



**HEREFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2021-2041  
STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION FOR  
REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION**

**March 2024**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** Herefordshire Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for the County. Once adopted the new Herefordshire Local Plan 2021 -2041 will replace the existing Core Strategy (2015) and provide the framework for guiding development within the County through to 2041.
- 1.2** Between 17th January 2022 and 29th July 2022, the Council held early preliminary consultations on the key issues and challenges in Herefordshire and the various topic-based and place-based options for addressing these to form the basis of the new Local Plan 2041.
- 1.3** This document outlines how the Council has conducted early, proactive and inclusive engagement. Along with a summary of the issues raised during the consultation and how Council has responded to these issues.
- 1.4** This is the first consultation statement following the initial round of consultations. Further Consultation Statements will be issued after the Regulation 18 consultation on the full Draft Local Plan.

## **2. Statutory requirements**

**2.1** The consultation and engagement activities were carried out following the approach set out in Herefordshire Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) published in January 2022, and of Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, which state that a Consultation Statement has to be produced to show:

- which bodies and persons were invited to make representations;
- how those bodies and persons were invited to make such; representations;
- How those main issues have been addressed in Local Plan.

**2.2** As required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paragraphs 15-16) this document demonstrates how we conducted early, proportionate, and effective engagement between council and communities, organisations, businesses, providers, operators, and statutory consultees when developing the new Local Plan.

### 3. Consultation Processes

#### 3.1 What we consulted on

**3.2** Herefordshire Council has undertaken several rounds of consultations while preparing the new Local Plan 2021-2041. To date, the following engagements and consultations have taken place:

Table 1: Consultation stages

<b>Local Plan section</b>	<b>Consultation dates</b>
<b>Spatial Options</b>	17 January to 28 February 2022
<b>Policy Options</b>	4 April to 16 May 2022
<b>Place Shaping</b>	13 June to 29 July 2022
<b>Next Stage of Consultation</b>	
<b>Regulation 18 - Draft Local Plan</b>	<i>25 March to 20 May 2024</i>

**3.3** These were the first consultations carried out by the Council in development of the new Local Plan. The consultation periods were intended to seek views on a number of different proposals on what the Local Plan should achieve, as well as potential strategies for delivering this. The consultations were structured as follows:

- Spatial Options consultation – covering the distribution of housing around the county. This first round of consultation presented different spatial options for distributing housing growth.
- Policy Options consultation – The second stage of consultation covered policy options and sought views on key policies covering a number of themes, including climate change, housing, employment and transport.
- Place Shaping Consultation – This round of consultations sought views on the strategic growth areas in Hereford, the market town and rural areas including a new rural settlement hierarchy.

#### 3.4 Who we consulted

**3.5** The Council consulted directly with a broad cross section of communities, stakeholders and interested parties during this early stage of consultations. Statutory and non-statutory consultees from the council's extensive consultation database were contacted. This database includes:

- Individual residents,
- Developers
- Businesses based across the county
- Parish councils
- Community and voluntary groups
- Infrastructure providers
- Neighbouring authorities
- Government agencies
- Elected Members

### **3.6 How we consulted**

- 3.7** The council employed a range of tools to enable as many residents stakeholders and interested parties, to have an opportunity to make representation and provide feedback through their preferred method.
- 3.8** Notification was sent to specified stakeholders, industry contacts, and statutory bodies such as Highways England and utility companies, neighbouring authorities, agents and land owners. The correspondence sent included details of where to find further information and how to make a representation either online or in writing.
- 3.9** The Council has continued to engage with neighbouring local authorities of Malvern Hills District Council, Forest of Dean District Council, and Shropshire Council to provide a forum to discuss cross-border and sub-regional planning issues. Further information will be provided in a future Duty to Cooperate Statement for the Regulation 19 consultation.
- 3.10** Residents, local community groups, elected members and other stakeholders were informed about ways to get involved in the consultations. Methods to respond both on and offline were given, in order to reach the broadest audience possible.
- 3.11** Using the online engagement platform 'Commonplace' we were able to create a dedicated site for the Herefordshire Local Plan 2021 – 2041. This site is accessible and user-friendly platform for the general public to access and provide their feedback the consultations. The online consultations platform were open and active throughout the consultation period. You can view all previous consultation material [here](#).

**3.12** The following table provides detail of the different tools and how they were used:

Table 2: Methods and processes

<b>Method of engagement</b>	<b>Processes</b>
<b>Email</b>  Specified statutory consultees, local business owners, groups representing, parish reps & neighbouring authorities	Notification of consultation Sent  Reminder sent part way through consultation
<b>Letter</b>  Inc. MPs	Notification of consultation Sent
<b>Facebook</b>	Notification of consultation start posted on council page with direct link to website followed by regular updates throughout
<b>Twitter</b>	Notification of consultation start on council page with direct link to website followed by regular updates throughout
<b>Council Website</b>	Featured on council news page with a direct link to consultation page
<b>Engagement platform</b>  Commonplace Website	Dedicated website used to engage throughout the project. Including regular news updates to subscribers
<b>Cabinet members' Newsletter</b>	Information in weekly newsletter
<b>Printed materials</b>  Made available at libraries and Parish halls information centres	Instructions displayed for each consultation on how to respond
<b>Online meetings</b>  with Parish councils and members	These were recorded and placed on the Commonplace website for public viewing
<b>Exhibitions</b>	13 events to cover the market towns, city and surrounding rural areas.

**3.12**In line with government requirements on social distancing at the time, in-person consultations were paused in order to protect public health following the COVID-19 pandemic. A suitable alternative approach was implemented by using accessible video conferencing communication platforms (Microsoft Teams, Zoom) which followed a similar format to in-person sessions.

**3.13**The Council was able to resume in-person consultations in a safe manner, following improvement in conditions. A number of consultation events were held across the county. These were attended by Planning Officers. A set of exhibition boards were displayed showing information on the various options, including maps. Questionnaires were also handed out seeking feedback.

**3.14**The table below provides an all summary of consultation events undertaken as part of the Issues and Options consultation:

Table 3: List of public consultation events held

Type	Consultee	Method	Topic	Date
Workshop	Ward Members	Online	Spatial Options	01/02/2022
Workshop	Ward Members	Online	Spatial Options	02/02/2022
Workshop	Parish Councils	Online	Spatial Options	03/02/2022
Workshop	Ward Members	Online	Policy Options	06/04/2022
Workshop	Parish Councils	Online	Policy Options	07/04/2022
Workshop	Parish Councils	Online	Policy Options	12/04/2022
Seminar	Ward Members	Online	Place-shaping	17/06/2022
Seminar	Parish Councils	Online	Place-shaping	20/06/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Ledbury: Place-shaping	28/06/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Bishops Frome: Place-shaping	28/06/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Hereford: Place-shaping	29/06/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Fownhope: Place-shaping	29/06/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Ross-on-Wye: Place-shaping	30/06/2022



Type	Consultee	Method	Topic	Date
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Lea: Place-shaping	30/06/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Leominster: Place-shaping	01/07/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Wigmore: Place-shaping	01/07/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Ewyas Harold: Place-shaping	04/07/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Bromyard: Place-shaping	07/07/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Barterstree: Place-shaping	07/07/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Kington: Place-shaping	08/07/2022
Exhibition	Public	In-person	Weobley: Place-shaping	08/07/2022

## 4. Overview of the responses

**4.1** This section summarises the feedback received from respondents the consultations. More detail on comments received can be found in Appendix A.

**4.2** Over 1,600 responses were received from members of the public answering questions and providing their view on the various options. With 403 responses for the Vision & Objectives, 1,200 for Growth Levels & Strategic Spatial Options including the Rural Spatial Options, 250 for the Policy Options, and 460 for the Place Shaping via the online survey and additional responses via direct email.

**4.3** You can view responses to consultations so far on the Commonplace website under the [Consultation feedback so far](#) section.