

General Policies

The General Policies are divided into three different sections:

Social Progress

Economic Prosperity

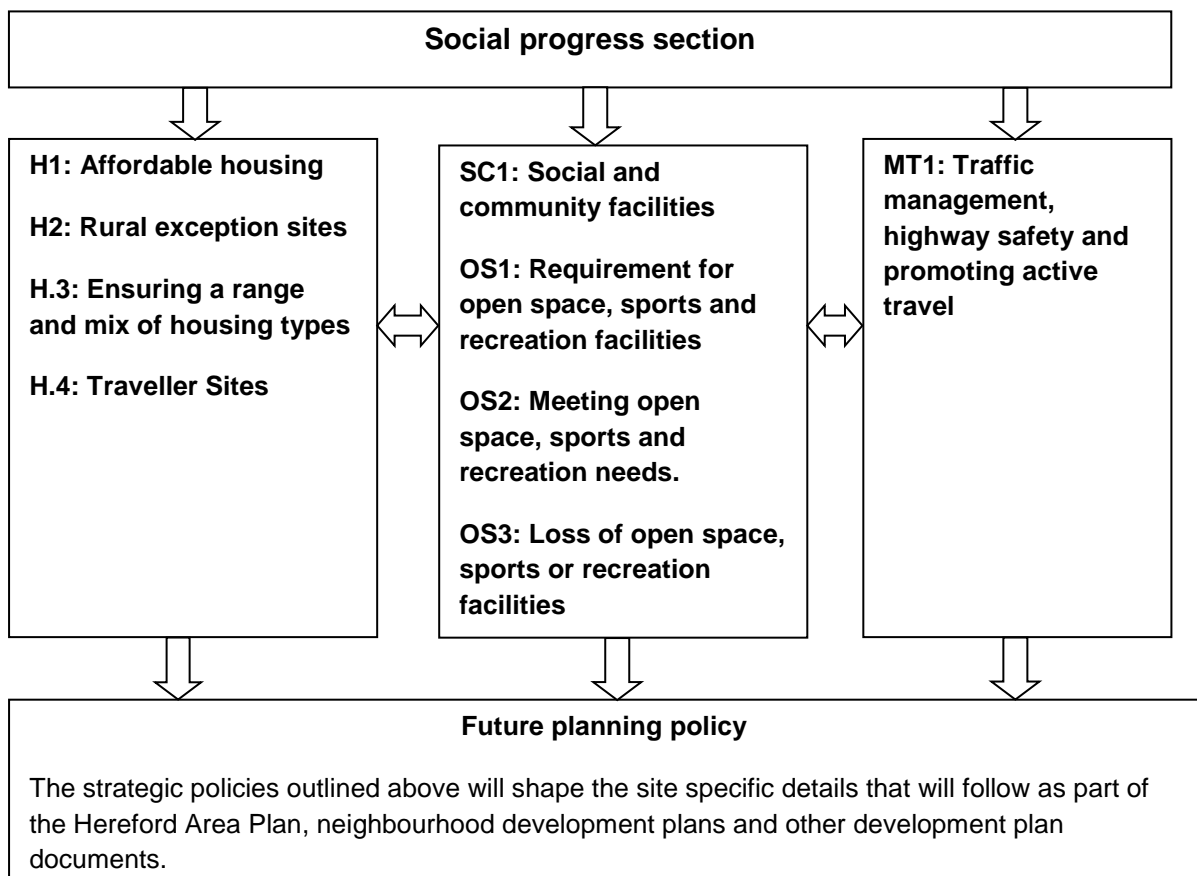
Environmental Quality

Social Progress

Introduction

Social progress is about improving the well-being of our communities.

The Core Strategy's vision for social progress is a long-term one, seeking to deliver decent affordable homes, social and community facilities and other necessary infrastructure in urban and rural areas. There are five objectives which develop this vision (strategic objectives 1-5 in the spatial strategy section) and this chapter sets out a series of policies on affordable housing, social and community infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation, and traffic management to deliver these objectives, alongside Policy SS1 to SS6.



Affordable housing

There is a significant need for affordable housing within Herefordshire and the planning system can assist the delivery of affordable homes. Policy H1 establishes affordable housing targets whilst specific place based policies set out targets for individual strategic housing developments.

Within the county, the need for affordable housing has been investigated through the *Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2008* (SHMA) which introduced the broad housing needs in seven housing market areas of the county. A *Local Housing Market Assessment* (LHMA) was completed in 2011 and updated in 2013, which draws on and develops the SHMA to provide a more local assessment of housing requirements for the seven local housing markets across Herefordshire. In addition to the LHMA, parish level housing needs surveys are undertaken to identify needs at a very local level, to support the development of affordable housing. The need for affordable homes across the county does exceed this figure, but the viability of delivering affordable homes over the Plan period has been recognised in order to provide an achievable figure.

Affordable housing is housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market. It encompasses housing provided at below market prices and allocated on the basis of need, to people who are unable to purchase or rent houses available generally on the open market without financial assistance. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

Affordable housing can include a range of rented and home ownership housing options which meet local housing need. By seeking to provide a range of housing options, the council can help to address the needs of those seeking to gain a first step on the property ladder, reduce the demand for social rented housing, free up existing social rented homes, provide wider choice for households and ensure that sites have a mix of tenures

The National Planning Policy Framework divides affordable housing into three categories:

- Social rented for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.
- Affordable rented housing subject to rent controls that require no more than 80% of the local market rent.
- Intermediate homes for sale and rent, provided at a cost above social rent but below market levels.

Affordable housing under these definitions can include both individual and multiple dwellings, constructed under self-build projects funded by registered providers, community housing groups and individual projects providing low cost housing that does not exceed affordable levels – as defined in the council published 'Provision of Affordable Housing Technical Data.' In such cases planning conditions will be imposed to ensure that housing is retained in perpetuity for future local housing needs.

Housing provided under these categories whether for rent or sale must be made available at a price level that can be sustained by local people in housing need. It is important to emphasise the distinctions between the roles of the different categories of affordable housing and not to treat one as a substitute for the other. It is important to set criteria identifying what constitutes local housing need. This is in order that proposals for additional dwellings coming forward can be clearly shown to be contributing to this requirement – and thus to the aim of sustaining urban and rural communities.

Policy H1 - Affordable housing – thresholds and targets

All new open market housing proposals on sites above the thresholds set out below will be expected to contribute towards meeting affordable housing needs.

Within and adjoining the urban areas of Hereford and the market towns, proposals of 15 or more dwellings or 0.5 hectares will be expected to contribute to affordable housing provision. In rural areas, all new housing developments will be expected to make a contribution whereby:

- i) on sites of 3 or more dwellings, the affordable housing will be expected to be provided on-site unless developers can clearly demonstrate that a financial contribution would be more appropriate;
- ii) on sites of 1 or 2 dwellings, developers will be required to provide a financial contribution to the provision of affordable housing off-site.

The amount and mix of affordable housing will vary depending on evidence of housing need, including those on strategic housing sites, and where appropriate, an assessment of the viability of the development. The following indicative targets have been established based on evidence of need and viability in the county's housing market and housing value areas:

1. A target of 35% affordable housing provision on sites in the Hereford, Hereford Northern & Southern Hinterlands, and Kington & West Herefordshire housing value areas;
2. A target of 40% affordable housing provision on sites in the Ledbury, Ross and Rural Hinterlands housing value areas (to include Bromyard);
3. A target of 25% affordable housing provision on sites in the Leominster housing value area.

Any affordable housing provided under the terms of this policy will be expected to be available in perpetuity for those in local housing need.

In order to ensure an appropriate balance of affordable housing is provided, the evidence for each housing market area and housing value area will form the basis for determining the mix of tenure types on specific sites.

Affordable housing targets and thresholds have been informed by the economic viability assessment including the likely impact upon overall levels of housing delivery and aim of creating mixed communities. The work on viability involved the definition of housing value areas which are areas, where housing values/prices were broadly similar. These can be seen in figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1 - Housing value areas



The findings of the *Local Housing Market Assessment 2013* (LHMA) have also been taken into account so that the resultant policies on affordable housing are locally relevant and viable.

The LHMA indicates that there remains a significant need for social housing across the county. However the viability of housing schemes also has to be taken into account in determining both the required percentage and an appropriate mix of tenures of affordable housing. Overall target percentages have been established for different parts of the county and are set out in the Policy H1. In locations where achieving high levels of social rented housing would impact upon the viability of new housing schemes, increasing the percentage of intermediate housing will be considered where the overall affordable housing target can be maintained. Evidence to justify this would need to be demonstrated as part of the consideration of a development proposal

In rural areas the majority of new housing is delivered on small sites of fewer than 5 dwellings and therefore to ensure the maximum provision of new affordable housing a threshold of one house is justified. Where there are sites that are capable of delivering 3 dwellings or more, the council will expect the affordable housing to be provided on-site, unless the developer can demonstrate that the requirement for affordable housing would be better met through contributions to off-site provision. – There must however be a realistic prospect that the off-site provision would meet the identified need, and come forward in a reasonable timescale. Where rural developments of one or two dwellings are proposed it is accepted that an on-site contribution may not be possible, and therefore in such a case an off-site contribution will be required.

Where new dwellings are provided as part of proposals for the re-use of rural buildings, an element of affordable housing should also be provided in accordance with Policy H1.

A Supplementary Planning Document will provide additional guidance and set out the details of how the affordable housing policies will be implemented. The guidance will include:

- advice regarding the need for affordable housing;
- affordable house prices and rents in Herefordshire ;
- the negotiation process;
- securing affordable housing and controlling occupancy; and
- contributions to off-site provision.

There is a need to ensure that planning policy provides for a mix of affordable housing to reflect differing household needs and future demographic trends. There are a number of intermediate housing products, including shared ownership, which is likely to be particularly appealing to would-be first-time buyers who do not have sufficient funds to access the open market.

Policy H2 - Rural exception sites

Proposals for small affordable housing schemes in rural areas may be permitted on land which would not normally be released for housing where:

1. the proposal could assist in meeting a proven local need for affordable housing; and
2. the affordable housing provided is made available to, and retained in perpetuity for local people in need of affordable housing; and
3. the site respects the characteristics of its surroundings, demonstrates good design and offers reasonable access to a range of services and facilities normally in a settlement identified in Policies RA1 or RA2; and
4. the internal floor area of the dwellings are consistent with the size limits imposed by policy RA2 (rural housing).

In order to enable the delivery of affordable housing some market housing may be permitted as part of the development to subsidise a significant proportion of affordable housing provision. However, evidence will be required – by way of a financial appraisal, in order to demonstrate that the proposed scale of market housing would be required for the successful delivery of affordable housing.

The council recognises that the provision of affordable housing is more difficult in rural areas where often the scale and location of new development is more restricted. Policy H2 enables the provision of affordable housing outside of villages, in areas where there is generally a restraint on open market housing, so as to help meet affordable housing needs in rural areas in perpetuity.

Rural exception schemes need to take full account of environmental considerations including design, siting and materials, and avoid sensitive locations where development would not be permitted for reasons of landscape or visual impact. Similarly a site's location should not place additional financial burdens upon households occupying the scheme such as through isolation or increased costs in gaining access to local services and facilities, for example schools and employment. Given that these schemes may be located in or around small villages, the scale of development should reflect the locality; meaning that small affordable housing schemes should not normally exceed 15 dwellings in total.

National planning policy indicates that consideration should be given to whether allowing some market housing on exception sites would facilitate the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs. Where such schemes are proposed, the applicant will need to demonstrate that a mixed tenure scheme is essential to the delivery of the affordable housing and that it removes the need for public subsidy. Open market housing should be limited to an absolute minimum in such schemes and only in order to make the scheme viable.. The preparation of neighbourhood development plans and/or other development plan documents will also provide an opportunity to identify sites for affordable housing.

Policy H3 – Ensuring an appropriate range and mix of housing

Residential developments should provide a range and mix of housing units which can contribute to the creation of balanced and inclusive communities. In particular, on larger housing sites not entirely intended to meet a specialist need, developers will be expected to:

1. provide a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all households, including younger single people;
2. provide housing capable of being adapted for people in the community with additional needs; and
3. provide housing capable of meeting the specific needs of the elderly population by providing:
 - specialist accommodation for older people in suitable locations;
 - ensuring that non-specialist new housing is built to take account of the changing needs of an ageing population;
 - ensuring that developments contain a range of house types, including where appropriate, bungalow accommodation.

There is a clear need to provide for balanced and sustainable communities in Herefordshire. Housing affordability issues in the county are compounded by the housing offer, with a high proportion of detached housing and properties in higher council tax bands. The supply of properties which younger households might be able to afford to buy is limited; only 13.5% of housing is in social sector ownership (affordable) compared to 19.5% across the West Midlands.

The Local Housing Market Assessment recommends that planning policies are not overly prescriptive with regard to requiring a specific mix of housing sites. Specific policies for the strategic sites provide an indication of the mix of housing appropriate to the relevant housing market area. The range of house types provided across the county will be monitored to ensure an appropriate mix of housing is provided, however it is recognised that meeting specialist needs is more likely to be achievable on sites of 50 dwellings and above.

The study of the housing and support needs of older people in Herefordshire (2012) outlined that there is an increasing requirement for new housing to cater for older people. Addressing this need will be met through a combination of measures including the provision of specialist accommodation in locations where the principle of residential development is accepted; and by ensuring that general housing provision is designed in such a way that enables easy adaptation to meet the requirements of all households.

Travellers' sites

It is important that the accommodation needs and requirements of all sections of the community are considered in developing planning policies. Government planning policy is increasingly favouring the identification of sites for travellers. Herefordshire

Council recognises these requirements which will be taken forward in the preparation of a new Travellers' Development Plan Document. In the interim however, the following policy is required in order to consider the merits of planning proposals.

For the purposes of this policy the definition of "travellers" means "gypsies and travellers" and "travelling showpeople" as defined in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, CLG 2012.

Policy H4 – Travellers sites

Herefordshire Council will provide for the site needs of travellers through the preparation of a Travellers' Development Plan Document (DPD), which will include site allocations. Sites for at least 31 new residential pitches for gypsies and travellers will be provided by 2017, with the target for the remainder of the period up to 2027 being established in the Travellers' DPD . The 2017 target will be in addition to maintaining provision for the current level of long-term unauthorised sites either through their retention where they comply generally with the criteria listed below or through the release of additional sites where such unauthorised sites are no longer available.

In the absence of an adopted DPD, or where proposals for sites are brought forward on non-allocated land supported by evidence that they meet a local need, proposals will be permitted where:

1. sites afford reasonable access to services and facilities, including health and schools, in particular avoiding long distance travel;
2. adequate screening and landscaping is included within the proposal in order to ensure that the proposal does not result in an adverse effect upon the character and amenity of the landscape, historic assets and/or neighbouring properties;
3. in the case of proposals for mixed business and residential accommodation providing for the live-work lifestyle of travellers, local amenity is not adversely affected;
4. the number of pitches at any location should not overload local infrastructure;
5. the size of the site should reflect surrounding population size and density so that sites do not dominate nearby communities; and
6. they are capable of accommodating on-site facilities that meet best practice for modern traveller site requirements, including play areas, storage, provision for recycling and waste management, and where necessary, work areas.

In rural areas, where there is a case of local need for an affordable traveller site, but criterion 1 above cannot be fulfilled, then an exception may be made and proposals permitted, provided such sites can be retained for that purpose in perpetuity.

The approach to planning for travellers through the preparation of a Travellers' Development Plan Document will reflect the increased involvement of communities in determining the location of development. Traveller sites include those considered necessary to meet the residential needs of gypsies and travellers who will remain in a location permanently or for substantial periods; transit sites for those moving through the area, and sites for travelling show people.

The Travellers' Development Plan Document will include the following:

- provision of residential sites for at least 31 new pitches for 'gypsies and travellers' by 2017, and establish a longer term target for the period up to 2027 and beyond if possible;
- identification of broad locations for further developable residential sites for 'gypsies and travellers' over the periods 2018- 22 and 2023–2027;
- identification of need for, and approach to, the provision of transit sites;

- consideration of the need for some provision for travelling show people within the county, with the location of plots being judged against the criteria in policy H4 above;
- an urgent re-assessment of current need; with an indication of the process for updating need on a regular basis;
- enabling an increased provision of private sites during the plan period;
- consideration of the need for a rural exceptions policy to enable sites to be brought forward solely as affordable gypsy and traveller sites;
- consideration of support for the authorisation of long-term unofficial sites where they meet the criteria in policy H4 above or the making available of alternative provision where they are lost for whatever reason;

Herefordshire Council's *Assessment of the Accommodation Needs of Gypsy and Traveller Communities across Herefordshire (November 2012)* identifies a total minimum requirement of 31 residential pitches by 2017. This target is in addition to the extent of long-term unofficial sites. A pitch is defined as the 'area of land on a gypsy and traveller caravan site developed for a single family.' . Studies for the preparation of the Travellers Development Plan Document should look at the possibility of estimating levels of need for pitches for the periods 2017 - 2022 and 2023 - 2027. Estimates of need beyond 2027 cannot be forecast with sufficient accuracy and will need to be identified in subsequent reviews after the development plan document has been prepared.

Currently some 101 authorised residential pitches are available within Herefordshire with a further 27 pitches on unauthorised but tolerated sites. Numbers of caravans on these sites have fluctuated over the past two years from 148 to 161 and averaging 157. Some pitches accommodate more than one caravan. A Travellers' Development Plan Document will set out the approach to identifying sites and the number of pitches at each location. This will look at matters in detail for the period 2012-2017 and it is likely that broad locations for estimates of need beyond this period will be identified. Prior to the adoption of a development plan document, policy H4 will be used as an interim policy to direct development.

In the immediate term it is considered that Herefordshire Council will provide 8 additional pitches by bringing back into use pitches at its site in Bromyard. The private sector may need to provide for further residential site needs until the development plan document is adopted, and policy H4 sets out the basis upon which planning permission will be granted during this period. The criteria in this policy may also apply when the defined need for residential gypsy and traveller sites has been met yet further need is accepted.

In assessing whether evidence of a local need exists, the categories set out in policy RA2 will be applied. In addition, and in the same way that a rural exception policy is applied to housing development, rural exception sites can also be applied to affordable traveller sites.

Although currently there is no assessment of need for transit sites or travelling show people this will be reviewed as part of the work for the Travellers' Development Plan Document. Should any need arise in the interim; proposals will need to satisfy the criteria set out in policy H4.

In bringing proposals forward it will be important to ensure that sites are appropriately landscaped in order to limit their visual impact and should provide access to local facilities and services such as shops and schools. Small sites accommodating pitches for individual or extended families are generally more unobtrusive, easier to manage and are less likely to be of a scale which would dominate local communities. It is also important to recognise that provision is included to meet the live-work nature of gypsies and travellers and adequate provision is made for play space for children.

Social and community facilities

The Core Strategy aims to achieve sustainable communities across Herefordshire and improve the well-being of its people. This requires an effective balance between the provision of new housing and employment and providing the social and community facilities required to support growth. There is a need to support and seek improvements to local services and facilities; particularly in rural areas where facilities have been in decline since the post-war period. Less prosperous groups in remote rural areas are arguably in a worse position than similar income groups in towns, because their access to services, employment, leisure and shopping facilities is severely limited. For people living in the rural areas, access to essential facilities and services depends on access to a car or living close to a public transport route.

The lack of local services and facilities in rural areas and their increasing concentration in the towns has been identified as a key issue in Herefordshire. Included within the ambitions of the Herefordshire Community Strategy, are the retention and improvement of services and facilities and the provision of excellent training and learning opportunities - for people of all ages within the county.

Social and community facilities can be defined as physical facilities for different individuals and communities, which are provided by a range of organisations (public, private and voluntary). They provide for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community. These facilities play an important role in the development of a vibrant community by creating a sense of place and providing a place for people to meet and interact socially. They also offer services that are essential for education, health and well-being; and support community cohesion and benefit the general quality of life of residents.

Social and community facilities include: public services, community centres and public halls, arts and cultural facilities including theatres, public art and heritage centres; policing and criminal justice facilities, fire and ambulance services, health and education facilities including GP surgeries and NHS walk-in centres; public houses, local shops, public toilets, youth centres, social care facilities including day centres and child care facilities; places of worship, and services provided by the community and voluntary sector - for example scout and guide premises.

Policy SC1 – Social and community facilities

Development proposals which protect, retain or enhance existing social and community infrastructure or ensure that new facilities are available as locally as possible will be supported. Such proposals should be in or close to settlements, have considered the potential for co-location of facilities and where possible be safely accessible by foot, by cycle and public transport.

New development that creates a need for additional social and community facilities (for example, schools, preschools, children's centres, child minding provision, youth provision, pubs and local shops) - that cannot be met through existing social facilities - will be expected to meet the additional requirements through new or extension of existing provision or by financial contribution where appropriate.

Proposals involving the provision or expansion of social and community facilities will be expected to provide publicly accessible toilets (including facilities for disabled people and baby changing).

Existing facilities will be retained, unless it can be demonstrated that an appropriate alternative facility is available, or can be provided to meet the needs of the community affected; or it can be shown that the facility is no longer required, viable or is no longer fit for purpose; and where appropriate, it has been vacant and marketed for community use without success. Viable alternative facilities must be

equivalent to those they replace, in terms of size, quality and accessibility.

The provision or improvement of a higher education facilities and the continuing enhancement of existing, or provision of new training and skills facilities will be actively promoted.

Population growth will generate a range of service needs throughout Herefordshire, particularly concentrated within the major growth locations, and it is essential that these service needs are supported by appropriate levels of social and community infrastructure. This should come forward either as an integral part of the development (adaptable, mixed use and made available at an early stage), or by way of a developer contribution/community infrastructure levy.

Notwithstanding the diverse spatial requirements of local clubs, societies and faith communities, the council is moving towards the co-location of community premises such as meeting halls, places of worship and schools - for example, a mix of community uses/resources at one location to encourage efficient use of space and integrated provision to meet the needs of all sectors of our community. The council recognises however, that whilst shared space will be a suitable way forward for some, there are many who require their own space for activities, including worship and teaching.

Loss of existing facilities

Local retail premises, village halls, churches and public houses, particularly in the rural areas are often at the heart of the community and provide a place for the local community to meet, to use function rooms, to socialise and to fulfil the day to day convenience needs of the local community. In some locations it is becoming increasingly difficult to retain services, shops and public houses; however it is essential that support is given to enable businesses to continue to serve the local community. In such cases, flexibility should be given to enable local shops, services or public house to diversify into ancillary retail and tourism opportunities or community ownership through the 'Community Right to Bid process. This flexibility may enable the business to continue to serve the local community. Where a business is shown to be no longer viable, the first alternative should be to investigate whether an alternative community use is possible.

Education and skills

Some of the main socio-economic outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy are to improve educational attainment, increase the number of young people entering education or training at 16 and create a highly skilled workforce. These are also wider regeneration objectives of various agencies and important components of delivering the economic vision for Herefordshire. The council is therefore, exploring the potential for a university gateway at Hereford in order to provide opportunities for local people to access jobs in growth sectors, including green technologies and help the city become a magnet for businesses in knowledge intensive industries. In doing so, the skills of the current labour market will be improved and the knowledge and research infrastructure aligned with particular growth sectors of the economy.

Culture

The council also acknowledges the contribution that culture can make to the economy. Culture is fundamental to the character of Herefordshire, with national and local research showing that it is important to people, and has the potential to make us happier and healthier; as well as providing opportunities for social interaction and learning. However, the rural nature of Herefordshire, with its dispersed communities and limited public transport, means that access to cultural facilities can be difficult. One of the aims of Herefordshire's Cultural Strategy is to

facilitate easy and affordable access to high quality cultural activities and facilities for all.

Reducing the need to travel

The provision of community facilities in local areas across the county will ensure better access for people, which in turn reduces the need to travel; while the co-location of some facilities and services will help to ensure the effective use of resources, and encourage joined-up service delivery, and shared maintenance and management costs. In that respect, the council aims to support the delivery of new services and facilities, through partnership working with service providers and the local community; and through development opportunities that arise from local authority and private sector regeneration projects. Furthermore, the council is working with local communities to develop neighbourhood development plans, to ensure that community needs and priorities are matched to the services that are offered in their local areas.

Provision of public toilets

A lack of toilet facilities can have an impact on the lives of older people, parents and carers with young children, disabled people and people with chronic health problems; by preventing or restricting their opportunities to take part in everyday activities like shopping and leisure pursuits. The council is developing a community toilet scheme to enable local businesses like pubs, restaurants and shops, to work together with the council to make more clean, safe and accessible toilets available to the public.

Co-location of services and facilities

Co-locating public and community services in shared buildings or on shared sites provides a number of benefits for both the community, as users of the services and for the council and its partners, as providers of services.

The population of Herefordshire is forecast to continue to grow, with an ageing population structure and this will put increasing pressure on existing services. At the same time, the current economic climate and competing demands for space and resources means that a different approach towards locating services and facilities may be needed, especially if we want to ensure that infrastructure is provided in the most sustainable and accessible locations in the county. In practice this could mean linking nurseries, schools and colleges; widening the range of health and social care services available at health centres, or by providing education, training or IT services in libraries.

Open space, sports and recreation

Open space, sports and recreation facilities are an essential part of sustainable communities. They need to stand the test of time, be where people want to live, and enable people to meet their sporting and recreational aspirations and potential. Planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are fundamental to delivering the broader objectives of:

- networks of accessible, high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities in both urban and rural areas, which meet the needs of residents and visitors, are fit for purpose and are economically and environmentally sustainable;
- an appropriate balance between new provision and the enhancement of existing provision; and
- give clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and land owners in relation to the requirements and expectations of local planning authorities in respect of open space, sport and recreation provision.

Herefordshire is fortunate enough to have a broad range of open space, sports and recreation facilities which are both in public and private ownership. Open space, sports and recreation typology definitions are based upon PPG17 – *Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide* and include (but are not limited to) formal and informal parks and gardens; school sports grounds; public rights of way, allotments, semi-natural areas (including orchards), sports playing fields, cemeteries and churchyards, amenity areas, indoor sports halls, children’s play facilities, village halls, civic spaces, country parks, green infrastructure corridors and canals etc.

Unfortunately, not all communities within Herefordshire are sufficiently catered for in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility of open space; so it is essential that new developments within the county meets the needs of new communities as well as protect and enhance existing facilities which are valued by existing communities.

Policy OS1 - Requirement for open space, sports and recreation facilities

The provision of appropriate open space, sports and recreation facilities will arise in the following proposals for planning applications:

1. all new residential dwellings; or
2. retail and employment proposals of greater than 1000 square metres of floor space or the equivalent of 15 or more full-time employees; or
3. residential institutions, student accommodation, assembly and leisure, hotels or hostels.

Wherever possible, open space sports and recreation facilities will need to be placed on site and be integral to the functioning of the development. Off-site contributions will be sought on an equally beneficial basis for the local community and will include provision for appropriate maintenance (as defined by the local planning authority) of the open space, sports or recreation facility.

For applicable employment and/or retail proposals, formal open space, sports and recreation facilities (see Glossary) will not be required. However appropriate on-site provision of at least 5% of the total site area for informal areas of amenity greenspace is required for the use of employees and visitors for breaks, and will need to be properly maintained by the owner/managing company for the site. If there is a nearby open space within safe walking distance which would cater for the needs of the employees, a contribution of the equivalent cost of providing the on-site area as identified above to improve existing off-site provision, may also be considered. Users of residential institutions e.g. care homes will also require the provision of on-site amenity greenspace, particularly where the facility hosts families and children. For residential accommodation providing for the needs of people with severe mobility impairments, a reduction of required provision will be need to be provided (on a pro-rata basis) according to the needs of the residents using the accommodation.

Policy OS2 – Meeting open space, sports and recreation needs

In order to meet the needs of the community, provision for open space, sports and recreation facilities will be sought, taking into account the following principles:

1. any new development must be in accordance with all applicable set standards of quantity, quality and accessibility as defined in the companion guide to PPG17 or any successor document; and
2. provision of open space, sports and recreation facilities should be located on-site unless an off-site or partial off-site contribution would result in an equally beneficial enhancement to an existing open space, sports and/or recreation facility which is of benefit to the local community.

Proposals for major sports facilities, which meet an identified regional or sub-regional need, should be located within or on the edge of Hereford. Where no suitable site is available on the edge of Hereford, the urban areas of market towns may also be considered.

In order to identify shortfalls against a local standard of provision and set out of future requirements, Herefordshire Council has undertaken a local assessment of existing provision of open space, sports and recreation needs; which is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, the companion guide to PPG17 and standards set by relevant organisations such as Fields in Trust, Sport England and Natural England. This assessment comprises an *Open Space Study (2007)*, *Sports Facilities Framework (2010)*, *Play Facilities Study (2013)* and a *Playing Pitch Assessment (2012)*. The council is updating its evidence base in order to incorporate local standards into either a supplementary planning document, other development plan documents and/or neighbourhood development plans. This evidence base will be used to secure appropriate planning contributions to aid development of open space, sports and recreation facilities throughout Herefordshire.

Wherever possible, the new provision of open space, sports and recreation facilities should help strengthen the link with green infrastructure corridors. New provision which repairs any previous fragmentation or isolation of sites as part of green infrastructure corridors will be looked upon favourably.

Proposals for major sporting facilities away from Hereford City Centre and surrounding market towns will not be appropriate unless there is a demonstrable requirement for their use to be established in a particular location. Proposals for such facilities will also need to take into account other relevant policies in this plan, covering issues such as the impact upon the landscape and surrounding environment.

Policy OS3 – Loss of open space, sports or recreation facilities

In determining the appropriateness of proposals which results in the loss of an open space, sports or recreation facility, the following principles will be taken into account:

1. clear evidence that the open space, sports or recreation facility is surplus to the applicable quantitative standard;
2. the loss of the open space, sports or recreation facility results in an equally beneficial replacement or enhanced existing facility for the local community;
3. the loss of the open space, sports and recreation facility is for the purpose of providing an ancillary development which improves the functioning, useability or viability of the open space, sport and recreation use, e.g. changing rooms, toilets, grandstand, accommodation, assembly and function uses;
4. the loss of the open space, sports or recreation facility will not result in the fragmentation or isolation of a site which is part of a green infrastructure corridor.

Any proposals resulting in a loss of an open space, sports or recreation facility should be able to clearly demonstrate that the facility is not only surplus currently, but taking into account the population needs of the community over the plan period. Proposals which also lead to the ‘thinning out,’ isolation or fragmentation of green infrastructure networks will also be resisted.

In some cases, the loss of an open space sports and recreation facility may be appropriate where a proposal is for the purpose of providing ancillary open space,

sports and recreation uses which are necessary to enable the continued viability, functionality or useability of the facility. Ancillary facilities will also need to meet applicable policies regarding appropriateness and siting of the development.

Open space, sports and recreation facilities not only benefit the health and well-being of the community, but can also bring great benefits to existing and new species-rich habitats supporting local biodiversity. A number of open space, sports and recreation facilities are located in green infrastructure corridors and act as important green links throughout the county. It is therefore important that we keep providing a range of open space areas such as semi-natural areas alongside open space, sports and recreation facilities to support their use and protection for future generations to enjoy.

Traffic management

In order to deliver the strategic objectives outlined in Policy SS4 in the spatial strategy, development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have incorporated the traffic management and safety criteria set out in Policy MT1.

Policy MT1 – Traffic management, highway safety and promoting active travel

Development proposals should incorporate the following principle requirements covering movement and transportation:

1. demonstrate that the strategic and local highway network can absorb the traffic impacts of the development without adversely affecting the safe and efficient flow of traffic on the network or that traffic impacts can be environmentally managed to acceptable levels to reduce and mitigate any adverse impacts from the development.
2. promote and, where possible, incorporate integrated transport connections and supporting infrastructure (depending on the nature and location of the site), including access to services by means other than private motorised transport;
3. ensure that developments are designed and laid out to achieve safe entrance and exit, have appropriate operational and manoeuvring space, accommodate provision for all modes of transport, the needs of people with disabilities and should also provide safe access for the emergency services;
4. protect existing local and strategic footways, cycleways and bridleways unless an alternative route of at least equal utility value can be used, and facilitate improvements to existing or provide new connections to these routes, especially where such schemes have been identified in the Local Transport Plan and/or Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and
5. comply with both the council's Highways Development Design Guide and cycle and vehicle parking standards as prescribed in the Local Transport Plan - having regard to the location of the site and need to promote sustainable travel choices.

Where traffic management measures are introduced they should be designed in a way which respects the character of the surrounding area including its landscape character. Where appropriate, the principle of shared spaces will be encouraged.

Herefordshire Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) defines the following road hierarchy across the county:

- the strategic highway network - comprising the M50, A49, A465, and A40. The strategic highway links Hereford with the market towns and provides the principal routes into and throughout the county.
- main distributor roads which comprise mainly A class routes that supplement the strategic network.

- secondary distributor roads which comprise mainly B and C class roads that link movements to and from the main distributor network.
- local distributor roads that facilitate movement between rural settlements and parishes.

Development proposals should not inhibit the safe and efficient flow of the strategic network. The use of controls on access can positively contribute to the integration of sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport), and development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how the criteria in Policy MT1 have been incorporated within the design of the scheme in order to increase active travel across the county.

Alongside the above, development proposals should meet the requirements prescribed by the council's LTP while promoting the principles set out in Herefordshire Council's Highway Development Design Guide for New Developments and the Department for Transport's Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2 – wider application of the principles (2010) or subsequent documentation.

Traffic management schemes should respect the local area including landscape character by providing an appropriate design solution, siting of infrastructure and use of materials as well as taking opportunities to improve the quality of the public realm as part of an integrated approach. This may include opportunities for rationalising the existing infrastructure and 'de-cluttering' the streetscape to the benefit of its appearance as well as functioning.

In appropriate locations, the use of shared space can provide an approach which can reduce delays and allow pedestrians to move more freely within the space. Shared space is a design approach that seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance of motor vehicles, primarily through lower speeds and encouraging drivers to behave more accommodatingly towards pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

Delivery and monitoring of social progress policies

These policies will be delivered by:

- the development management process
- preparation and implementation of the Hereford Area Plan, neighbourhood development plans and other development plan documents
- developer contributions and the community infrastructure levy

Social Progress Monitoring Indicators

The policies will be measured against the following indicators and targets annually through the Annual Monitoring Report:

- life expectancy of residents (ONS)
- affordable housing completions split by social and intermediate occupancy
- rural exception site completion
- house type and number of bedrooms (aspirational)
- assessment of traveller site provision against the need identified in the council's Assessment of Accommodation Needs of Gypsies and Travellers
- recommendations of the open space study and playing pitch assessment which includes surveys of open space sports and recreation facilities to assess useability, supply, access and maintenance

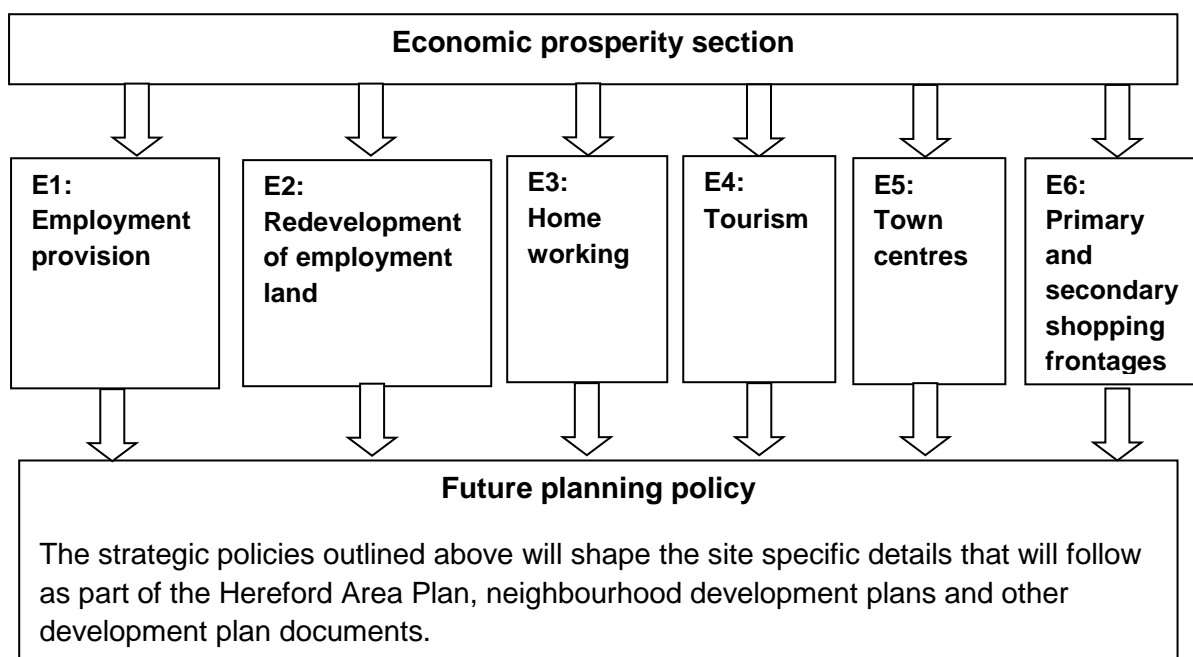
- number of planning applications proposing the loss of an open space, sports or recreation facilities
- number of planning applications proposing new open space, sports and recreation facilities

Economic prosperity

Introduction

Ensuring a strong and diverse economy will help give people in Herefordshire more opportunities for work within the county which could reduce the number of people needing to travel outside of it, retaining a skilled labour force, particularly in rural areas, as well as helping to reduce carbon emissions. Herefordshire is currently very reliant on agricultural and manufacturing industries being a centre for food and drink production, and a home to large manufacturing operations. However, it is acknowledged that although we need to help strengthen these industries, that generally these types of industries are in decline, and that some employment uses will need to diversify, particularly to environmental technologies, knowledge, tourism and service based industries in order to address this imbalance and enable the county to grow into the future.

The following policies relate to the theme of economic prosperity and include policies for the provision of employment land; maintaining employment land; home working and tourism. They supplement the spatial strategy policy SS5. In particular, they address Core Strategy objectives 6-9 set out in the spatial strategy section.



Provision of employment land

In line with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, building a strong and competitive economy is an objective that resonates in each of the policies concerning economic prosperity. Over the plan period, Herefordshire will continue to diversify employment opportunities, encourage the expansion of local business and reduce the need for travel. Already many employment areas in Herefordshire utilise links with the A49 trunk road, including sites in Hereford City Centre, Ross on Wye, Leominster, Marlbrook and Moreton-on-Lugg. There will be a greater emphasis on extending and enlarging enterprise parks in Hereford City, the market towns and allowing more flexibility in the rural areas for employment development such as home working and live/work units.

As shown in figure 5.2 in order to cater for the needs of the plan period within Herefordshire as a whole, it is estimated that there is currently approximately 118 hectares of employment land supply either allocated (without planning permission) or committed (including allocations/other sites with planning permission where employment development has not started or is under construction).

Figure 5.2: Herefordshire supply overview (hectares)

Supply Component	Office (B1a)	Manufacturing (B1b,c & B2)	Warehousing (B8)	Total
Employment allocations	17.83	42.31	18.08	78.22
Commitments (n/s)	6.96	21.21	3.81	31.98
Commitments (u/c)	1.31	4.18	1.01	6.5
Owner specific sites	0	1.39	0	1.39
Total supply (excluding Owner Specific Sites)	26.1	69.09	22.9	118.09

Source: Employment Land Study 2012

Policy E1 - Employment provision
<p>The focus for new employment provision in Herefordshire is to provide a range of locations, types and sizes of employment buildings, land and offices to meet the needs of the local economy. Larger employment proposals will be directed to the strategic employment sites of Hereford City, the market towns and rural industrial estates where appropriate.</p> <p>Development proposals which enhance employment provision and help diversify the economy of Herefordshire will be encouraged where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the proposal is appropriate in terms of its connectivity, scale, design and size; • the proposal makes better use of previously developed land or buildings; • the proposal is an appropriate extension to strengthen or diversify the existing business operation; • the proposal provides for opportunities for new office development in appropriate locations. <p>The provision of viable live/work units as part of mixed use developments will also be encouraged.</p>

It is important that plan policies enable new, sustainable provision of employment land in locations and of a scale that is appropriate. Whilst Herefordshire has a relatively high employment rate, it is important to make sure that adequate opportunities exist to improve the quality and range of employment available.

A major element of the strategy for generating new and better jobs will be the provision of a deliverable range of land supply in appropriate locations and in the right amounts. 'Employment land' in this instance refers to those uses falling within the planning B use classes, that is offices (B1), manufacturing (B2) and warehousing and distribution (B8). In addition, employment land is considered an appropriate location to accommodate waste facilities and similar sui-generis employment uses.

The following is a summary of the main new and existing strategic locations which will provide for local and inward investment and contribute to the future employment provision in the county over the plan period. There is also potential for smaller sites to come forward throughout the plan period away from these strategic locations, which will also be encouraged where appropriate.

Hereford

The city of Hereford will continue to provide a large proportion of the county's employment supply.

Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ)

The Rotherwas industrial estate is located south-east of Hereford and is over 120 hectares (ha) in size and has over 125 companies operating within it.

Westfields Trading Estate

The Westfields trading estate is a 25 ha site located in the northern part of Hereford.

Three Elms Trading Estate

Three Elms Trading Estate is located north of Hereford and occupies 3 ha of land.

Holmer Road, Hereford

The industrial precinct on Holmer Road is located to the north of Hereford and is approximately 16 ha in size

Market towns

The market towns of Leominster, Bromyard, Kington, Ross-on-Wye and Ledbury will also continue to support employment development through the rest of the county at existing and/or new strategic employment sites, which will be the primary location of a range of employment premises providing a series of enterprise hubs to complement the Hereford Enterprise Zone. The main strategic employment locations in the market towns are as follows:

Land west of Panniers Lane, Bromyard

This 5 ha area is located to the south western edge of Bromyard. The site is likely to support a number of small scale business enterprises.

Leominster Enterprise Park, Leominster

The Leominster Enterprise Park is located to the south-east of Leominster and is designated by the *Employment Land Study 2012* as of 'best quality.' The site is 15 ha in size and caters B1, B2 and B8 uses. It is envisaged to be fully developed during the first half of the plan period. Given housing growth in Leominster, it is likely that during the second half of the plan period, an additional 5-10 ha of employment land will be required by extending the Leominster Enterprise Park to the south.

Southern Avenue, Leominster

This site is adjacent to the Leominster Enterprise Park and is 33 ha in size and is rated by the *Employment Land Study 2012* as 'good.' The site has limited opportunities to provide additional employment opportunities, however it is a significant contributor to employment provision.

Land between Little Marcle Road and Ross Road, Ledbury

This location is to the south-west of Ledbury and will be approximately 12 ha of employment land which will come forward to support the existing population and proposed growth of Ledbury. The land adjoins existing employment land and is rated as 'moderate' and will cater for a mix of employment uses, particularly smaller based business which may help to reduce the need to travel for the local community.

Model Farm, Ross-on-Wye

This site, carried forward from the Unitary Development Plan 2007, is approximately 10 ha in size and is located to the east of Ross-on-Wye. The site is envisaged to deliver innovative knowledge based industries and a high quality mix of B1, B2 and B8 employment. The site has excellent access to the A40 and is classed as 'good.'

Rural areas

The areas outside of market towns are also supported for continuing economic growth, particularly in areas which allow for the diversification of uses either through strengthening food and drink production, adding to new environmental technologies or those that allow for home based start-up businesses. The Rural Economy section of this Core Strategy contains further policies and explanatory text to guide employment development within these areas.

There is however a small number of larger employment locations outside of Hereford and the market towns which will also continue to contribute to the provision of Herefordshire's employment needs, including:

Moreton Business Park, Moreton-on-Lugg

Moreton Business Park is a large employment site of 60 ha which is located on the A49 between Hereford and Leominster. The business park includes a mineral extraction site and other employment units which contain all employment classes, however has recently seen an increase of B1 office use and B8 storage and distribution uses. There is also possibility to enhance rail infrastructure into the site for business use. The site is rated as 'good' with potential to be rated as 'best.'

Safeguarding existing employment land

'Best and Good' quality employment land in the county, as defined in the *Employment Land Study 2012* will continue to be safeguarded for employment generating uses and general industry. In circumstances where other employment land and sites are no longer viable, sufficient justification and evidence will need to be submitted - for example structural surveys demonstrating that the building is not fit for continued employment use, and redevelopment of the site for employment use is not viable or feasible. Where possible, flexibility will be given to enable the business the opportunity to diversify to other ancillary and complementary uses to enable the business to continue. Uses such as fitness centres, child care centres, residential and retail uses are generally not appropriate to be located within an employment site, unless they serve for the day-to day convenience needs of the employment site and any residential use is part of a live/work scheme.

Where proposals are advanced to change the use of land not specifically examined by the employment land review; the methodology used in the study will be used to determine the quality of the site.

Policy E2 - Redevelopment of existing employment land and buildings

Employment land and buildings rated as 'best' and 'good' in the Employment Land Study 2012 (or successor document) will be safeguarded from redevelopment to other non employment uses:

Proposals which would result in the loss of employment land rated as 'moderate' will be only permitted where:

1. the release of the site for other uses would not result in an overall shortage in the quality and quantity of employment land supply in the area; or
2. there would be a net improvement in amenity through the removal of a non-conforming use from within a residential area, and where an alternative use would offer amenity benefits. For sites in existing employment use, consideration should also be given to the ability to relocate existing occupiers where this is necessary; or
3. the proposal would not result in a piecemeal loss of employment land where there is potential for a more comprehensive scheme;
4. the viability of the development proposal has been confirmed through a comprehensive assessment;
5. there is evidence of appropriate and active marketing of at least 12 months for a

B Use Class employment and that this marketing has been unsuccessful.

The provision of ancillary and complementary uses which help meet the day-to-day needs of employment sites and their employees and improve the sites' attractiveness to businesses, will be permitted where they are of a scale which does not impact on the overall supply of employment land.

It is important that a range of employment land continues to be available within Herefordshire. Means by which this can be achieved include: safeguarding existing supply, enabling extensions to existing employment land, or the development of additional employment land where appropriate.

Policy E2 seeks to protect the best quality employment land in Herefordshire from being lost to other uses. The *Employment Land Study 2012* undertaken as part of the evidence base classifies employment land across Herefordshire in respect of its quality. The recommendations from this study provide the basis for the development of Policy E1- 'Employment provision.'

Home working

In addition to employment sites in predominately Class B employment areas; Herefordshire Council also encourages the development of live/work units and some material change of use in surrounding residential areas to allow for a small scale occupation to be carried out at a person's principal place of residence. Live/work units and allowing flexibility for home working enable small enterprises which are compatible with the residential environment to become established. If the business seeks to expand beyond what could be described as home working or a live/work unit, then larger facilities in surrounding areas, particularly in enterprise parks in surrounding towns should be utilised.

Policy E3 - Homeworking

The value of home working will be recognised by allowing some material change of use to part of a dwelling, where the dwelling remains as the principle place of residence for the home worker; and recognising the potential to encourage and expand home working, by allowing small extensions or conversions where the proposed use and operation would be compatible with its location, heritage value, and where it would not adversely affect the amenity of the neighbourhood by any of the following:

- changes to the appearance of any building;
- noise disturbance from the use or any increased traffic and parking generated;
- unsociable hours of operation; and
- the storage of hazardous materials or emissions from the site.

Tourism

The Herefordshire Steam Report 2011 shows that tourism makes an important contribution to the county's economy. Herefordshire has many historic and natural assets which are of national interest for example the Mappa Mundi and the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Hereford, the market towns and rural areas are popular destinations for a range of different types of visits and activities. Tourism in Herefordshire can help to strengthen the economy through diversification and new business development in both urban and rural areas.

By encouraging more overnight stays and associated increased expenditure, there is potential for revenue from tourism to make a greater contribution to the county's economic well-being. The provision of new accommodation and the enhancement of existing accommodation will help achieve this goal. Many visitors to the county

come to enjoy the beautiful countryside and there is likely to be a demand for new facilities and accommodations associated with this. Whilst some small scale tourism associated development may be appropriate in rural areas, any significant new development for accommodation and facilities should be focused in Hereford and the market towns to maximise sustainable transport opportunities and to protect environmental amenity. *The Marches Hotel Study 2012* indicates that three star hotels dominate supply in Herefordshire. The Study identified a need for larger 4-star hotels in the county with business and conferencing facilities. In order to ensure that there is not an oversupply of a particular standard of hotel, applicants will be encouraged to provide a 'Hotel Needs Assessment Report' to support their proposals. This assessment will inform whether the right standard of hotel is proposed with respect to market demand and need to demonstrate the economic benefit of the new hotel to the area.

The disused Herefordshire and Gloucestershire canal corridor is the subject of a long term restoration project with the aim of re-opening the canal link between Hereford and the Severn at Gloucester, terminating in a canal basin in Hereford. Some sections have already been restored. The recreation, tourism and economic potential of the project is recognised and it will continue to receive protection from development through Policy E4.

Policy E4 recognises the contribution that tourism makes to the Herefordshire economy and seeks to ensure that this continues and is enhanced through new developments which are of an appropriate scale, type and location.

Policy E4 – Tourism

Herefordshire will be promoted as a destination for quality leisure visits and sustainable tourism by utilising, conserving and enhancing the county's unique environmental and heritage assets and by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. In particular, the tourist industry will be supported by:

1. recognising the unique historic character of Hereford and the market towns as key visitor attractions, and as locations to focus the provision of new larger scale tourist development;
2. the development of sustainable tourism opportunities, capitalising on assets such as the county's landscape, rivers, other waterways and attractive rural settlements, where there is no detrimental impact on the county's varied natural and heritage assets or on the overall character and quality of the environment. Particular regard will be had to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty in the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
3. retaining and enhancing existing, and encourage new, accommodation and attractions throughout the county, which will help to diversify the tourist provision, extend the tourist season and increase the number of visitors staying overnight. In particular proposals for a high standard hotel with business and conferencing facilities in Hereford will be encouraged. Applicants will be encouraged to provide a 'Hotels Need Assessment' for applications for new hotels,
4. ensuring that cycling, walking and heritage tourism is encouraged by facilitating the development of long distance walking and cycling routes, food and drink trails and heritage trails, including improvements to public rights of way, whilst having special regard for the visual amenity of such routes and trails, and for the setting of heritage assets in their vicinity;
5. the safeguarding of the historic route of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal, together with its infrastructure, buildings, towpath and features.. Where the original alignment cannot be re-established, a corridor allowing for deviations will be safeguarded. New developments within or immediately adjoining the safeguarded corridor will be required to incorporate land for canal restoration. Development not connected with the canal that would prevent or prejudice the restoration of a continuous route will not be permitted.

Policy E5 encourages appropriate town centre investment in Hereford and the market towns of Bromyard, Ledbury, Leominster, Kington and Ross-on-Wye which will contribute to and enhance the vitality and viability of these centres.

Policy E5 – Town centres

Town centres will be the focus for retail, commercial, leisure, cultural and tourism uses. Proposals for such uses which contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centres of Hereford and the market towns will be supported provided that they:

1. do not adversely affect the primary function of the town centres as shopping destinations; and
2. are of a scale and design appropriate to the size, role, character and heritage of the centre.

Proposals for development outside the town centres will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the requirements of the sequential test have been met and that the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the centres. An application will be refused if it fails the sequential test or impact assessment..

The sequential test approach requires these uses to be located within the town centres. Where it is proven there are no available and suitable town centre sites, preference will be given to edge of centre sites before any out of centre site is considered. Where a sequential test adequately demonstrates that the only suitable and available site is an edge of centre or an out of centre location, preference will be given to sites that are well connected to the town centre and are easily accessible by sustainable transport modes.

An impact assessment for retail, leisure and commercial proposals outside of the town centres may be required depending on the scale and location of the proposal as specified in the Place Shaping section.

The use of upper floors within town centres for residential and office uses will be supported.

Within town centres, retail uses will be concentrated within the primary shopping areas.

The town centre boundaries are defined in the place shaping sections. A review of these boundaries will be undertaken as part of the neighbourhood development plans and the Hereford Area Plan.

Policy E5 has been informed by the findings of the *Town Centres Study Update 2012* which outlines the retail, office and leisure needs of Hereford and the five market towns to 2031. The report identifies limited requirement for further retail and leisure development and advises that there is no need for out of centre retail allocations in Hereford or in the market towns. Where town centre uses are proposed in edge of centre or out of centre locations, a sequential approach to selecting sites will be adopted in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. Evidence will be required to demonstrate that all available town centre opportunities have been thoroughly assessed, and transparent reasons provided as to why the town centre sites are not suitable and available, before land and/or buildings in edge of centre and then out of centre locations are considered. The sequential approach will also apply to large scale extensions to existing retail and town centre uses, as well as proposals to vary or remove conditions restricting the range of goods that can be sold, where the site is located in an edge of centre or out of centre location. In considering the suitability and availability of sites, applicants will be required to demonstrate how they have adopted a flexible approach to the size, design and format of the proposal.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to set thresholds to determine the requirement for an impact assessment for applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of town centres. Individual thresholds have been set for Hereford and the market towns as follows, and are included within the individual place shaping policies:

Hereford	1,250 sq.m
Bromyard	200 sq.m
Kington	200 sq.m
Ledbury	500 sq.m
Leominster	500 sq.m
Ross-on-Wye	500 sq.m

The council will seek to agree the scope of any impact assessment with the applicant in advance to ensure that the assessment is proportionate to the proposal under consideration. These impact assessments will be expected to meet the requirements as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 26 and will also apply to extensions and proposals to vary or remove conditions restricting the range of goods that can be sold. Impact assessments should balance any identified benefits in terms of job creation, highways and accessibility improvements etc. against likely counter effects that may occur in the town centre as a result of the proposal.

The vitality and viability of town centres may also be enhanced by the use of upper floors over existing shops, for residential and office accommodation; and uses that assist in supporting the vibrancy of the town centres in the evenings such as restaurants and leisure facilities. Such uses will assist in increasing the footfall and general activity in the town centre.

Retail

A successful retail function contributes to the vitality and viability of the town centre, the maintenance of its historic fabric and its role as a tourist destination. The aim of the policy is to improve vitality and viability of the centres by improving the variety, choice and quality of shops and other services, and enhancing the overall attraction, safety, convenience and ambience of a town centre. Within the town centres, retail uses will be focused in the primary shopping areas. These will be defined in the Hereford Area Plan, neighbourhood development plans or development plan documents.

For edge of centre and out of centre retail locations that have satisfied the sequential test and impact assessments, conditions may be imposed where necessary to restrict the range of goods to be sold to bulky goods only and/or the net floorspace that can be devoted to non-bulky goods. Conditions may also be imposed setting a minimum size of unit and restricting the potential for further vertical or horizontal sub division. This is to prevent the proliferation of smaller shop units outside of the town centre without further reference to the local planning authority and will protect the vitality and viability of existing centres.

Regular markets in town centres can attract additional shoppers and enhance the vibrancy to town centres bringing additional benefits for the existing retailers. Most of these are of a temporary nature and use public spaces. They generally complement the character of the town centres and their retention and enhancement will be encouraged.

Offices

The *Employment Land Study Update 2012* found that the majority of demand for offices in Hereford is for small office premises (less than 100 sq.m) and in the market towns is generally from local companies in the town centres. In all places demand

was found to be low and therefore it is expected that this can be met through existing provision and the conversion of upper floors of properties.

Leisure

The *Town Centres Study Update 2012* recommended that no further allocations for leisure facilities and other town centre uses are made in Hereford or in the market towns. However the provision of new leisure facilities in locations within market town centres should be encouraged where they serve an identified community need or meet a shortfall in existing provision.

Primary shopping areas and primary and secondary shopping frontages

Primary shopping areas will be made up of primary and secondary shopping frontages (except in Bromyard and Kington) and will be reviewed in the Hereford Area Plan (including the Old Market Area) or neighbourhood development plans/development plan documents. Until their review the primary and secondary frontages as shown in the place shaping sections are carried forward from the Unitary Development Plan 2007 for development management purposes. Primary and secondary frontages will not be defined for Bromyard and Kington given the size of their centres and the distribution of uses within them. In these towns retail uses will to be focused in the primary shopping areas when defined.

Policy E6 -Primary Shopping Areas and primary and secondary shopping frontages

The retail trading character of the primary shopping areas and primary and secondary shopping frontages will be protected and enhanced. Primary shopping frontages will continue to be dominated by shops (Class A1) whilst secondary frontages may include greater mix of uses.

Proposals for uses within Classes A2-A5 in ground floor premises will be permitted where the proposed use will not result in:

- a continuous frontage of more than two non-retail units; and
- the non-retail uses exceeding 25% in primary shopping frontages and 50% in secondary shopping frontages. Exceptions to these thresholds may be considered where:
- In primary and secondary frontages the appropriate use of vacant or underused premises will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the premises are unlikely to be used for retailing and that a business case can be demonstrated for requiring such a location or in secondary frontages the proposal results from an expansion of an existing non retail use; and

In primary and secondary frontages, the proposal will not detract from the shopping character of the frontage concerned for reasons of location or frontage width or; It is demonstrated in the Hereford Area Plan and/or a Neighbourhood Development Plan that an alternative threshold would be appropriate. Within secondary frontages uses within Classes D1 and D2 may be considered appropriate. Proposals for such uses must conform to the criteria of this policy listed above.

Proposals must respect the character of the frontage and be appropriate in location, unit size and frontage width. The reinstatement of historic frontages will be encouraged.

The overall emphasis on retail trading should be retained in order to maintain character and to protect the vitality and viability of the primary shopping areas of Hereford and the market towns. The concentration of retail trading activity within a limited area, with substantial runs of active retail frontage will contribute to the busy

and vibrant character of the county's primary shopping areas. A variety of non-retail uses already exist within shopping areas and these can add to the diversity of uses in town centres. Different but complementary uses during the day and evening can reinforce each other, making town centres more attractive to local residents, shoppers and visitors. The non-retail uses include building societies, banks, estate agents, insurance and betting offices (uses falling within Use Class A2, financial and professional services), together with restaurants and cafes (Class A3), drinking establishments (Class A4) and hot food takeaways (Class A5). However whilst one non-retail use alone may not detract from the vitality of a street, the cumulative impact of such changes will do so. A concentration of non-retail uses can have the effect of breaking up the shopping area, isolating some shop units to the detriment of the centre as a whole. The further introduction of non-retail uses in the primary shopping areas therefore, needs to be carefully balanced against the need to protect retail trading character. The Hereford Area Plan and neighbourhood plans/development plan documents for Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye will review the boundaries of the primary and secondary shopping frontages. However as stated above, only a primary shopping area will be defined in the Neighbourhood Plans/development plan documents for Bromyard and Kington as recommended in the *The Town Centre Study Update 2012*.

The introduction of non-retail uses falling outside Class A of the Use Classes Order will normally be opposed on the ground floor level of primary shopping areas so as to protect the combination of retail and associated services which characterise these frontages in the interest of protecting vitality and viability. However secondary shopping frontages may provide an opportunity for some non-retail uses in Classes D1 and D2 in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, subject to the criteria of Policy E6.

Proposals will also be considered in terms of noise, appearance, traffic generation, servicing, parking and any other factors which may have a detrimental effect on the shopping street and residential amenity.

Reference should be made to the Shop Front Design Guide 2011. Where historic frontages have been lost or degraded their repair and / or reinstatement will be encouraged. This can help to improve the quality and attractiveness of the centre and this contribute to its vitality and viability.

Delivery and monitoring of economic prosperity policies

These policies will be delivered by:

- an Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- preparation and implementation of other development plan documents or neighbourhood development plans;
- the development management process.
-

Economic Prosperity Monitoring Indicators

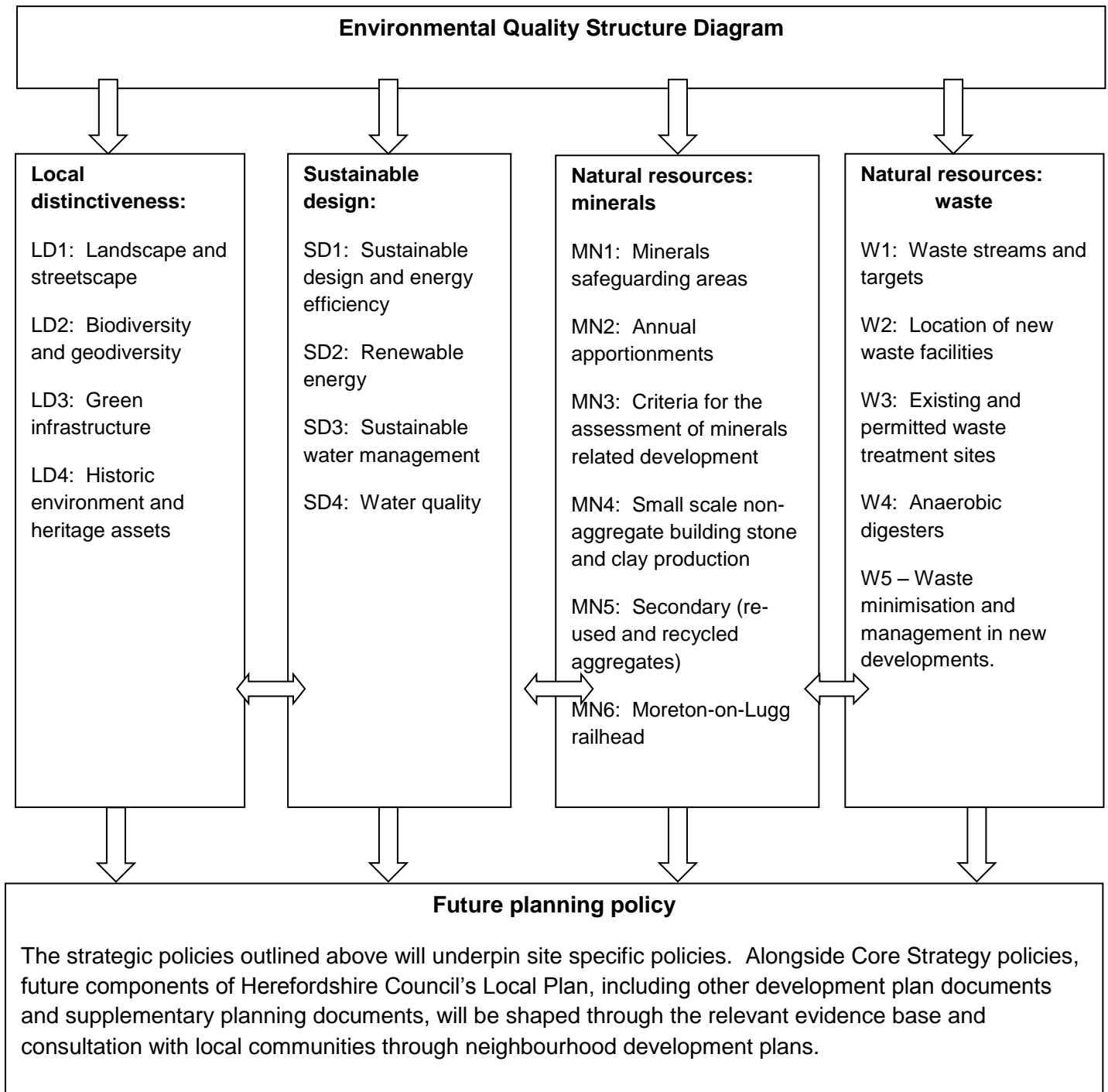
The following indicators will be used to monitor the effectiveness of the policies:

- the amount of employment land commitments, completions and reallocations, as monitored through the council's annual Employment Land Survey including expansions and relocations;
- the amount of vacant land and premises in the county;
- the amount of new employment development occurring in rural areas;
- new business registration rates;

- the amount of retail, office and leisure development completed within the monitoring period;
- the amount of retail, office and leisure floorspace permitted outside of city and town centres;
- the amount of permissions granted for change of use from A2 to residential or offices;
- the number of vacant units within town centres
- the number of conversions of upper floors of retail and commercial premises to residential and office use;
- the number and type of visits to Herefordshire, and associated expenditure;
- the number of people employed in the different tourism sectors; and
- events and attractions occurring across the county.

Environmental Quality

The role of this chapter is to aid the delivery of environmental objectives 10-12 of Herefordshire Council's Core Strategy. This will be achieved through incorporating and enhancing important locally distinctive assets within future developments while combating climate change and mitigating its impacts. There are clear links as shown, between all the four elements below; for example water management, geodiversity and renewable energy are all integral 'natural resources' and each element should not be read in isolation. The way water, energy and minerals are utilised affects all developments.



Local distinctiveness

To successfully deliver the Core Strategy vision in respect of environmental quality and local distinctiveness, this section provides a pro-active strategy for the conservation, restoration and enhancement of environmental assets and the delivery of new green infrastructure to support policy SS6.

Locally distinctive assets both natural and man-made, are finite and any detrimental impacts can carry cultural, environmental, economic and social costs. A number of assets benefit from statutory designations within national and international legislation. Statutory designations range from large areas conserved for biodiversity importance, such as the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and River Wye Special Area of Conservation, to individual statutory listed buildings which are protected for their architectural or historical significance.

Non-statutory designations and locally determined features are equally important to Herefordshire's local distinctiveness. Working with partner organisations, Herefordshire Council has identified important assets such as local wildlife sites and areas and buildings of local interest which contribute to Herefordshire's unique character. Non-statutory locally distinctive buildings and green spaces will be identified through forthcoming development plan documents or neighbourhood development plans

Conserving local distinctiveness is central to the purposes of designations at all levels and achieved substantially through the production and implementation of management plans, conservation strategies and objectives and guidance resulting from best practice and local assessments.

Landscape and townscape:

The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as “*an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*”. Herefordshire has a distinctive and varied landscape. Much of the area is rural in nature but varied in landscape character, including high hills, forest, commons and river meadows. Herefordshire contains a wide range of settlement patterns, different types of farmland and evidence of ancient landscape features. This diverse landscape is an integral element of local distinctiveness.

Landscape is important, not just as scenery but because it links culture with nature, and the past with the present. It has many values, not all of them tangible (such as sense of place); and it matters to people – it is people who create and value landscape. All landscapes matter, not only those with national designations. They provide a range of services such as food, water, climate regulation and aesthetic enjoyment.

Policy LD1 – Landscape and townscape

Development proposals should be in accordance with landscape management objectives and townscape assessments and achieve all the following objectives:

- demonstrate that character of the landscape and townscape has positively influenced the design, scale, nature and site selection, including protection and enhancement of the setting of settlements and designated areas;

- conserve and enhance the natural, historic and scenic beauty of important landscapes and features, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, nationally and locally designated parks and gardens and conservation areas; through the protection of the area's character, and by enabling appropriate uses, design and management;
- incorporate new landscape schemes and their management to ensure development integrates appropriately into its surroundings; and
- maintain and extend tree cover where important to amenity, through the retention of important trees, appropriate replacement of trees lost through development and new planting to support green infrastructure.

The concepts of conservation, restoration and enhancement have been set out as a strategic approach to landscape and townscape management. The principles are relevant when considering the management of individual sites where the landscape character may be dependent upon unique landscape features. Landscape survey and analysis are pro-active tools for allowing new build developments to address the three principles. For development proposals there are often opportunities for mitigation measures to conserve landscape features such as trees, to restore features such as boundary hedges and to enhance the landscape character by other means such as woodland planting, creation of wetland areas or restoration of historic features. The preparation of landscape schemes and management plans should address these three aspects in relation to the local landscape character and the relevant landscape type.

Various landscape and townscape character assessments have been prepared supported by a Historic Landscape Characterisation and a number of conservation areas appraisals. The *Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance 2009* (SPD) will be reviewed during the plan period. The SPD will build upon the detailed evidence base documentation; including Natural England's Character Areas as well as more recently produced *Urban Fringe Sensitivity Analysis* (January 2010), *Rapid Townscape Assessments* (various), *Green Infrastructure Strategy* (February 2010) and other local studies covering the architectural and historic environment. In conjunction with the above, relevant Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans also provide more place-specific guidance which should inform development proposals from the outset.

The particular importance of trees is recognised within the planning system and the extent of tree cover is important to the county's landscape and townscape. Tree surveys and arboricultural impact assessments may be necessary where it is important to assess and protect existing trees on or adjacent sites where development proposals are being advanced.

Biodiversity and geodiversity:

Biodiversity can be defined as the variety of sites, habitats and species within a specified locality and is influenced by factors such as geology, topography and climate. Geodiversity refers to the natural processes and constituent parts that have shaped the landscape and includes minerals, soils and water.

Biodiversity and geodiversity assets provide an important contribution to the distinctiveness of an area. Herefordshire has a diverse range of geological features and wildlife habitats such as the Malvern Hills, the River Wye, ancient woodlands and traditional orchards. Wildlife is not confined to designated sites and many features serve as wildlife corridors, links and stepping stones. Ecological networks are vital to the survival and dispersal of species. Herefordshire's biodiversity and geodiversity

make a major contribution to the economy, supporting the tourism sector and providing a healthy and attractive environment for its residents.

Policy LD2 – Biodiversity and geodiversity

Development proposals should conserve, restore and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity assets of Herefordshire, incorporating the following objectives:

1. retention and protection of sites, habitats, networks and species of European, national and local importance and those identified within biodiversity and geodiversity action plans;
2. restoration and enhancement of existing biodiversity and geodiversity features on site and connectivity to wider ecological networks; and
3. creation of new biodiversity features and wildlife habitats.

Where appropriate the council will work with developers to agree a management strategy to ensure the protection of, and prevention of adverse impacts on, biodiversity and geodiversity features.

Areas of biodiversity and geological importance and sensitivity should be protected and development should enhance local habitats and ecological networks. Development within close proximity to internationally, nationally and locally designated sites will need to incorporate sympathetic design components to enhance their nature conservation interests and to avoid or mitigate any adverse impacts. Internationally important sites present within the county include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); nationally important sites include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); and locally important sites include Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites. Where harm cannot be avoided, compensatory measures should be included to off-set any losses or adverse effects.

Dependent upon the scale and proximity of development proposals to biodiversity or geodiversity features, Herefordshire Council will seek a management strategy to ensure the continued protection of the features of interest. Such management strategies may include monitoring information. This will provide up-to-date information which will shape future policy reviews as well as inform future site specific plans.

The Core Strategy objectives will be delivered through supporting development proposals that add to Herefordshire's biodiversity. During the plan period Herefordshire Council will review its Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Guidance utilising in particular the principles, opportunities and constraints detailed within the *Building Biodiversity into Herefordshire Council's Local Development Framework* (December 2009). Further areas of local biodiversity or geodiversity importance may be designated or extended during the plan period.

Details of the county's biodiversity and geodiversity assets and features, some of which traverse the local authority's administrative boundaries, are held at the Herefordshire Biological Records Centre. Core areas have been identified where there are clusters of biodiversity and geodiversity features of high conservation value as detailed in the Herefordshire Ecological Network Map (*October 2012*). Development within and adjacent to these core areas and associated buffer zones will need to be sympathetically designed to ensure there are no adverse impacts

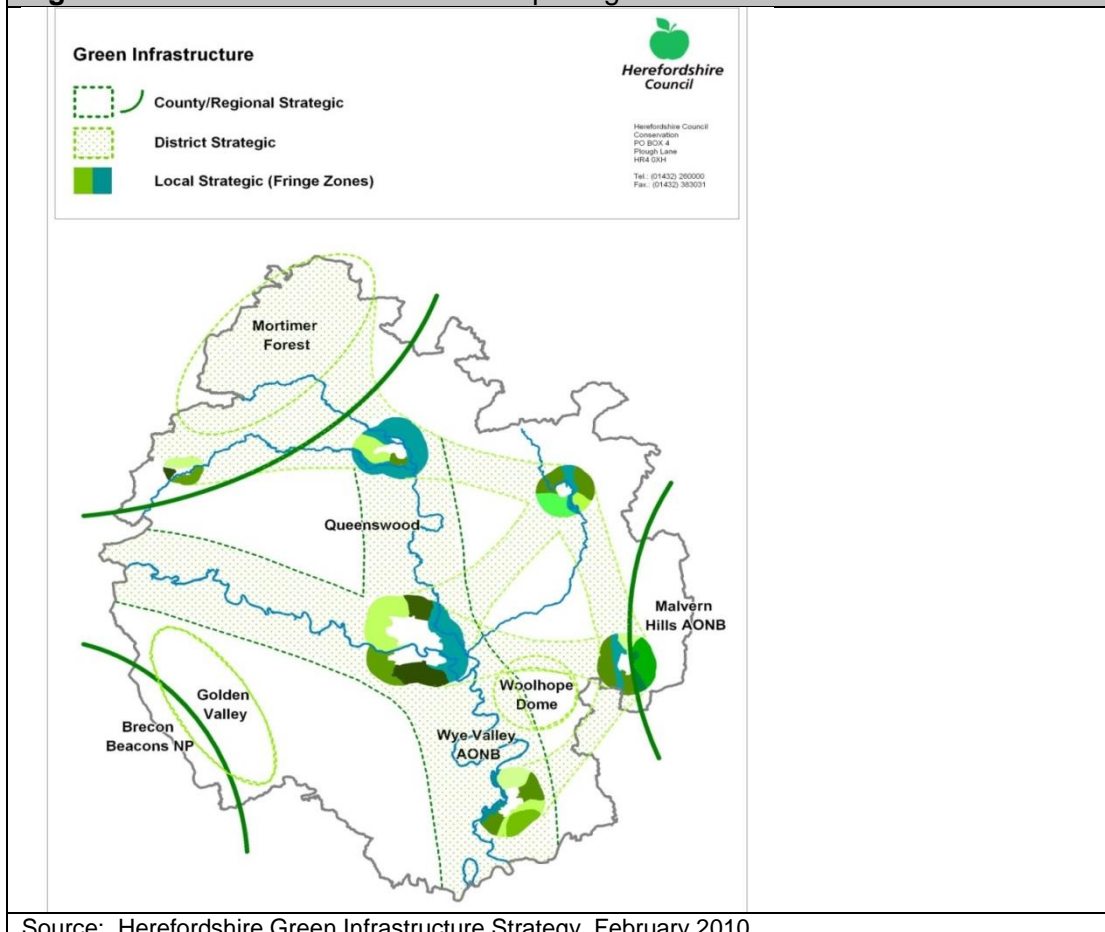
upon them. Alongside this Herefordshire Council will seek contributions to enhance and link such core areas.

Green infrastructure

Green infrastructure is a multi-functional network of green spaces, links and assets within and surrounding the built environment, and providing connection to the wider countryside. As a major component of sustainable design it includes and contributes to health and wellbeing as well as biodiversity, culture and heritage across the county. It is not limited to urban areas and can be seen at different strategic levels as shown in the table below and the accompanying concept diagram.

Geographic tier	Example of green infrastructure asset
County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. ▪ Sites of national and international nature conservation importance (e.g. SAC, SSSI). ▪ Verges of trunk roads, motorways and railways.
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rivers and large streams and their floodplains. ▪ Local wildlife sites. Scheduled ancient monuments. ▪ Designed landscapes.
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public and private parks and gardens. ▪ Recreational grounds, cemeteries, playing fields and public green spaces. ▪ Public rights of way and cycle paths.

Figure 5.3: Green infrastructure concept diagram



Herefordshire Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (February 2010) sets out a vision for green infrastructure across the county. It also provides a local framework around Hereford and the five market towns by defining strategic corridors, enhancement zones and fringe zones. These are areas where through sympathetic design and planning, a functional relationship between the urban and rural environments can be created and enhanced.

The development of new green infrastructure and preservation of existing assets will provide a variety of economic, environmental and social benefits. Economic benefits can be achieved through food production and productive landscapes, diversification of farming activities and attracting tourism. Environmental benefits include habitat provision and connectivity, landscape protection, energy conservation and mitigation of climate change impacts. Social benefits of green infrastructure include places for leisure, garden food production, recreation, sport and exercise, all of which make a major contribution to health and wellbeing. Development can include corridors for movement through foot and cycle paths. It provides opportunities for improving the management of and interpreting natural and heritage assets and how they contribute to local distinctiveness. Increased access to green infrastructure can promote physical and mental health and well-being.

Green infrastructure can provide energy production, flood attenuation, maintenance of water quality, water resource management, cooling effects and many other benefits encompassed under the concept of ecosystem services. The council is committed to work with Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership to bring forward a shared vision using green infrastructure to improve ecological networks and wider economic and social benefits as part of an ecosystems approach.

Policy LD3 – Green infrastructure

Development proposals should protect, manage and plan for the preservation of existing and delivery of new green infrastructure, and should achieve the following objectives:

1. identification and retention of existing green infrastructure corridors and linkages; including the protection of valued landscapes, trees, hedgerows, woodlands, water courses and adjoining flood plain;
2. provision of on-site green infrastructure; and
3. integration with, and connection to, the surrounding green infrastructure network.

Development proposals should identify and protect existing green infrastructure. This could be based on areas mapped in the Green Infrastructure Strategy or any other features that contribute to the green infrastructure network. This should take account of features within the site, but also on adjacent sites as integration and connection with the surroundings is a key objective. Proposals should incorporate the retention and enhancement of features such as trees and hedgerows, together with long term management.

The inclusion of new planting, wildlife enhancement, creation and links, links to the countryside and river ways, green transport corridors, open spaces and recreational facilities and sustainable drainage systems within or associated with development proposals are important and valuable contributions to green infrastructure. Landscaping of development sites should feature planting of appropriate native

species wherever possible, ensuring there is sufficient space for plants to grow to maturity. Opportunities for new elements include establishing grasslands, wildflower meadows, wetlands, orchards or woodland. New green infrastructure features could include promoting and extending the public rights of way network, increasing public access and providing interpretive information.

Historic environment and heritage assets

The historic environment is defined as all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora. Those elements of significance with statutory protection are referred to as designated heritage assets. Policy LD4 is applicable to heritage assets throughout Herefordshire whether formally designated or not, ranging from individual structures and their settings, archaeological remains, to larger neighbourhoods of historic value, parks, gardens and other green spaces of local interest.

The historic environment and heritage assets are significant contributors to sustainable development. Important local buildings have a social value and can act as focal points for local communities. The historic environment is of cultural value as it illustrates the historical development of Herefordshire. Heritage assets also bring economic benefits as Herefordshire's well preserved historic environment is a major factor in its tourism industry and the county's quality of life can also serve to attract and retain investment. The re-use of existing buildings can also help mitigate climate change through reducing development pressures on greenfield sites, reducing demand for construction energy and materials and by minimising construction waste.

Policy LD4 – Historic environment and heritage assets

Development proposals affecting heritage assets and the wider historic environment should achieve the following objectives:

1. the conservation, and where appropriate enhancement, of heritage assets and their settings that positively contribute to the character of a site, townscape and/or wider environment, including conservation areas;
2. the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings through appropriate management, uses and sympathetic design;
3. the retention, repair and sustainable use of heritage assets as a focus for wider regeneration schemes;
4. the appropriate recording of heritage assets in mitigation of development impact, in cases where agreed loss occurs.

The scope of the works required to protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings should be proportionate to their significance. Development schemes should emphasise the original form and function of any asset and, where appropriate, improve the understanding of and public access to them.

Where important heritage assets are at risk or underutilised, development proposals for alternative uses which are sympathetic and contribute to the conservation of the heritage asset and its wider environment will be supported. Due to the site-specific nature of heritage assets, the Core Strategy does not seek to stipulate particular uses and each proposal will be evaluated on its individual merits.

During the Core Strategy period Herefordshire Council will review the Archaeology and Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in particular in the light of any changes to the existing evidence base, the Historic Landscape Characterisation, emerging farmstead assessment guidance and growing knowledge of heritage assets contained within the Council's Historic Environment Record. This existing data and evidence base together with the Rapid Townscape Assessments for the market towns and the Hereford Streetscape Design Strategy should be used to shape development proposals from the outset. The evidence base will also guide forthcoming development plan documents and neighbourhood development plans which should be supported where necessary, with careful appraisal of sites within or adjacent to those villages where development may be proposed - in terms of effect on archaeological remains and the setting of historic assets.

Large scale developments should embrace the historic environment rather than regard it as a constraint. Utilising existing locally distinctive heritage assets within wider regeneration proposals can help create new developments that integrate positively with their surroundings, and can reinforce existing cultural and social characteristics. Where it is agreed that a heritage asset cannot be retained then mitigation includes as a minimum requirement, the recording of material that may be lost. Other mitigatory or compensatory measures may however be necessary.

Sustainable design and energy efficiency

Good design embraces more than simply the aesthetics of new development and includes how buildings are used, accessed and constructed. Equally, for development to be considered sustainable, it must embrace the move to a low carbon future through designing buildings that are more energy and water efficient and increase the use and supply of renewables. Herefordshire Council will seek to ensure that future developments are designed to enhance local distinctiveness but without stifling innovation and creativity, particularly with regard to energy efficiency.

Policy SD1 – Sustainable design and energy efficiency

Development proposals should include high quality sustainable design that also creates a safe, accessible, well integrated environment for all members of the community. In conjunction with this, all development proposals should incorporate the following requirements:

- be designed to preserve and enhance locally distinctive built, historic and natural characteristics of a site and its surroundings and/or make a positive contribution to the architectural diversity and character of the area through appropriate layout, siting, scale, height, proportions and massing, orientation, use, architecture detailing, landscaping and materials;
- safeguard residential amenity for existing and proposed residents
- ensure new development does not contribute to, or suffer from, adverse impacts arising from noise, light, air, contamination and land instability or cause ground water pollution, ;
- in relation to development proposals on contaminated land, it is demonstrated that appropriate remediation can be carried
- ensure that distinctive features of existing buildings and their setting are safeguarded and where appropriate, restored. –
- utilise sustainable construction methods which minimise the use of non-renewable resources and maximise the use of recycled and sustainably sourced materials;

- minimise resource use and carbon dioxide emissions by maximising the energy and water efficiency of buildings prioritising a fabric first approach. Where possible, on-site renewable energy generation should also be incorporated.
- allow easy access for all members of the community throughout the development facilitating shorter links between destinations, and allowing for a range of sustainable transport modes;
- optimise the use of previously developed land and/or buildings
- ensure that proposals make efficient use of land - taking into account the local context and site characteristics, including land stability and contamination;
- create safe environments, addressing crime prevention and community safety;
- ensuring designs can be easily adapted and accommodate new technologies to meet changing needs throughout the lifetime of the development;
- that the design of the development is resilient to climate change including minimising flood risk in accordance with policy SD3;
- include elements that contribute to the provision of green infrastructure in accordance with policy LD3;

All planning applications including material changes of use, will be expected to demonstrate how the above design and energy efficiency considerations have been factored into the proposal from the outset.

High quality design and well planned developments can enhance community cohesion through maintaining or creating a sense of place. New development should be designed to preserve and enhance locally distinctive characteristics and positively contribute to the appearance of the locality. To achieve this, it is important that new development is successfully integrated into the existing built, natural and historic environment; however recognising that architectural styles change over time. Policy SD1 does not seek to stifle architectural innovation, contemporary design or reject advances in design and technology.

High quality design can significantly enhance the environment and amenity for new residents. Equally, the amenity and quality of life for existing residents can be adversely affected by insensitive, poorly considered design. To address this, buildings, extensions and spaces must be designed having regard to the impacts of overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing. Additionally, ensuring that new development is compatible with the surrounding locality requires more than simply scale and aesthetic qualities, and includes consideration of the impacts of noise and, artificial light, ground conditions and air quality

All developments must demonstrate how they have been designed and incorporate measures to make them resilient to climate change in respect of carbon reduction, water efficiency and flood risk. Carbon reduction should influence design from the outset by ensuring the fabric of the building is as energy efficient as possible. Good site planning can also aid greater energy efficiency in new development, for example by seeking to maximise solar gain.

Revisions to the Building Regulations are introducing progressive increases in the energy efficiency requirements for new buildings. In terms of energy conservation, developments in sustainable locations that achieve 'Passivhaus' accreditation will be

supported, unless the adverse landscape, townscape or visual impacts of doing so would significantly outweigh the benefits of achieving Passivhaus. Developments in sustainable locations that achieve other accreditation standards, such as BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes, which cover a range of sustainability criteria, will also be supported particularly where the level achieved materially exceeds the relevant Building Regulations and other relevant standards in place at the time.

Large-scale developments (non-residential developments exceeding 1,000 square metres gross floorspace, and new residential developments comprising 10 or more units, whether new build or conversion) will be expected to demonstrate how opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation and sustainable waste management have also been considered and addressed within the design of the scheme. Such details should include an appraisal of all suitable renewable energy technology. Other developments will also be encouraged to consider whether on-site renewable energy opportunities might be available. Alongside this, the Council supports the provision of renewable and low carbon technologies within existing developments, subject to such proposals according with other policies of the Core Strategy.

The efficient use of land is encouraged in the design policy; however it does not specify minimum development densities; these are referenced in Policy SS2. It is recognised that in highly accessible locations development proposals may be more sustainable and viable if constructed to higher densities than usually found elsewhere in the county, provided there is no detrimental impact upon existing local amenity. However in most instances, appropriate density will primarily be informed by the local context as well as site opportunities and constraints.

Accessibility to all members of society is fundamental to achieving sustainable development and inclusive design, and must be carefully considered in all development proposals. Development layouts should be designed to provide a high degree of permeability particularly for sustainable modes of travel within the site, and provide safe connections to adjoining land uses and local community facilities.

Sustainable design principles can also contribute to reducing crime and the fear of crime. Developers should consider whether the location and form of their development should adopt the principles set out in 'Secured by Design' incorporating design measures such as ensuring a high level of natural surveillance, sensitive consideration of boundary treatments and clear delineation of public and private spaces, in order to aid the creation of a safer and more inclusive environment. In addition, provision should be made to allow ease of access for emergency services.

The age structure of the county is rapidly changing with an increasing elderly population. Increasing fuel prices is resulting in residents, particularly in rural areas, reviewing their home to work travel patterns, furthermore continual advances in technology means costly refurbishments of existing buildings is often required to meet modern requirements. It is therefore important that developments are flexibly designed to be adaptable to different and future occupational and technological needs and demands. This can include measures such as meeting lifetime homes and equivalent standards in residential design, providing infrastructure to meet the growth in demand for electric vehicles, providing adequate space for internal and external plant and facilitating home working and live/work opportunities.

Design guidance will be prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document to provide baseline standards across Herefordshire; expanding on the above design principles

and to inform the preparation of masterplans, other development plan documents, neighbourhood development plans, parish plans, village design statements and planning applications, which accord with the principles of the Core Strategy.

Renewable and low carbon energy generation

An overarching principle of the planning system is to support the transition to a low carbon future. A significant means of achieving this goal is through the use of renewable energy sources. Renewable energy covers energy generated directly from natural sources, be it sun, wind or water, or indirect sources such as biomass and geothermal heat. The Climate Change Act makes the UK the first country in the world to have a long term legally binding commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The Act commits the UK to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 80%, from a 1990 baseline, by 2050. The UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009) sets a target for 15% of the UK's energy to come from renewable resources by 2020, which represents a seven fold increase from 2008.

Policy SD2 – Renewable and low carbon energy

Development proposals that seek to deliver renewable and low carbon energy targets in line with the UK Renewable Energy Strategy (or any future national equivalent) will be supported where they meet the following criteria:

1. the proposal does not adversely impact upon the objectives for international or national designated natural and historic environmental assets;
2. the proposal does not adversely affect residential amenity;
3. the proposal does not result in any significant detrimental impact upon the character of the landscape and the built or historic environment; and
4. the proposal can be connected efficiently to existing national grid infrastructure unless it can be demonstrated that energy generation would be used on-site to meet the needs of a specific end user.

Herefordshire is predominantly a rural county which benefits from the presence of many international and national designations, alongside highly valued local landscapes. While these designations limit the potential for strategic renewable and low carbon energy generation, opportunities are present in Herefordshire to support such measures and the exceptional circumstance for such provision needs to be recognised. For example farm diversification schemes can provide opportunities for the implementation of renewable or low carbon energy projects. Neighbourhood Development Plans promoting community-led micro-generation schemes will be supported where they are in accordance with policy SD2 and other relevant policies of the Core Strategy.

Sustainable water management

Sustainable water management means minimising our impact on the healthy functioning of the water cycle. Changes occurring to the climate mean that we are likely to experience an increase in the intensity, severity and frequency of extreme weather events such as droughts, storms and floods, which could dramatically impact on the way we need to manage water in the development of sustainable communities. There is a finite capacity within the environment, and it cannot simply provide more and more water as a result of increased consumption rates or overall demand. Equally there is a limit to the amount of waste water that can be safely returned to rivers without having a detrimental effect.

The issue of water management is especially important in Herefordshire with a number of watercourses benefiting from different levels of protection. The entire lengths of the River Wye and River Lugg are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, while the Wye and the Lugg from Hampton Court Bridge to its confluence are designated as a Special Area of Conservation under European legislation. Alongside this, all watercourses and groundwater, are covered by the Water Framework Directive and are recognised as providing significant biodiversity, health and recreational benefits. Delivery of the Water Framework Directive is proposed through a Catchment Based Approach and the Local Development Framework should play a part in achieving its objectives.

Policy SD3 – Sustainable water management and water resources

Measures for sustainable water management will be required to be an integral element of new development in order to reduce flood risk; to avoid an adverse impact on water quantity; to protect and enhance groundwater resources and to provide opportunities to enhance biodiversity, health and recreation. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

1. development proposals are located in accordance with the Sequential Test and Exception Tests (where appropriate) and have regard to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2009 for Herefordshire;
2. development is designed to be safe taking into account the lifetime of the development, and the need to adapt to climate change by setting appropriate floor levels, providing safe pedestrian and vehicular access, where appropriate, implementing a flood evacuation management plan and avoiding areas identified as being subject to Rapid Inundation from a breach of a Flood Defence;
3. where flooding is identified as an issue, new development should reduce flood risk through the inclusion of flood storage compensation measures, or provide similar betterment to enhance the local flood risk regime;
4. development will not result in the loss of open watercourse, and culverts should be opened up where possible to improve drainage and flood flows. Proposals involving the creation of new culverts (unless essential to the provision of access) will not be permitted;
5. development includes appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage surface water appropriate to the hydrological setting of the site. Development should not result in an increase in runoff and should aim to achieve a reduction in the existing runoff rate and volumes, where possible;

6. water conservation and efficiency measures are included in all new developments, specifically:
 - Residential development to meet the equivalent of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5 for water efficiency (80 litres/person/day);
 - Non-residential developments in excess of 1,000 sq.m gross floorspace to achieve the equivalent of BREEAM 3 credits for water consumption as a minimum.
7. the separation of foul and surface water on new developments is maximised;
8. development proposals do not lead to deterioration of EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) water body status;
9. development should not cause an unacceptable risk to the availability or quality of water resources; and
10. in particular, proposals do not adversely affect water quality, either directly through unacceptable pollution of surface water or groundwater, or indirectly through overloading of Wastewater Treatment Works;

Development proposals should help to conserve and enhance watercourses and riverside habitats, where necessary through management and mitigation measures for the improvement and/or enhancement of water quality and habitat of the aquatic environment. Proposals which are specifically aimed at the sustainable management of the water environment will in particular be encouraged, including where they are required to support business needs such as for agriculture. Innovative measures such as water harvesting, winter water storage and active land use management will also be supported. In all instances it should be demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse landscape, biodiversity or visual impact.

Changes in rainfall patterns, land management and land use, combined with more frequent occurrence of extreme weather events will present increased flood risk. Although flooding cannot be wholly prevented, its impacts can be avoided or reduced through good planning and land management. To this end the susceptibility of land to flooding and surface water management are material considerations when assessing planning applications. Accordingly Herefordshire Council will support development proposals that accord with the principles of the *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2009* (SFRA), as well as national technical guidance on the sequential test and the exception test, and ensure that surface water drainage is also properly managed. Where flood risk assessments are undertaken they should include all sources of flooding, including fluvial flooding from ditches and water courses across the site.

The SFRA aims to ensure that planning policies and development land allocations will not increase the risk of flooding both within the development and the surrounding area, and to identify and promote measures that will minimise flood-risk and/or enhance flood resilience. The SFRA for Herefordshire refines the county's flood risk areas by taking into account other sources of flooding and other strategies, such as the Wye and Usk Catchment Flood Management Plan and the River Severn Catchment Flood Management Plan.

This policy provides criteria for developers to consider when proposing development within areas identified as being at risk of flooding within the district. The policy identifies the need for development proposed within flood risk areas to take account of a number of measures to ensure that the development is safe and remains safe, in times of flood including:

- Setting appropriate floor levels which should be above the 1% predicted plus climate change design flood level, incorporating an allowance for freeboard. Development should also consider in the design the risk from more extreme events. Where it is not feasible or practicable to set the floor levels, then other forms of flood resilience and resistance techniques may be considered as an alternative;
- Where development includes overnight accommodation including a safe pedestrian access route available during a 1% plus climate change design flood event. In considering this, regard should be given to the evidence in the SFRA and for 'defended areas' including an assessment of Flood Defence breach/overtopping scenarios. Other development should consider this as a residual risk;
- Consideration of safe vehicular access;
- Developments implement a flood evacuation management plan, where appropriate, to manage the risk to the development site itself and future users/occupiers during all flood events along with any remaining residual risks.

A key component to reducing the risk of flooding is the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all developments. Such systems can also assist in improving water quality. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 introduces the mandatory inclusion of SuDS within developments alongside the ability for the setting of national standards. Development proposals are to accord with these standards and where appropriate be accompanied by surface water management plans detailing the drainage proposals. Advice is contained within the SFRA.

Government legislation sets out the statutory introduction of Sustainable Urban Drainage Advisory Bodies (SABs). SABs are designed to appraise and grant approval or refusal on proposed sustainable urban drainage systems. Herefordshire Council will work in partnership with the SAB as well as the Environment Agency, to ensure that development proposals do not have adverse flood impacts.

With respect to water conservation and efficiency of use, Policy SD3 sets out targets for reduced consumption in association with new development, which in turn will result in decrease flow entering the sewer system. This approach will also help to reduce flows entering the sewerage system and waste water treatment infrastructure, thereby assisting to manage the level of nutrients in the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (see Policy SD4). The Department for Communities and Local Government has published a 'water efficiency calculator' that applicants can use to demonstrate the water efficiency of proposed developments.

For employment development a standard of BREEAM 3 credits equivalent for water consumption is required. This equates to 40% reduction in water consumption than current building regulations. The Environment Agency has stated that all new non-residential development should meet the 'Good Practice' level of the AECB (Association for Environment Conscious Building) Water Standards. These measures will complement the measures set out in Policy SD4 - Wastewater treatment and river water quality.

The availability of water resources to meet demand during the plan period has been examined and Dwr Cymru-Welsh Water's Water Resource Management Plan identifies that there are sufficient water resources available to meet demand during this plan period.

While agricultural water use lies largely outside planning control, it is a significant contributor to the water cycle conditions within Herefordshire and its impacts need to be taken into account in the Core Strategy and other development plan documents and neighbourhood development plans. There is considerable potential for farmers to capture and store surplus water for future use thereby reducing the need to abstract water from other sources, while enhancing biodiversity. However, reservoirs in particular will alter landscapes and habitats on a permanent basis and care on siting and design is essential.

Land management practices can also play a vital role in managing flood risk and water quality at a local level; for example, the creation and restoration of wetlands and woodlands can reduce the level of flooding, and in some cases remove the risk of local flooding altogether. These practices also improve water quality in addition to producing wider environmental benefits, including encouraging an increase in wildlife species and habitats and reducing carbon.

A Herefordshire Water Steering Group was established, attended by Herefordshire Council, Dwr Cymru-Welsh Water, the Environment Agency and Natural England, in order to investigate how development might be accommodated within the limits set by the Habitats Regulations. It is expected that this group will be expanded in order to address issues arising from the preparation of a Nutrient Management Plan. One of the areas that it might consider is identifying best practice in the reduction of water use.

Wastewater treatment and river water quality

The water quality of Herefordshire's main rivers and their tributaries is of strategic importance and in particular, current unacceptable levels of nutrients along part of the rivers need to be addressed. This is important to the overall environmental objectives of the Core Strategy.

The Rivers Wye, Lugg, Teme and Clun are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), designated under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). Furthermore, the River Wye including part of the River Lugg (downstream from Hampton Court Bridge), part of the River Clun (downstream of Marlow, Shropshire) and Downton Gorge on the River Teme are also designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs).

Both levels of designation require efforts to be made to ensure the whole system, or catchment, achieves and then remains resilient in terms of supporting river habitats consistent with policy LD3 (Biodiversity and geodiversity). The Environment Agency has responsibility for water quality and ecological objectives set by European Directive 2000/60/EC, the 'Water Framework Directive,' which applies to surface waters and groundwater, and is preparing a River Basin Management Plan to deliver these. Natural England has responsibility for ensuring SSSIs and SACs achieve 'favourable condition.' Currently all parts of the river SSSIs are in unfavourable condition although some are recovering. All public bodies have a duty to contribute towards meeting these targets.

Policy SD4 Wastewater treatment and river water quality

Development should not undermine the achievement of water quality targets for rivers within the county, in particular through the treatment of wastewater.

In the first instance developments should seek to connect to the existing mains wastewater infrastructure network. Where this option would result in nutrient levels exceeding conservation objectives targets, in particular additional phosphate loading within a SAC designated river, then proposals will need to fully mitigate the adverse effects of wastewater discharges into rivers caused by the development. This may involve:

- incorporating measures to achieve water efficiency and/or a reduction in surface water discharge to the mains sewer network, minimising the capacity required to accommodate the proposal, in accordance with policy SD3;
- phasing or delaying development until further capacity is available;
- the use of developer contributions/community infrastructure levy funds to contribute to improvements to waste water treatment works or other appropriate measures to release capacity to accommodate new development;
- in the case of development which might lead to nutrient levels in exceedence of the limits for the target conservation objectives within a SAC river, planning permission will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC in view of the site's conservation objectives;
- Where the nutrient levels set for conservation objectives are already exceeded, new development should not compromise the ability to reduce levels to those which are defined as favourable for the site.

Where evidence is submitted to the local planning authority to indicate connection to the wastewater infrastructure network is not practical, alternative foul drainage options should be considered in the following order:

- provision of or connection to a package sewage treatment works (discharging to watercourse or soakaway);
- septic tank (discharging to soakaway).

With either of these non-mains alternatives, proposals should be accompanied by the following:

- information to demonstrate there will be no likely significant effect on the water quality, in particular of designated national and European sites, especially the River Wye SAC and the River Clun SAC; or
- where there will be a likely significant effect upon a SAC river, information to enable the council, in its role as a competent authority, to ascertain that the development will have no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC.
- in relation to water courses with national or European nature conservation designations, the inclusion of measures achieving the highest standard of water quality discharge to the natural drainage system including provision for monitoring.

The use of cesspools will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that sufficient precautionary measures will ensure no adverse effect upon natural drainage water quality objectives.

There is a duty upon Herefordshire Council, so far as it is able, to further the conservation and enhancement of the river SSSIs within its area. Each SSSI has its own 'conservation objectives,' which include targets that form the baseline against

which its favourable condition is judged. The decisions the council takes can influence whether a site meets its targets or not. With respect to the river SSSI's, this includes decisions on foul and surface water drainage from development. Developers can assist by contributing to the resilience of ecological networks through their efforts to deliver green infrastructure under policy LD4. Maintaining a high quality environment will assist marketing of homes and the attraction of employment.

Herefordshire Council is a competent authority under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012 and there is a duty upon it to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive in exercising any of its functions. Furthermore, the LPA can only permit development which would have a likely significant effect (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) upon European sites after having undertaken an Appropriate Assessment. Subject to certain derogation tests, only development which can be shown to have no adverse effect on the integrity of European sites can be permitted.

In addition, there is also a duty on the council to help deliver Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives. It is imperative that proposals for growth do not adversely affect river water quality, and this includes that within associated watercourses flowing into the rivers and other 'controlled waters' (lakes, ponds and groundwater etc). Wastewater from most, although not all, new development within the county will connect to sewage treatment works. Such treatment works are potentially point sources of pollution especially if they are unable to achieve acceptable standards of discharge, either directly or indirectly into rivers. Septic tanks and other activities such as agricultural practices form more diffuse sources of potential pollution.

The county's rivers have a finite capacity to accommodate discharges arising from development before their water quality is adversely affected, and improvements to the management of waste water will be required to ensure both the achievement of the watercourses conservation objectives and the ability to deliver the scale of growth set out in the Core Strategy.

The Environment Agency and Natural England have committed, through a formal Statement of Intent, to the preparation of a Nutrient Management Plan aimed to control and reduce phosphate within the River Wye SAC and in doing so seek to identify actions to enable additional development. The Core Strategy will play a vital role in delivering the requirements of the Nutrient Management Plan, along with other mechanisms and measures. The Nutrient Management Plan will identify the management actions required to achieve the conservation objectives target for phosphate by 2027 such that: Planning guidance will be prepared where necessary to cover relevant measures included within the Nutrient Management Plan, or any revisions to it, comprising the need for planning advice, detailed phasing requirements, options that might be funded through developer contributions, water quality and ecological condition of stretches along the SAC rivers, and monitoring arrangements.

- (i) Sections of the River Wye SAC where the water quality targets are already exceeded will be subject to measures to reduce nutrients in line with the targets. New development must not compromise the ability of the Nutrient Management Plan to deliver the necessary overall reductions along these stretches.
- (ii) Sections that are currently meeting their phosphate targets will be subject to measures to ensure that future inputs of nutrients will not lead to failures.

Figure 5.4 identifies river sub-catchment areas within Herefordshire, set by the Water Framework Directive. Development within these areas has the potential to detrimentally affect water quality standards. High levels of phosphates have been identified as particular problems with concentration levels exceeding targets.

Herefordshire Council will expect developments to connect to existing sewage infrastructure. However, when this would compromise the ability to achieve favourable condition, and potentially be contrary to the Habitats Regulations, mitigation measures would be required if the development is to proceed.

Local water companies are responsible for providing and maintaining sewage treatment works at a standard to meet permitted conditions. Their asset management programmes will set out capital works to ensure compliance with discharge licences. Should such works be required then it may be necessary to phase new development within timescales set by these programmes. However, there may be an additional requirement for developer contributions or community infrastructure levy funding to make further improvements.

Increases in flows to sewage treatment works lead to increases in nutrients in watercourses, as discharges have set nutrient concentrations. Reducing flows to sewage treatment works through measures referred to in policy SD3 can therefore contribute to reducing nutrient levels in the receiving watercourses. The separation of foul and storm water will have similar benefits.

Development seeking to use non-mains drainage solutions will need to explain why this is necessary in the light of the Government advice on mains drainage advice and Herefordshire Council's planning application requirements in respect of non-mains drainage (see Herefordshire Council website). Herefordshire Council will wish to be assured that such proposals will not adversely affect the quality of water within watercourses and in particular, will have no negative effect upon SAC rivers and, in this regard, will undertake Habitat Regulation Assessments where necessary using information required from and provided by developers. Measures proposed to mitigate any effect will be rigorously scrutinised; and monitoring arrangements may need to be put in place to ensure the chosen system is effective. Sustainable forms of water treatment such as reed beds may be used as alternatives to or in combination with foul water treatment and disposal. Full details should be provided to show these will achieve the required standard of discharge into the natural drainage system. The sensitivity of Herefordshire's environment is such that the use of cesspools should be avoided, however if this is deemed to be the only option then a rigorous assessment of potential effects will be required.

A number of rivers have water quality problems arising from sedimentation. Where operations requiring planning permission may cause or add to the problem then mitigation works such as trenches, wetlands, retention ponds, buffers, swales and other forms of sediment traps may need to be considered as part of sustainable water practices under policy SD3.

Figure 5.4: River sub catchments



Natural resources: minerals

Minerals are an essential resource upon which the built environment is reliant. However minerals can only be obtained from where they exist and are accessible in viable quantities. There is the added necessity that extracted minerals are required to meet quality specifications. The locating of such materials is an inexact science and can sometimes not be confirmed until extraction takes place. These factors distinguish minerals planning from other planning issues. The winning of minerals strengthens the presumption in favour of sustainable development subject to mitigation techniques, environmental protection and long-term restoration. In the broader context mineral extraction is a temporary activity with a finite life; albeit this can be over several decades. National policy and environmental legislation recognises all of the above.

The Core Strategy objectives place a high value on environmental protection (objective 10) and concern for the natural environment (objective 12). Minerals development can have significant impacts upon these objectives both during extraction and the after-use of sites. Through careful and sensitive planning the after-use of sites can result in the creation of new sites for biodiversity and recreation (objective 11), including lakes and rock faces. Herefordshire's mineral resources include glacial and river gravels and sand, limestone and in the west of the county there are small-scale old red sandstone resources suitable for local buildings. The use of traditional local stone-working assists the protection of the local distinctiveness of the county and, by using these local materials, helps to deliver more sustainable sources of traditional building materials (objectives 10, 11 and 12).

Historically coal mining took place south of Ross on Wye as well as extensive brick and tile works utilising local red clays across the county. While these industries are no longer prevalent in this area, the combination of new technology and dwindling resources elsewhere may result in renewed interest in the county for those purposes. Herefordshire also contains a minerals site with a rail terminal for the long distance movement of large volumes of minerals, aiding the reduction in need for long distance transport of minerals by road. Safeguarding minerals resources is in itself part of the preservation of natural resources (objective 12).

Aggregates form the majority of minerals extracted in Herefordshire. This comprises gravel/sand from river basins, and crushed limestone from uplands. Such materials are processed according to requirements and are vital for concrete production, building block materials and road workings. The National Planning Policy Framework stresses the need for mineral planning authorities to provide for its allocated contribution to sub-national requirements for aggregates (annual apportionment). Alongside this the duty to co-operate is an important requirement in mineral planning with the need for neighbouring mineral planning authorities to work together to achieve such apportionments. The Government has committed to the established national Managed Aggregated Supply System (MASS) based upon an average of the previous 10 years' reports sales/extraction/use; mineral planning authorities are expected to participate in data gathering and provision. This work is co-ordinated by the Aggregate Working Parties (AWP), which advises government, and comprises representatives from local authorities and the minerals industry. The requirement to ensure a steady and adequate supply of minerals to meet the needs of society and the economy needs to be tempered, with the significant landscape and other impacts associated with large scale mineral workings. Consequently policies need to allow for safeguarding resources and sites, while minimising and mitigating any adverse effects of minerals working. This includes consideration of the reclamation and after-use of sites. Policies also encourage the re-use and recycling of secondary aggregates (construction and demolition materials otherwise treated as 'waste'). The key purpose of this is to improve sustainability by reducing the demand for primary aggregate extractions.

With regard to building stone, a particular feature of Herefordshire is the existence of small scale workings known as ‘delves.’ These produce hand-made stone products which are an important contributor to locally distinctive building styles. This industry is of prime significance to heritage restoration and the resulting streetscape in both rural and urban areas. Core Strategy policies make specific allowance for this local and important traditional rural industry.

It is recognised that quarries of all types have an educational potential to further knowledge in terms of geology, palaeontology and archaeology. Herefordshire’s mineral extraction sites have made significant contributions to the county’s archaeological and fossil records. Opportunities to provide new geological exposures and improved wildlife habitats are also acknowledged and policies ensure that long term benefits are maximised.

The Minerals and Waste Planning Assessment (Entec 2009) established the baseline data to support the development of relevant policies. This has been reviewed and is regarded as remaining adequate for the time being. For aggregates, the report found the landbank of existing permissions continues to serve the purpose. It significantly exceeds that regarded necessary to ensure a steady and adequate supply of minerals in accordance with the predicted annual apportionments established at sub-national level. The criteria are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 145. Annual surveys of mineral reserves, sites and permissions indicate that extraction rates have diminished since the Entec report, thus extending the known permitted reserves at this time.

This Core Strategy has established that minerals provision can be maintained for an adequate number of years. In order to set out greater detail and take account of future needs with clarity, Herefordshire Council has programmed the production of a Natural Resources Development Plan Document. This document will follow on from the established base-line Core Strategy policies with updated information. It will provide site-specific minerals and waste detail while also re-evaluating the targets and standards previously set out. It will demonstrate the interaction with neighbouring counties in accordance with the duty to co-operate, and will ensure consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework with particular reference to section 13 and the appended Technical Guidance

The strategy for minerals development as set out in the following policies ensures a steady and adequate supply of aggregates. The sustainable and efficient use and management of Herefordshire’s mineral resources will be promoted by:

- Provision of a Proposals Map showing known minerals deposits based on the best available data;
- preparing a Local Aggregates Assessment based on a rolling average of 10 years sales data in conjunction with the current Aggregates Working Party;
- defining minerals safeguarding areas (MSA) based on the Proposals Map, identifying the minerals to be safeguarded, and managing development which would adversely affect them (policy M1);
- maintaining appropriate land banks of permitted reserves for primary aggregates consistent with national and sub-national guidance in co-operation with neighbouring authorities (policy M2);
- ensuring that development for the winning, working, storage and transport of minerals takes place in accordance with appropriate criteria (policy M3);
- enabling small scale production of building stone and clay production (policy M4);
- encouraging the use of secondary aggregates and the re-use and recycling of aggregates and other minerals (policy M5); and
- protecting the continued availability of the railhead at Moreton-on-Lugg for minerals transportation purposes (policy M6).

Policy M1 – Minerals Safeguarding Areas

The areas of known minerals resources shown on the Proposals Map will be regarded as minerals safeguarding areas (MSAs) to which the policy considerations below apply. These will be defined around known resources of sandstone, limestone, sand & Gravel in particular, along with any other known mineral resources such as brick clay, as identified on the Proposals Map. MSAs will also include the safeguarding of existing and future supplies of traditional building and roofing stone, and possible coal, oil or gas reserves should any be identified. Detailed boundaries will be reviewed in the preparation of a Natural Resources Development Plan Document which, once adopted, will then define the boundaries of MSAs in Herefordshire.

Within and adjacent to the MSAs, development which would sterilise any known minerals resource will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the non-minerals related development is of sufficient weight and overall benefit to override the need to protect the minerals resources. . Particular consideration shall be given to locally and nationally designated sites relating to heritage and biodiversity. Depending on the nature of any proposed non-minerals related development within MSAs, the applicant may be required to undertake any or all of the following:

1. a geological and/or mineral assessment of the site to establish the type of minerals likely to be present, to ascertain the likely volume, quality and commercial viability of such minerals, and to provide a report of the results to the local mineral authority;
2. protect the minerals in question;
3. make provision for the extraction and use of all or part of the mineral reserves as part of or before the non-minerals related development takes place.

National Planning Policy requires Minerals Planning Authorities to define minerals safeguarding areas (MSAs) in their development plan documents based on the best known data. However it remains the case that the British Geological Survey has not researched mineral deposits across a significant part of the county and so in certain areas, resources are not known at this time. We will protect existing and potential supplies of building stone wherever possible. To assist this we will utilise and updated known building stone data as it becomes available, including the 'Strategic Stone Study' and other BGS data. Any identified coal resources will also be safeguarded, based upon evidence in the Surface Coal Resource Plan produced jointly by the BGS and the Coal Authority. Defining an MSA does not imply that identified minerals will be extracted during the plan period; instead Policy M1 prevents unnecessary sterilisation of known minerals resources. It is open to prospectors to conduct their own survey and to come forward with evidence of any economically viable minerals within or without the MSAs. The detailed review of boundaries, including setting out an appropriate methodology to identify them, will be undertaken in the Natural Resources Development Plan Document (DPD). Prior to the publication of a future DPD, the areas currently shown on the proposals map will be regarded as interim MSAs.

Policy M2 – Annual apportionments for aggregate provision

The annual apportionment providing for the production of primary land-won aggregates for the interim period to 2016 shall be:

1. sand and gravel: 283,000 tonnes per annum; and
2. crushed rock: 424,000 tonnes per annum.

Revised apportionments for the period beyond 2016 will be established through a Natural Resources Development Plan Document. based on a Local Aggregate Assesment. Parameters for collaborative working with other mineral planning authorities will also be established through this part of the process. Landbanks will be maintained to at least the minimum levels prescribed by national policy.

Apportionments are targets for the supply of mineral aggregates which are set for each mineral planning authority. Previous statutory apportionments were superseded by new national apportionment in 2009, and the assumed approach to the sub-regional apportionment has been interrupted by the revocation of regional spatial planning. It is acknowledged that there is a need for a stated apportionment for the county to contribute to UK sand and gravel and crushed rock requirements. The policy continues with the most recent adopted volumes, but acknowledges that amended figures will be required during the plan period, i.e. for the period beyond 2016 and up to at least 2031. Revised figures and a relevant evidence base forming a Local Aggregate Assessment will be brought forward in the Natural Resources Development Plan Document in due course. Under the duty to co-operate, further opportunities for collaborative working with neighbouring authorities will be explored.

Historic data collection, by the British Geological Survey and others to assess permitted reserves and the rate of extraction, has amalgamated Herefordshire and Worcestershire for a variety of reasons. These include previous political boundaries, diminishing resources in Worcestershire and the very small number of active extraction sites in both counties. This situation is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future and may potentially form the basis for joint working between the two counties.

Policy M3 – Criteria for the assessment of minerals related development

Proposals for the winning and working, storage and transport of minerals will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. No further or new permissions will be granted for the extraction of granite from the Malvern Hills except under exceptional circumstances to fulfil the particular requirements of specific projects requiring local stone;
2. new large scale minerals extraction outside MSAs will not be permitted unless further survey work is undertaken which demonstrates the existence of viable and accessible mineral deposits for which a clear need is identified, or if demand outstrips the existing landbank of permissions. (Large scale is defined as workings in excess of 1 hectare);
3. extensions to existing permitted sites will be supported as a first option, and in sequential preference to the opening of new sites;
4. where minerals extraction is permitted either within MSAs it shall be on the basis that:
 - a. The minerals resource is reasonably required to meet identified and adopted targets (where appropriate), or complies with policy M4 in respect of small scale workings;
 - b. the environmental impact of the development can be assessed and mitigated and potential benefits maximised, especially with regard to:
 - i. the impact on designated sites and biodiversity interests (especially the River Wye SAC and the lower River Lugg SAC and their catchment areas);
 - ii. the impact of the development on floodplain management (which may be

- positive);
- iii. the impact on surface water or groundwater resources and quality is assessed and mitigated, optimising opportunities to help maintain or improve waterbody catchments to 'good' status
- iv. the impact on geological, archaeological and other heritage interests (which may also be positive) and the potential for furthering scientific knowledge;
- v. the impact on landscapes especially in the AONBs;
- vi. the potential of the development to maximise the use of sustainable transport measures;
- vii. amenity impacts on nearby residential properties;
- viii. the inclusion of positive proposals for after-use and after-care of the site, with priority being given to habitat creation, heritage and community/leisure uses (in that order of preference); and
- ix. the provision of at least an interim or draft restoration plan, to include provide retained evidence of the site's existence and function, demonstrable benefits to geological conservation, heritage and the furthering of scientific knowledge, provision of new and/or enhanced biodiversity and wildlife habitats, both during and following minerals extraction.

During the plan period no requirements are anticipated for new large scale extraction sites to be developed in Herefordshire for a number of reasons, including the absence of known commercially workable deposits, distance from major development areas and conurbations, the need to protect the county's environment from unnecessary development pressures, and a realistic assessment of demand (see policy M2).

Current inactive, not started or mothballed sites may need to be opened/re-opened, subject to demand and national policy. Furthermore towards the end of the plan period, consideration may be given to new sites for extraction of primary aggregates. The combination of Herefordshire's geographic location and constrained accessibility mean that new large scale aggregate extraction proposals continue to be unlikely due to expense of transporting aggregates over long distances. However, this will be continually reviewed within the Natural Resources Development Plan Document and in accordance with the outcome of an collaborative working with other authorities or through the Aggregates Working Party.

There are currently no permitted extraction sites in the Malvern Hills AONB area, due to its landscape importance, and legislative constraints. The Malvern Hills Conservators, established by the Malvern Hills Act 1884, have jurisdiction over approximately 200 hectares of the Hills, the majority of which are Open Access land within the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This area straddles the Herefordshire/Worcestershire county boundary. Subsequent legislation gave the Conservators rights *inter alia* to acquire and manage land, to protect the characteristics of the Hills and to restrict or prevent quarrying. It is now recognised that the quarries have helped to form the spectacular landscapes of which they are a part, and have long provided stone which contributes to the local built environment. Necessary works to existing and new buildings may require authentic local stone, particularly with regard to historic building repairs. The special protection afforded by the designated AONB and the management of land under the Malvern Hills Conservators' control will limit the potential for minerals extraction. However with appropriate high quality assessments and mitigation, small-scale proposals for recovering or extracting stone for a specified period and purpose may be regarded favourably in principle, under policy M4. Policy M3 restricts (but does not prohibit) the extraction of Malvern stone for aggregate use (crushed rock) except under exceptional circumstances. . Policy M4 applies where building stone is required in the Malvern Hills area .Due to the cross-boundary

nature of both the AONB and the Conservators' land, the relevant parts of policies M3 and M4 have been the subject of discussion between Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council. The policy terminology has been jointly agreed and forms part of the collaboration required under the Duty to Co-operate

The importance of quarry sites to archaeological, geological, and paleontological study is recognised. Quarry restoration schemes should include provision for furthering such study in the future by retaining evidence of the site and its function, such as rock faces and other landforms or infrastructure, subject to an agreed restoration plan.

Policies M3 and M4 differentiate between large scale aggregate extraction and local, small scale extraction for dimension and other building stone, shale, brick clay and other minerals such as coal. A nominal site area limit of 1 hectare is used for this purpose. However, where significantly important sources of non-aggregate minerals are identified and their extraction fully justified, the size criterion is not absolute. Each case will be judged on its own merits, in terms of the likely available volume of the resource, the value and nature of the resource, its accessibility, location, environmental and amenity impacts, and the need for and eventual use of the stone.

Policy M4 – Small Scale non-aggregate building stone and clay production

Proposals for the small scale extraction of non-aggregate minerals will be permitted where all of the following points are observed and included:

1. a demonstrated need for the material for the preservation or enhancement of local distinctiveness; in particular features and/or building techniques of local historic or architectural interest, repair of listed and vernacular buildings, other structures or archaeological sites; or the embellishment of proposed new buildings;
2. that suitable materials of a particular type have been identified as likely to exist in appropriate quantity;
3. the means of identifying, evaluating and conserving scarce building stone resources against future needs has been properly assessed;
4. that anticipated timescales for quarry or mining, including any requirements for intermittent working, have been assessed and are justified;
5. that the majority (i.e. more than 50%) of the site's output would be for non-aggregate use unless specifically stated otherwise for a fully evaluated and justified reason;
6. that any significant adverse impacts from the minerals extraction are identified and mitigated in accordance with policy M3 with particular reference to point 4b
7. that the site is capable of sympathetic restoration and reclamation to a specified beneficial use, including with a priority given to geological conservation and/or scientific research, positive benefits to biodiversity, wildlife habitats and/or agriculture.

It is important for Herefordshire's heritage, character and local economic purposes that the associated workings of small scale building stone quarries is supported in principle and not unduly restricted. The nature of the workings is such that on occasions very specific strata need to be worked for a particular project. The policy therefore needs to allow for flexibility in exactly where workings are located and the timescales for minerals extraction, including intermittent working, and the sustainability requirements to secure scarce specialist materials for future needs. Building and roofing stone resources are included in the Minerals Safeguarding Area criteria outlined in policy M1. However the policy also takes into account the potential for small quarries to harm local amenity, particularly where workings remain open over long periods.

Policy M5 – Secondary (reused and recycled) aggregates

The use of alternatives to naturally occurring ‘as-dug’ aggregates or other minerals, especially inert construction, demolition and excavation wastes, will be encouraged and supported in principle, subject to the compliance of such proposals with adopted policies. On appropriate sites, proposals for the production, import, processing, treatment and storage of such alternatives will be permitted:

1. for temporary periods where development is ancillary to principal activities at a site, including use of demolition and excavation waste arising from development, or longer periods when the development will be limited to the life of a mineral working; or
2. permanently at permitted waste transfer stations, and
3. Where the environmental impact of the development can be assessed and mitigated, and potential benefits maximised, especially with regard to:
 - a. the impact on designated sites and biodiversity interests (especially the River Wye SAC which includes the lower River Lugg);
 - b. the impact of the development on floodplain management (which may be positive);
 - c. the impact on landscapes especially in the AONBs;
 - d. the potential of the development to maximise the use of sustainable transport measures;
 - e. amenity impacts on nearby residential properties.

In all cases the proposals should provide adequate means of mitigating visual impact, minimising adverse effects on the environment and amenity, and controlling traffic, noise, vibration and pollution as part of the development. All proposals shall include detailed surveys, assessments and recommendations to avoid adverse effects on the amenity of the immediate or surrounding environment (including landscape and townscape) and human health; with particular reference to the wider catchments of the River Wye and Lugg SSSI/SAC designations.

In order to reduce dependency on primary aggregates and to encourage the use of waste materials as a resource, the re-use and re-cycling of demolition and other wastes from development sites will be encouraged. There is a close link to waste policies in this regard.

Policy M6 – Moreton-on-Lugg railhead.

The continued use of the railhead at Moreton-on-Lugg for the storage, loading and transport of minerals by rail will be encouraged. Development which would prejudice its continued use will not be permitted unless it can be shown that reasonable alternative provisions have been made for the transport of minerals by rail.

Aggregates, once won from the ground, are bulky and heavy materials to transport and for sustainability and climate change reasons, encouragement will be given to alternatives to road transport wherever possible. In the absence of canals Herefordshire Council will encourage the use of rail transport. A railhead centrally located at Moreton-on-Lugg is dedicated to minerals loading with road access available from the A49 trunk road. It is therefore appropriate to make specific provision to protect the railhead from alternative

developments which would prejudice its continuing use for minerals transportation. There may also be future opportunities for other commodities to use the railhead.

Natural resources: waste

The definition of 'waste' is a legal interpretation which is under government review. In early 2012 DEFRA issued a consultation document outlining its updated definitions, but the process will continue to evolve. As new technology emerges, materials previously categorised as 'waste' become 'resources' capable of recovery. The Environment Agency regulates waste transfer, treatment, recycling and recovery through the *Environmental Permitting Regulations* (currently 2012), and regards materials that would otherwise be disposed of as 'waste' until fully recovered. The specific control of such matters is covered by legislation separate from planning, including EU Directives. Accordingly planning policies need to concentrate on enabling the provision of appropriate sites and facilities, based on evaluated need and ensuring proposals are capable of compliance. However it is necessary to bear in mind that any particular material can be 'waste' in some circumstances and not in others, or may change its status according to the stage of treatment it has reached. For example there has been much debate as to the point at which discarded paper stops being 'waste' and starts being useful again during the process of recycling.

National planning guidance nevertheless contains central government's planning policies for sustainable waste management, recognising that the planning system is pivotal to the adequate and timely provision of new waste management facilities. *The National Waste Strategy 2007* (in part subject of the government's Waste Policy Review in 2011) outlines government policy in accordance with EU legislation. The National Planning Policy Framework excludes waste policies and *Planning Policy Statement 10, Planning for Sustainable Waste Management*, has been retained for the time being, pending an adopted update of the Waste Strategy. Revisions to the *EU Waste Framework Directive (2008)* have been implemented in England by the Environment Agency through the *Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011*. There is therefore a legal requirement for all waste policies to be consistent and compatible. All minerals development and the majority of waste developments are excluded from the requirement of the *Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012*.

The concept of the Waste Hierarchy continues to be central to the waste policy principles at all stages. This starts at the top with 'reduce,' then re-use, recycling and recovery down to the last resort of 'disposal' to landfill for residual material for which no further possible uses can be found. However, the constantly changing environmental, economic and social drivers (for waste processing), technological advancement, and contractual obligations, all play a part in which elements of the waste hierarchy are applied and a flexible approach is essential.

The *Herefordshire Minerals and Waste Planning Assessment (May 2009)* signposts key areas for development of waste policies. The 2009 assessment is regarded as remaining relevant for the time being, because the requirement for new waste facilities has not significantly altered, particularly in light of the economic down-turn. However previously approved regional policy recommendations relating directly to Herefordshire are carried forward in the Core Strategy including targets for diversion from landfill and the concept of balancing waste flows where possible. With no specific regional policy there is a need for clear development plan documents to establish the overall context. This is strengthened by the requirement for neighbouring authorities to work together, to meet the requirements of the 'duty to co-operate' as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Of relevance to the above is the *Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy* for both Herefordshire and Worcestershire which deals mainly with Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste (LACMW) but also covers some Commercial and Industrial Waste. Under

current contractual arrangements for the collection and disposal of LACMW until 2026, Herefordshire and Worcestershire employ a single contractor to manage all aspects of the waste disposal process. Any policy which seeks self-sufficiency, or a balance of “waste in” and “waste out” (one of the key principles of former regional policy), must therefore recognise Herefordshire and Worcestershire as one unit for this waste stream. This approach contributes to the evidence for co-operation under the new duty.

There has been a long-standing strategy to ensure residents are within reasonable distance of a household waste ‘amenity’ or ‘bring’ site, where unwanted items can be taken for recycling or disposal. To date Hereford and the market towns have such a site, with the exception of Kington. At Kington planning permission exists on an approved site and construction is awaited to complete the suite of facilities. No further such sites are anticipated, but the provision of further ‘bring’ sites is not ruled out by any of these waste policies.

Core Strategy objectives explicitly require consideration of waste minimisation/prevention (objective 11). Waste policies also contribute indirectly to other objectives, such as conserving the natural and historic environment, sustainable development requirements and delivering essential infrastructure. By applying the proximity principle (a feature of EU and national waste policies), reductions can be made in the need for road transport (objective 4) both to access waste facilities and to minimise the need for long-distance waste transport. Climate change is an issue which influences the whole Core Strategy and by regarding waste as a resource to be used where appropriate, especially in the case of energy-from-waste developments, reliance on fossil fuels can be decreased thereby helping to reduce the ‘carbon footprint’ of the county.

Herefordshire is a predominantly rural county which generates large volumes of agricultural effluent, including cattle slurry and poultry litter. This may be classified as ‘waste’ (if disposed of), but is a useful fertiliser resource. This county is well-placed to encourage the use of anaerobic digestion (AD) as a technique for generating renewable energy from such effluent whilst still using the less noxious residue (‘digestate’) for crop and soil improvement. AD is a treatment measure which the Government supports and can be successful at a variety of scales in terms of volume throughput. Food waste (from homes, businesses and/or industry) has not yet been collected separately due to economies of scale, but enabling a network of AD plants could facilitate this in the future. This approach is also compatible with the network of sewage treatment works across the county and allows the achievement of treating waste close to source.

Conversely, the rural nature of this county has limited significant industrial areas outside Hereford. This restricts the supply of ‘brownfield’ land on which waste facilities might be located, the volume of industrial waste generated, and the economics of process such waste locally. Currently most industrial, hazardous or other difficult wastes are shipped out of county for treatment where it is not viable to do otherwise.

Details of future waste installations, including site specific allocations, or Areas of Search and the on-going review of targets, will be dealt with in a subsequent Development Plan Document for Minerals and Waste, at which time the requirements and capacity will be reassessed. The Core Strategy policies need to distinguish between those policies appropriate at this strategic level and the detailed ones which will follow.

The strategy for the current and future sustainable and efficient management of waste will be secured through:

- dealing with waste (as defined) in accordance with European legislation and national policy and the waste hierarchy;

- Securing compatibility with Environment Agency (or successor regulator) requirements on relevant topics including groundwater protection, air quality and Permitting requirements;
- considering otherwise waste materials primarily as a resource, to be managed so as to minimise the need for disposal to landfill;
- making provision for specific waste streams (policy W1);
- incorporating flexibility so as to enable the processing of food waste should the opportunity arise or proposals come forward (policy W1);
- assessing proposals for new and expansion of existing waste development (policy W2);
- regarding favourably any co-operative proposals to utilise waste, heat, energy, recovered materials etc by or for a combination of neighbouring businesses or other establishments within the county or with adjoining authorities where appropriate (policy W2);
- protection of existing waste sites and currently permitted waste treatment facilities (policy W3);
- encouragement of energy-from-waste facilities, with particular regard to anaerobic digestion and other appropriate emerging technology (policy W4);
- requiring all new development to make appropriate provision for waste minimisation, management and treatment (policy W5).

Policy W1 Waste streams and targets

The principal waste streams shall be dealt with in accordance with the following principles:

1. Local Authority Collected Municipal waste (LACMW): This shall continue to be managed through the Joint Municipal Waste Management Contract with Worcestershire County Council, with treatment (from 2014/15) potentially focussed on a single energy-from-waste installation to serve the two counties. The specific targets for diversion from landfill are set out in Figure 5.5 below (subject to review in the Natural Resources DPD).

In addition up to two hectares of land may be required for new facilities for waste transfer, treatment, recycling and recovery of LACMW. The priority for locating such sites will be based on proximity to the origin of the bulk of such waste and therefore such site(s) are likely to be in or close to Hereford and/or the market towns, (although it is recognised that rural sites may be more appropriate in some cases and such sites are not ruled out. Significant individual site(s) will be identified in the Natural Resources DPD, guided by the criteria set out in policy W2.

2. Commercial and industrial waste (C and I): This shall be dealt with as far as practicable within the county on sites suitable for industrial use. The specific targets for diversion from landfill are set out in Figure 5.6 below (subject to further review in the Natural Resources Development Plan Document following an update of the most recent Assessment). In addition up to ten hectares of land may be required for new facilities for C and I waste transfer, treatment, recycling and recovery; the location of such sites will follow the same principles as for LACMW. Any individual site(s) or Areas of Search will be identified in the Natural Resources DPD, guided by the criteria set out in policy W2.
3. Construction, demolition and excavation waste (CDE): This waste stream represents a significant proportion of total wastes and constitutes a low-value, high-volume commodity. The quantity of such waste will be minimised through the use of site waste management plans where relevant and in particular, the encouragement of on-site recovery and re-use as part of development projects. Wherever possible demolition wastes will be regarded as a source of secondary aggregates (both re-used and reclaimed), although the need for specific washing, screening and quality

control of such material is acknowledged. Identified strategic housing proposals will be expected to be as self-contained as possible, re-using excavation materials for landscaping within and adjacent to the development sites. However it is recognised that there will still be a significant requirement for the appropriate relocation of some of this waste to be facilitated through land raising, landscaping and agricultural land improvement, where tangible benefits can be demonstrated and where the materials are uncontaminated and deemed fit for purpose. This process is primarily controlled through Environment Agency regulations and the planning process must work in parallel with those requirements.

4. Hazardous waste: Sites for the transfer and treatment of hazardous wastes will be dealt with in accordance with national planning policy principles.
5. Agricultural waste, organic liquid waste and food waste: Non-biodegradable agricultural waste will be dealt with as part of the commercial and industrial waste stream. The sustainable treatment of biodegradable agricultural waste, organic liquid wastes and food wastes will be encouraged through composting, biological wetland (reed-beds) and farm-scale anaerobic digesters in accordance with Policy W4 and, where appropriate, policies SD2 and SD4.

Specific targets are set for municipal solid waste (LACMW, Figure 5.5) and for commercial and industrial waste (C & I, figure 5.6). Central government also recognises three further waste streams which the Core Strategy seeks to diminish: construction, demolition and excavation Waste, hazardous waste and agricultural waste.

With regard to LACMW, Policy W1 accords with the evidence base and acknowledges the planning application lodged in March 2010 for an energy-from-waste plant to take up to 200,000 tonnes of LACMW per annum on a site in Worcestershire which has been granted planning permission by the Secretary of State in July 2012, although progress is not finalised. The project would divert the majority of LACMW from landfill into renewable energy generation based on an industrial site with suitable adjacent users. If the scheme stalls, then energy from waste treatment remains the most likely destination for LACMW and, if not on the site that has received planning permission then an alternative site would need to be identified elsewhere (within the terms of the waste contract) on a suitable site within either Worcestershire or Herefordshire.

The amount of LACMW collected in Herefordshire has reduced significantly in the last 10 years with the aid of local and national waste prevention and recycling initiatives including the household amenity sites. This reduction, and conversely likely future growth in waste as a result of additional households, will need to be monitored and reflected in any targets as part of the Joint Municipal Waste Strategy. Taking this into account and the new strategy for treatment in Worcestershire, there is still a need for approximately two hectares of land for collection, treatment and transfer of LACMW. This allocation will be provided on land suitable for employment uses and be in addition to the needs of employment land for economic development purposes. In accordance with the proximity principle, the most suitable locations are in or adjacent to, Hereford and the market towns. There will however be cases where rural sites will need to be considered where particular justification can be provided.

The collection, treatment and disposal of commercial and industrial waste (C and I) depends upon private sector initiatives coming forward. It is largely outside the control of Herefordshire Council's waste management service provision, although the waste industry is dynamic. More flexible collaborative arrangements are not ruled out, and policies will not be

over-restrictive. Provision must be made for suitable land for the transfer, treatment, recycling and recovery of waste arising in the commercial sector. The evidence base identifies a need for up to ten hectares of land, which is allowed for as part of employment land provision. This, in common with LACMW requirements, will be in addition to other employment land allocations and be located in accordance with similar criteria. Where existing waste management sites are lost due to changes in use and/or commercial interest factors, additional land may be expressly required in compensation. Targets and specific allocations or Areas of Search will be identified in the forthcoming Natural Resources Development Plan Document. The potential inclusion of C and I waste within LACMW may require further sites, and consideration within a subsequent DPD.

The principle for construction, demolition and excavation waste (CDE) is for sites to prioritise self-sufficiency. This waste stream has a high potential for the production of secondary aggregates and for landscaping operations, potentially associated with another development. Herefordshire's absence of suitable landfill sites increases the importance of this principle. Policies need to take account of the problems associated with unauthorised deposits, whilst facilitating genuine proposals to utilise resource for beneficial purposes. The council's objective is to ensure that only appropriate sites are used and only suitable materials are disposed of in this way. In terms of both planning policy and development management, the council needs to work co-operatively with the licensed waste operators and neighbouring authorities to ensure optimum management of this large-volume waste stream.

Hazardous waste volumes, including low-level radioactive wastes, are currently low in Herefordshire, and therefore there is no need for any strategic allocations. Any individual applications for sites to treat or transfer hazardous waste can be assessed by reference to the policies within national planning guidance.

Agricultural waste is largely dealt with on-farm but where non-biodegradable waste needs to be moved off-farm then it effectively becomes part of the C & I waste stream and will be dealt with accordingly.

Figure 5.5: Targets for municipal waste (tonnes)					
Period	2005/6	2010/11	2015/16	2020/21	2025/26
Minimum diversion from landfill	24,000	43,000	60,000	69,000	74,000
Maximum landfill	68,000	59,000	48,000	45,000	46,000

Figure 5.6: Targets for commercial and industrial waste (tonnes)					
Period	2005/6	2010/11	2015/16	2020/21	2025/26
Minimum diversion from landfill	97,000	110,000	137,000	188,000	188,000
Maximum landfill	71,000	59,000	59,000	62,000	62,000

Policy W2 – Location of new waste management facilities
<p>Significant new waste management facilities (i.e. those which require sites of 0.5 hectares or more) shall be located in accordance with the following general principles. Such sites should be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. sites with current use rights for waste management purposes; or 2. active mineral aggregate working sites, or existing permitted landfill sites where the proposal is both operationally related to the permitted use and for a temporary period commensurate with the permitted use of the site; or

3. existing or allocated industrial or employment land; or
4. land within or adjacent to sewage treatment works.

Where it can be demonstrated that none of the above categories of site are available, the re-use of redundant agricultural buildings and their curtilage will be supported.

In all cases:

- a) the impact of the proposals for the collection, storage, handling, treatment, disposal and transport of any wastes shall be mitigated, with particular attention paid to potential impacts on human health, biodiversity, and the natural, cultural and historic environment;
- b) sites shall be reclaimed where appropriate, to an acceptable after-use and condition;
- c) sustainable technologies shall be used wherever possible;
- d) Proposals by groups of neighbouring businesses and/or other establishments to combine and utilise their waste outputs and to co-operatively benefit from resource, heat or energy recovery shall be regarded favourably in principle (subject to local amenity and environmental considerations);
- e) waste developments have the potential to impact upon the natural environment. Accordingly, development proposals are to be accompanied with a detailed environmental monitoring and mitigation strategy based on reliable professional surveys and assessments. In addition, permission may be granted for a trial period to ensure there is no local environmental impact.

The above criteria ensure waste proposals will be assessed in a coherent and consistent manner, based on robust evidence and existing successful practices.

Policy W3 – Safeguarding existing and permitted waste treatment sites

Existing and permitted waste treatment sites and facilities will be protected from development which would compromise their future operation, , unless satisfactory alternative provision can be secured on equivalent or better sites. For new site proposals, appropriate measures should be included to protect the environment and human health from adverse effects including visual impact, noise, dust, vibration, air quality including odour, and land/water pollution. Alternatively ; or it is must be demonstrated that alternative facilities are no longer required because the relevant waste stream has been minimised and/or dealt with, in a more sustainable manner elsewhere.

To ensure sufficient capacity to meet waste requirements established and permitted waste sites should be able to continue in operation unless suitable alternatives can be secured, or are demonstrably no longer required. Accordingly existing sites will be protected from development which would conflict with or displace waste uses as well as the consideration of adjoining land and sites where there is a risk that new uses may prejudice the continued operation of the waste-related use. This is particularly relevant where existing waste management sites are clustered on old-style industrial estates which are considered for redevelopment, even where older sites are run-down. It is the established use which is the key consideration..

Policy W4 – Technologies for biological treatment of waste

As a means of generating renewable energy and fertiliser, and reducing carbon emissions, the use of anaerobic digesters (AD) and other emerging technologies will be encouraged for both large and small scale waste and farm effluent management developments, provided that potentially adverse local environmental effects can be identified and adequately managed and mitigated, including traffic implications. AD installations are not restricted to the broad locations for waste facilities specified in policy W2 above but are to be situated as close as is practical to the source of necessary feed-stocks bearing in mind other essential factors. The use of biological wetland treatment systems and reed beds will be supported for the treatment of liquid effluent where proposals can demonstrate positive effectiveness, with full pollution and nuisance prevention measures, and the coincidental creation of wildlife habitats. Proposals must include appropriate measures to protect the environment and human health from adverse effects including:

1. visual impact,
2. noise,
3. dust,
4. vibration,
5. air quality including odour, and land/water pollution new or extensions to existing open air composting facilities, in-vessel composting and anaerobic digestion facilities should only be permitted in appropriate locations where bio-aerosols and emissions to air, land and water can be acceptably controlled and managed.

Anaerobic digesters (AD) are becoming more commonplace as a means of dealing with biodegradable effluent and recovering energy. An advantage of AD and similar technology is that it does not necessarily require the large-scale installation that many other technologies use, schemes can be successfully run at a variety of scales. It is recognised that they require a combination of input materials ('feedstock'), which include some bio-energy crops to achieve the correct operational balance. The import of feedstock to the site may be necessary, since one agricultural enterprise may not be able to provide an adequate volume and range of feedstock. There needs to be a viable use for the end products in terms of energy (typically electricity and heat), and digestate. However with the benefit of improving technology, there is potential for AD installations to become a significant means of treating farm and liquid wastes sustainably. Rapidly expanding intensive poultry and dairy enterprises in Herefordshire require a strategic approach to the sustainable management of slurry, spent litter and manure. For smaller farms and intensive installations the capacity for dealing with the effluent resource (as nutrient-rich fertiliser) is becoming problematical. Polytunnel development for vegetable and fruit has its own similar arisings in the form of silt and run-off, which likewise needs to be managed. Future policy needs to anticipate, encourage and help to manage this consequence of an expanding market flexibly, in order to meet demands. The increasing use of engineered swales, reed-beds and biological wetland treatment systems either as stand-alone effluent treatment or in conjunction with conventional systems, and/or AD plants needs to be recognised as having significant potential for liquid waste and silt management. This provision needs to be read alongside policies for wastewater treatment (SD4) for both homes and industry, promoting a flexible, integrated and future-proof network.

Policy W5 – Waste minimisation and management in new developments

All development proposals shall include measures to deal with waste arising in accordance with the principles of the waste hierarchy. This will apply to both the

construction phase (where physical development is involved) and subsequent use of the development. Major proposals which could generate significant volumes of waste will be required to submit a waste management plan before development begins, detailing: The likely waste arisings from the development during construction and use, a strategy for waste minimisation and management, commitment to recycling and recovery wherever possible, and how and where any final residue would be disposed of. Detailed policies for smaller scale developments will be brought forward in the Minerals and Waste DPD and in Supplementary Planning Documents appropriate to specific sites, uses or developments.

All developments should include consideration of their likely waste arising, for the full range of waste streams, both during construction and afterwards once the development is brought into use. In the case of some waste development types it is also necessary to have regard to the after-use of the site. This policy includes minimum criteria for the application of policy at the strategic level, i.e. developments classified as 'major'. Smaller sites will be guided with more detailed policies in the Natural Resources DPD and forthcoming Supplementary Planning Documents such as the Design Code and masterplans for specific sites/localities. The overall objective is to take a holistic approach to managing any materials arising from other development, operations, industry and households. The key aim is to achieve a flexible and sustainable methodology which is capable of keeping abreast of technological advancement.

Delivery and Monitoring of the environmental quality policies

These policies will be delivered by:

- an Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- preparation and implementation of other development plan documents
- preparation and implementation of a Design Code Supplementary Planning Document; and other SPDs as appropriate;
- the development management process.

Environmental Quality Monitoring Indicators:

- Changes in the areas of designated nature conservation sites as a consequence of planning permission;
- Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has or is being implemented;
- Number of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments on buildings at risk register (English Heritage);
- Net change in condition of SSSI's (Natural England);
- Number of applications granted planning permission contrary to the advice of statutory agencies (e.g. English Heritage, Natural England or the Environment Agency);
- Percentage of river length assessed as good biological or chemical quality (EA) in particular so far as they relate to the measures within the Nutrient Management Plan;
- Phosphate levels within the River Wye SAC and adjoining tributaries that receive increased phosphates from Core Strategy growth;
- Monitoring changes to protected habitats and impacts of species within the Herefordshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan;
- Percentage of total residential applications at below 30 dwellings per hectare;
- Number of residential applications at less than 1.5 parking spaces per unit;

- The need for, frequency and outcomes of planning enforcement investigations/ planning appeals concerning the aspects of local loss of locally important buildings within a conservation area;
- Number of developments meeting and surpassing national design standards;
- Number of new parish, town and neighbourhood development plans;
- Maintaining Herefordshire Council's County Site and Monuments Register;
- Comparison of mineral production figures with national and sub-national apportionments;
- Estimates of permitted and useable land banks for aggregates (sand, gravel and crushed rock);
- After use of sites especially wildlife habitat creation;
- The production of secondary (reused and recycled) aggregates;
- Data on the use of the railhead at Moreton-on-Lugg;
- Summary of proposals contributing to the Green Infrastructure Strategy from the above and any other measures.
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Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

The Sustainability Appraisal Report produced as part of the development of this Draft Core Strategy did not recommend any changes to any of the policies in this section.

In relation to Social Progress policies most were appraised as having mostly positive effects with a number having significant positive effects. The only negative effect identified in these policies was in relation to Policy H2 - allowing affordable housing schemes in rural areas which may have a negative effect on reducing the need to travel.

The economic prosperity policies again are assessed to have mostly positive effects, whilst in respect of the environmental quality policies the local distinctiveness and sustainable design policies are assessed to have mostly positive or significantly positive effects. Policies dealing with minerals and waste are assessed as having mixed effects.