

BELMONT RURAL
NATIONAL AND LOCAL
PLANNING POLICY
ASSESSMENT

VERSION 1 - August 2014

Kirkwells

The Planning People

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Document Overview

- The Parish of Belmont Rural is located to the South of the City of Hereford with boundaries formed by Newton Brook to the South and East, Ruckhall Lane to the West and the River Wye to the North.
- The boundary follows the south side of the River Wye (Special Area of Conservation and Site of Scientific Interest) and Belmont Abbey to the northern boundary.
- The Parish of Belmont Rural was established in April 2000, having previously been a ward within the Parish of Clehonger. The Parish falls within the Belmont Ward of Herefordshire Council.
- The Parish consists of mainly private sector housing and has two Community Centres; Belmont Community Centre on Eastholme Road, and the Northolme Centre on Northolme Road.
- The key policy documents which are relevant to the area are: National Planning Policy (NPPF), saved policies of the adopted Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (2007) and Herefordshire Core Strategy Pre Submission Publication 2013
- Belmont Rural falls within the Hereford Housing Market Area (refer to policy RA1 – Rural housing strategy and Rural Housing Background Paper, Herefordshire Council, 2013).
- Belmont Rural lies within the boundary of National Landscape Character Area 100 “Herefordshire Lowlands”.
- There are a total of 6 Listed Buildings within the area and no conservation area.
- Belmont Rural lies within zone 3 of the Herefordshire Council Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule Consultation Document, March 2013

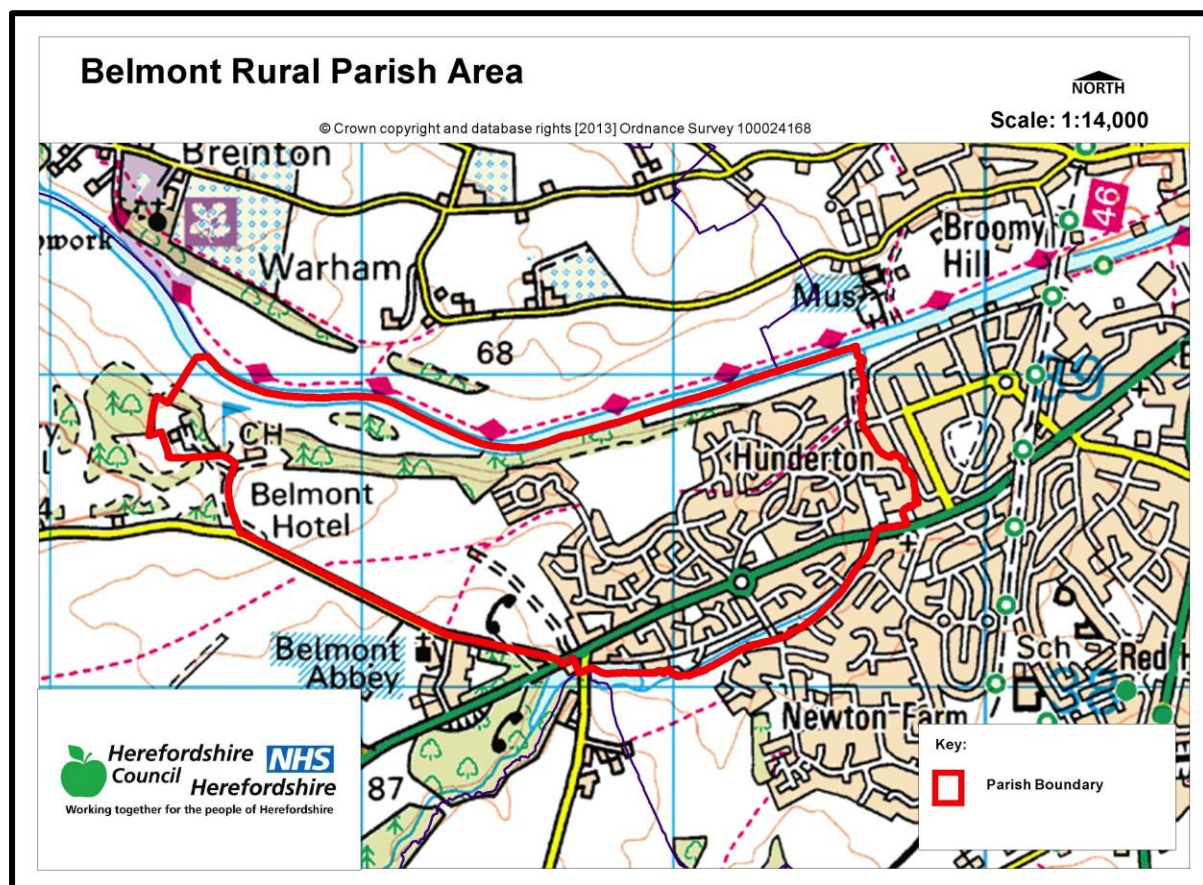
1.0 Introduction

Neighbourhood Plans are required to sit within the framework of national, regional and local planning policies.

This document summarises the national, regional and local planning policies that will have to be taken in to account during the preparation of the Belmont Rural Neighbourhood Plan. It will form an important background document to the Neighbourhood Plan and should be used as a key point of reference for members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The Planning Policy Assessment has been prepared as a “live” working document and will continue to be reviewed and updated throughout the preparation of the Belmont Rural Neighbourhood Plan.

Figure 1 – Designated Belmont Rural Neighbourhood Planning Area



2.0 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹

National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The key elements of NPPF that have to be taken in to account by those preparing neighbourhood plans is set out below.

Para 6: The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Para 7: There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- ❑ ***an economic role*** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- ❑ ***a social role*** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- ❑ ***an environmental role*** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Para 11. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Para 15: All plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally.

Para 16: The application of the presumption will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Critically, it will mean that neighbourhoods should:

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

- ❑ develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development;
- ❑ plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan; and
- ❑ identify opportunities to use Neighbourhood Development Orders to enable developments that are consistent with their neighbourhood plan to proceed.

Delivering Sustainable Development

There are a number of elements to delivering sustainable development. These are outlined below with any specific references NPPF makes to neighbourhood plans.

1. Building a strong, competitive economy.

Para 19: Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth.

Para 21: Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including a poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing.

Para 22. Planning policies should avoid long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose.

2. Ensuring the vitality of town centres

3. Supporting a prosperous rural economy

Para 28: To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:

- ❑ support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;
- ❑ Promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- ❑ Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside;
- ❑ Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship

4. Promoting sustainable transport

Para 29: Transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives.

Para 30: Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.

5. Supporting high quality communications infrastructure

Para 42: Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks plays a vital role in enhancing provision of local community facilities and services.

6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Para 49: Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Para 54: In rural areas, exercising the duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities, local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites, where appropriate. Local planning authorities should in particular consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs.

Para 55: To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

7. Requiring Good Design

Para 56: The Government attached great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

Para 57: It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design of all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

Para 58: Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.

Para 59: Design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.

Para 60: Planning policies should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms and styles. It is however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

8. *Promoting healthy communities*

Para 69: Planning policies should aim to achieve places which promote:

- ❑ Opportunities for meetings between members and the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through mixed use developments, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages
- ❑ Safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion
- ❑ Safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.

Para 70: Planning policies should:

- ❑ Plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- ❑ Guard against unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day to day needs;
- ❑ Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community; and
- ❑ Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

Para 71: Local planning authorities should take a positive collaborative approach to enable development to be brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order, including working with communities to identify and resolve key issues before applications are submitted.

Para 73: Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities.

Para 75: Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access.

Para 76: Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances.

Para 77: The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- ❑ where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- ❑ where the green space is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance
- ❑ where the green area is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land

Para 78: Local policy for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with policy for Green Belts.

9. Protecting green belt land

10. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Para 99: new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure.

Para 100: Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

Para 101: The aim of the Sequential Test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding. The Strategic Flood Risk assessment will provide the basis for applying this test. A sequential approach should be used in areas known to be at risk from any form of flooding.

Para 102. If, following application of the Sequential Test, it is not possible, consistent with wider sustainability objectives, for the development to be located in zones with a lower probability of flooding, the Exception Test can be applied if appropriate. For the Exception Test to be passed:

- ❑ it must be demonstrated that the development provides wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk, informed by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment where one has been prepared; and
- ❑ a site-specific flood risk assessment must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.

Both elements of the test will have to be passed for development to be allocated or permitted.

11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Para 109: The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- ❑ protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils
- ❑ recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services

- ❑ minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity

Para 111: Planning policies should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.

Para 115: Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National parks, the Broads and AONBs, which have the highest status in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.

12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Para 132: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be.

13. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

Plan-making

Neighbourhood plans

Para 183: Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes and neighbourhood forums can use neighbourhood planning to:

- ❑ set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications; and
- ❑ grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order.

Para 184. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

Para 185. Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid

duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation.”

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), March 2014

This document provides advice on the neighbourhood planning system introduced by the Localism Act including key stages and decisions (e.g. deciding neighbourhood areas, the legal tests for neighbourhood plans, and the process of independent examination and referendum).

This is a reference useful tool and can be accessed [here](#).

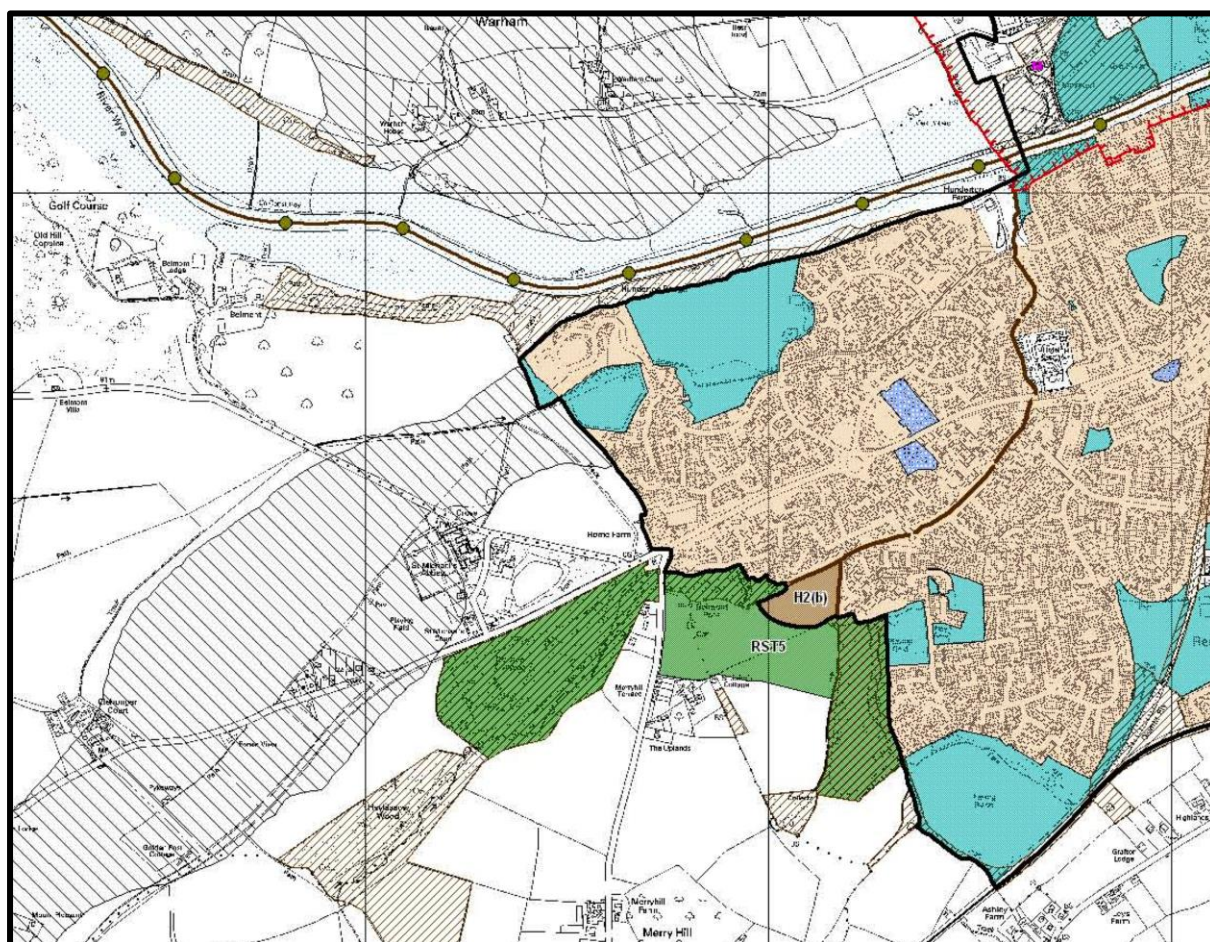
3.0 Adopted Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan 2007 Saved Policies²

The saved policies in the Unitary Development Plan are the policies that the Belmont Rural Neighbourhood Plan currently have to be in “general conformity” with if the neighbourhood plan is to meet this important basic condition of the Localism Act.

The Unitary Development Plan was adopted in March 2007 and is the principal element of Development Plan for Herefordshire for the purposes of Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

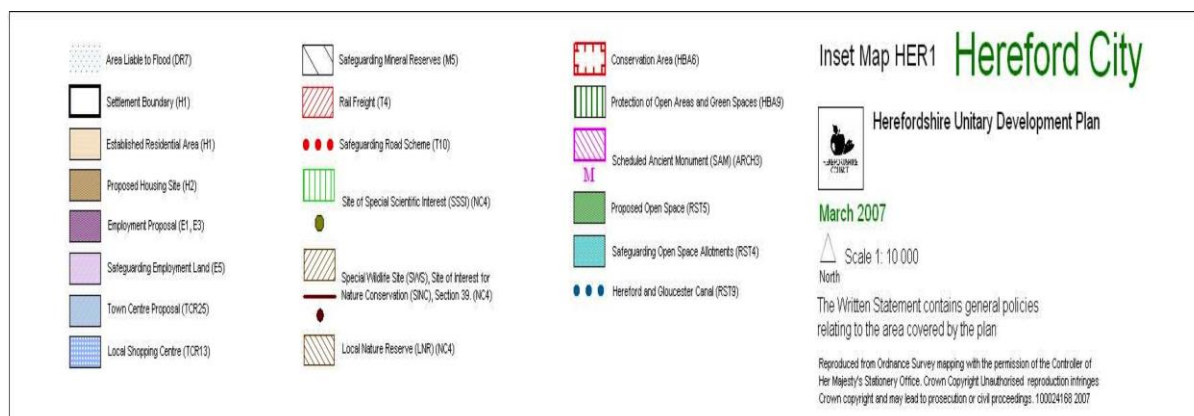
This means that, where regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

UDP Proposals Map for part of Belmont (Inset map HER1)³



² <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/unitary-development-plan/>

³ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/5749166/Hereford.pdf>



Saved policies which are relevant to Belmont Rural Neighbourhood Plan include:

S1 – Sustainable development

The Plan will promote development and land use change which in terms of its level, location, form and design contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. This means avoiding or minimising adverse impacts on the environment whilst providing necessary dwellings and employment together with appropriate infrastructure, services, transport and amenities.

S2 – Development requirements

The contribution that developments can make to a sustainable pattern of land use and development which respects the County's environmental resources will be secured by:

1. ensuring that new development achieves a high standard of design and layout which respects the townscape, landscape, ecological and historic character of the area; is sustainable in terms of its construction materials and methods, use of energy, water and other resources; and includes positive environmental benefits including landscaping schemes and provision of wildlife habitats;
2. promoting land use patterns and developments
3. ensuring that developments include suitable provision for public transport, cycling and walking,
4. ensuring that development is designed having full regard to and within environmental constraints, including groundwater protection, land stability, contamination, and the location of hazardous uses;
5. taking a risk-based precautionary approach to flood risk and the effects of flooding elsewhere, having regard to indicative flood risk in the major flood plains of the Rivers Wye and Lugg and their tributaries. Where development is proposed in locations at risk of flooding, it should be demonstrated that there are no reasonable options available in a lower risk category, consistent with other sustainable development objectives;
6. ensuring that development does not lead to an unacceptable risk to human health and safety, and that risks of pollution of water, air, or land, or in terms of noise or lighting, are minimised;
7. ensuring that development which would result in significant negative effects is avoided, but where environmental impact is unavoidable, requiring mitigation or

- compensation measures which provide benefits at least equal to any environmental loss;
- 8. taking proper account of the ability of existing and proposed infrastructure including foul drainage, water supply and water resources, and the highway network to serve the development proposed without undue environmental impact; and
- 9. making use of planning conditions and planning obligations to further the strategy of the Plan.

S3 – Housing

Provision will be made for additional dwellings to be built at an annual rate of 800 dwellings a year for the period 2001-2007 and for 600 dwellings a year beyond 2007. Having regard to existing commitments and the likely supply of dwellings arising from windfall sites, a maximum of about 12,200 dwellings would thereby be built over the period 1996-2011. Priority will be given to the use of previously developed land, ahead of urban extensions, including making the most effective use of existing buildings through conversion and bringing vacant property back into use.

Distribution of housing:

- ❑ Hereford 3,781 dwellings
- ❑ Wider rural area 1,918 dwellings

In addition, it is anticipated that approximately 274 dwellings (253 in Hereford and 21 in Ross-on-Wye) will be built on other sites not allocated at this stage.

Housing will be provided to meet the needs of communities throughout the County, including the need for affordable housing (about 2,300 dwellings in the Plan period) and for the provision of a range of dwelling types and sizes, and taking advantage of opportunities to create and maintain sustainable and integrated communities. In selecting and appraising locations for housing development, consideration will be given to:

1. accessibility to employment and local services by transport modes other than the car; and
2. the capacity of existing infrastructure including public transport, utilities and social and educational facilities to absorb and serve the development proposed.

S6 – Transport

The safe, efficient and sustainable movement of people and goods will be promoted within the context of reducing the need to travel by:

1. locating developments wherever possible within the County's existing urban areas or at locations reasonably accessible by means other than the private car
2. encouraging alternatives to the motor vehicle which through reducing energy consumption and pollution have less environmental impact;
3. promoting integration between transport modes so that the network is used to best effect;

4. assessing development and transport infrastructure proposals in terms of their traffic and transportation, economic development and environmental impacts and benefits,
5. safeguarding appropriate opportunities for rail transport and the routes of new walking, cycling and highway schemes from development that would prejudice their implementation.

S7 – Natural and historic heritage

The following assets comprising the County's historic and natural heritage will be protected, restored or enhanced:

1. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
2. sites and features of international, national and local nature conservation interest, species of biodiversity interest and areas of geodiversity;
3. the historic heritage including archaeology, buildings and areas of historic or architectural importance, and natural landscapes; and
4. landscape features that contribute positively to local distinctiveness and quality of the local environment.

S8 Recreation, sport and tourism

Existing recreational and sports facilities will be protected, fully utilised wherever possible, or enhanced to provide better and improved facilities. The re-use of existing buildings should also be considered, if appropriate, for the development of new facilities.

S11 – Community facilities and services

The needs of the community for services and facilities will be addressed by:

1. ensuring that the provision of necessary infrastructure minimises environmental consequences;
2. supporting the use of renewable energy resources where they are economically and environmentally sustainable; and
3. making provision for the retention of existing community facilities, particularly where there is under provision, and for the further development of social, health, education and community care facilities which are located close to the community they serve.

DR1 – Design

Where relevant to the proposal, all development will be required to:

1. promote or reinforce the distinctive character and appearance of the locality in terms of layout, density, means of access and enclosure, scale, mass, height, design and materials;
2. retain and where possible incorporate existing site features contributing to the quality of the local environment, including landscape, historic and natural elements such as wildlife habitats and species;

3. respect the context of the site, taking into account townscape and landscape character and topography, including the impact of the proposal on urban vistas, longer distance views and ridgelines;
4. include measures that address health and safety, the conservation of energy and water, and avoids nuisance and pollution; and
5. submit a design statement with the application for planning permission which sets out how proposals relate to issues of design quality, environmental conservation and sustainability.

DR2 – Land use and activity

Where relevant to the proposal, all development will be required to:

1. be located and designed so as to facilitate a genuine choice of modes of travel, including public transport, cycling and walking as alternatives to the private car;
2. incorporate wherever possible a mix of compatible land uses and activities;
3. be designed to deter crime and increase personal safety;
4. not prejudice the amenity or continued use of adjoining land and buildings; and
5. not constrain the future development of adjoining sites or prejudice the implementation of comprehensive development.

DR3 – Movement

Where relevant to the proposal, all development will be required to:

1. provide a safe, convenient and attractive pattern of movement into, out of and across the site, particularly for pedestrians, people with disabilities and cyclists, incorporating pedestrian seating and cycle parking as required;
2. include good links to public transport, incorporating wherever appropriate suitable access for public transport vehicles into the site and associated passenger facilities;
3. include a travel plan as part of the planning application in the case of proposals for major employment, retail, leisure and service development, proposals for such uses in Hereford and the market towns generating significant travel, or where particular local traffic problems require to be addressed;
4. be designed to secure access and mobility for all;
5. incorporate adequate provision for vehicular access from the highway network without detriment to highway safety or to pedestrians, cyclists or public transport; and
6. incorporate cycle and vehicle parking to the required standards having regard to the need to promote sustainable transport choices,

DR4 – Environment

Where relevant to the proposal, all schemes will be required to:

1. be capable of being served by existing services or demonstrate that adequate services are reasonably accessible or can be readily provided without significant environmental impact;
2. minimise resource use, including water and energy, and maximise resource efficiency including passive energy absorption;
3. safeguard the availability and quality of surface and groundwater supplies

DR6 Water resources

Development will not be permitted where there is the likelihood of an unacceptable risk to the availability or quality of water resources.

DR7 Flood risk

Proposals for development in flood risk areas will need to be accompanied by a flood risk assessment. Additionally and within high risk areas (zone 3) as defined on the proposals map or as reviewed by other justified data, proposals will need to demonstrate through a sequential test that there are no reasonable alternative locations available on land of a lower flood risk, taking account of other environmental considerations.

Development within high risk developed areas (zone 3a) may only be suitable for residential, commercial and industrial development provided the minimum standards for flood defence can be provided and maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Development within high-risk undeveloped and sparsely developed areas (zone 3b) will not be permitted unless a particular location is essential.

Built development within functional flood plains (zone 3c) should be wholly exceptional and limited to essential transport and utilities infrastructure that have to be there.

In all cases development will only be permitted where it would not be at an unacceptable risk of flooding or where it is essential to that location. Any protection, compensatory, mitigation and other measures proposed must be acceptable in safety terms and in terms of their environmental effects. All proposals will need to include the necessary minimum standards of flood defence, including a dry access for residential development, show that there would be no net loss of flood plain storage and that the proposed development would not impede water flows or increase flood risk elsewhere.

Wherever possible sustainable drainage techniques should be used to minimise the adverse effects associated with increased surface water runoff. Adequate access to watercourses and flood defences for maintenance and improvements should be maintained.

H1 Hereford and the market towns: settlement boundaries and established residential areas

The provision of housing in Hereford and the market towns of Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury, Bromyard and Kington will be restricted to within the defined settlement boundaries. Within these boundaries, the established residential areas should remain primarily residential in character and other uses proposed should be compatible with this

primary use and appropriate for the site. Residential development will be permitted within these areas where compatible with the housing design and other policies of the Plan.

H9 – Affordable housing

The provision of affordable housing will be sought through negotiations with developers of both allocated and windfall housing sites. Such housing should, wherever possible, be provided as a mix of affordable housing types, having regard to local needs, and contribute to a mixed and balanced scheme overall in terms of dwelling size, type and affordability.

Indicative targets for affordable housing have been set for specific sites identified in policies H2 and H5. Affordable housing at an indicative target of 35% will also be required on suitable windfall sites above the following size thresholds:

H13 – Sustainable residential design

Proposals for residential development at all scales should maximise their contribution to sustainable residential design and high quality living environments. In particular proposals will be expected to:

1. take an integrated and comprehensive approach to design, layout and landscape which respects the townscape and landscape context of the site and the distinctive character and appearance of the locality;
2. provide for interesting and attractive environments through the imaginative layout of buildings, landscaping and open spaces, making full use of existing site features;
3. create environments which are safe and secure for all members of the community;
4. design for movement and traffic management in ways that give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and, where appropriate, public transport, above the movement and parking of motor vehicles, in accordance with the transport user hierarchy;
5. address the energy efficiency of new housing, including energy conservation measures, sustainable energy generation, layout and orientation;
6. make provision for recycling and composting in the use of dwellings;
7. provide for the conservation of resources such as water;
8. make provision for sustainable drainage measures for both surface and foul water;
9. include landscaping and open space proposals in accordance with other Plan policies as an integral element of the scheme;
10. avoid building on open space with recreational and amenity value; and
11. provide for acceptable levels of residential amenity including privacy both within the scheme and in respect of nearby properties.

Design statements should address these issues in setting out the design principles adopted and the regard had to context.

H14 Re-using previously developed land and buildings

Proposals for the re-use, redevelopment, conversion or change of use of previously developed land and existing buildings for residential purposes will be permitted

H18 Alterations and extensions

Proposals for the alteration or extension of dwellings or for buildings incidental to the enjoyment of a dwelling will be permitted where:

1. the original building (that is, as at 1 July 1948 or as originally built if constructed later than this date, and not including any subsequent extensions) would remain the dominant feature;
2. the proposal is in keeping with the character of the existing dwelling and its surroundings in terms of scale, mass, siting, detailed design and materials;
3. the proposal would not be cramped on its plot, including having regard to provision of suitable private open amenity space, and would not adversely impact on the privacy and amenity of occupiers of neighbouring residential property; and
4. the level of resulting off street parking provision is in accordance with policy H16.

H19 Open space requirements

Residential development will be required to incorporate outdoor playing space and public open space in accordance with the minimum standards set out in policy RST3, according to the type of housing to be provided, the quantity and quality of any existing provision within the immediate locality.

E12 – Farm diversification

Proposals enabling the diversification of farm businesses into other forms of income generation including non-agricultural activities will be permitted where:

1. the proposal is consistent in scale with its rural location, serving to retain the open character of the countryside; and
2. use is made of existing buildings, in accordance with policies HBA12 and HBA13, and developed areas wherever possible, with any new development of a scale and design which is appropriate to its rural surroundings.

T6 Walking

Development proposals should:

1. acknowledge the individual and network value of existing walking routes and, where appropriate, provide new and improved links and infrastructure that enhance network capacity and encourage more journeys on foot, especially to workplaces, educational establishments, public transport nodes and other community facilities;
2. demonstrate that the strategic and/or local significance of walking routes through proposed development sites has been taken into account, especially in determining standards of provision including width, surfacing, signing and lighting;
3. respect the utility, convenience, recreational value, attractiveness and historical significance of any designated public right of way;
4. seek reasonably direct and convenient alignments for those new or improved walking routes that predominantly serve utility trips;
5. identify, with reference to the definitive map, the precise alignment and means of safeguarding of any public right of way, as well as the standard of any works to be carried out on the route;
6. demonstrate that the needs of disabled people have been taken into account in the

- design of new or improved walking routes; and
- 7. ensure that the legal alignment of any public right of way is kept open and usable during development works.

Development proposals that involve the extinguishment or diversion of a public right of way, or closure of any other type of established walking route, will not be permitted unless an alternative route of at least equal utility value can be provided on, or conveniently near to, the proposal site. The onus of demonstrating no net loss of value will be placed on applicants, in consultation with and to the satisfaction of the highway authority.

The creation of new public rights of way, permissive links, roadside footways and other forms of walking route will be supported where they add to the utility of the network, including providing missing links in otherwise continuous routes.

T7 Cycling

Development proposals shall wherever possible incorporate safe, direct, coherent, convenient and attractive cycle routes and associated facilities, taking full advantage of links to the existing or planned cycle route network and/or to major journey attractors including educational establishments, retail centres, public transport interchanges, leisure facilities and workplaces. The requirement for such provision and facilities may include related improvements to roads and junctions, cycle priority measures and the provision of convenient, safe and secure cycle parking.

New cycle routes will be developed within the Plan period towards establishing a County-wide network. Off-highway routes will generally be for shared use with walkers. Planned routes already identified for development, include:

Hereford:

- ❑ Great Western Way
- ❑ Northern extension from Widemarsh Common to Holmer Industrial Estate Southward extension from Haywood School to Newton Farm and proposed Haywood Country Park
- ❑ Commercial Road and Aylestone Hill
- ❑ Broad Street and Widemarsh Street
- ❑ St Owen's Street
- ❑ Edgar Street – Rail Station
- ❑ Holme Lacy Road – Phase 2 – Ross Road to Hinton Road
- ❑ Rotherwas/Lower Bullingham to Bartonsham
- ❑ Plough Lane to Eign Gate
- ❑ Hunderton (Golden Post) to Belmont (Ruckhall Lane)
- ❑ King Georges V Playing Field to Lower Bullingham (riverbank route) and Green Crize
- ❑ Various safer routes to schools

Inter-Urban Links (from Hereford):

Hereford- Ross-on-Wye-Symonds Yat (part Wye Valley Cycleway and National Route 44)

Development that would prejudice the provision of any route planned for implementation in the Plan period will not be permitted. Similarly, development that would prejudice either the safety, convenience and attractiveness of existing routes used by cyclists or the continuity and utility of such routes will only be permitted where at least equivalent alternative provision is made. The onus of demonstrating no net loss of value will be placed on applicants, in consultation with and to the satisfaction of the highway authority, including submission of cycle audits.

LA2 Landscape character and areas least resilient to change

Proposals for new development that would adversely affect either the overall character of the landscape, as defined by the Landscape Character Assessment and the Historic Landscape Characterisation or its key attributes or features, will not be permitted.

Proposals should demonstrate that landscape character has influenced their design, scale, nature and site selection. Where appropriate, developers will be encouraged to restore degraded or despoiled landscapes to their inherent character.

LA3 – Setting of settlements

Development outside the built up areas of Hereford, the market towns and rural settlements, which is acceptable in terms of other Plan policies, will only be permitted where it would not have an adverse effect upon the landscape setting of the settlement concerned.

NC1 Biodiversity and development

In determining all development proposals, the effects upon biodiversity and features of geological interest will be taken fully into consideration.

HBA8 Locally important buildings

Development proposals which would adversely affect the appearance or setting of locally important buildings of architectural or historic interest, or buildings that make a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of the area, will not be permitted.

HBA9 – Protection of open areas and green spaces

Proposals which would result in the loss of important open areas or green spaces which contribute to the distinctive spatial character, form and pattern of a settlement or neighbourhood will not be permitted.

CF5 – New community facilities

Proposals which would result in the provision of new or improved community facilities or the enhanced use of existing facilities will be permitted where they:

1. are appropriate in scale to the needs of the local community and reflect the character of the location;

2. are located within or around the settlement or the area they serve;
3. would not significantly impact upon the amenity of neighbouring residents; and
4. incorporate safe and convenient pedestrian access together with appropriate provision of car and cycle parking and operational space.

CF6 – Retention of existing facilities

Development proposals that would result in the loss of existing facilities which contribute to the needs of the community, will not be permitted unless:

1. alternative provision of at least equivalent community benefit is provided in a convenient and accessible location; or
2. the facilities can be best enhanced or complemented through the development of a small part of the site; or
3. there is continuing evidence that the facility is no longer required and that it could not accommodate an alternative community facility for which there is a need.

Other development which would reduce or restrict the ability of such facilities to be used for the function they are intended to fulfil will not be permitted.

M5 Safeguarding mineral reserves

Proposals which could sterilise potential future mineral workings will be resisted in order to safeguard identified mineral resources. Where such development is proposed, the applicant may be required:

1. to undertake a geological assessment of the site; and/or
2. to protect the minerals in question; and/or
3. to extract all or part of the mineral reserves as part of or before the other development is permitted.

In such cases mineral extraction will only be required when the need for the other development significantly outweighs the harm which extraction might cause to other matters of acknowledged importance.

RST4 Safeguarding existing recreational open space

Development proposals that would result in the loss of public or private open spaces with recreational value, or facilities that help meet the recreational needs of the community will not be permitted unless:

1. there is a clear excess of outdoor playing space provision and/or open space in the area taking account of the wider recreational value of such provision; or
2. alternative provision of at least equivalent community benefit is provided in a convenient

and accessible location (without reducing the developer's obligation to provide new open space within the development).

The development of playing fields which have not been shown to be surplus to requirements will not be permitted unless the development is ancillary and without prejudice to their continued recreational use, only affects land incapable of forming a pitch, or can be justified in terms of overall benefit to sport or criterion 2 above.

Development within parks and public gardens should be limited to that which is complementary to the main uses of the open space. Change of use from public to private open space will be permitted only where it secures enhanced provision for the community.

4.0 Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy 2011-2013 Pre-Submission Publication, May 2014

The Core Strategy is a key emerging planning document. The neighbourhood plan has to have regard to this emerging planning policy. When adopted the Core Strategy will set the planning policy to shape future development in the County. It will set a vision, closely aligned with the Herefordshire Sustainable Community Strategy (June 2010), to show how the county should look and function and how development needs will be met up to 2031.

The Core Strategy policies will eventually replace most Unitary Development Plan policies, against which current planning applications are determined.

Following the decision at Council in July 2013 to approve the Core Strategy Pre-submission publication, further work has been carried out on the preparation of a Nutrient Management Plan, a Transport Phasing Study and an updated Viability Assessment. All the technical information is now available to allow the plan to be submitted for independent assessment by a Planning Inspector.

Prior to submission to government, the council is required to publish the local plan - Core Strategy so that formal representations can be submitted. The publication period started on 22 May 2014 and closed on 3 July 2014.

This is the final round of consultation before the formal Examination of the Local Plan takes place. Once the publication period is complete and the comments analysed it is expected that the Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State. The representations received during this period will also be provided to the Inspector. The Inspector will then invite a range of organisations and individuals who have made representations at this stage to take part in a series of round table discussions which make up the examination. It is anticipated that the examination will take place in late 2014.

The Core Strategy has very little weight in terms of development management until Submission stage.

However the document provides part of the strategic planning policy context for neighbourhood planning and the Belmont Neighbourhood Plan will need to have regard to the following Core Strategy Policies:

SS1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development

When considering development proposals the council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within national policy. It will always work proactively to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that improves the social, economic and environmental conditions in Herefordshire.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Core Strategy (and, where relevant with policies in other development plan documents and neighbourhood development plans) will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise - taking into account whether:

- a) any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in national policy taken as a whole; or
- b) specific elements of national policy indicate that development should be restricted.

SS2 – Delivering new homes

A supply of deliverable and developable land will be identified to secure the delivery of a minimum of 16,500 homes in Herefordshire between 2011 and 2031 to meet market and affordable housing need.

Hereford is the focus for new housing development to support its role as the main centre in the county. Outside Hereford, the main focus for new housing development will take place in the **market towns** of Leominster, Ledbury, Ross on Wye, Bromyard and Kington on existing or new allocations to enhance their roles as multi-functional centres for their rural hinterlands. In the **rural areas** new housing development will be acceptable where it helps to meet local housing needs and requirements, supports the rural economy and local services and facilities and is responsive to the needs of its community. Outside of villages, new development will be carefully controlled to protect the countryside for its own sake.

The use of previously developed land in sustainable locations will be encouraged. Residential density will be determined by local character and good quality design. The target net density across the county is between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare, although this may be less in sensitive areas.

The broad distribution of new dwellings in the county will be a minimum of:

The broad distribution of new dwellings in the county will be a minimum of:		
Place	Facilities	New homes
Hereford	Wide range of services and main focus for development	6,500
Other urban areas – Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster, Ross on Wye	Range of services and reasonable transport provision – opportunities to strengthen role in meeting requirements of surrounding communities	4,700
Rural Villages – see list in Place - Shaping section	More limited range of services and some limited development potential but numerous locations	5,300
Total		16,500

SS3 – Releasing land for residential development

Sufficient land for residential development will be released to ensure the Core Strategy housing target is achieved over the plan period.

The release of specific sites may be phased or delayed to ensure that necessary infrastructure is in place to support the new development or in order to safeguard the integrity of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) from significant adverse effects.

In releasing residential land priority will be given to the identified strategic proposals and the re-use of brownfield land in sustainable locations.

The approach towards release of sites will be kept under review through the annual monitoring process. If rates of delivery or evidence from monitoring indicate that the number of new dwellings will exceed or fall below the target figure by 20% over a period of 3 or more years, the timescales for the release of sites will be reconsidered or Herefordshire Council will identify additional land through the preparation of other development plan documents.

SS4 – Movement and transportation

New developments should be designed and located to minimise the impacts on the transport network; ensuring that journey times and the efficient and safe operation of the network are not detrimentally impacted. Furthermore, where practicable, development proposals should be accessible by, and facilitate, a genuine choice of modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.

Development proposals that will generate high journey numbers should be in sustainable locations, accessible by means other than private car. Alternatively, such developments will be required to demonstrate that they can be made sustainable by reducing unsustainable transport patterns and promoting travel by walking, cycling and public transport.

Proposals to provide new and improved existing public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure will be supported. Where appropriate, land and routes will be safeguarded and developer contributions sought to assist with the delivery of new sustainable transport infrastructure, including that required for alternative energy cars. Herefordshire Council will work with the Highways Agency, national organisations, developers and local communities to bring forward improvements to the local and strategic transport network to reduce congestion, improve air quality and road safety and offer greater transport choices.

Herefordshire Council will work with the Highways Agency, national organisations, developers and local communities to bring forward improvements to the local and strategic transport

network to reduce congestion, improve air quality and road safety and offer greater transport choices, including the provision of the following major schemes:

- ❑ ESG Link Road (safeguarded route) and Transport Hub;
- ❑ Hereford Relief Road;
- ❑ Southern Leominster Relief Road;
- ❑ Connect 2 Cycleway in Hereford;
- ❑ Park and Ride schemes;
- ❑ other schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Proposals which enable the transfer of freight from road to rail will be encouraged. Development proposals incorporating commercial vehicular movements that could detrimentally impact on the environmental quality, amenity, safety and character of the surrounding locality will be expected to incorporate evidence demonstrating how the traffic impacts are to be mitigated.

Policy SS6 – Environmental quality and local distinctiveness

Development proposals should conserve and enhance those environmental assets that contribute towards the county's distinctiveness, in particular its settlement pattern, landscape, biodiversity and historic assets and especially those with specific environmental designations. In addition, proposals should maintain and improve the effectiveness of those ecosystem services essential to the health and wellbeing of the county's residents and its economy. Development proposals should be shaped through an integrated approach to planning the following environmental components from the outset, and based upon sufficient information to determine the effect upon each where they are relevant:

- ❑ Landscape, townscape and local distinctiveness, especially Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- ❑ Biodiversity and geodiversity
- ❑ Historic environment and heritage assets
- ❑ The network of green infrastructure
- ❑ Local amenity, including light pollution, air quality and tranquillity
- ❑ Agricultural and food productivity and soils
- ❑ Physical resources, including minerals, management of waste, the water environment, renewable energy and energy conservation.

The management plans and conservation objectives of the county's international and nationally important features and areas will be material to future development proposals. Furthermore assessments of local features, areas, and sites, where undertaken to define local distinctiveness, should inform proposals.

Where the benefits of proposals are considered to outweigh the adverse effects on the environment, or there are competing environmental objectives, and full mitigation is not possible, compensatory measures should be advanced.

Policy SS7: Addressing climate change

Development proposals will be required to include measures which will mitigate their impact on climate change.

At a strategic level, this will include:

- ❑ focussing development to the most sustainable locations;
- ❑ delivering development that seeks to reduce the need to travel by private car and which encourages sustainable travel options including walking, cycling and public transport;
- ❑ designing developments to reduce carbon emissions and use resources more efficiently;

- ❑ promoting the use of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy where appropriate;
- ❑ supporting affordable, local food production, processing and farming to reduce the county's contribution to food miles*;
- ❑ protecting the best agricultural land where possible.

Key considerations in terms of responses to climate change include:

- ❑ Taking into account the known physical and environmental constraints when identifying locations for development;
- ❑ Ensuring design approaches are resilient to climate change impacts, including the use of passive solar design for heating and cooling and tree planting for shading
- ❑ Minimising the risk of flooding and making use of sustainable drainage methods;
- ❑ Reducing heat island effects (through the provision of open space and water, planting and green roofs, for example);
- ❑ Reduction, re-use and recycling of waste with particular emphasis on waste minimisation on development sites and;
- ❑ Developments must demonstrate water efficiency measures to reduce demand on water resources, including through the use of efficient appliances and exploration of the potential for rainwater recycling.

Adaptation through design approaches will be considered in more locally specific detail in a Design Code Supplementary Planning Document

Place Shaping

For each area policies and proposals are set out including a range of broad locations where larger scale or strategic development is proposed. The Core Strategy does not identify specific development sites. For the purpose of the Core Strategy, a strategic location is generally defined as around 500 homes for Hereford, around 100 homes within the market towns or around 5 hectares for employment land.

Place-shaping policies include proposals for the following:

- ❑ Hereford
- ❑ Bromyard
- ❑ Kington
- ❑ Ledbury
- ❑ Leominster
- ❑ Ross-on-Wye
- ❑ Rural areas

Policy HD1 Hereford

Hereford will accommodate around 6,500 new homes within the plan period and a minimum of 15 ha of new employment land.

Major residential development will take place in the following locations:

- ❑ Around 800 new dwellings in Hereford City Centre (HD2)
- ❑ Around 500 dwellings at the Northern Urban Expansion Area (HD4)
- ❑ Around 1,000 dwellings at the Western Urban Expansion Area (HD5)
- ❑ Around 1,000 dwellings at the Southern Urban Expansion Area (HD6)

The remaining housing requirement of around 3,200 dwellings will be provided through the implementation of existing commitments, windfall development and non-strategic sites allocated through the Hereford Area Plan or Neighbourhood Development Plans.

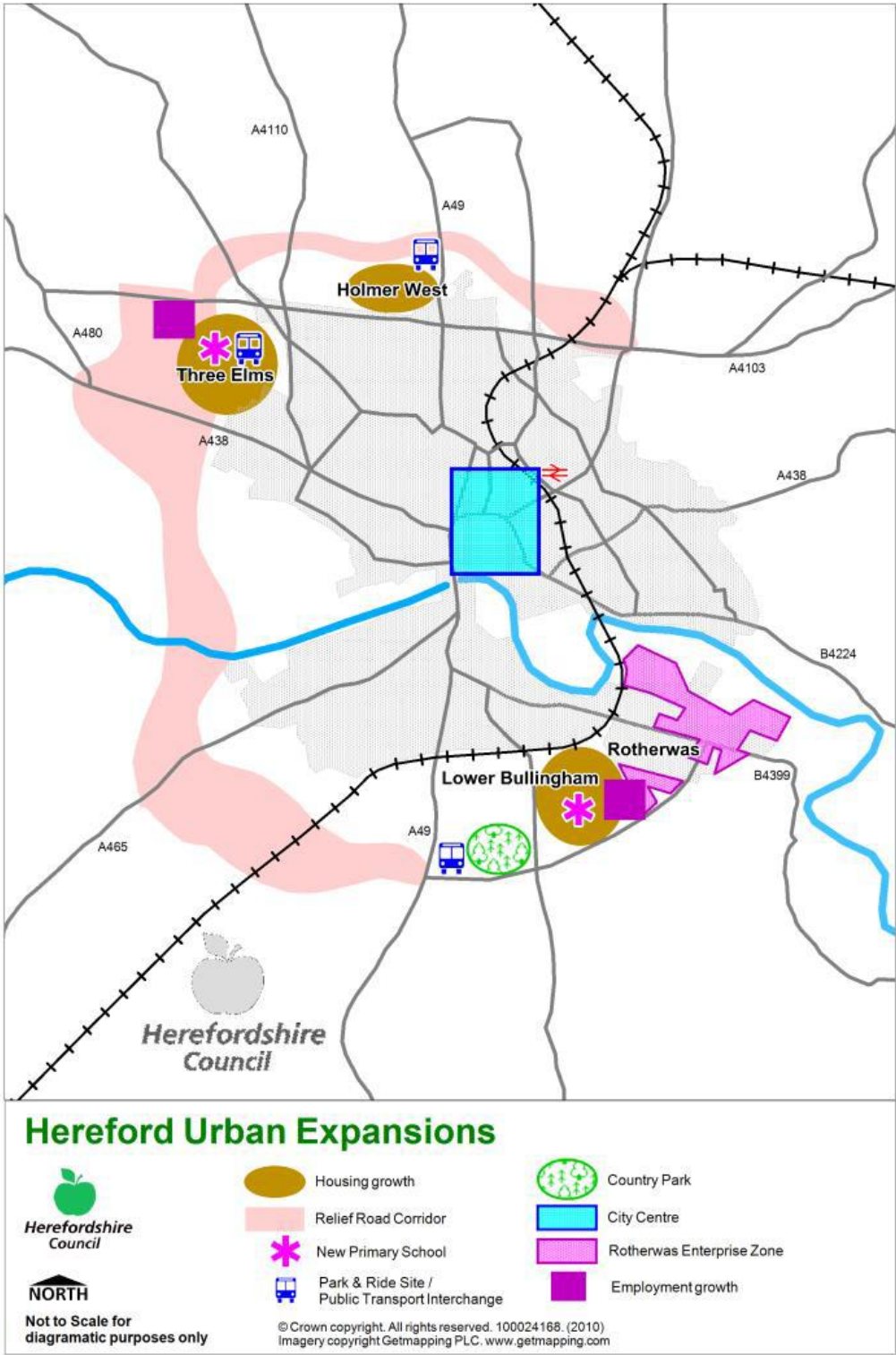
Major employment development will take place in the following locations:

- ❑ 10ha of employment land at the Western Urban Expansion area
- ❑ Around 5ha of employment land at the Southern Urban Expansion area. Further employment land provision will be made in accordance with Policy HD7.

The table below shows the level of commitments and completions as at 1 April 2013 for Hereford. This leaves a residual requirement of 5,357 dwellings up to 2031. The strategic sites are expected to deliver around 3,300 new dwellings. The Hereford Area Plan will allocate dwellings on non-strategic sites to ensure that, with windfalls, the remaining housing requirement of around 2,057 will be achieved.

Strategic allocation	Completed 2011-13	Commitments 2013	Strategic urban expansions	Residual housing requirement
6,500	227	916	3,300	2,057

Figure 2 - Hereford urban expansion areas and relief road corridor.



Policy HD3 Hereford movement

Herefordshire Council will maintain and improve Hereford's connectivity to the national and local transport networks by reducing congestion and improving journey time reliability using developer contributions and/or community infrastructure levy monies to fund the following:

- ❑ Packages of transport improvements focussing on key routes into the city delivering a range of public realm improvements and improving access and connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and bus users;
- ❑ Reduced reliance on car use by incorporating walking, cycling and bus routes within new developments and connecting them with existing networks;
- ❑ Improvements to public transport infrastructure enabling improved access and integration between bus and to rail services;
- ❑ Car parking facilities which attract shoppers and visitors and deter commuter parking in the city centre through the development of Park and Ride, Park and Share and Park and Cycle sites;
- ❑ A western relief road to reduce the volume of traffic from the city centre and enable the delivery of walking, cycling and bus improvements on the existing highway network. The road will be designed and developed in such a way which avoids and mitigates adverse impacts or physical damage to or loss of habitats, noise pollution and vibration, light pollution, air pollution, flood risk and water quality on the River Wye SAC as well as residential amenity and business interests. Consideration of the impact of the road on heritage assets, as well as the historic character of the wider landscape will also be required.

The *Hereford Relief Road – Study of Options (Aug 2010)* reviewed all route options and assessed the impacts of the routes in relation to environmental, engineering and traffic impacts. The inner western corridor, as shown in the figure 4.4, is the preferred corridor for the relief road based on the study's overall assessment.

The first section of the relief road constructed is likely to be the section between the A49 and A465 as part of the Belmont Transport Package (as identified in the *Local Transport Plan*). The second and lengthy western inner corridor which includes a bridge crossing (A465 – A4103) would need to be co-ordinated with the development of the western urban expansion proposals. The final section would link the A4103 to the western and eastern sides of the A49 in the north of Hereford. Costs of the link sections are highlighted within the study. The introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy will generate a significant part of the funding for the project. Other sources of funding and timings of delivery are set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which accompanies this document. The Economic Viability Assessment 2013 explains the viability of the project and other proposals in the plan generally.

Work on the detailed alignment of the road will be considered during the Hereford Area Plan. Close working with key statutory bodies will be needed to ensure the avoidance of impact on natural assets and appropriate identification of mitigation measures, particularly in relation to impacts from physical damage/loss of habitat, noise pollution and vibration, light pollution, air pollution and water quality on the River Wye SAC. The design and exact location of the proposals will need to fully take account of flood risk to ensure no detriment to third parties. Regard should also be had to any impact on Source Protection Zones. Consideration of the impacts on the historic environment will also be required with particular regard being paid to any designated heritage assets, as well as the historic character of the wider landscape.

General Policies

H1 – Affordable housing – threshold 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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

Policy E1 - Employment provision

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.

Development proposals which enhance employment provision and help diversify the economy of Herefordshire will be encouraged where:

- ❑ 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.

The provision of viable live/work units as part of mixed use developments will also be encouraged.

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.

LD1 – Local distinctiveness

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

5.0 Local Plan Evidence Base

5.1 Housing

Rural Housing Background Paper, Herefordshire Council, 2013⁴

This document provides background information about the defined housing market areas and proposed quantity of new housing in rural areas. Key sections are summarised below.

Para 5.2: Sustainable development is therefore about positive growth and gains in these three dimensions of sustainability are central to achieving a strong living and working rural Herefordshire and meeting objectives 1, 5, 8, 10 and 12 of the draft Core Strategy.

Para 5.3 To achieve this aim this strategy seeks to enhance the role the county's rural settlements have traditionally played as accessible, sustainable centres for their rural catchments. Therefore the positive growth of existing villages through the development of appropriate rural businesses and housing, including affordable housing, that contributes toward maintaining and strengthening these centres as hives of activity both socially and economically will be supported.

Para 5.4 The county can be divided in to seven areas based upon common housing market characteristics including:

- ❑ tenure
- ❑ house type profile
- ❑ incomes and affordability
- ❑ house prices
- ❑ geographical proximity
- ❑ travel to work patterns that demonstrate the functional relationship between where people live and work

These geographical areas are the Housing Markets Areas (HMAs) of Herefordshire.

Belmont Rural lies within the Hereford Housing Market Area which has an allocation of 1150 dwellings over the period 2011-2031 (Figure 2).

Para 5.6 These targets will inform the preparation of emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans to enable communities to identify appropriate sites to accommodate growth proportionate to their village(s). The indicator represents a target which individual communities can aim to meet or potentially exceed over the plan period depending on their particular aspirations and environmental constraints, in particular flood risk and/or landscape sensitivity.

Para 5.28 In recognising the potential of neighbourhood planning, Herefordshire Council has developed this policy approach with the role of this layer of plan making being central and integral to its aim. Through using HMAs as a basis, it seeks to provide a strategic

⁴https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/5749300/Rural_Housing_Background_Paper_March_2013.pdf

but locally based policy framework that communities can utilise to advance their own distinctive plans which best suit their needs and bring forward their element of future rural housing growth.

SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) for the period 2011-2031 (Second Review, March 2012)⁵

The second review of SHLAA takes an amended figure of 11,200 net new dwellings to be delivered in Herefordshire by 2031. (Page 1, SHLAA)

It is estimated that there are potential sites for 30,432 dwellings in Herefordshire between 2011-2031 of which 2,782 can be provided on deliverable sites and 7,875 dwellings can be provided on developable sites with low constraints and 19,775 dwellings on developable sites with significant constraints. (Page 2, SHLAA)

This SHLAA provides evidence to demonstrate that there is sufficient land to meet the housing figures contained in the adopted RSS 2008 (which remained part of the Development Plan at the time of the study). (Page 5, SHLAA)

It is important to note that the current SHLAA (dated 2012) is out of date and should be used as a reference because the housing projection it is based upon is out of date (as it is based on the RSS projections). The next SHLAA report will be a two year study which will look at potential housing sites from the financial years of 2012 and 2013 and is expected to be finalised towards the end of 2013. This document should offer a more accurate assessment that potential housing land is suitable, achievable and available to deliver the housing provision set out in the Development Plan.

The Tables in the Housing / SHLAA section of the Local Plan Evidence Base identify the following sites in Belmont Rural:

2013 SHLAA Call for sites⁶

The Council is currently undertaking a call for sites and inviting submissions of potential sites which have potential for housing (greater than 0.16 Hectares), employment or gypsy/traveller sites.

Herefordshire Council Local Housing Market Assessment (2012 update: draft report, January 2013, author: GL Hearn)⁷

The study identifies 7 unique Housing Market Areas across the county, these include: Hereford, Bromyard, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye, Kington, Leominster, Golden Valley.

⁵<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/herefordshire-strategic-housing-land-availability-assessment>

⁶<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/herefordshire-strategic-housing-land-availability-assessment#callforsites>

⁷https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/5759863/draft_lhma_report_05_02_13.pdf

The net housing need for the period 2012-2017 is as follows:

Figure A: Affordability and Housing Need				
	Ratio Entry-Level House Prices - Lower Quartile Household Incomes	% Households Unable to Afford to Buy/Rent without Subsidy	Net Housing Need, 2012-17	Net Need for Affordable Housing per Annum, 2012-17
Hereford	9.2	58%	2084	417
Bromyard	8.8	57%	358	72
Ledbury	8.7	53%	452	90
Ross-on-Wye	9.3	55%	289	58
Kington	8.7	57%	85	17
Leominster	10.2	55%	109	22
Golden Valley	10.0	56%	79	16
County		56%	3457	691

Source: GLH/JGC

Figure B: Estimated level of housing need (five years) by intermediate/social/affordable rented housing (percentages)				
HMA	Intermediate	Affordable rent	Social rent	Total
Hereford	22.1%	24.2%	53.8%	100.0%
Leominster	31.9%	14.6%	53.5%	100.0%
Ross	27.3%	20.1%	52.5%	100.0%
Ledbury	27.1%	17.7%	55.3%	100.0%
Bromyard	40.1%	35.8%	24.1%	100.0%
Kington	38.4%	5.3%	56.3%	100.0%
Golden Valley	20.8%	21.8%	57.4%	100.0%
Total	25.1%	21.7%	53.1%	100.0%
Urban areas	25.1%	21.8%	53.1%	100.0%
Rural areas	25.1%	21.6%	53.3%	100.0%
Herefordshire Total	25.1%	21.7%	53.1%	100.0%

Source: HomePoint Housing Register October 2012, Projection Modelling

The evidence points to a requirement, based on housing needs, for 53% social rented housing, 22% affordable rented housing and 25% intermediate affordable housing in the Rural areas.

Figure C: Overall Estimated Housing Need by Size and HMA

HMA	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4+ bed	Total
Hereford	57.3%	18.6%	18.5%	5.7%	100.0%
Leominster	77.1%	21.6%	-10.4%	11.7%	100.0%
Ross	54.4%	18.4%	28.2%	-1.1%	100.0%
Ledbury	46.8%	22.3%	22.7%	8.2%	100.0%
Bromyard	45.8%	29.9%	8.4%	15.9%	100.0%
Kington	64.7%	23.1%	12.2%	0.0%	100.0%
Golden Valley	61.6%	-5.0%	37.8%	5.6%	100.0%
Total	58.1%	19.1%	17.1%	5.7%	100.0%
Urban areas	58.3%	17.3%	18.6%	5.7%	100.0%
Rural areas	57.8%	22.3%	14.2%	5.6%	100.0%
Herefordshire Total	58.1%	19.1%	17.1%	5.7%	100.0%

Source: GLH/JGC

A Study of the Housing and Support Needs of Older People in Herefordshire, 2012, Peter Fletcher Assocs and Arc4⁸

The national housing strategy for an ageing population (2008 and the national housing strategy 2011 both identify older people as the fastest growing population group in the housing market. The 2011 strategy states that.

“Some 60% of projected growth in households to 2033 will be aged 65+. Good housing for older people can reduce caring pressures on working families. It can also prevent costs to the National Health Service and social care providers. Attractive choices to move to smaller, more suitable homes can free up much-needed local family housing. “

Recommendation 2

Herefordshire Council needs to work with social and private developers to re-balance the general needs housing market to ensure an adequate supply and wider housing choice for the ageing population by:

- ❑ Recognising the level of home ownership (nearly 80%) and equity in the older people's market, as shown in the 50+ household survey carried out for this study, and the potential to use new housing developments suitable for older people as a driver to rebalance the housing market.
- ❑ Developing non-specialist general needs two and three bedroom houses, flats and bungalows for rent and sale that meet lifetime homes standards, across all areas of the county in line with the LHMA and the Local Housing Requirements Study. These will be of equal benefit to older people, people or families with disabilities and young families.
- ❑ Encouraging mixed developments to balance the market, meet the needs of

⁸ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/1740855/Housing_older_people_study_final_report.pdf

older people and create genuine lifetime communities.

- ❑ Market the new housing opportunities to older people across all tenures to encourage people who are under occupying to free up family housing through the development of housing for older people.
- ❑ Consider the development of a charged for 'Home Moving' service to support older people who might wish to move but who are daunted by the practicalities of moving.
- ❑ Consider the needs of older people within development briefs for Section 106 commitments and the provision of other forms of cross subsidy.
- ❑ Ensure that new flats in particular are "future proofed" to take account of the changing population. For example, examine the potential to enhance standards by ensuring that all new flatted blocks have, as a minimum, stairwells that are capable of being adapted to take a stair lift.

Recommendation 3

Herefordshire Council should:

- ❑ Support the development of a small amount of new affordable sheltered housing for rent or shared ownership to improve the overall quality of the stock, and to aid the functioning of the wider housing markets and to release much needed family housing. This is likely to be in the order of around 100 units.
- ❑ Work with private developers to promote the development of additional leasehold/outright purchase retirement housing to address the current high level of under supply. The model in Figure 4.24 indicates the need for an additional 2105 units by 2015 reaching to an additional 3377 units by 2025. These are unrealistic targets in the light of the current housing market and therefore should be treated as an indication of the need to develop more specialist accommodation for sale as market conditions improve. However, it is important to stress that leasehold retirement housing for older people is still being built even in the current economic climate and developers are looking to work with local authorities who want to see further development of older people's housing.

5.2 Employment

Herefordshire County Employment Land Study 2012⁹

The emerging Core Strategy has an overall target of 148ha of available employment land over the plan period, which includes a rolling 5 year reservoir of 37ha of available land.

The Employment Land Study found that overall, there is good quantity of existing employment land supply within Herefordshire when compared against forecast minimum requirements using employment forecasting techniques. The supply of land appears skewed towards manufacturing / industrial type uses which as a sector is predicted to decline in the

⁹<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/employment-land-study-2012>

amount of land it occupies over the study period. More limited opportunities appear to exist for office uses.

5.3 Transport

Herefordshire Local Transport Plan 2013/14-2014/15, Herefordshire Council ¹⁰

The Local Transport Plan has two main focuses:

- ❑ Reducing congestion in Hereford City and increasing accessibility by less polluting and healthier forms of transport than the private car:
 - ❑
 - 1) Reduce short distance car based trips transferring as many as possible to less polluting and healthier modes such as walking and cycling
 - 2) Reduce the impact of car access in the historic core through traffic management and sign de-cluttering
 - 3) Support the regeneration of the central area by facilitating city centre expansion, ensuring integration with the existing shopping area; and
 - 4) Support the successful investment in jobs at the Rotherwas Enterprise Zone by ensuring that its expansion can be accommodated within highway network constraints.
- ❑ Maintaining access for rural residents and people without access to a car. We aim to:
 - (1) Ensure that the County's extensive highway network remains fit for purpose and safe for the travelling public;
 - (2) Review passenger transport services to ensure that we can continue to provide access for those most in need; and
 - (3) Provide alternatives for longer distance commuters so that they can also reduce their car use and adopt healthier lifestyles.

Specific policies in the Herefordshire Council Local Transport Plan 2013/14 and 2014/15 relevant to Belmont Rural include the following:¹¹

LTP AM6 – Managing changing demand including new developments
 LTP SM 2 – Residential 20mph zones
 LTP PT 1 – Supported bus network
 LTP PT 2 – Bus fares and ticketing
 LTP PT 3 – Bus infrastructure improvements
 LTP PT5 - Community and voluntary transport
 LTP PS 2 – Countywide parking policy

¹⁰ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-transport-plan-2013-2015>

¹¹ https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/6606038/local_transport_plan_policy.pdf

LTP AT 1 – Maintaining and extending our active travel infrastructure
 LTP AT2 – Extending our active travel network in new development
 LTP ST 1 – Improving the public realm
 LTP DC1 – Planning for sustainable developments
 LTP DC2 – Developer contributions to mitigate the impacts of new and re-development on the transport network
 LTP PRW1 – Policy B3 Managing public rights of way

5.4 Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure Strategy Herefordshire 2010¹²

A definition of green infrastructure has been developed by Natural England:

‘Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its design and management should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types.’

Green Infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland. Consequently it needs to be delivered at all spatial scales from sub-regional to local neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities and often much larger sites in the urban fringe and wider countryside.’

¹² <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/green-infrastructure-strategy-2010-and-study-2008>

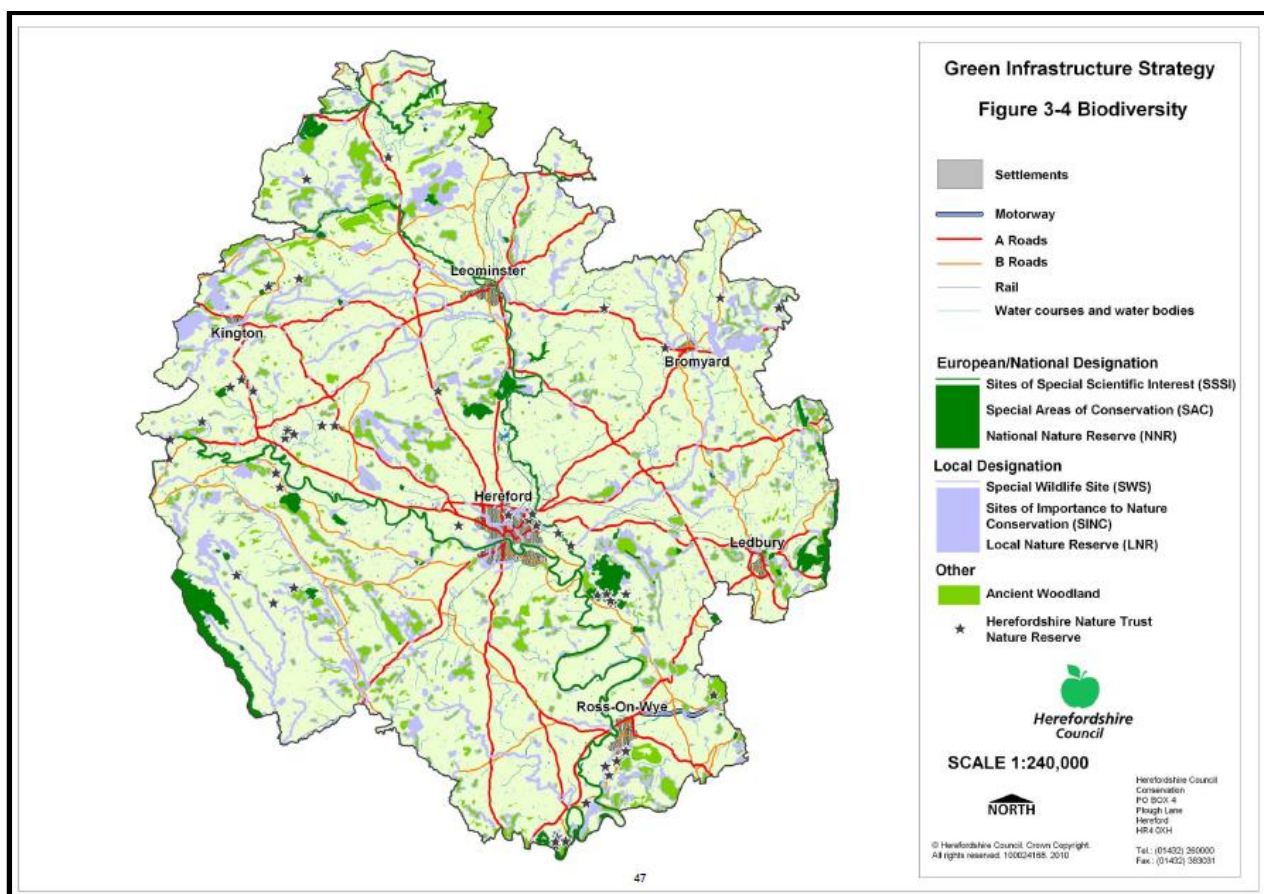


Figure 3 – Herefordshire Green Infrastructure Strategy

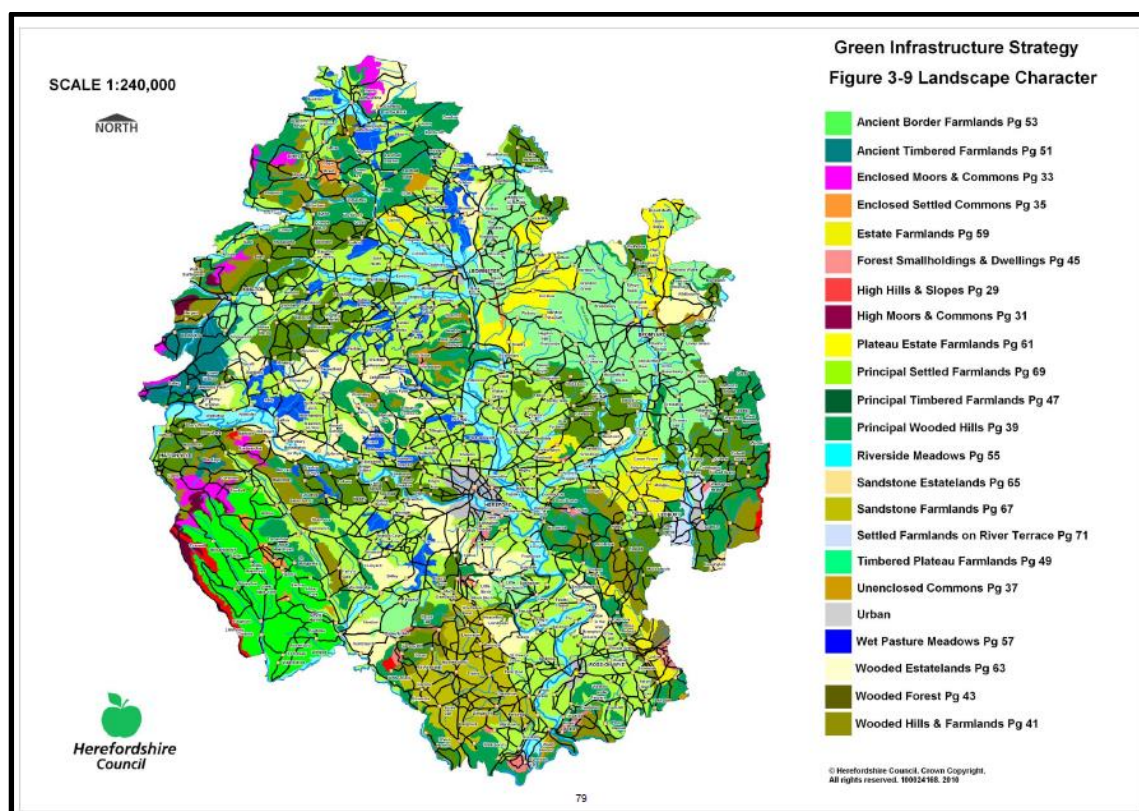
Landscape Character

The Resource

Landscape character can be described at a range of scales and enables focus on a particular area or location; the context of that area can then be understood in its own right or in relation to adjacent areas. Landscape character assessment does not make comparative judgements about quality, and is most effectively used to describe what is important about the places we live in, what makes them distinctive and, ultimately, what we value about them. Landscape character does not respect administrative boundaries. The assessment of landscape character is both a component of the wider green infrastructure asset, and a product of the quantity or lack of environmental assets. The landscape character of the **county** can be understood in the context of the region by considering the *National Character Areas* described in the *Character Map of England*¹⁴ [Figure 3-9]:

Detailed descriptions of Sub-Regional Landscape Areas and Local Landscape Types are given in the '*Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment SPG, 2004*'¹³.

¹³ https://beta.herefordshire.gov.uk/media/5787595/LCA_2009_V1_sec.pdf

Figure 4 – Landscaper Character Areas

The Belmont Rural area includes the following identified landscape types:

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Wooded Estate lands

The following is taken from *A Vision for Green Infrastructure in Herefordshire*:

All the biodiversity, landscape, heritage, access and recreational sites, assets and resources across the county of Herefordshire, that make the county and neighbourhoods attractive, distinctive and valued will be recognised and placed at the heart of planning for a sustainable future for the county. The development of a multifunctional network of green spaces, links and assets that help to conserve the biodiversity, culture and heritage of the county will be protected and enhanced, catering for and stimulating the economic, social and environmental needs of all communities.

The Green Infrastructure Strategy will endeavour to:

- ☐ Promote high quality development in and around the city, market towns and rural areas of the county that places the planning of environmental assets, green spaces, accessible places and aesthetic environments at the fore.
- ☐ Protect and enhance key ecological habitats, species and systems.
- ☐ Protect, restore and enhance landscapes that are most valued by residents and visitors to the county; rehabilitate systems within the landscape that benefit ecology, culture and the wider environment.

- ❑ Create places that allow for leisure, recreation, sport and exercise, providing the opportunity to promote physical and mental health and well-being.
- ❑ Preserve and provide opportunities for interpreting and better understanding the archaeological, historical and cultural features in the landscape and how they define a sense of place and a sense of history.
- ❑ Realise the opportunities for farmers and land managers to diversify activities to ensure a healthy, productive environment.

5.5 Landscape Character

Natural England Character Area 100 Herefordshire Lowlands ¹⁴

As part of Natural England's responsibilities as set out in the Natural Environment White Paper, Biodiversity 2020 and the European Landscape Convention, they are revising profiles for England's 159 National Character Areas (NCAs). These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision making framework for the natural environment.

NCA profiles are guidance documents, which can help communities to inform their decision-making about the places that they live in and care for. The information they contain will support the planning of conservation initiatives at a landscape scale, inform the delivery of Nature Improvement Areas and encourage broader partnership working through Local Nature Partnerships. The profiles will also help to inform choices about how land is managed and can change.

Belmont Rural lies within National Character Area 100 Herefordshire Lowlands. Belmont is mentioned once within the NCA on page 9 referring to gravel extraction.

The Herefordshire Lowlands National Character Area (NCA) lies almost entirely within Herefordshire, with small areas to the north and east in Shropshire and Worcestershire and to the south-east in Gloucestershire. It is largely tranquil and rural in character but does include the larger settlements of Hereford and Leominster. There are small dispersed settlements of hamlets and villages, many of which contain older buildings with the local vernacular of black-and- white timber-framed buildings. Restored cider barns with characteristic double doors and historic farmsteads are also common.

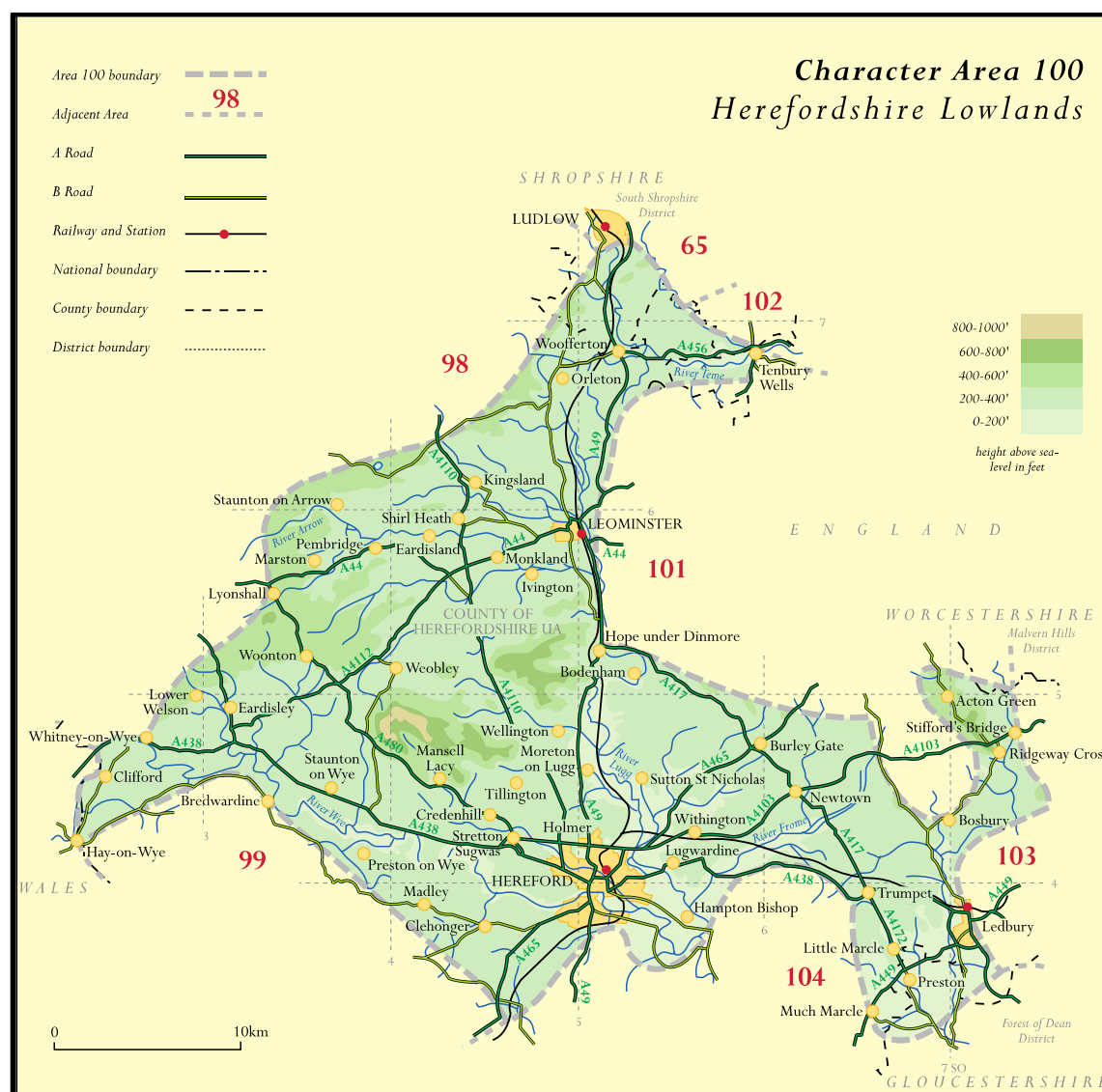
The NCA is an important area for commercial agriculture supported by the fertile and high-grade agricultural soils; the farming is mixed arable and livestock. Traditional orchards are still to be found, though suffering decline, with new orchards and dwarf varieties of trees also common. The area is also important for commercial production of soft fruit under polytunnels, supplying much of the UK. Historic parklands such as at Berrington Hall have many veteran trees that are important for invertebrates.

There are many rivers in the area, the largest of which are the rivers Wye, Lugg and Frome, flowing through wide, fertile mudstone valleys. Old Red Sandstone is commonly found in the west and east of the area and here the soils take on a distinctive red colour. **The River Wye Special Area of Conservation** is of international importance, designated for its natural river

¹⁴ http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/nca/herfordshire_lowlands.aspx

habitat, which includes species such as native migratory fish (lamprey, shad and salmon), and the wide, meandering river valley creates a unique and beautiful landscape. Recreational opportunity is offered by long-distance trails including the Wye Valley Walk which links to the Shropshire Hills and the Herefordshire Trail which links the market towns in Herefordshire. Views can be expansive across to neighbouring NCAs, looking west to the Black Mountains, north to the Clun and Shropshire Hills, and east to the Malvern Hills.

Figure 5 – Character Area 100 – Herefordshire Lowlands



Statements of Environmental Opportunities:

SEO1: Protect and manage the internationally important River Wye Special Area of Conservation and the many other watercourses and their flood plains to improve the health of the rivers and the quality and availability of water. Develop the capacity of the riverine environment to tolerate more extreme flow levels by protecting and creating new wet meadow and woodland in the flood plain and seek to increase recreational opportunities related to the riverine environment.

SEO2: Protect and enhance the natural and historic environment, integrating new development through the use of green infrastructure principles informed by existing heritage, geodiversity and biodiversity assets. Protect the agrarian character of the area by making the most of versatile and fertile soils to produce food while integrating semi-natural features and protecting above- and below-ground heritage assets and geological assets and reinforcing the strong sense of character.

SEO3: Protect, manage and restore semi-natural habitats, in particular woodlands, grasslands, orchards and wet meadows within the rural and urban areas to improve ecological connectivity, biodiversity, landscape character, the historic environment, and flood water storage capacity and the ability of the landscape to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

In particular, manage, restore and create new woodland, and develop connectivity in other semi-natural habitats such as the hedgerow networks and orchards.

The 3 SEO's are developed further and identified as 'opportunities' within the full NCA document

Key characteristics

- ❑ Wide river valleys.
- ❑ Intensive arable farming with low hedges.
- ❑ Undulating valley sides.
- ❑ Steep wooded hills.
- ❑ Frequent orchards and hop yards.
- ❑ Historic parks.
- ❑ Old Red Sandstone and timber-framed buildings.
- ❑ Large farmsteads and frequent hamlets.

5.6 Built Heritage

Listed Buildings, English Heritage¹⁵

There are 6 Listed Buildings in Belmont Rural. These are:

Name	Listing
Stables about 20 yards NNE of Belmont Home Farm House	II

¹⁵ <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/results.aspx>

Stone and plaque about 200 yards west north west of Belmont House	II
Almshouses and chapel at NGS 485383	II
Belmont House	II*
Barwood House	II
Walled gardens c 220 metres west north west of Belmont House	II*

There is no conservation area.

5.7 Flood Risk

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) For Herefordshire¹⁶

The primary aim of a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is to determine whether planning policies or development land allocations will 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 at all levels, particularly with regard to future development and existing critical infrastructure (1-8).

Site Specific Flood Risk Assessments

Within Local Development Documents, it should be indicated whether or not a Flood Risk Assessment is required for individual sites. Sites intersecting or marginal to the Flood Zone 3 and Zone 2 indicative floodplain will always require a Flood Risk Assessment.

This SFRA has demonstrated however that a significant proportion of feasible development sites within Herefordshire are outside or marginal to the Zone 3 and 2 flood zones, and consequently fluvial flood risks should be manageable on most sites.

There is a more significant problem with runoff management however. Herefordshire appears to have a disproportionate amount of surface water flooding, emanating either directly from fields or the numerous smaller watercourse prevalent in the County. There will be significant requirement therefore for all development sites larger than 1 ha to address specifically runoff issues upstream and downstream of the site, and to confirm how this runoff will interact not only with the receiving watercourse, but the next sequential watercourse.

The most appropriate test to decide if a development site external to the fluvial floodplain requires a detailed FRA will be to assess the quantity of local flood reports (**HSFRA Flood Reports**) downstream and upstream of the site within say 1 km radius. If there are more than 5 such reports, this should trigger the requirement for a detailed FRA for the site AND a drainage assessment for the locality. (5-32)

Sustainable Drainage Best Practice

The single most authoritative source for SUDS design and implementation which should be cited in LDF policies is **The SUDS Manual – 2007, CIRIA C697** which provides comprehensive guidance on every aspect of SUDS .

¹⁶ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/strategic-flood-risk-assessment-and-water-cycle-study>

A new Local Authority Network on Drainage and Flood Risk Management (Landform) has been established by CIRIA with support from the Environment Agency (<http://www.ciria.org/landform>).

The Environment Agency has also provided an outline guide for developers which recommends that SUDS should be cost-effectively designed to work with retained natural features such as ditches or ponds, and to form an integral part of hard and soft landscaped areas.

In this way, they can contribute towards an attractive scheme that enhances the nature conservation and amenity value of the development, while also recycling the valuable water resource. Environment Agency (Wales) also hosts a comprehensive on-line guide to SUDS implementation and best practice in its region.

Figure 6 - Principal Flood Risk Areas Map

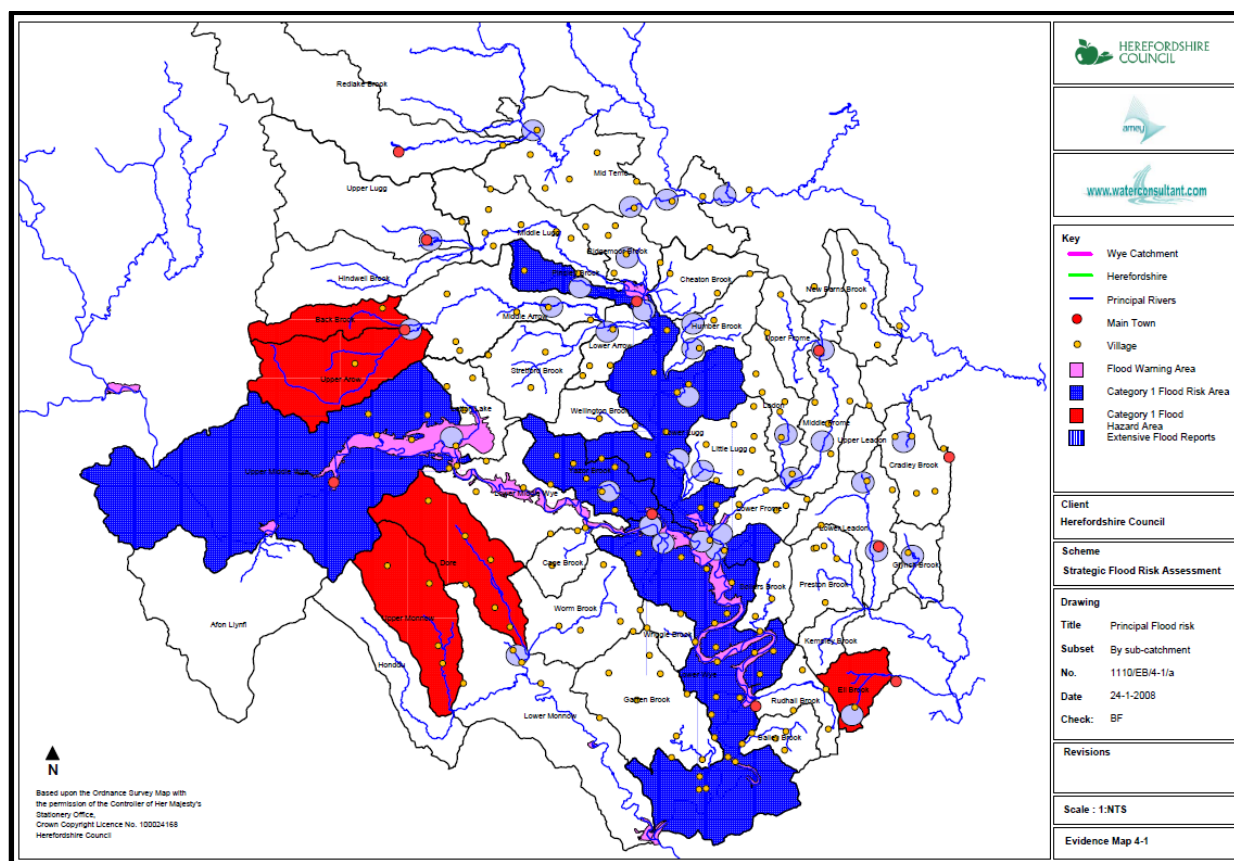
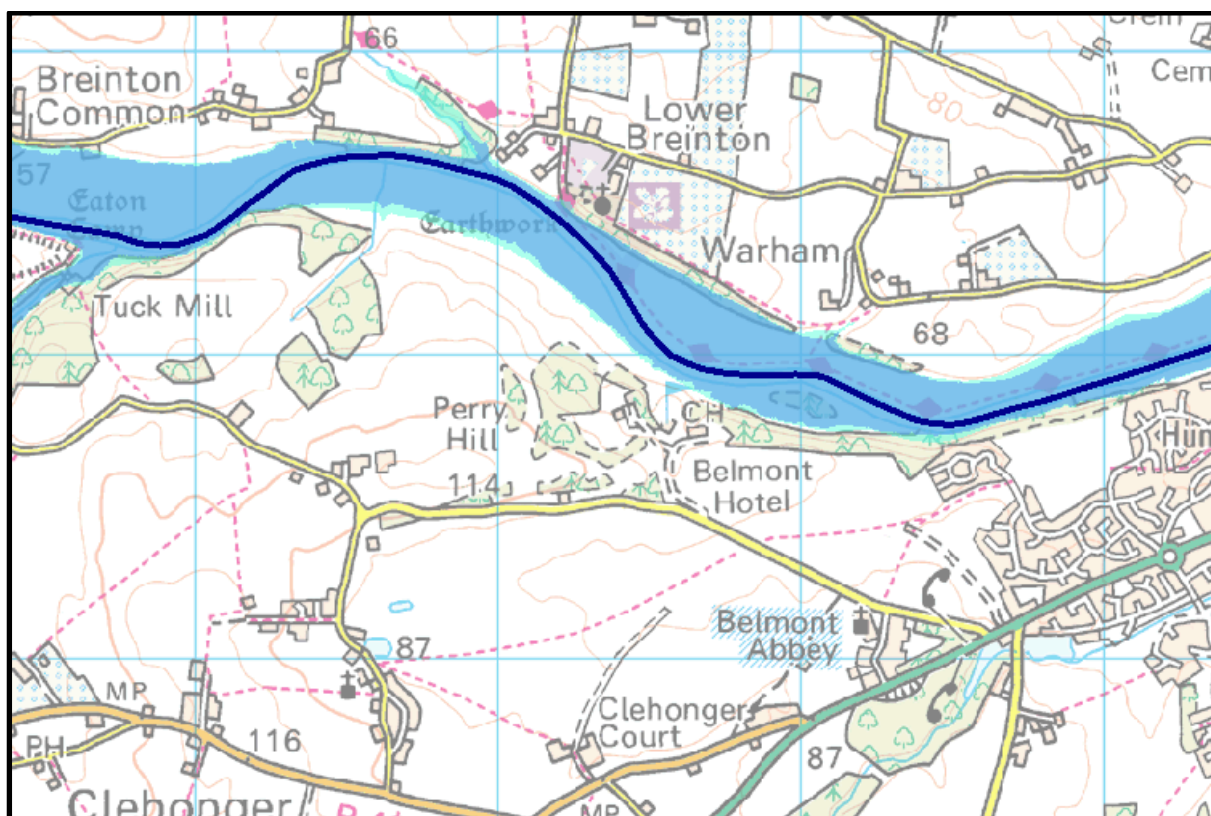


Figure 7 - Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea), Belmont Rural¹⁷



- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2
- Flood defences
(Not all may be shown*)
- Areas benefiting from
flood defences
(Not all may be shown*)
- Main rivers

Water Cycle Study¹⁸

¹⁷ <http://maps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/wiybyController?value=HR2+9SA&submit.x=-242&submit.y=-146&submit=Search%09&lang=e&ep=map&topic=floodmap&layerGroups=default&scale=10&textonly=off#x=347389&y=238790&lg=1.&scale=9>

The Water Study is part of the Growth Point Study and investigates the availability of water supply, treatment and infrastructure. The study also looks out the areas likely to flood across the county.

5.8 Infrastructure

Core Strategy Infrastructure Delivery Plan, March 2013¹⁹

The Core Strategy sets out twelve objectives to implement a Vision for Herefordshire. Objective 10 aims:

“To achieve sustainable communities and protect the environment by delivering well-designed places, spaces and buildings, which use land efficiently, reinforce local distinctiveness and are supported by the necessary infrastructure including green infrastructure”.

Projects are prioritised on the following basis:

Fundamental: needed immediately as the strategy cannot be delivered without it. Projects include:

- ❑ Upgrade to the sewage treatment plants
- ❑ Provision of a western relief road (with a second river crossing)

Critical: the key “unlocking” projects without which the strategy could not be achieved and/or projects with a unique funding opportunity. Projects include:

- ❑ Upgrade of the electricity distribution network in Hereford
- ❑ Delivery of superfast broadband
- ❑ Energy from waste centre
- ❑ Leominster Southern Link Road

Necessary: needed to support the strategy but projects not necessarily needed immediately.

Desirable: projects that support the strategy and may come forward over the longer term. These can be aspirational projects.

¹⁸ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/strategic-flood-risk-assessment-and-water-cycle-study>

¹⁹ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-evidence-base/infrastructure-delivery-plan>

Community Infrastructure Levy

Herefordshire Council Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule Consultation Document, March 2013²⁰

The CIL is a new way for communities to benefit from built development taking place in their area. The levy is a fixed rate charge, based on square metres of net additional built floorspace. The charge may be levied on 1 or more dwellings and developments of more than 100 sq. m of floorspace. Exemptions include affordable housing and charities.

The proceeds of the CIL will be spent on strategic and local infrastructure to support the development of the area such as highways improvements, open spaces or education provision. Developer contributions on their own will not be able to meet the entire cost of a major infrastructure project. Core public funding will continue to contribute.

(Page 4, Herefordshire Council Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule Consultation Document, March 2013)

Proposed CIL rates

Proposed Use	CIL Charge per square metre
Residential Zone 1	£0
Residential Zone 2	£50
Residential Zone 3	£100
Residential Zone 4	£140
Residential Institutions (C2)	£0
Town Centre Comparison retail (A1)	£90
Out of Centre Comparison retail (A1)	£125
Small convenience retail (up to 280 sqm) (A1)	£80
Large convenience retail (over 280 sqm) (A1)	£120
Hotel (C1)	£25
Light Industrial (B1)	£0
Office (B1)	£0
General Industrial (B2)	£0
Storage and Distribution (B8)	£0
Leisure	£0

²⁰ <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/community-infrastructure-levy/>

Proposed Residential Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule

Community Infrastructure Preliminary Draft Residential Charging Schedule

- Zone 1: £0 per square metre (Leominster large scale greenfield urban extension)
- Zone 2: £50 per square metre (Hereford Northern and Southern Rural Hinterland and Leominster)
- Zone 3: £100 per square metre (Hereford and Kingston and West Herefordshire)
- Zone 4: £140 per square metre (Ledbury, Ross and Rural Hinterland and Northern Rural)

Herefordshire Council

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Zone 1	£0 per square metre (Leominster large scale greenfield urban extension)
Zone 2	£50 per square metre (Hereford Northern and Southern Rural Hinterland and Leominster)
Zone 3	£100 per square metre (Hereford and Kington and West Herefordshire)
Zone 4	£140 per square metre (Ledbury, Ross and Rural Hinterland and Northern Rural)

Belmont Rural lies within Zone 3.

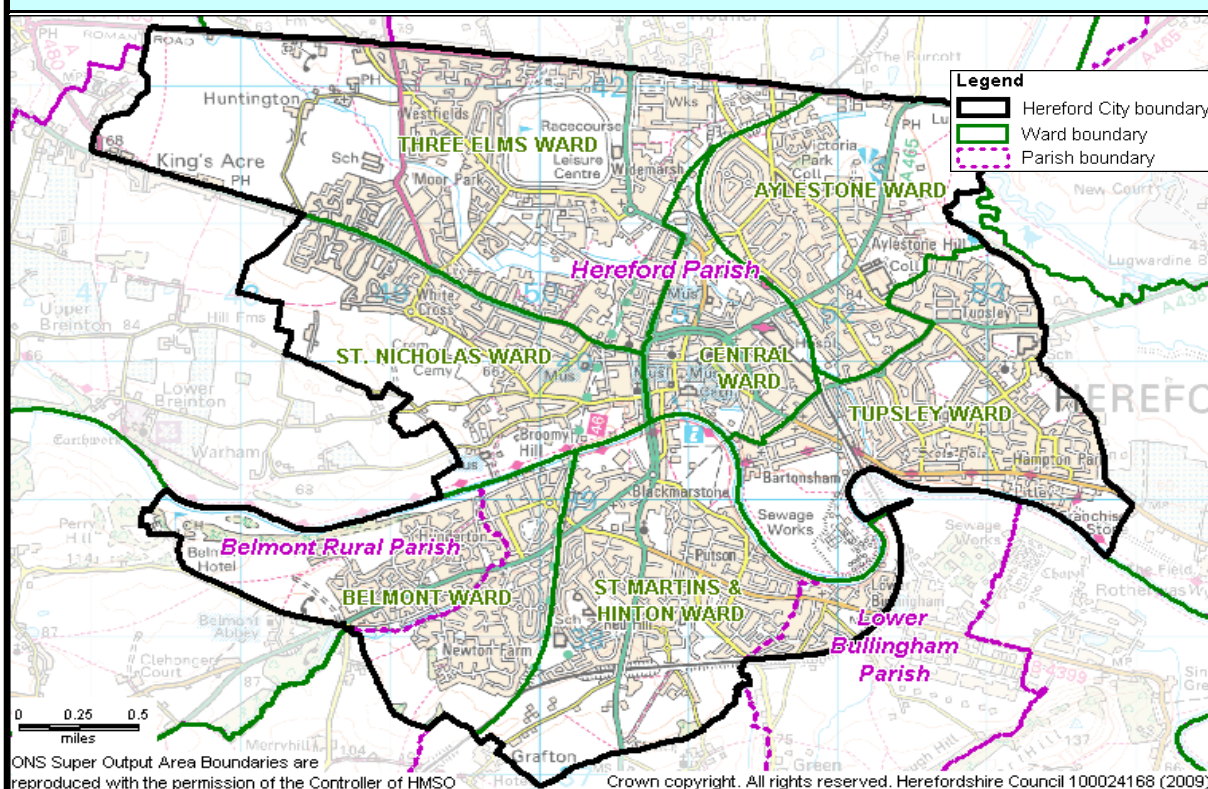
6.0 Conclusions

This Planning Policy Assessment provides a broad planning policy framework on which to build the Neighbourhood Plans for Belmont Rural. The Assessment should assist with identifying key themes and planning policy areas in the proposed Plan and much of the information referred to within the document will form part of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base.

The Assessment should be considered as a “live”, working document, and Kirkwells will continue to review and amend the information at key stages in the preparation of the Plans. In the meantime it is essential that the Steering Group use the document as a key source of information and reference point for preparing planning policies in Belmont Rural.

Appendix 1

LOWER SUPER OUTPUT AREAS (LSOAS) AND PARISHES WITHIN HEREFORD CITY



Area profiles can only be produced for geographies defined by grouping together Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). These are statistical geographies of about 1,500 people designed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) using the 2001 Census, and are the smallest areas for which statistics are regularly published. Data has traditionally been available for administrative wards, but these aren't really suitable for statistics as they vary widely in population size and boundaries can change frequently. LSOAs nest into Herefordshire's current wards, and usually follow civil parish boundaries - although some rural LSOAs cover several parishes.

Because of the need to group LSOAs, for statistical purposes **Hereford City is defined as a group of seven wards**. The map above shows these ward boundaries, and how they relate to the parishes within the city. The table below lists all of the LSOAs (named by the Research Team) within each ward and parish.

This profile includes information for the wards within Hereford City along with the parish as a whole. Information for the **LSOAs within each ward** is given in the individual ward profiles, available on the Herefordshire Council website or by contacting the Research Team (see p.1).

Parish	Wards	Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)
Hereford City	Aylestone	Aylestone Park, College Estate, Barr's Court, Bodenham Rd
	Belmont (part)	Newton Farm-Treago, Hunderton, Golden Post-Newton Farm, Newton Farm-Brampton Road
	Central	Hereford City Centre, Hospital
	St Nicholas	Kings Acre Green Lane, Wordsworth Road, Whitecross-Sainsbury's, Broomy Hill
	St Martins & Hinton (part)	Bishop's Meadow-Hunderton, Redhill-Belmont Rd, Broadleys, Hinton Rd, Putson, Redhill-Ross Rd, Dales & Pastures (part)
	Three Elms	Bobblestock, Courtyard, Golden Lion, Kempton Avenue, Kings Acre Huntington, Moor Farm & Whitecross, Yazor plain
	Tupsley	Ledbury Road East, Whittern Way, St Pauls, Old Eign Hill, Bartonsham-St James, Hampton Dene
Belmont Rural	Belmont (part)	Belmont-Abbotsmead, Belmont-Whitefriars, Newton Farm-Treago (part)
Lower Bullingham (part)	St Martins & Hinton (part)	Dales & Pastures (majority)

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Water Cycle Study

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