



Scoping Report for the Herefordshire Local Plan Review

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

Herefordshire Council

Final report

Prepared by LUC

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared by LUC on behalf of Herefordshire Council as the first stage in carrying out the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) for the review and update of the Herefordshire Local Plan ('the Local Plan').

1.2 SA/SEA is an assessment process designed to consider and communicate the significant sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans and policies within them, including their alternatives. SA/SEA iteratively informs the plan-making process by helping to refine the contents of such documents, so that they maximise the benefits of sustainable development and avoid, or at least minimise, the potential for adverse effects.

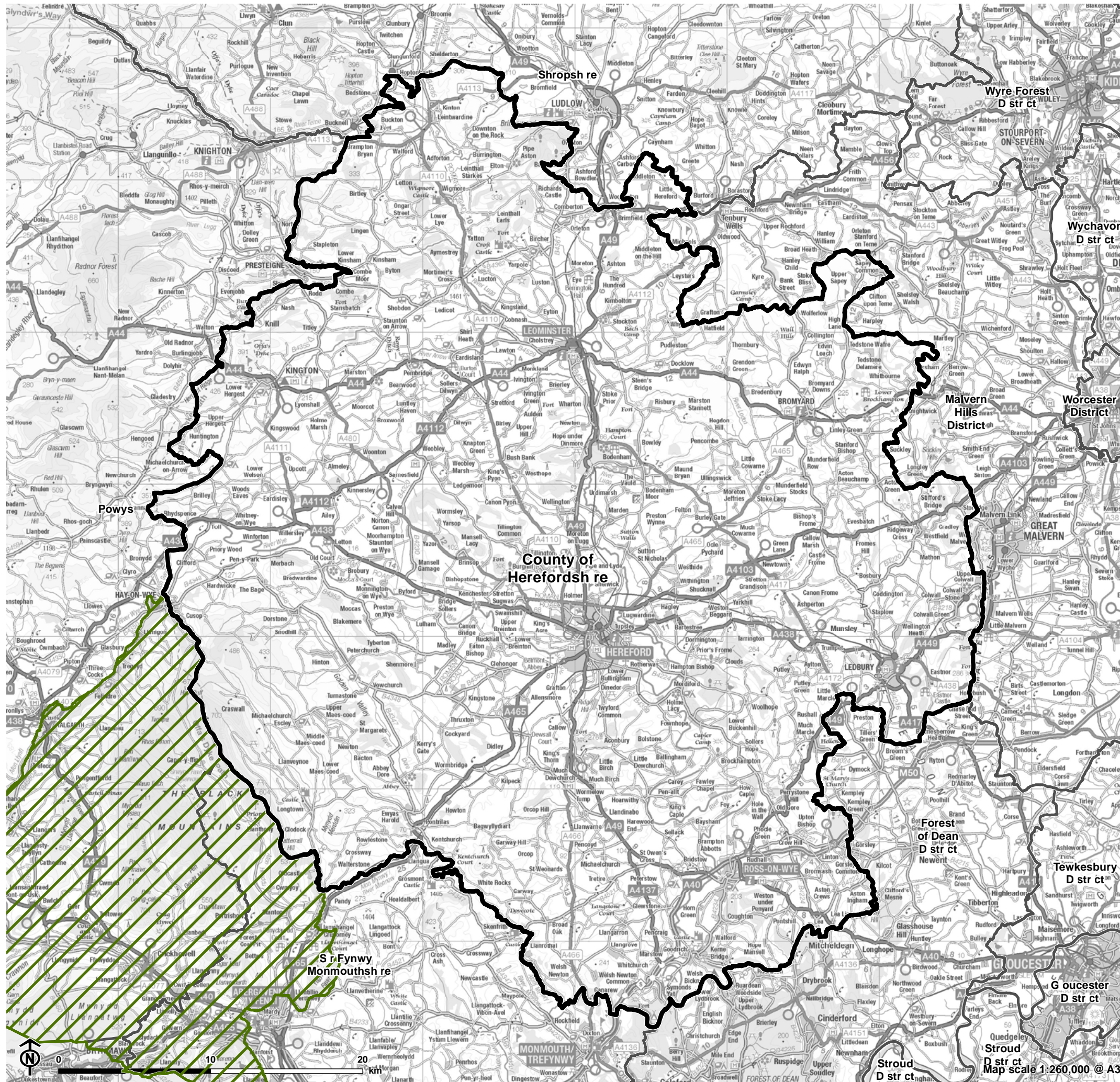
1.3 The purpose of this Scoping Report is to provide the context for, and determine the scope of, the SA/SEA for the review and update of the Local Plan and to set out the framework for undertaking the later stages of the SA/SEA. The tasks involved in the Scoping stage of SA/SEA are summarised below:




- Reviewing other plans, policies and programmes.
- Considering the current state of the environment, as well as social economic factors in the plan area.
- Identifying any key environmental, social and economic issues which may be affected by the review of the Local Plan.
- Setting out the 'SA framework', which comprises specific sustainability objectives against which the likely effects of the Local Plan can be assessed.

The Plan Area

1.4 Herefordshire is a large, predominantly rural, landlocked county situated in the southwestern corner of the West Midlands region, on the border with Wales. Herefordshire shares boundaries with three English local authorities (the unitary authority of Shropshire Council, together with Malvern Hills and Forest of Dean District Councils within Worcestershire and Gloucestershire). Herefordshire also shares boundaries with three Welsh local authorities (Monmouthshire County Council, Powys County Council, and the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority). Figure 1 below shows the location of Herefordshire in context.

Figure 1.1: Location of Herefordshire



-  County of Herefordshire
-  Neighbouring authority boundary
-  Brecon Beacons National Park

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1.5 The county area covers 217,973 hectares and has a population of 187,000 residents [See reference 1]. High hill ranges, including the Malvern Hills and Black Mountains, encircle much of the county at its perimeter. Away from these areas, the landscape is one of gentle rolling hills, dissected by wide river valleys with lower-lying plains in the centre. River crossing points have provided a natural focus for the development of many settlements, with others dispersed across Herefordshire's rich and diverse landscape.

1.6 The meandering river valley landscape which is the county's principal geographical feature is that of the River Wye. This enters Herefordshire near the Welsh town of Hay-on-Wye, flowing east to Hereford before leaving the county at the Wye Gorge, downstream of Ross-on-Wye. Herefordshire contains parts of two protected landscapes of national importance: the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Brecon Beacons National Park is located beyond the county's western boundary.

1.7 Hereford City, near the centre of the county, is the main centre for administration, health, education and leisure facilities, shopping and employment. The five market towns of Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye surround the city of Hereford. Outside these urban areas, villages and smaller settlements, farms and other isolated properties characterise much of Herefordshire.

1.8 Further baseline information is provided in Appendix A.

The Herefordshire Local Plan Review

Progress to Date

1.9 Herefordshire Council adopted its current Local Plan (Core Strategy) in October 2015. The review of the plan commenced in 2020, in line with the Government's expectation that Local Plans are reviewed every five years. The Local Plan review will again cover the whole administrative area of Herefordshire and will cover the period 2021 - 2041.

1.10 Consultation on an initial set of spatial options for Herefordshire was undertaken between January and February 2022. Questions sought to explore the level of agreement over the vision and supporting objectives that had been presented, and to identify preferences towards where future growth should be directed. Over 1,200 responses were received, with the key messages being:

- Overall support for the vision that the consultation document had outlined, with 64% of the respondents being in agreement.
- Overall support for the proposed suite of plan objectives, with 63% of the respondents being in agreement.
- A preference towards directing growth across the market towns and Hereford, with 39% of the respondents identifying this to be their preferred strategy.
- A preference towards directing growth within settlements outside of the county's AONBs and Conservation Areas.

1.11 In terms of specific themes, some of the most commonly raised issues focused on the need to:

- Invest in infrastructure and transport links.
- Support the increased use of electric vehicles.

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- Better consider the needs of the disabled and elderly with respect to the safety of routes and methods of transport.
- Differentiate between the practicalities of active travel in both urban and rural contexts.
- Encourage development around railway stations.
- Support the relationship between the protection of habitats for wildlife, and natural infrastructure and climate change.
- Improve drainage and flood defences.
- Drive the pursuit for the use of renewable energy sources and sustainable heating methods in new development.
- Better enabling communities to cope with the effects of climate change.
- Recognise the importance of sustainable farming practises and the protection of soil.
- Promote good quality, sustainable affordable housing.
- Address all aspects of environmental issues.
- Recognise new technologies and changed working lifestyle practices.
- Identify the consequences of second home ownership with respect to local affordability.
- Consider the need for key services where development is being anticipated **[See reference 2]**.

1.12 Consultation on potential Policy Options was undertaken between April and May 2022. The consultation sought views on the type of policies to be included in the Local Plan review, with the recognition that these policies would ultimately be used to help determine planning applications across the county. Over 250 comments were received in response to the consultation, with positions varying depending on the specific policy theme.

1.13 Some of the stated preferences were skewed towards a specific option, while for other policy areas, comments were more evenly spread across the alternatives presented [See reference 3]. Policies options that received support exceeding 60% identified preferences for:

- Developing strengthened policy for the county's historic areas.
- Developing a dark skies policy to help tackle light pollution.
- Allowing neighbourhood plans to supplement and support strategic policies on design.
- Preparing a new policy on nutrient neutrality.
- Developing strategic design policies for Hereford and the market towns.
- Ensuring that housing policies provide a more prescriptive mix/range of housing.
- Ensuring that policies surrounding the protection of economic opportunities are sufficiently configured to the evidence base.
- Allowing neighbourhood plans to denote the boundaries for primary and secondary retail areas.
- Encouraging the use of upper floors in town centres.
- Including an additional policy to cover other types of tourist accommodation, and to develop flexible policies for defining sustainable tourism locations.
- Defining the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal as a green infrastructure corridor.

1.14 Consultation on a set of Place Shaping Options was undertaken between June to July 2022. The consultation set out possible options and/or potential strategic development areas for the county. The first part of the questionnaire considered Hereford and the county's market towns. For Hereford, areas 4 (City Centre) and 1 (Land to the North) were identified as being the most favoured, with these two areas achieving over 75% of the highest preferences. The least favoured strategic areas in Hereford were areas 8 (Land to the Southwest) and 7 (Land to the South).

1.15 The second half of the questionnaire focused on the county's rural areas and explored attitudes concerning the distribution of housing, including for settlements within the county's AONBs and in those settlements with Conservation Areas. In terms of how new housing should be distributed to the settlements across the county, the majority of respondents (59%) expressed a preference towards option 1a for delivering in the most sustainable way across the county.

1.16 Respondents were also encouraged to identify potential sites that they felt would be suitable for development. In response, 283 people highlighted sites on an accompanying interactive map. Respondents were also invited to comment on the type of criteria that could be used to assess the suitability of a site. Of those that were presented, the adequacy of transport connections was identified as being most significant [\[See reference 4\]](#).

Key reference points

1.17 The Local Plan review is taking into account the Government's planning policies for England, as presented through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [\[See reference 5\]](#). Reference is also being made to the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance [\[See reference 6\]](#), as well as the National Design Guide [\[See reference 7\]](#) and the National Model Design Guide [\[See reference 8\]](#). The Local Plan review is being prepared in response to an updated evidence base, which includes data that was collected via the 2021 Census.

1.18 The Local Plan review is also being prepared in the context of a climate and ecological emergency. Herefordshire Council declared a Climate Emergency in March 2019, with the Council committing to become carbon neutral by 2030/31 [\[See reference 9\]](#). The Local Plan review will respond to the provisions of recently approved legislation, such as the Environment Act of 2021 and the Agriculture Act of 2020. For example, the Environment Act includes long-term targets to improve air quality, biodiversity, water, waste reduction and resource efficiency. In terms of biodiversity, the Environment Act seeks to halt the decline of nature by 2030 and includes important provisions relating to nature recovery and net gain, including a commitment that ensures new developments deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity.

1.19 The Local Plan review will also respond to the key events that have occurred since the adoption of the current Local Plan, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the exit of the UK from the European Union. The Local Plan review is also being prepared in the context of key socio-economic challenges, such as the need to respond to growing housing need and the wide-ranging impacts that have arisen with the rising cost of living.

1.20 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Authorities to prepare Local Plans with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development [\[See reference 10\]](#). This includes the inclusion of policies that are designed to secure development and use of land in the local planning authority's area that contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change [\[See reference 11\]](#).

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.21 Under the amended Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 [See reference 12], Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is mandatory for Development Plan Documents. For these documents it is also necessary to conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (European Directive 2001/42/EC), as transposed into law in England by the SEA Regulations [See reference 13] that remains in force despite the UK exiting the European Union in January 2020. Therefore, it is a legal requirement for the Herefordshire Local Plan review to be subject to SA and SEA throughout its preparation.

1.22 On 11th May 2022 the Government published the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, which sets out in detail the Government's proposals for reforming the planning system. Amongst other things, the Bill proposes the replacement of the current SEA regime with a new requirement relating to production of Environmental Outcome Reports. The specific requirements will be set out in forthcoming regulations, along with information about transition arrangements. However, at present, the requirement for SEA remains as set out in existing legislation. Any changes to the legal framework for carrying out SA/SEA will be addressed as appropriate as the Local Plan review is prepared.

1.23 The requirements to carry out SA and SEA are distinct, although it is possible to satisfy both using a single appraisal process (as advocated in the national Planning Practice Guidance [See reference 14]), whereby users can comply with the requirements of the SEA Regulations through a single integrated SA process – this is the process that is being undertaken for the Local Plan review. From here on, the term 'SA' should therefore be taken to mean 'SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Regulations'.

1.24 The SA process comprises a number of stages, with scoping being Stage A as shown below.

Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.

Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects.

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report.

Stage D: Consulting on the Local Plan and the SA Report.

Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.25 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the Habitats Regulations published for England and Wales in July 2007, updated in 2010 and again in 2012 and 2017 [See reference 15]. The Regulations translate Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) and 79/409/EEC (Birds Directive) into UK law, and remain a legal requirement despite the UK exiting the European Union.

1.26 The purpose of HRA is to assess the impacts of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of a European Site and to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of that site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

1.27 The HRA of the Local Plan review is being undertaken separately but the findings will be taken into account in the SA where relevant (for example to inform judgements about the likely effects of potential development locations on biodiversity).

Approach to Scoping

1.28 There are five tasks involved at the Scoping stage of the SA:

- **Stage A1:** Setting out the policy context for the SA of the Herefordshire Local Plan review (i.e. key government policies and strategies that influence what the Local Plan and the SA need to consider).
- **Stage A2:** Setting out the baseline for the SA of the Local Plan review (i.e. the current and likely future environmental, social and economic conditions in Herefordshire).
- **Stage A3:** Drawing on A1 and A2, identify the particular sustainability problems and/or opportunities ('issues') that the Local Plan review and the SA should address.
- **Stage A4:** Drawing on A1, A2 and A3, develop a framework of SA objectives and assessment criteria to appraise the constituent parts of the Local Plan review in isolation and in combination.
- **Stage A5:** Consultation on the scope of the SA.

1.29 This Scoping Report fulfils the requirements set out above with a view to establishing the likely significant effects of constituent parts of the Local Plan review both in isolation and in combination. In accordance with national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), the Scoping Report should be proportionate and relevant to the Local Plan review, focussing on what is needed to identify and assess the likely significant effects **[See reference 16]**.

Meeting the requirements of the SEA Regulations

1.30 The relevant sections of the Scoping Report that are considered to meet the SEA Regulations requirements are signposted below (the remainder will be met during subsequent stages of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Herefordshire Local Plan review). This information will be included in the full SA Report at each stage of the SA to show how the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met through the SA process.

1.31 The SEA Regulations [See reference 17] require the responsible authority to prepare, or secure the preparation of, an 'environmental report', which in this case will comprise the SA report. The report shall identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of the following (requirements in green shaded text below, where each requirement is met is provided in the bullets below):

Implementing the plan or programme; and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme. (Regulation 12(1) and (2) and Schedule 2)

- The full SA Report that will be produced to accompany consultation on the Local Plan will constitute the 'environmental report' and will be produced at a later stage in the SA process, but will include the relevant parts of the Scoping Report as noted below.

An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.

- Covered in **Chapter 1** and **Chapter 2** and **Appendix A**.

The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.

- Covered in **Chapter 3**.

The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.

- Covered in **Chapter 3**.

Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and the Habitats Directive.

- Covered in **Chapter 3**.

The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.

- Covered in **Chapter 2** and **Appendix A**.

The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as: (a) biodiversity; (b) population; (c) human health; (d) fauna; (e) flora; (f) soil; (g)

water; (h) air; (i) climatic factors; (j) material assets; (k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; (l) landscape; and (m) the interrelationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l).

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 17.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

The report shall include such of the information referred to in Schedule 2 to these Regulations as may reasonably be required, taking account of:

- Current knowledge and methods of assessment.
 - The contents and level of detail in the plan or programme.
 - The stage of the plan or programme in the decision-making process.
 - The extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment (Regulation 12 (3)).
- This Scoping Report and the Environmental Reports will adhere to this requirement.

In terms of consultation, the SEA Regulations require that:

When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the environmental report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies. (Regulation 12(5)).

- This Scoping Report will be published for consultation with the statutory bodies (the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England and Natural Resources Wales).

Every draft plan or programme for which an environmental report has been prepared in accordance with regulation 12 and its accompanying report (“the relevant documents”) shall be made available for the purposes of consultation in accordance with the following provisions of this regulation.

As soon as reasonably practical after the preparation of the relevant documents, the responsible authority shall:

- Send a copy of those documents to each consultation body.
- Take such steps as it considers appropriate to bring the preparation of the relevant documents to the attention of the persons who, in the authority's opinion, are affected or likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the decisions involved in the assessment and adoption of the plan or programme concerned, required under the Environmental assessment of Plans and Programmes Directive ("the public consultees");
- Inform the public consultees of:
 - (i) the address of the website at which the relevant documents may be viewed and downloaded free of charge;
 - (ii) the fact that a copy of the relevant documents may be obtained by email from the responsible authority;
 - (iii) the fact that a copy of the relevant documents may be obtained by post from the responsible authority, provided that it is reasonably practicable for the authority to provide a copy by post;
 - (iv) the address, email address and telephone number for the purpose of requesting a copy of the relevant documents either by email or by post;
 - (v) whether a charge will be made for copies of the relevant documents provided by post and the amount of any charge; and

- (vi) the telephone number which can be used to contact the responsible authority for enquiries in relation to the relevant documents

The period referred to in paragraph (2) (d) must be of such length as will ensure that the consultation bodies and the public consultees are given an effective opportunity to express their opinion on the relevant documents. (Regulation 13 (1), (2), and (3))

- Public consultation on the Local Plan review and accompanying SA Reports will take place as the plan develops. The intended programme and key stages for plan preparation are set out in the Local Development Scheme [See reference 18].

Where a responsible authority, other than the Secretary of State, is of the opinion that a plan or programme for which it is the responsible authority is likely to have significant effects on the environment of another Member State, it shall, as soon as reasonably practicable after forming that opinion:

- Notify the Secretary of State of its opinion and of the reasons for it; and
- Supply the Secretary of State with a copy of the plan or programme concerned, and of the accompanying environmental report. (Regulation 14 (1))

- Unlikely to be relevant to the Herefordshire Local Plan review, as there will be no effects beyond the UK.

1.32 In terms of taking the SA Report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making, the SEA Regulations require (relevant extracts of Regulation 16):

As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme for which an environmental assessment has been carried out under these Regulations, the responsible authority shall:

- publish the plan or programme, as adopted, its accompanying environmental report and a statement containing the particulars specified in paragraph (4) (“the relevant adoption documents”) on a public website at which the documents may be viewed and downloaded free of charge;
- provide a copy of the relevant adoption documents by email to any person who requests a copy, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of that person’s request;
- provide one copy of the relevant adoption documents by post to any person who requests a copy, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of that person’s request, unless it is not reasonably practicable to provide a copy by post for reasons connected to the effects of coronavirus, including restrictions on movement;
- make available a telephone number for the public to make enquiries in relation to the relevant adoption documents;

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme the responsible authority shall inform (i) the consultation bodies; (ii) the persons who, in relation to the plan or programme, were public consultees for the purposes of regulation 13; and (iii) where the responsible authority is not the Secretary of state, the Secretary of State, that the plan or programme has been adopted, and a statement containing the following particulars:

How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;

How the environmental report has been taken into account;

How opinions expressed in response to: (i) the invitation in regulation 13(2)(d); (ii) action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with regulation 13(4), have been taken into account;

How the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account;

The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and

The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SA process.

1.33 The SEA Regulations also require that the responsible authority shall monitor the significant effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action (Regulation 17(1)). This requirement will be met after adoption of the Local Plan review and will include the preparation and publication of Authority Monitoring Reports (AMRs) on an annual basis.

Structure of the Scoping Report

1.34 This chapter describes the background to the review and update of the Herefordshire Local Plan and the requirement to undertake SA. The remainder of this Scoping Report is structured into the following sections:

Chapter 2 describes the other plans, policies and programmes of relevance to the SA of the Local Plan review.

Chapter 3 presents the baseline information which will inform the assessment of the policies and sites in the emerging Local Plan review.

Chapter 4 identifies the key environmental, social and economic issues in Herefordshire of relevance to the Local Plan review and considers the likely evolution of those issues without its implementation.

Chapter 5 presents the SA framework that will be used for the appraisal of the Local Plan review and the proposed method for carrying out the SA.

Chapter 6 describes the next steps to be undertaken in the SA of the Local Plan review.

Chapter 2

Relevant Plans and Programmes

2.1 Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires:

- a) “an outline of the contents and main objectives of the Plan and its relationship with other relevant plans or programmes” and
- e) “the environmental protection objectives established at International, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”

2.2 In order to establish a clear scope for the SA it is necessary to review and develop an understanding of the environmental, social and economic objectives contained within international and national policies, plans and strategies that are of relevance to the review of the Herefordshire Local Plan. Given the SEA Regulations requirements above, it is also necessary to consider the relationship between the Herefordshire Local Plan and other relevant plans, policies and programmes.

2.3 This chapter summarises the relationship between the Herefordshire Local Plan and the relevant international and national policies, plans and programmes which should be taken into consideration during preparation of the plan and its SA, as well as those plans and programmes which are of relevance at a county/sub-regional level. The objectives of these plans and programmes have been taken into account when drafting the SA framework in Chapter 5. An outline of the content and main objectives of the Local Plan review will be described in subsequent SA reports, as this emerges through the plan-making process.

The Implications of Brexit

2.4 The UK left the European Union on 31st January 2020 although a transition period was maintained until 31st December 2020.

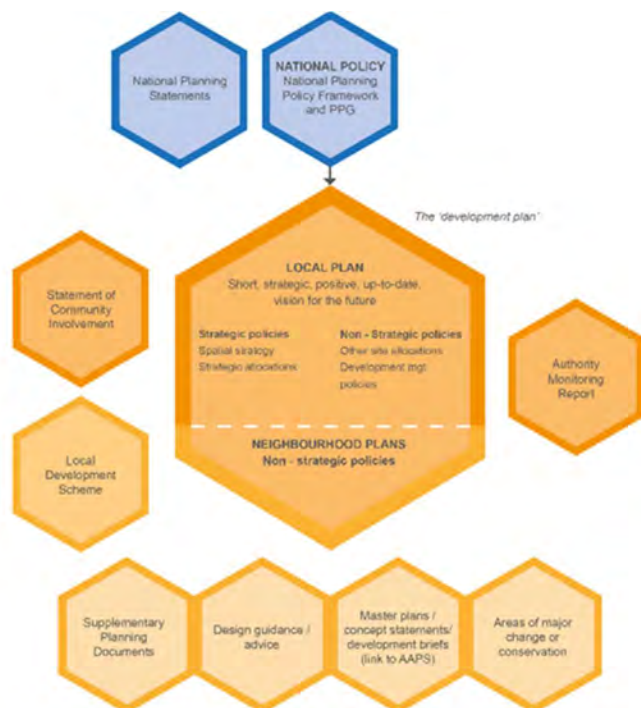
2.5 As set out in the Explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments [See reference 19], the purpose of the Brexit amendments to the SEA Regulations is to ensure that the law functions correctly after the UK has left the EU. No substantive changes are made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime operates.

2.6 Relevant international plans and policy (including those at the EU level) are transposed into national plans, policy and legislation and these have been considered in this chapter and in Appendix A.

Relationship with other relevant plans or programmes

2.7 The Herefordshire Local Plan review is not being prepared in isolation and must be in conformity with a range of international and national plans and programmes as show in Figure 2.1 below. The Local Plan is supported by other documents such as the Statement of Community Involvement, Local Development Scheme, Authority Monitoring Report and Supplementary Planning Documents, also shown in Figure 2.1. Neighbourhood Plans, once made, sit beneath Local Plans and form part of the statutory development plan.

Figure 2.1: Local Plan Relationship with other Relevant Plans and Programmes



2.8 At the international level, there is a wide range of plans and programmes which act to inform and shape national level policy context. Planning policy in England at a national and local level, such as that which is advanced through a Local or Neighbourhood Plan, should be informed by, and be in conformity, with the relevant legislation. The main sustainability objectives of international plans and programmes which are of most relevance for the Local Plan and the SA are provided in Appendix A.

National

2.9 There is an extensive range of national policies, plans and programmes that are of relevance to the Local Plan preparation and SA process. A pragmatic and proportionate approach has been taken with regards to the identification of key national policies, plans and programmes, focusing on those that are of most relevance. A summary of the main objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance of relevance to the Local Plan and SA is provided below. In addition, the main sustainability objectives of other national plans and programmes which are of most relevance for the Local Plan and the SA are provided in Appendix A.

The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

2.10 The NPPF [See reference 20] is the overarching planning framework which provides national planning policy and principles for the planning system in England. The NPPF was originally published in March 2012, revised in July 2018, updated in February 2019 and again in July 2021. The 2021 update gives increased focus to design quality. This includes for sites as well as for places as a whole. The terminology included in the Framework on protecting and enhancing the environment and promoting a sustainable pattern of development has been revised. Furthermore, revisions are included in relation to policies which address opting out of permitted development, the use of masterplans and design codes and the important contribution of trees in new developments.

2.11 Further revisions to the NPPF were published for consultation in December 2022 although these are not yet formally made. The proposals are wide-ranging and include changes that seek to:

- Remove the requirement for Local Planning Authorities to continually demonstrate a deliverable five-year housing land supply, providing the Council's housing requirement, as presented through its strategic policies, is less than five-year years old.
- Allow Local Planning Authorities to meet their area's objectively assessed needs 'as far as possible', rather than as a 'minimum' that is expected through the 2021 version.
- Give greater importance to 'beauty' in design and placemaking, with greater emphasis being given to local design codes.

2.12 The three overarching objectives of the planning system are set out in paragraph 8 of the 2021 NPPF, which should be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that net gains are achieved across each of the different objectives:

“a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

2.13 The Local Plan review must be consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, which states:

“Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.” [See reference 21]

Chapter 2 Relevant Plans and Programmes

2.14 A local planning authority is also required to have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State when preparing a Local Plan **[See reference 22]**.

2.15 Paragraph 20 of the 2021 NPPF states the need for strategic policies in plan making, which set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, making sufficient provision for:

“a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;

b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);

c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and

d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

2.16 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) **[See reference 23]** provides guidance for how the Government’s planning policies for England are expected to be applied. Sitting alongside the NPPF, it provides an online resource that is updated on a regular basis for the benefit of planning practitioners.

2.17 The overarching nature of the NPPF means that its implications for the SA relate to multiple topics which this report seeks to address. Considering the importance of the NPPF to the English planning system, the relevance of the Framework and its implications for the plan making process and the SA is provided in more detail below. Sustainability topics are separated into environmental, social and economic below, but consideration of issues often cuts across topics. The summary provided below is not absolutely comprehensive and the NPPF is intended to be read and applied as a whole during plan making.

Environmental and Social Considerations

2.18 Climate change adaption and mitigation, energy efficiency and waste minimisation measures for new development including through the promotion of renewable energy schemes are also supported through the NPPF. One of the core planning principles is to “support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure” **[See reference 24]**. Furthermore, local planning authorities should adopt a proactive approach to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.

2.19 Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states how development plan documents must include policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority’s area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

2.20 Although Local Plans can no longer require levels of the Code for Sustainable Homes, they can promote the Home Quality Mark to support residents in understanding the quality and performance of new build homes and

can also set targets for developers to provide for a given percentage of energy used by a new development to come from on-site renewable or low carbon technologies. Local Plan policies can further support the development of renewable energy technologies where appropriate, in line with climate change mitigation strategies and targets.

2.21 The UK Green Building Council has produced a resource pack which is designed to help local authorities improve the sustainability of new homes. The New Homes Policy Playbook [\[See reference 25\]](#) sets out minimum requirements for sustainability in new homes that local authorities should introduce, as well as proposed stretching requirements should local authorities wish to go further. For non-residential uses BREEAM assessments can be used by local authorities to ensure buildings meet sustainability objectives.

2.22 The NPPF promotes healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social integration, as well as enable and support healthy lifestyles. The Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit [\[See reference 26\]](#) can be used by local authorities to assist in the creation of places that are better for people and nature.

2.23 One of the core planning principles is to “take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community” [\[See reference 27\]](#). It is identified in the document that “a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation is important for the health and well-being of communities” [\[See reference 28\]](#). Furthermore, the retention and enhancement of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports, cultural venues and places of worship is supported. Importantly, Local plans should also “contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible” [\[See reference 29\]](#).

2.24 Additionally, larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns are required by the NPPF to be guided by policies set within a vision that looks at least 30 years ahead

[See reference 30]. The need for policies to be reflective of this longer time period is to take account of the likely timescale for delivery.

The delivery of new housing is considered to support local communities by meeting housing needs and addressing shortages. The Local Plan can have a significant influence on addressing inequalities including those relating to health and will need to consider the appropriate siting of new development, particularly large development sites that are likely to include new service and facility provisions. The Local Plan can ensure that new development is located in areas which can improve accessibility for existing as well as new residents and ensure that future development does not exacerbate existing inequalities. The SA process can support the identification and refinement of options that can contribute to reducing inequalities and support the development of policy approaches that cumulatively improve the wellbeing of local communities.

2.25 The NPPF sets out the approach Local Plans should have in relation to biodiversity, stating that Plans should “identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation” [See reference 31]. Plans should also promote conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats and species, ecological networks and measurable net gains for biodiversity. A strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure is to be supported through planning policies.

2.26 The Local Plan, through its review of the spatial strategy, should seek to maximise any opportunities arising for local economies, communities and health as well as biodiversity. This should be inclusive of approaches which are supportive of enhancing the connectivity of green infrastructure and promoting the achievement of biodiversity net gain. The SA process should support the identification and maximisation of potential benefits through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of both negative and positive significant effects.

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2.27 In relation to landscape, the NPPF sets the planning principles of recognising the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside as well as protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Reference is included with regards to this purpose at National Parks, The Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs).

2.28 The Local Plan should be supportive of an approach to development which would protect the landscape character of Herefordshire. Where appropriate it should also seek to protect the individual identities of Herefordshire's settlements, with regard for the potential coalescence. The SA should identify those alternatives which contribute positively to landscape character.

2.29 The NPPF states that in relation to the historic environment, plans should “set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats” **[See reference 32]**. Where appropriate, plans should seek to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and local character and distinctiveness, while viable uses of assets should be considered. Plans should take into account the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring. They should also consider the contribution the historic environment can make to the character of a place.

2.30 The Framework places a focus on making ‘beautiful’ and ‘sustainable’ places. The use of plans, design policy, guidance and codes are encouraged. The SA provides an opportunity to test alternatives in terms of the contribution they can make to the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

2.31 The Local Plan can take forward a spatial strategy which helps to limit adverse impacts on designated and non-designated heritage assets, including any potential archaeological finds in line with heritage protection and enhancement plans. The SA has a role to play by identifying which alternatives could offer opportunities to secure the protection and enhancement of assets as well as those which might have significant impacts in terms of their appropriate use and setting.

2.32 The NPPF states that new and existing development should be prevented from contributing to, being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, pollutions including water pollution and air quality. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided. Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account implications for water supply. Furthermore, strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient infrastructure provision for water supply and wastewater.

2.33 The Local Plan review presents an opportunity to consider incorporating targets for water efficiency and the level of water consumption and grey water recycling in any new development. The Local Plan also can ensure that development is sited away from areas of high flood probability and that appropriate water drainage is in place in line with flood risk strategies. The SA process should seek to identify and address potential negative effects on the water environment, including implications relating to wastewater.

2.34 The NPPF states that planning system should protect and enhance soils in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or quality, while also encouraging the reuse of previously developed land.

2.35 Plans can seek to ensure the appropriate protection of soil quality, including best and most versatile agricultural land. Further to this, plans should ensure that new development does not conflict with current mineral operations as well as long-term mineral resource plans. The SA process should inform the development of the Local Plan by helping to identify alternatives which would avoid the areas of highest soil quality and best and most versatile agricultural land, as well as those which would promote the use of brownfield land.

Economic Considerations

2.36 The Framework sets out that in terms of economic growth the role of the planning system is to contribute towards building a “strong, responsive and competitive economy” by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation [See reference 33]. There is also a requirement for the planning system to identify and coordinate the provision of infrastructure. Furthermore, planning policies should address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. Local planning authorities should incorporate planning policies which “support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation” [See reference 34]. Local Plans are required to “set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration [See reference 35].”

2.37 The Local Plan should seek to maximise the potential benefits of nearby strategic growth, whilst at the same time ensuring the vitality and viability of smaller localised economies, through the review of the spatial strategy. Ensuring that local town centres and services and facilities at settlements in the plan area are maintained and enhanced is also important and will also provide support for local communities.

Chapter 2 Relevant Plans and Programmes

2.38 The SA process can support the development of the Local Plan to ensure that its policies are considerate of impacts on the economy across Herefordshire. The process can also be used to demonstrate that impacts on the viability of town centres in the area and surrounding areas have been considered.

2.39 The NPPF encourages local planning authorities to consider transport issues from the earliest stages of plan making so that: opportunities to promote sustainable transport are identified and pursued; the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified and assessed; and opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage are realised. The framework also states that the planning system should actively manage growth patterns in support of these objectives.

2.40 Growth is likely to increase traffic on the roads which also has implications for air quality, and the Local Plan and SA process can seek to influence the effects of this through an appropriate spatial strategy, identifying where mitigation may be needed and requiring the necessary transport provisions and contributions from new development. The Local Plan, as supported by the SA, should seek to identify opportunities to maximise the potential for alternative modes of transport to the car and reduce the need to travel, therefore reducing emissions, through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of significant effects. This includes potential opportunities that may arise as a result of the delivery of new infrastructure.

Other National Policies, Plans and Programmes

2.41 Numerous other policies, plans and programmes at a national level are of relevance to the Local Plan review and the SA. Unlike the NPPF, most of these are focussed on a specific topic area which the SA will consider. There will be some overlap between SA topics covered by these plans and programmes where those documents contain more overarching objectives. However, the plans and programmes considered of most relevance for the SA have been grouped by the topics they most directly seek to address, and green boxes below each topic heading summarise the implications of the national PPPs (including the NPPF) for the Local Plan and SA.

Climate change adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency and waste minimisation

2.42 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), British Energy Security Strategy (2022).
- Environment Agency (EA), Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy Roadmap to 2026 (2022)
- BEIS, Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021).
- HM Government, The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (2021).
- Department for Transport, Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020).
- EA, National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2020).
- Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018).

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- Defra, The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate (2018).
- Defra, The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting (2018).
- Defra, UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2017)
- HM Government, The Clean Growth Strategy (2017).
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) (2014).
- Defra, Waste Management Plan for England (2013).
- The Energy Efficiency Strategy (2012)
- Understanding the risks, empowering communities, building resilience: The national flood and coastal erosion risk management strategy for England (2011)
- Defra and the Environment Agency, Understanding the risks, empowering communities, building resilience: The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2011).
- The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National Strategy for Climate and Energy (2009)
- The UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA: The Local Plan review should consider setting out policies to achieve climate change and adaptation while also encouraging development which would help to minimise carbon emissions. This can be done through siting development allocations in areas where sustainable transport patterns can be best achieved and encouraging development to make use of more sustainable sources of energy, potentially through the delivery of renewable energy development. The local planning authority should consider setting out approaches in the

Local Plan to encourage appropriate use of SuDS to minimise flood risk and handling of waste in line with the waste hierarchy.

In 2015, planning laws relating to renewable energy were changed to give local planning authorities greater powers in decision making for the permission of onshore renewable development [See reference 36]. The planning restrictions mean that councils can only grant permission for a new wind farm if they meet two requirements, which are that they must be in a suitable location as identified in a local or neighbourhood plans and that all planning impacts identified by local people must have been addressed and there must be community backing. The recent increases in the wholesale price of gas have prompted calls for these planning rules on onshore wind to be relaxed.

The SA can test policy options in relation to the contributions they make towards these aims. It should also appraise the contribution individual site options can make to limiting carbon emissions (including through the uptake of more sustainable sources of energy). Sites should also be considered in terms of the impact they will have in terms of promoting climate change adaptation as well as reducing flood risk and the amount of waste that goes to landfill.

Health and well-being

2.43 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Natural England, Green Infrastructure Framework (2023).
- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) [formerly the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government], National Design Guide (2021).

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- DLUHC, National Model Design Code (2021).
- HM Government, The Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper (2022).
- HM Government, The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (2022).
- Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care (2021).
- COVID-19 mental health and wellbeing recovery action plan (2021).
- Public Health England (PHE), Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments (2020), Addendum (2021).
- DLUHC, Planning for the Future White Paper (2020).
- PHE, PHE Strategy 2020-25 (2020).
- Homes England, Homes England Strategic Plan 2018 to 2023 (2018).
- DLUHC, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015).
- HM Government, Fair Society, Healthy Lives (2011).
- HM Government, Laying the foundations: housing strategy for England (2011).

Implications for the Local Plan and SA: The Local Plan needs to consider the need for infrastructure as this has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment and it should be prepared to ensure that the population has access to sustainable low carbon infrastructure and services and facilities and that there is sufficient capacity within them to serve the increased population. This should include healthcare, education and open space. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the necessity of access to adequate green space to support mental health and facilitate physical recreation. Local Plans offer the opportunity to maximise the well-being benefits of well designed local green spaces. Development allocations should be located in areas where facilities are most accessible, issues of overcapacity would be less likely to result, and active modes of travel might

be promoted. Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in the Local Plan to facilitate the supply of healthy local food. The provision of an appropriate level of housing over the plan period will help address issues of disparity in terms of access to decent housing in the plan area. The provision of new housing should be considerate of local needs with regards to housing size, tenure and type, including the needs of Travellers.

Policy options considered for the Local Plan can be tested through the SA in relation to the contributions they make towards these aims. The SA should also appraise the contribution individual site options can make to health and wellbeing. This should be considered through the site's ability to support the delivery of new infrastructure and facilities which might benefit public health, as well as accessibility to existing infrastructure and facilities of this nature. It may be necessary to consider the capacity of existing facilities when considering individual site options. Consideration should also be given to the capacity of sites to deliver new homes, including affordable homes.

Environment (biodiversity/geodiversity, landscape and soils)

2.44 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Natural England, Green Infrastructure Framework (2023)
- HM Government, The Environment Act 2021
- Natural England, The Biodiversity Metric 3.1 (2021)
- Defra, A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)
- HM Government, The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

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- Defra, Biodiversity offsetting in England Green Paper (2013).
- Defra, Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011)
- Defra, Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England (2009)
- Defra, England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles (2008)

Implications for the Local Plan and SA: The Local Plan should be prepared to limit the potential for adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity as well as important landscapes (including those that are designated) and higher value soils. The plan area provides the setting for the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Wye Valley AONB. The Brecon Beacons National Park lies adjacent to the county's western boundary. Herefordshire contains a number of internationally and nationally important biodiversity sites which will need to be protected through planning policy, including three National Nature Reserves (NNRs), four Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and 79 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). The plan should also take into account non-designated landscapes identified to be particularly sensitive to development and non-designated habitats which form part of wider ecological network. The plan also presents opportunities to promote the achievement of net gain in biodiversity, which will become mandatory from later in 2023, and support the goals of the county's Wildlife Trust for delivering a 'Wilder Herefordshire' [See reference 37]. Similarly the Local Plan can also contribute to supporting the Nature Recovery Plan for the Malvern Hills AONB [See reference 38]. In terms of the location of development, the Local Plan can encourage the re-use of brownfield land and protect more valuable agricultural soils from development. Benefits may be achieved by directing development to less sensitive locations. The allocation of new sites for development and updated planning policy can also be used to

achieve habitat connectivity through the provision of new green infrastructure and the requirement for biodiversity net gain.

It will be role of the SA to test the policy options in terms of the effect they will have on biodiversity sites and habitats as well as value landscapes. The effects of these options in relation to promoting the development of brownfield land and limiting the loss of valuable agricultural soils should also be appraised. Site options should be considered in these terms also, making use of the findings of the HRA and landscape character assessment work where appropriate.

Historic environment

2.45 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Historic England, Corporate Plan 2022-2023 (2022).
- Historic England Climate Strategy (2022).
- Historic England, Heritage at Risk Register (2022).
- Historic England, Future Strategy (2021).
- Historic Environment Forum, Strategic Framework for Collaborative Action 2020-2025 (2020).
- Historic England, Sustainability Appraisal and Strategy Environmental Assessment: Historic England Advice Note 8 (2016).
- Historic England, Climate Change Adaptation Report (2016).
- Historic England, GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (2015) and HEAN 3: Site Allocations (2015).
- HM Government, Marine and Coastal Access Act (2009).

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- HM Government, Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act (1990).
- HM Government, Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act (1979).

Implications for the Local Plan and SA: The potential impact of new development on the historic environment, including local character as well as designated and non-designated heritage assets and their respective settings should also inform the preparation of the Local Plan. The Local Plan review should set out a positive strategy for conserving, enhancing and enjoying heritage assets and their settings, including wider historic townscapes, landscapes and seascapes. The Local Plan review can help to realise the wider benefits of historic environment enhancements which include contributions to tourism and wellbeing and addressing the climate and biodiversity emergencies. Particular regard may be given to protecting heritage assets which have been identified as being 'at risk' (both at the national and local level). Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in the Local Plan to address these issues and site options should be considered with regard to the potential for related issues.

The SA should appraise both policy and site options in terms of the potential for effects on the historic environment. It should identify those locations at which development would have the greatest potential to adversely impact the historic environment, as informed by heritage impact assessment work for the Local Plan. Furthermore, the SA process should help the Local Plan maximise opportunities for enhancing the significance of and public access to heritage assets.

Water and air

2.46 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Defra, Establishing the Best Available Techniques for the UK (2022).
- HM Government, The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations (2020).
- Defra, Clean Air Strategy (2019).
- HM Government, The Road to Zero (2018).
- Defra, Our Waste, Our Resources: A strategy for England (2018).
- The UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations (2017).
- Environment Agency, Managing Water Abstraction (2016).
- Defra, Water White Paper (2012).
- Defra, The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007),

Implications for the Local Plan and SA: Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in the Local Plan to promote the efficient use of water and limit all types of pollution including water and air pollution. It should also seek to limit pressure on the wastewater treatment (WwT) infrastructure and water supply. The allocation of sites for development should take account of areas which have highest sensitivity in relation to these issues, including Source Protection Zones (SPZ) and Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). To limit the potential for air quality issues to be intensified as development is delivered over the plan period, local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in the Local Plan to factor in the contribution specific site options can make to achieving modal shift and limiting the need for residents to travel.

The contribution policy options can make to achieving these aims can be tested through the SA.

Economic growth

2.47 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- HM Government, Levelling Up the United Kingdom (2022).
- HM Government, Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth (2021).
- HM Government, UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2018).
- HM Government, Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future (2017).
- LEP Network, LEP Network response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper Consultation (2017).
- HM Government, National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016-2021 (2016).
- Infrastructure and Projects Authority, National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016-2021 (2016).

Implications for the Local Plan and SA: The Local Plan should allocate land to support the projected level of economic growth required over the plan period. Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in Local Plan policies to promote sustainable economic and employment growth to benefit all members of the community as to reduce disparity in the plan area. This should include support for the infrastructure required for the economy to function successfully. Local economic growth should be considered in the light of wider economic growth of the local LEPs. Employment sites should be located to enable local people to be able to access the new employment opportunities. Local planning authorities

should consider setting out approaches in the Local Plan to promote the viability of Town Centres as well as Local Centres.

The SA can test individual site and policy options in relation to the contribution they can make to achieving these aims. Employment site options should be appraised in terms of the contribution they can make to meeting the employment land requirements of Herefordshire as well as the access residents would have to the employment opportunities delivered.

Transport

2.48 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Department for Transport (DfT) Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021)
- HM Government, Levelling Up White Paper (2022)
- DfT / HM Government, The Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Report to Parliament (2022)
- DfT / HM Government, The Road to Zero (2018).
- DfT, Transport Investment Strategy (2017).
- Highways England, Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan (2017).

Implications for the Local Plan and SA: The potential for reducing the need to travel, limiting congestion and associated benefits for air quality and climate change as well as public health should inform the preparation of the policies for the Local Plan and its site allocations. The Local Plan can also be supportive of more sustainable modes of transport. This may include support for the infrastructure necessary for electric vehicles. Furthermore,

the selection of site options for development should be informed by issues such as the potential for access to new and existing public transport nodes and active transport routes and specific highways capacity issues. The selection of individual site options should also be informed by their proximity to essential services and facilities which is likely to reduce the need for residents to regularly travel long distances.

The SA should be used to test policy and site options in terms of the contribution they can make to making transport choices more sustainable in the county. As well as testing site options in terms of limiting the need to travel in Herefordshire, policy options should be tested with regard the contribution they make to the uptake of more sustainable transport options, such as walking and cycling and public transport.

Sub National

2.49 Below the national level there are further plans and programmes which are of relevance for the Local Plan and SA process. These plans and programmes sit mostly at the sub-regional, county and district level. Details of those plans and programmes which are of most relevance at this level are provided in Appendix A.

Surrounding Development Plans

2.50 Development in Herefordshire will not be delivered in isolation from those areas around it. Given the interconnection between Herefordshire and the surrounding areas there is potential for cross-boundary and in-combination effects where development is proposed through development plans in neighbouring authorities. As such, a summary of the following adopted and emerging plans for local authority areas which surround Herefordshire is also provided in **Appendix A**.

- Shropshire Council: Core Strategy (adopted 2011)
- Shropshire Council: Site Allocations and Management of Development (adopted 2015)
- Shropshire Council: Pre-Submission Draft of the Shropshire Local Plan (published December 2020)
- Malvern Hills: The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) (adopted February 2016)
- Malvern Hills: The South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) Regulation 19 Publication Document (November 2022)
- Forest of Dean: Core Strategy (adopted in 2012)
- Forest of Dean: Allocations Plan (adopted in 2018)
- Forest of Dean: Quarter Area Action Plan (adopted in 2012)
- Monmouthshire: The Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan (LDP) (adopted in 2014)
- Monmouthshire: The Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan Review (LDPR) Preferred Strategy (published December 2022)
- Powys: The Powys LDP (adopted April 2018)
- Brecon Beacons National Park: Local Development Plan (adopted 2013)

Neighbourhood Plans

2.51 Across Herefordshire, 86 neighbourhood plans have been formally ‘made’ and now form part of the development plan for Herefordshire, while a further 15 parishes are preparing a plan (as of January 2023). Three neighbourhood plans have been submitted for examination, and a further three plans are set to be considered via a referendum.

Chapter 3

Baseline Information

Population, Health and Wellbeing

Population

3.1 The 2021 Census identified the population of Herefordshire to be 187,034 residents, of which 91,854 are male (49.1%) and 95,180 are female (50.9%) [\[See reference 39\]](#). The population of the county grew by 2% in the decade from 2011, a rate that is lower than the corresponding rate for England and Wales (6.6%). In the decade between 2001 to 2011, Herefordshire's population grew by 4.9% [\[See reference 40\]](#).

3.2 The 2020 mid-year population estimates, which were published in September 2021, give an indication of the distribution of population across the county. Just over half of the population was found to be living in areas defined as 'rural'. Just under a third of the population lives in Hereford city (61,500), and just under a fifth live in one of the three largest market towns of Leominster (12,400), Ross (11,200) and Ledbury (9,900) [\[See reference 41\]](#).

3.3 The 2018-based subnational population projections estimate a county population of 199,470 for the year 2023, rising to 218,203 in 2041 [\[See reference 42\]](#).

3.4 According to the mid-2021 population estimates [\[See reference 43\]](#), the highest proportion of residents in Herefordshire are within the 45-54-year and 55-64-year age brackets. However, the overall percentage of people in Herefordshire of working age (15-64) is below the national average. Nearly 16% of the population is within the age bracket 0-15, which is below the national (16.7%) and regional averages (17.2%). The 18-20-year-old age group has the highest internal migration outflow (1,000), followed by 25-29-year olds (700) (however, this age bracket also has the highest internal migration inflow).

3.5 Herefordshire is predicted to experience a demographic change with an increasing elderly population. In 2016 those aged over 65 accounted for 24.3% of the population. By 2031 this age group is expected to account for 29.8% of the total population in Herefordshire. This will have implications for the economy, service provision, accommodation requirements and healthcare. There are expected to be 3,000 fewer people of working age (16-64) in 2031 compared to 2016 (58.8% in 2016 down to 53.9% in 2031) and similarly there is expected to be a decrease in the number of people in the 0-15-year age group (from 16.8% in 2016 to 16.3% in 2031) [\[See reference 44\]](#).

3.6 93.7% of Herefordshire's population is white English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British. This is significantly higher than both the West Midlands (79.2%) and England (79.8%) figures, indicating that the county is much less diverse [\[See reference 45\]](#) .

3.7 In mid-2019, Herefordshire had a population density of 88 persons per square hectare which compares to an average for West Midlands of 457 persons per square hectare. Herefordshire had the lowest population density across all of the local authorities within the West Midlands. The county had the twelfth lowest figure for persons per square hectare in England, across all local authorities [\[See reference 46\]](#).

3.8 Hereford city has a much younger age profile than the county as a whole, with relatively high proportions of young adults and young children. The most rural areas have relatively more people of older working and early retirement age (50-70 year olds). The market towns and other areas (including larger

villages like Colwall and Credenhill) have an age profile more similar to the county overall.

Housing

3.9 The 2018-based household projections identify how the number of households in Herefordshire is expected to grow from 82,350 residents in 2018, to 99,847 residents in 2043 (a rate of 21.3%). In comparison, the number of households in England is expected to increase from 23,204,246 in 2018 to 26,953,266 (a rate of 29.1%) [\[See reference 47\]](#).

3.10 In 2019, Herefordshire contained 83,765 dwellings, of which 33,917 (40.5%) were located in Hereford City [\[See reference 48\]](#). Approximately 68% of dwellings in Herefordshire are owner occupied, which is slightly higher than the West Midlands (64.9%) and England (63.3%) averages. Only 0.98% of housing in Herefordshire is in shared ownership. Socially rented accommodation accounts for 14% dwellings in Herefordshire, whereas 18% of dwellings are privately rented [\[See reference 49\]](#). Herefordshire has less socially rented housing than both the West Midlands (19.0%) and England (17.7%) [\[See reference 50\]](#).

3.11 Herefordshire has a much higher proportion of detached dwellings (40%) than the national average (25%). Some 22% of dwellings are semi-detached and 14% and 9% are mid terrace and end terrace, respectively [\[See reference 51\]](#). Flats make up 15% of dwellings and the remainder of dwellings are mobile or temporary structures. In 2018, 947 (1%) of dwellings in Herefordshire were vacant, with 0.3% being long-term vacant (6 months or more) [\[See reference 52\]](#).

3.12 In November 2022 the average property price in Herefordshire was £321,214 which was above the average price in England of £315,073 [\[See reference 53\]](#). The affordability of property can be assessed by calculating the ratio of the median house price (of an existing dwelling), to the median gross annual residence-based earnings. Analysis of this data shows how

Herefordshire had the worst housing affordability ratio in the West Midlands, with the county recording a ratio of 9.40 in 2021, an increase from 8.50 in 2020 [\[See reference 54\]](#). In contrast, the West Midlands had an overall affordability ratio of 7.52 in 2021, an increase from 6.51 in 2020 [\[See reference 55\]](#). The corresponding figures for England were 8.96 in 2021 and 7.61 in 2020 [\[See reference 56\]](#).

3.13 In terms of rental costs, Herefordshire sits below the West Midlands and England median private rental costs for all housing categories (room, studio, one-, two-, three-, four- and more bedroom flats/houses) at £732 and £946 respectively. The median monthly rent in Herefordshire was £690 between October 2021 and September 2022. However, there is a lack of rental availability arising from removal of rental properties from the market in favour of holiday accommodation, short-term lets, and second homes [\[See reference 57\]](#).

3.14 In terms of homelessness, the rate for Herefordshire equalled 1.61 homeless households per 1,000 households in the period to April to June 2022. This rate is lower than the equivalent figure for the West Midlands (1.68), but higher than the rate for England (1.49) [\[See reference 58\]](#).

3.15 The Homelessness Act 2002 requires every local authority to carry out a review of homelessness in their district every five years and to publish a homelessness strategy based on the findings of the review. The Herefordshire Homeless Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020-2025 serves this purpose and identifies two umbrella factors that contribute to homelessness that Herefordshire Council seek to mediate and address. These are 'structural factors', and 'system failures' [\[See reference 59\]](#).

3.16 The adopted Herefordshire Core Strategy sets a minimum requirement of 16,500 new dwellings between 2011 and 2031 to meet market and affordable housing need [\[See reference 60\]](#). This includes a broad distribution across Hereford (6,500 new homes), other urban areas (4,700 new homes) and rural settlements (5,300 new homes). So far, the Council has completed 6,382 new homes between 2011-2022, with most dwellings developed in the city of

Hereford (47%). This is 1,768 fewer homes than the Council’s net requirement, although the expectation is that the highest rate of housing completions will be towards the latter end of the plan period [\[See reference 61\]](#). Table 3.1 below outlines housing completions compared to Core Strategy targets.

Table 3.1: Housing Completions in Herefordshire compared to Core Strategy Targets (2022)

[\[See reference 62\]](#)

Core Strategy Year	Net Requirements	Net Completions	Difference
2011/2012	600	341	-259
2012/2013	600	201	-399
2013/2014	600	331	-269
2014/2015	600	774	+174
2015/2016	600	327	-273
2016/2017	850	405	-445
2017/2018	850	776	-74
2018/2019	850	666	-184
2019/2020	850	904	+54
2020/2021	850	643	-207
2021/2022	900	1014	+114
Overall Total	8150	6382	-1768

3.17 Alongside the current adopted Local Plan (Core Strategy), the Council produced a Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008 and a Local Housing Market Assessment 2013, which indicate that there is an urgent need to increase the provision of affordable housing in the county. Affordable dwellings make up 27.5% of the total homes delivered to date.

3.18 Table 3.2 below demonstrates the current affordable housing provision in the county.

Table 3.2: Affordable Housing Completions in Herefordshire (2022) [See reference 63]

Year	Number of Affordable Dwellings Completed
2011/2012	90
2012/2013	60
2013/2014	116
2014/2015	159
2015/2016	129
2016/2017	135
2017/2018	171
2018/2019	203
2019/2020	213
2020/2021	228
2021/2022	248
Overall Total	1752

3.19 There have been concerns in the plan area over the lack of a five-year housing supply within the county and its effects on any neighbourhood plans adopted for more than two years. As of April 2021, Herefordshire Council had a 6.90 year supply. In addition, the results of the 2020 Housing Delivery Test indicate that delivery in Herefordshire was above 75% of housing required over the previous three years (106%) [see reference **64**].

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

3.20 Herefordshire Council's Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) identifies how there are 38 Gypsy and Traveller sites located across the County. This assessment, conducted in April 2022, identified that there were 45 pitches on six local authority sites, 44 pitches on 30 private sites, and 14 pitches located on two unauthorised developments. The assessment also identified four Travelling Showpeople yards consisting of 10 plots.

3.21 With respect to the future, the GTAA identifies a need for 35 additional plots for 2021-2041, based on the guidance prescribed via the government's guidance, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS) (2015). The analysis also identified the need for nine additional Travelling Showpeople plots, as well as transit places, for the same period [**See reference 65**]

3.22 The existing sites are spread fairly widely across the county, however there are virtually no sites in the south and south west of the county. Sites operated by Herefordshire Council are outlined in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Gypsy and Traveller Sites in Herefordshire [See reference 66]

Site	Description
Romany Close, Grafton	Grafton is one of two sites based in Hereford the other being Watery Lane. It is a vibrant site which is occupied primarily by an extended family and has family members of all ages.
Watery Lane, Rotherwas	This site is quiet and well-kept. Many of the residents at Watery Lane have lived together for many years at various locations and it is close to Hereford City. Whilst one access road to the site floods, there is an alternative route and the site itself has not flooded.
Bosbury	This is a quiet rural site. The residents would benefit from having access to a vehicle to access local amenities. The nearest Market Town is Ledbury where there is easy public transport access to Hereford including a railway station in Ledbury.
Openfields, Bromyard	This site has been refurbished and is a valuable asset to the number of plots available within the county. The number of plots which have currently been refurbished are ten. Again this is a rural site and the residents would benefit from use of their own transport.
Luston	Croft Lane is a mixed age and culture site and is popular with New Age Travellers. The nearest town is Leominster where there is access to public transport including a railway station.
Pembridge	This site is in a rural setting and the residents would benefit from the use of a vehicle to access amenities. The nearest Market Town is Leominster where there is easy access to Hereford using public transport, there is also a railway station situated at Leominster.

3.23 The Traveller Education Team is part of Herefordshire Council's Virtual School Team supporting vulnerable children to reach their potential. It provides extra support and help for families who are Romany, Roma, Gypsy, New Traveller, Showman, Circus, and Irish Traveller [\[See reference 67\]](#).

Health

3.24 Health is a cross cutting topic and as such many topic areas explored in this Scoping report influence health either directly or indirectly.

3.25 There are 24 GP surgeries in Herefordshire, four of which are in Hereford. There are also 24 dental surgeries in the county. There are seven hospitals within Herefordshire. The primary NHS hospital is the County Hospital in Hereford, which has an accident and emergency department. The hospital is operated by the Wye Valley NHS Trust [\[See reference 68\]](#). Following an inspection in October 2022, the Care Quality Commission has identified how the County Hospital 'requires employment' [\[See reference 69\]](#). The NHS provides daily updates with respect to the closure of Accident and Emergency departments, and provides occupancy statistics for a range of different departments and provisions. For 'General and Acute Care' beds, the County Hospital in Herefordshire was operating at a capacity in excess of 85% for the majority of January 2023 [\[See reference 70\]](#).

3.26 There is one private hospital, two specialist mental health hospitals and three community hospitals [\[See reference 71\]](#).

Life Expectancy

3.27 Life expectancy for those born in Herefordshire between 2018 and 2020 was estimated to be 83.75 years for women and 79.18 years for men. The corresponding figures for England were estimated to be 83.1 years for females and 79.3 years for males [\[See reference 72\]](#).

3.28 Health inequalities exist across Herefordshire. For example, those born in the most deprived 10% of areas in Herefordshire have a shorter life expectancy at birth than those living in the least deprived 10% cent by an average of 4.2 years for males and an average of 3.0 years for females. However, this gap is one of the smallest among counties with a similar level of overall deprivation to Herefordshire [\[See reference 73\]](#).

3.29 However, those living in the most deprived areas are 36% more likely to die prematurely (i.e. under 75 years of age) of cancer; 22% more likely to die prematurely of cardiovascular disease and 18% more likely to die from respiratory disease. Residents of the most deprived areas of Herefordshire are approximately a third more likely to die as a result of suicide than the county population in general [\[See reference 74\]](#)

Obesity

3.30 In 2018/19, the combined proportion of obese and overweight reception year children was 23.7%, 10.3% of whom were obese. For year 6 children, the prevalence of obesity was 21.0%, while the combined figure for obese and overweight children was 34.7% [\[See reference 75\]](#). These figures are in line with national figures [\[See reference 76\]](#). Alcohol-specific hospital stays and levels of smoking for those aged under 18 are worse than the England average, although better than the England average for adults [\[See reference 77\]](#). 66.8% of adults in Herefordshire are physically active, which is higher than both the West Midlands (63.2%) and England (66.3%) figures. Participation in sport at least once a week has generally been increasing year on year since 2011/12, with 59% and 15% of adults identifying themselves as active or fairly active, respectively [\[See reference 78\]](#).

Perception of Well-being

3.31 Residents of Herefordshire reported having marginally higher levels of life satisfaction (7.55 out of 10.00) than the average for the UK (7.54) in the 2021/22 period [See reference 79]. For the topic, 'feeling that things done in life are worthwhile', Herefordshire scored 7.82 out of 10, above the corresponding figure of 7.78 for England. The figure for 'happiness' in Herefordshire, for the same period, was calculated at 7.44 which was marginally lower than the English figure of 7.45 [See reference 80].

Loneliness and Social Isolation

3.32 Loneliness is a subjective, negative feeling experienced where there is a discrepancy between the amount and quality of social contacts one has, and the amount and quality one would like to have. It is related to, but distinct from, social isolation which is an objective state where there is an absence of social contacts and social connectedness [See reference 81].

3.33 Emerging evidence indicates that loneliness is associated with poor health and well-being outcomes including hypertension, coronary heart disease, strokes, depression and mortality. Research also suggests that loneliness can increase the risk of premature death by 30% [See reference 82].

3.34 Living alone has been found to be a risk factor associated with loneliness and involuntary social isolation, as well as multiple falls, functional impairment, poor diet, smoking, and three self-reported chronic conditions; arthritis and/or rheumatism, glaucoma, and cataracts. Loneliness is caused by a number of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. While loneliness can occur at any age, it can be exacerbated by major life events that typically correspond with ageing such as bereavement, loss of mobility and declining physical health.

3.35 In Herefordshire, a quality of life survey undertaken by Data Orchard in 2018 indicated that 60% of respondents were in contact with family, friends or neighbours most days; 34% at least weekly but 6% were only in contact once a month or less **[See reference 83]**. The survey also highlighted how 26% of respondents felt lonely some of the time during their past week, while 8% of the respondents felt lonely 'most or all of the time'.

Open Spaces, Sport and Recreation

3.36 Leisure activities contribute to the quality of life of residents, providing amenity and opportunities for enhancing intellectual, spiritual and physical wellbeing. Additionally, they represent a tourism asset and their provision can result in economic benefits to the area.

3.37 Herefordshire has a range of cultural and leisure opportunities, including Eastnor Castle and Hampton Court Castle, a number of houses and gardens to visit, as well as its characteristic market towns. Hereford city is home to the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery and The Old House, a well preserved example of a 17th century timber framed building.

3.38 Many visitors to Herefordshire come for its countryside, including the Wye Valley in the south of the county and the wealth of walking opportunities across the county. There is a network of public rights of way (PROWs) across the countryside including promoted routes such as the Wye Valley Walk and the Three Rivers Ride. The Offa's Dyke Path, a National Trail, passes through the county near Kington. National Cycle Network (NCN) routes 44, 46, 426 and 423 are present within the county. The county also contains Queenswood Country Park near Bodenham. This includes an arboretum, semi-natural ancient woodland (a SSSI) and a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

3.39 Herefordshire has a number of leisure centres managed by Halo, on behalf of Herefordshire Council. There are Halo leisure facilities in Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster, Hereford, Ross-on-Wye and Wigmore **[See reference 84]**.

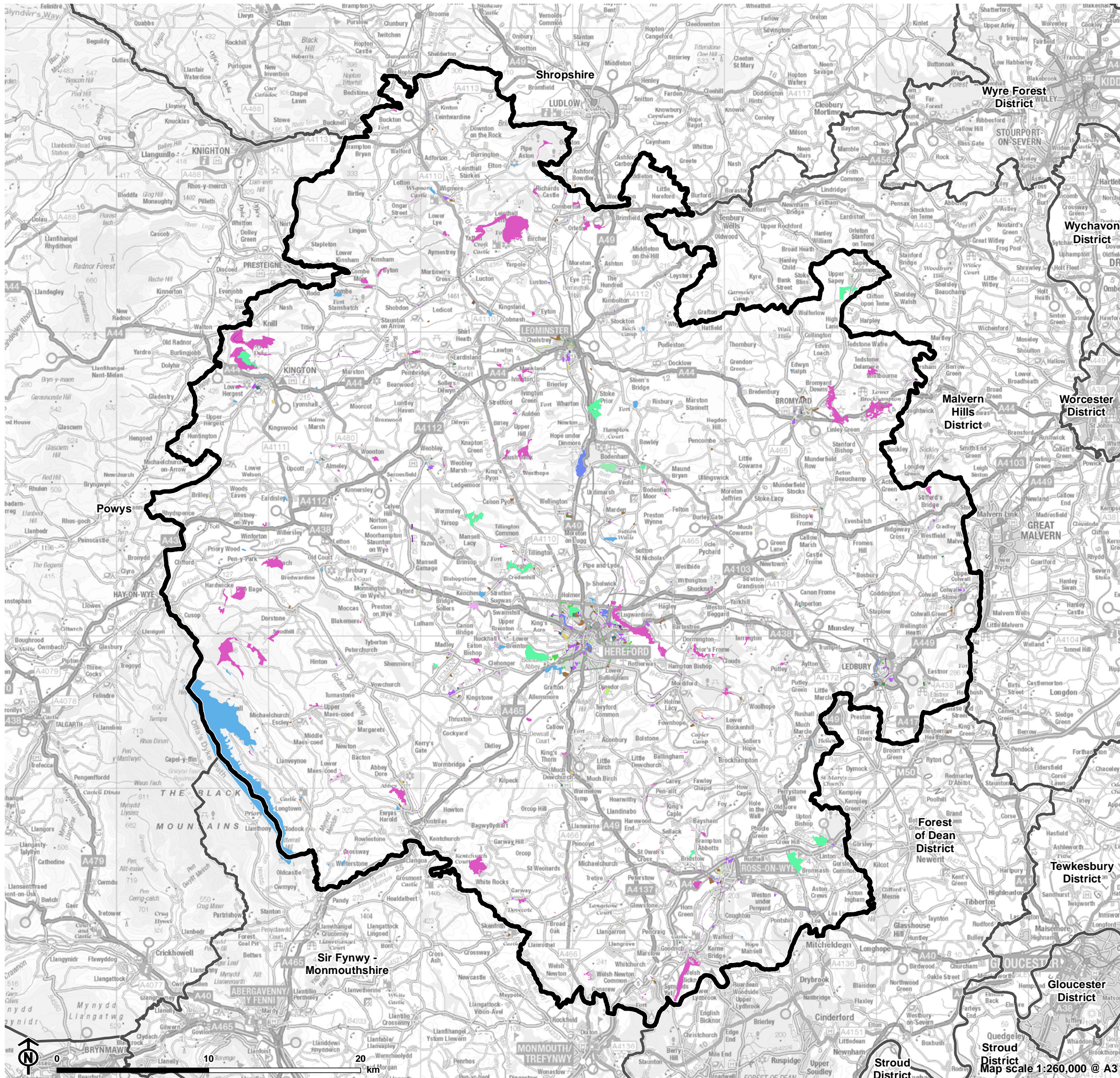
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3.40 Herefordshire Council has prepared a number of Playing Pitch Assessments, which review provision in various parts of the county. The Herefordshire Play Facilities Study [See reference 85] identified 145 sites in the county that have equipped provision for children and young people, of which 48% are in the rural parishes and 52% are in urban areas.

3.41 Local standards of open space provision are outlined in the Council's Policy Direction Paper: Open Space, Sport, and Recreation which aims to direct development to 2026. Figure 3.1 shows the open spaces and recreational facilities available across Herefordshire. Table 3.4 presents observations made in relation to Herefordshire's main settlements.



Figure 3.1: Open Spaces/Recreation Facilities



- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary
- PPG17 Open Space Assessment**
- Allotments
- Amenity
- Athletics
- Bowling
- Cemetery
- Civic Spaces
- Common
- Cricket
- Football
- Gardens
- Golf
- Green Corridors
- Local Nature Reserve
- Local Park
- Major Park
- Natural
- Nature Reserve
- Picnic Site
- Play
- Play Area
- Recreation Ground
- Rugby
- School Playing Fields
- Tennis
- Village Green

Table 3.4: Observations of Existing Open Space in Herefordshire by Settlement [See reference 86]

Settlement	Open Space Observation
Hereford City North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extensive under provision of natural and semi-natural green space and outdoor sports facilities. ■ Extensive over provision of parks and gardens. ■ Average provision for children and teenagers. ■ Over provision of amenity green space.
Hereford City South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Average provision of parks and gardens. ■ Extensive under provision of natural and semi-natural green space and outdoor sports facilities. ■ Average provision for children and teenagers. ■ Extensive over provision of amenity green space.
Bromyard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extensive under provision of parks and gardens. ■ Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space. ■ Under provision of amenity green space and outdoor sport. ■ Average provision for children and teenagers.
Kingston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extensive under provision of parks and gardens. ■ Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space. ■ Under provision of amenity green space and outdoor sports facilities. ■ Average provision for children and teenagers.
Ledbury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extensive under provision of parks and gardens and outdoor sports facilities. ■ Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space.

Settlement	Open Space Observation
Leominster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extensive under provision of parks and gardens and outdoor sports facilities. ■ Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space. ■ Under provision of amenity green space. ■ Average provision for children and teenagers.
Ross-On-Wye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extensive under provision of parks and gardens, amenity green space and outdoor sports facilities. ■ Extensive over provision of natural and semi-natural green space. ■ Average provision for children and teenagers.

Levels of Physical Activity

3.42 Physical inactivity is the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality, accounting for 6% of deaths globally. People who have a physically active lifestyle have a 20% to 35% lower risk of cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease and stroke compared to those who have a sedentary lifestyle. Regular physical activity is also associated with a reduced risk of diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis and colon and breast cancer and with improved mental health. In older adults, physical activity is associated with increased functional capacities. The estimated direct cost of physical inactivity to the NHS across the UK is over £0.9 billion per year [\[See reference 87\]](#).

3.43 Department of Health physical activity guidelines recommend that over a week adults should undertake a total of at least 150 minutes of at least moderate physical activity. Moderate activity can be achieved through brisk walking, cycling, gardening and housework, as well as various sports and exercise. Alternately, an adequate level of activity can be achieved over a week

by undertaking 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity such as running, football or swimming. All adults should also aim to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week and minimise sedentary activities.

3.44 In 2017/18, approximately two thirds of Herefordshire adults met the recommended level of physical activity of 150+ moderate intensity equivalent minutes per week, a figure similar to that reported for England. In the same period 23% of Herefordshire adults were physically inactive, again similar to England as whole **[See reference 88]**.

3.45 15.1% of 15-year-olds in Herefordshire in 2014/15 were reported as partaking in at least one hour of physical activity daily; not significantly different to England as a whole. Around two in every three (65.1%) had a mean daily sedentary time in the last week of over seven hours per day, which was a lower proportion than reported for England (70.1%) **[See reference 89]**.

3.46 In addition to physical activity, the potential contribution of leisure more broadly to health is being viewed increasingly from a public and population health perspective where leisure is regarded as the domain of lifestyle where people have greatest control. Consequently, it is seen an important resource that can positively influence physical, psychological and spiritual health **[See reference 90]**.

Education

3.47 There are 101 publicly funded primary, secondary and special schools in Herefordshire **[See reference 91]**. For the period January 2021 to December 2021, 4.6% of the County's residents had 'no qualifications', which compares to figures of 7.8% for the West Midlands and 6.6% for Great Britain **[See reference 92]**. The percentage of those in Herefordshire with NVQ3 (2 or more A levels or equivalent) equated to 60.9%, a figure that compares to 57.2% for the West Midlands and 61.5% for Great Britain **[See reference 93]**. The percentage of those possessing an HND, Degree or Higher Degree level qualification equalled 39.4% in Herefordshire, a figure that is higher than the

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figure for West Midlands (38.9%) but lower than the percentage for Great Britain (43.6%).

3.48 The County has prepared a Schools Capital Investment Strategy to identify and guide future priorities [\[See reference 94\]](#)

3.49 The New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering opened to new students in September 2021 and offers university-level studies in engineering, technology and sustainable construction. The institute has two campuses. One is located in the centre of Hereford, with the other being located at Hereford's Skylon Park [\[See reference 95\]](#).

Deprivation

3.50 The English Indices of Deprivation 2019 [See reference 96] is a measure of multiple deprivation in small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA), in England. Seven domains of deprivation are measured: Income Deprivation; Employment Deprivation; Health Deprivation and Disability; Education, Skills and Training Deprivation; Crime; Barriers to Housing and Services; and Living Environment Deprivation. Each domain contains a number of indicators. The seven domains are combined to give a multiple deprivation score. There are 116 LSOAs in Herefordshire and 32,844 nationally [See reference 97] .

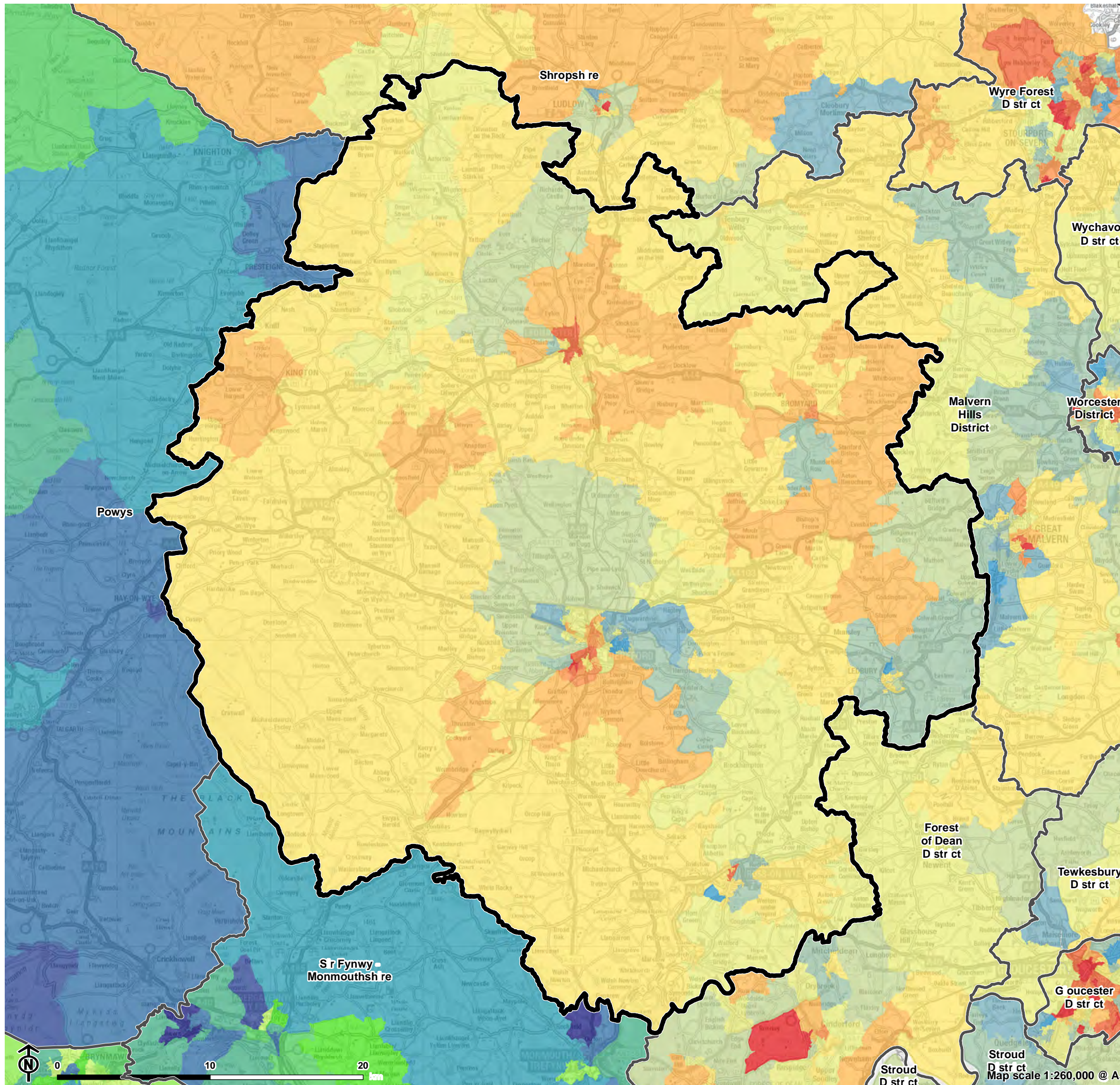
3.51 Herefordshire contains one LSOA in the 10% most deprived in the country (Herefordshire 017D within the Newton Farm ward). Eight LSOAs are within the 20% most deprived in the country (two within the Hinton and Hunderton ward and one within the Ross North, Leominster South, Leominster North and Rural, Leominster East, Red Hill and Newton Far) with an additional five LSOAs within the 30% most deprived in the country (one within the Central ward, one within the Bromyard West ward one within the Saxon Gate ward, one within the Red Hill ward and one within the Newton Farm ward). Figure 3.2 illustrates the Indices of Multiple Deprivation as they relate to Herefordshire.

3.52 In 2017, there were an estimated 82,2020 households in Herefordshire, 9,990 (12.2%) of which were in fuel poverty [See reference 98]. This is slightly lower than fuel poverty rates in the West Midlands (12.6%) [See reference 99] but higher than England as a whole (10.9%) [See reference 100]. The majority of households affected by fuel poverty live in rural areas [See reference 101]. A household is considered to be fuel poor if they have required fuel costs that are above the national median level and were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the poverty line [See reference 102].

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3.53 About 12% (3,725) of children live in low-income families. This is lower than the national average of 17.0% of children living in low income families **[See reference 103]** .

Figure 3.2: Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)



- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary

Index of Multiple Deprivation (Decile)

- 1 (most deprived)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 (least deprived)

Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (Decile)

- 1 (most deprived)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 (least deprived)

Crime and Safety

3.54 Herefordshire is policed by the West Mercia force. For the year to September 2022, the crime rate in West Mercia equated to 72 crimes per 1000 people [See reference 104]. This compares to a crime rate of 99.8 for the West Midlands, and 99.1 for England. For violence against a person, statistics for the same period identify a rate of 30.7 crimes per 1,000 people, compared to 42.8 for the West Midlands and 35.5 for England [See reference 105]. For the period to December 2018, the crime rate in Herefordshire was 56.42 [See reference 106]. There appears to be a correlation between crime and the most deprived areas of Herefordshire [See reference 107].

Economy

Economy and Employment

3.55 Labour market statistics for the period October 2021 to September 2022 show that 96,700 people in Herefordshire were economically active, accounting for 78.9% of the population. This figure is in excess of the natural figure of 77.5% [See reference 108]. Of those economically active, 76,000 (63.2%) were employees and 19,500 (13.3%) were self-employed. Of the employees, 50,000 (65.8%) were working full-time, with 26,000 (34.2%) working part-time [See reference 109].

3.56 Some 3,000 (3.1%) people were unemployed [See reference 110]. The percentage of those unemployed is lower than the percentages for both the West Midlands (4.9%) and Great Britain (3.7%). Of those economically inactive (23,400), the majority were identified as being retired (28.9%), long-term sick (26.7%) or 'looking after the family /home' (23.2%). The percentage of those retired is higher than the figures for both the West Midlands (11.5%) and Great Britain (14.1%) [See reference 111].

3.57 In terms of employment by occupation, again for the period October 2021 to September 2022, the highest percentage (44.5%) is attributed to ‘Soc 2020 Major Group 1-3’ [\[See reference 112\]](#). This includes:

- Managers, Directors and Senior Officials (12.3% compared to 10.5% for Great Britain).
- Professional Occupations (18.5% compared to 26.0% for Great Britain).
- Associate Professional Occupations (13.7% compared to 14.9% for Great Britain).

3.58 Table 3.5 provides a summary of employee jobs in 2021 for Herefordshire, the West Midlands, and Great Britain [\[See reference 113\]](#). As the table shows, Herefordshire has higher percentages, when compared to the West Midlands, for the numbers of employees engaged with:

- Manufacturing.
- Construction.
- Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles.
- Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities.
- Accommodation and food service activities.
- Human health and social work activities.
- Arts, entertainment and recreation.

3.59 The gross weekly pay for full-time workers in Herefordshire, for 2022, equated to £543.2, a rate less than the corresponding figures for West Midlands (£617.5) and Great Britain (£642.0) [\[See reference 114\]](#). A provisional figure for Gross Disposable Household Income in 2019 was £20,631 for Herefordshire. This was lower than the figure for England (£21,978), but higher than that for the West Midlands (£18,350) [\[See reference 115\]](#). Low pay translates into the county’s GVA which is low at £20,738 per head. This compares to the England average of £28,096 [\[See reference 116\]](#).

3.60 Hereford’s stock of jobs grew by 6.3% between 2015 and 2019, 1.3% higher than the national average and a considerably stronger performance than the three largest towns in the county, Leominster, Ledbury and Ross on Wye, all of which experienced modest job losses during this period [\[See reference 117\]](#).

Table 3.5: Employee Jobs in Herefordshire in relation to regional and national averages (2021) [\[See reference 118\]](#)

Employee Jobs by Industry	Herefordshire (%)	West Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
Mining and Quarrying	0.0	0.0	0.1
Manufacturing	14.5	10.4	7.6
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning,	0.2	0.4	0.4
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	1.2	0.9	0.7
Construction	5.3	4.3	4.9
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	18.4	16.1	14.4
Transportation and storage	2.3	5.9	5.1
Accommodation and food service activities	7.9	6.6	7.5
Information and communication	3.0	3.6	4.5

Employee Jobs by Industry	Herefordshire (%)	West Midlands (%)	Great Britain (%)
Financial and insurance activities	0.9	2.1	3.6
Real estate activities	1.6	1.7	1.8
Professional, scientific and technical, activities	6.6	6.9	8.9
Administrative and support service activities	7.9	9.3	8.9
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	1.6	3.8	4.6
Education	7.9	8.7	8.8
Human health and social work activities	15.8	14.7	13.7
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	3.0	2.5	2.3
Other service activities	1.6	1.9	1.9

3.61 There are 10,620 businesses in Herefordshire, across 11,900 local units (sites or workplaces). The majority (86.8%) of businesses are micro, with up to nine people in the business. Some 11.2% of businesses are small (10-49 people), 1.8% are medium (50-249 people) and 0.3% are large (250 people or more) [See reference 119].

3.62 The economy of Herefordshire benefits from its strong strategic connections, despite the County’s relatively rural location. The County benefits from being on the motorway network that connects South Wales with the West Midlands. The County also has direct and regular rail links to London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Cardiff. Birmingham, Bristol and Cardiff airports are all accessible within a 90-minute drive.

3.63 Within the county there are a number of global companies – including Cadbury/Mondelez, Heineken, Cargill, Kingspan, and Special Metals, which operate alongside well-known British brands – including Tyrells, Weston’s Cider, and PGL, most of whom have started and grown in Herefordshire.

3.64 An Economic Vision was implemented by Invest Herefordshire in December 2021 to identify the ambitions and intentions of a range of stakeholders and partners, to help make Herefordshire a better place to live, work and learn. Much has already been achieved in recent years to implement this proactive pursuit of growth [See reference 120]. Major investments in the plan area include:

- The Old Market retail and leisure development: This £90m development, in partnership with British Land, brought a new cinema, retailers that include a department store and high-end supermarket and restaurant chains reinforcing the role of Hereford as a retail destination.
- Fastershire: A £32.5m programme of investment in superfast broadband infrastructure, delivering a 21st century digital network, to 55,000 homes and businesses countywide.
- Hereford Enterprise Zone: A 74-hectare new business park development which has already secured over £23m of public and private investment delivering business growth and new job opportunities.
- Halo Leisure: Investment of £10million in the redevelopment of a range of sports and leisure centres to enhance the user experience, and improve the company’s economic viability.

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- Securing over £43m from central government for road infrastructure schemes which will enable the development of several hundred city centre homes and form the first section of a Hereford bypass.
- Investing £7m in the construction of a new Livestock market to facilitate the retail and leisure development within the city and provide a state-of-the-art market to serve the Marches agricultural sector.

3.65 These and other investments represent well over £250m of recent public and private investment in the county, improving the economic infrastructure and enabling private sector growth.

Town Centre, Tourism and Retail

3.66 In 2015, 6.86 million people visited Herefordshire, comprising 2.65 million overnight visitors and 4.21 million day visitors who between them contributed £442.81 million to the local economy [\[See reference 121\]](#). This supports about 6,688 full time equivalent jobs in the tourism industry. Tourism is strong in all the market towns, which are characteristic of the region. These provide attractions as well as places to stay, eat and shop [\[See reference 122\]](#). The county has a dedicated website to promote tourism across Herefordshire [\[See reference 123\]](#)

3.67 There are only around 25 hotels in Herefordshire, offering approximately 820 bedrooms (excluding guest houses / bed and breakfasts, etc.). The majority of these hotels are located around Hereford and Ross-on-Wye [\[See reference 124\]](#).

3.68 The main retail and cultural centre of Herefordshire is Hereford city. It is the largest settlement in the plan area, making up 25% of the population of the county and accounting for a significant proportion of its productivity. Hereford Cathedral contains nationally important treasures, such as the Mappa Mundi and the Magna Carta, and draw many visitors each year. Other key attractions include Hereford Racecourse, Hereford Football Club, the New Cattle Market and Belmont Abbey. There are a number of festivals in Hereford throughout the year, which attract both locals and visitors. These include the Borderlines Film Festival and Herefordshire Art Week.

3.69 Herefordshire's market towns each play a critical role in the county's economy as focal points for employment, retail, tourism, leisure, culture, business investment and growth, and for housing and access to services. The Council has supported each of the five market towns - Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye - to create Market Town Economic Development Investment Plans [\[See reference 125\]](#).

- Leominster has the second largest urban population in Herefordshire and is in a strategic location on crossroads of A49 and A44 with access to Wales and central location in the Marches. It has a railway station with good connectivity to Hereford and Shrewsbury and Cardiff and Manchester beyond. The town has a wealth of heritage buildings which has been recognised by Historic England in awarding the town Heritage Action Zone Status with a substantial funding allocation. The town's heritage and strong antiques sector have the potential to attract a substantial number of tourists [\[See reference 126\]](#).
- Bromyard is one of the smallest market towns in the county with a population of 4,284. Bromyard has history and heritage buildings from the medieval, Georgian, Victorian, inter-war, post war and post millennium periods which are host to a high number of independent retailers. The town is a traditional small rural service centre supporting a wider dispersed population [\[See reference 127\]](#).
- Kington is a distinctive town on the Welsh border which has a very strong vernacular and individual character making its built environment unique and engaging for visitors. The key gateway position of the town gives it

real potential to operate as a gateway into Wales (and vice versa), as a small little-known settlement it has significant capacity with the right investment to delight and surprise people as a visitor destination exploiting its position as a location on the crossroads of the A49 and A44 with access to Wales and central locations in the Marches. The visitor appeal of the town is further enhanced by its access to both a river and little known but beautiful open spaces [\[See reference 128\]](#).

- Ledbury acts as a key service centre to the surrounding rural area, east Herefordshire and neighbouring Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. Ledbury railway station has regular services to Hereford, Malvern, Worcester, Birmingham and London. Ledbury has a strong voluntary sector with over 120 local groups. It has a number of visitor attractions and hosts a number of events throughout the year [\[See reference 129\]](#).
- Ross-on-Wye is also well connected. It is located on the A40 which runs through Gloucester to Abergavenny and beyond. The town also has good road links to Birmingham and the Midlands via the M50 motorway (the 'Ross-on-Wye spur' from the M5) and to South Wales via the A40/A449 dual carriageway. Ross-on-Wye is located within the Wye Valley AONB and is next to the River Wye. Its picturesque buildings include the Market House and The Prospect [\[See reference 130\]](#).

3.70 During 2022, Nexus Planning undertook Town Centre Health Checks for Hereford, Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye [\[See reference 131\]](#). Each profile provided information concerning the split of floor space between different town centre uses and provided data on observed vacancy rates (2022). All of the towns were compared against the UK 2022 vacancy rate of 13.8%, with local trends from 2012 being observed:

- In Hereford, the vacancy rate was 17.5%, up from 12.6% in 2012.
- In Bromyard, the vacancy rate was 7.1%, down from 8.9% in 2012.
- In Kington, the vacancy rate was 14.3%, up from 13.2% in 2012.
- In Ledbury, the vacancy rate was 9.3%, up from 5.4% in 2012.
- In Leominster, the vacancy rate was 16.94%, up from 5% in 2012.

- In Ross-on-Wye, the vacancy rate was 7.4%, down from 16.0% in 2012.

3.71 Each Health Check elaborated on the key data by providing commentary on the changing nature of the uses, the nature of pedestrian flows, accessibility, environmental quality, and perceptions of safety [\[See reference 132\]](#). The evidence has helped to inform the Market Town Investment Plans that the Council has facilitated [\[See reference 133\]](#).

3.72 Despite a challenging context, the market towns around Herefordshire are considered to be well placed to realise some of the opportunities associated with future high streets. Herefordshire's market towns are strategically well placed in terms of relationship to Hereford and Worcester, offering a great place to live, visit and work. As people's approach to work and quality of life requirements change, the towns are well placed to benefit from an increasing transition to a digital economy, with people working from home or flexible workspaces in attractive, less densely populated locations away from city centres [\[See reference 134\]](#).

Transport

3.73 The primary road network in Herefordshire generally radiates out from Hereford and Leominster. The A49 and A438 provide north-south and east-west links across the county respectively, via Hereford. The A44 provides an east-west link via Leominster. The A465 connects Hereford with Abergavenny and the A438 links Hereford with parts of Eastern Wales. The A40 changes into the M50 at Ross-on-Wye, offering residents access to the motorway network. Hereford is a hotspot for congestion in the county, particularly around the main river crossing of the A49 and the bridge at St Martin's Street, which is controlled by traffic lights [See reference 135]. As part of the Hereford Transport Package, the City Link Road was opened in December 2017 in Hereford which links Commercial Road and Edgar Street. Future transport and infrastructure improvements in Hereford include:

- the Southern Link Road in the South Wye area which will reduce congestion on Belmont Road and provide improved access to the Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas; and,
- the Hereford Bypass which will provide an alternative route for through traffic.

3.74 There are no commercial airports within Herefordshire, with the nearest airports being at Birmingham and Cardiff. There are four train stations within Herefordshire at Hereford, Leominster, Colwall and Ledbury. These are served by the following services:

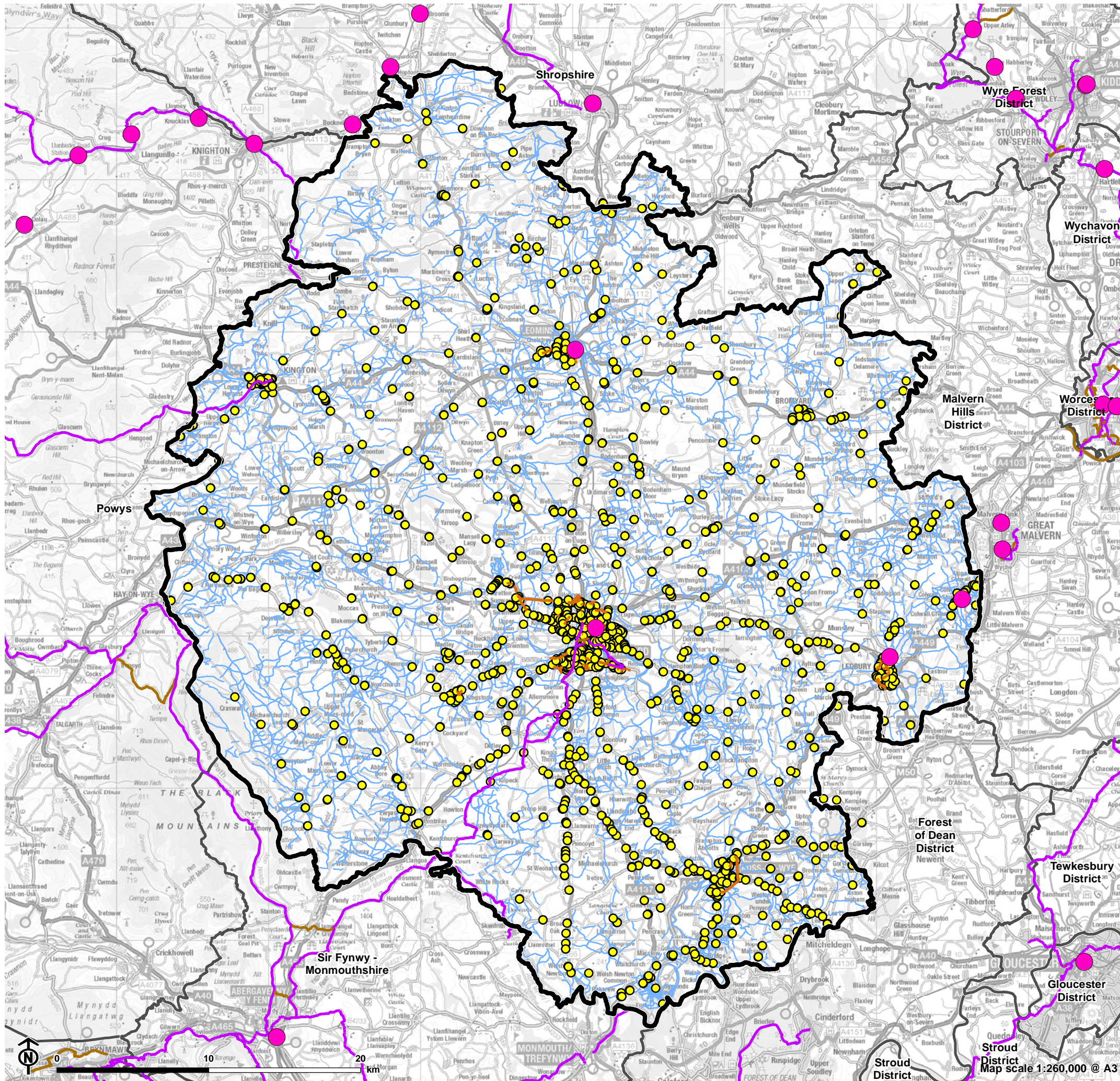
- Arriva Trains Wales services from Milford Haven to Manchester Piccadilly.
- Arriva Trains Wales service from Cardiff to Holyhead.
- Great Western Railway service from Hereford to London Paddington.
- London Midland service from Hereford to Birmingham.

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3.75 Two further stations lie just outside the county boundaries, near Leintwardine - Hopton Heath train station and Bucknell train station. Figure 3.3 shows the extent of the sustainable transport network.



Figure 3.3: Sustainable Transport Network



- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary
- Rail station
- Bus stop
- Public Right of Way
- National Cycle Network (NCN)
- NCN Link
- Cycle network

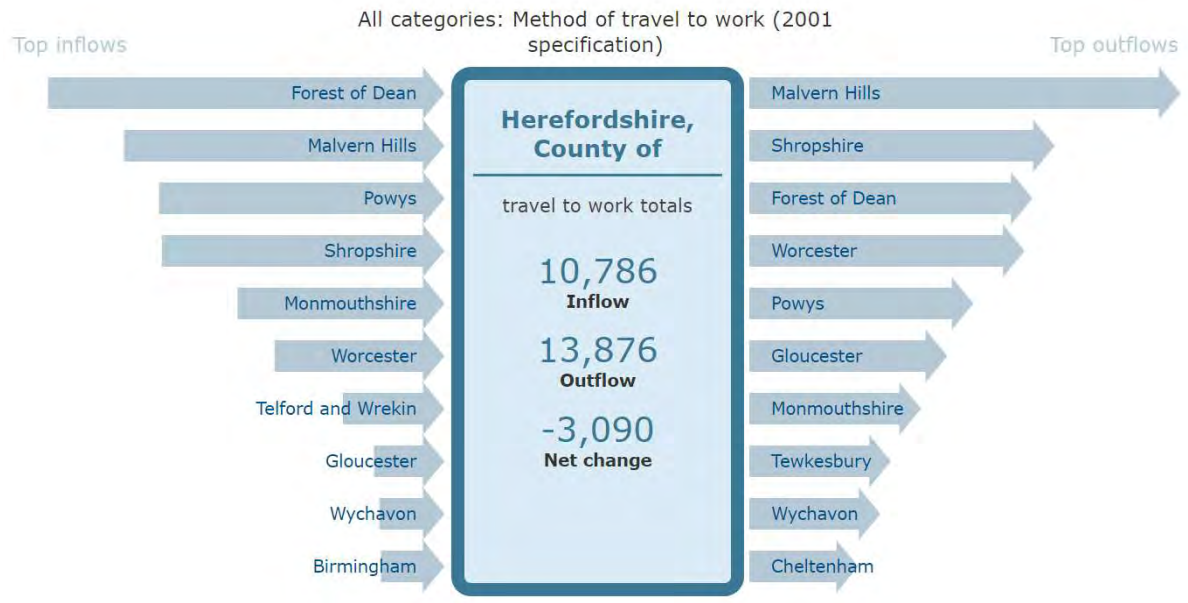
3.76 Bus services in Herefordshire are provided by a number of operators, including First Buses, Lugg Valley Travel, N Maddy Coaches, Stagecoach West, and Yeomans Canyon Travel [\[See reference 136\]](#). Generally, the urban areas (Hereford and the market towns) have a more extensive range of bus services and these are more frequent than in the rural areas.

3.77 The majority of households in Herefordshire own either one (41.6%) or two (30.4%) cars or vans. Car ownership is higher in Herefordshire than in the West Midlands and England, as 11.7% households own three or more vehicles compared to 8.0% in the West Midlands and 7.4% in England. There are also variations in car ownership across the County, with 46.4% of households in the City of Hereford having at least one car. Some 16.4% of households across the County have no access to a car. Car ownership is particularly high in Holmer and Shelwick parish, with 78.0% households owning either one or two cars and only 6.0% not owning a car or van [\[See reference 137\]](#).

3.78 The most common method of travel to work is driving a car or van, which is a trend seen across the country. Some 6.3% of people in Herefordshire work from home, which is greater than in the West Midlands (3.0%) and England (3.5%). Nearly 10% of people in Herefordshire walk to work, which is similar to England as a whole, although higher than for the West Midlands. In Hereford City, slightly fewer people drive to work (37.4%) and slightly more travel to work on foot (15.3%). More people also cycle to work (5.2%) compared to 2.5% across Herefordshire as a whole. Figure 3.4 shows commuter flows in and out of Herefordshire.

3.79 In 2017/18, 89 people were killed or seriously injured on Herefordshire's roads. The rate has remained, statistically speaking, unchanged since 2016, and is also one of the lowest rates in the West Midlands region for deaths or serious injuries resulting from road traffic collisions [\[See reference 138\]](#).

Figure 3.4: Flows of commuters in and out Herefordshire



<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/wu03uk/chart>

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

3.80 Herefordshire is a largely rural county and as such has a rich biodiversity offering. The countryside consists primarily of arable fields, interspersed with pasture and woodland. There are four sites of international importance for nature conservation within Herefordshire: the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which passes through the county from Symonds Yat to Clifford, via Hereford; Wye Valley Woodlands SAC, which sits alongside the River Wye in the southern tip of the county; and Downton Gorge SAC and River Clun SAC, which both lie in the northern part of the county.

3.81 The following section outlines the key environmental problems/threats relevant to the internationally designated biodiversity sites within Herefordshire. Although not within Herefordshire, the key environmental/problems associated with the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC are also identified as previous HRA work undertaken in Herefordshire has indicated the potential for likely significant effects on the SAC as a result of development in Herefordshire.

European Sites within (or partly within) Herefordshire

River Wye SAC

Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the decreasing quality of water; small scale development impacting the hydromorphology and character; the invasive species of Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and hybrids; lack of communication between management levels; incompatibility between fishery management and SAC features; outdated water abstraction agreement; pressure from public access; the risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition which exceeds site relevant critical loads;

inappropriate scrub control; under grazing; and poor site management when undertaking works on Network Rail's assets.

Downton Gorge SAC

Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the adverse impact of deer; the over rearing of pheasants by game management; a few small scale issues with forestry and woodland management; the spread of disease; several invasive species; and the risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition which exceeds site relevant critical loads.

River Clun SAC

Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the increasing pressure of siltation; loss of suitable habitats and food sources through water pollution; low breeding success of Freshwater Mussel; the spread of disease; physical modification; the invasive species of Himalayan balsam; and the change in land management.

Wye Valley Woodlands SAC

Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the increasing pressure of deer; poor

woodland management; spread of invasive species; habitat fragmentation which risks hindering the ecosystem; and the risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition which exceeds site relevant critical loads.

European Sites outside of Herefordshire but within 15km

Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC

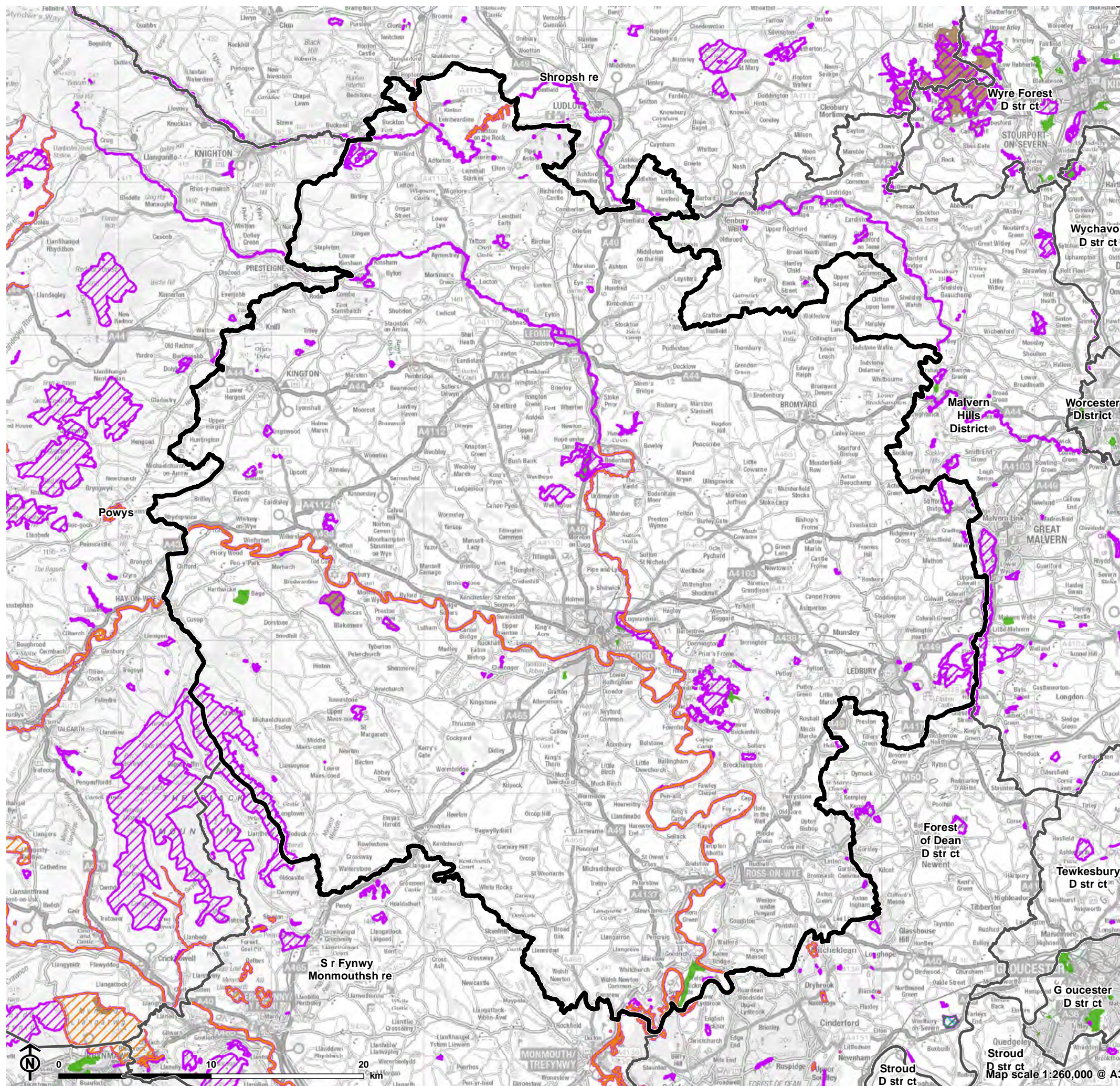
Key environmental problems/threats

- Natural England's Site Improvement Plan for the SAC identifies the main threats facing the site to be the structural deterioration of roosts sites that are in inhabited privately owned buildings vulnerable to disturbance; and pressure from public access.

3.82 There are three National Nature Reserves (NNRs) within Herefordshire: Moccas Park, The Flits and Downton Gorge. There are also a number of NNRs bordering, or close to the boundary of Herefordshire, to the south and west. There are seven Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) in Herefordshire. These include Queenswood, which is part of the Queenswood Country Park. Queenswood LNR partially coincides with Dinmore Hill Woods SSSI.

3.83 There are a total of 79 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in Herefordshire. Some of these are cross-boundary, including the River Teme SSSI, River Wye SSSI, Malvern Hills SSSI and Upper Wye Gorge SSSI. Of the 5,794.75ha of SSSIs, 39.0% is in favourable condition; 39.01% is in unfavourable but recovering condition; 19.80% is in unfavourable condition; and, 2.20% is classed as being in declining condition [See reference 139]. Due to the high number of SSSIs, the majority of the county falls within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone. Figure 3.5 shows designated biodiversity assets across Herefordshire.

Figure 3.5: Designated Biodiversity Assets



- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary
- Special Protection Area
- Special Area of Conservation
- Ramsar site
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Nature Reserve

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3.84 There are 685 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in Herefordshire. These are spread across the county but there is generally a higher density of LWS in the west. There are also 119 Local Geological Sites in the county.

3.85 The county includes a range of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats, including lowland deciduous woodland, lowland meadows and pasture and lowland dry acid grassland.

3.86 Herefordshire Council has published an Ecological Network map [See reference 140], which identifies the key areas for biodiversity in the county. This shows core areas for biodiversity, buffers around those core areas, biodiversity corridors and stepping stones, and sustainable land use areas (areas with proposals for habitat restoration or creation).

Historic Environment

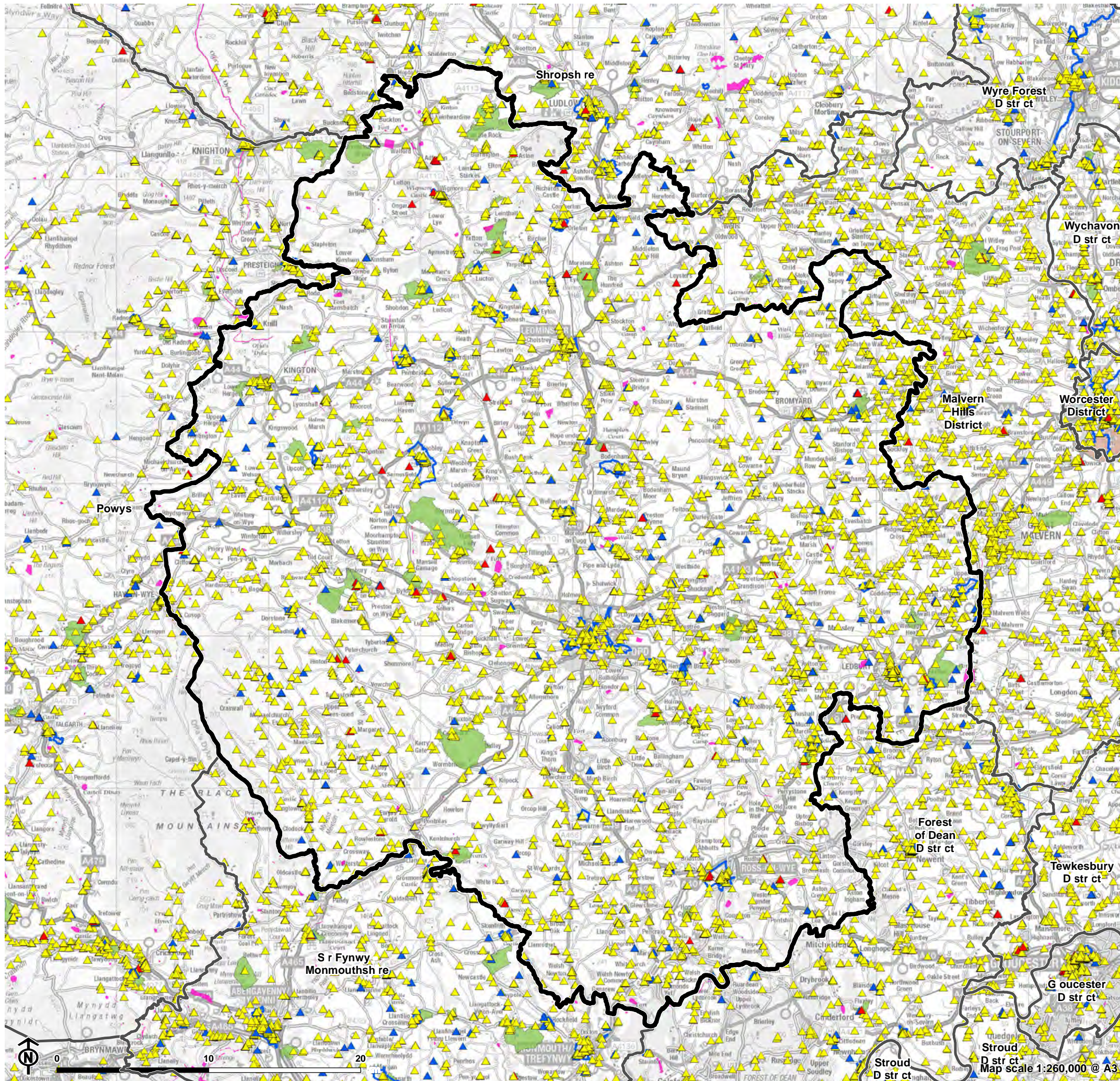
3.87 There are a number of heritage designations in Herefordshire, from individual buildings and structures of interest to the distinctive character of the market towns. Herefordshire possesses a rich historic environment which includes numerous Iron Age hill forts, sites of Roman towns, defensive features such as Offa's Dyke and the border castles, together with some of the best preserved traditional framed buildings in the country. The richness of the historic environment is reflected in the number of designated heritage assets encompassing a wealth of listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments and conservation areas. There are 5,938 Listed Buildings in Herefordshire (127 Grade 1, 358 Grade II* and 5,453 Grade II). There are 265 Scheduled Monuments across the county, as well as 25 Registered Parks and Gardens (11 Grade II* and 14 Grade II). There are also 179 Unregistered Parks and Gardens in Herefordshire.

3.88 There are 64 Conservation Areas in Herefordshire, including country house estates, the historic centre of Hereford, market towns and villages. Of these, two are listed on the Heritage at Risk Register - Kington and Ross-on-Wye/Bridstow. Both conservation areas are assessed as being in very bad condition which is deteriorating. Of the total 64 Conservation Areas in the county, 31 have either draft brief, brief or full appraisals completed [[See reference 141](#)].

3.89 Figure 3.6 shows designated heritage assets across Herefordshire.

3.90 In addition, there are also over 27,500 archaeological and historic sites in Herefordshire, identified within the Herefordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Not all of these are listed, but they contribute to the character of the area. The HER also holds data on the historic landscape characterisation map of Herefordshire, which maps the age of the present-day cultural landscape, primarily using field shapes. The HER is maintained by Herefordshire Council.

Figure 3.6: Designated Heritage Assets



- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary
- Historic England Designations**
- Listed Building (by grade)**
- I
- II*
- II
- Scheduled Monument
- Registered Battlefield
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Conservation Area
- Cadw Historic Designations**
- Listed Building (by grade)**
- I
- II*
- II
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Registered Historic Parks and Gardens
- Conservation Area

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3.91 The Hereford Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI) encompasses the whole zone within the medieval walls of the city, together with some of the early suburbs and former monastic precincts. It was designated an AAI in 1983, under the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, due to the national significance of the historic core of Hereford [\[See reference 142\]](#). Hereford is only one of five national AAIs.

3.92 Historic England has a Heritage at Risk Register [\[See reference 143\]](#) that identifies vulnerable listed buildings and Conservation Areas that are at risk of being lost through neglect, deterioration or decay. The register aims to highlight those places and buildings in greatest need of repair. The condition of buildings or structures on the register range from 'very bad' to 'poor', 'fair' and occasionally 'good'. Buildings judged to be in a 'good' condition may be considered at risk if they empty or under-used [\[See reference 144\]](#).

3.93 There are 56 heritage assets in Herefordshire that are on the Heritage at Risk Register. This includes 24 Scheduled Monuments, 16 Grade II* buildings, three Grade II buildings, 11 Grade I buildings, and two conservation areas [\[See reference 145\]](#).

Landscape

3.94 Herefordshire is characterised by being a largely rural area, consisting mainly of farmland with scattered woodland and settlements. The area has varied topography, with a number of hills and ridges. Herefordshire's varied landscape is reflected by the fact that it lies within five National Character Areas (NCAs):

- 98: Clun and Northwest Herefordshire Hills
- 99: Black Mountains and Golden Valley
- 100: Herefordshire Lowlands
- 101: Herefordshire Plateau
- 104: South Herefordshire and Over Severn [\[See reference 146\]](#)

3.95 The Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) [\[See reference 147\]](#) identifies a hierarchy of landscape character units below NCA level. There are 12 Sub-Regional Character Areas, the largest and most central of which being Central Herefordshire, which includes the city of Hereford. There are 22 Landscape Types (excluding urban areas) as well as several Landscape Description Units and Land Cover Parcels, which are at a fine-grain scale. Figure 3.7 shows the National Character Areas in relation to Herefordshire.

3.96 The Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Malvern Hills AONB lie partially within Herefordshire. The Wye Valley AONB broadly follows the River Wye, ending just southeast of Hereford and the Malvern Hills AONB incorporating an area east and northeast of Ledbury. The Shropshire Hills AONB lies almost adjacent to the north-western part of Herefordshire, near Leintwardine. The Brecon Beacons National Park lies adjacent to the county's western boundary.

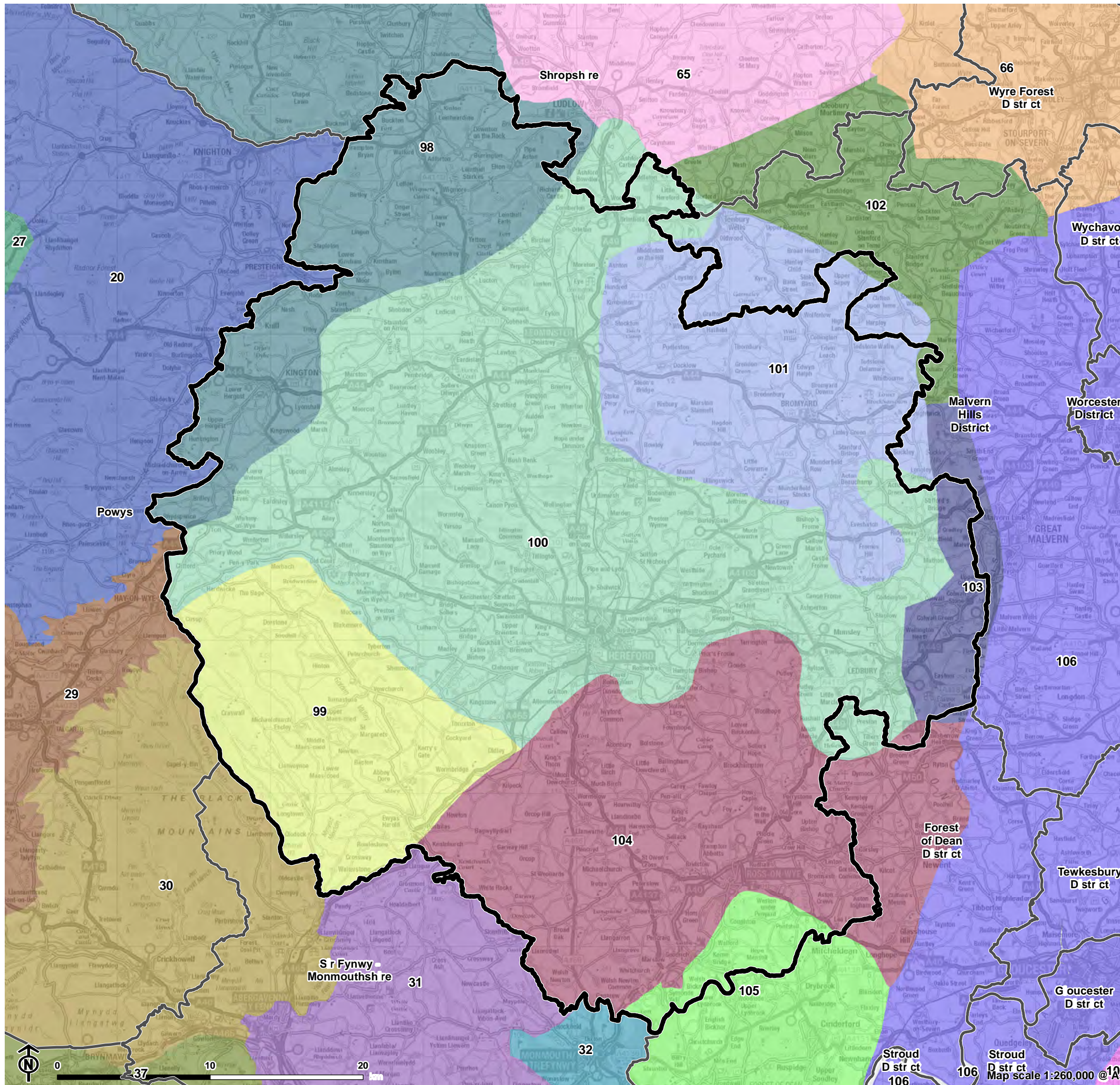


Figure 3.7: National Character Areas

- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary
- National Character Area (England)**
 - 65: Shropshire Hills
 - 66: Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau
 - 98: Clun and North West Herefordshire Hills
 - 99: Black Mountains and Golden Valley
 - 100: Herefordshire Lowlands
 - 101: Herefordshire Plateau
 - 102: Teme Valley
 - 103: Malvern Hills
 - 104: South Herefordshire and Over Severn
 - 105: Forest of Dean and Lower Wye
 - 106: Severn and Avon Vales
 - 107: Cotswolds
- Landscape Character Area (Wales)**
 - 20: Radnorshire Hills
 - 27: The Spas and Wells of Central Wales
 - 29: Wye and Usk Vales
 - 30: Brecon Beacons and the Black Mountains
 - 31: Central Monmouthshire
 - 32: Wye Valley and Wentwood
 - 37: South Wales Valleys

3.97 The Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis [**See reference 148**] characterises the areas surrounding Hereford and each of the five market towns. It identifies areas of low, medium-low, medium, high-medium and high sensitivity, depending on how vulnerable key landscape characteristics are to change. The following section provides details on the landscape sensitivity analysis of Hereford.

Landscape sensitivity analysis of Hereford

Land with low sensitivity

- None of the land around the periphery of Hereford was assessed as falling into the lowest category of sensitivity.

Land with medium-low sensitivity

- Holmer – Shelwick
- Grafton – Lower Bullingham
- Stretton Sugwas - Huntington

Land with medium sensitivity

- Holmer – Shelwick
- King's Acre
- Stretton Sigwas – Huntington
- Burghill – Pipe & Lyde

Land with high-medium sensitivity

- Homer – Shelwick

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- Aylestone Hill – Hampton Bishop
- Grafton – Lower Bullingham
- Breinton
- King's Acre
- Burghill – Pipe & Lyde

Land with high sensitivity

- Holmer – Shelwick
- Aylestone Hill – Hampton Bishop
- River Wye Corridor
- Dinedor/Grafton – Lower Bullingham
- Grafton – Lower Bullingham
- Ruckhall – Merryhill
- Belmont
- Breinton
- Stretton Sugwas - Huntingdon

Climate change, Energy Consumption and Energy Efficiency

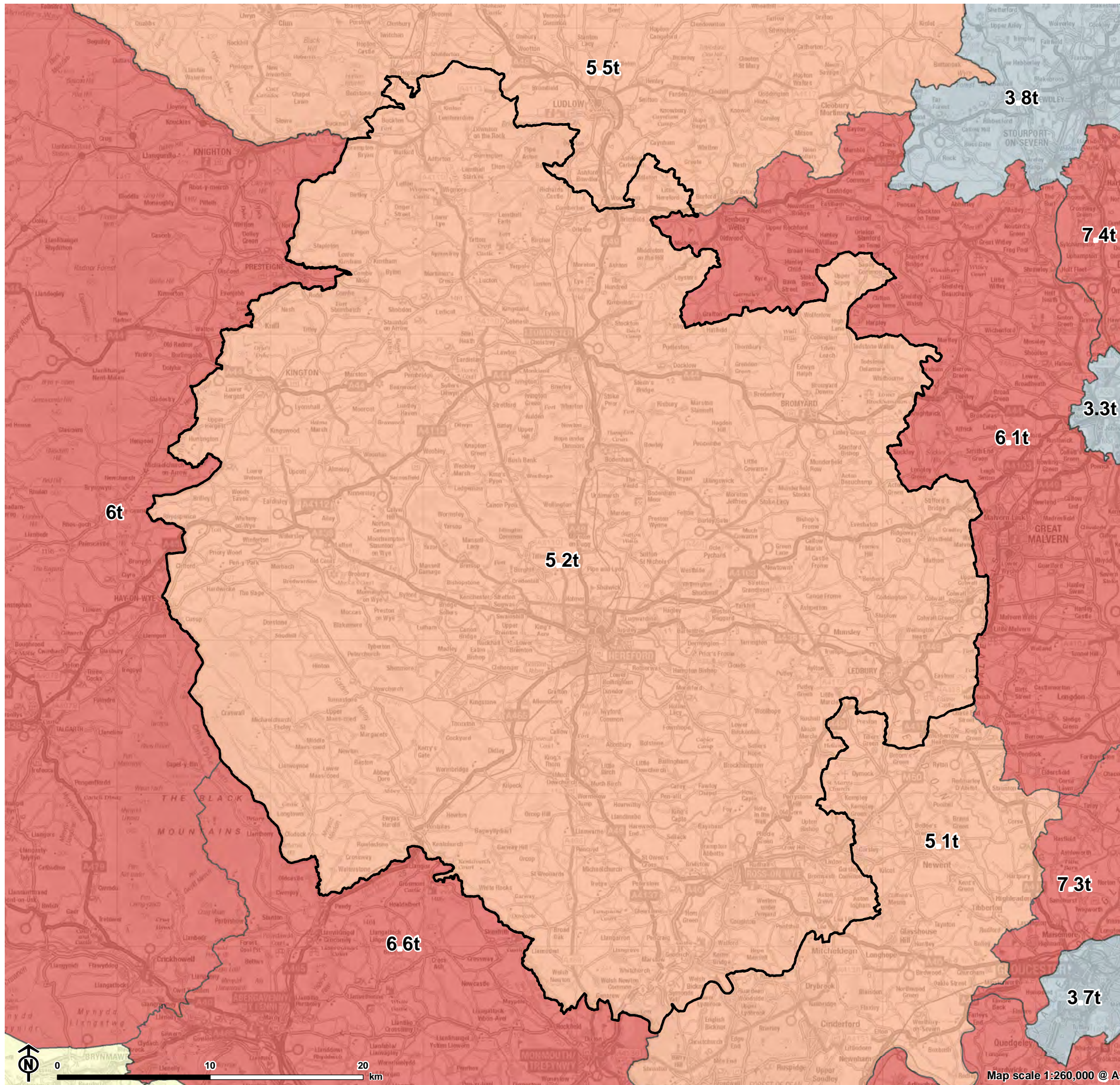
3.98 Climate change has the potential not only to affect the environment but also the social and economic aspects of life in Herefordshire. Although the precise nature of environmental changes is not fully understood, changes to precipitation patterns (and river flow) and flooding have implications for the location, longevity and viability of mineral and waste developments.

3.99 Conversely, predicted dry, hot summers will cause problems of low flows for some of the rivers in the area which will increase demand for water potentially affecting availability for minerals operations. Extreme weather events may also increase disruption to supply chains, infrastructure and transport of minerals and waste.

3.100 The UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) show that West Midlands temperatures are projected to increase, particularly over the summer months when the mean temperature could increase by 5.8°C (2070s high emissions scenario). Another key change is the intensification of a seasonal variation in rainfall patterns. The winter months are projected to become wetter with 33% more rainfall (2070s high emissions scenario), while summers are projected to become 57% drier under the same scenario and probability level. In addition to this seasonal variation, the intensity of rainfall events is also anticipated to increase, with the amount of precipitation falling on the wettest days in both winter and summer increasing (2070s high emissions scenario, central estimate). The projections also suggest small changes in relative humidity in summer and winter, a reduction in summer cloud cover and an increase in winter cloud cover.

3.101 Figure 3.8 shows the per capita CO₂ emissions for Herefordshire, as compared to neighbouring authorities

Figure 3.8: Per Capita CO2 Emissions Compared to Neighbouring Authorities



County of Herefordshire

Per Capita CO2 Emissions (t), 2019

- < 3.2
- 3.21 - 3.9
- 3.91 - 4.6
- 4.61 - 5.6
- > 5.6

Annotations on the map refer to per capita CO2 emissions in tons (t).

3.102 The future changes in climate may have significant impacts across a range of sectors in the West Midlands, including health, infrastructure, economy and biodiversity [See reference 149] . According to the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 there are a number of risks and opportunities arising from climate change for the UK which are outlined below.

Risks and opportunities arising from climate change in the UK

Risks

- The number of incidents of food poisoning, heat stress and heat related deaths may increase in summer.
- Domestic energy use may increase during summer months as refrigeration and air conditioning demand increases.
- Wetter winters and more intense rainfall events throughout the year may result in a higher risk of flooding from rivers.
- More intense rainstorms may in some locations result in the amount of surface water runoff exceeding the capacity of drainage systems, consequently leading to more frequent and severe localised flash flooding.
- More frequent storms and floods may cause increased damage to property and infrastructure, resulting in significant economic costs.
- Periods of drought in summer could lead to soil shrinking and subsidence, causing damage to buildings and transport networks. Drought may also impact negatively on agriculture, industry and biodiversity.
- Warmer and drier summers are likely to affect the quantity and quality of water supply, which will need careful management.
- The changing climate will impact on the behaviour and distribution of species, and may encourage the spread of invasive species.

Opportunities

- Milder winters should reduce the costs of heating homes and other buildings, helping to alleviate fuel poverty and reducing the number of winter deaths from cold.
- Domestic energy use may decrease in winter due to higher temperatures.
- Warmer and drier summers may benefit the recreation and tourism economy.
- UK agriculture and forestry may be able to increase production with warmer weather and longer growing seasons.
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3.103 The latest DECC figures [\[See reference 150\]](#) are set out in Table 3.7 and show generally decreasing trends for CO₂ emissions (kilo tonnes) in Herefordshire from 2005 to 2017. The decreasing trend in emissions reflects the decrease in overall emissions for the UK during this period driven mainly by reductions in emissions from power stations, industrial combustion and passenger cars. The reduction from power stations is driven by change in the fuel mix used for electricity generation with a reduction in the amount of coal, which is a carbon intensive fuel. Emissions for many Local Authorities are heavily influenced by activities at industrial sites, and changes at a single site can have a big impact on emissions trends [\[See reference 151\]](#). Minerals and waste management developments have the scope to contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, for example, through the transportation of minerals and waste by road.

3.104 Consumption (in thousand tonnes of oil equivalent (ktoe)) per consuming sector and household in Herefordshire are set out in Table 3.8. There has been a general decreasing trend in energy consumption as well as CO2 emissions. This also reflects a steady year on year decrease in total energy consumption in Great Britain with the only anomaly occurring between 2009 and 2010, and 2011 and 2012 when there was a small increase due to the particularly cold winter those years, resulting in a higher consumption of fuels used for heating purposes. The decreasing trend has been attributed to the impacts of the recession, as well as energy efficiency improvements and declining use particularly in the industrial and commercial sector of petroleum products and gas [See reference 152].

3.105 In March 2019, Herefordshire Council declared a Climate Emergency and outlined plans to set a target for zero carbon by 2030. In September 2019, the Council agreed to:

- Accelerate a reduction of emissions and aspire to become carbon neutral by 2030/31.
- Deliver an updated carbon management plan and associated action plan for Council emissions by April 2020.
- Work with strategic partners, residents and local organisations to develop a revised countywide carbon dioxide reduction strategy aspiring for carbon neutrality by 2030.
- Use 100% renewably sourced energy where this provides the best carbon reduction return on investment.

3.106 Corresponding with this declaration, Herefordshire has been tackling challenges posed by climate change for many years with significant success. Herefordshire was the first county in the UK to have 100% LED street lighting. Since 2011/12 there has been a 65% reduction in the electricity used for street lighting, from around 4.7 million kWh to an estimated level of 1.7 million kWh in 2018/19, saving an estimated £1.5 million between 2016/17 and 2020/21. The council has also installed LED lighting into offices and car parks to reduce emissions and costs [See reference 153].

3.107 In 2013/14 the Council was awarded government grant money for the installation of electric vehicle charge points in 11 locations across the county including Hereford city and all the market towns. Before these installations there were no publicly available electric vehicle charge points in the county. The Council is currently working with Highways England to install rapid chargers along the A49 corridor [\[See reference 154\]](#).

3.108 In October 2018, the Council purchased six new electric and five new petrol hybrid pool cars for staff to use for business travel. Their use will reduce the CO2 emissions and help reduce levels Nitrous Oxide (NOx) which will contribute to improved local air quality [\[See reference 155\]](#).

3.109 The Council has committed to invest £2.1 million in solar photovoltaic (PV) panels across council buildings by 2021. To date, Herefordshire Council have installed 928kWp across its operational estate [\[See reference 156\]](#).

Table 3.7: Source of CO2 emissions in Herefordshire per Sector (2005-2017)

Year	Industry and Commercial (kt CO2)	Domestic (kt CO2)	Transport (kt CO2)	Total (kt CO2)
2005	763.4	479.0	443.8	1,662.3
2006	754.3	483.5	436.9	1,642.6
2007	729.9	467.6	444.4	1,605.7
2008	706.2	467.5	422.0	1,555.2
2009	643.7	430.8	409.7	1,443.2
2010	697.3	464.2	408.0	1,523.9
2011	650.9	398.0	397.5	1,397.1
2012	650.6	422.3	391.1	1,411.0

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Year	Industry and Commercial (kt CO2)	Domestic (kt CO2)	Transport (kt CO2)	Total (kt CO2)
2013	644.7	407.9	387.6	1,380.7
2014	616.3	349.7	397.0	1,302.5
2015	576.2	333.2	404.6	1,248.5
2016	529.1	315.6	413.6	1,194.5
2017	506.6	297.5	420.7	1,156.0
2018	495.4	294.7	412.5	1131.1

Table 3.8: Energy consumption in Herefordshire per Sector (2005-2018)

Year	Industry and Commercial (ktoe)	Domestic (ktoe)	Transport (ktoe)	Total (ktoe)
2005	203.8	141.6	128.8	477.1
2006	192.0	139.4	129.5	464.1
2007	187.4	134.2	132.8	457.6
2008	175.5	133.0	129.8	444.3
2009	167.8	127.3	127.2	428.6
2010	179.0	131.7	125.6	443.9
2011	171.5	118.4	123.1	419.6
2012	164.1	118.3	121.0	412.1
2013	167.2	117.9	120.3	416.1
2014	175.5	113.2	123.5	420.0
2015	174.0	113.0	123.9	419.3

Year	Industry and Commercial (ktoe)	Domestic (ktoe)	Transport (ktoe)	Total (ktoe)
2016	171.5	121.7	125.5	419.5
2017	173.6	123.1	127.6	424.3
2018	173.2	124.2	125.8	423.2

Pollution

Air Quality

3.110 The Environment Act 1995 introduced the National Air Quality Strategy and the requirement for local authorities to determine if statutory air quality objectives (AQOs) are likely to be exceeded. All local authorities now report to DEFRA on an annual basis, and have the obligation to declare Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and develop action plans for improvement of air quality if objectives are likely to be exceeded.

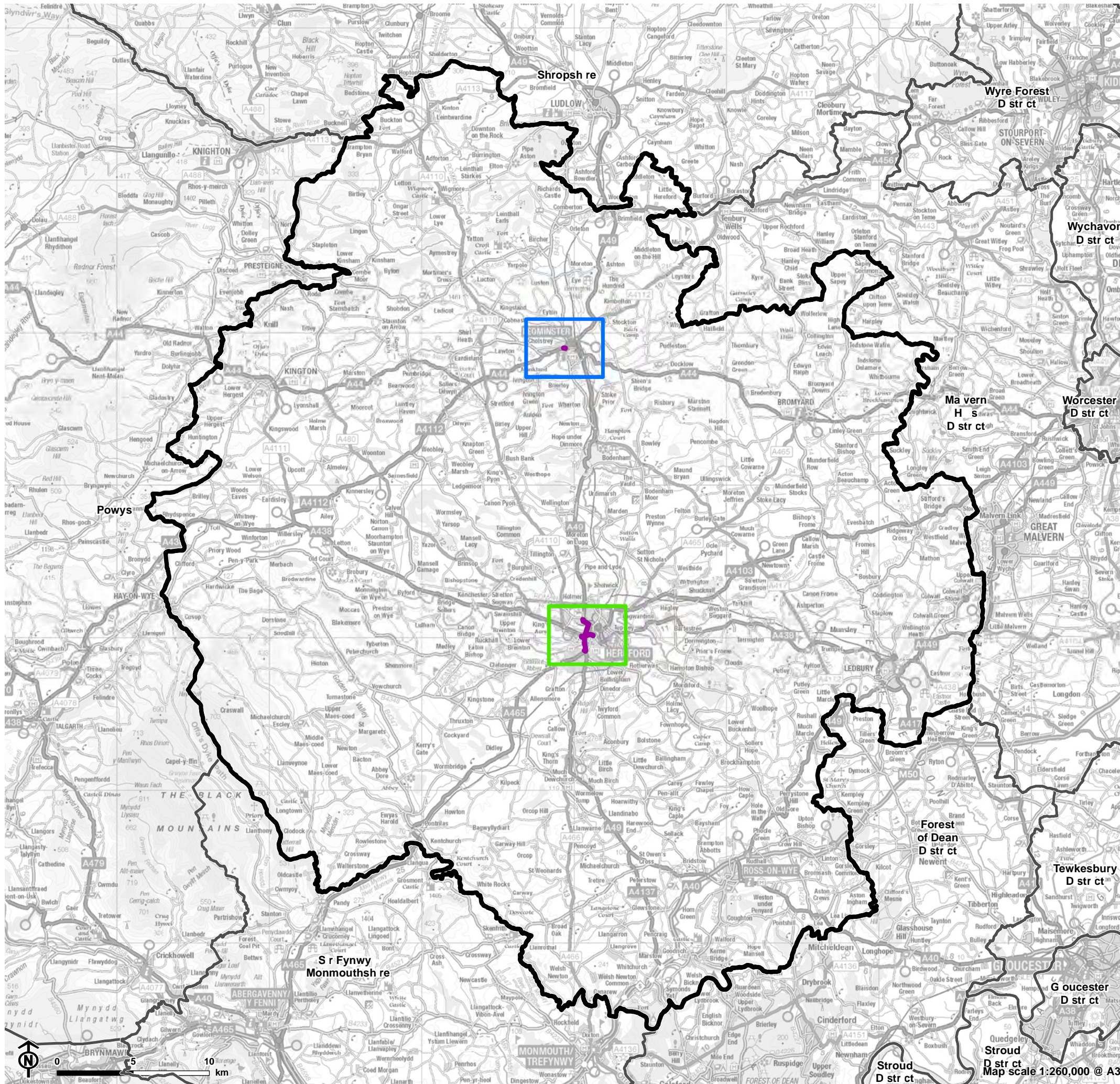
3.111 There are two declared AQMAs in Herefordshire. Hereford AQMA consists of part of the A49 corridor from Holmer Road in the north, to Belmont Road in the south and extending along New Market/Blueschool Street and along Eign Street [See reference 157]. The annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide is being exceeded at this AQMA.

3.112 Bargates Leominster AQMA encompasses the junction between the A44 Bargates and B4361 Dishley Street/Cursneh Road in Leominster. The annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide is being exceeded at this AQMA [See reference 158].

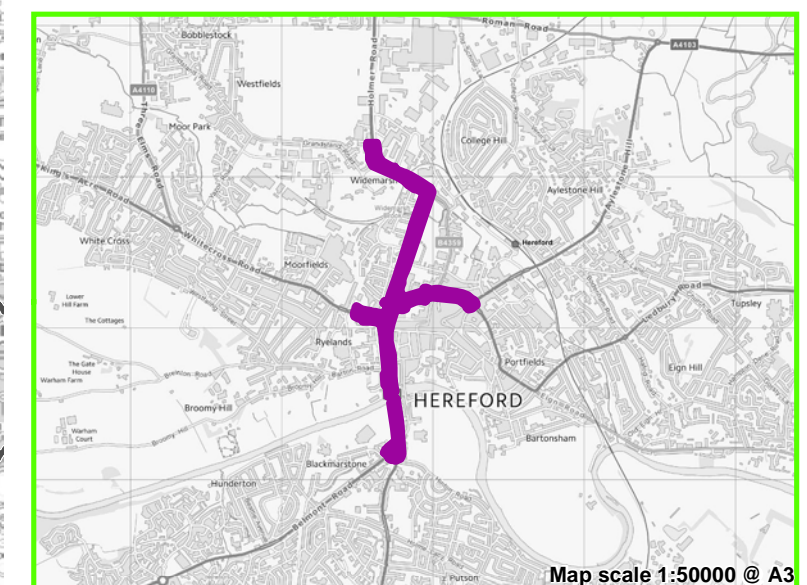
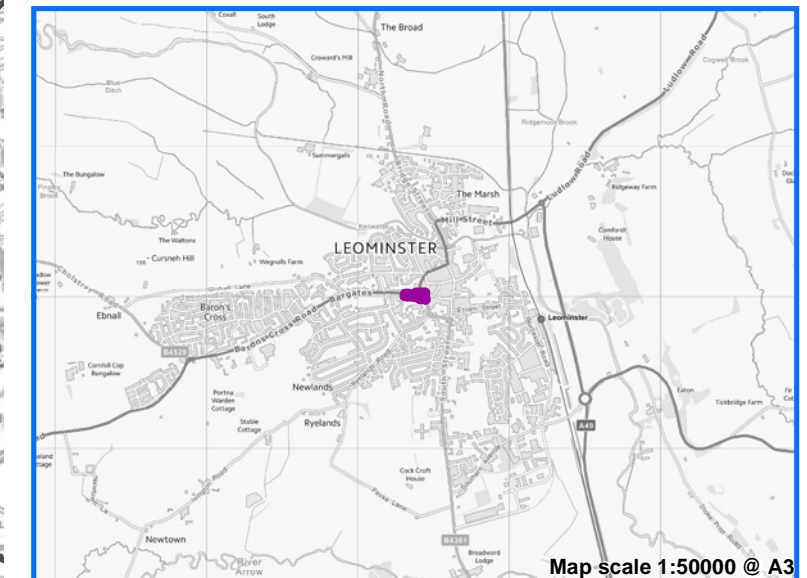
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3.113 Figure 3.9 shows the position of the county's Air Quality Management Areas.

Figure 3.9: Air Quality Management Areas in Herefordshire



- County of Herefordshire
- Neighbouring authority boundary
- Air Quality Management Area



Noise Pollution

3.114 Noise is a common problem arising from transport. Noise has been proven to have a major negative direct and indirect effects on health and well-being, on quality of life and on wildlife.

3.115 While noise pollution would not appear to be a major problem in a rural county such as Herefordshire, a survey carried out for CPRE looking at rural tranquillity has found that the countryside is becoming more and more affected by urban type noise (although the information it is based on can be open to a measure of interpretation). Noise within Herefordshire is mostly associated with the main transport corridors, in particular road networks.

Light Pollution

3.116 Light pollution is essentially unwanted artificial light and comes in the following forms:

- Light trespass: the intrusion of light into homes.
- Glare: unshielded bright lighting may be hazardous in a relatively small area.
- Sky Glow: the broad orange glow that prevents appreciation of the night sky.

3.117 As well as destroying a view of the night sky, light pollution wastes energy and harms people's quality of life at night through interference with sleep. Light pollution also has an ecological impact.

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3.118 In 2022, The Wye Valley Society successfully received a Nature and Climate Change Grant from Herefordshire Council to deliver a Dark Skies Project in part of the Wye Valley AONB. The project will raise understanding through an awareness campaign, public events and an education programme to combat light pollution in Walford first and then move on to Goodrich, Welsh Bicknor, Whitchurch, The Downards and Ganarew [\[See reference 159\]](#).

3.119 In 2016 Herefordshire Council also completed a project to replace the majority of the 12,000 council-owned lights with LEDs to reduce light pollution.

Waste

3.120 Waste is generated from a wide range of domestic, commercial and industrial activities. The main waste types considered in this section are:

- Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW) - household waste and other wastes collected by local authorities.
- Commercial and Industrial (C&I) waste - waste from businesses and manufacturing companies.
- Construction, Demolition and Excavation (CD&E) waste - produced through a wide range of building projects, from home renovations to major redevelopments.
- Hazardous waste - generally considered hazardous if it is harmful to humans or the environment, particularly through being toxic, corrosive or irritant - examples of hazardous waste include asbestos, chemicals such as brake fluid or print toner.
- Agricultural waste - includes both natural, such as animal manure, animal bedding and crop waste and non-natural, such as plastic wrapping or bottles.
- Low level (non-nuclear industry) radioactive waste - such as is used in research laboratories.
- Wastewater – used water from any combination of domestic, industrial, commercial or agricultural activities such as surface runoff or stormwater, and any sewer inflow or sewer infiltration.

3.121 The amount and type of waste produced, and the ways in which it is managed, partly reflects the environmental, social and economic characteristics of the area. Concentrated populations and commercial/industrial activities, as are found in Hereford, together with the five market towns, are the largest producers of waste, and this is generally reflected in the pattern of waste management facilities within Herefordshire.

3.122 Anaerobic digestion and biological treatment facilities are dispersed around the county, reflecting its agricultural sector.

3.123 According to the Waste Needs Assessment of 2019 [See reference 160], consented facilities located in Herefordshire managed 460,000 tonnes of waste in 2018, compared to just over 300,000 tonnes in 2013. The single largest tonnage is municipal waste (principally wastes from households); representing 42% to 48% of the wastes managed at consented facilities in Herefordshire between 2015 and 2018. The second largest tonnage is formed by construction and demolition wastes (29%) followed by agriculture and processing wastes (20% in 2018). All the other wastes added together still only comprise about 6% to 11% of all wastes managed at the consented facilities in Herefordshire.

3.124 The majority (90%) of waste received at consented facilities in Herefordshire originated in Herefordshire in 2019; an increase on the 86% reported in 2016. This suggests either that Herefordshire is managing more wastes within the county than last year, or that more waste is being deposited at consented facilities. It also suggests that Herefordshire is reasonably self-sufficient, at least in waste transfer capacity.

3.125 There are 34 waste management facilities operating in Herefordshire comprising of four physical treatment facilities, two non-hazardous waste transfer facilities, two non-hazardous waste transfer and civic amenity sites, three civic amenity sites, one hazardous waste transfer facility, three car breaker facilities, one material recycling and two metal recycling facilities, four biological treatment facilities, one Civil Amenity site and 11 anaerobic digestion treatment facilities.

3.126 While there is a range of waste management collection, re-use and recycling capacity permitted in Herefordshire addressing a variety of wastes, there are no residual waste management facilities such as energy from waste plants or landfill sites. This means that there is a reliance on such facilities outside the county, including a significant proportion of strategic capacity that has been jointly procured with Worcestershire County Council to manage 'local authority collected waste' (LACW).

3.127 Over the last four years there has been a notable increase in the capacity and waste inputs to consented facilities. This is predominantly driven by an increase in biological treatment and anaerobic digestion facilities, with permitted capacity increasing by approximately 800kt and waste inputs by 115kt [See reference 161] , and the permitting and increased operation of a physical treatment facility at Lugg Bridge Quarry with a capacity of 250kt and an input of 100kt.

3.128 Herefordshire Council operates a kerbside recycling scheme. Households have a black wheeled bin for general rubbish and a green wheeled bin for mixed recycling. There are seven recycling centres in Herefordshire [See reference 162]:

- Hereford
- Bromyard
- Kington
- Ledbury
- Leominster
- Ross-on-Wye
- Tenbury Wells

Natural Resources

Geology and Minerals

3.129 The following baseline information in relation to mineral resources in Herefordshire is derived from the Minerals Needs Assessment 2019 ('MNA 2019') [See reference 163] which was prepared to support the Herefordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The MNA 2019 has forecast demand for each of the minerals present in Herefordshire.

3.130 Mineral resources in Herefordshire are relatively limited in range, primarily consisting of aggregates for use in construction but also a small amount of building stone. The commercially exploitable minerals available for extraction from within Herefordshire include sand, gravel, crushed rock, and sandstone.

- Sand and gravel:
 - river terrace deposits are mainly found in the river valleys of the Wye, Lugg and Arrow; and
 - glacial deposits are present in the north and west of Herefordshire.
- Crushed rock:
 - Silurian limestone is found on the western side of the Malvern Hills and Ledbury, the Woolhope dome and in the north-west of the county in the Presteigne/Aymestrey areas.
 - carboniferous limestone is present to the south-west of Ross-on-Wye in the northern flanks of the Forest of Dean; and
 - igneous and metamorphic rock occurs in the Malvern Hills.
- Sandstone:
 - sandstone occurs extensively throughout much of Herefordshire and several operational quarries exist in the north, west and south of the

county. The output is of particular importance for heritage restoration and in creating authentic character for new-build properties.

3.131 Coal is no longer extracted in Herefordshire, but was formerly worked in two locations:

- the southern tip of the Wyre Forest Coalfield, which extended into the north of the county, near the boundary with Worcestershire and Shropshire; and
- a small outlier site of the Forest of Dean Coalfield which extends into southern Herefordshire.

3.132 In 1999, the British Geological Survey reported that the hydrocarbon prospectivity of the county was low. Wells drilled to test the oil and gas potential of sandstones in the Worcestershire Basin and rocks in the Woolhope Inlier failed to discover hydrocarbons.

3.133 In December 2015, a small block of land in the south of the county was offered for onshore hydrocarbon exploration, appraisal and extraction in relation to coalbed methane. This offer was declined by the energy company to which it was offered and has not been made available again.

3.134 It is considered highly unlikely that there will be any activities relating to the exploration or extraction of hydrocarbons within Herefordshire in the short term. In the medium to long term, it is possible that this situation may change but, recognising current policy on minimising carbon emissions this is considered to be unlikely.

3.135 There are currently 11 consented mineral workings in Herefordshire:

- Sand and gravel:
 - Shobdon Quarry
 - Upper Lyde Quarry

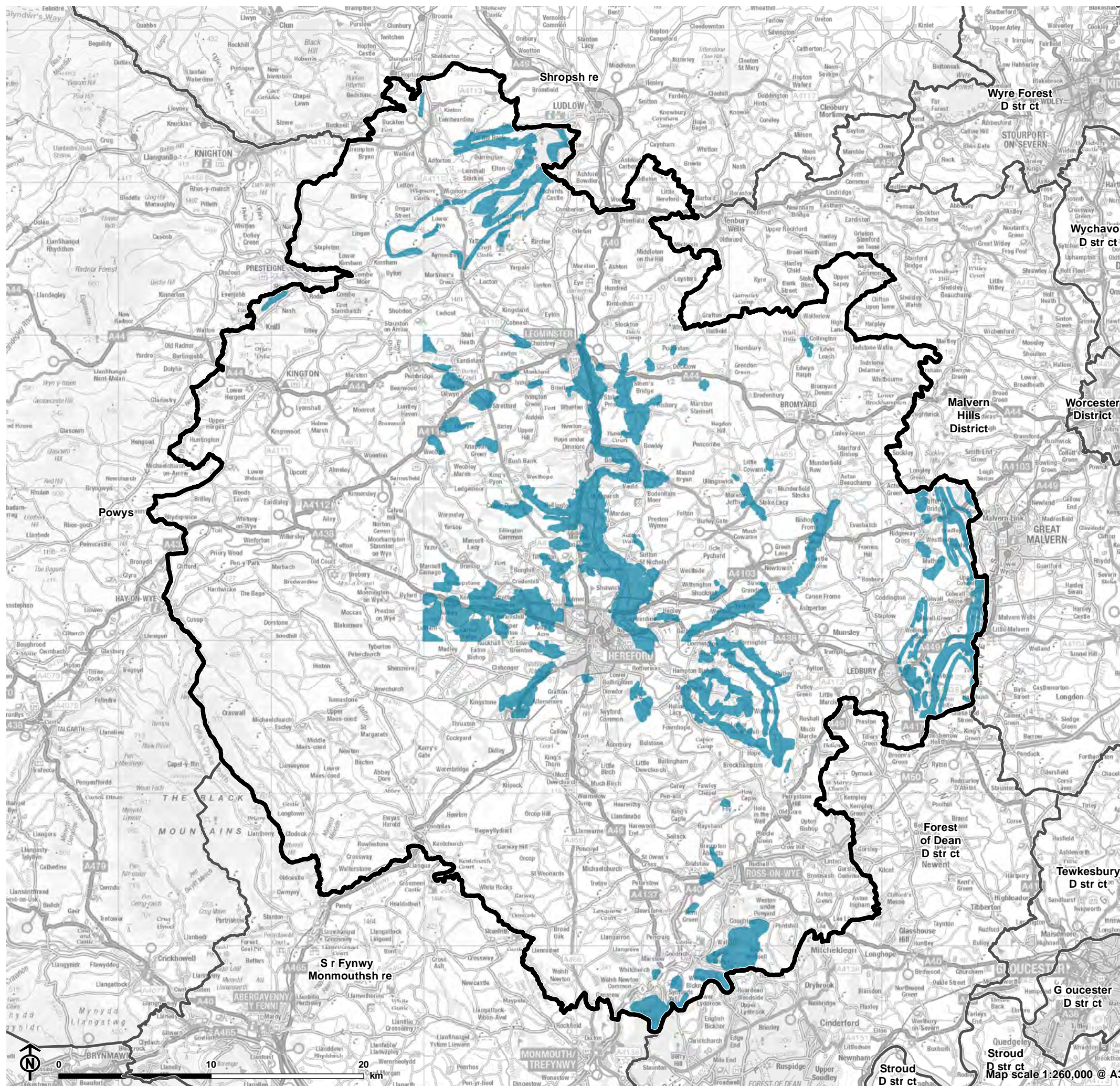
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- Wellington Quarry
- Limestone/Crushed rock:
 - Leinthall Quarry
 - Perton Quarry
- Sandstone:
 - Llandraw Delve
 - Callow Delve
 - Black Hill Delve
 - Pennsylvani Delves
 - Sunnybank Delve
 - Westonhill Wood Delve.

3.136 Figure 3.10 identifies mineral safeguarding areas in Herefordshire.



Figure 3.10: Minerals Safeguarding Areas in Herefordshire



-  County of Herefordshire
-  Neighbouring authority boundary
-  Minerals Safeguarding Area

Chapter 3 Baseline Information

3.137 There are a number of quarries that are known to be inactive, closed or mothballed, and some for which the activity status is unknown. Tables 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, and 3.9.

Table 3.6: Sand and Gravel Quarries in Herefordshire

Quarry name	Status
Hereford Quarry	Closed
Lugg Bridge Quarry	Closed
Upper Lyde Quarry	Operational
Shobdon Quarry	Inactive at the time of preparing the MWLP
Wellington Quarry	Active
St Donat's Quarry	Restored

Table 3.7: Limestone Quarries in Herefordshire

Quarry name	Status
Leinthall Quarry	Active
Loxter Ashbed Quarry	Restored
Nash Scar Quarry	Mothballed
Perton Quarry	Active
Loxter Ashbed Quarry	Restored

Table 3.8: Sandstone Quarries in Herefordshire

Quarry name	Status
Brakes Farm Delve	Abandoned
Callow Delve	Active
Black Hill Delve (formerly Coed Major Quarry)	Active
High House Delve	Unsuccessful, never exploited
Hunters Post Delve	Closed, naturally regenerated
Llandraw Delve	Active
Pennsylvania Delves	Active
Sunnybank Delve	Active
Tybubach Delve	Abandoned, to be restored
Westonhill Wood Delves	Active

Table 3.9: Coal Quarries in Herefordshire

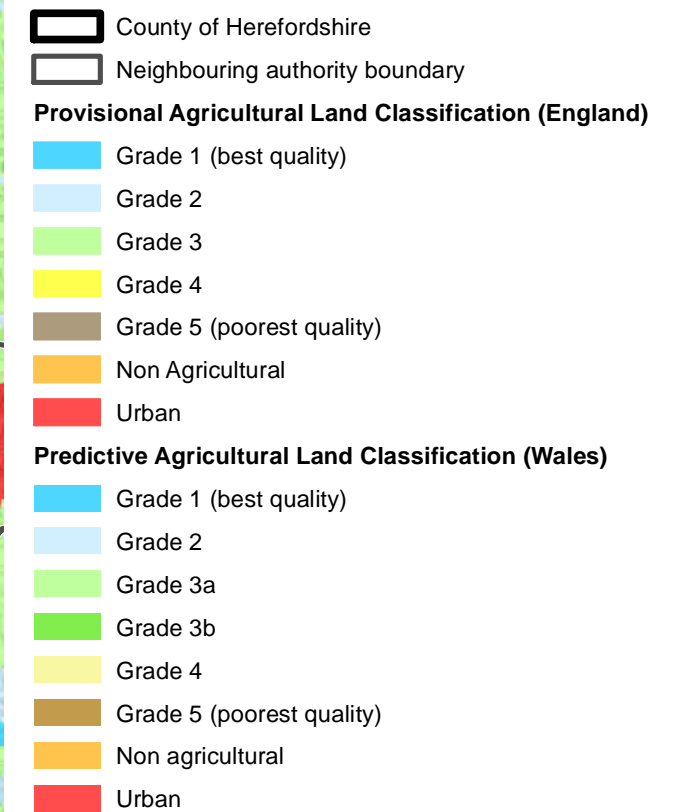
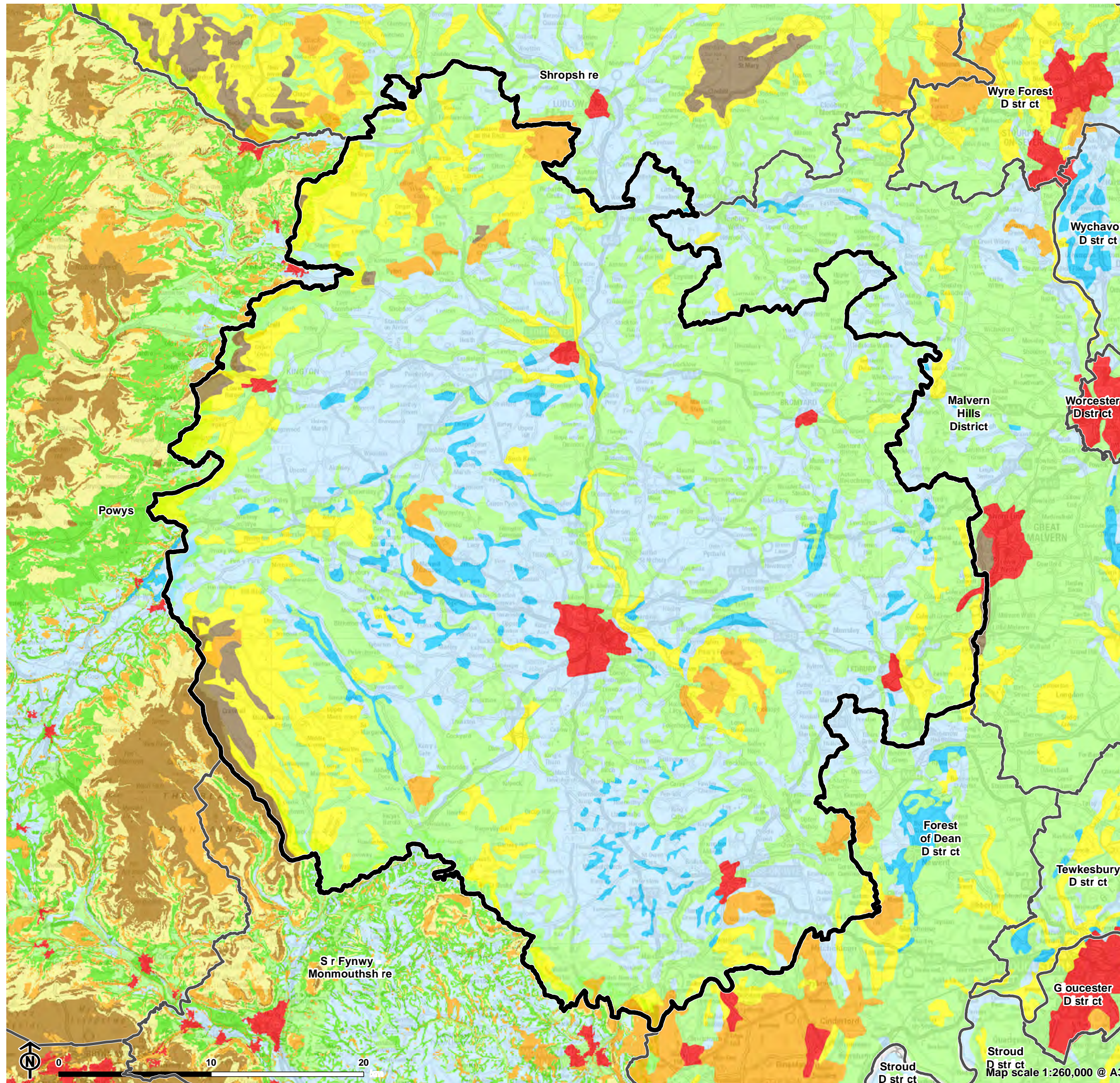
Coal Quarries	Status
Howle Hill Quarry	Restored

Soils

3.138 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system [See reference 164] provides a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations to agricultural use. The principal factors influencing agricultural production are soil wetness, drought and erosion. These factors together with interactions between them form the basis for classifying land use into one of five grades, where 1 describes land as excellent (land of high agricultural quality and potential) and 5 describes land as very poor (land of low agricultural quality and potential). Land falling outside these scores is deemed to be 'primarily in non-agricultural use', or 'predominantly in urban use'. Grade 3 can be further separated into grades 3a and 3b, although this requires further local surveys and therefore such data is only available for small areas. Grades 1, 2 and 3a are considered to be best and most versatile agricultural land.

3.139 The majority of Herefordshire consists of Grade 2 and Grade 3 agricultural land. There are scattered areas of Grade 1 land and some areas of lower quality Grades 4 and 5 land, particularly in the west of the county. Larger settlements, such as Hereford, Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury and Bromyard do not have associated ALC grades as they are predominantly in urban use. However, the Pre-1988 Agricultural Land Classification does identify areas comprising Grade 1, 2 and 3a best and most versatile agricultural land in Hereford, Lower Bullingham and Homer and Shelwick. Figure 3.11 shows the classification of agricultural land across Herefordshire.

Figure 3.11: Agricultural Land Classification in Herefordshire



Contaminated Land

3.140 Under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Herefordshire Council is responsible for regulating contaminated land. This requires surveying Herefordshire, determining contaminated land, ensuring a solution is found, and identifying who should bear the costs of the solution.

3.141 In accordance with Section 78R of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Council is also required to maintain a public register of contaminated land, which serves as a permanent record of all regulatory action undertaken to ensure remediation of any site that has been classified as contaminated.

3.142 The definition of contaminated land from Part IIA Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended), Section 78A is: 'any land which appears to the local authority in whose area it is situated to be in such a condition, by reason of substances in, on or under the land, that:

- significant harm is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such harm being caused; or
- significant pollution of controlled waters is being, or is likely to be, caused'

3.143 Local authorities are required to take a strategic approach in inspecting their area and are required to publish this as a part of a written strategy. The Council recently decided after inspection that a single site should be determined under the Part IIA regime as contaminated land in Herefordshire. This is a former landfill site to the north of Hereford **[See reference 165]**.

Water resources and flooding

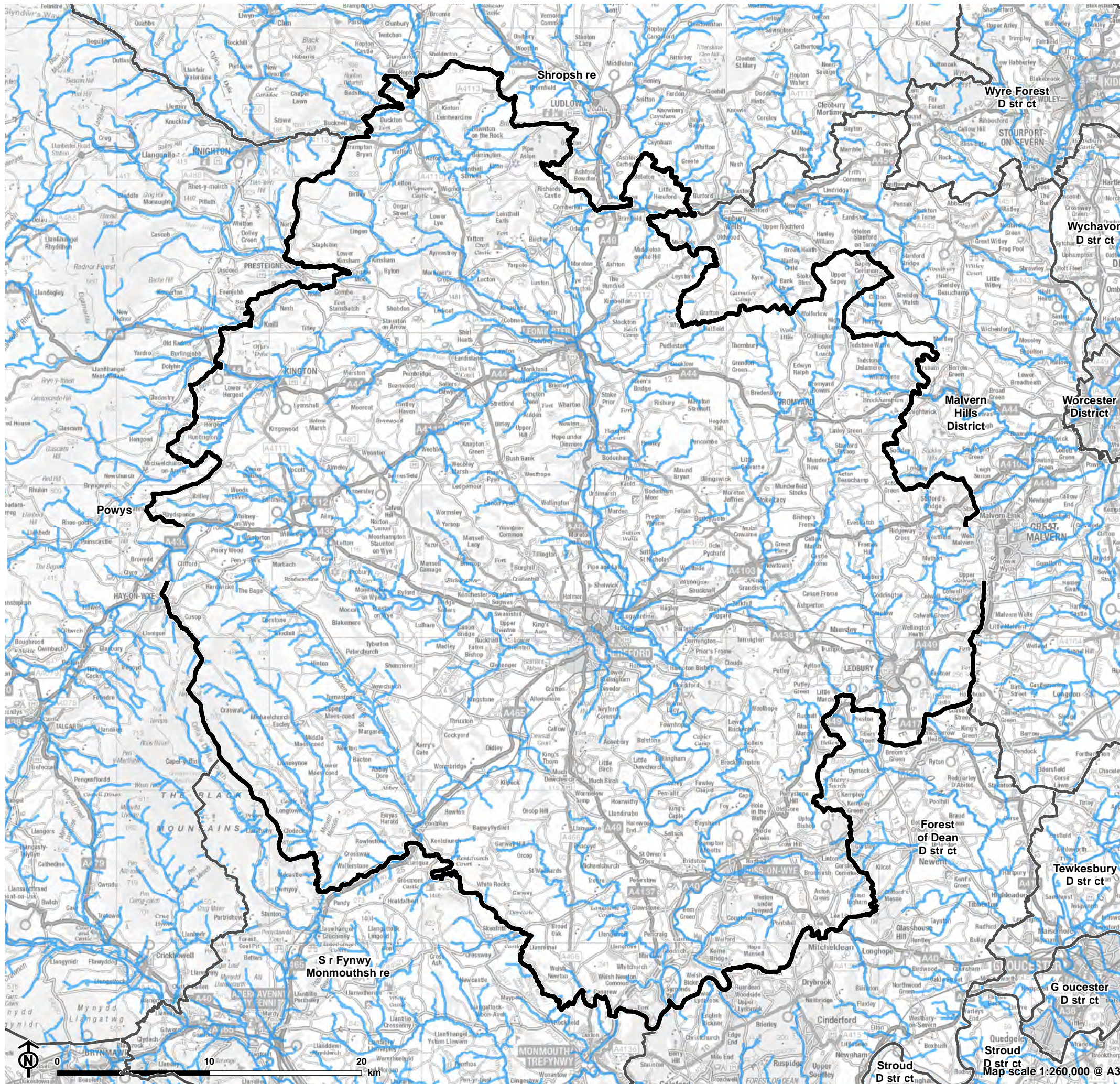
3.144 Herefordshire lies largely within the River Wye management catchment. Operational river catchments in the county include the Wye catchment, the Arrow, Lugg and Frome catchment and the Monnow catchment:

- The River Wye flows through Herefordshire and Hereford city. The source of the River Wye lies in the Cambrian Mountains and the river flows from the west to the southeast of the county. After leaving Herefordshire, the river flows south to join the River Severn.
- The River Lugg flows from Pool Hill in Wales, through Leominster to join the River Wye near Hampton Bishop.
- The River Arrow flows from west to east to join the River Lugg just south of Leominster.
- The River Dore flows through Hereford to join the River Monnow, which forms the southern border of the county.
- The River Monnow runs along the county's southern boundary to join the River Wye near Symonds Yat.
- The River Frome flows roughly north to south through Herefordshire, passing through Bromyard then joining the River Lugg east of Hereford.

3.145 Information from the Environment Agency details the peak river flow allowances by river basin districts in England showing the anticipated changes to peak flow with consideration for climate change allowances. Table 3.10 below shows the peak river flow allowances for the River Severn Basin for a period which includes the plan period (i.e. the '2020s') using the period 1961 to 1990 [See reference 166] as a baseline. Figure 3.12 identifies watercourses across Herefordshire.



Figure 3.12: Watercourses in Herefordshire






-  County of Herefordshire
-  Neighbouring authority boundary
-  Watercourse

Table 3.10: Peak river flow allowances for the River Severn Basin

Allowance category	Total potential change anticipated for the '2020s' (2015-2039)
Upper end (based on scenarios at 90th percentile)	20%
Higher central (based on scenarios at 70th percentile)	15%
Central (based on scenarios at 50th percentile)	10%

3.146 Information available from Herefordshire Council relating to fluvial risk identifies that there is a need to consider different climate change allowances (peak river flows) to inform the location, impacts and design of a scheme depending on development vulnerability. The Environment Agency has produced maps which set out the likelihood of surface water flooding in England and these should also be taken account of when considering other types of flooding. A small area of the county, around Ledbury, lies within the Severn Vale management catchment and the Leadon operational catchment. The River Leadon flows north to south through Ledbury, to join the River Severn [See reference 167]. In addition, the River Teme which runs from west to east in the north of the county is also within the catchment of the River Severn. The River Teme is also designated as a Surface Water Safeguarding Zone to ensure the protection of drinking water in the area.

3.147 The Wye catchment contains 19 natural rivers, all of which have failed to achieve good chemical status (2019 Cycle 2) (in the 2016 Cycle 2 all achieved good chemical status). Only one of these rivers are recorded as being of good ecological status, whilst 15 are of moderate status (14 in the 2016 Cycle 2) and three are of poor status (four in the 2016 Cycle 2). 18 rivers are expected to achieve good status by 2027. The main reason for not achieving good status is agriculture and rural land management [See reference 168] . The River Wye SAC Nutrient Management Plan [See reference 169] is seeking to address issues of water quality, particularly in terms of nutrient loading.

3.148 The Arrow, Lugg and Frome catchment contains 24 natural rivers. All rivers have failed to achieve good chemical status (2019 Cycle 2) (in the 2016 Cycle 2 all achieved good chemical status). One river has achieved good ecological status. Of the remaining rivers, 13 are of moderate ecological status, seven are of poor and three are of bad status. By 2027, all rivers are expected to achieve good status. The main reason for not achieving good status is agriculture and rural land management.

3.149 The Monnow catchment contains seven natural rivers. All of these have failed to achieve good chemical status (in the 2016 Cycle 2 all achieved good chemical status), and only one has achieved good ecological status. Five rivers are of moderate ecological status (six in the 2016 Cycle 2) and one has a poor status (none in the 2016 Cycle 2). All seven rivers are expected to achieve good status by 2027.

3.150 The Leadon catchment contains eight natural rivers. All of these are failing to achieve good chemical status (in the 2016 Cycle 2 all achieved good chemical status), none are of good ecological status. Five rivers are of moderate ecological status and three of poor status, but a total of seven rivers are expected to achieve good status by 2027.

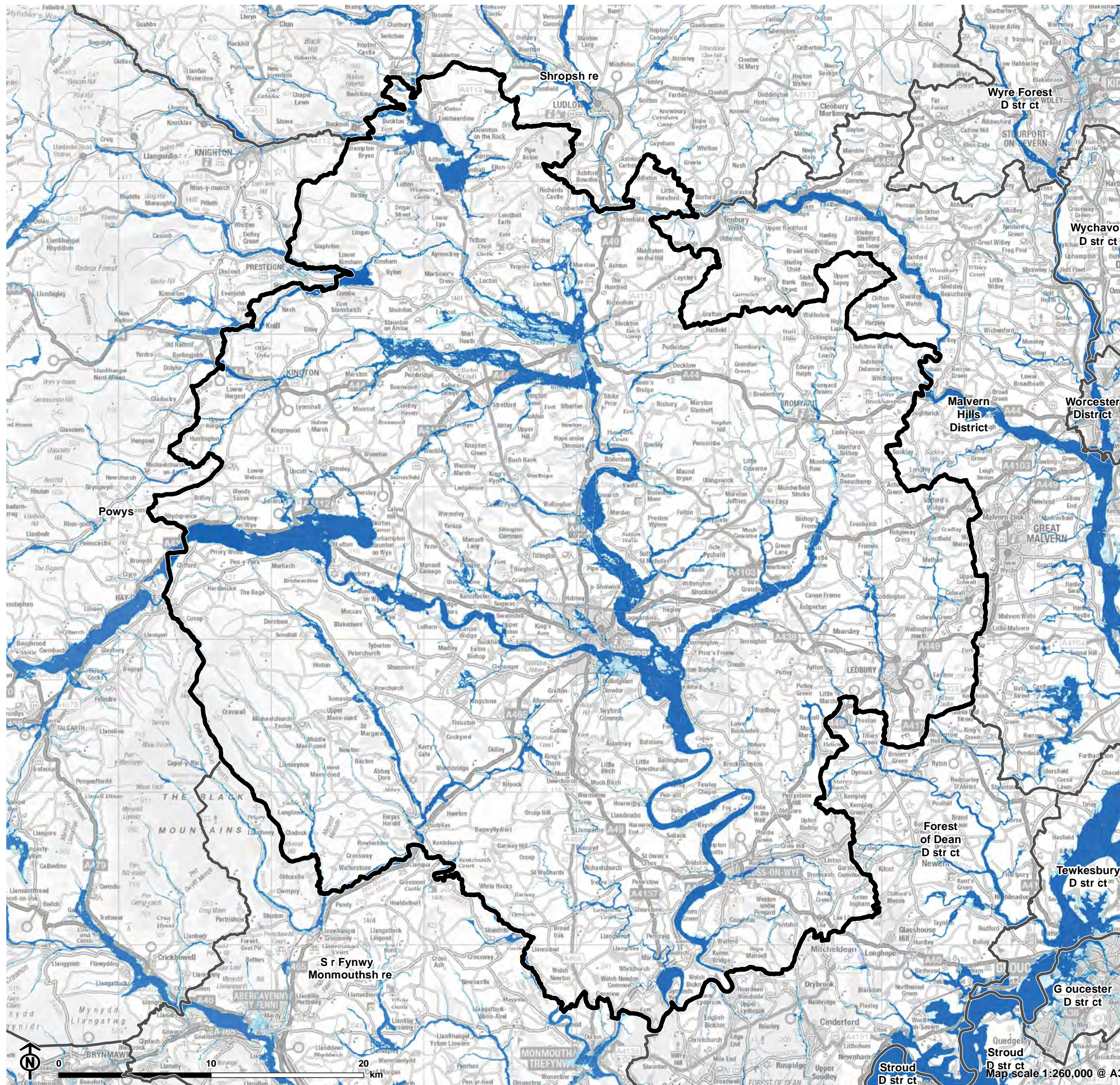
3.151 There are a number of groundwater Source Protection Zones within Herefordshire to ensure that rivers and aquifers are protected from pollution and are principally located at the River Lugg and River Wye.





3.152 Fluvial flooding (from rivers) is the largest single source of flooding in Herefordshire, based on notable flood events recoded from 1931 to 2018. The majority of fluvial flood risk in Herefordshire is associated with the main rivers that flow through the country, with the most extensive floodplains attributable to the River Teme, River Lugg, River Arrow, River Wye, River Frome, River Dore, River Leadon and Worm Brook. The second most common cause is flooding from surface water. Herefordshire Council prepared a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) to assess levels and types of flooding in the county to inform the Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Areas of high flood risk are primarily within the Lower Wye sub-catchment (including Hereford) extending along the River Wye between Belmont and Monmouth, with a significant number of properties at risk from flooding events. Smaller settlements with a significant history of flood disruption include Bosbury, Eardisland, Ewyas Harold, Hampton Bishop, Hereford, Kington, Leintwardine, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye. Figure 3.13 shows the extent of flood risk across Herefordshire.

3.153 Water supply and wastewater treatment in Herefordshire is managed by Welsh Water (Dŵr Cymru) and Severn Trent Water. There are nine Wastewater Treatment Works in the county (at Eign, Rotherwas, Fownhope, Kingsland, Leominster, Ivington, Ross-on-Wye, Bredwardine and Kington), one Sewage Pumping Station at Bromyard, and three Water Pumping Stations (at Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, and Bredwardine).



Figure 3.13: Flood Risk in Herefordshire



-  County of Herefordshire
-  Neighbouring authority boundary
-  Flood Zone 2
-  Flood Zone 3

3.154 Welsh Water's 2019 Water Resources Management Plan [See reference 170] identifies Hereford as being in water surplus (i.e. supply is greater than demand) and identifies a number of measures to increase the efficiency of water provision [See reference 171]. According to the Water Cycle Study [See reference 172], the River Teme, Leadon and Wye are all designated Sensitive Waters (susceptible to eutrophication) under the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. It also identifies that there are five Environment Agency defined Water Resource Management Units in Herefordshire (four in the Wye system and one in the Teme), all of which are at 'No Water Available' status which means that at the fully licenced uptake scenario, the ecological river flow objective would be compromised. This means that any increases in demand for water, for example through population growth, will have to be met through a combination of: decreased demand; increased efficiency of use; licence revocations; and seasonally or flow constrained licences. The River Wye Abstraction Licensing Strategy [See reference 173] demonstrates that there will be water available for licensing in the entirety of the catchment, with the exception of in dry, low rainfall conditions, when abstraction licenses are likely to be restricted. New consumptive licenses in the Wye are likely to be restricted.

3.155 Nutrient pollution is a significant environmental issue that has the potential to significantly harm and disrupt a wide range of habitats [See reference 174]. In freshwater habitats and estuaries, increased levels of nutrients (especially nitrogen and phosphorus) can speed up the growth of certain plants, disrupting natural processes and impacting wildlife. This process, that is called 'eutrophication', can damage water dependent sites and can harm the plants and wildlife that are meant to be there. As Natural England guidance explains, nutrients can put sites in an 'unfavourable condition' [See reference 175]. The sources of excess nutrients are very site specific but include sewage treatment works, septic tanks, livestock, arable farming and industrial processes. Natural England has also developed a list of Nutrient Neutrality Principles [See reference 176].

3.156 As with elsewhere in England, Herefordshire's rivers are currently struggling with high levels of nutrients entering the watercourses and adversely affecting their quality. Affected resources include the Rivers Wye, Frome, Lugg and Clun. Predominantly, the nutrients comprise phosphate, however, the River Clun is also suffering from high levels of nitrates [\[See reference 177\]](#). Herefordshire Council is therefore acting to improve the existing water quality, and to ensure that any new development does not affect nutrient levels in the county's rivers.

3.157 Particular concern is directed to the impacts of nutrients upon the River Lugg and River Clun Special Areas of Conservation. In order to protect the integrity of these areas, applicants looking to progress development are being expected to demonstrate nutrient neutrality as part of any planning submission [\[See reference 178\]](#). Nutrient budget calculators have been prepared for each of the two river catchment areas [\[See reference 179\]](#)

3.158 To provide an opportunity for mitigation, Herefordshire Council has developed a phosphates credit scheme linked to the creation of a new Integrated Wetland. The site for this is close to the Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) plant at Luston [\[See reference 180\]](#).

Difficulties and Data Limitations

3.160 The SEA Regulations, Schedule 2(8) require the Environmental Report to include:

“... description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.”

3.161 At this stage, given the content and purpose of the SA Scoping Report, it is considered appropriate to report on the data limitations identified as the baseline information presented in this chapter was prepared:

- Some of the data which are available at the national and at the level of Herefordshire are based on the reporting of 2011 census. This data allows for comparisons to be made between Herefordshire Council and national performance in relation to number of indicators, however it recognised that data is now relatively old considering the timings of the national census.
- The lack of GIS data distinguishing between Grade 3a and 3b land.
- There is limited local data in relation to transport movements.

3.162 Where data limitations have been identified, if relevant updates sources become available at a later stage of the SA process, they will be used to update the baseline evidence for the appraisal work. A suite of evidence is being commissioned and produced to support the review of the Local Plan which will provide opportunities to update the SA baseline as it becomes ready.

Chapter 4

Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Plan

4.1 Analysis of the baseline information has enabled a number of key sustainability issues facing Herefordshire to be identified. Identification of the key sustainability issues and consideration of how these issues might develop over time if the Local Plan review is not implemented help to meet the requirements of Annex 1 of the SEA Directive to provide information on:

“the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan; and any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan.

4.2 Key sustainability issues for Herefordshire were previously identified through the SA of the adopted Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the SA of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan. These issues have been reviewed and revised in light of the updated policy review and baseline information, and considering the context of the Local Plan review. The current set of key sustainability issues facing Herefordshire are presented within this chapter.

4.3 It is also a requirement of the SEA Regulations that consideration is given to the likely evolution of the environment in the plan area (in this case Herefordshire) if the Local Plan review was not to be implemented. This analysis is also presented within this chapter.

4.4 Key sustainability issues in Herefordshire (including environmental problems, as required by the SEA Regulations) are set out below:

Chapter 4 Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Plan

- The need to mitigate and adapt to climate change including protecting communities from extreme weather events, and the associated risk of flooding.
- Need to protect and enhance water quality, in particular in the catchment of the River Wye.
- Higher than average level of retired people, posing implications for the economy, service provision, accommodation and health.
- High demand for housing, while the affordability of housing in relation to incomes, remains poor.
- Pockets of high deprivation in Hereford City and in some of the market towns.
- Need to diversify and invest in Herefordshire's economic infrastructure to help increase salaries and to raise the value of the economy.
- Need to provide equitable access to education and high-speed broadband.
- Poor coverage and frequency of public transport services in Herefordshire's rural areas.
- Over-reliance on the private car in some parts of the county, leading to congestion and air quality challenges.
- Challenges facing Hereford and the market towns' high streets from restricted spending and the consequences of internet shopping.

4.5 In the absence of the Local Plan review, these issues would be addressed to some degree through policies in the adopted Local Plan (Core Strategy). However, the Local Plan review provides an opportunity to develop up to date policies that reflect the most recent evidence and national policy, and to allocate new development in the most appropriate locations based on that evidence. Without the Local Plan review, the key issues facing Herefordshire would therefore be less well addressed.

Sustainability Appraisal Framework

4.6 The development of a set of SA objectives (known as the SA framework) is a recognised way in which the likely environmental and sustainability effects of a plan can be described, analysed and compared.

4.7 The proposed SA framework for the Local Plan review is presented in Table 5.1. SA objectives from the SA of the adopted Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy) were taken as a starting point but have been updated to reflect the updated analysis of international, national and local policy objectives, the baseline information and the sustainability issues identified for Herefordshire.

4.8 The appraisal of the Local Plan policies, sites and alternative spatial strategies against these SA objectives will be guided in part by the appraisal questions accompanying each objective, which are set out below.

4.9 All the topics specifically required by the SEA Regulations (set out in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations) are clearly addressed by the headline SA objectives, as shown beneath each SA objective.

SA Objective 1: To mitigate climate change by actively reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Appraisal questions

- Will the policy/option promote energy efficiency?
- Will the policy/option promote the generation of clean, low carbon, decentralised and renewable electricity and heat?

- Will the policy/option promote the use of energy efficient design and sustainable construction materials?
- Will the policy/option promote and facilitate the use of electric cars and sustainable and active modes of transport?
- Will the policy/option support or enable the mitigation and/or adaptation measures needed to address the climate change impacts on the natural environment?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Climatic Factors

SA Objective 2: To provide a suitable supply of housing including an appropriate mix of types and tenures to reflect demand and need.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option support the supply of an appropriate quantity of housing to satisfy demand?
- Will the policy/option support the supply of an appropriate mix of types and tenures of properties in relation to the respective levels of need and demand?
- Will the policy/option contribute to addressing the housing needs of older people and other groups with specific needs, i.e. extra care housing, sheltered housing, lifetime homes and wheelchair accessible homes?
- Will the policy/option support the provision of specialist accommodation for those with disabilities?
- Will the policy/option support provision of homes that can be adapted to support independent living for older and disabled people?

- Will the policy/option help to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Human Health
- Material Assets

SA Objective 3: To support community cohesion and safety.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option help facilitate the integration of new neighbourhoods with existing neighbourhoods?
- Will the policy/option help to meet the needs of specific groups in Herefordshire, including those with protected characteristics and those in more deprived areas?
- Will the policy/option promote developments that will benefit and will be used by both existing and new residents in Herefordshire, particularly within the most deprived areas?
- Will the policy/option help to deliver cohesive neighbourhoods with high levels of pedestrian activity/outdoor interaction, which will allow for informal interaction between residents?
- Will the policy/option help to reduce levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Human Health

SA Objective 4: Support the vitality of Herefordshire's town and retail centres.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option help to enhance the vitality and vibrancy of town and retail centres?
- Will the policy/option support the retention of town centre commercial and retail uses and encourage the flexible use of space?
- Will the policy/option promote regeneration across Herefordshire?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Material Assets

SA objective 5: To provide access to services, facilities and education.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option help to deliver new services and facilities to provide for the needs of existing and new residents?

- Will the policy/option provide for development that is well linked to existing services and facilities (e.g., shops, post offices, GPs, schools, broadband) and employment areas?
- Will the policy/option contribute to improving educational levels of the population of working age, including by improving access to educational facilities?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Human Health
- Material Assets

SA Objective 6: Improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of residents and reduce health inequalities.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option enable people to be adequately served by key healthcare facilities, regardless of socio-economic status?
- Will the policy/option improve access to healthcare and provide new or enhanced local health services to support new and growing communities?
- Will the policy/option improve access to range of high quality open spaces and green infrastructure that will promote health and well-being by connecting people with nature?
- Will the policy/option avoid impacts on existing green infrastructure assets?
- Will the policy/option contribute to narrowing health inequalities?

- Will the policy/option help to avoid noise and light pollution?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Human Health
- Material Assets

SA objective 7: To support the sustainable growth of the economy.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option allow for the delivery of land and infrastructure to meet Herefordshire's projected economic needs?
- Will the policy/option support the prosperity and diversification of Herefordshire's rural economy?
- Will the policy/option promote the achievement of a circular, low carbon economy?
- Will the policy/option support the development of sustainable tourism?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Material Assets

SA Objective 8: To deliver and maintain sustainable and diverse employment opportunities and reduce inequality and poverty.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option contribute to meeting Herefordshire's employment needs?
- Will the policy/option provide opportunities for local people to access employment and skills?
- Will the policy/option support equality of opportunity for young people and job seekers, in addition to opportunities for the expansion and diversification of businesses?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Population
- Human Health
- Material Assets

SA Objective 9: To reduce the need to travel and encourage sustainable and active alternatives to the private car.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option help to improve public transport links to key facilities across Herefordshire?

Chapter 4 Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- Will the policy/option help to reduce reliance on private vehicles?
- Will the policy/option help to promote and facilitate the use of electric cars and sustainable modes of transport?
- Will the policy/option help to promote compact, mixed-use development, which encourages active travel including walking and cycling?
- Will the policy/option protect and enhance public rights of way and access?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Air
- Climatic Factors
- Population
- Human Health

SA Objective 10: To improve air quality.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option encourage improvements in air quality, including within the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)?
- Will the policy/option minimise and contribute to reductions in air pollution caused by traffic and commercial uses?
- Will the policy/option help to minimise the number of people exposed to poor air quality?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Air

SA Objective 11: To conserve and enhance Herefordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option help to conserve and enhance designated and undesignated ecological assets within and outside Herefordshire, including measurable biodiversity net gain?
- Will the policy/option help to conserve and enhance ecological networks, including not compromising future improvements in habitat connectivity?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Biodiversity
- Human Health

SA Objective 12: To conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of landscapes and townscapes

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option help to protect and enhance the special qualities and distinctive character of the landscape, including the landscapes designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty?
- Will the policy/option help to conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of Herefordshire's non-designated landscapes and townscapes?

- Will the policy/option promote visually attractive development with high quality design, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Landscape

SA Objective 13: To conserve and enhance the historic environment including the setting of heritage features.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option help to conserve and enhance Herefordshire's designated heritage assets, including their setting and their contribution to wider local character and distinctiveness?'
- Will the policy/option help to conserve and enhance Herefordshire's non-designated heritage assets, including their setting and their contribution to wider local character and distinctiveness?
- Will the policy/option help to ensure the management and enhancement of Herefordshire's heritage assets, including bringing assets back into appropriate use, with particular consideration for heritage at risk?
- Will the policy/option promote access to, enjoyment and understanding of the historic environment for residents and visitors of Herefordshire?
- Will the policy/option be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Cultural Heritage

SA Objective 14: To manage and reduce flood risk from all sources and to protect the quality and quantity of water resources.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option limit the amount of development in areas of high flood risk and areas which may increase flood risk elsewhere, taking into account the impacts of climate change?
- Will the policy/option reduce the flood risk facing existing and new development?
- Will the policy/option promote the use of SuDS and other flood resilient design?
- Will the policy/option improve the water quality and achieve nutrient neutrality of Herefordshire's rivers and inland waters?
- Will the policy/option help to minimise inappropriate development in Source Protection Zones?
- Will the policy/option help to support efficient use of water, including greywater recycling in new developments?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Water
- Biodiversity

SA Objective 15: To support efficient use of resources, including land and minerals.

Appraisal Questions

- Will the policy/option promote the re-use of previously development land?
- Will the policy/option help to avoid development on the best and most versatile agricultural land?
- Will the policy/option protect or provide for the sustainable management of soils?
- Will the policy/option promote the achievement of the waste hierarchy?
- Will the policy/option help to ensure that sterilisation of mineral resources is prevented unless development can be justified at locations where this would result?

Relevant SEA Topics

- Soil
- Material Assets

Use of the SA Framework

4.10 The SA will be undertaken in close collaboration with Herefordshire Council officers responsible for preparing the Local Plan review in order to fully integrate the SA process with plan preparation.

4.11 The SA findings for the options and policies being considered for inclusion within the Local Plan review will be presented using a colour coded symbol showing the likely effect of the option against each of the SA objectives, with a concise justification for the score being given. It may be appropriate for strategic and development management policies to be grouped by theme and appraised together.

4.12 The use of colour coding in the matrices will allow for likely significant effects (both positive and negative) to be easily identified, as shown below.

Table 4.1: SA Framework symbol and colour coding

Symbol and colour code	Description
++	Significant positive effect likely
++/-	Mixed significant positive and minor negative effects likely
+	Minor positive effect likely
++/--	Mixed significant positive and significant negative effects likely
+/	Mixed minor positive and minor negative effects likely
-	Minor negative effect likely
--/+	Mixed significant negative and minor positive effects likely
	Significant negative effect likely
0	Negligible effect likely
?	Uncertain effect

4.13 The dividing line between sustainability scores is often quite small. Where significant effects are distinguished from more minor effects this will be because the effect of the option on the SA objective will be of such magnitude that it will have a noticeable and measurable effect compared with other factors that may influence the achievement of that objective.

4.14 In determining the significance of the effects of the options for potential inclusion in the Local Plan review it will be important to bear in mind its relationship with the other documents in the planning system such as the NPPF, as these may provide additional safeguards or mitigation of potentially significant adverse effects.

Chapter 5

Next Steps

5.1 In order to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations, the views of the statutory consultees (Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England and Natural Resources Wales) are being sought in relation to the scope and level of detail to be included in the SA Report.

5.2 This SA Scoping Report will be published for consultation from xxx to xxx 2023.

5.3 Consultees are in particular requested to consider the following:

- Whether the scope of the SA is appropriate as set out considering the role of the Herefordshire Local Plan review to help meet and manage Herefordshire's needs.
- Whether there are any additional plans, policies or programmes that are relevant to the SA that should be included.
- Whether the baseline information provided is robust and comprehensive and provides a suitable baseline for the SA of the Local Plan review.
- Whether there are any additional key sustainability issues relevant to the Local Plan review that should be included.
- Whether the SA Framework (Chapter 5) is appropriate and includes a suitable set of SA objectives for assessing the effects of the options included within the Local Plan review as well as reasonable alternatives.

5.4 Responses from consultees will be reviewed and appropriate amendments made to the detail contained in the Scoping Report, including the baseline information, policy context and SA Framework where necessary.

Chapter 5 Next Steps

5.5 As the Local Plan review is drafted, it will be subject to SA using the SA Framework presented in Chapter 5. A full SA Report (incorporating the later stages of the SA process) will then be produced and made available to other stakeholders and the general public for wider consultation alongside the emerging Local Plan review. This will include any amendments to the Scoping work arising from the consultation on this report.

LUC

March 2023

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Appendix A

Review of Plans, Policies and Programmes

International plans and programmes of most relevance for the Local Plan

A.1 United Nations Declaration on Forests (New York Declaration) (2014) - Sets out international commitment to cut natural forest loss by 2020 and end loss by 2030.

A.2 United Nations Paris Climate Change Agreement (2015) - International agreement to keep global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

A.3 European Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (2010) - Aims to promote the energy performance of buildings and building units. Requires the adoption of a standard methodology for calculating energy performance and minimum requirements for energy performance.

A.4 European Industrial Emission Directive (2010) - Lays down rules on integrated prevention and control of pollution arising from industrial activities. It also lays down rules designed to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions into air, water and land and to prevent the generation of waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment taken as a whole.

A.5 European Birds Directive (2009) - Requires the maintenance of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the European territory at

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a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements.

A.6 European Waste Framework Directive (2008) - Sets out the waste hierarchy requiring the reduction of waste production and its harmfulness, the recovery of waste by means of recycling, re-use or reclamation and final disposal that does not harm the environment, including human health.

A.7 European Floods Directive (2007) - A framework for the assessment and management of flood risk, aiming at the reduction of the adverse consequences for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity.

A.8 United Nations Declaration on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Declaration) (2002) - Sets broad framework for international sustainable development, including building a humane, equitable and caring global society aware of the need for human dignity for all, renewable energy and energy efficiency, sustainable consumption and production and resource efficiency.

A.9 European Environmental Noise Directive (2002) - Sets out a hierarchy for the avoidance, prevention and reduction in adverse effects associated with environmental noise, including noise generated by road and rail vehicles, infrastructure, aircraft and outdoor, industrial and mobile machinery.

A.10 European Landscape Convention (2002) - Promotes landscape protection, management and planning. The Convention is aimed at the protection, management and planning of all landscapes and raising awareness of the value of a living landscape.

A.11 European Water Framework Directive (2000) - Protects inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater.

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A.12 European Landfill Directive (1999) - Prevents and reduces the negative effects on the environment from the landfilling of waste by introducing stringent technical requirements for waste and landfills.

A.13 United Nations Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the 'Aarhus Convention') (1998) - Establishes a number of rights of the public (individuals and their associations) with regard to the environment. The Parties to the Convention are required to make the necessary provisions so that public authorities (at national, regional or local level) will contribute to these rights to become effective.

A.14 European Drinking Water Directive (1998) - Protects human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring that it is wholesome and clean.

A.15 European Air Quality Framework Directive (1996) and Air Quality Directive (2008) - Put in place measures for the avoidance, prevention, and reduction in harmful effects to human health and the environment associated with ambient air pollution and establish legally binding limits for the most common and harmful sources of air pollution.

A.16 The European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (1992) – Protects archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study.

A.17 International Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) - International commitment to biodiversity conservation through national strategies and action plans.

A.18 European Habitats Directive (1992) - Together with the Birds Directive, the Habitats Directive sets the standard for nature conservation across the EU and enables all 27 Member States to work together within the same strong legislative framework in order to protect the most vulnerable species and habitat

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types across their entire natural range within the EU. It also established the Natura 2000 network.

A.19 European Nitrates Directive (1991) - Identifies nitrate vulnerability zones and puts in place measures to reduce water pollution caused by the introduction of nitrates.

A.20 European Urban Waste Water Directive (1991) - Protects the environment from the adverse effects of urban waste water collection, treatment and discharge, and discharge from certain industrial sectors.

A.21 European Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1985) - Defines 'architectural heritage' and requires that the signatories maintain an inventory of it and take statutory measures to ensure its protection. Conservation policies are also required to be integrated into planning systems and other spheres of government influence as per the text of the convention.

A.22 European Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) (1979) - Aims to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats, to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of those species (including migratory species).

A.23 International Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) (1976) - International agreement with the aim of conserving and managing the use of wetlands and their resources.

A.24 United Nations (UNESCO) World Heritage Convention (1972) - Promotes co-operation among nations to protect heritage around the world that is of such outstanding universal value that its conservation is important for current and future generations.

National plans and programmes (beyond the NPPF) of most relevance for the Local Plan Review

Climate change adaption and mitigation

A.25 The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021) - sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet net zero targets by 2050. It sets out strategies to keep the UK on track with carbon budgets, outlines the National Determined Contribution (NDC) and sets out the vision for a decarbonised economy in 2050. Its focus includes:

- Policies and proposals for reducing emissions across the economy in key sectors (power, fuel supply and hydrogen, industry, heat and buildings, transport, natural gas and waste); and,
- Policies and proposals for supporting transition across the economy through innovation, green investment, green jobs, embedding net-zero in government, local climate action, empowering people and businesses, and international leadership and collaboration.

A.26 Department for Transport, Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020) – sets out the strategic priorities for a new Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), to be published later in 2020, will set out in detail what government, business and society will need to do to deliver the significant emissions reduction needed across all modes of transport, putting us on a pathway to achieving carbon budgets and net zero emissions across every single mode of transport by 2050. This document acknowledges that while there have been recently published strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in individual transport modes, transport as a whole sector needs to go further and more quickly, therefore the TDP will take a coordinated, cross-modal approach to deliver the transport sector’s contribution to both carbon budgets and net zero.

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A.27 Defra, The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate (2018) – sets out the strategy for adapting both to the climate change that is already evident, and that which we might see in the future.

A.28 The 25 Year Environment Plan (2018) - sets out policy priorities with respect to responding to climate change, are using and managing land sustainably; and protecting and improving our global environment. Actions that will be taken as part of these two key areas are as follows:

- Using and managing land sustainably:
 - Take action to reduce the risk of harm from flooding and coastal erosion including greater use of natural flood management solutions.
- Protecting and improving our global environment:
 - Provide international leadership and lead by example in tackling climate change and protecting and improving international biodiversity.

A.29 The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting (2018) sets out visions for the following sectors:

- People and the Built Environment – “to promote the development of a healthy, equitable and resilient population, well placed to reduce the harmful health impacts of climate change...buildings and places (including built heritage) and the people who live and work in them are resilient and organisations in the built environment sector have an increased capacity to address the risks and make the most of the opportunities of a changing climate.
- Infrastructure – *“an infrastructure network that is resilient to today’s natural hazards and prepared for the future changing climate”*.
- Natural Environment – *“the natural environment, with diverse and healthy ecosystems, is resilient to climate change, able to accommodate change and valued for the adaptation services it provides.”*

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- Business and Industry – *“UK businesses are resilient to extreme weather and prepared for future risks and opportunities from climate change.”*
- Local Government – *“Local government plays a central in leading and supporting local places to become more resilient to a range of future risks and to be prepared for the opportunities from a changing climate.”*

A.30 HM Government, The Clean Growth Strategy (2017) – sets out the approach of the government to secure growth of the national income while cutting greenhouse gas emissions. The key policies and proposals of the Strategy sit below a number of overarching principles: acceleration of clean growth including through recommendations for private and public investment to meet carbon budgets; providing support to improve business and industry energy efficiency; improving energy efficiency in the housing stock including through low carbon heating; accelerating the shift to low carbon transport; delivering clean, smart, flexible power; enhancing the benefits and value of our natural resources; leading in the public sector to meet emissions targets; and ensure Government leadership to drive clean growth.

A.31 UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2017): sets out six priority areas needing urgent further action over the next five years. These include:

- flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure,
- health, well-being and productivity from high temperatures,
- shortages in public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation and industry with impacts on freshwater ecology,
- natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils and biodiversity,
- domestic and international food production and trade and
- new and emerging pests and diseases and invasive non-native species affecting people, plants and animals.

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A.32 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) (2014) – sets out a number of key planning objectives. It requires that local planning authorities help deliver sustainable development through measures including driving waste management up the waste hierarchy; ensuring that waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns; and providing a framework in which communities can take more responsibility for their own waste.

A.33 Defra, Waste Management Plan for England (2013) – sets out the measures for England to work towards a zero waste economy.

A.34 Defra and the Environment Agency, Understanding the risks, empowering communities, building resilience: The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2011) - sets out the national framework for managing the risk of flooding and coastal erosion. It sets out the roles for risk management authorities and communities to help them understand their responsibilities. An update to the document (Draft National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England, 2019) was published for consultation up to July 2019.

A.35 The Energy Efficiency Strategy (2012) aims to realise the wider energy efficiency potential that is available in the UK economy by maximising the potential of existing dwellings by implementing 21st century energy management initiatives on 19th century homes.

A.36 The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National Strategy for Climate and Energy (2009): sets out a five-point plan to tackle climate change. The points are as follows: protecting the public from immediate risk, preparing for the future, limiting the severity of future climate change through a new international climate agreement, building a low carbon UK and supporting individuals, communities and businesses to play their part.

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A.37 The UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009) describes out the ways in which we will tackle climate change by reducing our CO₂ emissions through the generation of a renewable electricity, heat and transport technologies.

Health and well-being

A.38 National Model Design Code (2021) - The National Model Design Code sets a baseline standard of quality and practice which local planning authorities are expected to take into account when developing local design codes and guides and when determining planning applications, including the layout of new development, including street pattern; how landscaping should be approached; the factors to be considered when determining whether buildings are of sufficiently high quality; and the environmental performance of place and buildings, ensuring they contribute to net zero targets.

A.39 National Design Guide (2021) - sets out the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.

A.40 Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care (2021) sets out the government's new plan for health and social care. It provides an overview of how this plan will tackle the elective backlog in the NHS and put the NHS on a sustainable footing. It sets out details of the plan for adult social care in England, including a cap on social care costs and how financial assistance will work for those without substantial assets. It covers wider support that the government will provide for the social care system, and how the government will improve the integration of health and social care. It explains the government's plan to introduce a new Health and Social Care Levy.

A.41 Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments (2020), Addendum (2021) provides a framework and starting point for local authorities to clearly set out in local planning guidance how best to achieve healthy weight environments based on local evidence and needs, by focusing

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on environments that enable healthier eating and help promote more physical activity as the default. The Addendum provides updates on the implications for planning for a healthier food environment, specifically on the hot food takeaways retail uses, and sets out recommended actions in light of changes to the Use Class Order (UCO) in England from 1 September 2020.

A.42 Covid-19 mental health and wellbeing recovery action plan (2021) - sets out the governments plan to prevent, mitigate and respond to the mental health impacts of the pandemic during 2021 and 2022. Its main objectives are to support the general population to take action and look after their own mental wellbeing, to take action to address factors which play a crucial role in shaping mental health and wellbeing outcomes, and to support services to meet the need for specialist support.

A.43 The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper (2020) sets out the Government's actions to ensure residents in social housing are safe, listened to, live in good quality homes and have access to redress when things go wrong.

A.44 Planning for the Future White Paper (2020) - Sets out a series of potential reforms to the English planning system, to deliver growth faster. The White Paper focuses on the following:

- Simplifying the role of Local Plans and the process of producing them.
- Digitising plan-making and development management processes.
- Focus on design, sustainability and infrastructure delivery.
- Nationally determined, binding housing requirements for local planning authorities to deliver through Local Plans.

A.45 Public Health England (2020) - PHE Strategy 2020-25 - identifies PHE's priorities upon which to focus over this five-year period to protect people and help people to live longer in good health.

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A.46 Homes England Strategic Plan 2018 to 2023 (2018) - Sets out a vision to ensure more homes are built in areas of greatest need, to improve affordability, and make a more resilient and diverse housing market.

A.47 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) sets out the Government's planning policy for traveller sites. The Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.

A.48 Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change report Ready for Ageing? (2013) - warns that society is underprepared for the ageing population. The report states "longer lives can be a great benefit, but there has been a collective failure to address the implications and without urgent action this great boon could turn into a series of miserable crises". The report highlights the under provision of specialist housing for older people and the need to plan for the housing needs of the older population as well as younger people.

A.49 Fair Society, Healthy Lives (2011) - investigated health inequalities in England and the actions needed in order to tackle them. Subsequently, a supplementary report was prepared providing additional evidence relating to spatial planning and health on the basis that there is "overwhelming evidence that health and environmental inequalities are inexorably linked and that poor environments contribute significantly to poor health and health inequalities".

A.50 HM Government, Laying the foundations: a housing strategy for England (2011) – aims to provide support to the delivery of new homes and to improve social mobility.

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Environment (biodiversity/geodiversity, landscape and soils)

A.51 The Environment Act (2021) - sets out the UK's framework for environmental protection. It includes the creation of Conservation Covenant agreements between a landowner and a responsible body for the purposes of conservation of the natural environment of the land or its natural resources, or to conserve the place or setting of the land for its 'archaeological, architectural, artistic, cultural or historic interest.'

A.52 Defra, A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018) - sets out goals for improving the environment over the next 25 years. It details how the Government will work with communities and businesses to leave the environment in a better state than it is presently. The gov.uk website notes that the 25 Year Plan sits alongside two other important government strategies: the Industrial Strategy and Clean Growth Strategy (the former summarised in the Economic growth section below, the latter under Climate Change above).

A.53 Defra, Biodiversity offsetting in England Green Paper (2013) - sets out a framework for biodiversity offsetting. Offsets are conservation activities designed to compensate for residual losses.

A.54 Defra, Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011) - Guides conservation efforts in England up to 2020 by requiring a national halt to biodiversity loss, supporting healthy ecosystems and establishing ecological networks.

A.55 Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011) – This document guides conservation efforts in England up to 2020 by requiring a national halt to biodiversity loss, supporting healthy ecosystems and establishing ecological networks. The Strategy includes 22 priorities which include actions for the following sectors: Agriculture, Forestry, Planning & Development, Water Management, Marine Management, Fisheries, Air Pollution and Invasive Non-Native Species.

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A.56 Defra, Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England (2009) - Sets out how England's soils will be managed sustainably. It highlights those areas which Defra will prioritise and focus attention in tackling degradation threats, including: better protection for agricultural soils; protecting and enhancing stores of soil carbon; building the resilience of soils to a changing climate; preventing soil pollution; effective soil protection during construction and; dealing with contaminated land.

A.57 England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles (2008) - Sets out principles to guide adaptation to climate change. The principles are: take practical action now, maintain and increase ecological resilience, accommodate change, integrate action across all sectors and develop knowledge and plan strategically. The precautionary principle underpins all of these.

Historic environment

A.58 Historic England, Corporate Plan 2018-2021 (2018) - contains the action plan which sets out how the aims of the corporate plan will be delivered. The plan includes priorities to demonstrate how Historic England will continue to work towards delivering the heritage sector's priorities for the historic environment.

A.59 Historic England, Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment: Historic England Advice Note 8 (2016) - sets out Historic England's guidance and expectations for the consideration and appraisal of effects on the historic environment as part of the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment processes.

A.60 Historic England, Heritage 2020 (2015) – sets out the historic environment sector's plan for its priorities between 2015 and 2020.

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Water and air

A.61 The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations (2020) -

amend a range of legislation to prevent waste generation and to monitor and assess the implementation of measures included in waste prevention programmes. They set out requirements to justify not separating waste streams close to source for re-use, recycling or other recovery operations, prohibit incineration and landfilling of waste unless such treatment process represent the best environmental outcome in accordance with the waste hierarchy. The Regulations set out when waste management plans and in waste prevention programmes are required. The Regulations focus on the circular economy as a means for businesses to maximise the value of waste and waste treatment.

A.62 Defra, Clean Air Strategy (2019) - sets out the comprehensive action that

is required from across all parts of government and society to meet goals relating to ensuring cleaner air. This is to be underpinned by new England-wide powers to control major sources of air pollution, in line with the risk they pose to public health and the environment, plus new local powers to take action in areas with an air pollution problem. The UK has set stringent targets to cut emissions by 2020 and 2030.

A.63 Defra, Our Waste, Our Resources: A strategy for England (2018) -

aims to increase resource productivity and eliminate avoidable waste by 2050. The Strategy sets out key targets which include: a 50% recycling rate for household waste by 2020, a 75% recycling rate for packaging by 2030, 65% recycling rate for municipal solid waste by 2035 and municipal waste to landfill 10% or less by 2035.

A.64 HM Government, The Road to Zero (2018) sets out new measures towards cleaner road transport, aiming to put the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles. It explains how cleaner air, a better environment, zero emission vehicles and a strong, clean economy will be achieved. One of the main aims of the document is for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040.

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A.65 Defra and Department of Transport (DoT), The UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations (2017) provides the Government's ambition and actions for delivering a better environment and cleaner air, including £1 billion investment in ultra-low emission vehicles (ULESVs), a £290 million National Productivity Investment Fund, a £11 million Air Quality Grant Fund and £255 million Implementation Fund to help local authorities to prepare Air Quality Action Plans and improve air quality, an £89 million Green Bus Fund, £1.2 billion Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and £100 million to help improve air quality on the National road network.

A.66 Environment Agency, Managing Water Abstraction (2016) - is the overarching document for managing water resources in England and Wales and links together the abstraction licensing strategies.

A.67 Defra, Water White Paper (2012) - Sets out the Government's vision for the water sector including proposals on protecting water resources and reforming the water supply industry. It states outlines the measures that will be taken to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystem, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources.

A.68 The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007) - Sets out a way forward for work and planning on air quality issues by setting out the air quality standards and objectives to be achieved. It introduces a new policy framework for tackling fine particles and identifies potential new national policy measures which modelling indicates could give further health benefits and move closer towards meeting the Strategy's objectives. The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Further improve air quality in the UK from today and long term.
- Provide benefits to health quality of life and the environment.

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Economic growth

A.69 Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth (2021) - Sets out a plan to 'build back better' tackling long-term problems to deliver growth that delivers high-quality jobs across the UK while supporting the transition to net zero. This will build on three core pillars of growth: infrastructure, skills and innovation.

A.70 UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2018) lays down a vision and foundations for a transformed economy. Areas including artificial intelligence and big data; clean growth; the future of mobility; and meeting the needs of an ageing society are identified as the four 'Grand Challenges' of the future.

A.71 HM Government, Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future (2017) – sets out a long-term policy framework for how Britain will be built to be fit for the future in terms of creating successful, competitive and open economy. It is shaped around five 'foundations of productivity' – the essential attributes of every successful economy: Ideas (the world's most innovative economy); People (good jobs and greater earning power for all); Infrastructure (a major upgrade to the UK's infrastructure); Business Environment (the best place to start and grow a business); Places (prosperous communities across the UK).

A.72 LEP Network, LEP Network Response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper Consultation (2017) – seeks to ensure that all relevant local action and investment is used in a way that maximises the impact it has across the Government's strategy. Consultation responses set out how the 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships will work with Government using existing and additional resources to develop and implement a long-term Industrial Strategy.

A.73 HM Treasury and Infrastructure and Projects Authority, National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016-2021 (2016) - sets out the government's plans for economic infrastructure over a five-year period with those to support delivery of housing and social infrastructure.

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Transport

A.74 Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021) - The Decarbonisation Transport Plan (DTP) sets out the Government's commitments and the actions needed to decarbonise the entire transport system in the UK. It follows on from the Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge report published in 2020. The DTP commits the UK to phasing out the sale of new diesel and petrol heavy goods vehicles by 2040, subject to consultation, in addition to phasing out the sale of polluting cars and vans by 2035. The DTP also sets out how the government will improve public transport and increase support for active travel, as well as creating a net zero rail network by 2050, ensuring net zero domestic aviation emissions by 2040, and a transition to green shipping.

A.75 Department for Transport, The Road to Zero (2018) - sets out new measures towards cleaner road transport, aiming to put the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles. It explains how cleaner air, a better environment, zero emission vehicles and a strong, clean economy will be achieved. One of the main aims of the document is for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040.

A.76 Department for Transport, Transport Investment Strategy (2017): Sets out four objectives that the strategy aims to achieve:

- Create a more reliable, less congested, and better connected transport network that works for the users who rely on it;
- Build a stronger, more balanced economy by enhancing productivity and responding to local growth priorities;
- Enhance our global competitiveness by making Britain a more attractive place to trade and invest; and
- Support the creation of new housing.

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A.77 Highways England, Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan (2017)

- This strategy is designed to communicate the company's approach and priorities for sustainable development to its key stakeholders. Highways England aims to ensure its action in the future will further reduce the impact of its activities seeking a long-term and sustainable benefit to the environment and the communities it serves. The action plan describes how Highways England will progress the aspirations of their Sustainable Development and Environment Strategies. It describes actions that will enable the company to deliver sustainable development and to help protect and improve the environment.

Sub-national plans and programmes of most relevance for the Local Plan

A.78 Herefordshire Council, Hereford Masterplan (in preparation) - The masterplan seeks to enhance the character of the city, and provide improved links to connect Hereford's central areas with adjoining neighbourhoods and the market towns and villages of Herefordshire. Specifically, the masterplan is seeking to make streets more people-friendly; enhance the historic centre; maximise green space; identify potential housing opportunities; reduce carbon emissions; and adapt the city for a changing climate. Consultation on the masterplan began from autumn 2022. A draft master plan is expected in Spring 2023. Beyond the involvement of Herefordshire Council, the masterplan team also comprises LUC, Westco, Element Urbanism, SQW, and PJA Transport.

A.79 Herefordshire Council, Minerals and Waste Local Plan (in preparation) - This plan, that will form part of the development plan once adopted, covers the period to 2041. Issues and options were published in 2017 with a Draft Minerals and Waste Plan following in 2019. A further version was published for consultation in January 2021. The plan was submitted for examination in March 2022 and examined during November 2022. A report was presented to Herefordshire Council by the examining Inspector in December 2022 and consultation on Main Modifications is expected to take place early in 2023. The vision supporting the plan identifies the need for the sustainable

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provision of minerals supply and waste management through the balancing of development needs, whilst protecting and enhancing environmental, heritage and cultural assets and strengthening the local economy. The plan also identifies how sustainable provision within Herefordshire will be achieved through:

- the efficient use and effective protection of mineral resources.
- efficient waste management infrastructure including delivery of the circular economy; and
- taking a strategic approach to achieving high quality reclamation that provides site betterment, and optimising self-sufficiency and resilience.

A.80 Herefordshire Council, Integrated Waste Management Strategy 2021-2035 (2022) - The strategy outlines the policy context surrounding waste, describes existing provision, and considers future infrastructure demands. In terms of future investment, specific outcomes are identified for kerbside collection, the use and management of Household Waste Recycling Centres, and the processing of commercial waste.

A.81 Herefordshire Council, Market Town Investment Plans (2022) - Market Town Economic Development Investment Plans have been produced for the towns of Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye. Each plan includes a vision for growth; presents opportunities for economic development; and identifies potential investment projects to deliver the plan. Each plan also gives indicative investment figures with respect to potential funding that could come from Herefordshire Council; grant opportunities; and external institutions. Each plan prioritises the activity needed for economic growth.

A.82 Herefordshire Council, Respecting our past, shaping our future. A Delivery Plan for 2022-23 (2022) - This delivery plan seeks to support the achievement of the goals set out in the above corporate plan. It identifies key projects that are underway and outlines supportive actions through 22-23.

A.83 Herefordshire Council, Annual Monitoring Report (2022) - Under the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Order Act 2004 (as

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amended by the 2011 Localism Act) and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Herefordshire Council is required to produce an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR is expected to monitor the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS), and monitor the implementation of the policies set out in the Local Plan (including the Core Strategy of 2012). The AMR comprises a number of sections, with each part being produced at a different time. The first section provides an update on local plan production, the second on the general performance of the Local Plan's policies, and section three on neighbourhood plans. Section four of the AMR discusses the Council's collaborations with respect to the Duty to Cooperate, while six and seven relate to self and custom house-building and housing completions more generally.

A.84 Herefordshire Council, Carbon Management Action Plan (2021) - This document supports the ambitions of the above document and presents key areas for targeting reductions. Measures are identified for the Council's estate, including schools and academies. Carbon reductions are also outlined with respect to contracts, council projects, and through better ways of working.

A.85 Herefordshire Council, Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026 (2021) - The document provides a summary of housing issues in Herefordshire and presents a vision for the sector. The vision seeks to effectively meet the housing needs of people living in Herefordshire, to promote independence, and create healthy and sustainable communities. Four supportive priorities are outlined, including the need to:

- Eliminate the negative impact that our homes have on the environment.
- Increase the number of affordable homes available to rent and buy.
- Improve the quality and accessibility of housing in Herefordshire and bring long term empty properties back into use
- Work in partnership to assess and deliver solutions to identified housing need.

A.86 Herefordshire Council, Pathway to Carbon Neutral Carbon Management Plan 2020/21-2025/26 (2020) - The plan seeks to support the

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Council's ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030/31 and responds to the Council's Climate Emergency Declaration of March 2019. The Management Plan outlines the Council's journey towards carbon neutrality and introduces a series of initiatives, challenges and solutions. The role and importance of policy, behaviour change, leadership, engagement and appropriate resourcing is outlined. Energy efficiency and the need to generate renewable energy are also identified as important areas of work. The plan seeks a 75% reduction in carbon emissions from the baseline level recorded in 2008/09, by the end of the financial year 2025/26.

A.87 Herefordshire Council, Hereford City Strategic Flood Risk

Assessment - Level 2 (2020) - This assessment builds upon the study referenced above and provides a more detailed assessment of flood risk at a number of strategic and emerging development sites within the city of Hereford. These include Three Elms and Lower Bullingham (that are introduced through the Core Strategy), alongside seven further sites that were considered through the Hereford Area Action Plan (although this proposed development plan document has not been progressed).

A.88 Herefordshire Council, County Plan (2020) - This document sets out the council's ambitions for the period 2020 to 2024. Three ambitions are presented, namely to support goals for improving the sustainability, connectivity and wellbeing of Herefordshire by strengthening its communities; creating a thriving local economy; and protecting and enhancing the county's environment. Success measures are outlined for each ambition. For example, with respect to the environment, the plan identifies how the Council will take steps to:

- Increase flood resilience and reduce levels of phosphate pollution in the county's river.
- Reduce the Council's carbon emissions.
- Work in partnership with others to reduce county carbon emissions
- Improve the air quality within Herefordshire.
- Improve residents' access to green space in Herefordshire, and
- Improve energy efficiency of homes and build standards for new housing

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A.89 Herefordshire Council, Travellers' Sites Development Plan Document

(2019) - This document, which forms part of the adopted Herefordshire Local Plan, supplements Policy H4 on Traveller Sites. The document outlines the need for pitches, considers current supply, and presents a series of policies to support delivery. Policies cover the need for Residential Traveller pitches and sites, and plots for Travelling Showpeople Plots. The document also identifies temporary stopping places.

A.90 Herefordshire Council, Contaminated Land Strategy (2019)

- This strategy provides a framework for ensuring that unacceptable risks to human health and the environment are identified and removed. The strategy also seeks to provide measures for ensuring that contaminated land is made suitable for its current use, and to ensure that any potential burden arising from contaminated land is proportionate, manageable and compatible with the principles of sustainable development.

A.91 Herefordshire, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Level 1 (2019)

- The assessment outlines the relevant policy context, and brings different strands of flooding data together. It makes an assessment of flood risk across the county by summarising the main catchment areas, reporting on flood events, and assessing flood risk schemes. The impact of climate change, and strategies surrounding emergency planning, are also considered as part of the risk assessment. The assessment makes recommendations with respect to the management of development and outlines policy expectations with respect to different flood zones.

A.92 Herefordshire Council, The Herefordshire Sustainable Destination Management Plan 2018 – 2022 (2018)

- This document is grounded on four priorities, namely to grow Herefordshire as a visitor destination; to grow the share of visitor markets; to help facilitate great experiences and memories; and to develop staff. The plan outlines the relevant policy context and also summaries key tourism trends relating to Herefordshire.

A.93 Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy

(2016) - This strategy provides an overview of the health needs of Herefordshire

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and presents a vision for how health outcomes can be significantly enhanced. It identifies the type of change that is needed and outlines seven overarching priorities. These relate to improving mental health and wellbeing; improving the health outcomes of children and older people; and tackling the health consequences of poor housing. Other priorities focus on the need to tackle long term condition and unhealthy lifestyles (such as smoking); responding to hidden issues (such as alcohol abuse); and targeting the health needs of specific groups (such as travellers, or those with learning disabilities).

A.94 Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Council Local Transport Plan Strategy 2016 – 2031 (2016) - The strategy outlines a vision and emphasises the importance of public transport and active travel. The strategy provides a baseline account of existing infrastructure and offers a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that this infrastructure gives rise to. A strategy of measures is presented for Hereford, including High Town, the city centre, and South Wye. Transport measures are also presented for Herefordshire's market towns and rural areas.

A.95 Herefordshire Council, Invest Herefordshire. Herefordshire's Economic Vision (2016) - The plan seeks to realise the full economic potential of Herefordshire through a coordinated plan that can 'ambitious, persuasive, achievable and sustainable'. The vision seeks to support the growth of Herefordshire by identifying priority projects, and to raise the profile of Herefordshire. The vision also seeks to provide Herefordshire with clear priorities for negotiations surrounding future development. The timescale of the vision is set over fifteen years, split into three blocks each of five years.

A.96 Herefordshire Council, Local Plan: Playing Pitch Strategy (2012) - The strategy offers a quantitative and qualitative assessment of current provision, and considers relevant factors linked to playing pitch demand. The strategy presents a playing pitch standard that is linked to local context, and makes recommendations, and identifies future actions, for the Hereford area.

A.97 Herefordshire Council, Green Infrastructure Strategy (2010) - This document explains what green infrastructure (GI) entails and outlines the wide-

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ranging benefits that a strategic and multi-functional GI network can generate. It presents a vision for GI across Herefordshire, and presents a framework through which there are actions to protect, enhance and provide additional GI. In presenting these, the strategy makes a distinction between county and local-level priorities. At a county level, the document outlines strategic corridors and areas of strategic importance. Corridors, and enhancement zones, are also identified for local scales.

A.98 Herefordshire and Worcestershire Councils, Air Quality, A Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire (2009) - The strategy presents analysis concerning air quality across the two county areas and outlines key commitments with respect to air quality management. These commitments extend to cover the relationship between planning and air quality; transport; climate change and energy management; health and education; and industry and domestic sources.

A.99 Herefordshire Council, Landscape Character Assessment (2004) - This assessment is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. The document identifies 17 different types of landscape character, with the document listing both primary and secondary landscape characteristics for each. Potential forces for changing the landscape are considered, with a range of objectives being set for each to support both conservation and enhancement.

A.100 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plans: A Management Plan for the Malvern Hills AONB was published in 2019 and covers the the period to 2024. A Management Plan for the Wye Valley AONB was published in 2021 and covers the period to 2026. Both of the plans present a vision, and a supporting set of priorities, for managing each of the AONBs, which in turn, is intended to inform the policies of the relevant Local Authority. The documents also provide guidance to the local communities and the many landowners, residents and visitors living across the areas.

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Surrounding Development Plans

A.101 Shropshire Council: The adopted development plan comprises a Core Strategy, that was adopted in February 2011, together with a Site Allocations and Management of Development document, which was adopted in December 2015. A review of the Local Plan is underway and this will cover the period 2016 to 2038. A draft of the plan was submitted for examination in September 2001 and a copy of the Inspector's Report is awaited. The plan is expected to be adopted in 2023.

A.102 Malvern Hills: The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) encompasses the local authority areas of Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon. The adopted plan dates to February 2016 and covers the period to the year 2030. The plan allocates a range of small sites, together with larger 'strategic' sites across South Worcestershire, and provides policies to ensure that any development is sustainable. A review of the SWDP is underway with the resulting plan covering the period to 2041. A draft of the plan was published in November 2022. Although a submission version of the plan was intended to be published in the summer of 2023, this has been delayed to allow for the collection of additional, underpinning evidence.

A.103 Forest of Dean: The development plan comprises a Core Strategy and an Allocations Plan which collectively cover the period to 2026. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2012, while the Allocations Plan was adopted in 2018. The Allocations Plan updates the housing requirement from the Core Strategy, shows how the policies of the Core Strategy are to be implemented, allocates sites for development, and details protective designations. The development plan also includes the Cinderford Northern Quarter Area Action Plan that was adopted in 2012.

A.104 Monmouthshire: The Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted in 2014 and covered the period to 2021. A replacement LDP is being prepared for the period 2018 to 2033, with consultation on a Preferred Strategy being undertaken through December 2022 and January 2023. The strategy identifies the key issues, challenges and

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opportunities for the County, presents a vision and a supporting set of objectives, sets out the preferred level of growth, and outlines where this growth is to be spatially distributed. It also includes site allocations and strategic policies to help deliver and implement the strategy.

A.105 Powys: The Powys LDP, that covers the period from 2011 to 2026, was adopted in April 2018. It extends across the whole of Powys, except the area of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The plan provides for 4,500 dwellings and 45 hectares of employment land. Work on a replacement LDP is underway and this will cover the period 2022 to 2037. A call for sites was published in November 2022 and a Preferred Strategy is expected to be published in June 2023.

A.106 Brecon Beacons National Park Authority: The Brecon Beacons National Park Local Plan, for the period 2007 to 2022, was adopted in December 2013. The plan states the purposes for the National Park and identifies priorities relating to a range of themes, including landscape, biodiversity and water quality. With respect to development, the plan presents a settlement hierarchy with Brecon being identified as the primary settlement. The plan has a requirement for 2,045 dwellings homes in the plan period. Work has started on a replacement plan.

Report produced by LUC

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Bristol

12th Floor, Beacon Tower, Colston Street, Bristol BS1 4XE
0117 929 1997
bristol@landuse.co.uk

Edinburgh

Atholl Exchange, 6 Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EG
0131 202 1616
edinburgh@landuse.co.uk

Glasgow

37 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JJ
0141 334 9595
glasgow@landuse.co.uk

London

250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD
020 7383 5784
london@landuse.co.uk

Manchester

6th Floor, 55 King Street, Manchester M2 4LQ
0161 537 5960
manchester@landuse.co.uk

landuse.co.uk

Landscape Design / Strategic Planning & Assessment
Development Planning / Urban Design & Masterplanning
Environmental Impact Assessment / Landscape Planning & Assessment
Landscape Management / Ecology / Historic Environment / GIS & Visualisation