a local housing need, provide car parking for the village hall and considerably enhance the village by redeveloping an area which had become derelict and a considerable eyesore. The local community was enthusiastic about the proposals and in view of the advantages that would be provided for them he felt that an exception could be made to the Council's planning policies and approval granted. Several Members expressed their support for the proposals and shared the view of the Local Member and the community that the scheme would be a considerable asset for the village. Councillor JW Hope was of the view that the proposals were premature and that the housing needs survey needed to be completed before a judgement could be made. Councillor RV Stockton was concerned about the proposed density on the site and that there were no guarantees that social housing would be provided.

The Development Control Manager and the Southern Team Leader confirmed that the application was for outline permission only and that the access was the only factor to be determined at this stage. They confirmed that there was no pressing housing need in the village and that the application was contrary to Policies H6, H9 and H10 of the UDP. They felt that approval would raise expectations for other sites and the Regional Spatial Strategy was leaning more towards new housing in the market towns rather than rural areas. The fact that the site was brown field and an eyesore did not outweigh the policies. The Head of Planning Services said that the Committee needed to be aware of all the implications and to weigh them against the material considerations of the application. Notwithstanding the views of the Officers and having considered all the points put forward about the application, the Committee decided to make an exception to policy and approve it.

#### RESOLVED

**That the application be approved subject to a Section 106 Planning Obligation, Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure at least 5 affordable dwellings, and subject to any appropriate conditions felt to be necessary by the Head of Planning Services.**

**121. DCCW2007/3940/F - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF TWO BUILDINGS (4 UNITS) FOR SMALL BUSINESS B1 AND B8 USE - LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AT MARSHALL BUSINESS CENTRE, WESTFIELDS TRADING ESTATE, HEREFORD, HR4 9NS**

The Development Control Manager said that the Central Area Planning Sub-Committee was minded to refuse planning permission for Unit 2 contrary to recommendation. He said that the Sub Committee was of the view that Unit 1 could be approved as recommended but that permission should be refused for Unit 2. The Sub-Committee gave weight to the objections from local residents, and were concerned with noise impacts and the visual impact on the nearest residential properties.

In accordance with the criteria for public speaking, Mr Baskerville, a local resident, spoke against the application.

Councillor A Taylor was of the view that there were difficulties associated with industrial uses close to residential properties and that there would be a detrimental impact of the development on the privacy and residential amenity of adjoining properties. He therefore felt that the application should be refused. Councillor H Davies was of the view that the mass of the building would be overpowering when viewed from the gardens of the dwellings. Councillor Greenow had reservations about the noise disturbance experienced by occupiers of adjacent properties and the proximity of the building would have a significant impact on residential amenity. He did not feel that there was sufficient room for large delivery vehicles to manoeuvre at the furthest point from the houses as proposed in the scheme.

The Development control Manager said that the building was orientated away from the residential properties to minimise noise and that only light industrial use would be permitted. This included storage and distribution, office or research use. He reminded Members that the site lay within a designated area safeguarded for B1, B2 and B8 employment purposes within the UDP. The main source of noise from such development tended to be from the parking and circulation area. As the building was close to the boundary and doorways had been relocated, the building itself would act as a buffer to noise generated from this area. He considered that the approval of one unit and the refusal of the other could be difficult to sustain on appeal and

suggested that the conditions could be reviewed to ensure that the noise attenuation measures were sufficient. Having considered all the aspects of the application and whilst noting the concerns raised, the Committee decided to approve it.

**RESOLVED:**

**That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

- 1. A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission)).**

**Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

- 2. B01 (Samples of external materials).**

**Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings.**

- 3. E05 (Restriction on hours of use (industrial)).**

**Reason: In order to protect the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties.**

- 4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3(1) and Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, (or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development which would otherwise be permitted under Classes A or B of Part 8 and of Schedule 2, shall be carried out.**

**Reason: In order to protect the character and amenity of the locality, to maintain the amenities of adjoining properties and to comply with Policies DR1 and E8 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007.**

- 5. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until areas for the manoeuvring, parking, loading and unloading of vehicles have been laid out, consolidated, surfaced and drained in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and such areas shall thereafter be retained and kept available for those uses at all times.**

**Reason: To minimise the likelihood of indiscriminate parking in the interests of highway safety and to conform with the requirements of Policy T11 of Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan**

- 6. H29 (Secure covered cycle parking provision).**

**Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for secure covered cycle accommodation within the application site, encouraging alternative modes of transport in accordance with both local and national planning policy.**

- 7. H30 (Travel plans).**

**Reason: In order to ensure that the development is carried out in combination with a scheme aimed at promoting the use of a range of sustainable transport initiatives.**

8. F01 (Scheme of noise attenuating measures).  
Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the area.
9. F04 (No open air operation of plant/machinery/equipment).  
Reason: To protect the amenities of nearby properties.
10. F16 (Restriction of hours during construction).  
Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents.
11. F32 (Details of floodlighting/external lighting).  
Reason: To safeguard local amenities.
12. No external flues or extractor equipment shall be installed at the premises without the prior written approval of the local planning authority.  
  
Reason: In the interests of the amenity of the area and to comply with Policy DR4 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007.
13. F22 (No surface water to public sewer).  
  
Reason: To safeguard the public sewerage system and reduce the risk of surcharge flooding.
14. F28 (No discharge of foul/contaminated drainage).  
  
Reason: To prevent pollution of the water environment.

**Informatives:**

1. N03 - Adjoining property rights.
  2. If a connection is required to the public sewerage system, the developer is advised to contact the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water's Network Consultants on Tel: 01443 331155.
  3. N19 - Avoidance of doubt.
  4. N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC.
122. DCCE2008/0220/F - ERECTION OF 6 NO APARTMENTS IN TWO STOREY FORM TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING & DCCE2008/0225/C – DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DWELLING, 84 AYLESTONE HILL, HEREFORD, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR1 1JJ

The Development Control Manager said that the Central Area Planning Sub-Committee was minded to refuse planning permission contrary to recommendation. He said that the Sub-Committee had given weight to the objections from local residents and were concerned at the loss of the existing single dwelling and its replacement with 6 self contained flats. They were also concerned about increased

traffic and car parking. He provided the Committee with the following updates:

The following letter has been received by Councillor Wilcox from the occupant of 96 Aylestone Hill.

"I thank you for your e-mail and subsequent letter outlining the discussions and decision to refuse the above application presented to the Central Area Planning Committee in March.

Mr Harry Speight of 15 Walney Lane was present at the meeting and informed me of discussion and outcome.

As I wrote in my letter of objection, should this application be eventually passed it will set a precedent for the future development of Aylestone Hill. I thank you and Councillor Vaughan for resisting the construction of flats within an area of the City which is predominantly single dwellings in spacious plots.

However I think such resistance is a lost cause in the present climate of Town development. Many of the Victorian houses at the south end of Aylestone Hill are being converted into flats, whilst I watched, with sadness, Carfax being demolished to make way for the large block of flats known as The Point at the 'top' of the Hill.

With such inevitability, I would hope that such blocks would be constructed within existing building lines and that associated car parking areas be located to the side or rear, with a control on front parking to avoid the total destruction of gardens, which help to form the Conservation landscape of the Hill.

My objection to the proposed development at '84' was based upon my concern with the design and location of the associated car parking, as well as the fact that the block is well forward of the Walney Lane building line.

We can see what happens when a building is converted into multiple flats; the greenery of a front garden disappears under a sea of gravel and the road boundary becomes a 1.5m 'solid' timber fence.

I disagree with the Traffic Manager's observations that "the access is safe and that adequate parking has been proposed within the application". The proposed design indicates double-banked parking for residents and visitors, which is not practical.

What will happen? Visitors to the flats will park their cars on the Walney Lane entrance splay or on the lay-by outside 94-98 Aylestone Hill. Hopefully this will be stopped with the introduction of "No Parking" for these areas.

It seems inevitable that as soon as the Planners 'backs are turned' the given parking area for the flats will be enlarged to cover most of the front garden.

I am of the opinion that the nature of the Conservation Area that we presently enjoy on Aylestone Hill has no future. The houses set in large gardens on the north side of the hill, both east and west sides, which have no architectural merit, will be demolished to make way for large blocks of flats. The Traffic Manager has given the green light with the statement: "the



local highway network has sufficient capacity”.

Such developments have been going on in leafy suburbia about most major Cities; it’s now reached Hereford.

This is yet another example of a Planning Application where the local Councillors and/or Officers may wish to limit development but are feared to so do, for should the Developer win his case at Appeal, the local tax payer will foot the bill.”

The Development Control Manager said that the applicant had agreed to increase the total parking provision on the site to nine spaces and to use “grasscrete” or a similar material for the car-park surfacing. The applicant had also agreed to enter into a Section 106 agreement to pay for a Traffic Regulation Order to prevent parking in the recently widened entrance and first section of Walney Lane. The Transportation Manager had no objection to the proposals. The view of the Officers was that should the site be developed for flats, it would not be conspicuous because there were others nearby. The footprint of the new building would be different and larger than the existing one but would not significantly change the character of the built form of the area. The general scale was comparable to the neighbouring dwelling to the north. In these circumstances a refusal of permission would be very difficult to defend on appeal.

The Committee discussed the details of the application and noted the steps agreed with the applicant to overcome the objections that had been raised. In answer to a question from Councillor PJ Watts about retaining the trees, the Development Control Manager said that they would be protected through the landscaping scheme to be approved by the officers, and by virtue of being in the Conservation Area.

**RESOLVED:**

**That**

- 1) the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to complete a planning obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 subject to the Heads of Terms attached to this report an any additional matters and terms as he considers appropriate;**
- 2) upon completion of the aforementioned planning obligation that the officers named in the Scheme of Delegation to Officers be authorised to issue planning permission subject to the following conditions and any other conditions considered necessary by officers.**

**Note to applicant:**

- 1) this permission is granted pursuant to an agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

**CE2008/0220/F**

- 1 A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission) )**

**Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

- 2 B01 (Samples of external materials )**

**Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings.**
- 3 H13 (Access, turning area and parking )**

**Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the free flow of traffic using the adjoining highway.**
- 4 G04 (Landscaping scheme (general) )**

**Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.**
- 5 G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general) )**

**Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.**
- 6 G09 (Retention of trees/hedgerows )**

**Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the area.**
- 7 G18 (Protection of trees )**

**Reason: To ensure adequate protection to existing trees which are to be retained, in the interests of the character and amenities of the area.**
- 8 H29 (Secure covered cycle parking provision )**

**Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for secure covered cycle accommodation within the application site, encouraging alternative modes of transport in accordance with both local and national planning policy.**
- 9 Notwithstanding the submitted details, the finished floor level of the development hereby permitted shall be constructed at 76.400**

**Reason: in order to define the permission and to ensure the development is of a scale and height appropriate to the site and its surroundings.**
- 10 F16 (Restriction of hours during construction )**

**Reason: To protect the amenity of local residents.**
- 11 H27 (Parking for site operatives )**

**Reason: To prevent indiscriminate parking in the interests of highway safety.**
- 12 The development hereby permitted shall not occupied until evidence documenting the foul drainage connection to the mains sewer has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.**

**Reason: To ensure satisfactory drainage arrangements are provided.**
- 13 Foul and water surface discharges shall be drained separately from the site.**

Reason: To protect the integrity of the public sewerage system.

- 14 No surface water shall be allowed to connect, either directly or indirectly, to the public sewerage system unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To prevent hydraulic overloading of the public sewerage system, to protect the health and safety of existing residents and ensure no detriment to the environment.

- 15 Land drainage run-off shall not be permitted to discharge, either directly or indirectly, into the public sewerage system.

Reason: To prevent hydraulic overload of the public sewerage system and pollution of the environment.

- 16 F39 (Scheme of refuse storage)

Reason: In the interests of amenity.

- 17 The development shall be designed and constructed to meet level three of the Code for Sustainable Homes: A Step change in Sustainable Home Building Practice Design dated December 2006 or equivalent standard as may be agreed in writing with the local planning authority. No development shall commence until authorised certification has been provided confirming compliance with the agreed standard and prior to the occupation of the last dwelling, further certification shall be provided confirming that the development has been constructed in accordance with the agreed standard.

Reason: To promote the sustainability of the development hereby approved in accordance with Policies S1 and H13 of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan and PPS1 Supplement 'Planning and Climate Change'

**INFORMATIVES:**

- 1 There are no foul/surface water sewers in the immediate vicinity. It is therefore likely that off-site sewers will be required to connect to the public sewerage system.

If a connection is required to the public sewerage system, the developer is advised to contact Dwr Cymru Welsh Water's Network Development Consultants on 01443 331155.

- 2 N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC

- 3 N19 - Avoidance of doubt

**DCCE2008/0225/C**

1. C01 (Time limit for commencement (Listed Building Consent))

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 18(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

**2. G18 (Protection of trees)**

**Reason: To ensure adequate protection to existing trees which are to be retained, in the interests of the character and amenities of the area.**

**2 C14 (Signing of contract before demolition).**

**Reason: Pursuant to the provisions of Section 71(3) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.**

**INFORMATIVES:**

**1 N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of PP/LBC/CAC**

**2 N19 - Avoidance of doubt**

**123. DCNW2008/0221/F - INSTALLATION OF TWO TEMPORARY UNITS AND REMOVAL OF TWO UNITS. ORLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL, ORLETON, LUDLOW, HEREFORDSHIRE, SY8 4HQ**

The Development Control Manager said that the application had been submitted to the Committee because it involved Council owned property. He outlined the main aspects of the proposals and an objection that had been received to it.

Councillor WLS Bowen, the Local Ward Member, He said that the proposals would provide an invaluable facility for the school and the local Community. He sympathised with the concerns raised by the objector but felt that these could be mitigated with the proposed conditions and the orientation of the building, which would have its windows facing away from the adjoining dwellings.

**RESOLVED**

**That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:**

**1. A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission)**

**Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**

**2. The existing modular units as indicated on drawing number PSD/H/08/02 shall be removed from the site within two months of first use of the development hereby approved.**

**Reason: In the interest of the amenity of the surrounding area.**

**3. The premises shall be for use only as indicated on drawing number PSD/H/08/02 submitted as part of the application for planning determination and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class D1 of the schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification).**

**Reason: The local planning authority wish to control the specific use of**

the land/premises, in the interest of local amenity.

4. The use hereby permitted shall not be open outside the hours of 8.00 am - 6pm Mondays to Saturdays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the locality.

5. G01 (Details of boundary treatments )

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure dwellings have satisfactory privacy.

6. H29 (Secure covered cycle parking provision )

Reason: To ensure that there is adequate provision for secure covered cycle accommodation within the application site, encouraging alternative modes of transport in accordance with both local and national planning policy.

7. H30 (Travel plans )

Reason: In order to ensure that the development is carried out in combination with a scheme aimed at promoting the use of a range of sustainable transport initiatives.

**124. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

23 May 2008

The meeting ended at 12.40 p.m.

**CHAIRMAN**



PLANNING COMMITTEE

23 MAY, 2008

**REPORT OF THE NORTHERN AREA PLANNING  
SUB-COMMITTEE**

Meetings held on 09 April and 07 May, 2008

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**Membership:**

**Councillor J.W. Hope M.B.E (Chairman)**

**Councillor P.M. Morgan (Vice-Chairman)**

**Councillors LO Barnett, WLS Bowen, RBA Burke, ME Cooper,  
JP French, JHR Goodwin, KG Grumbley, B Hunt, RC Hunt, TW Hunt,  
TM James, P Jones CBE, R Mills, RJ Phillips, A Seldon, RV Stockton,  
J Stone, JK Swinburne, PJ Watts**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

1. The Sub-Committee has dealt with the planning applications referred to it as follows:-
  - (a) applications approved as recommended – 4
  - (b) applications refused as recommended - 1
  - (c) applications deferred for further information/site inspection – 1
  - (d) applications approved or refused against officer recommendation - 2
  - (e) number of public speakers – 1 parish/town council representative, 4 objectors and 4 supporters

**PLANNING APPEALS**

2. The Sub-Committee received information reports about 8 appeals received, 9 dismissed, 3 upheld and 1 withdrawn.

**J.W. HOPE M.B.E  
CHAIRMAN  
NORTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE**

- **BACKGROUND PAPERS – Agenda for meetings held on 09 April and 07 May, 2008.**





PLANNING COMMITTEE

23 MAY 2008

## REPORT OF THE CENTRAL AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE

Meetings held on 16 April 2008 and 14 May 2008

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### Membership

#### Councillors:

JE Pemberton (Chairman)  
GA Powell (Vice-Chairman)

PA Andrews, WU Attfield, DJ Benjamin, AJM Blackshaw, ACR Chappell, SPA Daniels, H Davies, GFM Dawe, PJ Edwards, DW Greenow, KS Guthrie, MAF Hubbard, TW Hunt (ex-officio), MD Lloyd-Hayes, RI Matthews, AT Oliver, SJ Robertson, RV Stockton (ex-officio), AP Taylor, AM Toon, NL Vaughan, WJ Walling, DB Wilcox and JD Woodward.

### PLANNING APPLICATIONS

1. The Sub-Committee has met twice and dealt with the planning applications referred to it as follows:-
  - (a) applications approved as recommended - 7
  - (b) applications minded to refuse, contrary to recommendation - 1 [referred to Head of Planning Services]
  - (c) applications deferred for further information / negotiations - 2
  - (d) number of public speakers - 12 (parish – 1, objectors - 6, supporters - 5)

### PLANNING APPEALS

2. The Sub-Committee received information reports about 5 appeals that had been received and 7 appeals that had been determined (5 dismissed and 2 upheld).

**JE PEMBERTON  
CHAIRMAN  
CENTRAL AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE**

- **BACKGROUND PAPERS – Agenda for the meetings held on 16 April and 14 May 2008**



PLANNING COMMITTEE

23 MAY 2008

**REPORT OF THE SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING  
SUB-COMMITTEE**

Meeting held 30 April 2008

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**Membership:**

**Councillors: Councillor G Lucas (Chairman)  
Councillors PD Price (Vice-Chairman)**

**CM Bartrum, H. Bramer, PGH Cutter, BA Durkin, MJ Fishley, A.E. Gray,  
TW Hunt (Ex-officio), JA Hyde, JG Jarvis, RH Smith, RV Stockton (Ex-  
officio), D.C. Taylor and J.B. Williams**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

1. The Sub-Committee has dealt with the planning applications referred to it as follows:-
  - (a) applications approved - 9
  - (b) applications minded to approve - 1 (not referred)
  - (c) application minded to refuse - 1 (not referred)
  - (d) applications deferred - 2
  - (e) number of public speakers - 8 (3 objectors and 5 supporters)

**PLANNING APPEALS**

2. The Sub-Committee received information reports on 3 appeals received and 1 appeal determined (Dismissed).

**G. Lucas  
CHAIRMAN  
SOUTHERN AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE**

- **BACKGROUND PAPERS – Agenda for the meeting 30 April 2008.**



**DCNE2008/0633/F - ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSION TO EXISTING BUILDINGS. NEW WAREHOUSE, CONCENTRATE STORE, GATEHOUSE, FUEL TANK STRUCTURES, ACCESS ROAD AND RE-ARRANGEMENT OF HARDSTANDING AREAS AT ROBERTSON'S BUSINESS PARK, LITTLE MARCLE LANE, LEDBURY, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR8 2JT**

**For: Universal Beverages per Cartledge Meller Ltd, Lockington Hall, Lockington, Derby DE74 2RH**

**Date Received: 11th March 2008 Ward: Ledbury**

**Grid Ref: 69601, 37224**

**Expiry Date: 10th June 2008**

Local Members: Councillor M E Cooper, Councillor J K Swinburne and Councillor P J Watts

### **Context**

This report sets out the details of the above application. It is of strategic importance and will both safeguard employment opportunities in Ledbury and introduce improved arrangements for the processing of apples in the County. The application has been the subject of extensive pre-application discussions. As members will identify from the report there are several outstanding matters at the time of writing this report. These matters are of sufficient importance to prevent the final determination of the application at this stage. In summary the outstanding issues are:

- Disposal of waste water effluence/flood risk and groundwater and contaminated land (Environment Agency)
- Water supply issues (Severn Trent Water and Welsh Water)
- Protected species (the Council's Ecologist).

The following report is based around the premise that the outstanding issues are ultimately capable of resolution at a technical level. On that basis the report seeks to secure member support in principle for the proposal.

Members will be given the usual updates at the meeting, both in general, and around the outstanding matters in particular. In the event that the Committee supports the course of action, and the technical issues are overcome the planning permission can then quickly be despatched (subject to any further conditions reasonably required by the appropriate agencies).

In the event that outstanding objections remain after the normal professional discussions have been exhausted a full report will be brought back to the next available Committee meeting thereafter.

The usual report on the determination of a planning application is set out below.

## 1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The application site has an area of approximately 12 hectares. It is located on the south-western side of Little Marcle Road some 60 metres west of the Ledbury by-pass (i.e. the A417). Upon the site at present is a range of industrial buildings including an effluent plant and storage tanks. These buildings are functional in nature with a limited palette of colours. There are two existing permanent vehicular means of access to the site, some distance from the A417, both with restricted visibility.
- 1.2 The site has a limited width tree screen along the boundaries with open countryside. These comprise of hybrid poplars. There are other existing landscape features, most notably, a strong hedgerow comprising indigenous species from the A417 to the main complex of buildings on the south-western side of the Little Marcle Road.
- 1.3 The south-eastern part of the site in the vicinity of the Ledbury by-pass (i.e. A417) lies within the floodplain of the River Leadon.
- 1.4 Two public rights of way cross the site.
- 1.5 Surrounded by the site on the south-western side of the Little Marcle Road is a lawful fuel depot still used by Watson Fuels and a house that is occupied by a member of staff of Watson Fuels and his dependants. Some 100 metres to the north-east on the opposite side of Little Marcle Road, and situated at a higher ground level, is Fairtree Farm. The buildings at Fairtree Farm are grade 2 listed. Further afield, again on the northern side of Little Marcle Road is Flights Farm, which includes the Grade 2, listed Farmhouse.
- 1.6 The land rises relatively gently from south-east to north-west.
- 1.7 Members may be aware that following the acquisition of Robertsons Preserves by Premier foods last spring, operations at the application site (other than suet production) will cease at the end of August this year. The applicant acquired the site from Premier foods at the end of 2007 and have an extended contract to mill fruit for Bulmers. It is the objective of the proposed development to provide the requisite physical infrastructure to facilitate this process. The resultant development would create a new fruit processing mill with a capacity to handle 15,000 tonnes of fruit per week together with a facility that will include additional fermentation, storage and packaging lines. The applicant has agreed to continue suet production for Premier Foods. Cider would be produced under the Bulmers brand although there would be other products produced as well as other fruit based beverages for other suppliers. It is anticipated that the proposed development would not only secure retention of the existing 100 jobs upon the site but also create a further 50 jobs.
- 1.8 The site has a lawful use for food processing. This is a lawful general industrial use (Use Class B2). The proposed use comprising food and drink processing remains a general industrial use (Use Class B2). As such the proposal does not involve a material change of use. The application involves further operational development, primarily the erection of buildings. The proposal comprises the following main elements: -
  - The erection of a warehouse building immediately to the south-east of the existing range of buildings. This would measure 93.5 metres in length and 66 metres in width. It would have a height of 14.5 metres. The roof would be behind a parapet.

- The erection of a concentrate store building to the south-west of the existing range of buildings. This building would measure 72 metres in length and 57.8 metres in width. It would have a double-pitched roof with a central valley. The ridges would be orientated in a south-east to north-west direction. This building would have a height to eaves of 12 metres and a height to ridge of 14.5 metres.
  - A series of tanks adjacent to the north-western boundary of the existing lawful site. There would be 24 tanks in total. The highest tanks would be some 27 .9 metres high.
  - A relatively modest refuse storage building with a maximum height of 3.5 metres;
  - The creation of a permanent new vehicular means of access on the southern side of the Little Marcle Road to the east of the existing effluent plant some 195 metres west of the Ledbury by-pass (A417). This vehicular means of access would be the access used by heavy goods vehicles. A modest gatehouse with a maximum height of 4.1 metres, would also be erected.
  - A staff car park accommodating 168 cars together with a cycle storage area accommodating some 30 bicycles. This area would be served off the historic main existing vehicular means of access thus separating the heavier traffic from the lighter traffic;
  - A full comprehensive Travel Plan has been submitted;
  - A full landscaping plan has been submitted. This involves the provision of a 30 metre wide landscaping strip along the north-western, south-western and south-eastern boundaries of the site. In addition, a 3-metre high landscape bund would be provided adjacent to the north-western boundary. This bund would have a maximum height of 3 metres, a maximum gradient on its south-eastern face (adjacent to the industrial site) of 1:4 and a maximum angle of repose / gradient on its north-western face (adjacent to the countryside) of 1:7. Also included within the landscaping scheme is planting either side of the proposed new vehicular access road; and
  - A fully detailed comprehensive lighting scheme has been submitted.
- 1.9 The majority of the buildings would have a brickwork plinth and then be clad in metal sheeting. Whilst the base of the buildings would accommodate a tawny and poppy red colour the majority of the buildings would be coloured in goose wing grey (including their roofs).

1.10 The proposal also involves the diversion of a bridleway.

**2. Policies**

2.1 The Central Government advice considered to be of relevance to the consideration of this application is: -

- PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPG4 - Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms
- PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- PPS9 - Bio-Diversity and Geological Conservation
- PPG13 - Transport

PPG15 - Planning and the Historic Environment  
 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands is of relevance.

2.2 The following policies of the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan are considered to be of relevance: -

- S1 - Sustainable Development
- S2 - Development Requirements
- S4 - Employment
- S6 - Transport
- S7 - Natural and Historic Heritage
- DR1 - Design
- DR2 - Land Use and Activity
- DR3 - Movement
- DR4 - Environment
- DR6 - Water Resources
- DR7 - Flood Risk
- DR8 - Culverting
- DR9 - Air Quality
- DR10 - Contaminated Land
- DR13 - Noise
- DR14 - Lighting
- E5 - Safeguarding Employment Land and Buildings
- E8 - Design Standards for Employment Sites
- T7 - Cycling
- T11 - Parking Provision
- LA2 - Landscape Character and Areas Resilient to Change
- LA6 - Landscaping Schemes
- NC policies re: Ecology
- HBA4 - Setting of Listed Buildings
- W11 - Development – Waste Implications

**3. Planning History**

3.1 Whilst the site has an extensive planning history, the only planning applications to be considered of relevance are: -

DCNE/2008/0420/F	Formation of temporary access roadway and entrance	-	Permitted
DCNE/2008/0531/F	Proposed new entrance for apple reception pit and machinery	-	Permitted
DCNE/2008/1115/F	Demolition of existing workshop, new boiler house/workshop	-	Undetermined

3.2 It should also be noted that the site has a lawful general industrial (Use Class B2) use.

**4. Consultation Summary**

Statutory Consultations

4.1 The Environment Agency objected to the original submission. In its opinion the following matters had not been adequately addressed: -

- Disposal of waste water effluent;



- Disposal of foul water;
  - Water supply;
  - Flood Risk re: surface water drainage arrangements;
  - Groundwater and contaminated land
- 4.2 The agent for the applicant has provided further information in a letter dated 24th April 2008 and an e-mail dated 29th April 2008. The Environment Agency's response is awaited.
- 4.3 Severn Trent Water is yet to confirm that it is satisfied with the proposed development.
- 4.4 Welsh Water has stated that it does not wish to comment. However, its confirmation that adequate mains water supply exists to serve the proposed development is sought.
- 4.5 Clearly it is critical that these technical matters are resolved. It is understood that the process would use 4,364 cubic metres of water a day and would create approximately 3,000 cubic metres a day of trade effluent. Clearly it is essential to ensure that an adequate water supply exists and that the means of discharging the trade effluent is acceptable.

Internal Council Advice

- 4.6 The Public Rights of Way Section is satisfied with the proposed bridleway diversion subject to a condition.
- 4.7 The Conservation Officer is satisfied that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact upon the setting of the listed buildings in the vicinity.
- 4.8 The Planning Ecologist requires further information to establish the presence (or otherwise) of protected species. Clearly if protected species are found mitigation measures would be required. Given the advice in paragraph 99 of Circular 06/2005 this matter needs to be resolved before any planning permission is granted.
- 4.9 The Land Drainage Engineer does not raise any objection to the proposed development.
- 4.10 The Minerals and Waste Officer has no objections.
- 4.11 In summary the Transportation Section consider: -
- The surrounding road network to have sufficient capacity;
  - The new vehicular means of access and associated visibility splays to be satisfactory and indeed to represent an enhancement to road safety;
  - The car parking and cycle parking provision to be satisfactory;
  - The Travel Plan to be satisfactory;
  - The proposed voluntary routing agreement to be beneficial; and

- The Little Marcle Bridge (BB308) to be capable of taking all normal highway traffic without restriction.
- 4.12 The Environmental Health Section has no objections to the proposed development subject to the imposition of appropriate planning with regard noise and lighting.
- 4.13 The Economic Regeneration Team support the application on the basis of the employment opportunities that it affords.

## 5. Representations

- 5.1 The 'Byways and Bridleways Trust' have no objection to the proposed bridleway diversion.
- 5.2 The Ramblers Association has no objection to the proposed bridleway diversion.
- 5.3 Ledbury Town Council wish to see the application approved. They wish the Planning Officer to secure landscaping of the external tanks.
- 5.4 The occupiers of five dwellings in the vicinity have expressed concern/objected on the following summarised grounds:
- The use of Falcon Lane and Little Marcle Road in a west of the application site by heavy goods vehicles.
  - Noise during the construction phase especially at inappropriate times.
  - Operational noise from the development.
  - Potential light pollution.
  - The adequacy of the Little Marcle Bridge in terms of its structure to cater with the type of traffic generated by the proposed development.
  - The visual impact of the proposed development.
  - Air quality.
- 5.5 The Open Spaces Society - No response
- 5.6 The British Horse Society - No response
- 5.7 Malvern Hills District Footpath Society - No response

The full text of these letters can be inspected at Northern Planning Services, Garrick House, Widemarsh Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

## 6. Officer's Appraisal

### Principle of the Development

- 6.1 The application site lies outside of the defined boundary of Ledbury and any of the surrounding villages. As such, in planning policy terms it lies within the countryside.

However, the site has a long established general industrial use (Use Class B2). The applicant also proposes a general industrial use and as such a planning application for a change of use is not required. The only matter to be considered is the impact of the new built (i.e. operational) development.

- 6.2 It is, however, critical that existing employment land is retained and wherever possible used to create employment opportunities. To create genuinely sustainable communities it is essential that the correct balance exists in terms of provision of housing, employment, retail, leisure and community uses. Part of this Authority's strategy in terms of ensuring an adequate employment land supply is the safeguarding of existing employment sites. In this regard the proposed development would not only ensure the retention of an existing employment site but would also provide enhanced employment opportunities to the locality. The location of the site in such close proximity to the residential workforce of Ledbury with skills in the food processing industry together with good links via the A417 to the M50 contribute to making this an extremely attractive site to the applicant. Clearly such a business based upon agricultural produce has wider benefits to the rural economy of Herefordshire.
- 6.3 All of the proposed built development lies within the existing lawful planning unit. As such, there is no encroachment of development upon the open countryside.
- 6.4 As a consequence there is no objection to the principle of the development. It is therefore the matters of detail that require further examination.

#### Visual Impact

- 6.5 The site lies on relatively flat land in a river corridor landscape in relatively close proximity to the River Leadon. All of the new built development would be sited in close proximity to the existing group of buildings. This represents good practice in that such development in rural areas are best seen as a closely-knit group of buildings rather than sporadically sited.
- 6.6 Whilst the proposed two major new buildings upon the site would be some three metres higher than the existing highest building upon the site, it is considered that these can satisfactorily be accommodated upon the site. It is considered that these buildings are well sited, designed and would have an acceptable external appearance. The greatest visual impact would, however, arise from the proposed storage tanks. Their location adjacent to the north-western boundary of the existing site is dictated by operational constraints.
- 6.7 There is no doubt that these tanks would be readily visible from a series of public vantage points including Little Marcle Road to the north-west, Lilly Hall Lane to the west and the Ross Road (A449). They would also be visible from a series of other short and long distant public vantage points, including public rights of way. However, merely because a development can be seen does not make it unacceptable. The design of these tanks clearly reflects their function. In terms of the wider landscape this site is low-lying and as such these tanks would not project above the skyline.
- 6.8 The issue that needs considering is whether their visual impact can satisfactorily be mitigated. In this respect negotiations have secured an extensive 30 metre wide landscaping belt adjacent to the north-western, south-western and southern boundaries. The area of land adjacent to the north-western boundary would be provided with an appropriately graded earth bund. These areas would then be planted with an extensive range of indigenous species including some 18,000 trees / plants.

This planting would in the long-term create an effective woodland belt. It would of course take some twenty-five years to mature. However, it is your officers' view that the proposal is not in itself so visually intrusive to justify refusal and the proposed landscaping will, albeit in the long-term, integrate the proposed development into the landscape.

#### Setting of Listed Building

- 6.9 The main views achieved of Flights Farm and Fairtree Farm is achieved from the Little Marcle Road. The proposed development would not disrupt these views or any specific views of these listed buildings. Given that the entirety of the development is confined within the existing lawful planning unit, it is considered that the wider setting of these listed buildings would not be adversely affected. By securing appropriate colours to the materials and significant landscaping it is considered that their settings would be safeguarded.

#### Transportation Matters

- 6.10 The proposed new vehicular means of access some 195 metres west of the Ledbury by-pass (A417) is welcomed. Its physical position in such close proximity to the A417 is such that heavy goods vehicles are much more likely to use the A417 route rather than Falcon Lane. This new access road would also mean that the existing vehicular means of access, which is to be retained, would not be used by heavy goods vehicles. Given that the existing vehicular means of access has sub-standard visibility splays this represents a highway gain. The applicant will route its traffic, through a voluntary routing agreement mechanism, along the A417. The Transportation Section is satisfied that the local network has adequate capacity to cater with the traffic generated by the proposed development.
- 6.11 The provision of on-site secure bicycle parking in accordance with the Council's standards is welcomed, as is the Travel Plan. These strategies should encourage employees to utilise modes of transport other than the private motor vehicle.
- 6.12 The level of on-site parking provision is considered to be satisfactory.
- 6.13 An issue has been raised by a local resident as to the adequacy of the Little Marcle Bridge in terms of its structural integrity to cater with the type of traffic generated by the proposed development. The Transportation Section is satisfied that the bridge can cater with the volume and type of traffic generated by the proposed development.

#### Noise

- 6.14 The issue as to the impact of noise upon the amenities occupiers of existing dwellings in the vicinity has been fully addressed by the Environmental Health Section. This assessment takes into account both the construction phase and the subsequent operational phase. Member's attention in this regard is drawn to recommended planning conditions 16 and 17.

#### Air Pollution

- 6.15 The fuel specifications, combustion temperatures / techniques and stack details will be controlled under separate legislation (i.e. IPPC Environmental Permit). There will be additional air pollution from traffic movements, especially HGVs. However, Ledbury and its immediate surroundings do not have an Air Quality Management Area nor is

there a likely future need for one. Any increased pollution resulting from increased traffic is therefore very unlikely to be significant in terms of local air quality management and therefore unlikely to be significant in planning terms.

#### Odour

- 6.16 The smell from the apple pomace drying currently associated with the autumn season in Hereford will not be transferred to the application site, as this type of process is not proposed at Ledbury. Other on-site odours could arise from fermentation, concentrates, pressing and effluent treatment. However, any offensive odours beyond the site boundary would be regulated by the Environment Agency's Environmental Permit.

#### Lighting

- 6.17 Light pollution in a rural area is a potentially significant issue. In this instance full lighting details have been submitted with the application and the accompanying plan details how light site spillage beyond the site boundaries would be minimised. Clearly such a large-scale twenty-four hour operation requires lighting for, amongst other reasons, health and safety reasons. It is considered that the proposed lighting scheme is satisfactory and Members attention is drawn to recommended condition 12.

#### Conclusion

- 6.18 The proposed development would secure an active use and hence employment opportunities upon a safeguarded employment site. The proposed built development is considered to be acceptable. The majority of the environmental impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated. As the report has commented earlier there are remaining issues to be resolved with the Environment Agency, the Water Authorities and on planning/ecological grounds.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Subject to: -**

- **The Environment Agency withdrawing its objection;**
- **Severn Trent Water and Welsh Water not objecting to the proposed development by the time the Environment Agency withdraw its objection or the date of the Planning Committee (whichever is the latter); and**
- **The ecological matters being resolved to the satisfaction of the Planning Ecologist**

**That the Head of Planning Services be DELEGATED POWERS TO GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION in consultation with the Chairman of the Northern Area Planning Sub-Committee and the ward members subject to the following conditions:**

- 1 A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission) )  
Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.**
- 2 Prior to commencement of the development hereby permitted the following matters shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for their written approval:**

- A written schedule of all external materials and their colour with regard the buildings (including external tanks).
- Written details of all surfacing materials in relation to the vehicular means of access, turning/manoeuvring areas and motor vehicle parking areas

The development shall not commence until the Local Planning Authority has given such written approval. The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved details and thereafter maintained as such;

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development in the landscape and to safeguard the setting of the listed Fairtree Farm.

- 3 Development shall not commence until an Order has been made to allow the existing public right of way (i.e. the bridleway) crossing the site to be diverted or stopped up;

Reason: To ensure the public right of way is not obstructed.

- 4 The Travel Plan Report from Sanderson Associates (Consulting Engineers) Ltd received 9th April 2008 shall be fully implemented;

Reason: To encourage the use of modes of transport other than the private motor vehicle.

- 5 Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted the motor vehicle parking, turning and manoeuvring areas and secure cycle parking facilities (i.e. drawing number 249.0803. (00) 31 Rev 2 received 28th April 2008) shall be fully implemented. Thereafter these areas shall be kept available for such use:

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to encourage the use of modes of transport other than the private motor vehicle;

- 6 Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted the new vehicular means of access and roadway including visibility splays of 4.5 metres x 120 metres in both directions shall be provided. The visibility splays shall be maintained free of obstruction above a height of 0.9 metre from existing ground level;

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 7 Prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted that part of the existing culvert shown upon drawing number 2008-007-01-06 Revision B received 14th April 2008 to be "opened-up" shall be with a new drainage ditch.

Reason: - In the interests of bio-diversity/ecology.

- 8 No development shall take place until the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority: -

- a) a 'desk study' report including previous site and adjacent site uses, potential contaminants arising from those uses, possible sources, pathways, and receptors, a conceptual model and a risk assessment in accordance with current best practice

- b) if the risk assessment in (a) confirms the possibility of a significant pollutant linkage(s), a site investigation should be undertaken to characterise fully the nature and extent and severity of contamination, incorporating a conceptual model of all potential pollutant linkages and an assessment of risk to identified receptors;
- c) if the risk assessment in (b) identifies unacceptable risk(s) a detailed scheme specifying remedial works and measures necessary to deal with situations where, during works on site, contamination is encountered which has not previously been identified. Any contamination encountered shall be fully assessed and an appropriate remediation scheme submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval;

**Reason:** In the interests of human health and to prevent pollution of controlled waters.

- 9 The Remediation Scheme, as approved pursuant to condition 8) above shall be fully implemented prior to the first use of the development. On completion of the remediation scheme the developer shall provide a validation report to confirm that all works were completed in accordance with the agreed details, which must be submitted before the development is first used. Any variation to the scheme including the validation reporting shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

**Reason:** In the interests of human health and to prevent pollution of controlled waters.

- 10 All planting, seeding and turfing in the approved details of landscaping (i.e. drawing number 249.0803. (90) 10 Rev 3 received 6th May 2008) shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the first use of the development hereby permitted or the completion of the development (whichever is the sooner). Any trees or plants which within a period of ten years from the first use of the building or completion of the development (whichever is the sooner) die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

**Reason:** To ensure that the visual impact of the development hereby permitted is satisfactorily mitigated and is integrated satisfactorily into the landscape.

- 11 Notwithstanding the details shown upon the approved plan, the bund: -

- Shall not exceed 3 metres in height from existing ground level;
- Shall not have a gradient on its south-eastern face adjacent to the general industrial site exceeding 1:4;
- Shall not have a gradient on its north-western face adjacent to the countryside exceeding 1:7;

**Reason:** To ensure that the bund has a satisfactory appearance in the landscape.

- 12 The external lighting hereby permitted shall be installed in full accordance with the approved plan (i.e. drawing number J375/EXLTG/001 received 11th March 2008) in terms of luminaire type, mounting height, direction, tilt angle and wattage; and shall thereafter be maintained in full accordance with the approved

details. No further external lighting shall be installed upon the site without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the character of the rural area.

- 13 Prior to their erection or within month of their erection all lighting columns hereby permitted shall be painted a Goose Wing Grey Colour (BS10A05) and thereafter maintained as such.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.

- 14 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) no development normally permitted by Class A, Part 2, Schedule 2, Article 3 shall be carried out without the express permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that any future fencing, walling or other means of enclosure is appropriate to the rural character of the area.

- 15 Prior to commencement of the development hereby permitted the trees shown upon drawing numbers TP 1045/0802/TPP/01 and 02 to be retained and protected shall be protected by fencing of at least 1.2 metres in height comprising vertical and horizontal framework of scaffolding (well braced to withstand impacts) supporting either chestnut cleft fencing or chain link fencing in accordance with figure 2 on page c13 of BS5837: 2005. This protective fencing shall be erected in the positions shown upon drawing numbers TP 1045/0802/TPP/01 and 02. Once these protective measures have been erected prior to commencement of the development a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant shall inspect the site and write to the Local Planning Authority to confirm that the protective measures are in-situ. Upon confirmation of receipt of that letter by the Local Planning Authority the development may commence but the tree protection measures must remain in-situ until completion of the development.

Reason: To ensure the retention and future health of those trees upon site that are worthy of retention.

- 16 The level of noise emitted from the site from 22.00 to 07.00 shall not exceed 37 dB LAeq,15mins at 'Redbank' and 'Flights Farm' nor 35 dB LAeq,15mins at 'Woodlands' as measured at a distance of 3.5m from the facing facade of each property. All measurements shall be undertaken in accordance with BS4142: 1997.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of the dwellings known as 'Redbank', 'Flights Farm' and 'Woodland'.

- 17 All construction noise associated with the development hereby permitted that will be audible to nearby residential properties shall be restricted to the hours of 08.00 to 18.00 hours on weekdays, 08.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturdays and shall not be allowed at any time on Sundays, Bank Holidays and Public Holidays. Written approval shall firstly be obtained in writing from Herefordshire Council prior to any works that may be required to be undertaken outside of these times and restrictions.



**Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of dwellings in the vicinity.**

**ANY OTHER CONDITIONS RECOMMENDED BY THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY, SEVERN TRENT WATER, WELSH WATER AND THE PLANNING ECOLOGIST THAT THE HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES CONSIDERS TO BE REASONABLE**

**Informatives:**

- 1 - N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission**
- 2 N19 - Avoidance of doubt - Approved Plans**

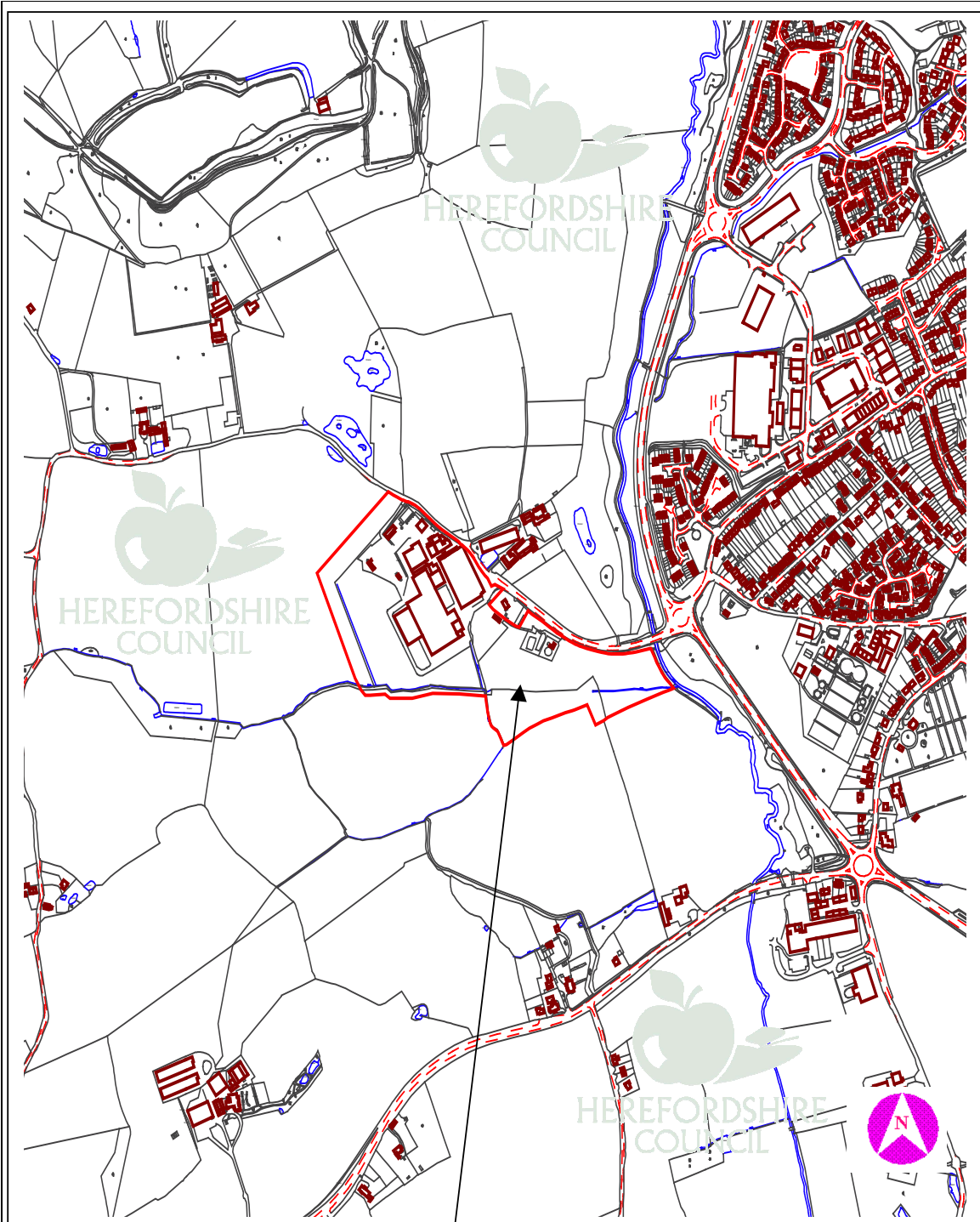
Decision: .....

Notes: .....

.....

**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.



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**APPLICATION NO:** DCNE2008/0633/F

**SCALE :** 1 : 10000

**SITE ADDRESS :** Robertson's Business Park, Little Marcle Lane, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 2JT

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## **WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY: PHASE TWO REVISION**

**Report By: Forward Planning Manager**

### **1 Wards Affected**

County-wide.

### **2 Purpose**

- 2.1 To determine a response to the Phase Two Revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

### **3 Financial Implications**

- 3.1 No direct financial implications.

### **4 Background**

- 4.1 The current version of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) was issued by Government in 2004. An immediate phased review was commenced. The first phase – dealing with the Black Country – is complete. The second phase, the subject of this report, has now reached an advanced stage. It deals with housing, employment, the role of centres, waste and some aspects of transport. The third and final phase began in November 2007 and covers rural services, gypsy and traveler sites, culture, minerals and environment policies.
- 4.2 In preparing the phase two revision, the Assembly has worked closely with regional stakeholders. Strategic planning authorities in the region, including Herefordshire Council, prepared and submitted advice to the Assembly in 2006. Consultation was then undertaken on spatial options. These were considered by Cabinet in February 2007. A preferred option was approved by the Assembly's Regional Planning Partnership in October, and submitted to the Secretary of State in December.
- 4.3 A formal public consultation on the revision was launched on 7 January 2008. The current closing date of 30 June 2008 is likely to be extended (see below).
- 4.4 The next stage is an Examination in Public, arranged by the Secretary of State and held before an independent Panel. The Panel will prepare a Report for consideration by the Secretary of State, who will publish and consult on proposed changes before finalising the revised RSS.
- 4.5 Throughout the process of drawing up the revision, Government has been concerned that more houses need to be built if problems of affordability are to be addressed. The Assembly has worked with partners, including local planning authorities, to increase its proposals for housing provision throughout the region. Although significant increases in housing development are

proposed across the region, the submitted revision does not meet Government aspirations in full.

- 4.6 Government has responded by commissioning a study to look at options delivering higher housing numbers. In order to allow adequate time for consultees to consider the study when it becomes available in October, the consultation period on the revision is proposed to be extended to December. On this basis the Examination will not commence until Spring 2009.
- 4.7 A further report to Cabinet will be made on the Government study when this is available. However, the study will not alter the content of the submitted document. It is this which has been published for consultation, and which will be before the Panel at the independent examination. Moreover, the submitted document forms in effect the starting point for the Council's Local Development Framework, and to establish a basis for the Core Strategy spatial options it is essential to define the Council's position on the RSS document.
- 4.8 Against this background, this report goes on to advise on a response to each of the policy areas in the phase two revision as it stands.

#### **Sustainable region (chapter 2 of the RSS)**

- 4.9 This chapter of the revision sets out four new crosscutting policies on climate change, sustainable communities, sustainable construction and improving air quality for sensitive ecosystems.

#### **Response**

- 4.10 The introduction of these policies reflects the increased importance attached to these issues since the RSS was approved in 2004. Several aspects are worth highlighting:
- The potential impact of housing and other development on nature conservation sites of European and national importance in the region. Diffuse air pollution is highlighted as a particular area of concern, affecting several sites in and adjacent to Herefordshire: Downton Gorge; Wye Valley Woodlands; and Wye Valley and Forest of Dean bat sites. Other sites such as the River Wye are at risk from other factors. There will be a need to continue to assess the impacts of growth proposals on these sensitive locations as the Local Development Framework is prepared;
  - A proposed requirement that medium and larger scale developments meet at least 10% of their energy requirement on site;
  - The pressure that new housebuilding is likely to create on water resources supplying the region and on sewage treatment infrastructure.
- 4.11 In brief, in principle these policies are very much to be supported. Their overall effect is to put in place safeguards against which the scale of proposed new development can be assessed. The policies effectively delegate much of this work to local planning authorities in their Local Development Frameworks, and this is a measure of the difficulty of determining a regional level policy to what is essentially a local issue. Nonetheless the policies should help ensure a consistent local response.

**Spatial Strategy (chapter 3)**

- 4.12 A number of adjustments have been made to the wording of the RSS spatial strategy, in order in part to reflect the levels of development being contemplated. For instance, the green belt objective now accepts that such land may be used in certain defined circumstances where necessary to deliver housing proposals. At Coventry the approach now allows for peripheral expansion of the conurbation onto greenfield land or in exceptional circumstances onto green belt, in order to meet housing needs.
- 4.13 Outside the metropolitan areas, new development is to be focused in and adjacent to towns capable of growth, but without attracting investment or migration from the conurbation. Hereford is listed as one of these ten settlements, designated as 'Settlements of Significant Development'. Effectively this is to replace the 'sub-regional foci' approach in the approved RSS (where Hereford is one of five). Provision for housing is to be concentrated in these settlements.
- 4.14 Peripheral development of other settlements may also be considered, with a key role recognized for market towns and larger villages. On transport, reference is now made to resolving existing infrastructure problems and assisting economic objectives. Overall the Strategy recognises that the growth agenda will require significant concerted investment in existing and new infrastructure.
- 4.15 A revised text for the 'rural renaissance' challenge is identified which emphasises the economic and social potential of rural areas whilst embracing the challenges of access and climate change.
- 4.16 Greater emphasis is placed on the need to achieve the spatial strategy through working with partners and in alignment with both the Regional Housing Strategy and the West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES). As far as housing is concerned, the revision endorses the four sub-regional housing market areas. Herefordshire sits in the West area, with Shropshire (excluding Telford & Wrekin). For economic development, the revision addresses the spatial implications of the WMES. In the context of the recommendations of the sub-national review for a single regional strategy to be developed by the Regional Development Agency, these steps towards an integrated approach are to be welcomed.
- 4.17 At a sub-regional level, the implications of the strategy are set out more clearly than hitherto in a separate section. The implications for Herefordshire are:
- the role of Hereford as a settlement of significant development, where the aim is primarily aimed at meeting the economic and social needs of the area rather than attracting out-migration from the conurbation;
  - a recognition that the extent to which Hereford can accommodate new development is limited, with an identified priority for the city being to ensure necessary transport infrastructure to deliver levels of planned economic and housing growth, support regeneration and protect historic heritage;
  - outside of Hereford, further development within key market towns acting as strategic locations for balanced housing and employment growth;

- within the context of the WMES, economic measures to develop the tourist potential of the market towns and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, bringing forward new, high quality employment sites/premises in sustainable locations, and revitalise industrial estates and town centres.

#### Response

- 4.18 Clearly the Strategy as now set out puts more emphasis on the achievement of growth. Proposals to use green belt, the identification of ten Settlements of Significant Development and the contemplation of peripheral development at other locations are notable amendments to the approach approved in 2004.
- 4.19 The designation of Hereford as a Settlement of Significant Development is a logical extension of the current 'sub-regional foci' role and also reflects the Council's support for the City's role as a New Growth Point. The emphasis on the need to address transport matters is very much to be welcomed although other infrastructure issues will also need to be considered, such as water and sewerage.
- 4.20 For the market towns, the allowance for them to grow in a balanced way is also to be supported. A clearer recognition should be made of the likely need to accommodate growth through peripheral expansion in these locations. Reference could also be considered to the role that market towns play in providing a certain level of service for their rural hinterlands.
- 4.21 In the rural areas, whilst larger villages do have a role to play, there is a need to recognize that many parts of rural Herefordshire have an open and diffuse settlement structure. Here, focusing growth to larger settlements can run against supporting communities and achieving sustainability at a local level. The existing RSS policy on this issue already requires planning authorities to take into account the extent to which new development may help the provision of local services, whilst supporting new and innovative forms of service delivery. There are also helpful statements on the role of market towns and villages. As the phase two and three revisions of the RSS proceed, it will be important to emphasise the point that the Strategy needs to provide for economic and social needs and requirements in the remoter rural areas, where larger settlements are few and far between, as well as providing for growth in larger towns and cities.

#### **Housing (Communities for the Future, chapter 6)**

- 4.22 This chapter sets out the Assembly's response to the Government's goal to increase levels of new housebuilding. The emphasis on urban renaissance – the concentration of housing growth within the conurbation, where much demand arises - remains. At the same time, growth is directed to the settlements of significant development as well as to other settlements, market towns and rural areas. Growth within and adjacent to market towns is again recognized. There is an explicit acceptance that whilst sustainability considerations will lead to growth in the rural areas being focused in the market towns and larger rural settlements where services exist, small scale housing provision may also be considered in smaller settlements where this can be shown to contribute to the regeneration of the rural economy and the

sustaining of local communities by meeting proven housing needs (policy CF2).

- 4.23 The level and distribution of housing development, set out in policy CF3, is such that the ratio of development between the metropolitan and other areas is expected to be 1:1.2 – for every ten dwellings built in the conurbation, 12 will be built outside. This compares with the approved strategy which aims to achieve a balance of 1:0.7 – where for every ten dwellings built in the conurbation, only seven are constructed in the rest of the region. This demonstrates the extent to which the overall strategy – based on urban renaissance achieved by enabling the conurbations to meet their own generated needs - has been affected by the pressure to accommodate increased levels of growth and the reaching of capacity limits in the conurbation. Provision overall falls short of that suggested by the 2004 based household projections, with a shortfall of around 16,400 dwellings (365,600 in the phase two revision, compared to 382,000 in the projections).
- 4.24 For Herefordshire, 16,600 dwellings are proposed 2006-2026 (830 per annum), with half of this growth directed to Hereford.
- 4.25 Policy CF5 sets a target for development on previously developed land at 70% for the region. This is down from a target of 76% in approved RSS. For areas outside the conurbation, the target is now to be 60% (down from 65%). These more modest targets reflect the need to develop greenfield land to deliver growth.
- 4.26 Policy CF7 sets a minima target of 700 units of affordable housing per annum for the West Housing Market Area. The policy highlights the setting of lower site thresholds in rural areas and small rural settlements; the option of allocating sites as 100% affordable; the use of the rural exception approach, and the use of local authority land resources.
- 4.27 Policy CF8 emphasizes the need to achieve a balanced mix of development, which allows for more family friendly housing and provides for more housing for the elderly such as lifetime homes and extra care housing.
- 4.28 Finally, policy CF10 identifies the contribution that windfall sites make to regional housing land supply – currently over half of all completions are on such sites. Current Government policy is that windfalls on previously developed land should not be taken into account when assessing future provision, unless there is robust evidence of genuine local circumstances that prevent specific sites being identified. Government appears to assume that windfalls on greenfield land will not occur in any significant numbers. Against this, the phase two revision argues that in the circumstances of the West Midlands, where economic re-structuring is underway, land falling out of employment use can - where it is not required for its original purpose - make a significant contribution to housing land supply. In doing so, sites can be brought back into use quickly and the need to use peripheral greenfield land minimised. The policy thus proposes that a windfall allowance is made by local authorities in determining their housing provision, where justified by evidence.

Response

- 4.29 As a starting point, policy CF2 should include explicit reference to the need to improve infrastructure if growth is to be accommodated. The recognition of the role of market towns, larger villages and smaller rural settlements is to be welcomed.
- 4.30 The implications of the levels and distribution of housing development proposed in policy CF3 for Herefordshire can be best illustrated by comparison with historic rates of provision and the equivalent UDP position (see table).

	Dwellings completed (per annum, 1996-2007)	Average UDP rate (dwellings per annum, gross)	Phase 2 revision (dwellings per annum, net)	UDP/phase 2 % difference	% phase 2 provision already identified*
Herefordshire	816	813	830	+2%	30%
Of which Hereford	207	270	415	+54%	25%
Rest of County	609	562	415	-26%	35%

\* completions since April 2006, planning permissions and UDP allocated sites

- 4.31 For the County overall, the table shows that proposed rates of development are broadly comparable with both those already being achieved and those postulated in the UDP. These rates are similar to those endorsed by the Council during the earlier spatial options consultation, and are to be supported.
- 4.32 Concerns arise in the proposed distribution of this new development between Hereford and the rest of the County. The phase two revision introduces a new requirement that half of new housing be directed to Hereford. In effect this equates to a significant increase in rates of development at Hereford – up 54% on UDP rates and 50% on what has been achieved in the recent past. This will undoubtedly require both significant greenfield releases and the solution of infrastructure constraints. Limits relating to transport and water provision are presently being investigated as part of the development of the Local Development Framework’s evidence base, and work is also underway to assess the likely availability of housing land. It is too early to say whether these levels of development will in practice be achievable, having regard to infrastructure; levels of market demand; availability of suitable sites; and capacity in the construction industry.
- 4.33 Outside Hereford, the position is reversed. Rates of development are proposed to fall. Past completion levels and UDP rates of development are both significantly higher than those now being mooted. The issue that thus arises is whether sufficient provision is now being made outwith Hereford, bearing in mind the need to provide for the growth of the market towns and in sustainable settlements in the wider rural areas.
- 4.34 In considering these opposing concerns, it is important to remember that the Council has adopted a position of welcoming growth at Hereford in its



participation in the New Growth Point programme – and the phase two revision reflects this. However, Growth Point aspirations are subject to testing and confirmation through the RSS process. The Council has also previously confirmed to the Regional Assembly (in its response on the spatial options consultation) that there are infrastructure limits at Hereford. Significant development at Hereford will require these to be resolved, and indeed may help provide the means to do so via the new Community Infrastructure Levy (if confirmed). The Council has also expressed the view that the County's market towns should also be considered to accommodate increased levels of growth.

- 4.35 A possible approach to resolve these dilemmas would be to introduce an element of flexibility in the distribution within Herefordshire. This would first recognize that as much growth as possible should be sought at Hereford. Necessary infrastructure provision would be made to achieve a maxima of 8,300 dwellings over the period. The balance would then fall to be found outwith Hereford. This would be a minima of 8,300 dwellings, plus any residual which could not be located at Hereford. The RSS total for the County would remain unchanged.
- 4.36 This would allow a balanced pattern of development to be determined through the Council's own Local Development Framework, whilst protecting overall provision and the priority given to Hereford as a settlement of significant development. The Council's approach to the preparation of its Local Development Framework – the preparation of the Core Strategy, then the Hereford Area Action Plan, followed by a final Development Plan Document dealing with the market towns and the rural areas – is very much in line with such a step by step process. It would also allow the implications of the forthcoming phase three revision to be addressed at the local level – notably how development might be used to support rural services in the market towns and larger villages. In the interim, pending completion of different elements of the Local Development Framework, UDP policies will provide policy coverage. It is recommended that appropriate representations are made on this basis.
- 4.37 Turning to policy CF5, the proposed revised target for development on previously developed land outside the conurbation, 60%, is the same as the national target in PPS3. Last year 71% of housing completions in the County were on previously developed land (to March 2007) – the highest figure since data was collected in 1996. Some 77% of outstanding planning permissions at March 2007 were located on previously developed land. For the future, such 'brownfield' development can be expected to continue to occur although current rates are unlikely to be sustained as a result both of greenfield UDP sites coming on stream and further greenfield releases which will be necessary to deliver housing growth aspirations. The policy as written will not create undue difficulties for the County.
- 4.38 In terms of affordable housing, policy CF7 sets an indicative annual minima of 700 affordable units for the West Housing Market Area, of which Herefordshire forms part. However the emerging Housing Market Assessment for the Market Area points to a much higher level of need, a reflection of the affordability gap in the area and relatively low levels of social housing supply. Clearly there is a need to establish workable policies which do not in themselves act to constrain development and so restrain supply. However the evidence would

appear to support measures such as increased targets/requirements, or reduced thresholds. This can be pursued in the Council's own emerging Core Strategy, within the context of appropriate regional targets. Policy CF7 is expressed as a minima, but it is recommended that representations be made that the affordable housing targets in policy CF7 be re-assessed in the light of the emerging Housing Market Assessment. Some 120 affordable housing units were achieved in Herefordshire in 2006/7, an increase over the average 97 dwellings per annum achieved since 1996.

- 4.39 The line taken in policy CF10 towards so called 'windfalls' – housing units arising on previously unidentified sites – is very much supported. The national policy towards windfalls is difficult to sustain in Herefordshire where a significant proportion of the housing land supply derives from this source. The UDP for instance assumes that over 2,800 dwellings will arise from windfalls in the period 2001- 2010 – 23% of the total Plan housing provision. Clearly it is important that a reasonable and evidenced allowance is made for sites from this source, and the regional arguments in policy CF10 are welcomed. However the case made is expressed very much in terms of economic changes and restructuring in manufacturing. It would be helpful if a rural dimension could be added – referring for instance to the relative emphasis on small sites which typically characterizes housing land supply in areas such as Herefordshire.

**Employment (Prosperity for All, chapter 7)**

- 4.40 This chapter and the partial revisions to it cover both general employment matters and town centres. The text has been revised in tandem with the revision by AWM of the Regional Economic Strategy, with which it dovetails.
- 4.41 The overall approach is to ensure sustainable economic growth as appropriate across the region, including the settlements of significant development such as Hereford, ensuring housing and employment growth proceed together. The emphasis on Regeneration Zones, including the rural zone, remains as in the approved RSS.
- 4.42 The various requirements for employment, retail and office uses for the County are summarized in the table below.

Use/location	RSS proposals
Employment land provision for Herefordshire (Policy PA6A)	Rolling five year reservoir of 37 hectares readily available land, with an indicative longer term requirement of 111 hectares.
Comparison retail, within Hereford city centre (Policy PA12A)	An additional 40,000 m <sup>2</sup> for the period 2006-2021, with an indicative requirement of a further 20,000 m <sup>2</sup> for the period 2021-2026 (gross figures).
Offices, Hereford city centre or edge of centre (Policy PA13A)	A 'lower limit' of 45,000 m <sup>2</sup> gross for the period 2006-2026.

## Response

## Employment land

- 4.43 The County has some 21 hectares of readily available employment land, to set against the 37 hectares required by the draft revision. This 'rolling reservoir' approach is new and will need careful handling in the Local Development Framework to ensure that land of appropriate quantity and quality is readily available in desired locations as it is expected to be required. It may be necessary to phase land release so as to synchronise with housing growth.
- 4.44 Overall the policy appears to suggest a provision of 148 hectares for the County over the twenty year RSS period (ie five year reservoir plus the longer term figure). This compares with a provision of 100 hectares in the UDP over fifteen years (equivalent to 133 hectares over a 20 year period). The UDP assumes that land for housing and employment would be needed on a 4:1 ratio, and applying this rule of thumb to the RSS housing provision suggests an overall requirement of 138 hectares. Taking into account the fact that the forecasting of employment land needs is an inexact science, particularly over the timescales now being considered, the RSS requirements overall appear reasonable and should be supported. Also to be welcomed is the emphasis in the policy on the fact that the longer term figures are indicative and are subject to testing and possible revision as part of Core Strategies. As part of the Council's work on the Local Development Framework, an employment land review is currently under way.

## Retail

- 4.45 The retail proposals, for an additional 40,000 square metres of gross comparison shopping floorspace in Hereford city centre up to 2021 and further indicative provision beyond that, are also supported. These levels may be compared with the balance of the UDP provision - estimated by the Inspector to be of the order of 15-21,000 sq m net for the period up to 2011. Current and emerging proposals on Edgar Street Grid are likely to account for this and may significantly take up the RSS provision to 2021 (for instance, the masterplan provides for 33,000 sq m of retail and leisure - subject to confirmation as the development proceeds). This would still allow further retail provision within the rest of the city centre, ensuring that opportunities were available for new retail schemes to come forward.
- 4.46 A retail study has been commissioned by the Council as part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework. The Council's emerging study is taking the regional work to date into account. However, this in itself might lead to the need to refine the draft RSS figures. Fortunately the opportunity exists to deal with any significant variations at the Examination stage. In any event, the phase two revision already accepts that whilst the floorspace figures should not normally be exceeded, it will be for local authorities to review them in the context of Core Strategy preparation, a process which might lead to some local variations. This flexibility is sensible and should be supported.
- 4.47 In respect of the provision between 2021 and 2026, this is rightly seen as indicative and is subject to revision through future RSS reviews. This

recognizes that there are considerable uncertainties in projecting future comparison retail requirements so far into the future.

#### Offices

- 4.48 Office provision in the County has been relatively modest to date, with recent rates suggesting around 4,500 sq m have been completed in the last five years. This has tended to be on the basis of bespoke provision to meet the needs of existing/expanding businesses rather than speculative.
- 4.49 The phase two revision effectively suggests a doubling of this rate. This reflects the housing growth proposed and the need to provide for associated employment.
- 4.50 The RSS directs this provision to be planned for in or on the edge of Hereford city centre. This reflects national policy which identifies offices as a town centre use, with new development directed first to in-centre locations before other locations are considered. Emerging national and regional policies both recognize that market demand and other factors will influence office location, and the revision accepts that an element of out-of-centre development will continue to be required. Emerging proposals within the Edgar Street Grid will create capacity opportunities in and around central Hereford.

#### Waste (Quality of the Environment, chapter 8)

- 4.51 When approved, the waste policies in the phase two revision will form the Regional Waste Strategy. An important principle is that each waste planning authority should allocate enough land through their LDF to manage an equivalent tonnage of waste to that arising from all waste streams within its boundary. Reflecting the more stringent targets and challenges in the Waste Strategy for England 2007, the phase two revision sets a series of targets for waste management and diversion from landfill. An assessment is made of the 'treatment gap' between available facilities and tonnages of waste arising. This is to be met by making provision through LDFs for a pattern of sites and areas suitable for new or enhanced waste management facilities in, or in close proximity to, a range of settlements including Hereford. The phase two revision recognizes that the allocation of specific waste streams or technologies to particular locations would stifle the opportunity for innovation, so identified sites should be capable of accommodating a variety of technologies and size of facility.

#### Response

- 4.52 The targets set out in the phase two revision will need to be further considered in the context of both the emerging Local Development Framework and the joint contractual arrangements. The latter has obvious implications for the principle of planning for an equivalent tonnage of waste arising in each waste planning authority boundary, which requires clarification as the process continues. The targets will form the background for local waste policies and necessary waste management facilities to deliver the strategy. The locational preferences for new facilities (ie in or close to Hereford) are sensible, as is the envisaged range of sites which includes industrial land and other uses compatible with waste management operations. The principle that site

allocations should not be specific to either particular technologies or waste streams is fully supported.

### **Transport (Transport and accessibility, chapter 9)**

- 4.53 This chapter sets out the Regional Transport Strategy, setting a context for Local Transport Plans. The chapter has been partially revised, including an update to policy T12, dealing with priorities for transport investment. This policy has been amended to reflect the implications of housing and employment growth.
- 4.54 A major transport challenge is balancing the needs of new housing and the economy against increasing levels of congestion. Managing the increasing demand for travel will require a package of measures, including reducing the need to travel, travel awareness, and park and ride. The revision accepts that there will continue to be a need for targeted improvements to the strategic transport network, particularly where they affect Settlements of Significant Development.
- 4.55 In this respect, the revision continues to recognize that the road and rail networks in the corridor between Shrewsbury, Hereford and Wales provide strategic links. They are to be managed and developed to balance environmental protection with regeneration and linking areas of opportunity. For Hereford, the revision continues to recognize the problems of congestion and refers to the proposals in the local multi modal study (i.e. the Hereford Transport Review) designed to relieve this and accommodate development and regeneration, thereby allowing Hereford to fulfil its role as a Settlement of Significant Development.
- 4.56 Where significant development is proposed in policy CF2, necessary highway and other infrastructure will be needed to access sites and mitigate transport impacts.
- 4.57 Policy T12 deals with priorities for investment. The policy identifies the improvement of the transport networks in Settlements of Significant Development (including Hereford) as one sub-regional priority for investment outside the conurbation, in order to support their growth.

### **Response**

- 4.58 The recognition of the need for transport infrastructure to be provided at Hereford to deliver the level of planned economic and housing growth has already been noted and welcomed in this report (see section on Spatial Strategy). In the Communities for the Future section dealing with housing development, a precautionary position is recommended that is designed to provide a fall back in the event that growth targets at Hereford cannot be fully met. It is important that adopting this position is not interpreted as signaling a weakening or withdrawal of support for transport infrastructure investment at Hereford. The Hereford Transport Review confirmed that as part of a package of measures an Outer Distributor Road (ODR) will be required in the period to 2031. This position is recorded in the Local Transport Plan where the significant contribution of the ODR to reductions in congestion is set out. In this respect, work is underway as part of the development of the Local Development Framework to assess the transport implications of the levels of

growth proposed. Transportation work for the UDP indicated that Hereford's transport capacity was such that levels of growth on greenfield land had to be restricted. The indications are that in terms of accommodating further growth, improvements to transport infrastructure is an essential pre-condition.

### Conclusions

- 4.59 The phase two revision has been developed in a spirit of partnership by the Regional Assembly, working with the local authorities at both officer and member level and with other stakeholders across the region. As a result, it has a wide ownership. The revision stands as a comprehensive and coherent response to the challenges facing the spatial development of the region to 2026. Accommodating increased levels of housing growth has been achieved within the broad scope of the overall strategy, even if the balance of development between the urban and other areas is not entirely as originally envisaged. The revision has been able to consider and plan for the consequences of that growth for other policy areas, such as employment, waste, and transport. It is appropriate that overall the Council records its broad support for the phase two revision.
- 4.60 For the County, as for all other areas in the region, there are significant challenges ahead if the levels of growth now being envisaged are to be met without compromising valued assets such as landscape or protected features such as European sites. The main issue identified in this report is with the scale of development proposed for Hereford, both in its own terms and relative to the rest of the County. The recommended measure of flexibility which is to be sought in this regard will allow an appropriate distribution to be determined locally. This will ensure overall levels of growth, whilst facilitating an appropriate infrastructure response to allow Hereford to fulfil its regional role as a Settlement of Significant Development and the Council's Growth Point aspirations.

### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT Planning Committee recommends to Cabinet that representations generally supporting the Phase Two Revision be made to the Panel Secretary, subject to:**

- 1. The Spatial Strategy should include further recognition of: the infrastructure requirements at Hereford if growth is to be achieved; the peripheral expansion of market towns, and their service centre role for their rural hinterlands; and the need to plan for the renaissance of the region's remoter rural areas in a way which sustains their social, economic and environmental character;**
- 2. Policy CF2 should be amended to recognize that growth may only be capable of being accommodated in some settlements of significant development if infrastructure constraints are removed. The recognition in para. 6.21 in respect of meeting housing needs in smaller settlements is welcomed;**
- 3. In respect of policy CF3:**
  - a) the total provision of 16,600 dwellings for Herefordshire be supported;**

- b) the identification of Hereford as a settlement of significant development be supported as reflecting the Council's Growth Point partnership with Government for the delivery of housing growth;
  - c) the provision for Hereford (8,300 dwellings) be expressed as a maxima, recognising that at present the extent to which Hereford can accommodate new development is limited and that the practical achievement of these levels of growth will be dependent on suitable transport and other infrastructure provision, as well as other factors;
  - d) following consideration of the distribution of growth within the County in the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and the Hereford Area Action Plan, dwellings which cannot be accommodated within or adjacent to Hereford be directed to the rest of the County in accordance with the principles in policy CF2;
4. The affordable housing targets in policy CF7 be re-assessed in the light of the emerging Housing Market Assessment for the West Housing Market Area;
5. Policy CF10 be supported and further recognize that in rural areas there are also considerations such as the relatively high proportion of small sites in the overall housing supply;
6. The comparison retail floorspace requirements set out in policy PA12A be supported, with the retail assessment work being undertaken as part of the Local Development Framework offering the opportunity to refine the Phase Two Revision figures at Examination if necessary to ensure suitable provision is made for Hereford city centre;
7. The office development requirement for Hereford in policy PA13A be supported;
8. The revisions to the waste policies be supported, subject to clarification of the implications of the existing joint arrangements for the principle that each waste planning authority should plan to manage an equivalent tonnage of waste arising within their boundary; and
9. The continuing recognition of the need to implement the package of measures identified in the Hereford Transport Review be supported, so as to allow Hereford to fulfil its role as a Settlement of Significant Development.

## Background papers

West Midlands Regional Assembly, West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, Phase Two Revision – Draft, Preferred Option December 2007.





## **HEREFORDSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: CORE STRATEGY: DEVELOPING OPTIONS PAPER**

**Report By: Forward Planning Manager**

### **Wards**

Countywide

### **Purpose**

1. To consider the contents of the Herefordshire Core Strategy Developing Options paper.

### **Financial Implications**

2. None.

### **Introduction**

3. The preparation of a Core Strategy is a mandatory element of the Local Development Framework (LDF). In Herefordshire it is the first development plan document being prepared as part of the Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy will include:
  - a long term vision for the County and its places, this will look to 2026;
  - objectives for an identified set of key issues;
  - a strategy to deliver the objectives; and
  - an indication of strategic sites or locations, infrastructure needs, funding and responsibilities.
4. The development of a Core Strategy is about the shaping of places rather than simply the grant of planning permission and it is essential to link the Core Strategy to the Community Strategy and to the Local Area Agreement. To ensure that these links are made early in the process of preparing the Core Strategy an LDF Task Group has been established. The Group, which consists of Herefordshire Council Cabinet Members covering the portfolio areas of environment, housing, transportation and economic development/regeneration and Herefordshire Partnership Board representatives for community, economy and environment, provides a forum for the broad consideration of the spatial development of the county, and helps to ensure consistency and coherence across the Council and Partnership.

## The Developing Options Paper

5. In September and October last year a public consultation was undertaken to help to identify the key issues for the Core Strategy. In order to progress the development of the document further all reasonable alternatives or “options” should be considered and these are set out in the Developing Options paper. The development of options is:
  - an important element in ensuring the soundness of the Core Strategy;
  - part of the requirement of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive; and
  - is helpful in undertaking stakeholder engagement.
6. The LDF Task Group has helped to develop the set of options in the paper. Meetings with officers from key departments across the Council have also informed the options and technical stakeholders from key external organisations have been consulted upon draft options. A seminar was held for Council members in February in order to provide an early sight of the developing strategic options and a series of meetings with local members has recently been held in Hereford, and each of the market towns to review the options and implications for places. Initial work has also been undertaken on a sustainability appraisal and habitats regulations assessment of the emerging options with the intention of publishing these reports alongside the Developing Options paper.
7. The document sets out the key issues as well as a vision and spatial objectives for Herefordshire in 2026. The objectives have been closely aligned with the outcomes of the Community Strategy. The document also acknowledges a number of “givens” in respect of the need to be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and consistent with national planning policy. The strategic options therefore assume that the County are likely to have to accommodate at least the levels of growth set out in the RSS Phase 2 revision. Hereford is acknowledged to be a place where significant levels of growth will be directed over the period up to 2026 and it is assumed that the market towns will remain as foci for new development.
8. The Paper suggests four strategic spatial options. **Option A** provides a focus upon the economy, placing emphasis on economic objectives being the driver for change in accommodating growth. It reflects the Economic Development Strategy for Herefordshire. It would focus housing and employment growth to Hereford, Leominster and the market towns and hinterland settlements in the south and east of the County (around Bromyard, Ross-on-Wye and Ledbury) where employment demand is greatest. This latter area is referred to in the Economic Development

Strategy as the 'eastern corridor'. This option also draws upon the potential for transport improvements to support economic growth in the towns and settlements based on the A49 corridor, including Hereford, Leominster and Ross on Wye, as referred to in the RSS.

9. **Option B** places emphasis on social objectives being the driver for change in the County in accommodating new growth. The option emphasises addressing the impacts of deprivation, including income and employment deprivation and in terms of access to services and facilities (including housing) across the County and particularly in rural areas. The focus for growth would be towards Hereford and Leominster but with a dispersal of development to other market towns and sustainable settlements.
10. **Option C** provides an approach based upon environmental objectives. The option reflects the work on priority habitats emerging from the Landscapes for Living Project (2007) undertaken by the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership as well as Strategic River Corridors from the RSS. It also reflects the emerging Herefordshire Water Cycle and Green Infrastructure Studies. The focus of development in this option would be towards Hereford and the market towns as well as to sustainable settlements and within other areas where an environmental focus could be demonstrated. A key priority of the option would be to use the opportunities presented through growth to invest in the provision, restoration and enhancement of environmental assets ensuring a robust and adaptable environmental framework across the County.
11. **Option D** places specific emphasis upon housing objectives and focuses upon developing a new or expanded settlement. This option promotes the distribution of growth to Hereford, the market towns and a new or expanded settlement in the County. Further work would need to be carried out to identify sustainable locations for such a settlement. It is acknowledged that this option would not be in conformity with the existing or emerging RSS, which generally directs larger scale growth to existing settlements. However, there is continuing uncertainty regarding the regional housing requirement and the option may become more realistic if the housing targets of RSS revision are raised significantly above those that are currently proposed, such an option should be considered at this time even if it is discounted at a later date.
12. The Paper also focuses upon a number of place shaping options. For Hereford this includes:
  - options regarding the future role of the City;
  - the strategic distribution of housing, including an indication of potential directions of growth;
  - the potential for economic diversification;
  - retail provision and the development of the City centre; and

- transportation infrastructure
13. The Core Strategy will not contain a full range of development control policies as currently set out in the UDP. National planning policy guidance in PPS12: Local Development Frameworks indicates that local planning authorities should avoid producing a compendium of use-related development control policies and that policies should not repeat national planning policy statements. In addition the RSS now forms part of the development plan and its policies need not be repeated within the Core Strategy. However, there will continue to be a need for a set of generic policies for key topic areas and the options paper provides an opportunity for these policy areas to be explored. The context for these generic policies will, in part, be determined by the preferred spatial option and place shaping proposals, but there are options presented in the document for the development of policies for topics such as affordable housing, renewable energy, waste, minerals, flooding, water use, design, employment, health and open space provision.
  14. Options are also included regarding potential roles for each of the market towns, indicating where strategic growth could be distributed while recognising the existence of constraints in each place. The options document also considers the retail function and employment provision within the market towns. In the rural areas, the paper includes options for rural housing and employment and community facilities and services.
  15. In order to continue to make progress towards the preparation of the Core Strategy it is proposed that the Developing Options paper be published as a consultation document in mid June for an eight-week period. During the consultation period there will be significant publicity and specific stakeholder and Parish Council events. In addition, the Forward Planning Team will take a “roadshow” around Hereford, the market towns and Ewyas Harold. A questionnaire will be produced to accompany the Developing Options paper.
  16. In producing the options paper the evidence emerging from a number of studies has been utilised. Developing a robust evidence base is an important element in achieving a sound Core Strategy. A list of the technical studies, which will form significant elements of the evidence base, is set out in Appendix 3 at the back of the options paper. Of particular significance is the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and a separate report to this meeting is being made regarding this work. It is intended that other elements of the evidence base completed to date will be published with the Core Strategy.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the Committee recommend to the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) that the Herefordshire Core Strategy Developing Options Paper be considered for approval by Cabinet for public consultation.**

# Core Strategy: Developing Options Paper

..... 2008

Local Development Framework



# **Herefordshire Core Strategy: Developing Options Paper**

**May 2008**

## **Contents**

1. Introduction
2. What has already been decided?
3. Creating sustainable communities
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5. Strategic Options
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8. Delivery and Monitoring Framework
9. What happens next?

Glossary of Terms

## **Appendices**

- 1 Links between community strategy and core strategy
- 2 Links between core strategy and other plans
- 3 Evidence base

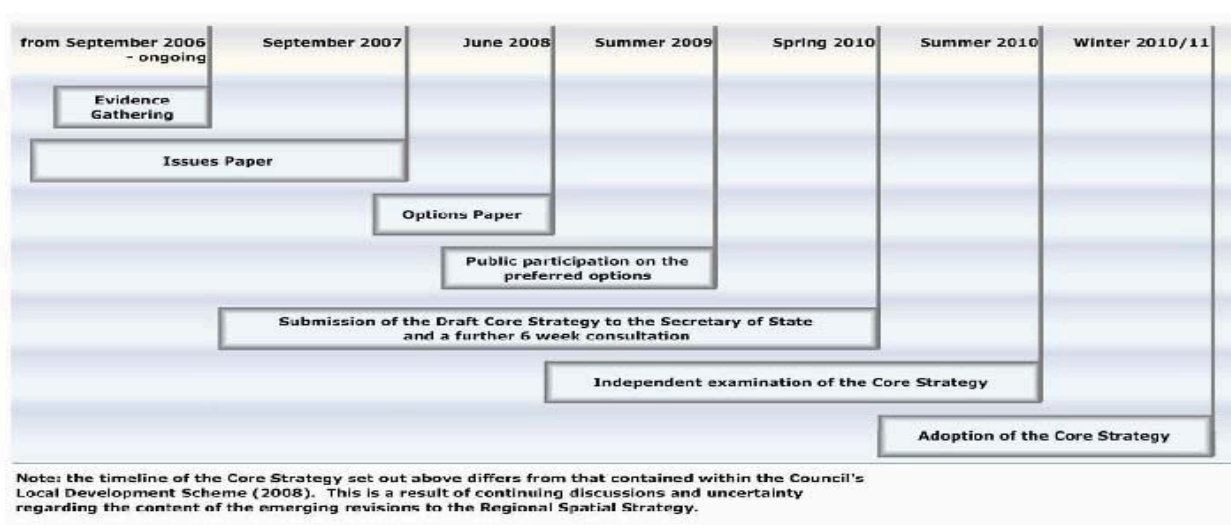
## 1. Introduction

### This Options Paper

This paper is the second stage in the production of the **Core Strategy** to shape Herefordshire up to the year 2026. It sets out some suggested ways forward or **Options** for dealing with the issues identified through the first stage of the Core Strategy preparation – the Issues Paper (September 2007).

### The Core Strategy

Shaping Herefordshire will involve looking at what the County is like today (a spatial portrait), agreeing a vision and objectives for what we want the County to be like in 2026 and deciding on a spatial strategy and policies to deliver that vision.



### The Local Development Framework for Herefordshire

The Core Strategy is just one key document that the Council is preparing as part of a series of planning documents known as the Local Development Framework or LDF. These documents will guide growth and change in the County over the next 20 years and will replace the existing, adopted Unitary Development Plan (March 2007).

Although the first statutory LDF document to be produced is the Core Strategy, the Council has produced the following other components of the LDF to date:

- Local Development Scheme (2008). Setting out the purpose, programme and timetable for each of the LDF documents,
- Annual Monitoring Report (December 2007). Reporting on the success or otherwise of the existing planning policies in Herefordshire,
- Statement of Community Involvement (March 2007). Providing a framework for engaging with the public and stakeholders in plan making and undertaking consultation



Various Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD's). Setting out more detailed planning guidance in respect of specific adopted planning policies and issues.

(see [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/forwardplanning](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/forwardplanning) for more details)

### **Your role?**

Your views and comments are needed to help us decide what options should be looked at in more detail. Please think about how the options in this document could affect your community and the problems or benefits that might result. What should our towns, villages and countryside look like in 2026 and beyond? How will they function? Will there be enough housing and jobs of the right type and in the right place? If you would like to have your say on these issues and help to develop the policies that will shape the future of your area, this is your opportunity.

We want your views to help develop a new planning strategy for the County. Attached to this document and on the Council's website you will find a questionnaire on the key points we want feedback on. Please answer the questionnaire, preferably online, as it helps us to use the information more efficiently and effectively and let us have your comments.

Please contact us if you need more information by

- e-mail: [ldf@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@herefordshire.gov.uk)
- in writing: P.O Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford HR4 OXH
- Fax: 01432 383031
- Phone: 01432 260500

## **2. What has already been decided?**

The Government's national policy and the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (called the regional plan for the purposes of this paper) already set the scene for the Herefordshire LDF, so the task of writing it does not start with a blank page. In this respect, some of the options for Herefordshire are limited by policies set at a higher level. However, the regional plan is currently being reviewed and so the Core Strategy we produce will need to be flexible and be able to take on board future changes that may be made to the regional plan. The requirements of the existing regional plan and the proposed revision to it are outlined below.

### **Current regional plan requires:**

- Concentrates development on the Major Urban Areas (conurbations);
- Outside of the conurbations, focus development on sub regional centres which includes Hereford, Worcester, Shrewsbury etc;
- New development should primarily meet locally generated needs to prevent commuting to the conurbations;
- A balanced network of town and city centres as the strategic focus for development, acting as service centres for their rural hinterlands;
- Transport networks improved;
- Total number of houses to be built between 2001 and 2021 in Herefordshire is **13,200** with an average of **600 houses per annum for the County**;
- 68% target on brownfield;
- In rural areas, the provision of new housing should generally be restricted to meeting local housing needs and/or to support local services; and
- Economic growth outside of the major urban areas should help meet the needs of rural renaissance, especially improving the market towns and can create more sustainable communities by providing a balance between housing and employment.

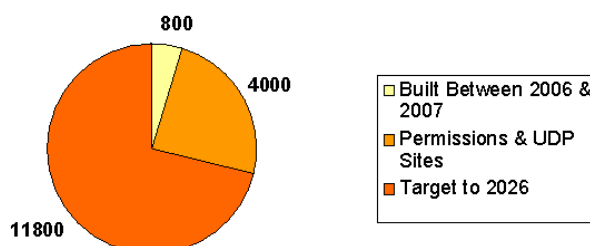
## Emerging regional plan (Phase 2 Revisions Preferred Option (January 2008))

- Enhanced levels of housing requirements across the Region;
- For Herefordshire this means **16,600 (830 per annum)** net new homes 2006-2026, half of which i.e. **8,300** are targeted in Hereford;
- Affordable housing target for the west housing market area (Herefordshire and Shropshire (excluding Telford and Wrekin)) of **700** homes per annum;
- Outside of Hereford, further development in the County focused within market towns acting as strategic locations for balanced growth whilst continuing to protect the environment and character of Herefordshire;
- Development in villages should support the need to meet local housing requirements, particularly needs for affordable housing; and promote local regeneration or support the retention or creation of local services. Development should be prioritised in villages which still have a range of services and within these, priority should be given to the reuse of previously developed land and the conversion of existing buildings;
- Targets for employment land of **111** hectares with a rolling 5 year reservoir of **37** hectares;
- Targets for retail floorspace of **60,000** sq m gross and office floorspace of **45,000** sq m gross, within or on the edge of Hereford centre.

It must be noted that the Phase 2 housing figures have not yet been examined and agreed. Although the figures for new homes are higher than that in the existing regional plan, they do not meet the national 2004 based household projections produced by central government. Given the current national momentum towards housing growth, it is possible that the Phase 2 housing figures for Herefordshire may rise further. The Core Strategy will therefore need to be flexible enough to take into account any future increases to the regional housing/employment requirements.

As well as having to take into account the requirements of the regional plan, the Core Strategy has to take account of what is actually being built in terms of housing provision in the County at present. Some development has already taken place in the County as part of the implementation of the current Unitary Development Plan. For instance, around 800 additional new homes were built in Herefordshire between 2006 and 2007. A further 4000 homes are likely to be built on sites identified in the adopted UDP or with the benefit of planning permission. If these sources of housing are developed, they will contribute to the overall housing target set by the regional plan.

Housing Needed in Herefordshire  
(2006 – 2026)



**Growth Points**

In October 2006 the Government announced it was entering into a long-term partnership for growth with local authorities in 29 places across the country, one of which was Hereford. The New Growth Point initiative is part of the Government's response to the 2004 Kate Barker report and is aimed at helping to increase the rate of house building in the country.

Hereford was considered appropriate for such an initiative because of its role as a focus in the sub-region, which is recognised in the regional plan. This sub-regional focus role reflects the extensive hinterland of the City for jobs, health, education and many other services.

### 3. Creating sustainable communities

The Herefordshire LDF will be about creating sustainable communities across Herefordshire, whether or not those communities are going to see major growth in terms of jobs or homes. The Government's definition of sustainable communities is that they are "places where people want to live and work, now and in the future". Key points for measuring this are that communities should be "active, inclusive and safe, well run, environmentally sensitive, well designed and built, well connected, thriving, well served and fair for everyone".

In practice, in relation to the Core Strategy, to achieve sustainable communities we need to be sure we are joined up in our thinking. This means relating our ideas to other strategies being produced inside and outside of the local authority and particularly the objectives of the Community Strategy and Council's priorities; using all the evidence base studies that we are undertaking to produce sound and robust strategies and policies; testing these against general objectives of sustainability; engaging the community at every stage and finally making things happen on the ground in terms of delivering development and the necessary infrastructure to support it. These issues are considered in turn.

#### **Links to the Community Strategy and Council's Priorities**

It is important that the Core Strategy reflects the aims of the Community Strategy, prepared by the Herefordshire Partnership, as well as the Council's key objectives/priorities. The table in Appendix 1 shows the links between the key elements of the Core Strategy and the Community Strategy. Herefordshire's Community Strategy was adopted in June 2006 and sets out a vision, guiding principles and outcomes for the period to 2020.

#### **Vision**

For Herefordshire for 2020:

**"Herefordshire will be a place where people, organisations and businesses working together within an outstanding natural environment will bring about sustainable prosperity and well being for all."**

#### **Guiding Principles**

The five Guiding Principles of the Herefordshire Community Strategy will ensure that we work towards Herefordshire being a sustainable County by considering the impacts of all proposed actions on communities, the environment and the economy.

The Guiding Principles are:

- Realise the potential of Herefordshire, its people and communities
- Integrate sustainability into all our actions
- Ensure an equal and inclusive society
- Build on the achievements of partnership working and ensure continual improvement
- Protect and improve Herefordshire's distinctive environment

#### **Outcomes**

These are the results of addressing the priorities for the County, links to which are shown under each of the suggested core strategy objectives set out in section 4 and in Appendix 1. As well as the community strategy, the plan needs to be aligned with other relevant strategies and programmes. Links to these are shown in Appendix 2.

## **Writing a sound Core Strategy**

When an independent inspector examines the Core strategy (see diagram on page 5), he or she will be looking at whether it is “sound”. The test will be whether the overall strategy and policies are soundly based and successfully address the needs and issues of Herefordshire. The evidence on which the strategy will be based will of course be continually developing and there will always be new or updated information to take account of, which is why the eventual plan will be regularly reviewed and changed where necessary.

This Options Paper describes what has been pulled together to date and what still needs to be done before deciding on a preferred option and producing a full Core Strategy. As studies that help in preparing the Core Strategy are finished they will be added to the Core Strategy pages of the Council’s web site. Appendix 3 sets out the evidence base studies being undertaken in detail.

## **Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment**

Alongside the Core Strategy a sustainability appraisal is being developed, to test the contribution the new strategy and its policies will make towards achieving more sustainable communities. A General Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the LDF and an Initial Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal for the Core Strategy (which will incorporate the requirements of the European Union Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)) can be found on the Council’s website. As part of the initial SA process a set of “sustainability objectives”, which cover many distinct aspects of sustainability, have been used to appraise the impact of the emerging ten Core Strategy objectives and the four spatial options. This appraisal will help identify the compatibility of the objectives and the relative effect of each option on sustainable development, and will contribute towards the decision on which policy options and objectives might be carried forward. The degree to which the option choices and preferred option furthers both climate change mitigation and adaptation will be a key element of the sustainability appraisal.

The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) must also be applied to the Core Strategy under the European Union Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). HRA aims to assess the potential effects of a land use plan against the conservation objectives of any sites designated for their nature conservation importance as part of a system known collectively as the Natura 2000 network of European sites.

European sites are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Union. These sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs, designated under the Habitats Directive) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs, designated under the Birds Directive). Under the Habitats Directive, the assessment must determine whether or not a plan will adversely affect the integrity of the European site(s) concerned. Where negative effects are identified, the process should consider alternatives to the proposed actions and explore mitigation opportunities. If it is impossible to avoid or remove the perceived adverse effect, the plan-makers must demonstrate, under the conditions of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest to continue with the proposal. This is widely perceived as an undesirable position and should be avoided if at all possible.

## **Engaging with the community**

Engaging with the community and stakeholders at the outset is a vital part of the new planning system. The aim for Herefordshire Council in this context is to achieve as wide ranging participation from the community as possible, within the constraints of limited resources. We are using existing community networks and other structures as far as possible to raise general awareness of the LDF amongst these organisations. The consultation programme leading to the Options stage of the Core Strategy was developed following the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and is explained in full in Consultation Statements Part 1 and 2, which can be viewed on the website.

## **Infrastructure**

Various facilities and services can be regarded as infrastructure, including roads, footpaths, sewerage, water mains, waste disposal, electricity, gas, telecommunications and so on, as well as community infrastructure such as public transport, schools, healthcare etc. In addition and in order to ensure sustainable communities are created, the consideration of the environment should be integrated into all development through the protection of and improvement to environmental infrastructure such as green infrastructure, sustainable urban drainage systems, organic waste composting/processing facilities and so on. The quality of infrastructure provision of all types can greatly affect the quality of people's lives. New housing and economic growth will increase pressure on existing service provision and infrastructure in an area. As the LDF preparation progresses, the Council will work with service and infrastructure providers, such as the area's water companies (Welsh Water and Severn Trent Water) and the Primary Care Trust, to identify where the current provision might already be under pressure and to ensure that forthcoming growth is planned for.

## **4 Spatial Vision and Objectives**

This next section sets out the spatial portrait, key issues, vision and objectives for the Core Strategy.

### **Spatial Portrait and characteristics of the County**

The compiling of a spatial portrait or characteristics of the County of Herefordshire has helped to identify the set of key issues set out in section 4.2. These are issues that have been apparent in the County for some time, are existing trends or new issues. All may present challenges and opportunities for the future.

#### **People**

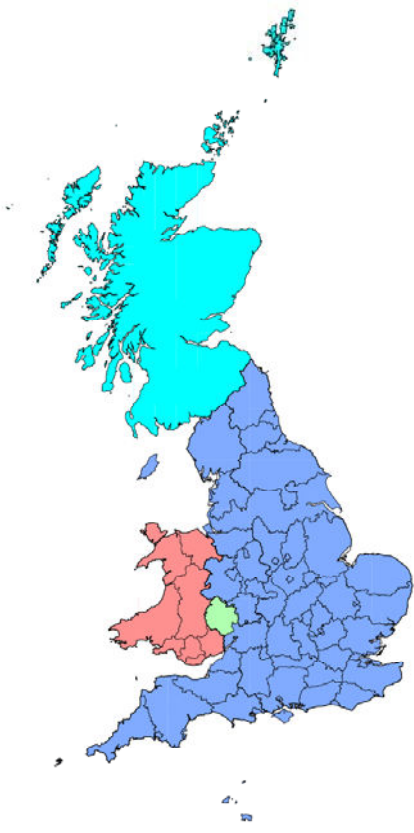
The population of Herefordshire at 2006 was estimated at 178,800. With the population density of the County at 0.8 people per hectare, Herefordshire is one of the five most sparsely populated counties in England. Population statistics indicate that the County's population will live longer, on average, than the population of England in general with increases over the last 12 years broadly in line with national trends. However, population trends also show that the population of the County is ageing more rapidly than the national population and the County also suffers from a marked loss of younger generations. Herefordshire is widely regarded as being an affluent County, but this reputation masks the extremes in both deprivation and poverty. Most parts of the County fall within the 10% most deprived nationally in terms of geographical access to services and barriers to housing and the average income of residents is significantly below both the regional and national averages, with pockets of severe deprivation in parts of Hereford and Leominster. Generally crime is below the national average although it is concentrated in specific areas.

#### **Natural and Built Environment**

Herefordshire is a rural, agricultural County located in the southwest corner of the West Midlands Region bordering Wales. It is considered to be the Midlands' most rural County and boasts a quality of landscape that is nationally acclaimed. Although large tracts of the landscape are of high quality, including parts of two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's), there is no vernacular style to the County's buildings. More typical are relatively small areas with common features.

Herefordshire contains 4 Special Areas of Conservation, numerous Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) and other designated areas, including 24 historic parks and gardens scheduled by English Heritage as being of national importance. In addition the County has a wealth of historic buildings with around 6000 being listed. There is an acknowledgement of the need to provide greater awareness of the importance of protecting and enhancing the County's natural and historic assets.

In order to tackle the issue of emissions of harmful substances, Air Quality Management Areas have been set up at Hereford, Leominster and the A40(T) Corridor.

LOCATION		GEOGRAPHY	
	<i>Status</i>	Unitary District	
	<i>Region</i>	West Midlands	
	<i>Area</i>	2, 180 Km <sup>2</sup>	
	<i>- District</i> <i>- Local Authority</i>	Ranked 3 <sup>rd</sup> largest (UK) Ranked 26 <sup>th</sup> (UK)	
	<i>Principal centres</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hereford</li> <li>▪ Bromyard</li> <li>▪ Kington</li> <li>▪ Ledbury</li> <li>▪ Leominster</li> <li>▪ Ross-on-Wye</li> </ul>	
<i>Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (parts of)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wye Valley</li> <li>▪ Malvern Hills</li> </ul>		
ADMINISTRATION		DEMOGRAPHICS	
<i>Parliamentary Constituencies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hereford</li> <li>▪ Leominster</li> </ul>	<i>Population</i>	Ranked 45 <sup>th</sup> (UK)
<i>Electoral Wards</i>	40	<i>- Total (2006)</i>	178,800
<i>Parishes</i>	238	<i>- Density</i>	82 / Km <sup>2</sup>
<i>Police authority</i>	West Mercia Constabulary	<i>- District</i>	Ranked 84 <sup>th</sup> (UK)
<i>Health authority</i>	Herefordshire Hospitals Trust, Herefordshire PCT	<i>Electorate</i>	135,297
<i>Fire authority</i>	Hereford & Worcester	<i>Ethnicity</i>	
<i>Water authorities</i>	Welsh Water/ Severn Trent	<i>- White British</i>	97.5%
		<i>- White Other</i>	1.6%
		<i>- Mixed</i>	0.4%
		<i>- Black / Asian</i>	0.5%
		<i>Minority communities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Roma Gypsy</li> <li>▪ Portuguese</li> <li>▪ Polish</li> </ul>



## **Climate Change and Flooding**

Addressing climate change will be a key element in the Core Strategy. The requirements to reduce the need to travel, tackle traffic congestion and improve air quality are elements which are connected to climate change. In addition, the design and location of new housing and other development, the management of waste and the development of renewable energy can also contribute to addressing the issue of climate change. Significant areas of Herefordshire are low-lying and are liable to flood risk. The impact of climate change and increased risk of flooding is being assessed in the emerging Water Cycle Study and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which will form part of the evidence base for this Core Strategy (Appendix 3). Another issue in relation to the impact of climate change is that of the changing face of the County through possible changes in agricultural practices and any knock on effects on the rural economy. This aspect may present opportunities for addressing the impacts of climate change head on, for e.g. using areas of land for biomass production or wind energy. Ever growing demands for water to supply new homes, industry and agriculture will also be affected by climate change. The issue of water availability will be a fundamental one for the Core Strategy.

## **Housing**

At March 2006 there were approximately 78,105 homes in Herefordshire, with 32% of these being located within Hereford. Owner occupation is high although there are significant variations across the County. The average house price is above the national average. House prices have risen much more steeply than earnings over the last decade, creating affordability issues in the process. Although the number of affordable housing completions has increased in recent years the completion rate will need to continue to increase significantly in order to achieve the targets set out in the Phase 2 preferred option for the regional plan. Many of the rural villages are attractive places to live for people wishing to commute to Hereford and further a field. Increases in housing targets will also require the provision of new infrastructure. In addition, although the County has performed well in recent years in maximising the development of brownfield land, there may well be a shortage of such land to accommodate the levels of new development emerging through the regional planning process.

## **Economy**

The 2001 Census gave Herefordshire's working population as 85,000 (68% of those aged 16-74), of whom 15% work outside Herefordshire. Manufacturing industries employ a larger share of the workforce than is the case nationally – this accounts for almost 18% of employment in the County. Agriculture remains a very important source of employment in Herefordshire making up 6.7% of the County's employment compared to the national average of 1.5%. Service sector activities are broadly under-represented along with technology and knowledge intensive industries, yet both have seen an increase in growth nationally. The tourism sector accounts for a relatively large share of employment in Herefordshire (5,610 full-time posts) when compared with the national or regional average. Self-employment throughout the County is high and the unemployment rate consistently remains below both the regional and national average at 1.5%.

## **Education**

The provision of education is very important to Herefordshire's economy with an estimated 6,027 jobs (nearly 7% of the total workforce). Herefordshire has a comprehensive education system with seven independent schools. Most state secondary schools provide for children aged 11-16. Sixth-form provision is limited throughout the County, but having received a glowing Ofsted report in 2006 Herefordshire College of Technology has spent £30 million on redeveloping itself as a 'Learning Village' in conjunction with Hereford College

of Art. The agreement to develop the Herefordshire Learning Village may positively improve access to higher education courses as well as training in the skills desired locally for those who continue their formal education beyond secondary school. However, the limited higher education provision in the County has been identified as a factor in the loss of the younger generation from the County's population.

Whilst there is limited higher education provision within Herefordshire, the County performs well at GCSE level with 63% of school leavers achieving 5 GCSE's A\* - C. In addition the County has a slightly lower proportion of people without qualifications compared to regionally and nationally, and over a quarter of the resident population is educated to degree level.

### **Transport**

Herefordshire plays a strategic role in facilitating cross boundary links between England and Wales. The County suffers from a limited strategic highway network and the externalities associated with these network limitations impact upon the communities that live along its most congested parts. The Highways Agency is responsible for the strategic road network; within Herefordshire these routes include the A49, A465 (south of Hereford), A40 and M50. In a nation context vehicle flows along these routes are low. But coupled with interactions between the local and strategic networks, the local and strategic vehicle flows results in congestion, most notably within Hereford.

Despite high car ownership rates the County enjoys a healthy sustainable transport network. This network includes a range of public transport options and serves Hereford and the Market Towns in addition to ever improving walking and cycling links. Whilst there has been a reduction in the number of local bus services operating in the past few years, bus patronage is beginning to increase. There are two rail lines, one operating East to West linking Hereford with Birmingham, the second operating North to South providing links with Newport and Manchester. In 2006 it was revealed that rail use had increased by 12% over the previous years.

Over the plan period car use will inevitably increase, and how this demand is managed will be crucial in addressing the likely growth in congestion, the economic viability and desirability of the County and the impacts upon air quality. The need for significant investment in transport infrastructure is acknowledged.

### **Shopping and Urban Regeneration**

With a population of 55,000, Hereford is identified as a sub-regional centre in the existing Regional Spatial Strategy and its traditional role has been to serve the administrative and commercial hinterland extending beyond the County. This sub-regional role will be further strengthened with additional central area retail development, guided by the Edgar Street Grid (ESG) Masterplan and Supplementary Planning Document, both of which may be found on the Council's website.

Additional central area retail development is essential to claw back expenditure currently used at shops in Worcester, Cheltenham and Gloucester, as well as over the Internet. It is considered vital to reverse the historic loss of business from shopping centres in Herefordshire, and the regeneration of ESG will play an important part in meeting this challenge. 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 the City plays a full role in the wider rural economy.

## **Waste**

The proportion of waste recycled in Herefordshire has increased over the past few years. Nevertheless, each year, the average Herefordshire household throws away approximately 522 kg of rubbish, which has important implications for landfill sites. The County is still not performing as well as other English Authorities placed within the bottom quartile (478 kg) and the local recycling rate currently stands at 19%. This figure is an improvement however on 15% in 2004-05 and there are plans to achieve a recycling rate of 50% by 2010. Minimising the amount of waste sent to landfill sites will be a continuing pressure during the period up to 2026 as will the need to become increasingly self sufficient in managing the waste produced in the County.

## **Culture, Leisure and Recreation**

It is estimated that the visitor economy in Herefordshire is now worth in excess of £290 million, due mainly to the attraction of the County's beautiful unspoilt countryside and the strong cultural offer of the market towns. The rate of growth is about 2% per annum with the region attracting 4.8 million visitors per year, of which 93% are day visitors. Visitor attractions are characterised by small, seasonal enterprises in family ownership. Some Herefordshire attractions have failed to sustain their visitor numbers, although overall this has been counterbalanced by growth in some newer enterprises. Investment in Herefordshire's tourism potential may provide significant benefits for the County.

The level of satisfaction with the cultural activities and facilities available in the County is fairly high, with satisfaction levels in the upper quartile for sports venues and libraries, and parks and open spaces. However, levels of satisfaction are slightly lower for museums and galleries. Hereford is well provided with open space, sports and leisure facilities, though there are variations in provision across the County. The provision of sports and leisure facilities can be quite poor in the remoter areas and so there is scope for improvement on many sites. The results of the emerging Open Space Study and Green Infrastructure Study (Appendix 3) will be used in developing policies for open space provision and enhancement in the Core Strategy.

## **Key Issues**

The following key issues reflect the 773 responses received to the Issues Paper consultation (September 2007); information from Parish Plan analysis; and the issues identified in the spatial portrait in section 4.1 above. The original 14 key issues that were detailed in the Issues Paper have been redefined as a result of this information. They are grouped here under sustainable development themes as follows:

### **Social Progress**

- Providing for the needs of all generations (KI 2)
- Ensuring appropriate housing provision and affordability (KI 4)
- Provision of and access to important services and facilities in urban and rural areas (KI 7)
- Improving transport infrastructure, choices, movement and communications throughout the County (KI 10)
- Reducing the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour (KI 13)

### **Economic Prosperity**

- The need to capitalise on educational achievements through higher education provision and skills development (KI 3)

- Diversification of the economy to higher value added industries such as research and development (KI 8)
- Regeneration of the County (KI 11)
- Promoting tourism and cultural activities in the County (KI 12)

### **Environmental Quality**

- Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding (KI 1)
- Protection and enhancement of environmental assets such as historic buildings, open spaces and designated sites (KI 5)
- Better use of resources including water, minerals, land, energy and promoting use of renewable energy and reducing waste generation throughout the County (KI 6)
- Improving poor air quality in specific locations due to vehicle pollution (KI 9)
- Ensuring high quality, locally distinctive, sustainable design and construction (KI 14)

The key issues numbers relate to the list as set out in the Issues Paper Consultation Statement – Part 2 (January 2008). The next section of the document sets out a vision and objectives for how these key issues can be addressed in the Core Strategy.

### **Vision and Objectives**

The Core Strategy's long-term vision must help deliver the Community Strategy (see section 3). In order to achieve this the following spatial vision is proposed:

#### ***Shaping our place 2026***

***Herefordshire will be a place of distinctive environmental, historical and cultural communities, with sustainable development fostering a high quality of life for those who live, work and visit the County.***

#### ***Social progress***

*By 2026, decent, affordable homes, jobs, health and community facilities will have been provided to meet the needs of all sections of the population creating safe, inclusive places and robust communities which promote good health and well-being. The opportunities and benefits from open space, leisure, shopping, sport, art, heritage, learning, health and tourism facilities and assets will be maximised enabling active lifestyles, reducing pollution and improving quality of life and retention of young people. Residents and workers will have a reduced need to travel by car with opportunities for active travel i.e. walking and cycling promoted. The trend of growing harmful environmental impacts from traffic growth will be lessened. In Hereford, congestion will be managed and public transport improved through the provision of a new outer distributor road, park and ride and bus priority schemes. Residents will have the opportunity to contribute to the shaping of their place.*

#### ***Economic prosperity***

*By 2026, Herefordshire will have a thriving local economy, with a balanced and diversified business base, an adaptable and skilled workforce. Workplace and resident incomes will compare favourably with the regional average and where a genuine commitment by all businesses to sustainable development underpins a unique quality of life. Educational developments will be promoted which bolster and support local resources and strengths, such as food production, forestry, equestrian expertise and tourism. With the implementation of the Edgar Street Grid proposals, Hereford will be a strong sub-regional shopping, employment, leisure and cultural focus for the County. The market towns will*

*be distinctive, thriving service centres that are better linked to their catchment villages. Our village-based services will be more economically resilient and better integrated. Herefordshire will be a sought after destination for quality leisure visits and sustainable tourism by more fully utilising, but respecting, the County's unique environmental capital.*

### **Environmental quality**

*Herefordshire's growth will be accommodated in ways to ensure that the environment is sufficiently robust to adapt to the wider impacts of climate change, including minimising pollution, ensuring availability of water resources and providing appropriate waste management facilities. Networks of connected, well managed and accessible natural green spaces will provide a range of enhanced leisure and health benefits within and between towns, villages and the countryside. Local food production and processing will be fostered whilst supporting stewardship of soils and water, biodiversity and the characteristic Herefordshire landscape. The area's natural beauty and quality of landscape, biodiversity, built development and cultural heritage will be enhanced. It will underpin and foster growth and innovation in businesses and jobs; being accessed, appreciated and actively supported by more people, for more purposes, in all walks of life.*

**To achieve the vision, the following objectives are proposed.**

### **Social Progress**

- 1. To ensure sufficient homes, with a mix of house types and tenures, are built in sustainable locations in the period to 2026, to meet the housing needs of all sections of the community in accordance with the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (Phase 2 Revision).**

#### **Key Issues addressed:**

Addressing an ageing population and the loss of younger generations (KI 2)  
Ensuring appropriate housing provision (KI 4)  
Ensuring high quality, locally distinctive, sustainable design and construction (KI 14)

#### **Community Strategy Outcomes:**

Cleaner, greener communities  
People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged  
Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice

- 2. To improve the health, well-being and quality of life of Herefordshire residents by improving access to, provision and use of, improved public open spaces, recreation, education, cultural and health facilities in urban and rural areas.**

#### **Key Issues addressed:**

Addressing an ageing population and the loss of young people (KI 2)  
Protecting and enhancing environmental assets (KI 5)  
Provision/access to important services/facilities (KI 7)  
Improving transport infrastructure, choices and movement (KI 10)  
Reducing the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour (KI 13)  
Ensuring high quality, locally distinctive, sustainable design and construction (KI 14)

#### **Community Strategy Outcomes:**

Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles

Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice  
Children and young people are healthy and have healthy lifestyles  
Children and young people engage in positive behaviour inside and out of school  
Children and young people achieve educational, personal, social and physical standards  
People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged

- 3. To meet the needs and aspirations of all generations through the provision and/or improvement, throughout the County, of higher education, skills development and training facilities to retain young people in the County and ensure life-long learning for all generations and support the economy.**

**Key Issues addressed:**

Addressing an ageing population and the loss of young people (KI 2)  
Need to capitalise on educational achievements (KI 3)  
Provision/access to important services/facilities (KI 7)  
Diversification of the economy (KI 8)

**Community Strategy Outcomes:**

More and better paid employment  
A more adaptable and higher skilled workforce  
Children and young people achieve educational, personal, social and physical standards  
Children and young people engage in further education, employment and training on leaving school

- 4. To locate development in sustainable locations where access to employment, shopping, education, health, recreation, leisure and other services are available by public transport, walking and cycling in order to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car, and thus lessen the trend of growing harmful impacts from traffic growth and promote active travel to improve quality of life and protect the environment.**
- 5. To ensure improved accessibility and movement from rural areas to urban areas and within urban areas to key services, places of work and recreation through the better provision and integration of safe, affordable and frequent travel choices and traffic management throughout Herefordshire, plus the provision of an outer distributor road for Hereford, in order to improve the quality of life for County residents, businesses and visitors alike.**

**Key Issues addressed**

Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding (KI 1)  
Improving air quality (KI 9)  
Improving transport infrastructure, choices and movement (KI 10)

**Community Strategy Outcomes:**

Reduced traffic congestion through access to better integrated transport provision  
People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged  
Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles  
Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice

## **Economic Prosperity**

- 6. To diversify and strengthen the employment base by attracting higher value added industries and cutting edge environmental technologies to Herefordshire, as well as enabling local businesses to start, grow and diversify, in order to raise resident incomes.**

### **Key Issues addressed**

An ageing population and the loss of younger people (KI 2)  
Need to capitalise on educational achievements (KI 3)  
Diversification of the economy (KI 8)  
Regeneration of the County (KI 11)  
Promoting tourism and culture (KI 12)

### **Community Strategy Outcomes:**

More and better paid employment  
A more adaptable and higher skilled workforce  
Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles  
Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice

- 7. To enhance the County's service centres and thus the economy by: providing better linkages between Hereford, the market towns and their catchment villages; improving the economic resilience and integration of village-based services; and implementing the Edgar Street Grid proposals in Hereford.**

### **Key issues addressed**

Provision/access to important services and facilities (KI 7)  
Regeneration of the County (KI 11)  
Tourism and culture (KI 12)  
Ensuring high quality, locally distinctive, sustainable design and construction (KI 14)

### **Community Strategy Outcomes:**

More and better paid employment  
A more adaptable and higher skilled workforce  
Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles  
Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice

- 8. To develop Herefordshire as a destination for quality leisure visits and more sustainable tourism by utilising the opportunities provided by, and contributing to the maintenance and restoration of, our high quality natural and built environment through increased provision of tourist accommodation in urban areas and visitor information/facilities in rural areas.**

### **Key issues addressed**

Protecting and enhancing environmental assets (KI 5)  
Diversification of the economy (KI 8)  
Regeneration of the County (KI 11)  
Promoting tourism and culture (KI 12)

### **Community Strategy Outcomes:**

More and better-paid employment  
Cleaner and greener communities

## **Environmental Quality**

- 9. To work with partners to deliver well designed places, spaces and buildings which use land efficiently, reduce the consumption of natural resources through sustainable construction methods, increase the use of renewable forms of energy, reduce waste and pollution and addressing the wider impacts of climate change including flood risk and the availability of water supply and sewerage facilities.**

### **Key Issues addressed**

Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding (KI 1)  
Ensuring appropriate housing provision and affordability (KI 4)  
Protecting and enhancing environmental assets (KI 5)  
Better use of resources (KI 6)  
Provision/access to services and facilities (K 7)  
Improving air quality (KI 9)  
Improving transport infrastructure, choices and movement (KI 10)  
Reducing the opportunity for crime and anti-social behaviour (KI 13)  
Ensuring high quality, locally distinctive, sustainable design and construction (KI 14)

### **Community Strategy Outcomes:**

Reducing levels of, and fear of, crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour  
Cleaner, greener communities  
People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged

- 10. To conserve, promote, utilise and enjoy our natural, built, historic and cultural assets for the fullest benefits to the whole community by safeguarding the County's current stock of environmental capital from loss and damage, reversing negative trends and ensuring best condition as well as enhancing and appropriately managing future green space.**

### **Key Issues addressed**

Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding (KI 1)  
Protecting and enhancing environmental assets (KI 5)  
Better use of resources (KI 6),  
High quality, local distinctive sustainable design and construction (KI 14)

### **Community Strategy Outcome:**

Reducing levels of, and fear of, crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour  
Cleaner, greener communities  
People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged



## 5 Strategic Options

### Which spatial strategy for Herefordshire?

This section outlines strategic “options” for growth - where it should go and what it might mean on the ground. The options reflect different approaches, emphases’ and priorities based on the objectives set out in the previous section, but are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The preferred strategy could be a combination of one or more of these options, or an entirely new approach. However, the final Core Strategy must reflect national and regional planning objectives and be tested by a Sustainability Appraisal, which will assess its social, economic and environmental performance.

The emerging regional plan gives a strong steer to the approach to be taken for Herefordshire:

- Hereford is to provide a sustainable focus for housing and employment growth with improved services and facilities including transport;
- Outside of Hereford, further development in the County will be focused within market towns acting as strategic locations for balanced housing and employment growth whilst continuing to protect the environment and character of Herefordshire. The appropriate level of growth for each town needs to be identified in the Core Strategy; and
- Development in villages should support the need to meet local housing requirements, particularly needs for affordable housing and promote local regeneration or support the retention or creation of local services. Development should be prioritised in villages that still have a range of services, and within these, priority should be given to the reuse of previously developed land and the conversion of existing buildings.

The options set out in this section relate to whether we focus the direction of new growth based on:

A The desire to promote Herefordshire’s economy (an economic option) with an eastern focus for development; or

B Prioritising the regeneration of areas of the County suffering from greatest social deprivation with a dispersed focus for development; or

C The protection and enhancement of our distinctive environmental assets (an environmental option) with a concentrated focus of development; or

D A new or expanded settlement option which would not necessarily be a separate option to A, B or C above, but which may be necessary depending on the level of growth required by the revisions to the housing figures in the regional plan.

The issues of addressing the impact of climate change and environmental protection and enhancement are recognised as being critical to the development of any sustainable spatial strategy. They will be fundamental elements of all of the identified options. Option C specifically reflects the extent to which new development could be used to enhance existing or provide new assets.

The emerging evidence base will continue to be used to help inform the choice of spatial strategy appropriate for the County. Developing a spatial strategy is about the planning of spaces in an integrated, sustainable fashion and for Herefordshire this really means planning for the development of its “places” – we have defined these for the purposes of this Options paper as Hereford, the Market Towns (Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross on Wye) and the Rural Areas, including all the rural settlements.

## **A Focus on the economy**

This option places emphasis on economic objectives being the driver for change in accommodating growth. It reflects the Economic Development Strategy for Herefordshire.

It would focus housing and employment growth to Hereford, Leominster and the market towns and hinterland settlements in the south and east of the County (around Bromyard, Ross-on-Wye and Ledbury) where employment demand is greatest. This latter area is referred to in the Economic Development Strategy as the 'eastern corridor'. This option also draws upon the potential for transport improvements to support economic growth in the towns and settlements based on the A49 Corridor, including Hereford, Leominster and Ross on Wye, as referred to in the regional plan. New growth would be focused at these locations at levels appropriate to the settlement size and function, character and environmental capacity.

If significant elements of this option are preferred, consideration could also be given to incorporating elements of Option D i.e. a new or expanded settlement, depending on the level of growth required by revisions to the housing figures of the regional plan.

This option is illustrated in Figure 1 and summarised in Table 1.

### **Key issues emphasised:**

- Addressing an ageing population and the loss of younger generations (KI 2)
- The need to capitalise on educational achievements through higher education provision and skills development (KI 3)
- Ensuring appropriate housing provision and affordability (KI 4)
- Diversification of the economy to higher value added industries such as research and development (KI 8)
- Improving transport infrastructure, choices, movement and communications throughout the County (KI 10)
- Promoting tourism and cultural activities in the County (KI 12)

### **Advantages:**

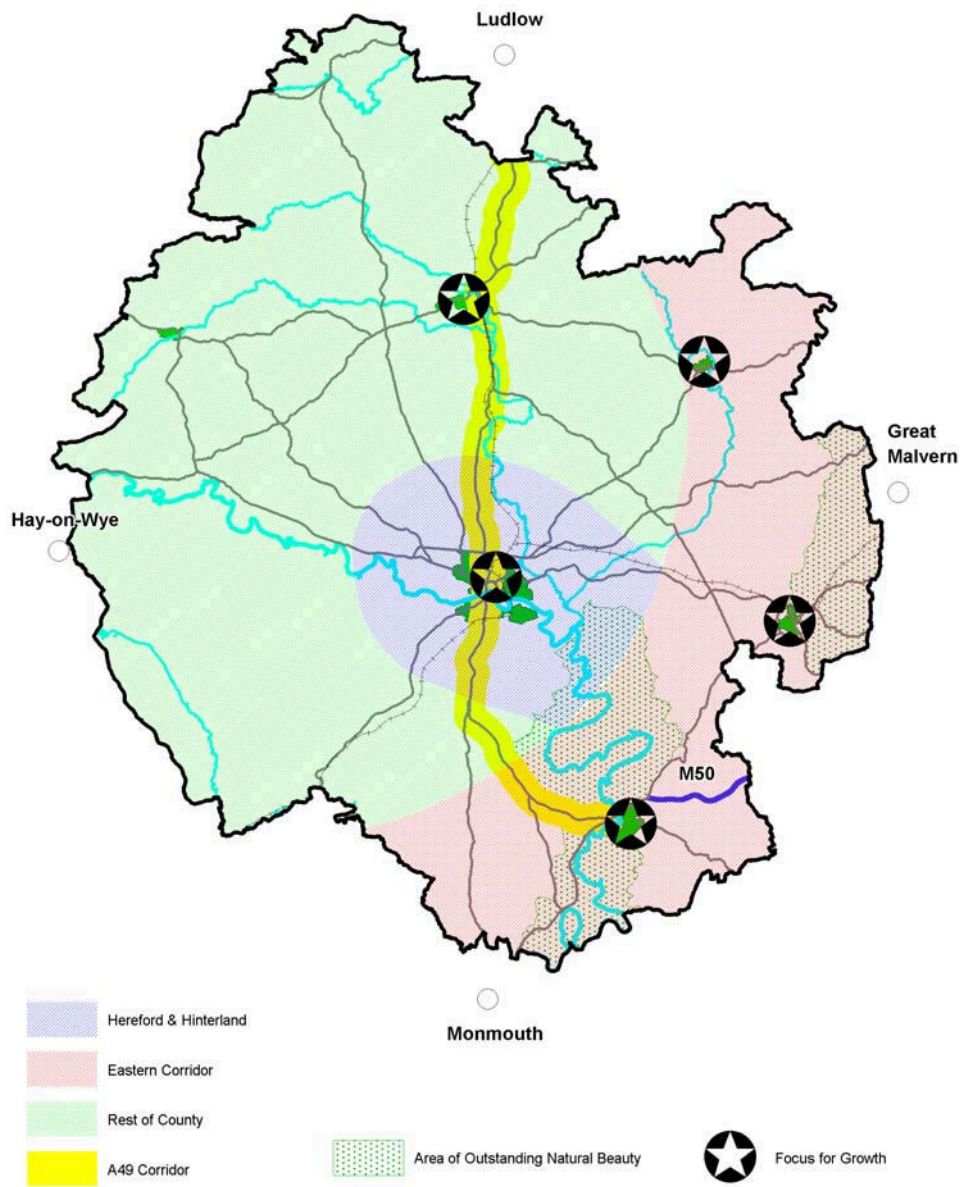
- directs new housing and employment growth to key centres, allowing for a possible reduction in the number and length of travel to work journeys and reduced traffic congestion, emissions and air pollution;
- targets development in more economically sustainable locations;
- provides opportunities for mixed use developments, with a suitable balance of housing, employment, retail and community facilities;
- enables employment land with little prospect of development to be used for other purposes;
- focuses development to areas of the County with highest demand for housing/employment and with greatest potential for delivery;
- would also have emphasis on promoting small-scale businesses for the rural economy;
- development could help provide new community facilities/infrastructure.

### **Disadvantages:**

- some existing settlements in areas where growth would be focused have little surplus brownfield land and new growth might result in the change to valued landscapes;
- expansion beyond the historic limits of existing settlements would impinge on character;

- some settlements are small and have few community facilities and limited public transport and people may still need to travel by car to shops, schools and leisure facilities;
- there is uncertainty, given recent past low levels of employment land take-up that areas of existing high employment demand will continue to be significant employment centres in the future;
- focusing growth around the most accessible parts of the County would also serve the wider sub-regional housing market encouraging commuting both into and out of the County; and
- focusing growth on the east of County may be regarded as neglecting the rural west in terms of providing housing and employment.

Figure 1 showing the main elements of Option A



## **B Focus on society**

This option places emphasis on social objectives or regeneration being the driver for change in the County in accommodating new growth. Regeneration is about addressing the impacts of deprivation, which for Herefordshire means tackling income and employment deprivation in parts of Hereford and Leominster as well as tackling deprivation in terms of access to services and facilities (including housing) across the rest of the County and particularly in rural areas.

The focus for growth would be towards Hereford and Leominster but with a dispersal of development to other market towns and sustainable settlements (yet to be determined). New growth would be focused at these locations at levels appropriate to the settlement size and function, character and environmental capacity. This approach has sub-options, which vary in relation to how we could address the accessibility of services.

The sub-options include:

- (i) Continue to plan by using a ranking of settlements whereby the places with the best level of existing services would generally be the focus for new development (this is similar to the approach taken in the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP)); or
- (ii) Plan for groups of market towns and/or settlements to share services and facilities in a way that keeps travel more local, and plan for better transport links, new housing and employment as part of this approach; or
- (iii) Focus new development to those settlements served by existing or potential sustainable public transport, including railway stations shown as accessible areas on figure 2. There are currently railway stations in Hereford, Leominster, Ledbury and Colwall. In addition there may be potential to develop new facilities elsewhere, for example at settlements located close to railway lines.

If significant elements of this option are preferred, consideration could also be given to incorporating elements of Option D i.e. a new or expanded settlement, depending on the level of growth required by revisions to the housing figures of the regional plan.

This option is illustrated in figure 2 and summarised in Table 1.

### **Key Issues emphasised:**

- Addressing an ageing population and the loss of younger generations (KI 2)
- Ensuring appropriate housing provision and affordability (KI 4)
- Provision of and access to important services and facilities in urban and rural areas (KI 7)
- Diversification of the economy to higher value added industries such as research and development (KI 8)
- Regeneration of the County (KI 11)
- Improving transport infrastructure, choices, movement and communications throughout the County (KI 10)
- Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding (KI 1)
- Improving poor air quality in specific locations due to vehicle pollution (KI 9)

### **Advantages:**

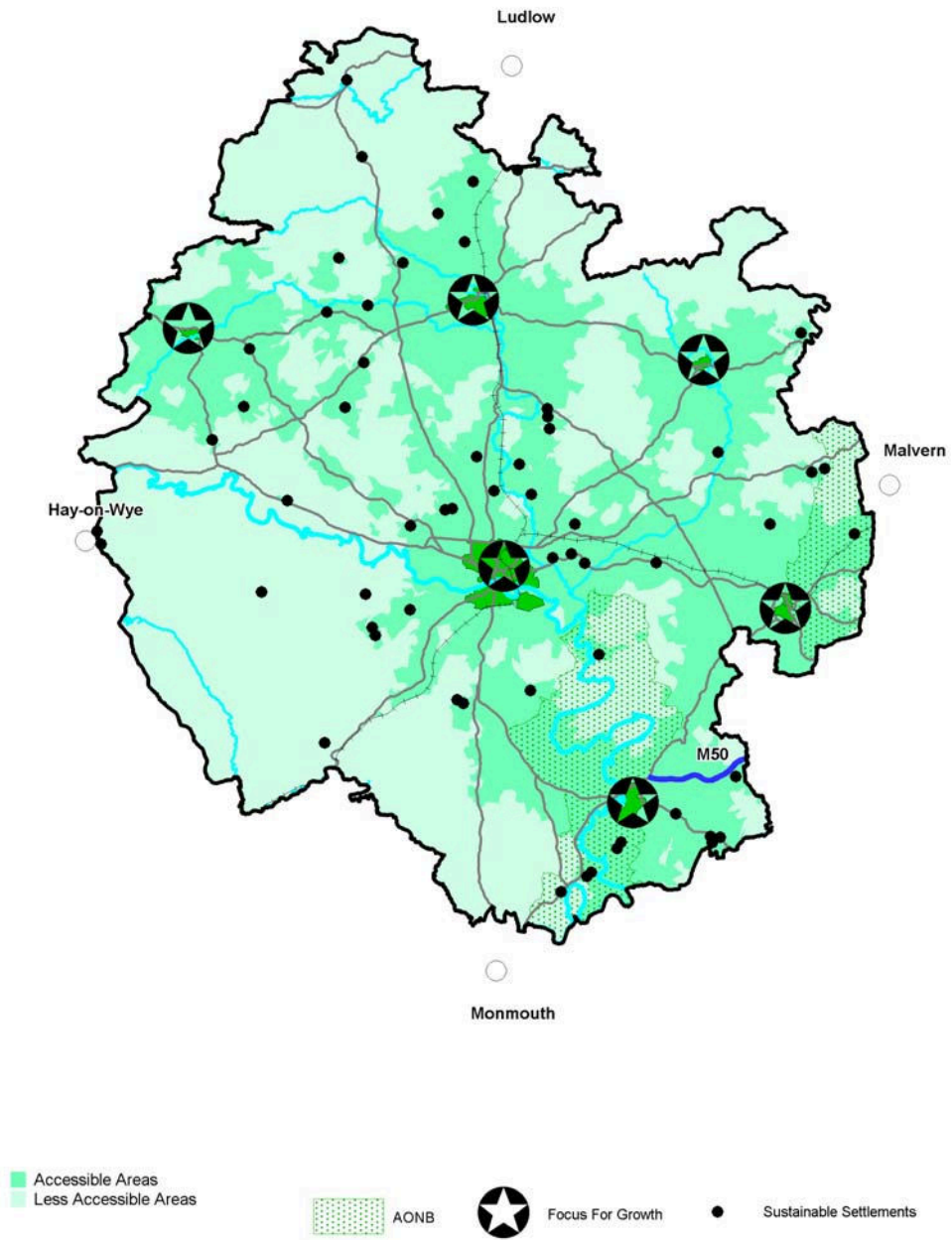
- concentrating resources in established service centres is highly sustainable in terms of reducing the need to travel and cost effective;
- strong emphasis placed on regeneration principles;

- recognises the needs of the whole County;
- would facilitate travel by public transport;
- would still provide significant opportunities for developer contributions towards infrastructure and community facilities which could enhance the range and quality of local services and reduce levels of social exclusion;
- new job opportunities created in rural and urban areas could reduce the need for local people to travel further a field to work.

**Disadvantages:**

- some existing settlements in areas where growth would be focused have little surplus brownfield land and new growth might result in the change to valued landscapes;
- some settlements are small and have few community facilities and limited public transport and people may still need to travel by car to jobs, shops, schools and leisure facilities, unless enhanced provision could be made locally;
- expansion beyond the historic limits of existing settlements would impinge on their character;
- an emphasis on social regeneration may work against market forces leading either to non-delivery of proposals or reducing opportunities for obtaining community facilities/infrastructure from development;
- in sub option (iii) the rail network may not have the capacity, without significant investment, to cope with the increased demand resulting from growth and car use may still increase;
- could encourage travel out of the County for jobs, particularly if new employment uses could not be delivered alongside housing development.

Figure 2 showing the main elements of Option B





## C Focus on environment

This option places emphasis on environmental objectives being the driver for change in the County in accommodating new growth. A key priority of the option would be to use the opportunities presented through growth to invest in the provision, restoration and enhancement of environmental assets ensuring a robust and adaptable environmental framework across the County and beyond. The option reflects the work on priority habitats emerging from the Landscapes for Living Project (2007) undertaken by the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership (which seeks to build upon the foundation of the Biodiversity Enhancement Areas as set out in the regional plan) as well as Strategic River Corridors. It also reflects the Herefordshire Water Cycle and Green Infrastructure Studies (see Appendix 3).

The focus of development in this option would be towards Hereford and the market towns as well as to sustainable settlements (yet to be determined) within areas where growth could help to deliver either:

- protection or enhancement of **priority areas of high value** where single or multiple environmental assets are currently clustered or concentrated as shown on Figure 3, e.g. restoration of wetland areas along the floodplains of the western reaches of the River Wye; and/or
- the creation or retention of a minimum standard of new, restored or enhanced environmental assets in areas of **fewer assets and/or lesser quality** shown on Figure 3, for example a new Country Park or raising air quality levels.

New growth would be focused at these locations at levels appropriate to the settlement size and function, character and environmental capacity and would need to work alongside other mechanisms such as local partnership actions, government incentives and so on, to enable well targeted and lasting environmental gains in a given locality.

As with options A and B if significant elements of this option are preferred, consideration could also be given to incorporating elements of Option D i.e. a new or expanded settlement, depending on the level of growth required by revisions to the housing figures of the regional plan.

This option is illustrated in Figure 3 and Table 1.

### Key Issues emphasised

- Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding (KI 1)
- Protection and enhancement of environmental assets such as heritage assets, open spaces and designated sites (KI 5)
- Better use of resources including water, minerals, land, energy and promoting use of renewable energy and reducing waste generation throughout the County (KI 6)
- Ensuring high quality, locally distinctive, sustainable design and construction (KI 14)
- Environmental regeneration of the County (KI 11)
- Promoting tourism and cultural activities in the County (KI 12)

### Advantages:

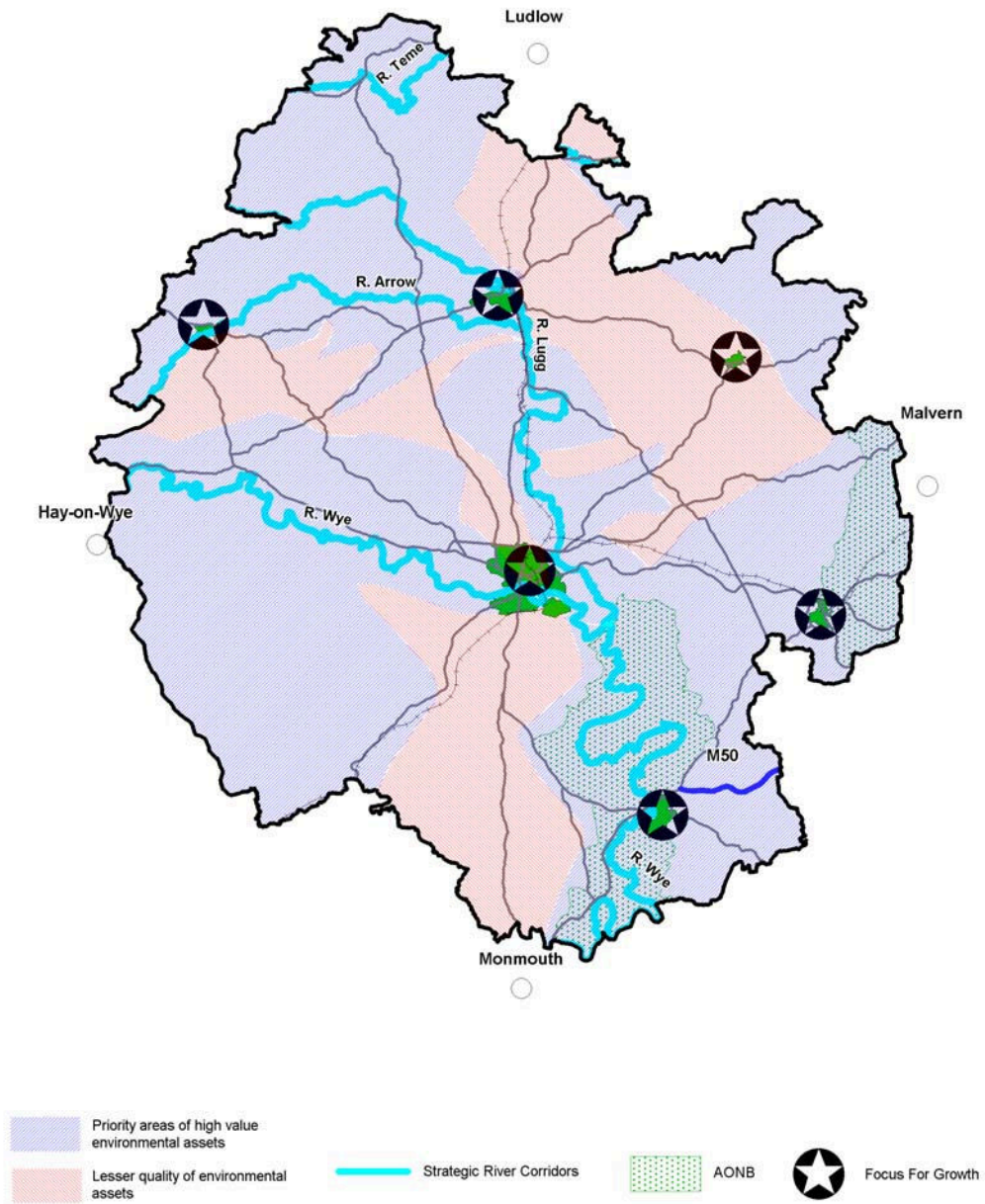
- protects and enhances the environmental assets that are characteristic of Herefordshire;

- focussing development to the selected areas could enhance their character and value with knock on effects for the economy, tourism and well-being;
- enhancing environmental assets within easy access of major areas of population would contribute to health and well-being;
- realise opportunities for environmental enhancement from climate change e.g. adaptation;
- avoid inappropriate development in areas at potential risk from flooding.

**Disadvantages:**

- would still result in loss of countryside because of level of housing growth required but targeted to ensure environmental enhancement;
- opportunities for obtaining community facilities/infrastructure improvements from development in other settlements would be limited.
- may have more limited impact in terms of reducing the need to travel for the majority of residents of the County;
- may not entirely realize social needs and economic demands;

Figure 3 showing the main elements of Option C



## **D Focus on a new or expanded settlement**

This option places specific emphasis on housing objectives and promotes the distribution of growth to Hereford, the market towns and a new or expanded settlement in the County. Further work would need to be carried out to identify sustainable locations for such a settlement. It is acknowledged that this option would not be in conformity with the existing or emerging regional plan, which generally directs larger scale growth to existing settlements. However, there is continuing uncertainty regarding the regional housing requirement and the option may become more realistic if the housing targets of the regional plan are raised significantly above those that are currently proposed. It is a requirement under national planning objectives to consider all the possible realistic options for development of the County as part of this Options Paper.

No potential areas or locations for a new settlement have been identified at present. It may be that a new settlement could be an element within Option A, B or C. In such a circumstance, the areas of the County identified as being a focus for growth would provide the basis for areas of search to locate a new settlement. However, any new settlement would not be proposed in an area where significant damage to the County's environmental assets would result from the development or within areas at significant risk of flooding. At the same time it would be important to ensure that any new settlement was located in an area which is, or has the potential to be, easily accessible by a range of travel modes, is attractive to the market in respect of employment and housing demand and fits in all other respects with regional sustainability requirements.

### **Key Issues emphasised**

- Ensuring appropriate housing provision and affordability (KI 4)
- Improving transport infrastructure, choices, movement and communications throughout the County (KI 10);
- Diversification of the economy to higher value added industries such as research and development (KI 8);
- Regeneration of the County (KI 11);
- Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding (KI 1);
- Protection and enhancement of environmental assets such as historic buildings, open spaces and designated sites (KI 5);
- Improving poor air quality in specific locations due to vehicle pollution (KI 9)
- Ensuring high quality, locally distinctive, sustainable design and construction (KI 14).

### **Advantages:**

- a new settlement could be developed in a sustainable manner, incorporating the necessary infrastructure and utilising developer contributions effectively;
- it would provide an opportunity to develop significant levels of affordable housing within the new settlement;
- it potentially could reduce the strain on existing infrastructure in the other settlements;
- a focus on one place outside of Hereford and the market towns may help to protect the historic character and distinctiveness of the majority of other, settlements;
- any new settlement would need to include a centre, containing a number of shops, health care facilities and community buildings which would be provided with developer contributions;
- the proposal has potential to improve the provision of public transport in and around the new/expanded settlement itself and to provide links to existing centres;

- the scale of development will better facilitate on site renewable energy generation and adoption of zero or low carbon development and sustainable construction techniques.

#### **Disadvantages**

- there would be a significant visual change to the local area;
- the proposal would have little impact in terms of reducing the need to travel for the majority of residents of the County;
- opportunities for obtaining community facilities/infrastructure improvements and affordable housing as part of development in other settlements would be reduced;
- concern that the scale of development required to provide a balanced community may not be able to be delivered within the plan period;
- depending upon its size and location a new/expanded settlement could impact detrimentally upon the role of existing market towns and rural service centres.

*Question: Do you agree that this option of a new or expanded settlement in the County is a realistic option for accommodating new housing provision?*

*Question: If so, do you have any suggestions as to where a new or expanded settlement could be located? Please specify.*

<b>Table 1- Summary of growth impact of options on both the County and its places</b>				
<b>Places</b>	<b>Options</b>			
	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>Herefordshire</b>	Focus on Hereford and the eastern side of the County	Focus on Hereford the market towns and sustainable settlements or groups of settlements with existing services or the potential to support new services.	Focus on Hereford, the market towns and specific areas of environmental enhancement	Focus on Hereford, the market towns and a new or expanded settlement
<b>Hereford</b>	Significant growth.	Significant growth	Significant growth	Significant growth
<b>Bromyard</b>	Focus for growth	Focus for growth	Focus for growth	Focus for growth
<b>Kington</b>	Limited growth			
<b>Ledbury</b>	Focus for growth			
<b>Leominster</b>				
<b>Ross on Wye</b>				
<b>The Rural Areas</b>	Levels of growth appropriate to the settlement size, function, character and environmental capacity in the hinterland settlements of Hereford, Ross on Wye, Ledbury and Bromyard.	Levels of growth appropriate to the settlement size and function, character and environmental capacity in sustainable settlements with existing services or those with potential to support new ones	Levels of growth appropriate to the settlement size and function, character and environmental capacity in sustainable settlements within areas on Figure 3, but related to identified needs for environmental enhancement in the local area.	Possible new or expanded settlement in an area yet to be determined.

**Key:**

**Significant growth:** Based on regional plan target of 8300 houses to Hereford over the next 20 years

**Focus for growth:** appropriate to the settlement size and function, character and environmental capacity.

**Limited growth:** involving current supply, windfalls, conversions and minor settlement infilling only.

**Sustainable settlements:** - with a level of population, services and public transport yet to be determined.

## **6 “Shaping our Place” Options**

### **What roles should our places have in the future?**

This section outlines ‘place shaping’ policy options. Planning should help to create pleasant and thriving places where people want to live and work, in safe and attractive physical environments with a strong community sense of well-being. ‘Shaping our Place’ in Herefordshire will seek to create or maintain a sense of identity for the places across the County. Herefordshire comprises Hereford and five market towns, each distinctive from each other, and over 200 “settlements” set within a wider rural area. The Core Strategy will include strategic policies for Hereford, market towns and settlements within the rural area. A Hereford Area Action Plan and a ‘Market Towns and Rural Areas’ DPD will be produced to expand upon these strategic policies.

A major part of place shaping will be to define the roles of our places and how they interact together. The regional plan gives a steer on the approach to be taken to the hierarchy of settlements within the County as highlighted within section 5.

The Core Strategy needs to identify where the housing, employment and retail that will be needed by 2026 will be directed. It will need to do this by identifying the amount of additional growth that is right for Hereford, the market towns and the rural areas and providing guidance on any proposed sustainable urban extensions. To guide the distribution of growth within an area, a settlement hierarchy will need to be established. Work is currently being undertaken to establish the level of facilities and services that are available in each settlement – emerging results are available in the Settlement Hierarchy Background Paper available on the Core Strategy web pages.

The following options consider the future role of Herefordshire’s settlements, how they interact together and the distribution of strategic growth in Hereford, the market towns and rural areas. The eventual distribution will be dependent upon the choice of the preferred option for the County (section 5).

An initial assessment of housing sites has been undertaken as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (referred to in the following text as the Housing Land Study) being carried out as part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy. The Study is at a very early stage but has been used here as a guide as to the potential for new homes in Hereford and the market towns.

### **Hereford**

In considering the role Hereford will play in the County in 2026 and beyond, it is important to recognise the challenges of delivering the likely level of growth required for Hereford. As highlighted within section 5.1 and the regional plan, half the housing growth is targeted towards Hereford. There are options about how we are to accommodate the growth required in Hereford.

Hereford is subject to a large regeneration project, known as the Edgar Street Grid. This area comprises 43 hectares of land and will incorporate retail, leisure, office, commercial and housing development. The Core Strategy will need to take this redevelopment into account and help to ensure that the city benefits from the proposals. In order to provide more detailed policy and guidance to help deliver the growth in Hereford, an Area Action Plan will be produced, reflecting Hereford’s status as a growth point and a settlement of significant development.

The Core Strategy will need to address the strategic policy options for Hereford, including defining its role, directing strategic housing/employment growth, ensuring regeneration taking into account the development of the Edgar Street Grid area, providing for an appropriate level of retail provision and ensuring that the resulting transportation and other infrastructure requirements of further growth to the City are provided for.

## **The Role of Hereford**

### **Hereford's current role:**

Hereford is a cathedral city, which provides the focus for employment, retail, education, health and other services for the much of the County and beyond. It is centrally located and is the administrative centre for Herefordshire. Hereford's current role is as a traditional market and County town.

Hereford has a number of strengths, which include tourism, culture and heritage and food and drink manufacturing. It may be possible for planning policy and growth to be targeted to enable these strengths to be developed further and for Hereford to become nationally renowned for such a specialism and thus enhance its local distinctiveness. In this way growth can be balanced with the retention of the city's character.

In order to address a number of the key issues, objectives and achieve the vision of the Core Strategy, it is appropriate to define whether the role of Hereford in the County and region should remain as at present or whether it is appropriate to define a new role for the City. This will enable policies to be developed and growth to be delivered in a locally distinctive way that can be developed further within the Action Area Plan.

### **What role should Hereford have in the future?**

Options:

- 1) Continue to plan for the City to maintain and enhance its current role as a traditional County/ market town providing a range of facilities and services for the rural hinterland;
- 2) Develop Hereford as a city with a specific role which builds upon its identified strengths whilst at the same time complementing the roles of the market towns, for example, developing a role which specialises in sectors such as retail, employment or education.



## **Growth in Hereford**

### **Focus for growth:**

Hereford is an area of significant growth within all the spatial options. The emerging regional plan revision highlights that half of the current housing growth should be directed to Hereford. This equates to 8,300 homes (415 per annum).

The regional plan does not specify how much of the employment allocation should be targeted specifically to Hereford, but the Core Strategy will need to ensure a balance of housing and employment growth to ensure people have a choice of employment available locally.

This level of development will lead to some difficult choices being made about the directions and location in which Hereford will need to grow in order to provide the number of homes and employment land being considered in the emerging regional strategy and how the infrastructure, services and facilities which will be required to accompany the growth will be delivered.

### **Statistics:**

Hereford has a population of 54, 842 which comprises 23,951 households.

The current build rate in the city is 208 homes per annum over the past 11 years and in April 2007 there were outstanding planning permissions and UDP allocated sites to accommodate around 1,750 homes.

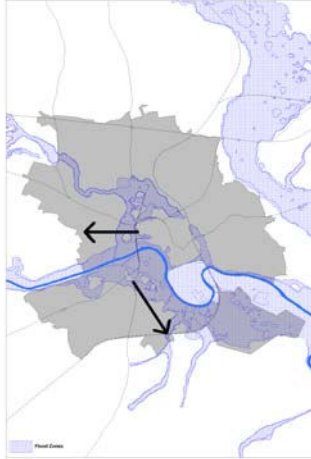
There are a number of employment areas in the city, the largest of which is Rotherwas Industrial Estate to the south.

### **Where?**

National policy continues to promote the use of brownfield land in preference to the release of greenfield land. However, given the emerging regional plan housing figures and the evidence emerging from the Housing Land Study, it is apparent that in order to accommodate the proposed level of housing growth releases of greenfield land around the city are likely to be required. In Hereford, the choice may well be as to whether the growth is accommodated on one or two significant sites capable of accommodating potentially a thousand or more homes, or whether the approach should be to release a greater number of smaller greenfield sites.

In assessing which directions Hereford could grow, we will need to take into account issues such as accessibility to services, constraints such as flood risk and quality of the landscape, plus the capacity of infrastructure such as water, roads and schools. In accommodating the level of housing suggested in the new regional plan it will be essential to ensure that the provision of necessary infrastructure is delivered in association with the housing growth.

Evidence emerging from the Housing Land Study work indicates the main areas with potential for significant growth lie to the west and south of Hereford.



These are potential areas and do not relate to specific sites. It may be there are additional areas that also offer some potential and that some of the highlighted areas are discounted as a result of considering emerging evidence.

#### **Initial Constraints:**

Hereford is constrained by its level of existing transport infrastructure; the regional plan acknowledges that there are limits to the existing transport capacity and that this is a priority to ensuring the delivery of any growth. Transportation options for Hereford are considered later in the section.

Development in Hereford is also significantly constrained environmentally by areas liable to flooding and important ecological designations; these constraints particularly limit significant growth to the east of the City.

#### **How and in which direction should Hereford grow?**

Options:

- 1) Allocate growth to the south;
- 2) Allocate growth to the west;
- 3) Allocate growth through a combination of areas to the south and west; or
- 4) Disperse the growth to a number of smaller areas in various locations around the city.

### **A better range of jobs for Hereford**

#### **National / Regional Context:**

There is a clear link between the economic prosperity of an area and people's quality of life, choice of housing, environmental quality, and access to service and facilities.

The Rural Regeneration Zone Implementation Plan, 2007-2010 (a daughter document to the regional plan) includes a key objective to develop a strong, diverse and sustainable economy. Indicating that support should be given towards higher waged, knowledge intensive employment whilst continuing to develop the robust aspects of the economy including food and farming, tourism and creative industries.

**Hereford Context:**

Almost the entire area of Herefordshire falls within the Rural Regeneration Zone as defined by the regional plan. Herefordshire has a relatively fragile economy and needs to improve its economic performance in order to raise incomes and tackle issues of economic inactivity and social exclusion.

One of the key objectives of the Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy (2005-2025) is to increase the business birth rate in the County, both through diversification and entrepreneurship, with a focus on growth sectors such as sustainable development and environmental sectors. As Hereford is the main employment centre in the County, the Core Strategy will need to address the issue of how to assist the Economic Development Strategy to achieve this diversification of the Herefordshire economy.

Planning policy at the national and regional level is aimed at encouraging office development within town centres rather than elsewhere. If the economy of Herefordshire is to diversify it may need to attract more office jobs to the area. Recent work on master planning in Hereford has identified office space at Edgar Street Grid, however it may not be enough to meet all the demand for new offices that is expected over the next 20 years. The regional plan highlights the need for 45,000 m<sup>2</sup> gross office space within or on the edge of Hereford. The emerging work undertaken as part of the Retail Study (Appendix 3) has highlighted that there is limited amount of office accommodation available in the city.

It is also a commercial reality that higher-value added activities like research and development will seek the spacious environment provided by edge of town commercial areas. Therefore as part of any approach aimed at diversifying the local economy, some key sites may need to be provided as a focus for new inward investment in research and development. These may best be provided as part of sustainable urban extensions.

**Key Issue:**

KI8, KI11

**Core Strategy Objective:**

6. Providing opportunities for diversifying and strengthening the local economy

**Which type of employment should be Hereford's focus for growth?**

Options:

- 1) Continue a policy of supporting a wide range of employment sectors building upon existing strengths; or
- 2) Develop policies to encourage the strengthening of the economy by identifying and focusing on specialist area such as food and drink production or tourism; or

- 3) Develop policies to encourage diversification into new employment sectors such as research and development, offices, high tech industries.

Options regarding the general provision of employment sites in the County, protection of employment land, improving skills and promoting tourism and culture are contained within Section 7- Policy Options of this report.

## **Regeneration of Hereford**

### **National / Regional Context:**

Planning Policy Statement 6 on retail provision highlights that local authorities should actively plan for the growth of, and manage change in, town centres. This may include managing the role and function of existing centres and encouraging specific types of uses in some centres. Any extensions of the town centre should be carefully integrated with the existing.

### **Hereford Context:**

Hereford is subject to a large regeneration programme, known as the Edgar Street Grid. This area 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. A Masterplan has been produced to guide the regeneration of this area for the next 20 years. One of the first phases of this redevelopment is a retail quarter on the site of the current livestock market. Current and emerging proposals for the Edgar Street grid are likely to account for a significant amount of the regional plan requirement to 2021. The Masterplan indicated 33,000 m<sup>2</sup> of retail and leisure to be provided.

The Core Strategy will need to address if the additional retail within this scheme meets the requirements of the regional plan and how to integrate the new retail area with the existing historic retail centre and combat any negative impacts it could have on the current retail area.

The existing UDP plans for the town centre as a whole, however the Edgar Street Grid scheme is being planned in specific quarters, for example retail quarter, office and commercial quarter. An option could be to mirror this approach across all the city centre in order to maintain and enhance its current unique qualities.

### **Key Issue:**

KI 7, KI 11, KI 12

### **Core Strategy Objective:**

7. Improving service centres

### **How do we want Hereford to improve as a centre?**

Options:

- 1) Continue with the current UDP policy stance of planning for the town centre as a whole; or

- 2) Define specific 'Quarters' or areas within the City for example retail, office, commercial, heritage, craft areas to provide a focus for specific activities and improve integration with the Edgar Street Grid redevelopment.

## **Retail within Hereford**

### **National / Regional Context:**

Vitality and viability of a town centre can depend on a wide range of factors, which include the variety, choice and quality of shops and services available within the centre. This range can often depend on the availability of units within the town itself and the ability for local independent retailers and the larger multi nationals to find suitable accommodation.

PPS6 highlights that local authorities should seek to enhance consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping and local services which allow genuine choice and meet the local needs of the whole community.

The regional plan highlights a non-food retail floorspace requirement for Hereford of 40,000m<sup>2</sup> between 2006 – 2021 and 20,000m<sup>2</sup> between 2021-2026.

### **Hereford Context:**

Hereford is characterised by smaller retail units within a historic street pattern, with much of the retail core being located within a conservation area. The Herefordshire PPS6 study has highlighted increasing pressure is being placed in the historic retail centre for larger retail floorplates thus leading to an amalgamation of adjoining units.

The current adopted UDP defines a commercial and shopping area, primary and secondary shopping frontages for Hereford in order to maintain the vitality and viability of the town centre. The Herefordshire PPS6 study has questioned the requirements of defining a commercial and shopping area as the sequential test within PPS6 have superseded this, but has highlighted the benefit of defining a primary shopping frontage for the city.

The retail quarter of the Edgar Street Grid redevelopment offers an opportunity for Hereford to increase its retail offer and provide larger units, which would be attractive to the larger national retailers.

During the Issues consultation, 13% of respondents to the key issue of access to services and facilities highlighted a wish to see more individual / independent shops.

The Core Strategy will need to address the retail floorspace needs for Hereford, how to develop and strengthen existing centres and how to balance the competing requirements for an increased retail offer whilst maintaining and enhancing the independent and local shops, which make Hereford distinctive from many other regional shopping locations.

### **Key Issue:**

KI 7, KI 11

**Core Strategy Objective:**

7. Improving our service centres

**What range of shops should Hereford offer?**

Options:

- 1) Protect the existing shopping provision of mixed unit size and frontages which provide a range of smaller independent and specialist shops using primary / secondary shopping frontage policies whilst supporting the Edgar Street Grid development as a preferred location for larger units and provision for larger national retailers
- 2) Devise policies for the city which seek to increase the range and mix of retail offer across the city including the Edgar Street Grid development.

**Transport provision in Hereford**

**National / Regional Context:**

An effective transport system is essential for the viability of the County to enable people to access jobs, education, health, leisure and other services. Planning has a key role to play in promoting sustainable development and travel by influencing the location of developments while improving existing transport systems.

PPS1 and PPG13 require new developments to be well located to public transport and key services and facilities in order to create sustainable communities. The regional plan acknowledges the important issue of the existing highway network capacity in Hereford, which results in increasing congestion, while encouraging more sustainable means of travel.

**Hereford Context:**

The 2003 Hereford Transport Review Local Multi-Modal Study (LMMS) and the existing Local transport Plan (LTP2) acknowledge that the existing highway network is operating at its capacity and that a larger degree of flexibility in the transport system would become increasingly important as pressure on the system increases. The LMMS and regional plan recommended the requirement for a blended package of transportation measures, including cycling and public transport infrastructure and an Outer Distributor Road (ODR) to provide increased flexibility in addressing Hereford's current and future transport needs. This need is based on current regional plan housing and employment figures.

Additional housing growth proposed by the Phase 2 revision would suggest that the blended package of transport measures may be required sooner than envisaged in the LTP to tackle increasing congestion in the city.

The Core Strategy will need to address how to accommodate the future growth of Hereford and the implications of future transport needs. A significant urban extension to Hereford could assist in the early delivery of necessary infrastructure improvements via developer contributions. Additional work is currently being

commissioned to consider the options for the proposed ODR alignment considering the impacts of an eastern or western route.

During the Issues consultation 13% of respondents commented on the key issue of transport and communications highlighting the requirement for a 'by-pass' or ODR for Hereford, with an additional 10% highlighting the need for a second river crossing.

Conversely, 29% of respondents indicated public transport improvements as being key (11% raised improvements to bus routes, 11% highlighted better links between the rail and bus network and 7% the requirement for a park and ride scheme).

**Key Issue:**

KI10, KI9,

**Core Strategy Objective:**

- 4. Sustainable locations
- 5. Improved accessibility and movement
- 10. Protecting the environment

**What new transport infrastructure is required in Hereford to accommodate growth and how will it be provided?**

Options:

- 1) Deliver a blended package of transport improvements including the provision of the ODR, and associated public transport improvements including bus priority and Park and Ride in association with the proposals for growth of the City;
- 2) Develop an enhanced package of public transport measures to enable growth **without** the provision of an outer distributor road.

If option1 is chosen, there will need to be decisions about a preferred route of the Outer Distributor Road whether this is east or west of the city. The questionnaire contains questions regarding potential route of the ODR.

## **The Market Towns**

The Market Towns could play a significant part in assisting with rural regeneration as well as retaining or enhancing local services. These centres could contribute to meeting a range of key issues raised in the Issues consultation i.e. increased growth of local businesses, reducing the need to travel to work and shopping; raising income levels; improving access to services and facilities and rural regeneration.

The Core Strategy will include strategic policies and may include strategic sites or locations for growth for the market towns. It is proposed that a 'Market Towns and Rural Areas' DPD will be produced at a future stage in the plan process to provide a more detailed framework for the Market Towns and rural areas.

## **The role of the Market towns**

### **Current role of the Market towns:**

Herefordshire has five Market Towns, Bromyard, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye, Kington and Leominster. Each of these towns is equidistance from Hereford and are distinct from each other in size and character although they all provide a range of local services and facilities for their rural hinterlands.

The Core Strategy will need to define whether each of these market towns should continue in their current multi-functional roles or whether they should develop specific and individual roles to assist achieving the overall vision and strategy of the plan but complement each other and the role of Hereford.

Ongoing work being undertaken through the Market Town and Parish Plans process as well as the settlement hierarchy work, will help to further define if there is a distinct role and function for each market town.

Defining a role for the market towns will assist in targeting growth and policy development, which addresses local circumstances and enhances local distinctiveness.

### **What role should the Market Towns have in the future?**

Options:

- 1) To continue to plan for each town based on maintaining and enhancing their current roles, as providing multi-functional roles for their rural hinterlands; or
- 2) Develop each market town as a place with a specialist function/role for instance through heritage, tourism, outdoor leisure, employment or specialist shopping, that is complementary to and doesn't compete with the others or Hereford; or
- 3) Develop better linkages between the market towns and Hereford both in terms of location of services and transport links between them.

### **Growth in the market towns**

Outside of Hereford the regional plan suggests that further development in the County should be focused to the market towns acting as strategic locations for balanced growth whilst continuing to protect the environment and rural character of Herefordshire. The choices about how to accommodate new homes, employment and retail growth in and around the market towns are considered individually. Each of the market towns could be targeted for growth depending on which spatial option is chosen. The choices here are concerned with the levels and directions of growth if the spatial option indicates 'focus for growth' to that market town (Table 1, Section 5). If the spatial option indicates 'limited growth' to a market town, this means current supply, windfalls, conversions and infilling only.

**Taking into account the suggested spatial options (Table 1), where should the remaining homes be built?**

### **Growth at Bromyard**



### Focus for growth?

Bromyard would be a focus for growth under all the suggested spatial options (A, B, C and D). Although the scale of development required for a new settlement in option D may mean that growth in existing centres is more limited.

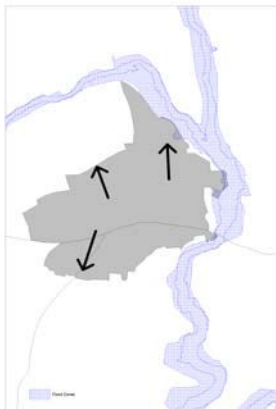
### Statistics:

Bromyard is situated on the A44 midway between Hereford and Worcester. It has a population of 4,240 and comprises of 1,832 households. The current build rate in the town is 36 homes per year over the past 11 years, a total of 396.

### Where?

Evidence emerging from the Housing Land Study indicates the main areas with potential for growth beyond the current built up parts of Bromyard lie to the north or south.

*In which direction should growth be directed? Should the town develop? Is there capacity within the current development boundary to accommodate an appropriate level of growth?*



These only relate to potential directions of growth and not specific sites. It may be that there are additional areas that also offer some potential or following further evidence these directional areas are discounted.

### Initial Constraints:

Growth at Bromyard is constrained due to flooding from the River Frome. Topography is also an issue, in particular the rising land to the Bromyard Downs to the east.

### In which direction should Bromyard grow?

Options for housing:

- 1) Allocate growth to the north;
- 2) Allocate growth to the south;

- 3) Disperse the growth to a number of smaller sites at various locations around the town; or
- 4) Limit further growth to that falling within the existing built-up parts of the town.

## Growth at Kington

### Focus for growth?

Kington could be a focus for growth if Options B, C or D are chosen (section 5). However, under option A Kington would see growth limited to current supply, windfalls, conversions and infilling only.

### Statistics:

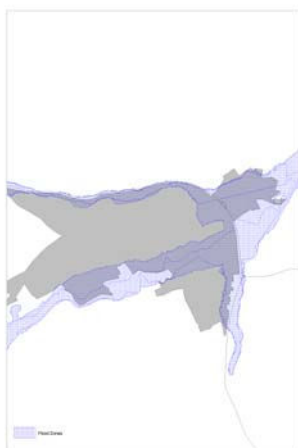
Kington is situated in the north west of the County, with a population of 2,660 comprising 1,149 households. The build rate in the town over the period 1996-2007 years was 12 per annum, which totals 132 homes.

Kington is the only market town which was not allocated any new employment land as part of the Unitary Development Plan.

### Where?

Evidence emerging from the Housing Land Study work indicates limited potential around the town to accommodate growth.

*Should the town develop? Is there capacity within the current development boundary to accommodate an appropriate level of growth? If the town develops outside the existing boundary, in which direction should growth be directed?*



### Initial Constraints:

Kington is constrained by the physical barriers such as the by-pass and its surrounding topography with areas of rising land around the town. To the west lies the historic park and garden of Hergest Croft and the higher land of Hergest Ridge. Any development to the east of the town would require development outside the by-

pass. In addition there are areas of Kington that are prone to flooding from the River Arrow and its tributaries.

### **In which direction should Kington grow?**

Options:

- 1) Limit any further growth to that falling within the existing built-up parts of the town; or
- 2) Allocate limited employment and housing growth to a number of smaller sites in various locations around the town

## **Growth at Ledbury**

### **Focus for growth?**

Ledbury could be a place for growth under spatial options based on economy, social issues and environment. (A, B and C). The market towns are also the focus for development as part of option D (New settlement) although the scale of development required for a new settlement may mean that growth in existing centres is more limited.

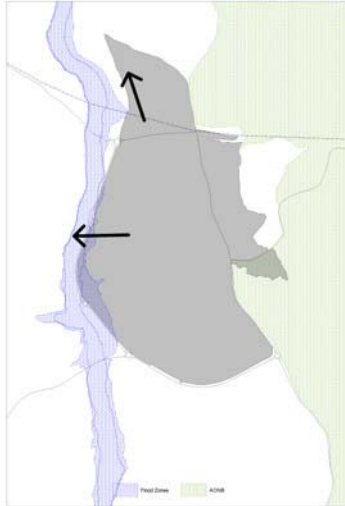
### **Statistics:**

Ledbury is located in the eastern side of the County, close to the M50 and the Malvern Hills. The town has a population of 9,240, which comprises 4,060 households. The build rate between 1996 and 2007 in Ledbury equates to 92 per annum or 1012 homes in total, although in recent years there has been a considerable slowdown in completions in Ledbury.

### **Where?**

Evidence emerging from the Housing Land Study indicates the main areas with potential growth outside of the current built up parts of the town lie to the north and west of the town.

*In which direction should growth be directed? Should the town develop? Is there capacity within the current development boundary to accommodate an appropriate level of growth?*



These only relate to potential directions of growth and not specific sites. It may be that there are additional areas that also offer some potential or following further evidence these directional areas are discounted.

**Initial Constraints:**

The Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies to the east of the town and the land rises sharply. Any development to the west of Ledbury would involve development outside of the by-pass. Land along the Leadon River to the east of the by-pass is subject to flooding.

**In which direction should Ledbury grow?**

Options:

- 1) Allocate growth to the northwest on land currently proposed for employment use; or
- 2) Allocate growth to the west, on the western side of the by-pass; or
- 3) Disperse growth to a number of smaller sites in various locations around the town; or
- 3) Limit further growth to that falling within the existing built-up parts of the town.

**Growth at Leominster**

**Focus for growth?**

Leominster could be a focus for growth under all the proposed spatial options A, B, C and D. Although the scale of development required for a new settlement in option D may mean that growth is more limited.

**Statistics:**

Leominster is the largest market town within the County and is situated north of Hereford. It has a population of 11,220 which comprises 4,874 households. The annual build rate between 1996 and 2007 was 45, which totals 495 homes.

In recent years, a 16 hectare Enterprise Park has been opened as an extension to the existing Leominster Industrial Estate.

### **Where?**

Evidence emerging from the Housing Land Study work indicates the main areas with potential for growth beyond the existing built up parts of the settlement lie to the south and south-west of the town. This is potentially a significant land release which would have the potential to be developed in association with new road infrastructure.

*Which direction should growth be directed?*



These only relate to potential directions of growth and not specific sites. It may be that there are additional areas that also offer some potential or following further evidence these directional areas are discounted.

### **Initial Constraints:**

Leominster is the least constrained market town environmentally, but there are significant areas around the town which are prone to flooding or are locally valued landscape. The River Lugg, A49 by-pass and railway line provide significant barriers to development to the east of the town.

However, Leominster has transport constraints already identified in the UDP and LTP imposed by the existing infrastructure in the town. The transport implications of any further housing growth will need to be considered.

The UDP highlights the infrastructure constraints of the town on further development and that any significant growth after 2011 would require the construction of a new road from the B4321 (Hereford Road) to the A44 in the Barons Cross area.

### **In which direction should Leominster grow?**

Options:

- 1) Allocate land to the south or south-west in conjunction with a east-west link road; or
- 2) Disperse growth to a number of smaller sites in various locations around the town; or
- 3) Limit further growth to that falling within the existing built-up parts of the town

## Growth at Ross-on-Wye

### Focus for growth?

Ross-on-Wye could be a focus for growth under all four of the proposed spatial options, economy, social and environment. The market towns are also the focus for development as part of option D (New settlement) although the scale of development required for a new settlement may mean that growth in existing centres is more limited.

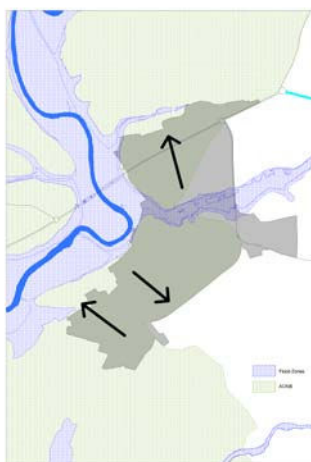
### Statistics:

Ross-on-Wye is located to the south of the County at the end of the M50. The population of the town is 10,180 and comprises of 4,471 homes. The build rate in Ross-on-Wye over the period 1996-2007 has been 53 per annum which totals 583 homes.

### Where?

Evidence emerging from the Housing Land Study indicates the main areas with potential for significant growth lie to the north, the south-west and south-east of the Town.

*Which direction should growth be directed?*



These only relate to potential directions of growth and not specific sites. It may be

that there are additional areas that also offer some potential or following further evidence these directional areas are discounted.

**Initial Constraints:**

Any proposals for growth will need to take into account the significant environmental constraints which impact upon Ross-on-Wye. The town, as well as land to the north, west and south, is contained within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Land to the west is also subject to flooding from the River Wye and its tributaries.

**In which direction should Ross-on-Wye grow?**

Options:

- 1) Allocate significant growth to the north; or
- 2) Allocate significant growth to the south-east; or
- 3) Allocate significant growth to the south-west; or
- 4) Disperse growth to a number of smaller sites in various locations around the town; or
- 5) Limit further growth to that falling within the existing built-up parts of the town.

**Shops in the Market Towns**

**National and Regional Context:**

The balance achieved between retail and other uses within our market town centres can have a great affect on their roles, vitality and viability. PPS6 highlights that primary shopping frontages and the town centre should be defined in order to protect and enhance the retail offer of centres.

**Herefordshire Context:**

The five market towns of Leominster, Ledbury, Kington, Bromyard and Ross-on-Wye serve a vital role in terms of providing for shopping, social and cultural needs of residents and visitors alike. They are an important source of local employment with attractive historic centres, which contribute to tourism. Their strengths lie in their local distinctiveness and the range of independent shops they provide, however, their vitality and viability is under threat from increasing competition, people travelling outside the County and the internet. One of the priorities of the Core Strategy is to ensure the regeneration of these market towns.

The current UDP defines primary and secondary frontages for the market towns. A primary shopping frontage comprises the main shopping streets where a predominance of retail shops are located. A secondary shopping frontage where a mix of town centre uses are located, such as estate agents, banks etc. A criteria based policy accompanies these defined areas to recognise the need to allow diverse uses within the town centre whilst maintaining a high proportion of retail uses.

PPS6 indicates that it may be appropriate to distinguish between primary and secondary frontages where frontages are realistically defined and having regard to the need to encourage diversification of uses in town centres. Options for the Core Strategy could be to consider continuing with the existing approach in order to retain the widest shopping offer for each town, or to draw back from the existing approach and to protect only the retail provision on primary shopping streets. Alternatively an approach, which does not seek to retain retail uses within town centres, could also be developed on the basis of maximising the range of uses. This approach would risk potentially higher value uses, such as housing, coming to dominate town centres and reducing the number and range of shops and impact upon the viability of the centre as a whole.

**Key Issue:**

KI 7, KI 11

**Core Strategy Objective:**

- 7. Improving our service centres
- 8. Promoting Tourism

**Options:**

- 1) Continue with the current UDP approach of defining primary and secondary shopping frontages and a criteria based policy to encourage a higher proportion of retail uses within the core of each the town centres;
- 2) Define primary shopping frontages only; or
- 3) Do nothing and allow market forces to prevail.

**The Rural Areas**

Herefordshire is predominately a rural County with numerous villages, hamlets and isolated properties. Agriculture remains a very important source of employment.

**Growth in the Rural Areas – Settlement Hierarchy**

**National / Regional Context:**

The regional plan indicates that market towns provide either the existing or potential focus for a balance between employment opportunities and employment provision and in the rural villages development should help meet local housing requirements, particularly needs for affordable housing and promote local regeneration or support the retention or creation of local services. Development should be prioritised in villages that still have a range of services and within these, priority should be given to the reuse of previously developed land and conversion of existing buildings.

**Herefordshire Context:**

Three of the four suggested strategic options (A, B and C) look at distributing some growth to the rural areas. The potential distribution of this growth varies depending on which spatial option is preferred and has also to be seen in the context of the



regional plan, which suggests that outside of Hereford the focus of remaining growth should be at the market towns rather than the wider rural area. Continuing work upon the Housing Land Study in rural areas and work defining an appropriate settlement hierarchy will also help to determine the scale and distribution of growth. Options for the Core Strategy will need to consider the overall levels of growth and the approach taken to development in and around rural settlements.

The adopted UDP contains a settlement hierarchy based on Hereford, the 5 market towns, 48 main villages and 34 smaller settlements. This settlement hierarchy was based on population/settlement size, availability of public transport, existing facilities/services and employment opportunities. The preparation of the Core Strategy will enable a review of the settlement hierarchy and will address what level of housing development should be directed to the rural areas. Issues related to the provision of affordable housing are included within section 7.

**Key Issue:**

KI 2, KI 4, KI 11

**Core Strategy Objective:**

1. Providing for appropriate housing provision
4. Sustainable locations
7. Improving service centres
9. Use of resources
10. Protecting the Environment

**How should the Rural Areas including all the settlements outside of Hereford and the Market Towns, grow?**

Options:

The balance of growth between the market towns and rural areas:

- 1) Focus the a significant majority of new growth, outside of Hereford, upon the market towns with rural settlements limited to affordable housing to meet local needs only; or
- 2) Focus new growth outside Hereford to the market towns but enable some growth in or around a limited number of sustainable rural settlements with the remainder of the rural area limited to affordable housing to meet local needs only; or
- 3) Plan for an equal or similar distribution of growth between the market towns and sustainable rural settlements; or
- 4) Focus the majority of growth, outside of Hereford, to sustainable rural settlements.

Depending on the level of growth distributed to rural areas, development in rural settlements could be:

- 1) Limited to brownfield land inside the existing built up limits of sustainable rural settlements using a criteria based policy; or

- 2) Enabled to provide sufficient growth, including greenfield releases, to retain or provide new rural services or facilities in identified rural settlements based.

## Jobs in Rural Areas

### National and Regional Context:

The need to protect existing jobs in the countryside and to help create the conditions to attract new sources of employment is important in helping to maintain sustainable communities. The diversification of local farm-based economies into a wider range of non-agriculture businesses can help to boost the rural economy. The provision of small-scale rural businesses within the countryside enables people to have a greater opportunity to work locally.

The regional plan highlights that the economic priorities within the rural areas should be to broaden the economic base and reduce the reliance on traditional employment and provide a wider range of local jobs. The emphasis should be on regenerating local communities but not attracting businesses /jobs away from urban areas.

### Herefordshire Context:

Herefordshire has a relatively high percentage of people working in agriculture when compared to the region. The Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy highlights the strengths of the rural areas including unspoilt natural and man-made environment with the potential to specialise in environmental businesses, tourism, food and crafts. The Core Strategy will need to balance the needs of diversifying the rural economy with the need to protect and enhance the rural landscape.

During the Issues consultation, 15% of respondents to the issue of diversifying the economy considered that rural business should be allowed to grow and 9% felt that farm diversification was important.

### Key Issues:

KI 8, KI 11

### Core Strategy Objectives

6. Providing opportunities for diversifying and strengthening the local economy

### How should we encourage the diversification of the rural economy?

Options:

- 1) Limit employment development in rural areas to proposals which support farm diversification and the development of small employment sites for businesses which are required to locate in a rural area; or
- 2) Devise a criteria based policy to diversify the rural economy within and outside of rural settlements by enabling the development of new employment opportunities and enterprises such as
  - a) live-work units;
  - b) environmental technologies, such as the development of biofuels or

- food production; or  
 c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure businesses

## Rural Facilities and Services

### National and Regional Context:

Local shops, post offices and public houses perform a vital economic and social function in sustaining rural communities not only for daily shopping needs but also as a community focus for the local area. These facilities help to ensure the vitality, viability and attractiveness of villages.

In recent years village shops and facilities have diminished in numbers as a result of high costs, competition from larger retailers, increased car ownership and the rationale of the Post Office.

### Herefordshire Context:

The Unitary Development Plan contains policies to encourage new, and protect the loss of, rural facilities. Settlement hierarchy work is being undertaken to ascertain the level of services and facilities available within the rural settlements (see Core Strategy web pages).

During the Issues consultation, 11% of respondents commenting on the access to services and facilities felt that more facilities should be available in the rural areas.

### Key Issue:

KI7, KI11

### Core Strategy Objectives

- 5. Sustainable locations
- 7. Improving our service centres

### How should we protect our rural facilities?

Options:

- 1) Develop more robust criteria based policies to protect and/or increase the provision of small-scale, rural services/facilities, including retail e.g. farm shops, in or adjoining settlements;
- 2) Identify particular settlements outside of the market towns and Hereford as Local Service Centres (still within a ranking of settlements) and use criteria based policies to promote/protect facilities/services (similar to the current approach); or
- 3) Do nothing and allow market forces to prevail.

## 7 Policy Options

As well as the strategic options and place shaping policies, the Core Strategy will need to incorporate important general policies to bring about changes to the way we deal with development. Listed below are some policy options grouped in themes. Responses to these options will give us a strong steer as to the range and emphasis on the policies we include in our “Preferred Options” document.

### Sustainable Communities

Delivering sustainable communities across Herefordshire is one of the objectives of the Core Strategy. Ensuring a sustainable community includes the need to protect the natural and historic environment and conserve vital resources for everyone now and for future generations. Planning can play a key role in mitigating the causes and effects of climate change and encourage the prudent use of natural resources through the location, design and nature of new development. If we want Herefordshire to be an increasingly sustainable place and to make a County contribution to reducing the effects of climate change, a number of major changes in practices will need to be achieved – including promoting renewable energy initiatives, a reduction in waste production, encouragement of low/zero carbon homes, minimising the risk of flooding and reducing the need to travel.

The policy areas to be addressed within this section are renewable energy, minerals, waste management, flooding, water use and the design and construction of buildings.

#### Renewable energy

##### National/ regional context:

Renewable energy is used to describe forms of energy that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – this includes wind, sun, water, materials from plants or combustible or digestible waste from industrial, agricultural and domestic materials.

The planning system has an important role to play in helping to deliver government target/goals for renewable energy and climate change which are central to achieving sustainable development. In a bid to tackle climate change and its effects, the UK has signed up to the Kyoto Protocol and made a commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The Government is seeking to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20% below the 1990 levels by 2010 and by 60% by 2050. (Regional Plan).

Core Strategies should provide a framework for promoting and encouraging the use of renewable and low-carbon energy generation whilst not stifling innovation.

##### Herefordshire Context:

Herefordshire can make a difference and increase the proportion of energy used from renewable sources by the promotion of specific renewable energy schemes or the use of technologies within building design.

The Herefordshire Carbon Management Strategy 2005 – 2012, seeks to achieve a 12.5% reduction in the 2002 carbon dioxide equivalent emissions by 2012 and

delivers a commitment to securing a 20% reduction by 2020.

Through the Issues consultation, 16% of respondents highlighted more energy efficiency and the conservation of resources as important ways of addressing the impacts of climate change.

The Core Strategy will need to consider whether it is appropriate for Herefordshire to promote a specific renewable energy source scheme, and if so where, or whether a policy promoting smaller individual schemes accompanying larger planning applications would be more appropriate.

**Key Issue:**

KI 1, KI 6,

**Core Strategy Objective:**

9. Efficient use of resources

**How can Herefordshire increase its usage of renewable energy sources?**

Options:

- 1) Highlight specific technologies and locations in Herefordshire where renewable energy sources could be promoted – such as wind turbines, individual turbines, solar energy, waste to energy, combined heat and power plants, biomass, geo-thermal or other; or
- 2) Set targets and design requirements for the inclusion of energy from renewable sources within new developments of a particular scale.

## **Waste Management**

**National/regional context:**

A new set of waste policies are being developed through the regional plan. These policies aim to drive waste management up the waste hierarchy, address waste as a resource and look to disposal as a last resort.

The regional plan includes minimum targets for the quantities of municipal waste, commercial and industrial waste which need to be diverted from landfill in the period to 2025. There are a number of challenges to enable these targets to be met and to ensure that the County moves towards being self-sufficient for waste by managing the equivalent tonnage of waste to that arising within its boundary.

**Herefordshire Context:**

The average Herefordshire household throws away approximately 522kg of rubbish per year. The recycling rate currently stands at 30% with a target of 40% by 2010.

Within the Issues consultation, 91% of respondents felt that the management of waste was an important issue to be addressed in the Core Strategy. Although many of the comments raised included more doorstep recycling and less packaging, which

are outside the remit of the Core Strategy, it will need to consider how to manage the waste produced within the County, particularly with the increased housing and employment growth proposed through the regional plan.

The Core Strategy will need to consider whether additional facilities are required and if so where they should be located and what types of facility are needed. It will be necessary to demonstrate how capacity equivalent to at least ten years of annual rates in the regional plan could be provided and identify the type(s) of facility that are appropriate. Any policy would need to consider whether to be proactive and allocate sites for new facilities or devise a criteria-based policy to be used to judge planning applications against.

**Key Issue:**

KI1, KI6

**Core Strategy Objectives**

9. Efficient use of resources

**How should Herefordshire manage the waste it produces?**

Options:

- 1) Identify locations where specific waste management facilities will be required, for example these could be,
  - a. Close to urban centres
  - b. As part of new urban extensions
  - c. Within areas with good transport links
  - d. Existing/proposed employment sites;
- 2) Provide a set of generic criteria in a policy for new waste management facilities which would be used to judge planning applications against; or
- 3) Devise a policy whereby all new developments of a certain size will need to be accompanied by a new local waste facility being built or contributed to.

**Minerals**

**National/regional context:**

All building works and some manufacturing processes require minerals in some form. The local extraction and use of minerals reduces construction costs, increases local employment but can have some impacts on the local environment.

Herefordshire Council is obliged to identify sufficient land to meet the County's share of regional production, adjusted to the local availability of different minerals. Government policy for aggregates provision is essentially that an adequate and regular supply of minerals must be provided subject to environmental and sustainability considerations.

Herefordshire's apportionment for aggregate supply is 283,000 tonnes per annum to be provided from it's landbank and 424, 000 tonnes per annum of crushed rock. The

regional plan is currently undergoing revision and Phase 3 of this will develop regional policy for aggregate production up to 2026.

**Herefordshire Context:**

Herefordshire's known mineral resource primarily consists of aggregate – sand and gravel and crushed rock. Recent estimates indicate the County has reserves of about 4.7 million tonnes of aggregates at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007. This equates to a 16 year supply based on the regional plan apportionment. In respect of crushed rock, the landbank of permitted reserves at 2004 was estimated at almost 17 million tonnes, equivalent to a landbank of 40 years.

Recent planning permissions have increased the permitted reserves of sand and gravel in the County. However, with increasing levels of housing and other growth emerging through the regional plan revision, there may well be an increased regional apportionment figure for Herefordshire.

Minerals can only be extracted at the locations where they are present. However, any policy will need to ensure that there is a sufficient degree of flexibility to provide an appropriate supply of minerals for the period to 2026. In addition, it will need to ensure that mineral workings are undertaken in a sensitive manner and reclamation and aftercare of the site is undertaken to protect and where possible enhance the environment and also to ensure that the minerals resources of the County are adequately safeguarded and not sterilised.

**Key Issue:**

KI1, KI6

**Core Strategy Objectives:**

9. Efficient use of resources

**How should Herefordshire address any additional mineral reserves requirement?**

Options:

- 1) Identify the current and required landbank of permitted mineral reserves to meet the needs of Herefordshire up until 2026;
- 2) Identify 'preferred areas of mineral extraction' to enable greater flexibility and safeguard potential mineral reserves; or
- 3) Provide a set of generic criteria which would be used to judge planning applications for new minerals extraction.

**Flooding**

**National / Regional Context:**

Flooding is an issue that has become more significant in recent years due to the increase occurrence in the County. With climate change likely to lead to milder

wetter winters and hotter, wetter summers, this could also lead to increased and new risks of flooding. Although, flooding can't be wholly prevented, the impacts can be avoided and reduced through planning policy. Planning policy should ensure that flood risk is taken in account in the development process though a risk based approach.

Government guidance is contained with Planning Policy Statement 25 – Development and Flood Risk. A sequential approach to determining the suitability of land for development in flood risk areas is included and an exceptions test that provides a method of managing flood risk whilst still allowing necessary development to occur.

The guidance highlights the need for a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to be undertaken and policies to reflect the need for site specific flood risk assessments at planning application stage.

Flooding is often associated with rivers but can also occur from high groundwater levels, surface water run-off and sewer and drainage capacity issues. The design of new developments and buildings can assist in reducing and conserving the amount of surface run off.

**Herefordshire Context:**

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been prepared for Herefordshire Council help identify those areas in the County most at risk of flooding and provide the basis from which to apply the sequential and exceptions tests (PPS25) in policy terms and planning applications.

The SFRA makes a number of important recommendations that will help inform the Core Strategy and the subsequent identification of sites for development. The assessment increases the understanding of all sources of flooding, establishes flood risk zones and highlights which mitigation measures would need to be taken if development was to be allowed in areas of lesser risk of flooding. The SFRA also enables a comparison of sites to be undertaken in sequentially testing proposals for new development.

Flooding was seen as an important issue for 90% of those responding to the Issues consultation. As part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked how they saw the future for water use and treatment which included flooding, and 50% suggested that applying flood prevention methods or preventing development in the flood plain was the key.

The Core Strategy can have an impact in varying ways on reducing the risks and the impacts of flooding within the County. This can include restricting the areas in which development is permitted or including elements within the design of developments in order to reduce and conserve surface run off.

**Key Issue:**

KI 1, KI 6, KI 14

**Core Strategy Objectives:**

- 9.Preventing flood risk
- 10 Protection of the environment

**How should the flooding issues in Herefordshire be addressed with the**



## **increasing needs for future development?**

Options:

### **Development in Flood Risk Areas**

- 1) Devise a policy based on the PPS25 sequential test approach using the data from the SFRA. This is similar to the current UDP approach; or
- 2) Adopt a stricter policy, only allowing development in areas with no known flood risk

### **Design of developments**

- 1) Introduce built or natural design approaches to tolerate or adapt to flooding;
- 2) Ensure all new development includes methods to collect, store and reuse rainwater, including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) where appropriate to reduce possible non-fluvial flooding; or
- 3) Work with developers to determine the most appropriate design solutions with regards to reducing flooding risks at the application stage.

## **Water use**

### **National/regional context:**

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Delivering Sustainable Development makes clear that the sustainable use of water resources and the use of sustainable drainage systems are important issues for the planning system to consider. PPS12 Local Development Frameworks confirms that the capacity of existing infrastructure and the need for additional facilities should be taken into account in the preparation of all local development documents. Infrastructure in this respect would include water supply and sewers.

Local development documents provide water companies with essential inputs for their own planning. Additional needs for infrastructure such as reservoirs, pipelines or treatment works, often a requirement to meet the needs of new development, and the implications for the environment both from such land use and from the additional water abstraction or discharge associated with that infrastructure will need to be addressed in the Core Strategy. Those implications may extend beyond the boundaries of the authority's own area. It will be important to ensure that new developments are as water efficient as possible and located in ways that will minimise or eliminate the environmental impact of additional demand for water and sewage services, thereby contributing to more sustainable development. The phasing of new development may well be influenced by the availability of infrastructure. Provision of completely new infrastructure such as the development of new water resources can take several years from identification of need to commissioning.

### **Herefordshire Context:**

In Herefordshire, water quality and resources, including infrastructure will be important considerations in ensuring that new growth delivered through the Core Strategy is done so in a sustainable manner. The Rivers Wye and part of the River Lugg have an international designation as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). New development has the potential impact upon both the quantity and quality of water within the River Wye SAC. In addition the impact of climate change could result in longer periods of water shortages and put additional pressure on the amount of water available. In addition the existing infrastructure for water and sewerage in the County may need significant investment in order to accommodate the level of new development proposed over the period up to 2026.

A Water Cycle Study (Appendix 3) commissioned by Herefordshire Council should help to identify infrastructure requirements to be provided in association with growth and inform the preparation of planning policy to encourage more efficient use of water resources

**Key Issue:**

KI 1, KI 6

**Core Strategy Objectives:**

9.Preventing flood risk  
10 Protection of the environment

**How can we balance the growing needs for water and the European status of the Rivers Wye and Lugg?**

Options:

- 1) Ensure that all new development incorporates water saving and efficiency measures linked to the Code for Sustainable Homes requirements;
- 2) Incorporate phasing proposals to enable necessary new infrastructure to be put in place prior to the commencement of new development;
- 3) Require developments over a particular threshold to contribute to retrofitting existing properties with SUDs or water efficiency techniques; or
- 4) A combination of elements of 1), 2) and 3)

**Design and sustainable construction**

**National/regional context:**

High standards of design and local distinctiveness which builds on the existing character of the local area is important not only on the appearance of the area but can also have an effect on creating safer environments, promoting sustainable developments and the more efficient use of resources and local materials

**Herefordshire Context:**

19% of respondents suggested the need to celebrate and highlight the distinctiveness of Herefordshire as a further key issue to be addressed. Design has an important role to play in promoting local distinctiveness and the use of local materials. There are many examples in Hereford where good modern design has been successfully accommodated in a historic setting.

Crime is relatively low in Herefordshire but the perception can be different. As part of the Issues consultation, 16% of respondents highlighting other important key issues for the County, pointed to the need to reduce crime as being important. Planning and 'the designing out of crime' can have a role to play in ensuring safer communities.

The Core Strategy will need to address whether a separate design policy is required or whether design criteria be integrated into specific policies and site proposals.

**Key Issue:**

KI14, KI13, KI6

**Core Strategy Objectives**

9. Delivery of sustainable communities

10. Protection, conservation and enhancing our natural, built, historic and cultural assets.

**How can we make Herefordshire distinctive in terms of design?**

Options:

- 1) Devise a locally distinctive design policy incorporating all aspects of design and sustainable construction;
- 2) Integrate design elements into the place shaping policies or general core policies such as renewable energy, flooding, housing provision; or
- 3) Rely on the sustainable design and construction policy as set out in the regional plan.

## **Diversifying and strengthening the local economy**

Sustainable communities need economic growth to ensure they are active and thriving. Wealth underpins social and cultural activities and the conservation of our environment. Ensuring a strong and diverse economy will help give people in Herefordshire more opportunities for work within the County. This could reduce the numbers needing to travel outside the County, thus helping to reduce carbon emissions and increasing the prosperity of Herefordshire residents.

The Core Strategy should make provision for a continuous five year reservoir of readily available employment land throughout the plan period as well as making provision for likely longer term employment land requirements. The emerging regional plan highlights that Herefordshire's employment land requirement is 111 hectares with a five year reservoir of 37 hectares.

The location of future employment growth will be determined by the chosen strategic option as outlined in section 5 and the roles of places within the place shaping policy

options in section 6. However there are a number of general employment policies options, which are outlined below.

<b>Provision of employment sites</b>
<p><b>National / Regional Context:</b>  Draft Planning Policy Statement 4 – Planning for Sustainable Economic Development, indicates that authorities should plan for a good range of sites with opportunities for creating new jobs in large or small firms which can respond to changing needs and demands.</p> <p>The regional plan and the Regional Economic Strategy highlight the regional economic framework and the main focus for economic growth is on the major urban areas. However, growth in the rural areas is promoted where it can meet the needs of rural renaissance and help create more sustainable communities.</p> <p>Herefordshire is contained within a Rural Regeneration Zone. There is a need to have a balance of employment opportunities available for all new and existing businesses within the County to allow those seeking small start up premises to thrive and other established businesses to expand without the need to leave the County</p>
<p><b>Herefordshire Context:</b></p> <p>The spatial option chosen will determine the strategic focus for the location and distribution of employment land across the County. However, how that land is to be provided still contains a number of choices.</p> <p>Economic Development Strategy 2005-2025 seeks to bring forward employment land, sites and premise in order to respond effectively to its Vision especially to encourage and attract higher value activities.</p> <p>According to the Annual Monitoring Report 06/07, Herefordshire had 168.7 hectares of available employment land on 125 sites in April 2007. However much of that land has existing constraints and is not readily available.</p> <p>The Core Strategy will need to address how future employment growth is allocated in order to assist strengthening and diversifying the local economy.</p>
<p><b>Key Issue:</b></p> <p>KI 8, K I11</p>
<p><b>Core Strategy Objectives:</b></p> <p>6. Providing opportunities for diversifying and strengthening the local economy</p>
<p><b>What type of employment sites should we be providing?</b></p> <p>Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Locate significant employment growth on larger purpose built estates similar to Rotherwas or Leominster Enterprise Park providing a mix of employment uses;</li> <li>2) Locate new employment growth on a number of smaller sites to meet local</li> </ol>

needs and start up businesses;

- 3) Expand existing employment areas to accommodate new employment growth;
- 4) Encourage the integration of new employment opportunities in mixed use developments such as live work schemes or working from home opportunities; or
- 5) Locate new employment growth as part of a housing urban extension.

## **Protection of Employment land**

### **National / Regional Context:**

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4 highlights that account should be taken of the need for the most efficient and effective use of land and buildings. Balancing the needs of housing, employment, retail and other uses can lead to competition for land. Together with the need to re-use previously developed land, this can add pressure on existing employment sites when they become vacant.

Encouraging the new uses of some vacant employment sites can contribute to regeneration, environmental improvements, reduce the need for greenfield development.

Over recent years, PPS3 has indicated that employment sites that are no longer needed should be assessed and potential for residential use investigated. However, the need to maintain a range and supply of employment land must be considered as the loss of existing employment land could lead to the need to find further sites elsewhere.

### **Herefordshire Context:**

The Annual Monitoring Report 2007 highlights that 8.31 hectares of employment land has been lost to other uses, 7.79 hectares of which was to residential development.

An employment land review is being undertaken to assess the current availability of employment land across the County and to help ascertain which of the existing employment sites should be retained for employment uses.

During the Issues consultation, 15% of respondents felt allowing rural businesses to grow and 9% felt providing for start up businesses were; important ways of diversifying the economy.

The Core Strategy will need to address whether a protection of employment land policy is required based on the information gathered as part of the employment land review.

### **Key Issue:**

KI 8, KI 11

### **Core Strategy Objective:**

6. Providing opportunities for diversifying and strengthening the local economy

**Should we protect existing employment land?**

Options:

- 1) Protect all employment land from development for other uses;
- 2) Protect no employment land and allow market forces to prevail; or
- 3) Develop a criteria based policy to protect employment sites on their merit at the time of an application based on sustainable locations, best employment land, quality of site and 5 year reservoir of supply.

**Improving the County's Skills base**

**National and Regional Context:**

Having a skilful workforce is the key to having a successful and thriving economy. The skills gap is defined within the Herefordshire Economic Assessment as occurring when employers regard some of their staff as not being fully proficient to meet the requirements of their job role.

Improving the availability of higher education and post 16 facilities can not only improve the skills of individual Herefordshire residents but can provide the skilled workforce to assist in boosting the economy as a whole and improving the prosperity for all.

**Herefordshire Context:**

One of the key outcomes within the Community Strategy is to create a more adaptable and higher skilled workforce.

The Herefordshire Economic Assessment shows that Herefordshire has a higher proportion of people with level 2 (5 GCSE or equivalent) and level 4 (Degree level) qualifications than the West Midlands average. However, one quarter of the County residents aged between 16 and 74 have no qualifications at all.

Herefordshire has a number of higher education / post 16 facilities but does not have a dedicated university. As a result many young people level the County for higher education and consequently younger people do not move here to study. This can have a knock on effect on the establishment of research, development and high skilled employers, which are normally associated with universities, wishing to locate within the County.

Within the Issue consultation, 28% of respondents to the question regarding the need to capitalise on education achievements highlighted more training in general was required and 20% highlighted the need for more facilities and access to higher education as being important.

The Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy highlights a number of objectives

to improve the skills and workforce development including developing the County's higher education offer and developing the Herefordshire Learning Village.

**Key Issue:**

KI 3, KI 8

**Core Strategy Objectives:**

3. Providing for the needs of all generations

**How can we improve the skills base in the County?**

Options:

- 1) Create a university style campus in Herefordshire to improve skills, retain young people in the area and help to attract new types of development to the area;
- 2) Support the development of new and extended school/college facilities improving skills, learning and performance; or
- 3) Allow market forces and demand to prevail and judge any applications at the appropriate stage.

**Tourism and Culture**

**National and Regional Context:**

Tourism and culture can be a key element of the economy and particularly in assisting the diversification of the rural economy, encouraging and supporting local businesses and promoting rural regeneration.

The regional strategy generally encourages the improvement of existing tourism and cultural facilities as well as the creation of new facilities subject to environmental and infrastructure constraints increased visitor numbers would bring.

**Herefordshire Context:**

Herefordshire's tourism and culture is based on its environment, historic city, market towns and villages. The Herefordshire Tourism Strategy highlights that the tourism industry in the County is comprised of a large amount of small and scattered businesses.

Based on figures at 2007, Herefordshire attracts 4.8 million visitors to the County per year which helps to maintain 7,880 people employed in tourism or tourism related employment. Tourism brings over £290 million spend to the County each year.

During the Issues consultation, 14% felt that tourism was good for the local economy and 10% believed that there should be more green tourism promoted. 15% highlighted the need for improved cycling, walking and riding routes.

Tourism can bring many economy benefits to the County but can also bring with it a

number of issues relating to further development pressures, including increase pressure on infrastructure and impacts on the environment. Should Herefordshire look to accommodate the maximum number of all type of tourists coming to the County or should it build upon the environmental assets of the County to develop the infrastructure for more sustainable or “greener” forms of tourism.

The Core Strategy will require a policy direction which balances the needs of tourism and economy with those of the impact on the environment which is what attracts visitors here initially.

**Key Issues:**

KI 12, KI 5

**Core Strategy Objectives:**

8. Developing Herefordshire as a designation for quality leisure visits and sustainable tourism.

10. Protecting the environment

**How can Herefordshire’s tourism and culture sector grow?**

Options:

- 1) Devise a policy to limit the growth of tourism in Herefordshire in order to protect existing environmental assets;
- 2) Devise a policy to strongly promote the growth of tourism across Herefordshire to help create a vibrant local economy;
- 3) Focus tourism development on key assets within Herefordshire for example Hereford, the Black and White villages or Symonds Yat to maximise the growth of tourism and attract more visitors;
- 4) Focus tourism development only to those areas accessible by public transport; or
- 5) Concentrate upon promoting Herefordshire as a centre for “green tourism”

## **Housing provision**

As well as the spatial and place based options regarding housing distribution contained within sections 5 and 6, there are also a number of general policies regarding the provision of housing which have a choice of options. These include affordable housing, settlement boundaries, density, housing mix and gypsies and travellers.

### **Affordable housing**

**National/regional context:**

The provision of affordable housing is a key consideration. National planning policy



recognises the importance of the issue in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3, while both the approved regional plan (CF5) and the revision to it (CF7) include policies to meet the need for affordable housing.

The Core Strategy will need to provide a County-wide target for the provision of affordable housing up to 2026 (PPS3 paragraph 29). PPS3 highlights a national minimum site threshold of 15 homes. Lower thresholds can be set locally and include varying proportions of affordable housing on a site-size basis.

Account should also be taken of the economic viability of any thresholds and proportions of affordable housing proposed, the impact upon levels of housing delivery and creating mixed communities and the need to deliver low cost market housing as part of the overall housing mix.

At a sub-regional level a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (HMA) has been undertaken for Shropshire and Herefordshire to provide a sub-regional market analysis of housing demand and housing need. Its findings will help to inform the affordable housing policies of the Core Strategy.

#### **Herefordshire Context:**

In Herefordshire the provision of affordable housing is already included as a key issue within the Community Strategy. Within the Issue consultation, 47% of respondents strongly agreed that people should have access to a decent home that they can afford. 23% of respondents considered more affordable homes would assist the key issue of an ageing population and the loss of younger people (K12)

The regional plan revisions indicate that within the West Housing Market Area (Herefordshire and Shropshire excluding Telford and Wrekin) a minimum of 700 affordable homes per annum should be completed up to 2026. Debate between Herefordshire and Shropshire will be required to decide on how best to split this figure and help set a requirement for the County.

However, to give an indication of what this target might mean for Herefordshire, the provision of 700 affordable homes per annum equates to 33% of the total housing requirement for the two counties. If 33% of Herefordshire's housing requirement (16,600) needs to fall within the definition of affordable, this equates to 5,500 units over the period 2006-2026. This is an average of 274 per annum. The average annual provision (provided through the planning system) in Herefordshire since 1996 has been 97 per annum (12% of all completions).

To achieve this level of affordable housing consideration would need to be given to lowering the current site thresholds and/or increasing the percentage of affordable homes required on sites. The site size thresholds contained in the adopted UDP are 15 homes or 0.5ha in urban areas and 6 homes or 0.2ha in rural areas. Analysis of the position in the County in April 2007 shows that some 32% of outstanding planning permissions in urban areas and 65% of permissions in rural areas fall below these site size thresholds.

The adopted UDP includes an indicative target which requires 35% of new homes to be affordable housing on sites above defined thresholds. Increasing the percentage of affordable housing on qualifying sites could also impact upon the supply of affordable housing. For example, analysis of the 2007 housing land position in urban areas would indicate that increasing the requirement from 35% to 40% could potentially result in around 80 additional affordable units based on retaining the

existing threshold of 15 homes.

However, in considering changes to site thresholds and/or percentage of affordable housing required, the impact of such changes upon the viability of land for housing, taking account of the level of developer contribution that can reasonably be secured will need to be assessed. The sub-regional HMA suggests that thresholds of 10 dwellings in urban areas and three in villages should be considered with targets of a minimum of 40% should be considered in the West Housing Market Area (Shropshire and Herefordshire).

As well as providing affordable housing as a percentage of affordable housing on allocated sites, an approach could be considered to specifically allocate sites for affordable housing. This could particularly be the case in areas not targeted for growth in the spatial options.

The provision of affordable housing will be a feature in all of the spatial options set out in Section 4. However, the implementation of different spatial options may require different approaches to the provision of affordable housing. For example, an option that suggests a concentration of new development in particular areas of the County may make it easier to address affordability issues in those areas. However, for areas not targeted for growth, meeting local affordable housing needs may prove more difficult.

**Key Issue:**

KI 2, KI 4, KI 14

**Core Strategy Objectives:**

1. Providing for appropriate housing provision

**How should we address the need for affordable housing in the County?**

Options:

- 1) Increase the percentage of affordable housing required on housing sites (currently 35%);
- 2) Lower the site size thresholds for affordable housing particularly in rural areas where most housing is completed on sites smaller than existing thresholds;
- 3) A combination of 1 and 2; or
- 4) Identify settlements or areas where new housing development is limited only to affordable housing, this could mean that rural exceptions sites for affordable housing are the subject of specific allocations.

**Settlement boundaries**

**Background Context:**

Settlement boundaries are a well-used planning tool for guiding, controlling and identifying the limits to development for individual settlements. They are lines drawn

around defined nucleated settlements to reflect their built form and the area to which a set of plan policies are applied. This may not necessarily reflect the full extent of the village.

Settlement boundaries have added certainty to planning decisions and locally are an understood and generally accepted planning tool, as the 'black line' defines the areas which the settlement and open countryside policies would be applied to. It is also considered that settlement boundaries ensure a more plan-led approach, can assist the delivery of affordable housing and protect the open countryside.

Conversely, settlement boundaries have been criticised for leading to settlement cramming and thus affecting the character of the settlement, being inflexible and increasing land values.

**Herefordshire Context:**

Once a strategic option has been chosen and a settlement hierarchy has been devised to further this development strategy, a policy for directing development within these settlements would need to be developed.

However, the Core Strategy can only include a list of settlements which development could be directed towards with a criteria based policy. If settlement boundaries are to continue, these could not be defined within a Core Strategy and would need to be defined within a future document such as a Market Towns and Rural Areas DPD.

Although, settlement boundaries can not be defined within the Core Strategy itself, decisions on whether to continue with them will need to be taken at this stage.

Settlement boundaries have been defined within the adopted UDP for Hereford, the market towns and 48 main settlements using criteria outlined within UDP. Any of these existing settlements which fall within a revised Core Strategy settlement hierarchy, will require their existing boundaries to be reviewed, as they have now reached their development limits.

If settlement boundaries were not to continue, an adequate criteria based policy would be required for adjudging development proposals against. The adopted UDP contains such a criteria policy for the smaller settlements within Policy H6. This criteria approach has been successfully defended at appeal.

**Key Issue:**

KI4, KI5

**Core Strategy Objective:**

- 1. Providing for appropriate housing provision
- 10. Protecting, conserving and enhancing our natural, built, historic and cultural assets

**Should we continue with settlement boundaries?**

Options:

- 1) List the settlements which are focus for growth within the Core Strategy and

devise a criteria based policy for adjudging future development proposals against; or

- 2) List the settlements which are focus for growth within the Core Strategy and define settlement boundaries for those settlements within a future DPD.

## Density

### Context:

PPS 3 – Housing highlights the importance of using land efficiently. The demand for additional homes by 2026, the limited amount of previously developed land and the competing demand for uses put increasing pressure on land and require innovative approaches to help deliver high quality housing.

Providing for more efficient use of land, means development at reasonable densities that protect valuable open space, respects privacy and maintains the character of the areas.

Housing density is worked out as the numbers of homes per hectare of land (not including open space, roads and services but it does include private gardens). The minimum density guidelines are included within PPS3 of 30 homes per hectare, however local authorities are encouraged to set their own densities.

The density of housing can affect to the local character and distinctiveness of that area. Any densities set should reflect local circumstances. Higher densities can assist in urban and rural regeneration by increasing possible population numbers to support community and social facilities and public transport as well as reduce the amount of greenfield land requirements.

### Herefordshire Context:

The UDP contains a set of density requirements. In urban areas of Hereford and the market towns, housing developments will be expected to achieve a net overall density of at least 30 homes per hectare. On town centre and adjacent sites with good accessibility, it is expected that higher densities should be achieved of between 30 and 50 homes per hectare.

The Annual Monitoring Report 06/07 highlights that the 37% of homes built were of a density below 30 homes per hectare. Of the 195 homes completed on sites of over a hectare in the urban areas of Hereford and the market town, the average density was 35 per hectare.

A number of characterisation assessments are planned to be undertaken which will assist in establishing appropriate densities in the urban areas.

The Core Strategy will need to balance the housing requirements with the protection and enhancement of the character of the city and market towns. In order to do this there are a number of choices regarding minimum density requirements.

The capacity of sites to accommodate the housing requirements of each of the

spatial options will be informed by the Herefordshire Strategic Housing Land Assessment (Housing Land Study) and through studies such as the Urban Characterisation Assessment.

**Key Issue:**

KI4, KI14, KI13

**Core Strategy Objective:**

1. Providing for appropriate housing provision  
10. Protecting, conserving and enhancing our natural, built, historic and cultural assets

**What level of density targets should Herefordshire set?**

Options:

- 1) Apply a single standard density to all housing provision across the County;
- 2) Apply different standard densities to different parts of the County to reflect accessibility (highest densities in central Hereford, towns and adjacent areas, lower densities in other parts of urban areas and the lowest densities in rural areas; or
- 3) Densities either set or determined for each site on the basis of an assessment of the character of the surrounding area.

**Housing Mix**

**National / Regional Context:**

PPS 3 highlights that the key characteristic of a mixed community is the variety of housing particularly in terms of the tenure and price and the mix of different households.

The Core Strategy should provide guidance upon the range and mix of housing across the County to ensure that the needs of families with children, single person households, older people and other groups such as gypsies and travellers are met as well as aiming to achieve balanced communities.

**Herefordshire Context:**

A commitment to providing for balanced and sustainable communities in Herefordshire means that we need to look at the existing housing stock and consider what is required in the area to enable the community to change and grow sustainably and provide for all members of the community.

Within the Issues Consultation, the need to create balanced communities and to provide more mixed age group housing were raised by respondents commenting on the key issues of the ageing population and loss of younger generations (KI2) and housing provision and affordable housing (KI4).

The 2001 Census shows that Herefordshire has a larger percentage of detached homes (43%) when compared to the average for England and Wales (23%). Conversely, Herefordshire has a lower average for flats and maisonette than the English and Welsh average, 11% compared to 19%.

A sub-regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment is being undertaken for the Western Market Area (Herefordshire and Shropshire) as defined in the regional plan phase 2 revision. This will identify the existing housing stock and assist in identifying the likely profile of households requiring market housing in the County.

Any Core Strategy policy will need to determine how best to address the needs of balancing our housing growth and communities successfully.

**Key Issue:**

KI4, KI2

**Core Strategy Objective:**

1. Providing for appropriate housing provision

**What types and mix of housing does Herefordshire need?**

Options:

- 1) Allow a market led approach to the mix of new house types in new developments;
- 2) Ensure all schemes have a mix of house types in accordance with up to date housing needs information; or
- 3) Devise a policy which gives priority to specific housing types i.e. family homes, single persons, retirement in order to balance the housing types across the County.

**Gypsies and Travellers**

**Context:**

Government Circular 01/2006 provides guidance on the planning aspects of finding sites for gypsies and travellers. The circular indicates that the regional plan should specify the number of pitches required in each local authority. However, the existing West Midlands regional plan does not set gypsies and travellers pitch requirements. This is an issue that will be considered as part of the Phase 3 revisions to the regional plan, now underway, which is expected to be completed in Summer 2010. The Regional Assembly to Government submitted an interim policy in March 2007 to cover the period until the regional plan revision is completed.

A key element in setting the requirements for gypsy and traveller needs is the preparation of a gypsy and traveller accommodation assessment (GTAA). The information from GTAAs on gypsy and traveller need for sites will be a component which informs the policies in the regional plan and should enable the number of pitches required to be identified.

**Herefordshire Context:**

The UDP contains a criteria based policy dealing with the accommodation of Gypsies and other travellers (policy H12). However, the UDP recognises that the LDF would need to take forward the identification of sites for gypsies and travellers. Within Herefordshire it is estimated that there are around 95 pitches on 18 sites (either local authority or private), with a number of other pitches on “unauthorised” sites, some which have been established for a number of years.

Core Strategies should set out criteria for the location of gypsy and traveller sites. These criteria will be used to guide the allocation of sufficient sites to meet the required number of pitches set out in the regional plan in other Development Plan Documents.

A sub regional GTAA is currently being prepared for the west of the Region including Herefordshire. Emerging evidence in the document suggests a significant need for gypsy and traveller accommodation over the plan period. The GTAA also looks at the need for accommodation for travelling showpeople but does not suggest any significant additional requirement in Herefordshire.

The Core Strategy will need to show how the regional plan requirement will be implemented giving an indication of how the future needs will be addressed and what documents will be brought forward to deliver sites.

**Key Issue:**

KI4

**Core Strategy Objective:**

1. Providing for appropriate housing provision

**How should we make provision for the needs of gypsies and travellers?**

Options:

- 1) Develop a County-wide criteria based policy for location of different types of gypsy and travellers sites (residential, transit and temporary);
- 2) Identify areas or locations where gypsy and traveller sites would be unacceptable due to environmental constraints; or
- 3) Provide an indication of specific areas (but not sites) where gypsy and travellers sites are needed and sites will be directed.

**Ensuring better health and wellbeing**

One of the key themes of the Community Strategy is to improve public health, quality of life and promote independence and well being for disadvantage groups and older people. This has translated into an objective of the Core Strategy to ensure better health, wellbeing and quality of life. People’s health and wellbeing can be influenced by many different factors including the environment around them; the standard of

housing; the ability to find employment as well as the obvious health and social care facilities and services available.

## **Health care provision**

### **Context:**

Primary Care Trusts are responsible for improving the health of people and ensuring they receive the best possible health care. The planning system can assist in this aim in numerous ways. Specific health care facilities could be provided either within new developments or via developer contributions. But benefits can also be obtained by providing open space and leisure facilities to enable residents ready access to exercise and fresh air, encouraging cycling and walking and targeting the location of housing, employment and other facilities within walking or cycling distance.

Recent research (Health, Place and Nature – How outdoor environments influence health and well-being) published by the Sustainable Development Commission highlighted that good planning has a critical impact on the health of communities, planning can be key to tackling obesity, mental health problems and diabetes by ensuring that people have access to green spaces, a clean environment and easily accessible services.

The planning of health care infrastructure is usually undertaken by the Primary Care Trusts on a five year cycle, in comparison to the Core Strategy timescale of 2026, which can make long term planning of new facilities within the plan difficult.

### **Herefordshire Context:**

By 2026, considerable pressure could be placed on the health and social care facilities and services within Herefordshire in order to allow people to live as independently as possible and in their own homes. The rural characteristics of the County, an increasing older population together with further housing growth will bring challenges on the provision and maintenance of any health services.

During the Issues consultation, the need for better access to health care facilities was highlighted by 14% of respondents to Key Issue 7 – Access to important services and facilities.

The Herefordshire Primary Care Trust – A strategy of success highlights a wish to improve the health of all Herefordshire residents and reduce health inequalities.

A Public Service Trust has been created in Herefordshire combining elements of the Primary Care Trust and Herefordshire Council to assist the delivery of health care services in the County.

The Core Strategy will need to address whether new health facilities should be incorporated in new growth areas or whether effects should be concentrated on improving and expanding existing facilities.

### **Key Issue:**



KI2, KI7

**Core Strategy Objective:**

2. Ensuring better health, wellbeing and quality of life

8. Securing sustainable communities

**How can new developments help to make provisions for new and improved health care facilities?**

Options:

- 1) Provide new facilities in areas which are a focus for growth or urban extensions in partnership with Herefordshire Primary Care Trust and other health care providers; or
- 2) Seek developer contributions to increase the capacity of existing facilities.

**Open Space Provision**

**Context:**

An active lifestyle can improve people's general health and wellbeing. The provision of informal and formal recreation and open spaces can have numerous positive effects. The provision of green spaces and areas to play and enjoy enable an attractive and pleasant environment, giving people access to facilities locally and thus creating a sense of social inclusion and improving people's general health and wellbeing.

PPG17 – Planning for open space, sport and recreation outlines the importance of local authorities undertaking assessments of the local need for quality open spaces which are based on local supply and demand for facilities. Nationally set standards would not be able to cater for local needs, demographics and existing facilities.

**Herefordshire Context:**

The rural nature of Herefordshire means that a large proportion of the population are not a great distance for some form of open space or countryside access.

The current adopted UDP sets a single standard open space criteria across the County based on population size for new developments and also seeks to safeguard existing facilities.

PPG17 Study and a Green Infrastructure Study are being undertaken to assess the current levels of informal and formal recreation space within the County and the green space between them.

Based on the findings of this study, the Core Strategy will need to address whether future open space requirements should be provided on all developments to one standard or whether a policy should be devised which addresses local shortfalls in

facilities.

**Key Issue:**

KI5, KI7

**Core Strategy Objective:**

2. Ensuring the health, wellbeing and quality of life  
9. Delivering sustainable communities  
10. Protecting, conserving and enhancing our natural, built, historic and cultural assets

**What is the best way to provide the required open space and recreation facilities throughout the County?**

Options:

- 1) Develop a County-wide standard for the provision of open space and recreation facilities within all new developments, similar to the current UDP;
- 2) Develop area specific standards and needs for the provision of open spaces and recreation facilities based on assessments from the PPG17 Study and the Green Infrastructure Study; or
- 3) Seek developer contributions for open spaces and recreation from all new development to be allocated where there is an assessed need within the area.

**Conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment**

Conserving, promoting, utilising and enjoying our natural, built, historic and cultural assets is one of the key objectives of the Core Strategy.

Herefordshire's countryside, landscape, rural settlements and the City and market towns are special and play a key role in defining a sense of place. These environmental assets include the range of features and components of the natural, historic and built environment which contribute to the social and economic wellbeing for residents and visitors alike.

Parts of two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are located in Herefordshire – the Malvern Hills and the Wye Valley. There are also, 4 Special Areas of Conservation, 75 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 3 national nature reserves, over 750 local wildlife sites and over 5900 listed buildings and 69 conservation areas, an Area of Archaeological Importance and around 260 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and numerous nationally and locally important archaeological areas within Herefordshire.

Some of these designations are protected by national or regional policies contained within various PPS/G's and the regional plan. PPS12 highlights that core strategy policies should not repeat national policy but explain how these can be applied to the local circumstances.

Many features and assets are not recognised by national designation but are very important locally and valuable to the character of Herefordshire. We all have a

responsibility to look after the environment around us for future generations. The Core Strategy will need to address whether specific policies or whether additional criteria to other policies will be required to assist this objective.

<b>Green Infrastructure</b>
<p><b>Context:</b></p> <p>Green infrastructure is the network of green spaces and natural elements that fall within and connect to the places in which we live. It includes open spaces, rivers, gardens, woodlands, green corridors wildlife corridors and open countryside.</p>
<p><b>Herefordshire Context:</b></p> <p>Green infrastructure planning requires a strategic approach to ensure that environmental assets of natural and cultural value are fully integrated with development and built infrastructure and that all opportunities for protecting, enhancing and creating green space are realised, including on a multifunctional basis. Herefordshire Council intends to place green infrastructure as an important element of it's sustainable development agenda and has commissioned a green infrastructure study to be undertaken.</p>
<p><b>Key Issue:</b></p> <p>KI1, KI5, KI6, KI14</p>
<p><b>Core Strategy Objective:</b></p> <p>9. Delivering sustainable communities 10. Protecting, conserving and enhancing our natural, built, historic and cultural assets</p>
<p><b>How should Herefordshire protect and enhance its green spaces?</b></p> <p>Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure that new developments are designed in a way which enhances Herefordshire's green infrastructure, for example through linking into existing networks;</li> <li>2) Seek developer contributions for identified green infrastructure proposals, particularly in areas where an identified need within an area has been identified; or</li> <li>3) Make the most of the benefits of green infrastructure for a number of purposes including flood storage, biodiversity and recreation.</li> </ol>

<b>Locally distinctive features / assets</b>
<p><b>Context:</b></p>

The Core Strategy has a key role to play in achieving a successful balance between protecting Herefordshire's environmental assets and enabling the further growth required.

Many of the national planning policy statements (PPS1 – Delivering sustainable development, PPS7 – Sustainable development, PPS9 – Biodiversity and geology, PPG15 – Historic Environment, PPG16 - Archaeology) seek to protect, enhance and restore environmental assets.

The Regional plan requires local authorities to conserve, enhance and where necessary restore the quality, diversity and distinctiveness of landscape character, biodiversity and historic environment.

The Core Strategy cannot repeat policies that are contained within national planning documents. However, many distinctive features and assets are not recognised by national designations but are very important locally and are valuable to the distinctive character of Herefordshire.

An objective of the Core Strategy is to conserve, promote, utilise and enjoy our natural, built, historic and cultural assets for the fullest benefits to the whole community. The Core Strategy will need to consider the most appropriate way to achieve this which could be either by specific individual policies for each of the locally important environmental assets or by including environmental asset criteria to each general core or place shaping policy as appropriate.

#### **Herefordshire Context:**

##### **Biodiversity**

The County is host to many important habitats and species. To protect and enhance biodiversity in terms of animals, sites and the spaces between them helps to create a balanced eco-system. Herefordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (2005) takes account of the national priorities and local distinctiveness and identifies priority species and habitats in Herefordshire. The Council is also producing a Biodiversity Strategy 2007–2010. During the Issues consultation, 28% of those commenting on protecting and enhancing environmental assets considered the protection of native wildlife species was important.

##### **Landscape**

Parts of two nationally designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty lie within Herefordshire. However, the County's landscape has many other distinctive and valued areas, including historic parks and gardens, trees/woodlands and the settings of many rural settlements. Many of which are not protected by any national designations. Herefordshire has produced a Landscape Character Assessment, and is in the process of producing an Urban Characterisation Assessment to review the landscape setting of the City and market towns.

##### **Historic environment**

Conservation of the built environment is recognised as important for economic prosperity and local pride and distinctiveness. Listed buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, buildings and monuments of local importance all contribute to this. Conservation Area appraisals have been undertaken for all Herefordshire's conservation areas.

During the Issues consultation, 14% of respondents to the issue of protecting and

enhancing environmental assets considered that more listed buildings and protecting more trees was important.

Past planning policy has sought to give specific local protection to these locally valued environmental assets.

**Key Issue:**

KI5, KI14

**Core Strategy Objective:**

9. Delivering sustainable communities

10. Protecting, conserving and enhancing our natural, built, historic and cultural assets

**How should we protect / conserve / enhance our locally distinctive features / assets?**

Options:

- 1) Rely on the national and regional policies only to protect Herefordshire's environmental assets;
- 2) Develop specific policies to provide an appropriate level of protection, conservation and enhancement for those locally distinctive and locally designated or recognised features and areas which are important for their biodiversity, landscape and/or the historic/built environment; or
- 3) Ensure that relevant policies of the plan include criteria which provides an appropriate level of protection, promotion and enhancement for all elements of the natural or historic environment.

## 7 Delivery and monitoring

The Government is keen to ensure that the planning system delivers a flexible, responsive supply of land particularly in relation to housing. Using the principles of 'Plan, Monitor and Manage' local authorities need to develop policies and implementation strategies to ensure that sufficient and suitable land is available to achieve their spatial objectives. The Council proposes to deliver a flexible, responsive supply of land by way of the following actions:

- Working with others such as the Local Strategic Partnership and other service and infrastructure providers, together with the development industry to ensure that there is adequate provision to meet the needs of new development and to ensure that the delivery of land for development is not restricted by inadequate provision or other obstacles. The use of the Community Infrastructure Levy and/or appropriate Planning Obligations will be key instruments in delivering the Core Strategy.
- Ensuring a continuous supply of deliverable housing sites for at least five years by preparing a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in conjunction with the development industry.
- Producing other appropriate and more detailed Development Plan Documents in order to identify site-specific issues and proposals impacting upon their development and set out mechanisms to help implement the proposals. A Hereford Area Action Plan has been identified within the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) and a timetable will be established in a future Scheme review for a DPD addressing the market towns and rural areas.
- Developing an implementation strategy that is sufficiently flexible to take into account changing circumstances such as housing need and supply and any reviews in the regional plan; this may for example entail a strategy whereby housing development is phased over a period of time and certain areas held 'in reserve' should identified sites not come forward.
- Continuing to monitor the implementation of planning policies and the LDS through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) process to ensure that the spatial vision, policies and proposals are being delivered on the ground. A new detailed framework for monitoring the impacts of the policies and proposals in the Local Development Framework (LDF) will be developed at preferred option stage.

*Question: Is there anything else the Council should be doing to help ensure the delivery of land over the Plan period?*

## **8 What happens next?**

Now that we have set out some potential options to deal with the issues raised through earlier consultations, it's your turn to have your say. Once we have received your comments, we will analyse the responses and report the main issues raised by your comments to the Planning Committee and Cabinet as well as feeding back to you. We will also consider the results of other consultations, which are due to take place during the consultation period as well as previous consultations and assess them all together. Once this work is done, we will have to prepare a "Preferred Options" document. The "Preferred Options" document will set out proposals for a spatial strategy and a set of planning policies to implement the overall vision and objectives of the Core Strategy. Again, you will be able to have your say on the "Preferred Options", probably next year in 2009.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Access** - This term refers to the methods by which people with a range of needs (such as disabled people, people with children, people whose first language is not English) find out about and use services and information.

**Accessibility** - This term is used in two distinct ways, its definition depending on the accompanying text (see Accessibility of Principle Centres and Accessibility of the Transport System below).

**Accessibility of Principle Centres** - This refers to the extent to which employment, goods and services are made available to people, either through close proximity, or through providing the required physical links to enable people to be transported to locations where they are available.

**Accessibility of the Transport System** - This refers to the extent of barriers to movement for users who may experience problems getting from one place to another, including disabled people.

**Affordable Housing** - Housing subsidised in some way for people unable to rent or buy on the open housing market. The definition of 'affordable housing' includes key worker housing and shared ownership homes.

**Aggregates** - Sand and gravel, crushed rock and other bulk materials used in the construction industry for purposes such as the making of concrete, mortar, asphalt or for roadstone, drainage or bulk filling.

**Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA)** - An area which a local authority had designated for action, based upon a prediction that Air Quality Objectives will be exceeded.

**Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)** - Each year, the Council will produce an Annual Monitoring Report, which will set out its progress in achieving set goals over the previous financial year. The Annual Monitoring Report will cover both the production of documents identified in the Minerals and Waste Development Scheme and the achievement of targets in those documents.

**Area Action Plans (AAP)** - An Area Action Plan is a Development Plan Document focused upon a specific location or an area subject to conservation and significant change. This could include a major regeneration project or a growth area.

**Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)** - A statutory landscape designation, which recognises that a particular landscape is of national importance. The primary purpose of the designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty of the landscape.

**Biodiversity** - This refers to the variety of plants and animals and other living things in a particular area or region. It encompasses habitat diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity. Biodiversity has value in its own right and has social and economic value for human society.

**Biodiversity Enhancement Areas** - A regional mechanism that can be used to deliver international, national and regional biodiversity objectives.

**Brownfield Land** - Both land and premises are included in this term, which refers to a site that has previously been used or developed and is not currently fully in use, although it may be partially occupied or utilised. It may also be vacant, derelict or contaminated. This excludes open spaces and land where the remains of previous use have blended into the landscape, or have been overtaken by nature conservation value or amenity use and cannot be regarded as requiring development.

**Capacity** - A measure of the volume of traffic that a point or link in transport infrastructure can accommodate, and often an evaluation of the extent to which that infrastructure is coping with the traffic that makes use of it, e.g. underused, at or near capacity etc.

**Carbon Footprint** - A measure of the impact human activities have on the environment in terms of the amount of green house gases produced, measured in units of carbon dioxide.



**Carbon Dioxide (CO<sup>2</sup>)** - Carbon dioxide is a naturally occurring gas comprising 0.04 per cent of the atmosphere. The burning of fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide fixed by plants many millions of years ago, and this has increased its concentration in the atmosphere by some 12 per cent over the past century. It contributes about 60 per cent of the potential global warming effect of man-made emissions of greenhouse gases.

**Climate Change** - The term climate change is generally used when referring to changes in our climate which have been identified since the early parts of the 1900's. The changes we've seen over recent years and those which are predicted over the next 80 years are thought to be mainly as a result of human behaviour rather than due to natural changes in the atmosphere.

**Community Facilities** - Land and buildings uses to help meet health, education and social needs in terms of developing and maintaining the health and well being of all.

**Community Infrastructure Levy** - A mechanism that empowers local authorities to apply a Community Infrastructure Levy on new developments in their areas to support infrastructure delivery.

**Community Strategy** - This is a practical tool for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area of jurisdiction of the local authority. Such strategies are prepared allowing for local communities (based upon geography and/or interest) to articulate their aspirations, needs and priorities.

**Congestion** - A measure of the level of the traffic against the capacity of the infrastructure carrying it, indicating a point where the route or network can no longer ensure steady flows.

**Conservation Areas** - An area, as defined in the Town and Country Planning Act (1990), designated as being of special architectural or historical interest and therefore protected from any alterations which would destroy its character.

**Core Strategy** - The Core Strategy sets out the key elements of the planning framework for the area. It is comprised of a spatial vision and strategic objectives for the area; a spatial strategy; core policies; and a monitoring and implementation framework, with clear objectives for achieving delivery. Once adopted, all other planning must be in conformity with it.

**Development Plan** - The statutory development plan is the starting point in the consideration of planning applications for the development or use of land. The development plan will consist of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy prepared by the West Midlands Regional Planning Body, and Development Plan Documents prepared by the council.

**Edgar Street Grid (ESG) Masterplan** - This plan establishes a three-dimensional framework of buildings and public spaces. It is a visual 'model' which can show the following: the relationship between buildings and spaces; the connections between streets, squares and open spaces; the movement patterns; the height, massing and bulk of buildings; the distribution of uses; the location of street furniture and landscaping; and how well the new urban neighbourhood is integrated with the surrounding urban context.

**Employment Land** - Land which is used for the following purposes – office, industrial and warehousing.

**Energy Efficiency** - This is about making the best or most efficient use of energy in order to achieve a given output of goods or services, and of comfort and convenience. This does not necessitate the use of less energy, in which respect it differs from the concept of energy conservation.

**English Heritage** – English Heritage is the Government's statutory adviser on the historic environment and is officially known as the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England. It is an Executive Non-departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

**Environmental Assets** - Features in the physical environment that are valued for a variety of cultural and scientific reasons.

**Environmental Capacity** - The limit of acceptable environmental change within a defined area.

**Evidence Base** - The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the 'soundness' of the policy approach set out in Local Development Documents, including physical, economic and social aspects of the area.

**Expanded Settlement** – Settlement that can be expanded to accommodate extra dwellings to meet the needs of future generations.

**Floodplain** - The floodplain of a watercourse is identified as that area of land at risk of flooding when flows in the watercourse channel overtop its banks.

**Flora and Fauna** - Wild flowers, wild animals and native trees of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

**General Scoping Report** - The General Scoping Report provides a general framework for the Sustainability Appraisal of future documents being produced as part of a new planning system for Herefordshire. The existing scoping report represents the first stage in an iterative process of sustainability appraisal of the Council's Core Strategy.

**Greenfield Land** - Land which has not been previously developed, often in agricultural use.

**Greenhouse Gases** - Gases present in the atmosphere which reduce the loss of heat into space and therefore contribute to global temperatures through the greenhouse effect.

**Green Infrastructure** - The open environment within urban areas, the urban fringe and the countryside. It is a network of connected, high quality, multi-functional open spaces, corridors and the links in between that provide multiple benefits for people and wildlife.

**Green Space** - The collective term used to describe all parks, public gardens, playing fields, children's play areas, woodlands, nature reserves, allotment gardens, linear and other open space.

**Green Tourism** - Low impact, environmentally friendly tourism that cherishes, not destroys.

**Gypsy and Traveller Sites** - These are sites either for settled occupation, temporary stopping places, or transit sites for people of nomadic habit of life, such as travellers and gypsies.

**Herefordshire Carbon Management Action Plan** - Defines the steps that Herefordshire Council will take to secure its contribution to the carbon dioxide reduction targets as part of the Herefordshire Partnership Climate Change Strategy.

**Herefordshire Economic Assessment** - A comprehensive analysis of the local economy, including future prospects that may generate and attract inward investment into the County.

**Herefordshire Learning Village** - A purpose-built state of the art learning centre. The Learning Village will provide a co-ordinated range of courses that are specifically targeted to meet the needs of local employers, a business development unit and a high technology engineering and craft workshop.

**Historic Parks and Gardens** - Gardens, parks and designated landscapes which are of national historical interest and which are included in English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England.

**Housing Completions** - Dwellings which have obtained planning permission and have been built.

**Infrastructure** - Collective term for services such as roads, electricity, sewerage, water, social services, health facilities and recycling and refuse facilities.

**Kyoto Protocol** - A protocol to the international Framework Convention on Climate Change with the objective of reducing Greenhouse gases that cause climate change. It was agreed on 11 December 1997.

**Land bank** – A means of implementing proposals that involve the acquisition, leasing or other method of land access, by which required parcels of land are assembled until development can proceed.

**Landfill Sites** - The place where controlled waste is deposited. References to landfill may also refer to landraising and waste disposal.

**Landscapes for Living** - An ambitious new initiative, which will develop a 50-year biodiversity vision and opportunity map for the West Midlands.

**Listed Buildings** - Buildings of special architectural or historic interest included in a list compiled by the Secretary of State and where special protection measures apply. Buildings are sub-divided into the following three categories: Grade 1; Grade 2\* and Grade 2.

**Local Development Documents (LDD)** - The Local Development Framework will be partly comprised of the Local Development Document, prepared by the council. These documents included the Statement of Community Involvement; Supplementary Planning Documents; and Development Plan Documents (being the Core Strategy, Site Allocations, Area Action Plans, Proposals Map, General Development Control Policies).

**Local Development Framework (LDF)** - The Local Development Framework is not a statutory term, however, it set out, in the form of a 'portfolio/folder', the Local Development Documents which collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for local planning authority's area. These are replacing the Unitary Development Plan.

**Local Development Scheme (LDS)** - This is a public statement of local authorities programme for the production of Local Development Documents. The scheme will be revised when necessary. This may be either, as a result of the Annual Monitoring Report, which should identify whether the local authority has achieved the timetable set out in the original scheme, or if there is a need to revise and, or prepare new Local Development Documents.

**Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP)** - These are non-statutory, multi-agency partnerships, which matches local authority boundaries. Local Strategic Partnerships bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors; allowing different initiatives and services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively.

**Local Transport Plan 2** - A five-year integrated transport strategy prepared by the council, as a highway authority, in partnership with the community, which seeks funding to help provide local transport projects.

**Minerals Development** - Development consisting of the winning and working of minerals or involving the depositing of mineral waste.

**Mitigation** - Measures taken to reduce adverse impacts e.g. changing the way development is carried out to minimise adverse effects through appropriate methods or timing.

**Monitoring** - Procedures by which the consequences of policies and proposals are checked on a continuous or periodic basis to assess their effectiveness and impact.

**Natura 2000 Sites** - Network of protected sites will consist of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.

**Nature Conservation** - Protection, management and promotion for the benefit of wild species and habitats, as well as the human communities that use and enjoy them. This also covers the creation and re-creation of wildlife habitats and the techniques that protect genetic diversity and can be used to include geological conservation.

**New Growth Point** - A national initiative to provide support to local authorities that wish to pursue large scale and sustainable growth, including new housing and jobs in partnership with the Central Government.

**Ofsted** - The official body for inspecting schools.

**Open Space** - All land in Herefordshire that is predominantly undeveloped other than by buildings or structures that are ancillary to the open space use. The definition covers a the broad range of types of open space within the County, whether in public or private ownership and whether public access is unrestricted, limited or restricted.

**Owner Occupation** - Term used to describe a person who owns or is in the process of buying the house or flat he lives in.

**Park and Ride** - Facilities which seek to reduce town centre congestion by encouraging motorists to leave their vehicles at a car park on the edge of town and travel into the centre by public transport, usually buses direct from the parking area.

**Plan, monitor and manage** - The ability to form a Plan, monitor the performance of its policies and amend if necessary.

**Planning Obligations** - (see Section 106 Agreements)

**Planning Policy Statement (PPS)** - These are statements of Government's national policy and principles towards certain aspects of the town planning framework. They are legally binding and may be treated as material considerations in the determination of planning applications. They were introduced under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and are gradually replacing the old style Planning Policy Guidance Notes.

**Previously Developed Land (PDL)** - (see Brownfield land)

**Primary Care Trust (PCT)** - Herefordshire Primary Care Trust is the local National Health Service organisation that plans, provides and purchases health services for people registered with a Herefordshire GP. It is also responsible for improving public health.

**Public Service Trust** - A new partnership arrangement between Herefordshire Primary Care Trust and Herefordshire Council that will culminate in the joint planning, purchase, design and integration of all local public services around the needs of individual customers and patients.

**Public Transport** - Generally bus and rail services operated for the carriage of passengers drawn from the general public; also covers taxis and other less conventional forms such as post-buses.

**Recycling** - The reprocessing of waste, either into the same product or a different material. Wastes that can be recycled include; paper, glass, cardboard, metals and plastics.

**Regeneration** - The redevelopment of decaying or run-down parts of older urban areas to bring them new life and economic vitality.

**Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)** – This document provides a long-term landuse and transport planning framework for the West Midlands region. The overarching framework guides the preparation of Herefordshire's development plans and local transport plans. It determines also the scale and distribution of housing and economic development across the region, investment priorities for transport and sets out policies for enhancing the environment.

**Renewable Energy** - Power derived from a source that is continually replenished, such as wind, wave, solar, hydroelectric and energy from plant material, but not fossil fuels or nuclear energy. Although not strictly renewable, geothermal energy is generally included.

**Restoration** - The treatment of an area after operations for the winning and working of minerals have been completed by the spreading of any or all of the following: topsoil, subsoil and soil making material.

**Retail Hierarchy** - Hierarchy of shopping centres ranging from regional and sub-regional centres through town centres, district and local centres.

**River Wye** - The fifth-longest river in the United Kingdom and forms part of the border between England and Wales.

**River Lugg** – A river which flows through the border town of Presteigne, Wales, then through Herefordshire, including the town of Leominster, south of which it is met by a

tributary, the River Arrow, then to a confluence with the River Wye, which it joins at Mordiford.

**Rural Regeneration Zone** – A vehicle for bringing together partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors to develop and implement a programme of economic regeneration for the area.

**Section 106 Agreements** – An agreement by the local authority with a landowner/developer restricting or regulating the development or use of land either permanently or temporarily in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).

**Sequential Approach** - A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types of locations of land before others. For example, brownfield sites before greenfield sites, or town centre retail site before out-of-centre sites. In terms of employment a sequential approach would favour an employment use over mixed use and mixed use over non-employment uses.

**Settlement Boundaries** - Settlement Boundaries are intended to define the extent of the existing built-up areas of towns and villages. They highlight a fundamental distinction in terms of planning policy between existing developed areas and the surrounding countryside where land uses are intended to remain for the most part undisturbed. Subject to environmental considerations, development should be contained within Settlement Boundaries during the Plan period.

**Settlement Hierarchy** - Settlements ordered by their size: hamlets, villages, towns, cities, and conurbations.

**Significant Urban Extensions** – Large-scale housing growth on the periphery of towns.

**Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI)** - SSSIs form a nationally important series, which contributes to the conservation of our natural heritage of wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms. SSSIs are areas of land that have been notified as being of special interest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) or the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949).

**Social Housing** – Subsidised housing provided by a Registered Social Landlord or Local authority allocated on the basis of need.

**Soundness** - The legislation does not define “sound” but the Planning Inspectorate consider it in this context within its ordinary meaning of ‘showing good judgement’ and ‘able to be trusted’ and within the context of fulfilling the expectations of the legislation. In order to decide whether a document is sound, the Inspector will apply the nine tests of soundness as set out in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks.

**Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)** - SACs are sites designated under the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora). Together with Special Protection Areas they will form the Natura 2000 network of sites.

**Special Protection Areas (SPA)** – Sites that are designated under the Birds Directive (Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds). Together with Special Areas of Conservation they will form the Natura 2000 network of sites.

**Stakeholders** - Groups, individuals or organisations which may be affected by, or have a key interest in a development proposal or planning policy. They may often be experts in their field or represent the views of many people.

**Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** - This sets out the standards to be achieved by the local authority in involving the community in the preparation, alteration and continuing review of all Local Development Documents and planning applications. The statement is a clear public statement enabling the community to know how and when they will be involved in the preparation of Local Development Documents and how they will be consulted on planning applications.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** – A formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the

environment. Local authorities which prepare and adopt such a plan or programme must prepare a report on its likely significant environmental effects, consult environmental authorities and the public, and take the report and the results of the consultation into account during the preparation process and before the plan or programme is adopted. They must also make information available on the plan or programme as adopted and how the environmental assessment was taken into account.

**Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SRFA)** - A planning tool that enables the Council to select and develop sites away from flood risk areas. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is being prepared as part of the Council's emerging Local Development Framework process but also sets out the procedure to be followed when assessing new sites that fall within a flood risk area..

**Strategic Housing Market Assessment** – Periodic survey of local estate and lettings agents carried out in compliance with Government guidance.

**Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (HLAA)** – A study that will identify as many potential housing sites as possible for the period from 2006 to 2026, and to explore any constraints that might affect their suitability, viability or availability for development.

**Strategic Highway Network** - A categorisation of the road network into different categories determined by the functions they perform.

**Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)** - These can take the form of design guides or area development briefs. However, each supplementary planning document must be consistent with national and regional planning guidance, as well as the policies set out in the adopted plan. It should be clearly cross-referenced to the relevant plan policy or proposal that it supplements. Public consultation should be undertaken and supplementary planning documents should be regularly reviewed.

**Sustainable Development** - In broad terms, this means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Government has set out five guiding principles for sustainable development in its strategy 'Securing the Future – UK Government Strategy for Sustainable Development'. The five guiding principles to be achieved simultaneously, are: Living within environmental limits; Ensuring a strong healthy and just society; Achieving a sustainable economy; Promoting good governance, Using sound science responsibly.

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** - The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires Local Development Documents to be prepared with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainability appraisal is a systematic appraisal process. The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies set within a Local Development Document from the outset of the preparation process. This will ensure that decisions are made that accord with sustainable development.

**Unitary Development Plan (UDP)** - Statutory plans produced by each borough which integrate strategic and local planning responsibilities through policies and proposals for the development and use of land in their area. These are being replaced by Local Development Frameworks.

**Unitary District** – A type of local authority that has a single tier and is responsible for all local government functions within its area or performs additional functions which elsewhere in the relevant country are usually performed by national government or a higher level of sub-national government.

**Waste Management Facilities** - These include facilities for waste treatment and disposal. Most waste management facilities and landfill sites are privately owned. The County Council has contracts with the private companies for the treatment and disposal of municipal waste.

**West Midlands Region** - An official Region of England, covering the western half of the area traditionally known as the Midlands. It contains the second largest British city, Birmingham, and the larger West Midlands conurbation, which includes the city of Wolverhampton and large towns of Dudley, Solihull, Walsall and West Bromwich.

**West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA)** - A voluntary institution, which is responsible for developing and co-ordinating a strategic vision for the region through the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy.

**Zero Carbon Homes** – Dwellings that achieve zero net carbon emissions from energy use on site, on an annual basis.

## Appendix 1 - Core Strategy and Community Strategy Links.

Draft Core Strategy Objectives	Core Strategy Key Issues	Draft Spatial Option	Community Strategy Outcomes
<p>Objective 1</p> <p>Providing for appropriate housing provision.</p>	<p>Addressing an ageing population and the loss of younger people.</p> <p>Ensure appropriate housing provision and affordability.</p> <p>Ensuring high quality, locally distinctive sustainable design and construction.</p>	<p>A B C D</p>	<p>Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice.</p> <p>Children and young people are safe, secure and have stability.</p> <p>People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged.</p> <p>Cleaner, greener communities.</p>
<p>Objective 2</p> <p>Ensuring better health, wellbeing and quality of life.</p>	<p>Addressing an ageing population and the loss of younger people.</p> <p>Protecting and enhancement of environmental assets such as historic buildings, open spaces and designated sites.</p> <p>Provision of and access to important services and facilities in urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Improving transport infrastructure, choices, movement and communications throughout the County.</p> <p>Reducing the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.</p>	<p>B C D</p>	<p>Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice.</p> <p>Children and young people are healthy and have healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>Children and young people engage in positive behaviour inside and out of school.</p> <p>Children and young people achieve educational, personal, social and physical standards.</p> <p>People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged.</p> <p>Reducing levels of, and fear of, crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour.</p>
<p>Objective 3</p> <p>Providing for the needs of all generations.</p>	<p>The need to capitalise on educational achievements through higher education provision and skills development.</p> <p>Diversification of the economy</p>	<p>A B D</p>	<p>A more adaptable and higher skilled workforce.</p> <p>More and better paid employment.</p> <p>Older people and vulnerable</p>



	<p>to higher value added industries such as research and development.</p> <p>Addressing an ageing population and the loss of younger people.</p>		<p>adults to enjoy more independence and choice.</p> <p>Children and young people are safe, secure and have stability.</p> <p>Children and younger people achieve educational, personal, social and physical standards.</p> <p>Children and young people engage in further education, employment and training on leaving school.</p> <p>People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged.</p>
<p>Objective 4</p> <p>Ensuring improved transport accessibility and infrastructure.</p>	<p>Improving transport infrastructure, choices, movement and communications throughout the County.</p> <p>Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding.</p> <p>Improving poor air quality in specific locations due to vehicle pollution.</p> <p>Addressing an ageing population and the loss of young people.</p>	<p>A B D</p>	<p>Reduced traffic congestion through access to better integrated transport provision.</p> <p>Cleaner, greener communities.</p> <p>People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged</p> <p>Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice.</p>
<p>Objective 5</p> <p>Improving access and movement from rural areas to urban areas.</p>	<p>Provision of and access to important services and facilities in urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Improving transport infrastructure, choices, movement and communications throughout the County.</p> <p>Addressing an ageing population and the loss of young people.</p>	<p>A B</p>	<p>Reduced traffic congestion through access to better integrated transport provision.</p> <p>Cleaner, greener communities.</p> <p>People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged</p> <p>Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice.</p>

<p>Objective 6</p> <p>Providing opportunities for diversifying and strengthening the local economy.</p>	<p>Addressing an ageing population and the loss of younger people.</p> <p>The need to capitalise on education achievements through higher education provision and skills development.</p> <p>Diversification of the economy to higher value added industries such as research and development.</p> <p>Regeneration of the County.</p> <p>Promoting tourism and culture activities in the County.</p>	<p>A B C D</p>	<p>More and better paid employment.</p> <p>A more adaptable and higher skilled workforce.</p> <p>Children and young people engage in further education, employment and training on leaving school.</p> <p>Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice.</p>
<p>Objective 7</p> <p>Improving our service centres.</p>	<p>Regeneration of the County.</p> <p>Promoting tourism and culture activities in the County.</p> <p>Provision of and access to important services and facilities in urban and rural areas.</p>	<p>A B</p>	<p>Reduced traffic congestion through access to better integrated transport provision.</p> <p>Reducing levels of, and fear of, crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>More and better paid employment.</p> <p>Reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>Older people and vulnerable adults enjoy more independence and choice.</p>
<p>Objective 8</p> <p>Developing Herefordshire as a destination for quality leisure visits and sustainable tourism.</p>	<p>Regeneration of the County.</p> <p>Promoting tourism and culture activities in the County.</p> <p>Protecting and enhancing environmental assets such as historic buildings, open spaces and designated sites.</p> <p>Diversification of the economy to higher value added industries such as research and development.</p>	<p>A B C</p>	<p>Reducing levels of, and fear of, crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Cleaner, greener communities.</p>
<p>Objective 9</p>	<p>Addressing the impacts of</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>Reduced traffic congestion</p>

<p>Securing sustainable communities.</p>	<p>climate change, including flooding.</p> <p>Improving air quality in specific locations due to vehicle pollution.</p> <p>Better use of resources including water, minerals, land, energy and promoting use of renewable energy and reducing waste generation throughout the County.</p> <p>Protecting and enhancing environmental assets such as historic buildings, open spaces and designated sites.</p> <p>Provision of and access to important services and facilities in urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Ensuring high quality, locally distinctive, sustainable design and construction.</p> <p>Improving transport infrastructure, choice, movement and communications throughout the County.</p>	<p>B C D</p>	<p>through access to better integrated transport provision.</p> <p>Reducing levels of, and fear of, crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Cleaner, greener communities.</p> <p>People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged.</p>
<p>Objective 10 Protecting, conserving and enhancing our natural, built and historic and cultural assets.</p>	<p>Addressing the impacts of climate change, including flooding.</p> <p>Protection and enhancement of environmental assets such as historic buildings, open spaces and designated sites.</p> <p>Promoting tourism and cultural activities in the County.</p> <p>Provision of and access to important services and facilities in urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Better use of resources including water, minerals, land, energy and promoting use of renewable energy and reducing waste generation throughout the County.</p>	<p>A B C D</p>	<p>Cleaner, greener communities.</p> <p>Reducing levels of, and fear of, crime, drugs and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>People are active in their communities and fewer are disadvantaged.</p>

## Appendix 2 Conformity to other Plans, Policies and Strategies

Plan/Policy/Strategy	Key Objectives Relevant to LDF	Draft Core Strategy Objectives
<b>National</b>		
PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)	<p>Make suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life.</p> <p>Protect and enhance the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside and existing communities.</p> <p>Ensure high quality development through good and inclusive design.</p> <p>Ensure that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.</p>	<p>Objective 1</p> <p>Objective 9</p> <p>Objective 10</p>
PPS3: Housing (2006)	<p>Prioritise the re-use of previously developed land with urban areas, in preference to greenfield sites.</p> <p>Provide greater choice and a better mix in the size, type and location of housing.</p> <p>Plan to meet the housing requirements of the whole community; including those in need of affordable and special needs housing.</p>	<p>Objective 1</p> <p>Objective 3</p>
PPS6: Planning for Town Centres (2005)	<p>Promote the vitality and viability of town centres by planning for growth and development of existing centres.</p>	<p>Objective 6</p> <p>Objective 7</p>
PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (2004)	<p>Raise quality of life and the environment in rural areas through the promotion of thriving, inclusive and sustainable rural communities.</p>	<p>Objective 5</p> <p>Objective 6</p> <p>Objective 9</p>
PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (2005)	<p>Promote sustainable development, conserve, enhance and restore the diversity of England's wildlife and geology.</p>	<p>Objective 10</p>

	Contribute to rural renewal and urban renaissance by enhancing biodiversity in green spaces and ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity.	
PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (2005)	Protect human health and the environment by producing less waste and by using it as a resource wherever possible.  Break the link between economic growth and the environmental impact of waste.	Objective 2
PPG13: Transport (2001)	Promote more sustainable transport choices for people and freight.  Promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, cycling and walking.  Reduce the need to travel by located new development in places that can be served by public transport.	Objective 4  Objective 5
PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994)	Protect and enhance historic buildings, conservation areas and other elements of the historic environment, by regulating the development and use of land whilst reconciling the need for economic growth with the need to protect the natural and historic environment.	Objective 10
PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2002)	Support an urban renaissance by creating local networks of high quality and well managed and maintained open spaces, sports and recreational facilities.  Support urban renewal and recognise that the countryside can play an important role in the regeneration of the economies of rural areas.	Objective 2  Objective 3
The UK Sustainable Development Strategy: Securing the Future (2005)	Respect the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity in order to improve our environment and ensure that the natural resources needed for life are unimpaired and remain so for future generations.  Ensure a strong, healthy and just society meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities.  Build a strong, stable and sustainable economy, which provides prosperity and opportunities for all.	Objective 2  Objective 3  Objective 9  Objective 10
<b>Regional</b>		

<p>Regional Sustainable Development Framework (2006)</p>	<p>Develop thriving sustainable communities.</p> <p>Reduce overall energy use and increase use of renewable sources.</p> <p>Promote sustainable consumption and production.</p>	<p>Objective 9</p> <p>Objective 10</p>
<p>West Midlands Regional Housing Strategy (2005)</p>	<p>Create a strong regional economy, which through the provision of “pathways of housing choice” enables people to live near their work in pleasant affordable homes.</p> <p>Redress the failure of the housing markets that have resulted in little or, in some cases no substantial range of choice whether in price or type.</p> <p>Work with the private sector and Registered Social Landlords and to deliver the required new range and types of housing.</p>	<p>Objective 1</p> <p>Objective 3</p> <p>Objective 9</p>
<p>Rural Renaissance: Advantage West Midlands’ Rural Framework (2005)</p>	<p>Foster the sustainable development and diversification of the rural economy of the West Midlands.</p> <p>Raise skills levels and improve access to skills development opportunities in rural areas, in support of the ten business clusters.</p> <p>Support restructuring in the West Midlands rural economy through development of an accessible, modern, social and economic infrastructure and capacity; through improving access to opportunity.</p>	<p>Objective 2</p> <p>Objective 3</p> <p>Objective 5</p> <p>Objective 6</p>
<p>West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (2004)</p>	<p>Secure the regeneration of the rural areas of the region.</p> <p>Retain the Green Belt, but to allow adjustment of boundaries where this is necessary to support urban regeneration.</p> <p>Support the cities and towns of the region to meet their local and sub-regional development needs.</p> <p>Support the diversification and modernisation of the region’s economy while ensuring that opportunities for growth are linked to meeting needs and reducing social exclusion.</p> <p>Ensure the quality of the environment is conserved and enhanced across all parts of the region.</p>	<p>Objectives 1-10</p>

	<p>Improve significantly the region's transport systems.</p> <p>Promote the development of a network of strategic centres.</p>	
West Midlands Regional Energy Strategy (2004)	<p>Ensure that business benefits from commercial opportunities to produce energy efficient products and initiatives.</p> <p>Ensure focused and integrated delivery and implementation of energy use.</p>	<p>Objective 2</p> <p>Objective 9</p>
West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy and Action Plan (2004)	<p>Support modernisation of and diversification of West Midlands to ensure economic growth.</p> <p>Pillar One: Develop a diverse and dynamic business base.</p> <p>Pillar Two: Promote a learning and skilful region.</p> <p>Pillar Three: Create the conditions for growth – securing improvements to the region's transport, communication and property infrastructure to support the development of a diverse and dynamic business base.</p> <p>Pillar Four: Regenerate communities in the West Midlands.</p>	<p>Objective 3</p> <p>Objective 4</p> <p>Objective 5</p> <p>Objective 6</p>
West Midlands Regional Transport Strategy (2004)	<p>Improve accessibility across the region, and reduce the need to travel by expanding upon travel choice.</p>	<p>Objective 5</p> <p>Objective 6</p>
West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy (2004)	<p>Add value to the West Midlands visitor economy by attracting more visitors from outside the region, including more overnight visitors, more business and high-value leisure visitors</p> <p>Attract greater private sector tourism investment and extend the multi-cultural experience of the region.</p>	<p>Objective 8</p>
<b>Local</b>		

<p>Herefordshire Cultural Strategy (2004)</p>	<p>Improve the health and well being of Herefordshire people through the provision of sporting opportunities, which encourage healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>Reduce crime and disorder and make Herefordshire safer by helping to divert people away from criminal activity or anti-social behaviour through the use of culture and leisure based initiatives.</p> <p>Reduce poverty and isolation in Herefordshire by promoting free or concessionary activities and run schemes that address rural isolation through mobile services and use of village/community halls.</p> <p>Encourage communities to shape the future of Herefordshire by supporting the work of hundreds of voluntary groups working in culture and leisure to run their own initiatives.</p> <p>Develop Herefordshire as an active, vibrant and enjoyable place to be.</p> <p>Protect and enhance Herefordshire's distinct Environment, and promote the historic and rural landscape, with schemes linked to tourism, distinctiveness and archaeological sites.</p> <p>Meet Herefordshire's accommodation needs and conduct work within the most deprived neighbourhoods, providing facilities such as libraries and leisure centres where appropriate.</p> <p>Support business growth and create more and better-paid work in Herefordshire.</p> <p>Provide excellent education and training in Herefordshire for all ages in order to support both the national curriculum and the County's Lifelong Learning programme.</p>	<p>Objective 1</p> <p>Objective 2</p> <p>Objective 3</p> <p>Objective 4</p> <p>Objective 8</p> <p>Objective 9</p> <p>Objective 10</p>
<p>Herefordshire Council Corporate Plan 2005/2008 "Action for a better Herefordshire"</p>	<p>Protect the environment by recycling much more waste and significantly reducing carbon emissions.</p> <p>Improve transport and safety of roads, including further reductions in the number of people killed or seriously injured.</p> <p>Sustain vibrant and prosperous communities by providing more efficient, effective and customer-focused services.</p> <p>Promote diversity and community harmony and strive for equal opportunities for all the people of Herefordshire, regardless of race, religion,</p>	<p>Objective 3</p> <p>Objective 4</p> <p>Objective 5</p> <p>Objective 9</p> <p>Objective 10</p>



	disability, sex, sexual orientation, geographical location, income or age.	
Herefordshire Economic Development Strategy 2005-2025	<p>Establish and promote Herefordshire as the leading County for a sustainable and high quality of life.</p> <p>Attract and support entrepreneurial businesses in sustainable high value sectors such as environmental technologies and knowledge-based activities.</p> <p>Enhance the provision of community based training and learning.</p> <p>Maximise the economic impact of competitive locations by improving the land and property offer.</p> <p>Provide flexible business accommodation and other support services in peripheral locations.</p> <p>Provide a sector specific property offer for key sectors (such as mixed use live-workspace for the creative industries sector).</p> <p>Address traffic congestion in Hereford through additional traffic management measures.</p> <p>Enhance access to affordable housing for those on low incomes, or those who are generally disadvantaged.</p> <p>Fully understand and address issues associated with urban disadvantage, particularly in Hereford City.</p>	<p>Objective 1</p> <p>Objective 3</p> <p>Objective 4</p> <p>Objective 7</p> <p>Objective 8</p>
Herefordshire Council Corporate Environmental Strategy 2005-2011	<p>Make efficient use of natural resources such as water, heat and electricity, and promote the use and development of appropriate sources of renewable energy and recycled products.</p> <p>Take action to prevent pollution and minimise environmental risks.</p> <p>Promote sustainable and integrated transport solutions that meet the needs of the County.</p> <p>Implement a waste strategy to reduce the amount of waste entering the waste stream.</p> <p>Respond to the challenges posed by climate change by significantly reducing carbon emissions from its own activities and acting, where possible, to address and mitigate wider potential impacts.</p> <p>Protect natural habitats and species to maintain</p>	<p>Objective 9</p> <p>Objective 10</p>

	<p>and improve the wealth of biodiversity in the county.</p> <p>Promote the benefits of a healthy and attractive environment to community well being.</p> <p>Provide a planning system that ensures that development is sustainable.</p>	
Herefordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (2005)	<p>Improve the condition of council owned Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).</p> <p>Prepare and implement a Biodiversity Action Plan complete with an effective monitoring, reporting and review system.</p> <p>Protect and enhance the biodiversity on council owned land.</p>	Objective 10
Herefordshire Local Transport Plan 2 2006/07 – 2010/11	<p>Reduce congestion and increase the use of sustainable modes of travel to safeguard the environment.</p>	Objective 2 Objective 4 Objective 5
Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan 2004 -2009	<p>Keep the Hills open for the benefit, recreation and enjoyment of the public.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for informal outdoor recreation by the public, both visitor and resident.</p> <p>Conserve and enhance the character and quality of the existing landscape to include all types of natural flora and fauna.</p> <p>Conserve and enhance the existing wildlife of the Hills and Commons.</p> <p>Improve the public's knowledge and understanding for the Malvern Hills.</p> <p>Have regard for the social and economic well being of the people living in the area in a manner compatible with the conservators' other purposes.</p> <p>Ensure that development within this area is consistent with the objectives of the conservators.</p>	Objective 6 Objective 9 Objective 10
Wye Valley AONB Management Plan 2004-2009	<p>Conserve and enhance, where necessary, the natural beauty of the landscape in the Wye Valley AONB, with its natural and cultural features and processes.</p>	Objective 6 Objective 9 Objective 10

	<p>Conserve, enhance and restore the characteristic biodiversity.</p> <p>Conserve, safeguarding and enhance the historic environment of the AONB, with its wealth of cultural associations.</p> <p>Foster viable farming enterprises that manage the land in ways that protect the natural resources and distinctiveness of the AONB and to enhance them where need arises.</p> <p>Ensure woodland throughout the Wye Valley AONB is managed sustainably in a way that protects and enhances the outstanding semi natural wooded character of the area, and provides economic, environmental and social benefits.</p> <p>Ensure that sustainable tourism, based upon the natural beauty and local distinctiveness of the AONB, continues to enrich the lives of visitors, operators and employees while contributing positively to the conservation and enhancement of the area.</p>	
Tourism Strategy for Herefordshire 2002 – 2007	Improve the value of tourism to Herefordshire, bringing benefits to the economy, the community and the environment of the area, and to the region as a whole.	Objective 8
Herefordshire Partnership Climate Change Strategy 2005/6 - 2011/12	<p>Reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.</p> <p>Decrease emissions of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions per head of population per year.</p> <p>Reduce the fossil fuel and electricity consumption of operational council properties.</p> <p>Support and promote energy efficient measures.</p> <p>Reduce the average street lamp circuit wattage.</p> <p>Improve the energy efficiency of all housing sectors.</p> <p>Reduce the energy consumption of operational council properties.</p> <p>Support the use of renewable energy sources.</p>	<p>Objective 9</p> <p>Objective 10</p>

**Appendix 3**

**Background Studies (Evidence Base)**

Title	Current position (June 2008)
<b>Housing Land Availability Assessment (in-house study)</b>	Initial report covering Hereford and the market towns prepared.
<b>West Sub-regional Housing Market Assessment (prepared for Shropshire and Herefordshire)</b>	Final draft report prepared.
<b>Water Study, comprising assessment of water supply, treatment, infrastructure and flooding (PPG25 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment)</b>	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment completed.
<b>(Growth Point study)</b>	Water cycle element report to be completed by June
<b>Employment Land Review (external consultants)</b>	Review paper prepared as background information for Options consultation.
<b>Retail study (PPS6 Assessment) (external consultants)</b>	Review paper prepared as background information for Options consultation.
<b>Green Infrastructure Study (Growth Point study)</b>	Completed
<b>Open space study (PPG17)</b>	Completed
<b>Transport Study</b>	Highways Agency taking lead role in this work. Discussions to be had regarding scope of work and funding arrangements
<b>Waste/Minerals study (external consultants)</b>	Study being commissioned.
<b>Sub-regional Gypsy/Travellers Assessment (prepared for Shropshire and Herefordshire, Telford and Wrekin and Powys).</b>	Final draft report published.
<b>Characterisation Assessment (in house study)</b>	First Phase expected October 08

## **STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT**

**Report By: Forward Planning Manager**

### **1 Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **2 Purpose**

- 2.1 To receive and agree for further technical assessment, emerging findings of an initial study of land with potential for housing development within Herefordshire.

### **3 Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Costs of undertaking the assessment as part of evidence base work required for the Local Development Framework (LDF) is being met from approved budgets.

### **4 Background**

- 4.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a study of the potential availability of land for future housing development within Herefordshire for the period up to 2026. The requirement to produce such an assessment is contained within PPS3 Housing with accompanying practice guidance (July 2007). Its purpose is to demonstrate that the future housing requirement identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) can be fulfilled.
- 4.2 The study is a key component of the Local Development Framework's evidence base and contributes to the preparation of the Core Strategy. The study's initial report will be made available as an evidence based background paper for the Core Strategy options which is proposed to be published for consultation in June. It will help to establish whether the Core Strategy options for possible broad directions of growth are feasible by indicating whether sufficient land is potentially available to achieve the levels of growth suggested. The assessment will also inform the Hereford Action Area Plan and any other development plan documents. Land identified will contribute to overall RSS requirements including those for affordable housing.
- 4.3 The technical information contained within the assessment will therefore inform policy. However it is important to emphasise that the identification of any site does not indicate that it will successfully obtain planning permission or will be allocated for housing development. Consequently it is also important to note that not all the sites identified will be either necessary or acceptable. It is not the role of the study to make final judgements about individual sites.
- 4.4 Finally, it needs to be noted that the assessment is currently being undertaken with the knowledge that the housing figures proposed in the current review of

the Regional Spatial Strategy have been challenged by the Government as being too low. Any addition to the future housing provision for Herefordshire will need to be considered further within the context of the Core Strategy and consequently this assessment.

## 5 The Assessment

5.1 In accordance with the practice guidance and as agreed with stakeholders, a Methodology Statement sets out the context and the scope of the assessment. For Herefordshire, the study is to cover Hereford, the five market towns and the main villages/smaller settlements as identified within the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan. These represent the areas where the vast majority of housing development is expected to be focussed.

5.2 The assessment is not yet complete. The initial study has considered land in/around Hereford and the market towns where plans have been compiled and are attached. These will also be on display at Committee. The initial report will include plans of each settlement and all land assessed along with a more detailed schedule of each sites potential for future housing development. This will set out a site description and known constraints. All land assessed within the initial report will then be the subject of a further technical assessment.

5.3 Assessments of land in the rural areas are to be completed. As the Core Strategy moves towards its preferred option stage the assessment will provide similar information for the rural areas.

### 5.4 Sources of supply

i) completions and commitments

The RSS/Core Strategy plan period is 2006 – 2026. Data from the 2006/7 Housing Land Study establishes that as at 2007 around 4,900 houses were either completed or committed and could therefore be deducted from the RSS requirement of 16,600. Based upon the RSS preferred option this has left a residual amount of around 11,700 dwellings to be found for the period up to 2026 with sites for around 6200 dwellings being required within Hereford, and the remainder of 5500 being sought in the market towns and the rural areas.

ii) comprehensive site surveys

Given the above, then potential sites need to be identified which are reasonable candidates to enable a delivery of housing sites to meet the residual 11,700 dwellings and so demonstrate a potential supply of housing land. This will initially identify more land for consideration than is necessary to meet the residual amount. This acknowledges and allows for some sites being eliminated as a result of the technical assessment and ultimately to enable an eventual choice to be made through the plan making process.

5.5 Desk top site identification, together with a request for sites to be made known to the local planning authority in 2007, has led to comprehensive site surveys within Hereford and the Market Towns and settlements in the rural areas. Most sites around settlement boundaries have been assessed as well as any remaining potential sites within the settlement itself.

- 5.6 When surveying, information was sought to establish whether sites were developable and deliverable. To be considered developable a site should be in a suitable location for housing development and available at the appropriate time. To be considered deliverable a site should be:
- Available – the site is available now;
  - Suitable – the site offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities;
  - Achievable – there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within 5 years and beyond within the timescale of the Plan ie by 2026.
- 5.7 The initial assessment has categorised land and sites as either land with no potential, land with significant constraints or land with minor constraints. All previous Unitary Development Plan urban capacity sites have been included and reviewed, which took account of many brownfield opportunities. Notwithstanding this, the study has also identified large amounts of greenfield land that could offer an urban /settlement extension. Most of these sites are with significant inherent constraints. Further examination is likely to rule out some or parts of these sites.

## **6 Timetable of Assessment**

- 6.1 The SHLAA is an important part of the emerging evidence base for the LDF. Overall, the work will provide an early indication of possible housing land and broad locations of growth to support the options stage of the Core Strategy, which is proposed to be published for consultation purposes in June.
- 6.2 Identified sites within Hereford and the Market Towns will be subject to a technical consultation in early summer to further assess their suitability for development and to identify any mitigation measures where necessary and appropriate. As previously stated this will likely result in currently identified sites being deleted from the assessment. In addition all remaining sites will also be subject to a viability assessment.
- 6.3 Following further consideration of this proposed approach by Cabinet on May 29, an initial technical report will be completed to provide further information for the sites identified on the attached maps, in particular in respect of factual information on constraints. This will be subject to the approval of the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) prior to publication. As the study progresses additional sites may become available and so the initial report will not be definitive.
- 6.4 Alongside this, further work will also be undertaken in the rural areas where identified sites will also be subject to the same assessment. Site details for the rural areas will be made available as the Core Strategy moves towards its preferred options stage.

## RECOMMENDATION

### THAT

1. the processes undertaken to date in compiling the SHLAA be noted and supported; and
2. it be recommended to the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) that Cabinet approve the initial mapped survey findings of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in respect of Hereford and the market towns as a basis for further technical work in support of the Local Development Framework, with publication of initial survey findings being carried out alongside the Core Strategy options consultation.

### Background papers

Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision Preferred Option (Dec. 2007)  
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments: practice guidance (July 2007)  
Herefordshire's Housing Land Availability Assessment – Methodology Statement (August 2007)  
Herefordshire Housing Land Study (2007)



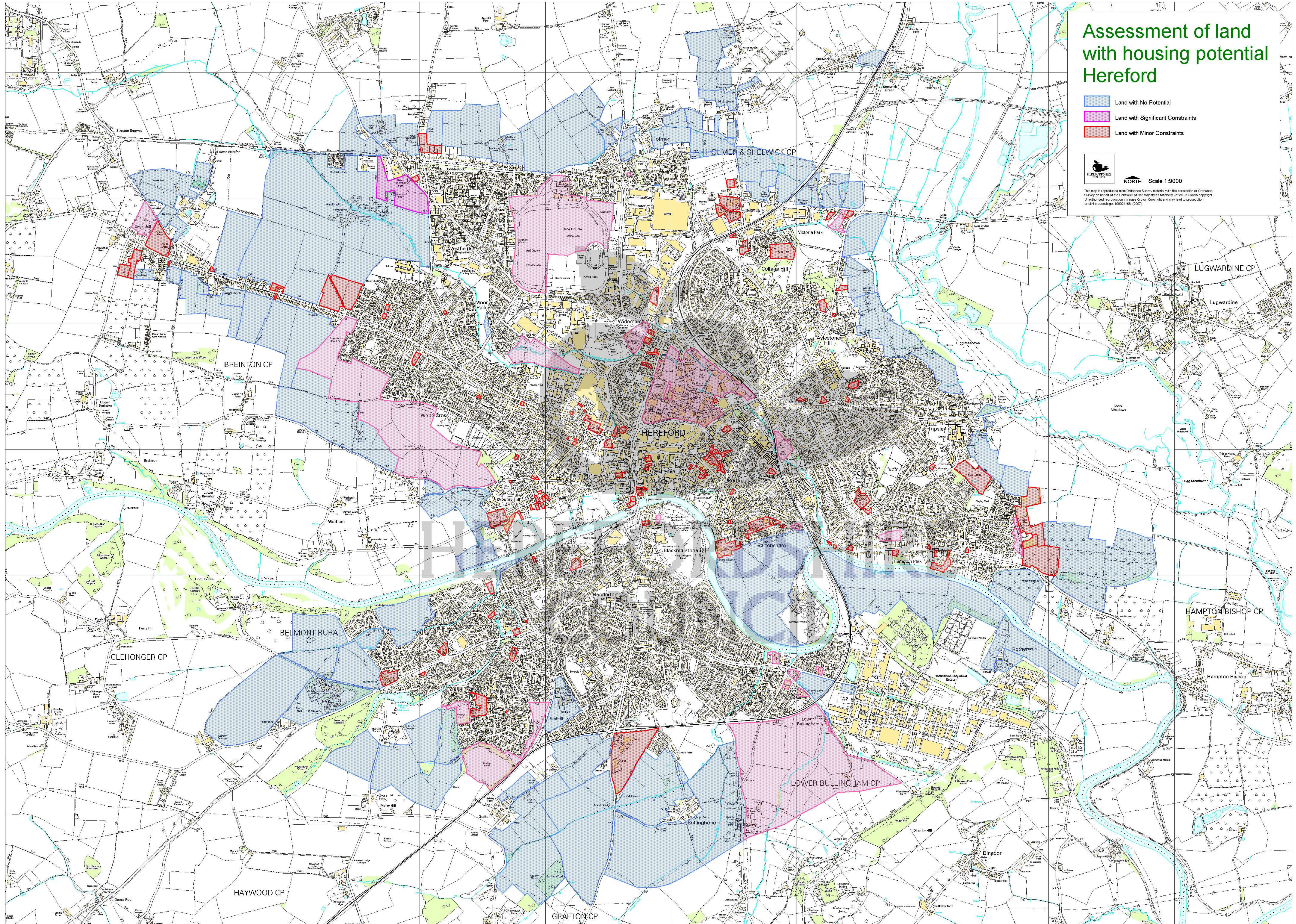
# Assessment of land with housing potential Hereford

- Land with No Potential
- Land with Significant Constraints
- Land with Minor Constraints



NORTH Scale 1:9000

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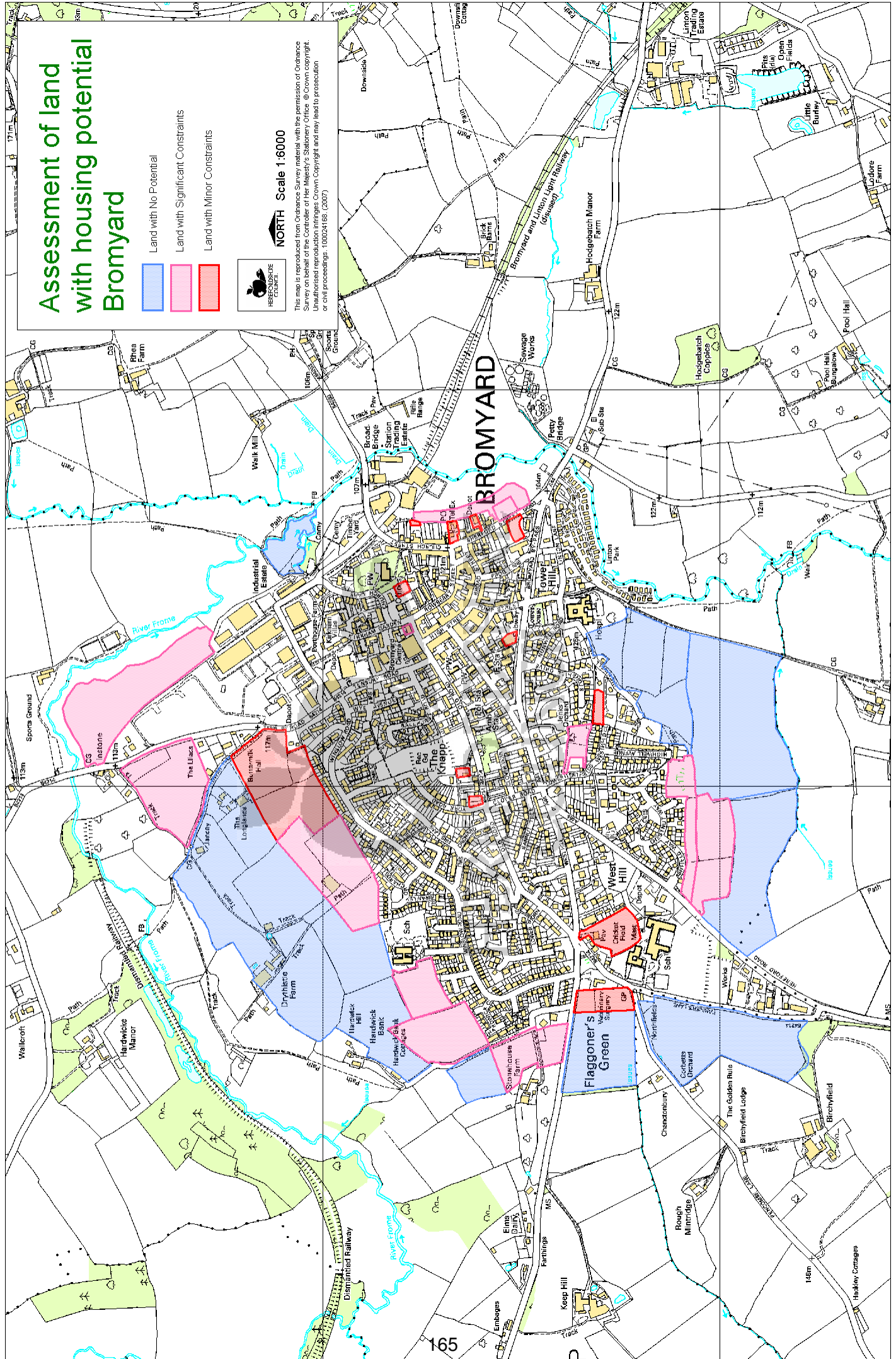
# Assessment of land with housing potential Bromyard

- Land with No Potential
- Land with Significant Constraints
- Land with Minor Constraints



**NORTH** Scale 1:8000

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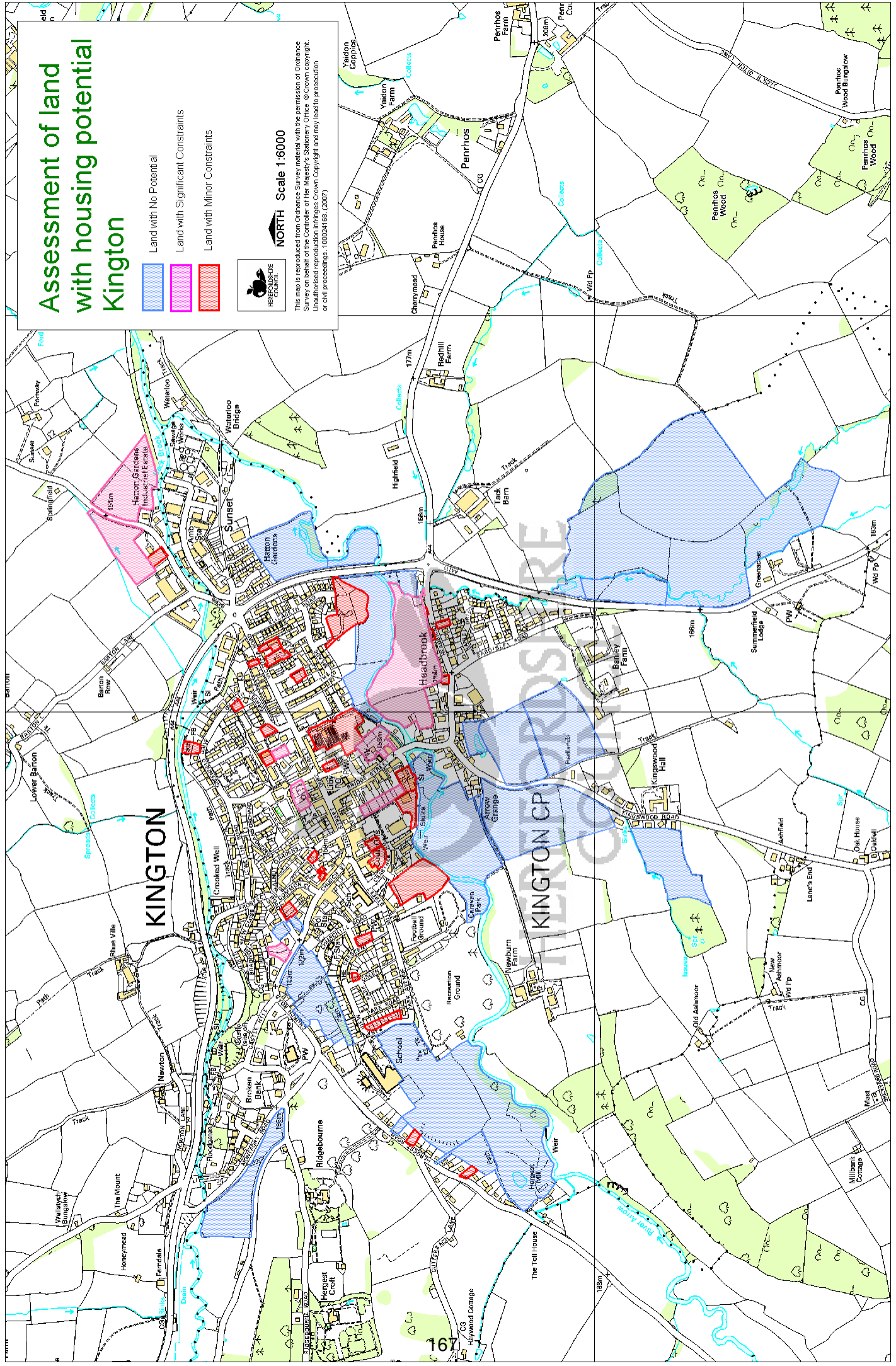
# Assessment of land with housing potential Kington

- Land with No Potential
- Land with Significant Constraints
- Land with Minor Constraints



NORTH Scale 1:6000

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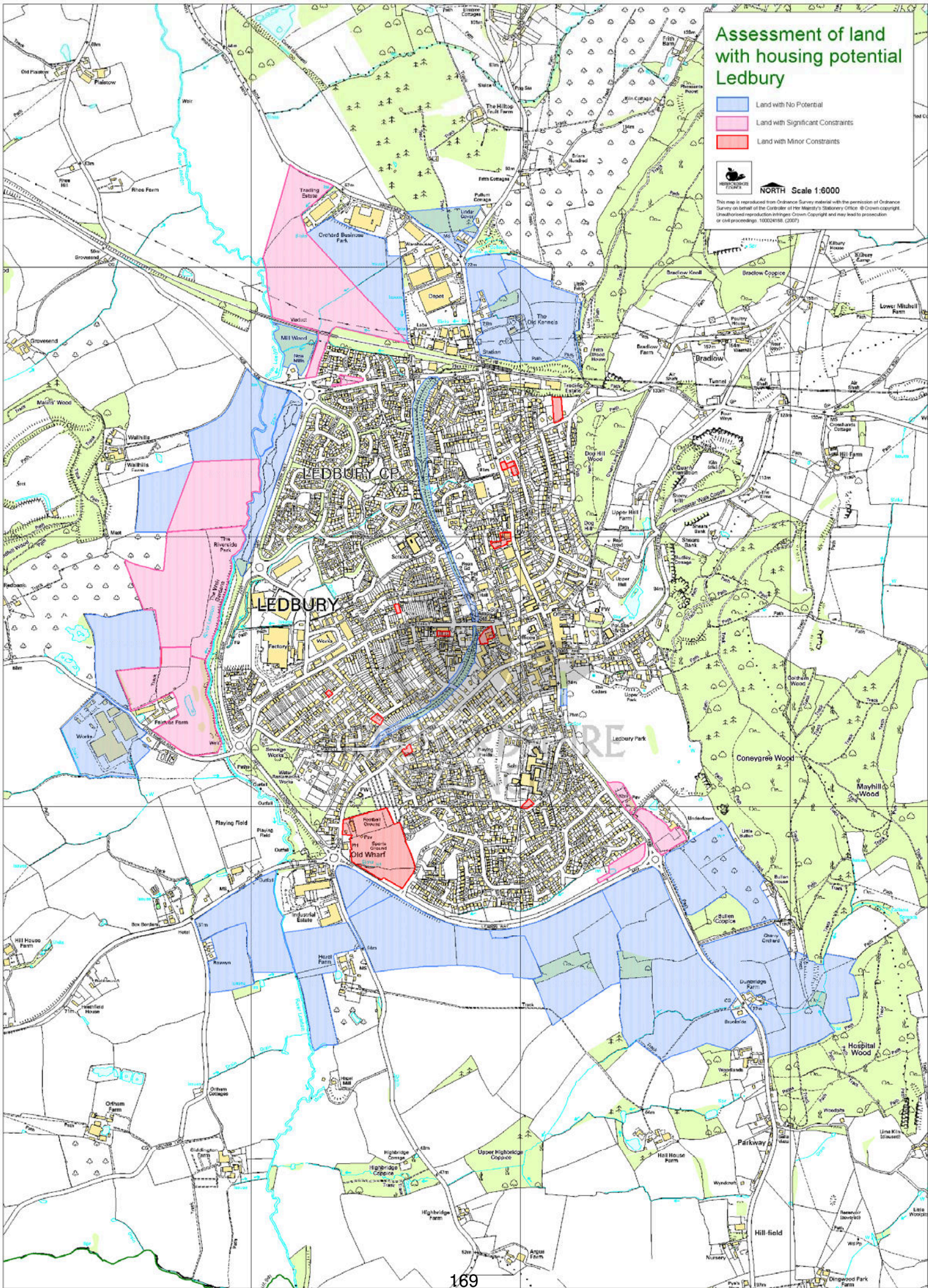
# Assessment of land with housing potential Ledbury

- Land with No Potential
- Land with Significant Constraints
- Land with Minor Constraints



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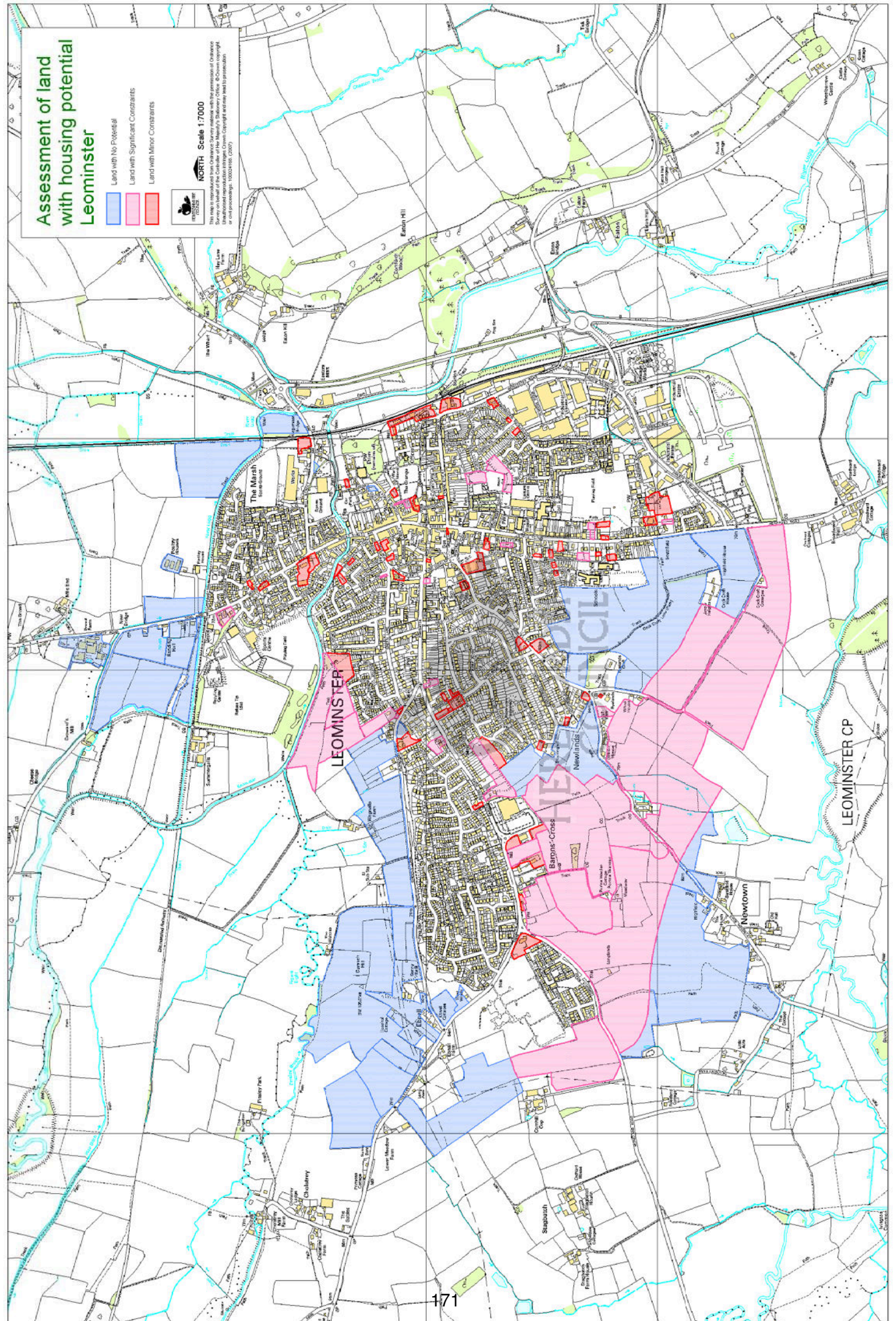
# Assessment of land with housing potential Leominster

- Land with No Potential
- Land with Significant Constraints
- Land with Minor Constraints



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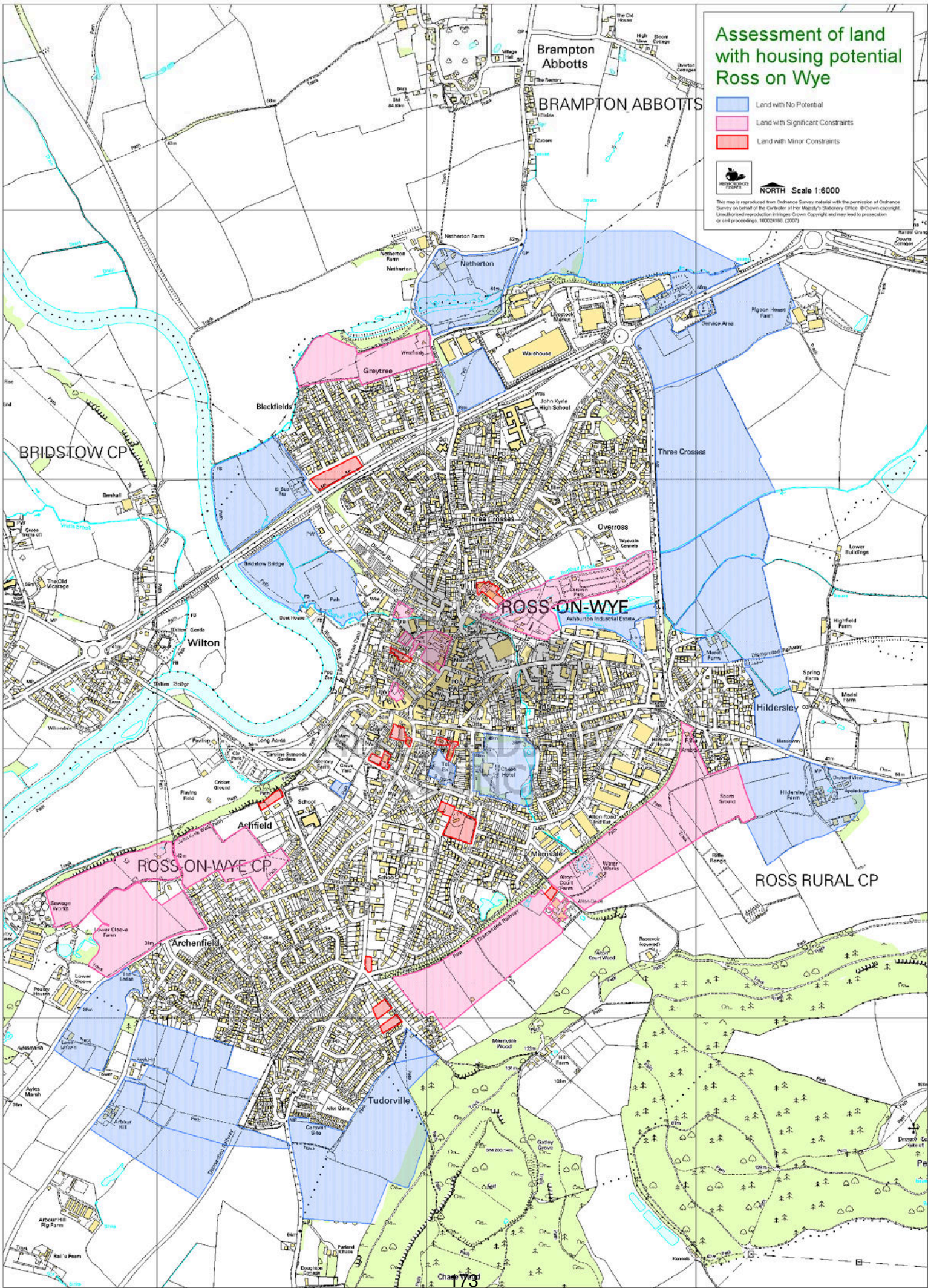
# Assessment of land with housing potential Ross on Wye

- Land with No Potential
- Land with Significant Constraints
- Land with Minor Constraints



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**PLANNING PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS****Report By: HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES****1. Wards Affected**

County-wide

**2. Purpose**

- 2.1 To update Committee on this important national initiative and to agree a local protocol.

**3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Likely to be cost neutral at this stage. Future reports will address the issue of charging for pre-application advice.

**4. Background**

- 4.1 Planning Performance Agreements are a key element of the Planning Reform agenda. Planning Performance Agreements are essentially a collaborative project management process primarily aimed at complex development proposals. Although PPAs can be used for all development projects that fit the Communities and Local Government definition of a major application, it is recommended that they are most appropriate for unique, complex schemes as PPAs require considerable effort. The aim is to move away from development control to a system of development management which takes account the broader concept of spatial planning. PPAs are about improving the quality of the decision making process, not the speed or decision making, and they may not be appropriate for all types of development proposal. Collaboration is key to the process and one party cannot insist on the use of a PPA if there is no collective agreement.
- 4.2 A PPA can be used for all major applications. Local authorities are required to notify Communities and Local Government about their use of a PPA via the amended general Development Control Return Forms PS1/2. The local planning authority (LPA) and applicant are free to agree on the necessary components of a PPA which will depend upon the individual project. However, LPAs will be monitored against that agreed PPA timescale (PPA programme).
- 4.3 There are a number of core components recommended as a minimum by Communities and Local Government for following the PPA process and producing a PPA. In developing the individual agreement parties must acknowledge the key written content of the PPA, which should include:
- project vision and development objectives and the planning proposal;
  - project issues and tasks plan;
  - project team and decision making framework; and
  - project programme.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Andrew Ashcroft, Head of Planning Services,  
on (01432) 383098

- 4.4. A PPA can only be considered via agreement between the local authority and the applicant.

Potential criteria for assessing the complexity of a scheme can include:

- proposals that meet a local authority's identified strategic objectives as set out in the Local Development Framework (LDF);
- proposals requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment;
- larger sites that include a variety of land uses;
- proposals that have an impact on strategic areas of environmental sensitivity, i.e. a Special Protection Area or sites where there are many constraints to be resolved before the development can be delivered;
- proposals involving significant non-standard planning obligations;
- proposals which require referral to a central or regional government body;
- proposals which would have significant impact on existing communities and therefore require consultations or involvement from many different stakeholders, interest groups, statutory agents, etc; and/or
- proposals that are unique to a local authority's experience.

- 4.5 Experience from the pilot exercise identified a wide variety of factors that can impact on any particular development proposal and that establishing a single model agreement was neither realistic nor helpful. It also identified that the actual process of establishing an agreement is significantly beneficial in developing a common understanding of project issues and objectives and building positive relationships.

- 4.6 The PPA process is expected to be iterative as agreements will need to be flexible and capable of being used as working documents. The following are recommended as key components to be included in any PPA.

- a) Screening – to establish if a PPA is a correct and agreed approach.
- b) Project Scoping – what needs to be done and who needs to be involved.
- c) Vision and development objectives – what vision is to be achieved.
- d) Project team – who are the key players and are all interests represented.
- e) Review of policy position – what policy guidance exists on the site.
- f) Review of evidence base – to establish what information exists and what is required.
- g) Community engagement strategy – based around the Statement of Community Involvements how best can the wider community be involved.
- h) Member involvement – how members are involved and how can this be managed without compromising the decision making process.
- i) Statutory agency and service provider input – the influence of these groups should be assessed and fully managed.
- j) Resources – the availability of skills should be assessed.



## 5. The Council's Approach

- 5.1 Government advice suggests that if PPAs are to be used regularly, local planning authorities are strongly advised to establish a formal process that can be set out in a formal document (a PPA Charter) which will set out the generic approach and commitment for dealing with complex development projects.
- 5.2 A proposed Charter is set out at Appendix 1. Mainly the charter is of a procedural nature and is in accordance with the key principles of the PPA process. However it proposes key criteria in suggesting when a PPA would be both appropriate and expected by this Council. For clarity these criteria are suggested as:
- a) proposals for strategic housing and/or employment sites as identified either in the existing UDP or the forthcoming LDF; or
  - b) proposals requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment; or
  - c) proposals which would have a significant impact on existing communities and therefore require expansive consultation or involvement from many different stakeholders, interest groups, statutory agencies etc.

In many cases these criteria would overlap.

## RECOMMENDATION

**It is recommended that the Committee:**

- (a) notes the introduction of Planning Performance Agreements: and**
- (b) supports their application in Herefordshire; and**
- (c) approves the Charter sent out at Appendix 1.**

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- CLG/Atlas : Guidance Note: Implementing Planning Performance Agreements April 2008



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## **Introduction**

The Council's Community Strategy sets out its vision for the future of the County. This vision requires that all development is of the highest quality and is founded on the principles of economic, social, environmental and physical sustainability. The evolving LDF Core Strategy states that new development must contribute to the well-being of existing and future communities.

This Charter sets out how the Council will work with developers, the community and other key stakeholders to ensure that all large and complex development proposals are carefully considered in a constructive, collaborative and open manner. Such an approach is the best way of developing proposals to see if they can meet the vision and objectives of the Council.

Where major development proposals are deemed to be in accordance with the Development Plan for the Area or, if a departure, have the potential to meet the Council's Corporate Objectives, the Council will instigate a Project Team approach and seek to manage the project through a Planning Performance Agreement.

## **The Council Structure**

An approach to the Council about a large-scale development project will initially be through the Planning Service. However, when a project is defined it is likely that it will involve officers from other departments and the Council is committed to co-ordinated cross-departmental working.

The make up of the Project Team will be determined according to the needs of the project by the Regeneration Directorate Management Team. For large strategic projects an officer Steering Group will be established, which the Council's Head of Planning Services or the Development Control Manager will chair. The Chair of the Steering Group will be responsible for corporate delivery, progressing the project and communication to Council Members and the Public. In addition, a Project Manager will be identified. The Project Manager will be responsible for the co-ordination of the project team and the primary interface with the developer's Project Team; ensuring tasks are delivered to agreed timescales, regular reporting and liaison with the other stakeholders. In most cases the project manager will become the case officer.

All members of the project teams will work on behalf of the council in the wider public interest and to secure the best quality scheme delivering the objectives of the Unitary Development Plan/Local Development Framework and relevant policy documents. Officers will express their own professional opinions that will form guidance for the applicant.

The guidance will not bind officers to final recommendation nor override the requirement for a formal planning application to be determined without prejudice and within the statutory requirements of current planning legislation.

### **Partner Organisation Commitment**

The Council is committed to co-ordinated inter-departmental working. However for large complex schemes other stakeholders from partner organisations are likely to be required to provide a timely, proactive response to each project. Other stakeholders including the Statutory Agencies (Highways Agency, Environment Agency and Natural England) and the Herefordshire Primary Care Trust have all committed to pre-application involvement. In respect of the latter the Council and the Trust now share a joint management structure.

The local planning authority and Partner organisations are committed to sharing existing information with the development interests.

### **Community Engagement**

As set out in the Statement of Community Involvement (March 2007) the Council is committed to open and constructive community engagement. In all projects within the scope of this Charter, community engagement will be established in liaison with the Local Strategic Partnership. As a minimum this will include the relevant Parish or Community Council(s) and any established resident groups. For large strategic projects the Council is likely to seek the developer's commitment to an independently facilitated Enquiry by Design process.

Notwithstanding the above, the Council will also undertake separate consultation as part of the formal planning application process as a statutory procedure, in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

### **Member Involvement**

The Council believes that Members should be appropriately and openly engaged with the development of the project, whilst ensuring that their decision making function is not compromised. The Council's normal procedure would be to ensure regular information is reported to members at the open Development Control Committee meetings in the form of 'Issues Report' at least once before the application is submitted. This will allow Members to develop an understanding of issues and raise their own issues and concerns that may wish to be addressed. Members will not express views about the overall planning merits of any case and will not engage privately with the developer interest.

### **Expectations from Applicant**

The Council will expect the developer interest to approach any proposal in an open, collaborative and creative manner. The developer interest will be expected to employ high quality staff/consultants with sound expertise in delivering sustainable communities. All projects will be delivered through a robust project management process and as with the Council, applicants will be expected to meet agreed timetables.

Where there are multiple developer interests the Council will seek a single steering group member and separate project manager empowered to represent the collective developer interest.

## **Funding**

The Council will have an expectation that the applicant will fund the preparation of the application material, production of technical reports, and community engagement activity. Prior to the commencement of individual tasks the Council and the Applicant will agree a brief to define the scope of work.

In establishing an individual PPA, consideration will be given to how the authority can service the project programme. If the cost is likely to exceed the subsequent planning application fee then the authority will expect the applicant to fund the additional cost.

## **Process Requirements**

The Council will expect the promoters of schemes covered by this Charter to engage in and sign a PPA. The process will involve the following key elements:

- Meet and review the project proposal at an early stage;
- Agree vision and development objectives;
- Form a Project Steering Group with key decision makers and the Project Manager (Council lead). Technical working groups may be required when technical tasks are identified (which will be co-ordinated by the Project Manager). The Steering Group should deal with any issues/conflicts arising, not the mechanics of the project;
- Produce a Project Plan based on identification of project issues and subsequent tasks; and
- Produce a Programme directly linked to the Project Plan and agree with the applicant to deliver key milestones.

The Project Plan and Programme will be updated regularly to reflect the ongoing work of the project. The Programme can be reviewed accordingly, in agreement with both applicant and the Council.

## **Key Thresholds**

The Council recognises that it is impractical to establish very precise criteria for proposals that would be appropriate for PPAs. A degree of flexibility will be expected.

Nonetheless the Council will press for and encourage developers to enter into PPAs on the following proposals:

- a) Proposals for strategic housing and/or employment sites as defined either in the existing UDP or the forthcoming LDF; or
- b) Proposals requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment; or

- c) Proposals that would have a significant impact on existing communities and therefore require extensive consultations or involvement from many different interests.

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DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION**

**ANDREW ASHCROFT  
HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES**

**COUNCILLOR J. JARVIS  
CABINET MEMBER – ENVIRONMENT & STRATEGIC HOUSING**

**COUNCILLOR A. BLACKSHAW  
CABINET MEMBER – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



## **ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW**

**Report by: Head of Planning Services**

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

- 1 To facilitate the Annual Development Review of planning application sites.

### **Financial Implications**

2. None.

### **Background**

- 3 A review developments which have recently been completed is desirable as part of the process of monitoring quality in development control decision making. This used to take the form of an annual visit (with the working title "Development Review") by Members of a selection of unusual, controversial or otherwise interesting sites. It should be seen as part of the monitoring of quality in development control decision making.
- 4 A provisional date has been set for 30 June 2008 and the tour will start at 9.30am at Brockington with the return planned for around 4.30 pm. A coach will be provided.
5. The sites to be visited need to be known beforehand to arrange access where necessary. Officers will provide a list of appropriate sites, but Members may also wish to suggest sites which they consider to be important to demonstrate particular points in the management of development in the County. The final list of sites will be agreed with the Chairman and the Vice Chairman and circulated to all Members before the visits.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **THAT:**

**The date of the Annual Development Review be agreed.**

