

Wychavon District Local Plan (Text Version)

June 2006

Wychavon District Local Plan

Contents

Section		Page No.
	List of Policies	3
1.	Introduction	6
1.1.	Introduction	6
1.2.	Purpose of the Plan	7
1.3.	How to Use the Plan	7
1.4.	A Guide to Reading the Policies	7
2.	General Strategy	8
2.1.	Aims and Objectives	8
2.2.	Accommodating Development in Wychavon	9
2.3.	General Development Policies	14
2.4.	Strategic Requirements	17
2.5.	Employment.....	21
2.6.	Retail.....	23
2.7.	Mixed Uses	23
2.8.	Transport	24
2.9.	Strategic Land Protection	28
3.	Prudent Use of Resources	31
3.1.	Introduction	31
3.2.	Conserving Natural Resources	31
3.3.	Making the Best Use of Land and Buildings	34
4.	Protecting the Environment	39
4.1.	Introduction	39
4.2.	Protecting Existing Assets	39
4.3.	Avoiding Hazards	56
4.4.	Environmental Statements.....	62
5.	Social Progress	63
5.1.	Introduction	63
5.2.	Building Sustainable Communities	63
5.3.	Enhancing People's Surroundings.....	81
6.	Economic Opportunity	92
6.1.	Introduction	92
6.2.	Employment Land.....	92
6.3.	Lorries in the Vale.....	94
6.4.	Employment Locations and Activities	96
6.5.	Retail.....	102
6.6.	Tourism	105
7.	Implementation, Monitoring and Review	108
7.1.	Implementation	108
7.2.	Monitoring	108
7.3.	Review	110
	Annexe	112
	Appendix	114

Wychavon Local Plan Policies and Reasoned Justifications

List of Policies **Page No.**

General Strategy

General Development Policies:

GD1	Location Strategy for New Development	14
GD2	General Development Control	15
GD3	Planning Obligations	15

Strategic Requirements:

SR1	Housing Land Supply	20
SR2	Employment Land Supply	22
SR3	Retail Allocations in Town Centres	23
SR4	Mixed Uses	23
SR5	Minimising Car Dependency	25

Strategic Land Protection:

SR6	Safeguarded Land for Transport Infrastructure	26
SR7	Development in the Green Belt	28
SR8	Major Developed Site in the Green Belt – Hartlebury Trading Estate	28
SR9	Areas of Development Restraint	29
SR10	Strategic Gaps	30

Prudent use of Resources

Conserving Natural Resources:

RES1	Agricultural Land Protection	31
RES2	Renewable Energy Facilities	32
RES3	Minimising Waste	33
RES4	Conserving Water Resources	34

Making the Best Use of Land and Buildings:

RES5	Housing Density	34
RES6	Conversion of Upper Floors	34
RES7	Conversion of Existing Buildings Outside Defined Development Boundaries to Non-Residential Uses	35
RES8	Conversion of Existing Buildings Outside Defined Development Boundaries to Residential Use	36
RES9	Replacement Buildings in the Countryside Outside Defined Development Boundaries	38

Protecting the Environment

Protecting Existing Assets:

ENV1	Landscape Character	39
ENV2	Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	40
ENV3	Sites of International Importance for Nature Conservation.....	41
ENV4	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	43
ENV5	Sites of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance	44
ENV6	Protected Species	45
ENV7	Protection of Wider Biodiversity.....	46
ENV8	Protection of Hedgerows, Trees and Woodland.....	47
ENV9	Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites	48
ENV10	Sites of Archaeological Significance.....	48
ENV11	Historic Parks and Gardens.....	50
ENV12	Conservation Areas (General).....	51
ENV13	Alterations to Listed Buildings	52
ENV14	Settings of Listed Buildings	54
ENV15	Demolition of a Listed Building	54
ENV16	Enabling Development	55

Avoiding Hazards:

ENV17	Development in Areas of High Flood Risk.....	56
ENV18	Development in Areas of Low to Medium Flood Risk.....	57
ENV19	Surface Water Runoff	58
ENV20	Development Likely to Give Rise to Pollution or the Risk of.... Pollution	59
ENV21	Bad Neighbour Uses	60
ENV22	Contaminated and Unstable Land	61
ENV23	Development Involving Hazardous Substances	61
ENV24	Development Close to Hazardous Installations and Pipelines	62

Social Progress

Building Sustainable Communities:

COM1	Mix of Dwelling Types.....	63
COM2	Affordable Housing	64
COM3	Rural Exception Sites	67
COM4	Provision of Supported and Sheltered Housing.....	68
COM5	Gypsy Sites – Existing Provision	68
COM6	Gypsy Sites – New Provision	69
COM7	Agricultural and Other Rural Workers’ Dwellings	69
COM8	Temporary Agricultural and Other Rural Workers’ Dwellings .	71
COM9	Agricultural or Rural Workers’ Occupancy Conditions	72
COM10	Provision of Rural Community Facilities	72
COM11	Protection of Community Facilities	74
COM12	Provision of Public Open Space	74
COM13	Protection of Open Space and Sport and Recreational Buildings and Land in Towns and Villages.....	77
COM14	Specialist Sport and Recreation Facilities in the Countryside .	79
COM15	Waterways	80

Enhancing People’s Surroundings:

SUR1	Built Design	82
SUR2	Landscape Design.....	87
SUR3	Parking Provision	88
SUR4	Shopfronts and Signs	88
SUR5	Advertisements	89
SUR6	Extensions to Buildings	90
SUR7	Annexe Accommodation	90
SUR8	Extensions to Curtilages	91

Economic Opportunity

Employment Land:

ECON1	Protection of Existing Employment Land.....	92
ECON2	Expansion of Existing Rural Employment Sites	93

Lorries in the Vale:

ECON3	B8 Exceptions Policy	94
ECON4	B8 Relocation	95
ECON5	Employment Development within the Vale of Evesham HG Control Zone	95

Employment Locations and Activities:

ECON6	Employment Development Adjacent to Development Boundaries of Villages	96
ECON7	Agricultural Buildings, Structures and Associated Works	97
ECON8	Farm Diversification	98
ECON9	Farm Shops and Roadside Stalls	99
ECON10	Throckmorton Airfield	100
ECON11	Freight	100
ECON12	Telecommunications Infrastructure	101

Retail:

ECON13	Large-Scale Retail Development	103
ECON14	Primary Shopping Frontage.....	104
ECON15	Secondary Shopping Frontage	104
ECON16	Food and Drink Retail	104
ECON17	Retail Sales at Petrol Filling Stations (PFS)	105
ECON18	Garden Centres	105

Tourism:

ECON19	Tourist Accommodation Outside Defined Development Boundaries	105
ECON20	Caravan Sites and Camping Sites	106

Section 1 –

see how local objectives could be achieved.

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

1.1.1. This is the adopted Wychavon District Local Plan prepared under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). It sets out policies and proposals to guide land use and development decisions in the District up to 2011. The document replaces the previous Local Plan that was adopted in 1998.

1.1.2. Under the new planning framework introduced through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 this Local Plan now forms part of the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) as a Development Plan Document (DPD). The Local Plan Policies are 'saved' until 2011, with the exception of Policies on Open Space and Affordable Housing. These will be replaced by DPD as set out in the adopted Local Development Scheme (LDS).

1.1.3. The Local Plan is a significant document. It is important that its policies and proposals reflect the needs and aspirations of local people and businesses. This document has been prepared following extensive public consultation. The process began in November 2001 with the publication of a Key Issues document that asked for the community's views on future development in the District. The community's views on the best place to locate new development were also sought. The comments raised through this process were assessed against national, regional and county guidance to

1.1.4. The First Deposit Version of the Local Plan was placed on deposit in July/August 2002 and represented the first formal opportunity to comment on the Plan. Some of the responses received led to changes to the draft Plan (Revised Deposit Plan July 2003). This document was also subject to a six-week public consultation period. Finally, the Council published further changes in January 2004 in a document titled Pre-Inquiry Changes. Following this, a Public Local Inquiry into the Local Plan Review was held between March and December 2004. The Inspector, appointed by the Planning Inspectorate, considered all duly submitted objections and published his recommendations in an Inspector's Report (October 2005). The Council set out its response to the Inspector's recommendations in the Proposed Modifications Report published in January 2006 and the Local Plan was adopted on 23 June 2006.

1.1.5. As a land use policy tool the Local Plan can help to deliver the Council's strategic objectives, and will also help in delivering Community Plan objectives. The Economic Development Strategies, Housing Strategy, Community Safety Strategy and the Cultural Strategy provide background information to inform policy making and implementation.

1.1.6. The 'West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy' (RSS) adopted in June 2004 provides the overall strategic planning context for the West Midlands Region. In addition, the adopted 'Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996 – 2011' (WCSP) provides a broad development strategy for the whole of the County, and the role of the Local Plan is to apply both these strategic documents in a way that enhances the quality of life for its residents.

1.1.7. The RSS, WCSP and Local Plan, together with the 'Minerals Waste Local Plan' prepared by the County Council, currently form the Development Plan Documents for the area. The County Council, as Highway Authority, have also prepared the 'Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011' (LTP). Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the WCSP is 'saved' for three years from the legislation commencement date. Therefore, from September 2007 the strategic direction for land use development in the District will be wholly guided by the RSS.

1.2. Purpose of the Plan

1.2.1. The purposes of the Local Plan are to:

- allocate land for specific uses such as housing, employment and shopping to meet current and future needs;
- provide a land use policy framework that enables needs to be met whilst minimising any harm to the District;
- provide a consistent basis to guide development control decisions;
- provide certainty where development is likely to take place up to 2011;
- work towards sustainable development for the benefit of all.

1.3. How to Use the Plan

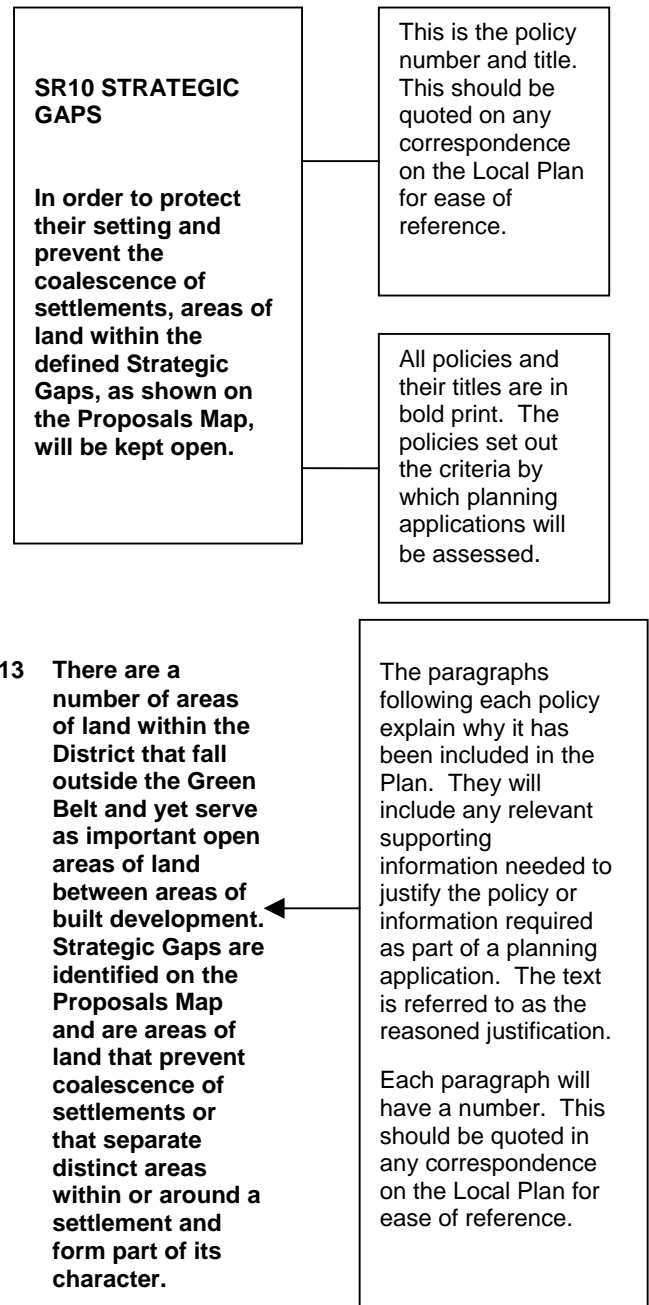
1.3.1. The Local Plan comprises a Written Statement and a Proposals Map. The Proposals Map identifies sites allocated for development and designated areas subject to specific policies contained in the Written Statement.

1.3.2. The Proposals Map covers the three main settlements in the District of Droitwich Spa,

Evesham and Pershore and a series of Inset Maps cover the remaining villages and hamlets across the District.

1.3.3. In reading the policies of the Local Plan regard should be had to the strategic context provided by the RSS, and any planning applications will be determined with regard to the policies in their entirety.

1.4. A Guide to Reading the Policies



Section 2 –

GENERAL STRATEGY

2.1. Aims and Objectives

2.1.1. It is the role of a Local Plan to contain policies and proposals that relate to the development and use of land. This section of the Plan sets out what it is seeking to achieve and summarises the approach taken to accommodating development and managing change based on a number of objectives.

2.1.2. The Government’s agenda for sustainability provides a context and starting point for the strategy of the Plan. Sustainability objectives aim to ensure that all public policy making provides for:

- the prudent use of resources;
- the effective protection of the environment;
- social progress recognising the needs of everyone; and
- the maintenance of a strong economy.

2.1.3. Through its role of facilitating or controlling change, particularly in the location of new development and the types of uses promoted, the Plan is a key ‘tool’ with which to further sustainability objectives.

2.1.4. The **aim** of the Plan, therefore, is to ensure that it provides for:

an improvement in the economic and social well-being of communities, whilst protecting and enhancing the environment in order to improve quality of life.

2.1.5. The adjacent table outlines the **objectives** of the Plan. It summarises the strategy of the Plan and illustrates how its policies and proposals can help to meet its aim.

OBJECTIVES	ROLE OF POLICIES AND PROPOSALS
1. Protecting and enhancing the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of development in towns and settlements • Protecting environmental assets such as landscape, natural and cultural resources
2. Conserving land, water and mineral resources, reducing pollution and promoting energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of development • Design of development
3. Maximising the use of previously developed land and buildings and encouraging the efficient use of land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of development in towns and settlements • Requiring the use of previously developed land before the use of greenfield sites • Promoting the re-use of buildings • Developing land at higher densities • Design of development
4. Securing a mixture of new housing types to meet a range of needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of adequate supply of land for housing • Developer contributions for affordable housing • Design of schemes • To enable affordable housing including rural exceptions housing
5. Meeting wider community needs and improving access to services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of development • Protecting community facilities and services • Facilitating the provision of new facilities
6. Ensuring developers provide for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developer contributions

necessary infrastructure, service provision and new facilities to cover the demand generated	
7. Reducing the need to travel and improving transport schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of development • Design of development • Developer contributions
8. Regenerating and enhancing the towns and settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of development • Encouraging town centre vitality and a mixture of uses • Encouraging high quality design
9. Providing for a safe and secure environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design of development • Location of development to minimise risk of flood and other hazards
10. Fostering economic prosperity and diversifying the rural economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting employment land • Providing a range of employment sites and encouraging uses that diversify the employment base as well as build on its existing strengths • Enhancing town centre vitality • Supporting tourism development

2.1.6. The objectives of the Plan are a combination of social, economic and environmental objectives. They are not independent of each other. It is an inherent role of the Local Plan to reconcile the need for development with the need to protect social, economic and environmental resources.

2.1.7. An important principle that underpins the Local Plan is that, in accommodating development, there shall be no overall loss or

unacceptable impact upon significant economic, social and environmental resources. Indeed, the key to enhancing quality of life within the District is to ensure that planning decisions are made which integrate these objectives. This ensures development can be accommodated without the loss of, for example, significant employment sites, habitats and wildlife, and without placing increased and unacceptable strains on social and physical infrastructure, such as schools, health facilities and roads.

2.1.8. In many cases the effects of development may be mitigated against. This may occur in a number of ways such as detailed design on-site, off-site works, financial contributions, particular land use provisions, etc. In some cases the social or economic need for a development may outweigh the need to protect a particular resource.

2.2 Accommodating Development in Wychavon

2.2.1. The Local Plan is not prepared in isolation. It needs to reflect Government guidance and 'dovetail' with the RSS and the WCSP, whilst also meeting local development objectives.

National Context

2.2.2. In addition to the primary legislation, Government advice for planning is provided by Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS) on a range of specific topic related areas (see Glossary).

2.2.3. National planning policy advice recognises that the Local Plan is a key way in which to deliver sustainability objectives. The overriding principles to guide development are that new development should take place in locations that minimise the need for travel and that have least impact on

the environment. This is the main thrust of Government policy direction and forms a basis for this Plan.

2.2.4. In particular, PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), PPG3 (Housing), PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres) and PPG13 (Transport) are notable examples that require Local Planning Authorities to locate development in ways that help to build sustainable communities.

2.2.5. PPG3, PPG13 and PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) recognise the need to balance countryside protection with the need to provide an appropriate proportion of development to sustain rural communities. Generally, the guidance states that villages will only be suitable for accommodating significant additional housing development where it is within the capacity of their character to accommodate more and where it can help support existing services.

2.2.6. PPG3 provides specific guidance to accommodate housing development in order to limit the amount of greenfield land used and to maximise the 'recycling' of Previously Developed Land (PDL). It states that a search sequence should be followed in identifying appropriate locations for housing, starting first and foremost with PDL within existing built-up areas. When the use of greenfield land cannot be avoided, the guidance favours the development of sites on the edges of towns so called 'urban extensions' before directing development to locations in good public transport corridors.

2.2.7. PPS7 further recognises the role of the countryside as a valuable resource enhancing the quality of the environment for local people

and visitors and its role in promoting economic activity. Development proposals are required to balance the opportunities for rural regeneration against the need to protect the countryside for its own sake.

Regional Context

2.2.8. The RSS establishes a location framework to accommodate development in the region to meet regional objectives which involve:

- focusing new development on the major urban conurbation;
- securing the regeneration of the rural areas of the Region;
- supporting cities and towns of the Region to meet their local and sub-regional development needs;
- supporting diversification and modernisation of the economy;
- ensuring environmental quality and enhancement; and
- improving the Regions transport infrastructure.

2.2.9. The RSS looks to facilitate a 'step change' in the way development is accommodated in the Region up to 2021. It places a greater emphasis on the need for the major urban areas to accommodate much of their own growth in an attempt to redress past trends, which sought to accommodate a significant proportion of development needs in 'overspill' towns close to the Birmingham conurbation. Within this part of the Region the City of Worcester is identified as that sub-regional foci.

Strategic Context

2.2.10. To 'dovetail' with the RSS, the WCSP provides a strategic context for the Local Plan until 2007. It seeks to:

- concentrate the outstanding development needs of the County in or adjacent to existing towns;
- restrict development in the rural area to that which serves local needs;

- promote a sequential approach to the search for housing land to deliver the use of previously developed land before greenfield sites; and
- encourage an integrated approach to accommodating housing, employment and transport provision.

2.2.11. It has also been the role of the WCSP to specify the level of employment and housing development that the District needs to accommodate up to 2011.

Local Context

2.2.12. The most significant way in which the Local Plan can meet its own aims and objectives is in its influence over the location of new development. The emphasis of Government policy on maximising the use of previously developed land, increasing accessibility to services and facilities, encouraging the development of vibrant towns and rural regeneration means that the Plan concentrates new development in the towns and villages of the District. It protects the countryside from unnecessary development, only allowing development which is essential in that location, for example, affordable housing to meet local needs (Policy COM2).

2.2.13. Over the next 5 years the District has to accommodate limited new housing development and is required to provide new employment land. In looking to accommodate these requirements the Plan:

- concentrates the majority of development in or adjacent to the three main towns;

- maximises the use of previously developed land and the re-use of buildings in the towns and villages; and
- seeks to distribute a proportion of new development to selected villages to assist rural regeneration.

2.2.14. The Council estimates that the majority of its residual housing requirement can be met by utilising brownfield land in the three main towns. This position is reinforced with the deletion of the Central Crescent from the RSS, which removes the previous emphasis on Droitwich Spa as the primary preferred location for development. This strategy fully accords with WCSP Policies SD5, SD6, SD7, SD8 and SD9, which promote the use of brownfield land before urban extensions/Areas of Development Restraint (ADR) land, sustainable rural development, and town centres as foci for key users.

2.2.15. Policy SR1 details the housing allocations for this Plan period and Policy SR2 the employment allocations to meet the Structure Plan requirements. Policy SR3 details the retail allocations for the Plan period. Development has been directed to the three main towns and maximises the use of previously developed land. Limited development has been directed towards the villages.

Urban Focus

2.2.16. In terms of meeting the housing requirement the Strategy (Policy SR1) is based on a sequential approach of utilising PDL in accordance with PPG3 and WCSP Policy SD7. In accordance with the strategy, the majority of residual housing requirement can be accommodated within PDL and greenfield sites within identified urban areas. However, in order to meet the revised housing land supply it is necessary to identify a significant greenfield urban extension at Evesham.

2.2.17. Wychavon is a predominantly rural District having three market towns, but with over half the population dispersed across the remaining 90 villages and hamlets. The proportions of the housing requirement allocated between the towns and the villages reflect the need to:

- address issues of sustainability and PPG3 requirements;
- accommodate a proportion of 'external' need (migration); and
- address the issue of rural regeneration including the provision of affordable housing.

2.2.18. This approach is based on the assumptions that windfall housing cannot sufficiently address issues of local need and that occupancy conditions on unrestricted market housing cannot be imposed.

2.2.19. The employment allocations of this Local Plan (Policy SR2) have been directed primarily to the three main towns, having regard to the strategy of the WCSP (particularly Policies SD5, SD6, SD7, D19, D20 and D21) and the need to address local employment issues. PDL sites have been utilised wherever possible, but there has been a need to allocate a greenfield extension in Evesham at the Vale Business Park. The over-provision in the allocation, against WCSP targets, is justified in terms of WCSP Policy D22. The approach on employment is addressed differently in each town.

2.2.20. **Droitwich Spa:** There is a significant residual employment allocation remaining from the previous Plan at Stonebridge Cross. This will provide both prestige greenfield employment land for B1 and more general B2 and B8 space (under the Use Classes Order). Brownfield sites

in the central area – mostly in mixed-use sites – will provide additional B1 space, while edge-of-centre brownfield sites will provide general employment land. This level of allocated provision is supplemented by existing vacancies on established estates in the town. The predominance of B1 Space in the allocations meets the District's economic development ambitions to address an apparent mismatch between extensive areas of white-collar housing – often serving the needs of commuters – and established employment areas offering predominantly blue-collar work. Thus, in terms of WCSP Policy D22, allocations in Droitwich Spa are addressing a balanced portfolio and balancing employment with housing growth.

2.2.21. **Evesham:** The employment allocation through the previous Plan has now been built out. In addition to the need to provide for new residential development, greenfield employment allocations are required to address:

- restructuring of the local economy as a result of over-reliance on the agricultural sector;
- opportunities, due to the presence of broadband, to develop an IT-related base, centred on strong indigenous growth in this field;
- the need to accommodate relocation of local businesses that either are poorly sited or have outgrown their current sites; and
- the opportunity to develop land as a relocation site for fruit and vegetable hauliers, currently unsuitably located in relation to both their own operational needs and the impact of their traffic generation on the local environment and communities.

2.2.22. One edge-of-centre mixed-use brownfield site is allocated for B1 use – although it is likely that other

windfall opportunities will arise within the fabric of the town. Thus, in terms of WCSP Policy D22, allocations in Evesham are addressing a balanced portfolio, balancing new housing growth and ensuring a continuing supply of readily available land.

2.2.23. **Pershore:** The employment allocation through the previous Plan is now built out. A revised commitment at nearby Throckmorton Airfield is brought forward from the previous Plan and reviewed in order to incorporate the full extent of the core of the existing built-up area (Policy ECON10). This is well located in relation to Pershore's existing industry, its railway station and a potential link to the Wyre Piddle Bypass. It offers an opportunity for high-technology employment, related to objectives in the RSS for the Birmingham-Worcestershire Central Technology Belt, which makes effective use of a brownfield site. Additionally, centrally located brownfield sites are identified for B1 mixed uses. Thus, in terms of WCSP Policy D22, allocations in Pershore are addressing a balanced portfolio, and are ensuring a continuing supply of readily available land.

2.2.24. The strategy of the Plan is justified in terms of PPS6, PPG13 and WCSP Policy SD9 in its support for town centres and retailing. Brownfield housing, employment and mixed-use sites are identified in all three town centres under Policies SR1, SR2, SR3 and SR4. The retail element of this Strategy is based on the 'Wychavon Retail Study' (2001) that identified a need to improve the scale and variety of retail provision in Droitwich Spa and Evesham. Retail sites are allocated under Policy SR3 in the central area of Evesham, the allocation in Droitwich Spa having

been built out. No such need was identified in Pershore.

Rural Regeneration

2.2.25. The pre-deposit consultation exercises prior to the production of this Plan highlighted a common concern that the rural parts of the District were stagnating. Concern was expressed about the need to sustain rural areas and the need to improve access to services and local housing and employment opportunities. Many villagers also expressed concern at the loss of local facilities such as shops, post offices and schools. The Council has made a positive decision to address these concerns. As a result, this Plan seeks to establish a rural regeneration strategy through a combined policy-led approach including the promotion of limited housing and employment development in selected villages.

2.2.26. This approach is sanctioned in national planning advice:

- PPG3 (Housing) states that there should be adequate housing provision in rural areas to meet the needs of local people.
- PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) states that new housing will continue to be required in rural areas to sustain healthy economic activity and the viability of village communities.
- PPG13 (Transport) refers to the suitability of villages to take additional development where they will enable access to a range of services.

2.2.27. The rural regeneration strategy will be implemented through Policy SR1; Policy COM1; Policy COM2; Policy COM3; Policy ECON1; and Policy ECON6. These Policies focus particularly on the social and economic objectives of sustainable development outlined in PPS1.

2.2.28. No major employment allocations have been made in the rural areas. The rural employment strategy consists of:

- strategic allocations in the market towns acting as a focus for their rural hinterlands (Policy SR3);
- protection of existing employment land (Policy ECON1); and
- opportunities for brownfield and edge-of-settlement development (Policy GD1 and Policy ECON6).

2.2.29. Villages with housing allocations have been selected on the basis of the methodology set out in Annexe 1. The main objective is to address the concern raised through the pre-deposit consultation exercises relating to rural regeneration aims. It is considered that the best way to achieve this is to locate development in villages with access to a primary school and public transport facilities. The type, size and design of any new housing in the villages will be controlled by specific policies in this Plan and possibly through the use of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) involving further consultations.

2.2.30. The Local Plan also provides for the provision of new and the protection of existing, community facilities through Policy COM11 and open space through Policy COM12.

2.3. General Development Policies

2.3.1. Policy GD1, Policy GD2 and Policy GD3 establish a set of basic controls applicable to all applications for development to ensure that their broad location is in line with national objectives

and that development can be reasonably accommodated.

GD1 LOCATION STRATEGY FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

Most new development to 2011 will be accommodated within the main built-up areas of Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore, with some in the villages; in all cases it will be within defined development boundaries and/or on allocated sites.

At the three towns, sequential preference will be given first, to the re-use of previously developed land and buildings; second, to urban greenfield land that has no significant recreational, amenity or visual value as open space; and third (but only at Evesham, if required to meet strategic development needs), to land adjacent to the development boundary.

No new development is proposed anywhere in the defined Green Belt.

Proposals for major shopping, commercial, leisure, sports or recreational facilities should follow a sequential approach in which town centre locations are preferred first, edge-of-centre locations second and out-of-centre locations last.

All other development proposals outside these areas will only be permitted where they accord with a specific policy or proposal in this Plan.

2.3.2. The strategy of this Plan aims to concentrate and accommodate most development within the existing towns and settlements in the District to further sustainability objectives, including reducing the need to travel and making best use of existing infrastructure and the long-standing national policy of safeguarding the countryside for its own sake.

2.3.3. Policies in the Local Plan seek to rigorously control development in the countryside, outside defined development boundaries, to development that generally requires a countryside location or that is

appropriate in the countryside. Within towns and settlements a sequential approach to identifying development needs is established, requiring brownfield sites to be developed prior to greenfield sites. Only when a search of these areas is exhausted will greenfield sites be considered beyond, but adjacent to, development boundaries. This is well established in national, regional and strategic policy. The sequential approach has been used in the identification of sites allocated for various uses, as part of the development strategy of the Plan and will be addressed in consideration of development proposals that come forward through the life of the Plan.

2.3.4. Development boundaries under Policy GD1, have been placed around towns and around some rural settlements in order to identify locations where development is acceptable in principle. PPG3 states that infill development in rural settlements can be acceptable, but goes on to say that where there is to be 'significant' additional housing, support services are required. Many of the rural settlements identified under Policy GD1 have access to a limited level of service provision, which makes them suitable for limited infill development only.

2.3.5. Development boundaries for the villages have been defined having regard to their size, character and form. Whilst they relate to the main built-up area of a settlement, they have been drawn to reflect where new development, through infilling or minor consolidation, would be appropriate as opposed to defining what constitutes a settlement. This may often differ from the local perception of what constitutes a settlement, which could include isolated groups' houses away from the main built-up area. In general, the boundaries of villages have been tightly drawn to respect their character in terms of size and form. Wherever possible, the development limits should follow physical features that can be easily defined on the ground. Long back gardens have been excluded

where the potential for development will have an adverse impact on its surroundings. Farm buildings on the edges of villages have also been excluded in order to facilitate the accommodation of local employment facilities.

GD2 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

All development proposals should follow the principles of sustainable development as set out in national, regional and structure plan policy.

Proposals for development that are also in accordance with Policy GD1 (Location Strategy) will be permitted where they would not have an adverse effect (where relevant) on any of the following:

- a) the character or appearance of the building, the surrounding built environment, or the rural landscape;
- b) public and private amenity, health and safety;
- c) the efficient operation of surrounding land uses;
- d) environmental and cultural heritage resources, nature conservation, and public rights of way;
- e) the efficient operation of the transport network; and
- f) the capacity of existing or proposed utility services and social infrastructure to support the development.

Relevant criteria in assessing development proposals will normally include access and transport arrangements, layout and design, the type and intensity of proposed uses, any cumulative impacts, and any proposed mitigating measures.

2.3.5. Policy GD2 provides a set of criteria against which all development in the District must comply before planning permission is granted. As the Plan is to be read as a whole, there is no requirement to repeat these criteria within other Plan policies. Policy GD2 aims to ensure that development is carried out without reducing the quality of life of residents of the District and

without undermining the quality of the District's environment. Development proposals will be assessed in terms of both their individual impact and their impact when considered cumulatively with the activities of other uses affecting the area - whether permitted, established or otherwise tolerated.

2.3.8. The Council's policy on developer contributions is set out in more detail in Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'Developer Contributions Towards Service Infrastructure' (2003). The document sets out the obligations likely to be sought including education, health, housing, leisure, public open space, transportation, and other community benefits.

GD3 PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

Planning obligations will be sought to ensure that development proposals:

- a) meet the objectives of sustainable development, and of the Plan strategy; and
- b) can be accommodated with acceptable impacts on the community and the environment.

2.3.6. It is important that development caters for its own impact(s) by providing infrastructure, community facilities and other elements, including maintenance contributions, which are necessary to maintain and enhance the quality of life of residents and the environment. Planning obligations are legal agreements, between a developer and the Council, which ensure that the development of land contributes to the aims of the Plan and Community Plan.

2.3.7. Obligations may seek provision or contributions for necessary service infrastructure proportionate to the development. This could include transportation, housing, regeneration, education, health, liveability and public open space, recreation and other community benefits. They may also be used to restrict the use of land to specified uses. Obligations usually take the form of a legal agreement and are crucial to achieving the objectives of the Plan. In negotiating with a developer, the Council will seek to ensure that a planning obligation satisfies all the tests set out in Government guidance ODPM Circular 05/2005 'Planning Obligations'.

2.4. Strategic Requirements

2.4.1. Housing

The Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996–2011 (WCSP) has provided the strategic framework for establishing the amount of housing and employment land to be provided in Wychavon during the Plan period. The Local Plan provides more detailed Policies and identifies site-specific proposals to meet the housing and employment requirements.

2.4.2. The residual figure for allocations differs slightly from that shown in WCSP Policy D4, as the figures have been updated using the Housing Land Availability information as at 1 April 2005 (Table 1 (see page 18)). In addition, an allocation for 44 dwellings has been omitted from this Plan on the basis that there is no reasonable likelihood of it coming forward. An allocation for nine dwellings at Himbleton has been omitted on the basis that it has been accommodated by a change to the village development boundary. The previously allocated sites shown in Table 2 have been reassessed in conjunction with WCSP Policy D4 and PPG3 and are considered acceptable to carry forward into this Plan period.

2.4.3. The 7450 figure is the total housing requirement for the Plan period 1996–2011. Between 1996 and 2005, 5241 dwellings had been constructed and at 1 April 2005, 721 dwellings either have been allocated for development as part of the previous Local Plan and have not come forward (Table 2 (see page 18), or were granted planning permission. This then leaves a requirement of 1488 dwellings to be provided from 1 April 2005 until 31 March 2011. Land will therefore need to be provided to meet this supply target.

2.4.4. The balance of 1488 dwellings will be met through windfall sites, and new allocations. Windfall sites represent those sites coming forward that have not been previously identified and usually consist of development on infill sites, disused land or sites currently in non-agricultural use that become vacant. Windfall sites have a major role to play in the supply of adequate housing to meet the needs of the District. The Council is allowing for the provision of 635 dwellings to come forward as windfalls. This figure has been calculated using an average of the 1996–2005 annual completed windfalls (the methodology for Wychavon adopted in the WCSP), which comes to 127.

Table 1

Wychavon Housing Requirements for 1996 - 2011 @ 1.4.2005	
Structure Plan requirements 1996-2011	7450
Completions @ 1.4.2005	5241
Commitments, permissions and previously allocated sites @ 1.4.2005	721
Balance to be provided from 1.4.2005 to 31.3.2011	1488
Windfall allowance 2005-2011	635
Residual balance to be met through new allocations	853

NB: Commitments have been discounted 4% in line with the Local Plan Inquiry Inspector's recommendation

Table 2

Previously Allocated Housing Sites Carried Forward @ 1.4.2005				
Site	Town/Village	Approx No. of Market Units	Approx No. of Affordable Units	Total No. of Units
St Giles Road	Bredon	14	6	20
Orchard, Highfield Road	Evesham	7	3	10
South of the Racks	Ombersley	14	6	20
Total:				50

- 2.4.5. The total residual balance of the 853 dwellings to be met through new allocations is approximately 380. This results in an over-supply of approximately 130 dwellings. However, the Public Local Inquiry Inspector recommended that the housing requirement should meet a shortfall of approximately 400 dwellings (comprising a figure of 150 additional dwellings, which has been added over and above the WCSP figure). Thus, the further increase in the housing figure is part delivered through the inclusion of a greenfield urban extension at Evesham and reinstating three previously allocated sites from the First Deposit Local Plan. This is provided through Policy SR1 on Housing Land Supply (see page 20).
- 2.4.6. The housing allocations have been assessed with regard to their compliance with the spatial strategy, as well as having regard to their impact on the appearance and character of the surrounding area. All the urban sites have been subject of an 'Urban Capacity Study' (UCS) and market testing undertaken by consultants in 2002. They are developable within the Plan period. Policy SR1 must be read in conjunction with Policies on mixed use, density, design, planning obligations, affordable housing and phasing.
- 2.4.7. The Council will prepare development briefs for the larger and/or more complex sites allocated in Policy SR1 prior to the commencement of building works, in order to establish guidelines for the nature and form of proposals. It must be stressed that the number of units provided are approximations only – exact figures will be determined as part of a consideration of each site's special characteristics in relation to density and a design-led approach to development.

SR1 HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

Sufficient land will be provided in the District to enable the construction of 7450 dwellings between April 1996 and March 2011. The residual element of this requirement will be met through windfall housing and allocations. The allocations will comprise the following sites:

Site	Town/Village	Approx No. of Units	Approx No. of Affordable Housing Units
1. Previously Developed Sites			
Canal Basin Project (mixed use)	Droitwich Spa	80	24
Willow Court, Westwood Rd	Droitwich Spa	24	7
Land Rover Garage, Hanbury Rd	Droitwich Spa	70	21
Former Gas Depot, Common Rd (mixed use)	Evesham	20	6
Inland Revenue, Burford Rd	Evesham	10	3
R/o Lime St/ Northwick Rd	Evesham	50	15
Evesham United FC, Common Rd	Evesham	75	22
Children's Home, Peewit Rd	Evesham	30	9
Health Centre, Lower Priest Lane	Pershore	15	4
Garage Court, St Andrews Rd	Pershore	10	3
Garage Court, Abbots Rd	Pershore	13	4
Garage Court, Mill Lane	Pershore	14	4
R/o High St (mixed use)	Pershore	40	12
Garage, High St (mixed use)	Pershore	34	10
Total:		485	144
2. Sites included through the Local Plan Inquiry			
Land off Badsey Rd	Evesham	300	90
Badsey Fields Lane	Badsey	20	6
Ivy Lane	Bretforton	20	6
Leys Road	Harvington	20	6
Tewkesbury Road	Eckington	20	6
Total:		380	144
3. Urban Greenfield Sites			
Nursery, Bewdley Lane/Blind Lane (mixed use)	Evesham	40	12
Orchard, Coopers Lane	Evesham	47	14
Total:		87	26
4. Villages			
Adj School, High St	Inkberrow (GF)	20	6
Moreton House	Fernhill Heath (PDL)	20	6
Total:		40	12
Total Residual Allocations:		992	296

KEY: PDL = Previously Developed Land; GF = Greenfield Land

2.5. Employment

2.5.1. The WCSP has provided the strategic framework for establishing the amount of employment land to be provided in Wychavon during the Plan period. The Local Plan provides more detailed policies and identifies site-specific proposals to meet the employment requirements.

2.5.4. Policy SR2 identifies that element the of the District's employment land supply and sites to be allocated during the Plan period. Existing sites are identified and/or protected through Policy ECON1. Together, these sites cater for a range of uses of varying sizes, are geographically well spread throughout the District with many well located in relation to the towns. They are generally well used and successful, and are significant sources of local employment. For these reasons the Plan will protect this range of sites to meet the requirements of existing and future businesses.

Table 3

Wychavon Employment Land Supply Requirement (ha) for 1996 – 2011 @ 1.4.2005	
Structure Plan requirement 1996 – 2011	110.00 ha
Completions @ 1.4.2005	48.23 ha
Permissions, previously allocated sites and sites under construction @ 1.4.2005	42.73 ha
Balance to be provided from 1.4.2005 – 31.3.2011	19.04 ha

2.5.2. The 110 ha figure is the total employment requirement for the Plan period 1996 - 2011. Between 1996 and 2005, 48.23 ha of employment land had been constructed and at 1 April 2005, 42.73 ha either had been granted planning permission or was under construction. This then leaves a requirement of 19.04 ha to be provided from 1 April 2005 until 31 March 2011 (Table 3). Land will, therefore, need to be provided to meet this supply.

2.5.5. The amount of new land to be provided for employment is set out in the WCSP. It indicates that about 110 ha should be accommodated in the District between 1996 and 2011. Taking account of completions, planning permissions and allocations at 1 April 2005, the residual figure is 19.04 ha. The allocations are justified in terms of the strategy in Section 2.2.

2.5.3. The balance of 19.04 ha will be met through specifically allocated sites. Additionally, there is a need to address specific employment issues (para. 2.2.19 – 2.2.22) through specific allocations that take the overall allocation in Policy SR2 to a level in excess of the residual requirement. This is justified in terms of WCSP Policy D22.

SR2 EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY

Sufficient land will be provided in the District to enable the construction of 110 hectares of employment land in B1, B2 and B8 uses between April 1996 and March 2011. The residual element of this requirement plus additional land to meet specific employment needs will be met through allocations. The allocations will comprise the following sites identified on the Proposals Map:

Site	Town	Use	Approx Area
Previously Developed Sites			
Nuway	Droitwich Spa	B1, B2, B8	1.03 ha
Coal Yard	Droitwich Spa	B1, B2, B8	1.09 ha
Canal Basin Project	Droitwich Spa	Mixed use – B1	0.25 ha
Former Gas Depot	Evesham	Mixed use – B1	0.05 ha
Garage, High Street	Pershore	Mixed use – B1	0.16 ha
R/o High Street	Pershore	Mixed use – B1	Not known
Total:			2.58 ha
2. Urban Extension			
Vale Park	Evesham	B1, B2, B8	15.25 ha
Vale Park	Evesham	Restricted B8	4.00 ha
Total:			19.25 ha
Total Allocations:			21.83 ha
Throckmorton Airfield (see ECON10) Pershore Hi-Tech			10.00ha
All sites identified under parts 1 and 2 will be retained for employment use throughout the Plan period unless proposals comply with the provisions of Policy ECON1 (Employment Land).			

2.6. Retail

SR3 RETAIL ALLOCATIONS IN TOWN CENTRES

The following town centre sites are allocated for retail use and are identified on the Proposals Map:

- a) Avon Street/High Street, Evesham – comparison goods (non-food); and
- b) Bridge Street/Cowl Street/High Street/Oat Street, Evesham – comparison goods (non-food).

2.6.1. National and strategic guidance establishes a sequential approach to the search for retail sites that concentrates on town centres as the priority. The next level of the sequence is edge-of-centre sites, followed by out-of-centre sites and, finally, out-of-town sites. Each level is defined in PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres). The strategy of this Plan is to focus retail development within town centres and to support local and neighbourhood facilities.

2.6.2. The 'Wychavon Retail Study' (2001) shows that the District's town centres are vulnerable because their viability and vitality could easily be reduced by the planned improvements to the retail offer in competing higher-order centres, in particular Cheltenham and Worcester. In order to retain more local expenditure, Wychavon's town centres need to improve their retail offer. The Retail Study identified three sites specifically for retail use which it is hoped will improve retailer demand, particularly from multiples as they normally help to underpin the retail function of town centres.

2.6.3. In Droitwich Spa, the retail allocation has been built out. In Evesham, there is a high degree of retention of convenience goods expenditure and a high anticipated growth in comparison goods expenditure means that the preferred retail use will be for non-food. Policy SR3 will be reviewed regularly as the retail market will continue to change/evolve, for example, potential

increase in home deliveries, shopping via the Internet, and this will determine the demand for floor space both qualitatively and quantitatively.

2.7. Mixed Uses

SR4 MIXED USES

The following sites are allocated for mixed uses and identified on the Proposals Map:

- Canal Basin, Droitwich Spa;
- Former Gas Depot and adjoining land, Common Road, Evesham;
- Abbey Road Depot, Evesham (excludes residential development);
- Nursery, Bewdley/Blind Lane, Evesham;
- Garage, High Street, Pershore;
- Land rear of High Street, Pershore.

Allocated mixed-use schemes that include residential allocations are also listed in Policy SR1. Other proposals for mixed-use developments within defined development boundaries will normally be permitted where they:

- a) contribute to the vitality and viability of settlements;
- b) present a compatible mix of uses; and
- c) comply with Policy GD2 (General Development Control).

2.7.1. PPG3 states that "...Local Authorities should promote developments which combine a mix of land uses, including housing, either on a site or within individual buildings...". It argues that this is important not only to accommodate new households but also to bring new life into our towns. The Council supports this aim and considers that such developments can contribute to other planning objectives, including the need to produce balanced communities, reducing the need to travel and improving community safety. Furthermore, it considers that the benefits of mixed uses can apply equally to villages and, in some circumstances, to proposals that include mixes other than housing.

2.7.2. The allocation at Abbey Road Bus Depot, Evesham is not considered suitable for residential use. In addition to the sites allocated in Policy SR4, the Council will normally permit mixed-use development schemes in other locations that comply with the locational and development control policies of this Plan. In particular, the Council will consider the opportunities for residential uses on the upper floors of the Evesham retail allocations in accordance with Policy SR3.

2.7.3. All proposals will need to demonstrate that the mix of uses is appropriate in combination, having regard to their likely impacts on one another and their respective operational and amenity requirements.

2.7.4. Mixed uses may be appropriate on other developments where ancillary uses can support the main proposed use. Therefore, it may be appropriate to include community or neighbourhood shopping facilities on a major residential site, or crèche or café facilities on a major industrial site.

2.8. Transport

2.8.1. The Council's overall aim with regard to transport is:

to minimise the need to travel by car, and to improve accessibility to everyday facilities for all.

2.8.2. To pursue this aim the Council will rigorously apply its transport policies in addition to promoting and supporting initiatives, in particular Safer Routes to School, set out in the Worcestershire 'Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011' (LTP).

2.8.3. The location of new development can influence the need to travel, though not necessarily the demand to travel. The Local Plan, in recognising the need to integrate transport and land use,

has allocated future growth principally in the three towns and, to a lesser extent, in the more sustainable villages. The allocations have, wherever possible, utilised previously developed land in order to conserve greenfield land. By concentrating development in the more sustainable locations there is an opportunity to reduce the need to travel by car, create a more efficient public transport system and improve accessibility for the whole community.

2.8.4. The Government, through various publications, most notably PPG13, the Integrated Transport White Paper 'A New Deal for Transport' and 'Transport 2010 – The Ten Year Plan' (2000), has set out its transport priorities, including reducing congestion, better integration and a genuine wider choice of quicker, safer, more reliable travel on road, rail and other public services. Despite the welcome and long-awaited focus on integrated policies and significant increases to investment in transport infrastructure, road traffic levels continue to rise with a 1.5% increase between 2005/2006 (Department of Transport 2006), whilst the UK remains the most car-dominated society in Europe. Traffic growth in Worcestershire has, historically, mirrored national traffic growth and a 32% growth in road traffic volume is predicted for the period 1996 – 2010.

2.8.5. The Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997 requires Local Authorities to meet traffic reduction targets. Whilst recognising that new development is but a small percentage of total development the Council will vigorously apply its transport Policies in order to meet LTP targets. The Council will continue to work with the County Council and other organisations, in particular Sustrans and with the Highways Agency to achieve the LTP objectives.

2.8.6. In determining planning applications the Council will adhere to the following movement hierarchy of users:

- a) pedestrians;
- b) people with mobility difficulties;

- c) cyclists;
- d) public transport and taxis;
- e) powered two wheelers;
- f) commercial/business users;
- g) car-borne shoppers;
- h) coach-borne visitors;
- i) car-borne commuters and visitors.

2.8.7. In order to reduce car usage, genuine transport alternatives need to be provided that will require continued increases in investment and even then attitudes to travel may only change in the long-term.

2.8.8. Although there is a high level of car ownership in the District relative to other rural areas, there are still a significant number of residents who do not have access to a car. Improving public transport infrastructure and services can improve accessibility for these people and, in some cases, where services are frequent and regular, provide an alternative to using the car. Improving the connectivity between bus and rail services can also attract passengers who would otherwise have used a car.

2.8.9. The Council will continue to work with the County Council to secure improved public transport services. New development is being directed to areas where access by public transport could be feasible, so developers are expected to contribute to schemes that could improve accessibility by this mode.

SR5 MINIMISING CAR DEPENDENCY

Development proposals that are likely to generate significant traffic movements must be supported by thorough Transport Assessments. These should demonstrate that all transport impacts have been analysed, and can be mitigated particularly by maximising safe access to the site on foot, on cycles, and by public transport.

Proposals may include:

- a) the provision of direct, easy and safe access to existing/proposed pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes;
- b) on-site and off-site highways safety measures that encourage walking, cycling and public transport; and
- c) new public transport services or improvements to existing services.

2.8.10. The car continues to be the dominant mode of transport and makes up 60% of all trips under 2 miles/3.5 km (National Travel Survey, 2006), a distance that could be made on foot or by cycle if conditions were more favourable. The 2001 Census shows a continuing decline in these modes of transport with detrimental consequences for the environment and public health. New infrastructure and/or highway safety improvements can make cycling and walking more realistic alternatives to the car. In order to pursue Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997 targets, the Council will continue to work with the County Council and other organisations in order to meet the aims, objectives and targets set out in the LTP and the National Cycling Strategy and the Walking Strategy. Development proposals must, therefore, demonstrate that movement within the site and site access is favourable to pedestrians and cyclists.

2.8.11. The locational strategy of the Local Plan is designed to minimise the need to travel and minimise car use by directing development sequentially to Wychavon's main towns and villages, where there are higher levels of service provision and transport alternatives. To supplement this, Policy SR5 is intended to mitigate the transport impact of new development. Transport Assessments, advocated in PPG13 and in the RSS, are more comprehensive than the former Traffic Impact Assessments and aim to determine the overall transport impact of new developments and whether

these can be reduced to an acceptable level by introducing various measures to improve access by cycling, walking and public transport.

- 2.8.12. A Travel Plan is a method by which organisations can evaluate the transport needs of their employees and reduce the need to travel by car by implementing a range of actions. By requiring Travel Plans for certain developments, the Council aims to satisfy the Government's requirement for Local Authorities to reduce traffic levels in their areas.
- 2.8.13. The West Midlands Area Multi-Modal Transport Study (2001) indicated that the adoption of Travel Plans on a major scale is needed in order to change travel behaviour.
- 2.8.14. Travel Plans should have measurable outputs and will be monitored to ensure that the agreed targets are met. In order to help achieve this, the Council will require developers to enter into a Section 106 Agreement that stipulates agreed travel targets, based on the needs of the locality.
- 2.8.15. Proposals that could have a material impact on the safety or efficient operation of the trunk road network will need to be submitted with a Transport Assessment to include the identification of developer-funded mitigation works.

SR6 SAFEGUARDED LAND FOR TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

The following specific sites, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded for potential improvements to the District's transport infrastructure.

Railway Schemes:

- a) Worcestershire Parkway Station;
- b) Cotswolds and Malverns Line;

County Road Scheme:

- c) Keytec Industrial Park to Wyre Piddle Bypass;

Cycling/Riding/Walking Schemes:

- d) Hartlebury to Stourport-on-Severn;

Canal Schemes:

- e) Droitwich Spa Canals;

Combined Scheme (Cycling/Walking & Rail):

- f) Stratford to Cheltenham (including the former Chord Lines at Honeybourne Junction);

General:

- g) The Council will not permit proposals that would jeopardise railway-transport-related developments at railway stations;
- h) Proposals that would compromise the Council's cycling and walking network, National Cycle Network Routes 41, 45 and 46, Public Rights of Way or Quiet Lanes will not be permitted unless alternative routes can be provided that are demonstrably better in quality, attractiveness, convenience and safety.

Worcestershire Parkway Station

- 2.8.16. The technical study carried out by Halcrow (2001) shows that there is merit in pursuing a parkway station at Norton that would enable a better rail service for passengers travelling on both the Cotswolds and Malverns Line and the South-West to North-East Main Line. The Council will continue to be represented on and support the Worcestershire Parkway Steering Group in its pursuit of this important strategic transportation project.

Cotswolds and Malverns Line

- 2.8.17. Initial studies carried out by Oscar Faber and Halcrow show that there are positive economic and environmental benefits in dualling various sections of this line in order to increase capacity. The Council will continue to be represented on and support the Cotswolds and Malverns Line

Partnership in its bid to secure Rail Passenger Partnership funding for this project.

Keytec Industrial Park to Wyre Piddle Bypass (Western Link)

- 2.8.18. This link could provide some local environmental benefits, particularly for Pinvin and Wyre Piddle. The scheme is unlikely to come forward without a substantial developer contribution. The Council supports the principle of this scheme, with the proviso it does not compromise the strategic Local Plan Policies, and will work with the County Council in securing it.

Hartlebury to Stourport-on-Severn

- 2.8.19. The Council supports LTP proposed interchange improvements at Hartlebury Railway Station. Whilst the potential for reopening this route for heavy rail services is low it still offers an opportunity for a cycling/riding/walking route linking Hartlebury with Stourport-on-Severn. This would provide an important link to Route 45 (Severn Valley) of the National Cycle Network.

Droitwich Spa Canals

- 2.8.20. The opening up of the Droitwich Spa Barge Canal, which runs between the town centre and the River Severn, and the Droitwich Spa Junction Canal, which runs between the town centre and the Worcester - Birmingham canal could bring major economic, environmental and recreational benefits to the area. The redevelopment of the Droitwich Spa canal basin for mixed uses would also provide a centre of attraction within walking distance of the town centre. The Council is committed to the reopening of this significant resource and will continue to work with British Waterways, County Council, the Droitwich Spa Civic Society, Droitwich Canals Trust, The Waterways Trust, Droitwich Spa Town Council and other interested parties in order to see the project through.

Stratford to Cheltenham

- 2.8.21. The restoration of the line between Cheltenham and Stratford-upon-Avon is a long-term project being pursued, principally, by two private organisations, the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Steam Railway (Plc) and the Stratford and Broadway Railway Society. The former operates trains (light rail) between Toddington and Cheltenham Racecourse and this service is becoming an important local tourist attraction. Network Rail, in their 'Network Management Statement 2000', has acknowledged that there is long-term potential for the line to be incorporated within the national rail network for heavy rail.

- 2.8.22. The reintroduction of rail services could have positive environmental impacts, for example reducing the number of vehicles on local roads.

- 2.8.23. This route also has the potential, without prejudicing future rail use or safety considerations, to accommodate a section of Route 41 (Bristol to Stratford-upon-Avon) of the National Cycle Network that could generate economic development benefits through increased tourism.

- 2.8.24. The Council will continue to work with the principal interested parties in order to safeguard the line and achieve a dual use in appropriate places.

2.8.25. Development near Railway Stations

The car parks at the District's railway stations are at capacity. The lack of car parking at railway stations has been shown to reduce the demand to travel by rail. Also, in order to provide realistic alternatives to car travel there needs to be local transport interchange facilities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public transport services. Therefore, the Council will scrutinise development proposals that would reduce the potential to increase car parking or transport interchange projects at railway stations.

2.9. Strategic Land Protection

SR7 DEVELOPMENT IN THE GREEN BELT

Within the Green Belt, proposals will only be permitted for development where they:

- a) would not detract from the open character of the Green Belt; or
- b) would not conflict with the purposes of including land within it; and
- c) (in both instances) are for one or more of the following purposes:
 - i) land uses for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, outdoor sports and recreation, horse riding, cemeteries and other uses suitable to the rural area and which preserve the openness of land;
 - ii) new buildings that meet a proven agricultural need or that are essential for uses outlined under i) above;
 - iii) small-scale social housing schemes to meet proven local needs that accord with Policy COM3 (Rural Exceptions Policy);
 - iv) limited infilling within defined development boundaries;
 - v) limited extension or replacement of existing buildings in accordance with Policy SUR1, Policy SUR6 and Policy RES9 (Design, Extensions, and Replacement Buildings);
 - vi) re-use of buildings in accordance with Policy RES7 and Policy RES8 (Conversion of Existing Buildings); and
 - vii) the limited infilling of the identified employment sites in accordance with the provisions of PPG2 Annexe C.

- 2.9.1. Green Belts are perhaps the most well known of planning policy tools used to shape and control urban form and growth. They are areas of open land that are protected from many forms of development. Areas of Green Belt land in the District are found to the north of Droitwich Spa and between Droitwich Spa and Worcester. The former has existed since the 1950s whilst the latter was included as an extension in 1975. The land forms part of the wider West

Midlands Green Belt that surrounds the Birmingham conurbation and Coventry and serves to prevent the unrestricted expansion of the conurbation, to prevent the coalescence of towns and villages around it and to safeguard the countryside from encroachment and to protect historic towns.

- 2.9.2. The general extent of the Green Belt is outlined in the WCSP, although it is the role of the Local Plan to set precise boundaries. The Green Belt boundary is defined on the Proposals Map.

- 2.9.3. The protection of the Green Belt is an overriding planning consideration and there is a presumption against inappropriate development within it. Policy SR7 outlines the types of development considered by national planning guidance PPG2 (Green Belt) to be appropriate within Green Belts. Appropriate land uses are those which for the most part would retain the openness of the Green Belt. Development that is necessary to the functioning of such land uses is also an appropriate type of development in the Green Belt. However, it is still important that the scale, location or design of buildings or structures does not impair the open character of the Green Belt.

SR8 MAJOR DEVELOPED SITE IN THE GREEN BELT – HARTLEBURY TRADING ESTATE

The protection of the Green Belt is an overriding planning consideration and there is a presumption against inappropriate development within it. The Policy outlines the types of development considered by national planning guidance (PPG2) to be appropriate within Green Belts. Appropriate land uses are those which for the most part would retain the openness of the Green Belt. Development that is necessary to the functioning of such land uses is also an appropriate type of development in the Green Belt. However, it is still important that the scale, location or design of buildings or structures does not impair the open character of the Green Belt.

The Major Developed Site (MDS) in the Green

Belt, identified on the Proposals Map at Hartlebury Trading Estate is regarded as being suitable for redevelopment and environmental improvement under the provisions of PPG2 Annexe C.

Proposals involving the redevelopment of this site should:

- a) have no greater impact than the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it, and where possible have less;
- b) contribute to the achievement of the objectives for use of land in Green Belts, set out in Policy SR7(Development in Green Belt) and have regard for the provisions of Policy ECON1 (Employment Land);
- c) not exceed the height of existing buildings; and
- d) not occupy an area larger than the footprint of existing buildings, unless this would achieve a reduction in height, which would benefit visual amenity.

2.9.4. Annexe C of PPG2 provides a framework for dealing with major developed sites in the Green Belt, recognising that these sites present opportunities to help secure jobs and prosperity without further prejudicing the Green Belt designation.

2.9.5. The Council is able to identify such sites and include policies in the adopted Local Plan to enable the site's redevelopment or infilling. Proposals should:

- have no greater impact on the Green Belt than the existing development;
- contribute to the achievement of objectives for the use of land in Green Belts;
- not exceed the height of existing buildings; and
- not occupy a larger area of the site than any existing buildings.

The Hartlebury Industrial Estate is considered suitable for identification as a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt.

2.9.6. When applying Policy SR8, regard should be given to Policy ECON1 of the Local Plan and Inset Map 96 that defines the development footprint. Reference in the Policy to "footprint of existing building" shall relate to the aggregate ground floor area of the existing buildings, excluding temporary buildings, and open spaces with direct external access between sections of a building.

SR9 AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT RESTRAINT

Areas of Development Restraint (ADR) are shown on the Proposals Map. Land identified as an ADR will be safeguarded and will not be released unless and until it is required for development in a future review of the Local Plan.

2.9.7. Planning guidance states that the essential character of Green Belts is their permanence and that their protection must be maintained as far as can be seen ahead. In other words, the guidance requires that Green Belt boundaries should be related to a time-scale which is longer than that normally used for other aspects of the Plan. To achieve this and to ensure the protection of the Green Belt for the longer term, the guidance advocates the safeguarding of land between the urban area and the Green Belt, which may be required to meet longer-term development needs. The previous Local Plan identified a number of areas of safeguarded land or Areas of Development Restraint (ADR) for this purpose.

2.9.8. ADR are identified at Droitwich Spa, Fernhill Heath, Wychbold and Hartlebury.

2.9.9. Droitwich ADR comprises a large greenfield site to the south of the main built-up area of the town and a smaller area directly to the south-east of the

urban area. Both ADR sites would comply with WCSP Policy SD4, which seeks access to development by different modes to minimise the need to travel. Both ADR sites are also considered to comply with WCSP Policy SD5, which aims to achieve balanced communities.

- 2.9.10. Fernhill Heath, Hartlebury and Wychbold have been rated as 'very high' or 'high' in the Village Accessibility Index, with good bus services and a range of existing local facilities. The ADR sites are considered to be those where new development would contribute to minimising the need to travel and achieving balanced communities.
- 2.9.11. The existing ADR land has been retained for this Plan period to meet possible longer-term development needs beyond 2011.
- 2.9.12. The development strategy of this Local Plan does not require greenfield land releases around Droitwich Spa to accommodate development within the period up to 2011. As a result, the existing Green Belt boundary remains unchanged in this Plan and the ADR land will be retained and will not be used to accommodate development unless, and until it is required to do so in a future review of the housing need within LDF.

SR10 STRATEGIC GAPS

In order to protect their setting and prevent the coalescence of settlements, land within the defined Strategic Gaps, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be kept open and essentially free of development. Minor development proposals may, however, be permitted if they do no harm, individually or cumulatively, to the function and purposes of a Strategic Gap, or to its open character.

- 2.9.13. There are a number of areas of land within the District that fall outside the Green Belt and yet serve as important open areas of land between areas of built development. Strategic Gaps are

identified on the Proposals Map and are areas of land that prevent the coalescence of settlements or that separate distinct areas of development within or around a settlement and form part of its character. These are sensitive areas that should be kept open and free from development.

- 2.9.14. PPS7 and the 2000 Rural White Paper recognise the need to protect the countryside from the increasing pressure for development and to prevent urban sprawl. Strategic Gaps have been designated in a number of areas around the District which fall outside the Green Belt but are important open areas of land between built-up areas. The purpose of the Strategic Gaps identified on the Proposals Map are to protect the setting and separate identity of settlements to avoid coalescence, to retain the existing settlement pattern by maintaining the openness of the land and/or to retain the physical and psychological benefits of having open land near to where people live. These are, therefore, sensitive areas that should be kept essentially free from development. However, there may be circumstances that permit minor development proposals, in particular the reasonable and limited needs for the expansion of an existing business or businesses, without harm to the purpose, function or character of a Strategic Gap.

- 2.9.15. A brief description of each Strategic Gap is listed at Appendix 4. A robust review of each separate Strategic Gap will be undertaken by the Council, which is identified in the adopted Local Development Scheme (LDS).

Section 3 –

PRUDENT USE OF RESOURCES

3.1. Introduction

3.1.1. Many of the policies within the Plan involve the use of a resource or impact upon it, and it is important to ensure that development proposals pay due attention to the sustainability of resources. This section should, therefore, not be read in isolation from the other policies of the Plan. In providing for the development needs of the District, it is important that care is taken to conserve and protect valuable resources. The focus of PPG3 (Housing) on the re-use of previously developed land and on making the best use of existing stock recognises the value of protecting our countryside and greenfield sites from development.

3.1.2. Focusing development within the main towns, which support a greater range of facilities/services and which have better access to public transport, will help to reduce the need to travel and minimise car journeys. It is not just where we build that is important but the way in which we build. Good design that is based on adaptable building design, the re-use of materials and incorporates energy efficient methods means that resources can be conserved with the additional benefit of savings in energy consumption.

3.1.3. There are many ways in which the Council can make the best use of stock including promoting the conversion of upper floors to residential or employment use where appropriate and the re-use of empty homes as detailed in its Housing Strategy. It will also

favourably consider the use of houses for multiple occupation where proposals comply with Policy GD2.

3.1.4. Our cultural heritage and wildlife forms a valuable asset within the District adding to its diversity as well as part of the national resource. Listed buildings, for example, are a finite resource which if lost would have a significant impact both locally and nationally. Policies to cover their protection are covered in Section 4 - Protecting the Environment.

3.2. Conserving Natural Resources

RES1 AGRICULTURAL LAND PROTECTION

Development involving the significant loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a) will only be permitted if the need for the development outweighs the agricultural considerations and where either:

- a) sufficient suitable alternative land of a lower grade (grades 3b, 4, and 5) is either unavailable or significantly less sustainable; or
- b) available lower grade land has an environmental value recognised by a wildlife, landscape, historic or archaeological designation.

3.2.1. National planning guidance states that Local Planning Authorities should assess the opportunities for developing brownfield sites first, before greenfield. However if the development of agricultural land is unavoidable, then PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) requires that poorer quality land (i.e. grades 3b, 4 and 5 Agricultural Land Classification) is used in preference to that of higher-quality. The latter is referred to as the best and most versatile agricultural land that should be protected as a national resource.

3.2.2. The best and most versatile agricultural land should only be developed exceptionally where the overriding need for the development

outweighs the agricultural considerations and where there is a lack of suitable lower-quality land; the use of lower grade land is outweighed by sustainability considerations; or the lower-quality land has an environmental value recognised by a designation, for example: Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

RES2 RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES

Proposals for renewable energy schemes will be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal would contribute nationally or locally to energy needs and where it would not have an adverse impact on the local environment.

Proposals will be required to demonstrate, through careful location, siting, layout and design, that any adverse impacts have been assessed and can be addressed through an approved programme of mitigation measures.

3.2.3. PPS22 (Renewable Energy) sets out the Government's policy on developing renewable energy sources where they are both economically attractive and environmentally acceptable. The term renewable energy is used to cover those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – energy from the sun, the wind, the oceans, and the fall of water.

3.2.4. The Government's target is to meet 20% of UK electricity requirements using renewable energy by 2020, subject to the costs on consumers being acceptable (The Energy Challenge, 2006). The increased use of renewable energy is generally supported as a means of increasing the diversity and security of supply and of reducing harmful emissions to the environment. Renewable energy schemes can also play a role in developing regeneration and diversification schemes. There are a number of potential sources of

renewable energy including:

- solar;
- bio gas;
- energy crops; and
- wind power.

3.2.5. Other developing sources include photovoltaics, which is the conversion of light into electrical energy. The incineration of waste from energy recovery is not considered to be a form of renewable energy as it does not occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment.

3.2.6. Renewable energy generation often requires large structures to collect and harness the energy and since most sites proposed would usually be in rural areas, they will almost always have some local environmental effects. The wider environmental benefits associated with such schemes will be carefully weighed against the continued commitment to protect the environment. Proposals within or adjacent to the Cotswolds AONB will be subject to careful scrutiny due to the character and quality of the landscape, and in the Green Belt no development will be permitted that would be likely to adversely effect its purpose.

3.2.7. Where the use of solar panels by householders requires planning permission, applications associated with listed buildings or those within a Conservation Area will not be permitted where they would have an adverse impact on the character or setting. This is in keeping with policies set out under Protecting the Environment.

3.2.8. The growing of energy crops is an agricultural or forestry practice and does not need planning permission. However, permission will be required for any buildings or plant machinery associated with the activity. Where possible, these should be accommodated through the conversion of an existing building or where this is not possible, any new

building should be in keeping with the area and should not detract from the character of the landscape.

b) how the potential pollution from waste is minimised and unavoidable waste disposed of, so as to avoid or minimise adverse environmental effects.

3.2.9. Wind turbines will be permitted where their scale, siting or cumulative effect would not have an adverse impact on the quality of the area. Proposed developments should be sited in sympathy with existing landscape features such as hedges and roads, and with contours. Where permission for a wind turbine(s) is granted, future proposals for development in the vicinity of the turbine(s) will not be permitted where it would impair the turbine's performance.

3.2.12. Worcestershire County Council is seeking to ensure that the management of waste in the County conforms to the principles set out in the Government's 'Waste Strategy 2000' and PPG10 (Planning and Waste Management). The aim is to work towards sustainable waste management through a waste hierarchy based on:

3.2.10. In assessing new proposals, applicants will be required to illustrate the visual impact of the proposed development on the landscape, including the impact on the existing skyline, landform and characteristics, and a full assessment of the impact on any neighbouring properties. Details should include the layout, number, size and height of machines, the design and colour of the proposed turbines and any on-site buildings, the proposed access and the level of traffic movements generated during construction and following installation. Where the Council considers that the proposal is likely to have a significant environmental impact, an Environmental Assessment will be required.

- reduction;
- re-use;
- recycling, composting or energy recovery; and
- incineration without energy recovery or landfill (disposal, only to be done if none of the above are appropriate).

3.2.11. A condition will be attached to all permissions requiring any structures to be removed and the site restored following permanent de-commissioning of the turbine.

3.2.13. The construction of new development and other building operations, and its subsequent occupation and demolition or removal can have a significant impact on the use of finite resources and materials. For example, when existing buildings are demolished for redevelopment, this not only produces waste but disregards past investment of materials and energy in the site. Developers will, therefore, be required to demonstrate how waste issues generated through construction, occupation and demolition of existing buildings has been addressed with the overall aim of minimising waste by:

- site selection and the design of development, which minimises the need for excavation;
- utilising construction methods, which minimise the use of raw materials and maximise the use of secondary aggregates, recyclable and recycled materials, where

RES3 MINIMISING WASTE

Detailed or reserved matters applications for new development, building or other operations will be required to demonstrate:

a) how waste and waste materials generated by the development and during its construction are to be minimised, re-used, reclaimed or recycled; and

feasible on site;

- incorporating waste material into the design; and
- maximising the re-use of existing buildings and promoting designs that lend themselves to re-use.

3.2.14. Practices such as energy efficiency, recycling and the use of sustainable materials and products are, in addition, important mechanisms for making better use of resources and materials and should be addressed as part of the construction process in accordance with the design principles set out at Policy SUR1.

RES4 CONSERVING WATER RESOURCES

Development proposals that increase the requirement for water will only be permitted where adequate resources exist or can be provided without detriment to the quality or quantity of existing water and the wider environment.

3.2.15. The supply of water to new developments is becoming increasingly difficult. In delivering sustainable development it is necessary to have regard to the provision of essential infrastructure, which includes water supply in-line with the principles set out in PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) at para. 27. This will ensure that new demands can be met without detriment to the environment or to the supplies of existing customers. The Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water Ltd will be consulted on all major developments in this regard.

3.3. Making the Best Use of Land and Buildings

RES5 HOUSING DENSITY

New housing development that accords with other policies in the Plan will normally be expected to achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per ha (dph) (net). Lower densities

will not normally be permitted, and will need special justification in terms of the character of the local environment.

In towns and villages densities generally should fall within the range of 30-50 dph. In town centres and other locations with good public transport accessibility, densities of around 70 dph should be achieved. In all cases higher densities will be considered where appropriate.

All proposals should be so designed as to incorporate suitable outdoor amenity space, and to have no unduly adverse impact on the character of the area, or on neighbours' residential amenity.

3.3.1. PPG3 advocates making the best use of our housing land and encourages higher densities than previously considered. The highest possible densities will, therefore, be sought for the dwelling mix that is appropriate for sites, provided there is no adverse impact on either the character of the area or the amenities that nearby residential occupiers would reasonably be expected to enjoy. Design solutions will need to comply with Policy SUR1. Development proposals will also need to provide adequate garden areas or, where appropriate, high quality shared open space. The density levels proposed are in accordance with the WCSP Policy D9.

RES6 CONVERSION OF UPPER FLOORS

The conversion for residential and/or B1 use of the upper floors of commercial premises in the towns will be permitted, subject to the requirements of Policy GD2 (General Development Control).

3.3.2. Floor space above shops in the market towns offers potential for meeting some of the District's housing need. This initiative is generally supported and such development will be encouraged provided that the development is of a high standard of design and can be integrated physically and visually into its

surroundings. Where appropriate, requirements for car parking provision will be relaxed.

- 3.3.3. This Policy will not apply in areas of high flood risk (Policy ENV17).

RES7 CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS OUTSIDE DEFINED DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES TO NON-RESIDENTIAL USES

A proposal for the conversion of an existing building (or buildings) outside defined development boundaries for non-residential and/or mixed uses will be permitted, providing:

- a) the new use and scale of development are appropriate to the location;
- b) the building is of permanent and substantial construction and is capable of conversion without major rebuilding or extension, and without detriment to its historic character; and
- c) it does not lead to a dispersal of activity which would have an adverse impact on the local economy or the vitality of nearby towns or villages;
- d) adequate access, servicing, amenity areas and parking are provided within the curtilage of the application site, and without detriment to the building or its rural setting; and
- e) the proposed use would not generate any significant increase of HGV traffic on minor and/or unsuitable roads.

- 3.3.4. The emphasis of PPS7 with regard to the conversion and adaptation of rural buildings is that in the first instance they should be considered for employment uses to aid the local economy and suggests that commercial, industrial or recreational uses may be appropriate. This adaptation can help to reduce the demand for new buildings in the countryside and encourage new enterprises and jobs in rural areas.

- 3.3.5. The conversion of buildings to new uses requires sensitive treatment. One of the aims of adaptation is to preserve evidence of previous social and cultural lifestyles. New uses should be accommodated into the building in such a way as to preserve its internal and external character; this is especially so with former agricultural buildings and barns. Many features of modern adaptation are alien to the building's character and should be avoided. The range of alien features includes dormer windows, roof lights, steel flues, excessive new openings, flush fitting glazed infill screens, excessive use of internal partitions and floors, fireplaces and satellite antennas.

- 3.3.6. In all cases, the proposal should be aesthetically and environmentally acceptable, should not cause demonstrable harm in amenity or road safety terms and should be of a form, bulk and general design in keeping with the surroundings to minimise the impact upon the open countryside. The conversion of rural buildings in the countryside will be expected to comprise a detailed building survey and report of the structural condition of the building(s), and the proposed method of conversion and alteration. In exceptional cases, a condition may be imposed to remove permitted development rights, if the character of the building(s) concerned or its setting justifies this.

- 3.3.7. The conversion of buildings in the open countryside will be subject to careful scrutiny due to the impact on the landscape and the potential for increasing traffic movements. In determining applications, the Council will assess the nature of the local road system. Where a site is served by poor access or single-track lanes, which are incapable of being improved without adversely affecting the landscape or local environment, re-use for employment uses may not be considered suitable. In such cases the applicant will be required to

demonstrate that the benefits to the local economy arising from the conversion have been weighed against the environmental impact of the proposal. Traffic generation arising from the proposal will be carefully assessed and applications resulting in an unacceptable level of HGV or other vehicle movements on unsuitable roads will not be permitted in accordance with WCSP Policy D29.

- 3.3.8. For applications involving retail use, there will be a requirement for the applicant to demonstrate that the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the viability and vitality of nearby towns and villages. The provision of tourist accommodation can make a limited contribution to the rural economy and may be acceptable where commercial or community uses are not possible and the design and layout is acceptable in terms of its effects on the building and its setting in the landscape. Such accommodation will be subject to occupancy restrictions.
- 3.3.9. The Council acknowledges the increasing pressure to convert modern purpose-built farm buildings. However, modern buildings of pre-fabricated construction, which are reasonably capable of being dismantled or occupy a prominent isolated location, will be subject to careful scrutiny.
- 3.3.10. To ensure that the character and appearance of the countryside is preserved and protected, the Council will require evidence to demonstrate that the building is structurally sound enough for conversion without the need for subsequent rebuilding. This will usually take the form of survey drawings of the existing building at 1:50 scale, together with a structural engineer's report.
- 3.3.11. In determining proposals to convert a building erected under agricultural permitted development rights, account will be taken of the extent to which the

building has been used for its original purpose. Where a proposal involves the re-use or conversion of agricultural buildings, permitted development rights may be withdrawn for new farm buildings on the relevant part of that particular agricultural unit or holding, to control the proliferation of such buildings and safeguard the landscape.

- 3.3.12. The Council will also apply the use of conditions in appropriate circumstances:
- a) Proposals for small workshops, commercial or industrial use may be subject to conditions limiting the hours of working and/or types of delivery vehicle, where these operations may affect the amenities of neighbouring properties;
 - b) Proposals for retail will be subject to a condition restricting sales to goods that are produced on-site; and
 - c) Proposals for holiday accommodation will be subject to a condition limiting occupancy.
- 3.3.13. Proposals for expansion of employment uses will be assessed under Policy ECON2.
- 3.3.14. It is the Council's intention to support this Policy with a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will set out in detail the design requirements of conversions.

RES8 CONVERSION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS OUTSIDE DEFINED DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES TO RESIDENTIAL USE

A proposal for the conversion of an existing building (or buildings) outside defined development boundaries for residential use will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated:

- a) that all reasonable efforts to secure an employment, community or recreational use for the building have been

unsuccessful; and

b) it would either meet a specific identified local housing need (for example essential worker accommodation or affordable housing), and would obviate the need for a new dwelling outside the development boundary, or a residential conversion would form a subordinate part of a scheme for business re-use; and

c) through the submission of evidence, with a planning application for residential conversion, that the above priorities after having been fully explored are found to have been unsuccessful.

In all cases, proposals should meet the following three additional criteria:

d) reasonable accessibility to service facilities, including health centres, schools and shops, by means other than private vehicle;

e) the building being of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without major rebuilding or extension, and without detriment to its character or appearance; and

f) the ability to provide a residential curtilage and any associated domestic features, without detriment to the building or its rural setting.

conversion.

3.3.16 Conversion to employment uses is, therefore, the preferred use. The purpose of Policy RES8 is to allow residential use only where it can be demonstrated that an employment use is not appropriate in terms of complying with Policy RES7 or where a residential proposal complies with criteria a) – f) above.

3.3.17 Where a residential conversion is permitted as part of a business use, it will be subject to the following conditions:

a) all work associated with the business should be completed prior to the dwelling being occupied; and

b) the occupation of the dwelling will be tied to the business use.

3.3.18 In support of an application for residential use, applicants will be expected to provide evidence that the building concerned has been actively marketed at a realistic price – for commercial or recreational use for a minimum of 12 months before a proposal for residential use will be considered. A copy of the sales particulars and details of the advertising should be submitted as part of any application together with records of any enquiries relating to the property. Evidence will be sought from the Council's Regeneration Team on the demand for employment accommodation, appropriate uses and Local Labour Markets to inform policy decisions. These guidelines also apply to renewals of existing planning permissions for conversions to residential use when the permission has lapsed or is being renewed.

3.3.19 Notwithstanding that the building may be listed and subject to listed building consent for further alterations etc. any permission for conversion of a rural building will incorporate a condition removing all Permitted Development Rights. This will ensure that some control can be exercised over further

3.3.15 PPS7 reiterates the previous presumption in favour of non-residential conversions, without precluding residential use in all circumstances. However, residential conversions may have a part to play in meeting identified needs through a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) survey or similar for new market or affordable housing need. Notwithstanding this, conversions of rural buildings for residential use are unlikely to contribute to the local economy and the conversion is often detrimental to the fabric and character of the building. The internal subdivision to form bedrooms and living areas, and new doors and windows and other features in prominent elevations are frequently out of scale and character with their original simple design and volume in a barn

minor alterations, extensions and, in some cases, permanent outbuildings that may affect the character or appearance of the building or the surrounding countryside.

- 3.3.20 The Council will support this Policy with a SPD that sets out in detail further policy guidance and design requirements relating to conversions.

RES9 REPLACEMENT BUILDINGS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OUTSIDE DEFINED DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES

Outside defined development boundaries, the replacement of existing buildings will be permitted where:

- a) the scheme would replace an incongruous building with one of better design, more in keeping with its surroundings and the rural landscape;
- b) replacement would be preferable in terms of design and sustainability to conversion and/or repair and extension;
- c) the replacement would be on much the same site as the existing building, and of a similar size, scale and footprint, unless variations are demonstrably preferable for reasons of site planning or design;
- d) the scheme would not involve the open storage of goods, containers or waste materials; and
- e) the existing building is not a caravan, mobile home, or other temporary structure, or subject to a temporary planning permission.

- 3.3.21. Whilst national policy generally restricts new development in the countryside, PPS7 allows for the replacement of suitably located, existing buildings of permanent design and construction (para. 19), particularly for economic development purposes. Generally, it is preferred that existing buildings are re-used. However, PPS7 allows for replacement buildings if they will provide a more acceptable and sustainable development, more in

keeping with their surroundings and landscape, than the repair, conversion or extension of the existing building.

The replacement should be in the same position as the existing building, and of comparable size, scale and footprint, unless it can be demonstrated that alternatives are more appropriate in planning or design terms.

This policy only applies to buildings with established use rights or specific permanent planning permission. It does not apply to any of the instances referred to in criteria e) above.

- 3.3.22. In order to prevent dwellings from being extended disproportionately, a condition may be imposed removing the permitted development rights normally available to extend dwellings.

- 3.3.23. Where a building has been erected as permitted development, the replacement building would require to be acceptable in planning terms in its own right, subject to the imposition of any reasonable conditions.

- 3.3.24. Where a scheme is considered reasonable the Council will be justified in ensuring there is no open storage of goods, containers, waste materials or finished products by way of condition or legal agreement.

- 3.3.25. Proposals for the replacement of non-residential buildings with residential development will be treated as new housing development in accordance with other relevant Plan Policies, PPG3 and PPS7.

Section 4 –

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

4.1. Introduction

4.1.1. The first part of this section contains policies that seek to protect and enhance the environmental quality of the District. The District contains a number of environmental assets that contribute to the quality of its environment. These include its landscapes, its range of habitat types, which sustain a wealth of biodiversity (the range of plant and animal life) and its cultural assets such as historic buildings, features and landscapes. The quality and diversity of these assets contribute enormously to the quality of the District's environment and to the quality of life of residents. They also help to attract businesses to this area, which provides economic opportunities. Policies in the Plan seek to protect and enhance these assets not only for their own sake and for the benefit of future generations but also for the contribution they make to the social and economic well-being of the area.

4.1.2. Whilst many of these assets are of outstanding quality – reflected by the range of international and national designations applied to important examples of landscape, habitats, species and buildings – the District also contains a wealth of environmental assets which are more common-place but which, nevertheless, contribute to its environmental quality. In their entirety these assets amount to a valuable stock of environmental resources in the District. Policies in the Plan aim to ensure that there is no overall loss of these resources by protecting those

which are irreplaceable and by ensuring that any loss of wider resources is compensated.

4.1.3. The second half of the section addresses wider issues of environmental quality. It contains policies that not only address the environmental impact of pollution but also ensure the avoidance of hazards.

4.2. Protecting Existing Assets

ENV1 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Proposals for development must demonstrate that they are informed by, and sympathetic to, landscape character. Proposals will be required to safeguard, restore or enhance the character of the natural and built environment in which they are proposed.

Proposals for development must demonstrate that they:

- a) are appropriate to, and integrate with, the landscape character of the area;
- b) proposals will be required to safeguard, restore or enhance the character of the natural and built environment in which they are proposed; and
- c) relate to the sensitivity of the particular landscape and the wider context, to accommodate change.

Development proposals that would adversely affect the landscape character of an area will not normally be allowed.

4.2.1. The landscape of the District contributes immensely to the quality of its environment and is integral to the quality of life of residents and the area's economy. It is important that it is protected and enhanced and that development proposals do not undermine its quality.

4.2.2. Traditionally, and outside the nationally protected landscapes, Local Plans have sought to protect other areas of landscape which are considered to be of scenic quality or value. The previous Local Plan identified a Cotswolds Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) to

the south of the District and a Special Landscape Area (SLA) at Droitwich Spa on this basis. However, it is increasingly recognised that it is a combination of elements that contribute to the character of a landscape, its scenic quality and appearance, diversity and distinctiveness. The character of the landscape is derived from 'natural' factors – its geology, geographic location and the characteristic vegetation and habitat types it sustains, coupled with human intervention and cultural influences over time. These factors generate a number of elements and need to be considered if development is to be sensitively accommodated without adverse effect on the character of the landscape or if development is to contribute to an enhancement of landscape character by improving degraded elements. They include:

- landscape elements that contribute to local distinctiveness – habitat types, building materials and design;
- historic and cultural elements, for example, settlement, field or transportation patterns, walls, landmarks, open spaces, parks, gardens and orchards;
- levels of activity, tranquillity and day/night-time appearance;
- the condition of landscape elements; and
- views into and out of the landscape.

4.2.3. Landscape Character Assessments and Historic Landscape Character Assessments will be used as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) to inform the decision making process. The Cotswolds AGLV and the Droitwich SLA are identified on the Proposals Map and will be considered for development control purposes as part of Policy ENV1. As areas of scenic value they will be integrated into Landscape Character Assessments as they are compiled.

ENV2 COTSWOLDS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)

Development within or affecting the setting of the AONB that would harm the natural beauty of the landscape will not be permitted. Agricultural, forestry or small-scale development necessary for the social or economic well-being of the AONB will be permitted where it will conserve or enhance the character, appearance and special qualities of the landscape.

Proposals for major development within or impacting upon the AONB will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there is an overriding national need for the proposal in that location and that no other alternative site to accommodate the development is available.

4.2.4. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are areas of naturally important landscapes designated under the same legislation as National Parks, with the primary legislative objective being the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 states that AONB have the same status as National Parks with regard to this primary aim.

4.2.5. The Cotswolds AONB is the largest in England and it straddles the administrative areas of 17 Local Authorities including part of south-east Wychavon along the Cotswold Escarpment and Bredon Hill.

4.2.6. The landscape of the Cotswolds is distinct and scenically attractive. The character of the landscape owes much to the geology and landform of the area together with the variety of vegetation and habitat types it sustains. Natural change and processes, together with human intervention and management, produce the diversity of landscape types ranging from wooded valleys to rolling hills to river valleys to farmed land, with villages scattered throughout, all of which contribute to the special character of the Cotswolds AONB.

- 4.2.7. Local Authorities and other partners have adopted an advisory Management Strategy. The Cotswolds AONB Partnership, on behalf of Local Authorities and other parties, has prepared a Management Plan (2004) as required by the CROW Act 2000, to provide a co-ordinated and strategic approach to its management in order to conserve the natural beauty of the landscape. The Management Plan is a statutory document and the aims and objectives are the starting point from which policies and projects relating to the use and management of land are developed. This is currently under review, to be completed by April 2008.
- 4.2.8. The planning system is one important way in which the objectives of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan can be implemented. This Policy, read in conjunction with others in the Local Plan, aims to ensure that in guiding and controlling development (such as new building and the use of land and buildings), planning decisions are made that do not adversely affect, but conserve and where appropriate enhance the character, special qualities and appearance of the Cotswolds AONB. The presence of the designation does not negate many forms of development in the area. Indeed, it is vital that planning decisions are made with regard to the economic and social well-being and needs of communities within the Cotswolds AONB. The challenge is to accommodate development to meet the economic and social needs of local communities whilst conserving and enhancing the landscape – which is itself a fundamental economic, social and environmental resource.
- 4.2.9. Proposals for development within the Cotswolds AONB or for affecting its setting will be determined, therefore, against any Policy in the Plan that is specific to the type of development proposed including Policy GD1 and Policy GD2, together with this Policy.
- 4.2.10. The siting of major development within the Cotswolds AONB will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Such development may include, for example, waste disposal facilities, mineral working, major road development or generally major development proposals that are more national than local in character. Proposals for such development will be subject to rigorous examination because of the serious impact they can have on the landscape and will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that a proposal is in the national interest and cannot be accommodated outside the area.
- 4.2.11. The ability to undertake certain forms of development without the need for planning permission (Permitted Development) is within the Cotswolds AONB. However, if it is considered that the special qualities of the landscape are being adversely affected and require additional protection from types of permitted development, the Council will use its powers under Article 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order (1995) to withdraw certain specified classes of Permitted Development. These may include, for example, Agricultural or Residential Permitted Development Rights.

ENV3 SITES OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

Proposals for development that may affect a designated or candidate Special Area of Conservation will be subject to the most rigorous examination. Development that would have an adverse effect or result in an unacceptable risk of an adverse effect on the integrity of a site will not be permitted unless:

- a) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development; and
- b) the Council is satisfied that there are no reasonable alternative sites or solutions to accommodate the development proposed.

Where a proposed location hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or priority species, development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site will not be

permitted unless it can be demonstrated to be necessary for reasons of human health or public safety or have beneficial consequences of primary importance for nature conservation.

Where development satisfies the above tests, appropriate compensatory measures will be required as part of the granting of planning permission.

- 4.2.12. European Union (EU) legislation affords international protection to the most important nature conservation sites throughout Europe. Its aim is to maintain a coherent network of sites known as Natura 2000 that are critical to the biodiversity of Europe as a whole. Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are those which host internationally important populations of rare breeding or migratory birds. Ramsar Sites are Wetlands of International Importance and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and are identified for the importance of their flora and fauna, some of which contain species identified in the legislation as having “priority” status. The sites are “designated” under the EU Birds Directive, the Ramsar Convention and the Habitats Directive, respectively.
- 4.2.13. At present, the District contains one site of international importance, Bredon Hill, which has the status of a SAC because of its importance for a species of beetle – the violet click beetle. It is possible that the number of internationally important sites may increase during the Plan period.
- 4.2.14. The planning implications for the control of development affecting international sites are translated from EU legislation into national legislation (The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994) and are reaffirmed in PPS9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation). These documents make it clear that, for the purposes of planning control, sites which are not fully “classified” or “designated” by the EU, such as

Bredon Hill¹, but which have “proposed” or “candidate” status awaiting designation should be considered in the same way as if they had already been designated.

- 4.2.15. In accordance with PPS9 and the regulations, it is considered that development (other than that which is proven to be necessary for the management of the site for nature conservation purposes) which would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a site and which could not be overcome by the use of planning conditions or a legal agreement, should be permitted only in the most exceptional circumstances of overriding national need. As the Bredon Hill SAC does not host any species identified as having “priority” status under the regulations; development proposals affecting this site will be considered against this test.
- 4.2.16. Developers will, therefore, usually be required to provide an appropriate assessment of the implications of their proposals to accompany applications and usually to a specification agreed by English Nature. It should be noted that, additionally, some specific projects may also require the preparation of an Environmental Statement under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999. This will assist the decision making process. Indeed, to ensure the appropriate protection of sites, the Council will not grant planning permission for development unless the full impact of the scheme can be determined, thus a precautionary approach will be used in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.2.17. As natural habitats are often fragile and vulnerable to indirect as well as direct damage, the same consideration will be given to proposals outside a site that could

¹ Bredon Hill was designated as a SAC in 2006

result in indirect damage. Similarly, damage to the integrity of a site can occur as a result of the effects of proposals in conjunction with other development or operations. The cumulative effects on a site will be another consideration in determining proposals.

to accommodate the development proposed.

Where development is permitted, damage will be required to be kept to an absolute minimum and where habitat is destroyed, appropriate compensatory measures will be required.

- 4.2.18. Where development satisfies the tests outlined above, conditions will be imposed on any planning permission to keep damage to a minimum and a planning agreement will be sought to secure appropriate compensatory measures prior to the granting of permission.
- 4.2.19. It should be noted that a number of types of development under planning legislation are granted permission without the need for the submission of a planning application (permitted development). The Habitats Regulations prevent such permitted development rights where a development is likely to cause damage to a site of international importance. The Council will consult with English Nature to ascertain whether a planning application is required that would need to follow the procedures outlined above. Developers are advised to consult English Nature prior to undertaking such work.

4.2.20. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are designated by English Nature under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They are areas of special interest that are nationally or in some cases internationally important in terms of ecological or geological features. The locations of SSSI in the District are indicated on the Proposals Map.

4.2.21. Once a site is designated an SSSI, owners and occupiers are legally required to notify English Nature of any operation that may be damaging to the site. Likewise, it is a statutory requirement that the Council consults English Nature on any planning applications that may affect the integrity of a site.

4.2.22. The Government's policy on the protection of SSSI is set out in PPS9, which clearly states that, as a set of nationally important sites, they should be protected.

4.2.23. Planning proposals for development that are likely to affect a site will be subject to special scrutiny. As many ecological habitats are fragile, consideration will be given to proposals that could lead to indirect damage either individually or cumulatively as well as proposals within a site that may result in direct damage. To ensure appropriate protection of sites, the Council will not grant planning permission for development unless the full impact of the scheme can be determined, thus a precautionary approach will be used in the determination of applications.

4.2.24. In considering proposals, the Council, in consultation with English Nature, will seek to establish whether a

ENV4 SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

Proposals for development likely to affect a designated or proposed Site of Special Scientific Interest will be subject to most rigorous examination. Development which would have an Adverse impact or which would result in an unacceptable risk of an adverse effect on the integrity of a site will not be permitted unless:

- a) the reasons for the development outweigh the impact on the importance of the site and the need to safeguard the nature conservation value of the national network of such sites; and
- b) the Council is satisfied that there are no reasonable alternative sites or solutions

proposal is acceptable and could be implemented without damage to the site or whether a scheme can be modified in order to prevent damage. Conditions will be used or planning agreements sought where this can be achieved. Applicants will be required to submit full details of proposed works and in some cases may be required to provide an independent assessment of the effects of proposals to assist the decision making process. It should be noted that this could be in addition to any requirement to produce an Environmental Statement under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999.

4.2.25. Planning permission will not be granted for schemes that would lead to damage of a site unless it can be demonstrated that the reasons for a proposal outweigh the national importance of the site. Such reasons would be for development that is considered to be in the national interest. Additionally, developers will need to demonstrate that there is no reasonable alternative site or solution to accommodate the development without damage and that the proposal is the least damaging means of accommodating the development.

4.2.26. The Council will use conditions or will seek planning agreements to ensure that damage/disturbance is kept to an absolute minimum. In addition, where habitat is destroyed, the Council will, in appropriate cases, require compensatory measures to secure an equivalent area of suitable habitat type(s) adjacent to or in close proximity to the site, or secure improved management of nearby sites.

ENV5 SITES OF REGIONAL OR LOCAL WILDLIFE IMPORTANCE

Development proposals which would have an adverse effect or which would result in an unacceptable risk of an adverse effect on a Local Nature Reserve, Special Wildlife Site or

a Site of Wildlife Importance (subject to a Section 39 Agreement under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a) the reasons for the development outweigh the intrinsic value of the site and the need to safeguard the network of such sites;
- b) there are no reasonable alternative sites or solutions to accommodate the development proposed; and
- c) appropriate compensatory habitat provision or management is provided.

4.2.27. There are a range of other sites which are considered to be of substantive nature conservation value and which contribute significantly to biodiversity in the District. They include Local Nature Reserves, designated by Local Authorities, and a number of non-statutory sites known as Special Wildlife Sites identified by Worcestershire Wildlife Trust.

4.2.28. Sites identified and covered by this Policy include a range of semi-natural habitats incorporating species and habitats that are regionally/locally significant, scarce or rare. They are important not only in their own right but also for their contribution in providing links to statutorily protected sites.

4.2.29. The Council will require planning applications to be accompanied by sufficient information to determine the extent of any impact on the site. The impact of indirect and cumulative actions as well as direct effects of a proposal will be considered. Planning permission will only be granted for proposals that can be accommodated without an adverse effect on a site and will be subject to planning conditions and Section 106 Agreements where appropriate. Developers should note that the translocation of habitat is not considered acceptable.

4.2.30. Development which would damage or destroy such sites will only be

permitted where it can be demonstrated that for national or local, social or economic reasons the development outweighs the nature conservation value of the site and the need to maintain a network of such sites and that there are no alternative sites or solutions to accommodate the development proposed. Additionally, to ensure no overall loss of biodiversity in the District resulting from development, developers will be required to provide compensatory habitat provision or management.

ENV6 PROTECTED SPECIES

Development proposals which would have an adverse effect or which would result in an unacceptable risk of an adverse effect on any species protected by National Legislation will not be permitted unless:

- a) there are over-riding reasons for the development that are in the public interest and that outweigh the protected status of the species; and
- b) the Council is satisfied that there are no reasonable alternative sites or solutions to accommodate the development proposed; and, where appropriate
- c) measures have been taken to reduce disturbance to the species to a minimum, and included to facilitate the survival of individual members of the species.

Development proposals which would have an adverse effect on any species protected by European Legislation will only be permitted where, in addition to a), b) and c) above, it can be demonstrated that the impact of the proposal is not detrimental to the maintenance of the species' population at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.

- 4.2.31. There are a number of rare or threatened species that are protected by legislation. Rare or threatened species in Europe are listed in the EU Habitats Directive and Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds enacted into UK law by the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994, whilst nationally, rare or

threatened species are identified in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The presence of such species is a material consideration in determining proposals for development. A number of these species occur within the District and developers should be aware that whilst they can occur in designated sites of importance, they do occur elsewhere. This Policy will also be applied to those species listed in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW) and protected under the National Biodiversity Action Plan.

- 4.2.32. The Council considers it inappropriate to permit development that would lead to the needless destruction of any species protected by law. It will consult closely with English Nature on proposals that are likely to have an impact on any protected species. Applicants will be expected to provide full details of a scheme that may, in some cases, include the provision of an assessment to identify the extent of any impact. This will determine whether a proposal can be accommodated and its effects mitigated with the use of conditions or Section 106 Agreements, without an adverse effect on the species in situ or whether a scheme will result in an adverse impact. Given the importance of ensuring the needs to safeguard protected species, the Council will adopt a precautionary approach in its decision making. Applications that are not accompanied by information that establishes the full extent of any impact will be refused. The Policy will be applied to development that has indirect, as well as direct, impact on a species that includes the habitat on which it is dependent. Assessment information will only be considered if surveys are undertaken at the correct time of year for the species concerned.

- 4.2.33. Where it is evident that a scheme could not proceed without an adverse effect on the species, the Council will only permit proposals where it can be demonstrated that there are overriding

reasons for the development which are in the public interest (such as public health, safety or other social or economic reasons) and where it can be demonstrated that there are no reasonable alternative sites or solutions to accommodate the development proposed. In addition, applicants will be required to demonstrate that a chosen scheme is one which reduces disturbance to an absolute minimum and that, where it is possible and appropriate, mitigation measures are included to ensure the survival of the species to sustain the current population in the longer term.

4.2.34. It should be noted that where the species concerned is one that is protected by European Legislation, in addition to the above tests, proposals will, in the first instance, be determined against the extent to which they are detrimental to the maintenance of the population at a favourable conservation status. The Council will be guided by advice from English Nature on this matter.

4.2.35. Developers should be aware that the translocation of a species is not considered an appropriate mitigation measure and that this will only be considered in the most exceptional circumstances.

4.2.36. Applicants are advised to contact English Nature or local wildlife groups where there is reasonable evidence of the presence of a protected species on a site. These bodies can provide invaluable information on the protection of species, which, if incorporated in the early stages of a proposal, can assist the decision making process.

4.2.37. It should also be noted that any requirement for planning permission will be in addition to any site licence that may be required from the appropriate authority before works can commence.

ENV7 PROTECTION OF WIDER BIODIVERSITY

Development proposals will be required to retain important ecological features, including natural habitat and features of nature conservation value in situ. Proposals which would have an adverse impact on the integrity of other habitats, species and features will only be permitted where:

- a) the reasons for the proposal outweigh the impact on the intrinsic nature conservation value of the habitat, species or feature;
- b) the Council is satisfied that there are no reasonable alternative sites or solutions to accommodate the development proposed; and
- c) compensatory habitat provision or management is provided in appropriate circumstances. Developers will be required to prepare an ecological assessment on all proposals likely to affect important ecological sites.

Developers will be required to prepare a professional assessment in all proposals likely to affect sites of ecological importance.

4.2.38. The District contains a wealth of biodiversity or "variety of life". It is reflected not only in the presence of rare, threatened or important habitat and species but also in a wealth of more common habitat and species. Habitats range from, for example, woodland, unimproved and semi-improved grassland, wetlands and rivers to smaller features such as individual trees, hedgerows, verges and walls. Such habitats have their own intrinsic value and are often valued because they do support a range of more common species, the sight of which, to many people, can be as important as the protection of scientifically important sites. Additionally however, many act as wildlife corridors or stepping stones, which are essential for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species which is vital to the health of sites of designated importance.

- 4.2.39. This Policy seeks to manage the protection of levels of biodiversity by recognising the importance of habitats and features that fall outside designated sites and their value as wildlife corridors. In all cases, proposals will need to be accompanied by evidence, such as an ecological assessment, to support and justify the approach taken.
- 4.2.40. In the majority of cases development will be able to be sited in order to retain wildlife habitats, species and features. Indeed, their continued presence can help to enhance a scheme. Where this cannot be achieved and a proposal would result in destruction of a habitat or feature, the importance of the site or feature will be assessed against the reason for the proposal.
- 4.2.41. The Policy should not be interpreted as offering protection to all habitat types which is equal to that applied to designated sites. It offers flexible levels of protection to be applied by assessing the local social and economic reasons for a development against the impact it would have on the importance of these other sites and features, which can vary in terms of their scientific significance, recreatability, quantity and distribution. Habitat survey data, the District's emerging Biodiversity Action Plan and guidance from English Nature, the Biological Records Office and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust will help to inform the implementation of this Policy.
- 4.2.42. Policy SUR2 will also be used to ensure that the opportunity to increase levels of biodiversity is taken through landscaping schemes such as the provision of habitat creation in larger development. The Biodiversity Action Plan will help inform such schemes.

ENV8 PROTECTION OF HEDGEROWS, TREES AND WOODLAND

Development proposals requiring planning permission will not be permitted where they would have an adverse impact on hedgerows, trees or woodland, their setting or their wider habitat, where such features are considered to be important for their visual, historic or ecological value of the area.

Removal of hedgerows, trees or woodland will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will benefit the visual, historic or ecological value of the area. All proposals affecting trees, hedgerows or woodland will need to be accompanied by an assessment that justifies the approach taken.

- 4.2.43. Trees are an important part of Wychavon's character. They add colour, variety, screening, shade and shelter in both rural and built-up areas; they can provide a link with the past; they have an ecological value as habitat for a variety of plants and animals; and they are beneficial as carbon sinks – helping filter greenhouse gases. Developers need to consider not only the trees etc themselves, but the impact of any proposals on their immediate or wider setting, for example, the siting or removal of buildings, structures and other planting will need to be undertaken so as not to impact on their health or growth potential. Where trees etc are affected by development, the application will be accompanied by an assessment of their value and the impact of the proposals on them, which will be used in determining it.
- 4.2.44. Hedgerows, trees and woodland all have varying degrees of protection under planning legislation and the Council will seek to protect those that it considers will benefit the visual, historic or ecological value.
- 4.2.45. Development proposals need to consider the trees themselves,

together with the impact upon their immediate or wider setting. Where trees or hedgerows are affected by development, the application will need to be accompanied by an assessment of their value and the impact of the proposals on them, both during and following construction works (see BS5837: 2005 (Guide for Trees in Relation to Construction)).

- 4.2.46. The Council will use its powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999 to protect important hedgerows, trees or woodland that it considers to be threatened.

ENV9 REGIONALLY IMPORTANT GEOLOGICAL AND GEOMORPHOLOGICAL SITES

Development proposals which would affect a Regionally Important Geological and/or Geomorphological Site (RIGS) will only be permitted where the feature for which the site is important can be preserved in situ as part of the scheme. Development that would have an unacceptable effect on a RIGS will not be permitted unless:

- a) the reasons for the development outweigh the impact on the intrinsic importance of the site;
- b) the Council is satisfied that there are no reasonable alternative sites or solutions to accommodate the development proposed; and
- c) where it is possible, exposures or areas of comparable geological interest are created or made available elsewhere on the site or on a substitute site.

- 4.2.47. RIGS are non-statutory geological or geomorphological sites that are considered worthy of protection for their educational, scientific, historic or landscape importance. They are selected at a local level by representatives of groups with expertise in geology, geomorphology and conservation. They are important not only for their intrinsic, scientific

value but also as valuable educational facilities.

- 4.2.48. The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust Group has a programme for the identification of RIGS. Once sites have been identified, proposals for development that would affect them will be considered against this Policy. The Council recognises the value of RIGS and the need to protect them through the planning process. Therefore, proposals that would result in the loss of or damage to a site will only be permitted where the national or local need for a development is considered to outweigh the impact on the intrinsic value of the site. This also applies where it can be demonstrated that there are no reasonable alternative sites or solutions to accommodate the development proposed. To compensate for any loss, where it is possible to create or provide comparable areas of interest on or off the site, this will be sought as part of any permission.

ENV10 SITES OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Proposals for development affecting national, regional or locally important archaeological sites and their settings; whether scheduled or unscheduled, will only be permitted where proposals can demonstrate that the archaeological interest is capable of being preserved in situ and without damage to its setting.

If this is not merited, where the reasons for the proposal outweigh the intrinsic importance of the site/remains or the setting of the feature and there is no reasonable alternative site or solution to accommodate the development proposed, then the developer must agree to an appropriate level of investigation and recording prior to and during development and the subsequent analysis and publication of results and curation of remains.

Applications for development affecting sites where archaeological remains are likely to exist should be accompanied by an

assessment/survey to establish the nature, condition or significance of any remains prior to the determination of any planning application.

- 4.2.49. Archaeological remains are finite, irreplaceable resources. They are cultural assets that serve to help us understand our national and local heritage and identity. They are to be valued and protected not only for their educational role but for their own sake. They are, however, fragile resources that are vulnerable and can be easily destroyed. Planning control is one way of assisting their preservation. In the consideration of development proposals encouragement will be given to the sympathetic management of archaeological sites and, where appropriate, for the provision of on-site interpretation and educational activities and to the protection and management of remains.
- 4.2.50. PPG16 (Archaeology and Planning) requires that there should be a presumption in favour of protecting nationally important (scheduled or unscheduled) remains and their settings. Proposals for development in such cases will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated it can be accommodated without damage to the archaeological interest, in situ. Developers will be required to provide sufficient details of their proposals for an assessment to be made to ensure that remains are capable of being preserved in situ and without damage. In some cases this will include the provision of a full evaluation/assessment to the specification of the Council. Applications will not be determined without such information.
- 4.2.51. Consultations with Worcestershire County Archaeology Service prior to making a development proposal is advised. Where development proposals are made, it is expected that developments preserve archaeological remains in situ.

Additionally, as archaeological remains are irreplaceable, the Council does not wish to see the needless loss of other remains of regional or local significance. Proposals will be expected to preserve archaeological remains in situ. Where this cannot be achieved, protection against loss through the development control process will be assessed by considering the intrinsic importance of the remains against the national and local social and economic need for the development proposed. Remains of regional and local significance vary in terms of their historical significance and their present state of preservation. Additionally, whilst some may not be individually significant in their own right, collectively they can constitute a historically important archaeological landscape. Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is no alternative site or solution to accommodate the development.

- 4.2.52. Where loss of an archaeological resource can be justified due to an overriding need for development that cannot be sited or designed to avoid damage, the Council will require that an appropriate programme of archaeological investigation and recording is agreed prior to the granting of planning permission. Where appropriate, this may include provision for the procurement of finds, analysis and publication of results.
- 4.2.53. Scheduled Ancient Monuments are formally designated archaeological sites or monuments of national importance. There are 72 such sites in Wychavon; these are listed in Appendix 1. There are over 7100 known archaeological sites recorded on the County Sites and Monuments Record. This number is growing as knowledge increases. This information is available for public inspection at the offices of the Archaeological Services. In appropriate circumstances developers are required to consult the County Sites and Monuments Record for up-to-date information and advice before the proposals are drawn up

and may have to provide an archaeological evaluation of the site to a standard agreed by the Council to define the extent and nature of any remains. The management, understanding and enhancement of archaeological sites where relevant should be taken into account when considering development proposals. Advice will also be sought from English Heritage where appropriate.

- 4.2.54. Proposals affecting a Scheduled Ancient Monument or its setting will require Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent from English Heritage

ENV11 HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

Development proposals will only be permitted where there is no adverse effect on the appearance, character or setting of an historic park or garden of either national significance (as identified on the Proposals Map) or local importance.

- 4.2.55. Historic parks and gardens are a significant element of the District's historic and cultural heritage and, as well as their own intrinsic value as parks and gardens, they are integral to the character and appearance of the landscape in which they are located.
- 4.2.56. The most important examples of historic parks and gardens are identified by English Heritage and are listed in its national Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. The Register grades sites to reflect the importance of their historic interest in the national context. (The Grades I, II*, and II are independent of any Grade of listed building which may be associated with the park or garden.) The 'Wychavon Historic Parks and Gardens' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was published in January 2005.
- 4.2.57. Whilst there are no statutory controls over the protection of historic parks and gardens, PPG15 (Planning and Historic Environment) advises Planning Authorities to protect registered parks

and gardens through their planning functions. In addition to registered sites there are a number of other parks and gardens which contribute to the heritage of the district and the character of the landscape. They range from formal public or private farmland to cottage and farm gardens. In considering proposals for development affecting such gardens, the Authority will seek to ensure that proposals respect the contribution a garden makes to the character of the landscape and schemes will also be considered under Policy ENV1 of this Plan. An historic landscape appraisal report may be required where development affecting an historic park or garden or its setting is proposed.

- 4.2.58. In addition to registered sites there are a number of other parks and gardens which contribute to the heritage of the district and the character of the landscape. They range from formal public or private farmland to cottage and farm gardens. In considering proposals for development affecting such gardens, the Authority will seek to ensure that proposals respect the contribution a garden makes to the character of the landscape and schemes will also be considered under Policy ENV1 of this Plan. An historic landscape appraisal report may be required, where development affecting an historic park or garden or its setting is proposed.

- 4.2.59. While inappropriate development will be resisted, there may be circumstances where carefully planned developments may result in the restoration of historic landscapes through the use of conditions or planning agreements. The integrity of an historic landscape depends on coherent and consistent long-term management for the whole site, given that fragmentation of ownership can lead to long-term degradation

ENV12 CONSERVATION AREAS (GENERAL)

Proposals for development within or affecting the setting of Conservation Areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character or appearance. Development that would affect a Conservation Area will be determined having regard to the following:

- a) the siting, position, layout and landscaping of new development proposals should respect traditional street patterns, building lines, existing landscape features including trees and hedges, plot layouts and views into and out of the area;
- b) the proportions and design of new development and alterations to existing buildings should respect the context provided by adjacent buildings and the surrounding area. Building materials must be appropriate to the locality;
- c) changes of use should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area; and
- d) the development should not involve the demolition of any building or feature that makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area, unless the Council is satisfied that there is an overriding justification for the demolition proposed.

4.2.60. Conservation Areas are defined by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest', the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Local Planning Authorities designate them and planning control is an important way in which this statutory requirement can be achieved. There are 66 Conservation Areas in the District and their character and appearance varies, reflecting the diversity and distinctiveness of local cultural heritage. A schedule of Conservation Areas is contained at Appendix 2.

4.2.61. The distinctive character of an individual Conservation Area is derived from a wide range of inter-related historical and architectural elements. These include the design and mixture of historic buildings, street patterns, building lines/scale and plot layouts, the relationship between buildings and spaces, the mix of uses of land and buildings, as well as a variety of other features such as views, vistas, landmarks, open spaces, vegetation, hard landscaping and building materials, street furniture, night-time appearance and other elements. It is the combination of all of these qualities which contribute to the character and appearance of Conservation Areas. Their character, therefore, is not solely dependent of the quality of individual buildings.

4.2.62. The Council intends to undertake Conservation Area Assessments and compile design guidance for Conservation Areas during the Plan period which will review and detail the elements which contribute to the special qualities and character of individual Conservation Areas, to assist the decision making process.

4.2.63. Proposals for development will be assessed to ensure that a scheme will either preserve or enhance the character and appearance of an area. It is not the intention that new development or changes of use of land or buildings should, unduly, be prevented, but instead that schemes respect the qualities of an area. It follows that development that would not respect the qualities of an area would result in the degradation of an area's character and, therefore, will be resisted.

4.2.64. It is not the intention of the Council to stifle all efforts towards innovative design within Conservation Areas. Materials and elevation treatment will be an important aspect of modern designs and modern interpretations of traditional and locally distinctive materials and design elements will be

considered.

4.2.65. The majority of schemes within Conservation Areas will involve traditional design in those cases, close attention to traditional detailing, materials, elevational proportions and traditional building techniques will be equally as important as the broader design issues such as height, scale and position, if the special quality of a Conservation Area is not to be undermined.

4.2.66. In addition, proposals should not result in the loss or destruction of any feature which makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Changes of use in Conservation Areas will be viewed cautiously, but an application is likely to succeed if it would enhance the vitality of an area or provide for the re-use of an historic building. Proposals that would lead to traffic or environmental problems or which would be harmful to an area's character will be resisted. Within Conservation Areas, controls exist over the demolition of unlisted buildings and structures and control over works to trees.

4.2.67. The ability to undertake certain forms of minor development without the need for permission (permitted development) is not affected by Conservation Area status. Where it is considered that individual Conservation Areas require additional protection from types of minor development, the Council will consider using its powers under Article 4(2) of the General Permitted Development Order (1995) to withdraw certain specified classes of Permitted Development. Any proposals for such development will then require the submission of a planning application.

4.2.68. It is the duty of the Council to undertake periodic reviews of their Conservation Areas (Section 69(2) of the 1990 Act), to ensure that they are still of special interest. Where

subsequent developments have eroded that special interest, then boundary revision or even cancellations of Conservation Areas will be pursued separately from the Local Plan process, in accordance with para. 2.9 of PPG15.

ENV13 ALTERATIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS

Permission for the alteration, extension, conversion or change of use of listed buildings will only be granted where:

- a) it would not result in damage or loss of fabric or features of special architectural or historic interest;
- b) the character and setting of the buildings will be preserved;
- c) the individual proposal would not prejudice the future use of other parts of the building or other buildings forming an integral part of the site; and in the case of extensions, the proposal:
 - i) would be subservient to the existing building in size, material and situation; and
 - ii) would respect the character of the building in form, scale, massing, proportion, fenestration, use of materials, detailing and siting.

4.2.69. Buildings of special architectural or historic interest are known as listed buildings. They represent the best examples of the Nation's architectural and historic heritage. Buildings are listed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and are classified into Grades I, II*, and II based on the degree of interest. Wychavon contains approximately 3000 listed buildings. Once a building is listed, consent is required from the Council to demolish it or to make internal or external alterations that would affect the building's character or fabric. Indeed, it is a criminal offence to undertake such works without the written consent of the Local Planning Authority. This listing status also applies to anything fixed to a listed building. Any structure within the

curtilage that has been there since before 31 July 1948 (even if not attached to the listed building) is itself listed. This includes boundary and garden walls and gates.

4.2.70 The Council has prepared SPD to assist applicants (See Appendix 3). The 'Accessible Historic Environment' SPD sets out guidance on improving access to historic buildings and places. PPG15 states that it is an important principle that disabled people should have dignified and easy access to and within historic buildings. If treated as part of an integrated review of access for all visitors, it should normally be possible for well-designed access facilities to be installed without compromising the historic buildings special character. The chief constraint in conservation terms will rise from the design of the buildings facade or setting. Where the proposed installation of ramps, handrails or lifts would lead to unacceptably damaging alterations, other options should be explored; for example through the adaptation of a secondary entrance.

4.2.71. In seeking to protect listed buildings, the Council recognises that the best way to secure the retention and upkeep of listed buildings is to encourage their use and usefulness. Inevitably, the most appropriate and least damaging use for a listed building will be that for which it was built. Often, however, such uses are no longer either viable or required. Securing new uses will help to secure a building's future and, therefore, the Council will support in principle, the re-use of listed buildings.

4.2.72. Frequently, however, new uses may require alterations or extensions to buildings to ensure their continued use in the longer term. Similarly, whilst the uses of a majority of listed buildings are well established, this too can result in demands for changes and adaptations to buildings to reflect changing lifestyles and modern requirements.

4.2.73. Changes and alterations can cause harm to a building's character and the extent to which a listed building can accommodate demands for changes, arising from new or existing uses, varies significantly between buildings. It is dependent on the special interest of the building and the features that justify its designation, together with the effect a proposal may have on these. Therefore, whilst many listed buildings can sustain a degree of sensitive change or alteration, others may be sensitive to even small or 'minor' alterations. Proposals for changes or alterations will be considered in terms of their effect upon the character, special interest, setting and fabric of the building. The Council will resist proposals that would harm the character, special interest, setting and fabric of a building. Where changes are permitted, they should complement the historic and architectural character of the building and will be expected to be of an appropriate design, using traditional materials and appropriate building techniques.

4.2.74. New development within the setting of a listed building should be designed so as to be sympathetic to the building in terms of siting, massing scale, proportions, materials and design detailing. It should not detract from the character or setting of the building.

4.2.75. An alternative use for a listed building may also bring demands to the site of the building, or on other buildings associated with the building. While an alternative use of a listed building in itself may be able to be accommodated without harm, the new use of the space around the building may be harmful to its setting and the relationship of the building with its context. A new use for a building may also have to consider the use and future of other associated buildings within the site. A proposal for an alternative use of a building cannot be considered in isolation of the wider impact the new use may have on its setting, relationship with, and use of, associated buildings.

- 4.2.76. Works of alteration or extension of a listed building that affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, require separate Listed Building Consent under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in addition to any planning permission requirements. It is a criminal offence to execute such works without consent.

ENV14 SETTINGS OF LISTED BUILDINGS

Proposals for development will only be permitted where they would preserve the setting of a listed building.

- 4.2.77. Local Planning Authorities have a statutory responsibility to have regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building when considering development proposals. The setting of a listed building is often an essential part of its character and is not necessarily confined to land that is ancillary to it. However, it can include land and buildings that are some distance from it, especially if the gardens, ancillary buildings or hard landscaping have been laid out to complement its design or function. In the case of groups of listed buildings, the introduction of new buildings such as garages, greenhouses or summerhouses, which weaken or obscure the character of the original grouping, must be avoided.
- 4.2.78. New development within the setting of a listed building should be designed so as to be sympathetic to the building in terms of siting, massing scale, proportions, materials and design detailing. It should not detract from the character or setting of the building.

ENV15 DEMOLITION OF A LISTED BUILDING

Consent for the demolition of a listed building will not normally be granted. Exceptions will only be made where:

- a) it is clearly demonstrated that it is not

practicable to continue to use the building in its current or previous use or find another viable use for the building;

- b) demolition will not cause material harm to the structure, character or setting of any other listed building; and
- c) a proposal for redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community that would outweigh the loss resulting from the building's demolition.

Where, exceptionally, demolition of a listed building is permitted:

- a) demolition shall not take place until detailed proposals for the sites future use have been granted planning permission and a contractual obligation signed to undertake the said works; and
- b) a suitable programme has been arranged to record those features of historic interest that would be lost in the course of the demolition works.

- 4.2.79. Listed buildings are finite historic resources and once demolished are lost and cannot be replaced. Similarly, inappropriate alterations will damage a building's special interest. The presumption, therefore, is always in favour of their preservation. In exercising listed building control there is a statutory requirement on Local Planning Authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its historic interest. This reflects the importance that is attached to protecting listed buildings from unnecessary demolition and insensitive alteration.

- 4.2.80. The Council may require that an application for Listed Building Consent should include a historic evaluation of the building, to establish its special architectural or historic interest, prior to the determination of the application.

- 4.2.81. The total or substantial demolition of a listed building requires special justification, and consent will only be granted in exceptional circumstances

where it is demonstrated that the proposal is unavoidable. In considering whether a proposal is unavoidable, the Council will consider the condition of the building, the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance and the value derived from its current use. In addition, the efforts that have been made to repair the building and to continue its existing use; the adequacy of efforts to find suitable alternative uses; and the merit of an alternative proposal for the site.

4.2.82. Frequently, requests for the demolition of a listed building are not for reasons of good planning but due to neglect, failure to secure new uses or failure to incorporate them into schemes for new development. Often, demolition can be avoided through limited maintenance and repair to halt deterioration. Ideally, however, it is the re-use of a listed building that helps to ensure its survival in the longer term. It can be feasible to incorporate listed buildings within new development and this option should always be carefully considered. Therefore, the majority of listed buildings are still capable of re-use and their destruction is seldom necessary. There are a number of policies in this Plan which would support the re-use of listed buildings for a range of uses.

4.2.83. If, exceptionally, the demolition of a listed building is permitted, conditions will be used, where appropriate, to ensure that a comprehensive record of the building/site is undertaken prior to the commencement of work. Additionally, where it is appropriate and to avoid a site being left vacant indefinitely, a signed contract for the redevelopment of the site will be required and planning permission for a redevelopment scheme must have been granted before demolition is allowed to take place.

ENV16 ENABLING DEVELOPMENT

Development proposals defined as Enabling Development will be considered only where all the following criteria are met:

- a) the development would not materially detract from the archaeological, architectural, historic or landscape, nature conservation interest of the site or its setting;
- b) it has been demonstrated clearly that all other potential options have been fully evaluated;
- c) the proposal avoids detrimental fragmentation of the management of the site;
- d) the enabling development will secure the long-term future of the site;
- e) the justification for the development arises from the inherent needs of the heritage asset, rather than the circumstances of the present owner or the purchase price paid;
- f) sufficient financial assistance is not available from any other source;
- g) it is demonstrated clearly that the amount of enabling development is the minimum necessary to secure the long-term future at the site; and
- h) the value to the community of the resulting development and the enhanced historic interest of the site clearly outweigh the disadvantages of providing the enabling development.

4.2.84. Enabling development is defined by English Heritage in their Policy statement 'Enabling Development and the Conservation of the Heritage Asset' (2001). This is development that is contrary to established planning policy (national or local), but which is permitted in exceptional circumstances because it brings public benefits that have been demonstrated clearly to outweigh the harm that would be caused. Where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated, such development can be regarded as a useful planning tool through which the community may be able to secure the future of an important listed building, Registered Garden or Scheduled Ancient Monument that is neglected, dilapidated or otherwise,

perceived to be at risk. It can also assist in regeneration strategies.

4.2.85. Many applications affect historic buildings and places and should, subject to conforming to other planning policies, either enhance or preserve their integrity. Occasionally, however, enabling development is proposed which, whilst it would achieve the preservation or secure the future of an historic structure or landscape, would normally be rejected as contrary to other national or local planning policies. Very special circumstances must, therefore, exist in order to justify why development, which would otherwise be regarded as inappropriate, may be permitted. The objective of such applications is to provide funds for repairs that cannot be generated from any other source. So unlike most planning decisions, the financial consequences of the granting of planning permission are not only relevant, but also fundamental to the decision making process.

4.2.86. Subject to the proposed enabling development meeting the criteria listed in the Policy, planning permission will be granted where:

- a) the impact of the development is precisely defined at the outset, through the submission of full rather than outline applications and all necessary supporting documents;
- b) with reference to the guidance contained in ODPM Circular 05/2005 'Planning Obligations' the objective of the preservation of the historic interest of the site is linked securely and enforceable to the planning permission;
- c) the historic interest is restored to an agreed standard, or funds made available to secure this aim, prior to the occupation of the enabling development; and
- d) the Planning Authority closely monitors implementation of the proposed development.

4.3. Avoiding Hazards

ENV17 DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS OF HIGH FLOOD RISK

1. DEVELOPED AREAS

Development in areas of high flood risk may be permitted on existing previously developed sites outside the functional flood plain, where it can be shown that:

- a) the appropriate minimum standard of flood defence with no net loss of flood plain storage (including suitable warning and evacuation procedures) can be maintained for the lifetime of the development; and
- b) the site is not required for washland creation as part of the overall flood defence strategy for river catchments; and
- c) it can be demonstrated that no suitable alternative sites in lower-risk areas are available (Zones 1 and 2).

2. UNDEVELOPED AREAS

Development in areas of high flood risk will only be permitted exceptionally in undeveloped and sparsely developed areas outside the functional flood plain where:

- a) that location is essential and it can be demonstrated that no suitable alternative sites in a lower-risk area are available (Zones 1 and 2); and
- b) it is provided with the appropriate minimum standard of flood defence, does not impede flood flows or result in a net loss of flood plain storage; and
- c) it relates to the use of the land for sports pitches and/or other informal recreation, sport, amenity and conservation uses, provided adequate warning and evacuation procedures are in place.

3. FUNCTIONAL FLOOD PLAIN

Development in areas of high flood risk will only be permitted in the functional flood plain where it comprises:

- a) appropriate open-air recreation, sport,

amenity and conservation uses (excluding caravan and camping sites), provided adequate warning and evacuation procedures are in place; or

- b) essential transport and utilities infrastructure designed and constructed so as to operate in times of flood which would result in no net loss of flood plain storage, no increase to flood risk elsewhere and no impediment to water flows.

4.3.2. The Council will consider applications for development in accordance with the sequential test outlined in PPG25 (Table 1: para. 30). This identifies zones of flood risk from those with little or no risk to those at high risk. The test should be applied with priority for development of sites in lower flood risk areas, i.e. directing development away from the functional flood plain and high-risk flood areas.

ENV18 DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS OF LOW TO MEDIUM FLOOD RISK

Development in areas of low to medium flood risk will be permitted provided that:

- a) the risk of flooding is addressed in the design of the development with no adverse impact on the wider environment;
- b) adequate measures have been taken into account to ensure the development itself would not lead to an increased risk of flooding; and
- c) it can be demonstrated that no suitable alternative sites in lower risk areas are available (Zone 1).

Flood Zone	Annual Probability of River Flooding
1. Little or no risk	<0.1%
2. Low to medium risk	0.1–1.0%
3. High risk – a) developed areas b) undeveloped areas c) functional flood plain	1.0% or greater

4.3.1. Flood risk involves both the probability of a flood occurring and the scale of its effects. It can be an issue both in river flood plains and on other sites where inadequate provision is made to deal with surface water run-off (see Policy ENV19). PPG25 (Development and Flood Risk) aims to control development in areas at risk from flooding and control development that could increase the risk of flooding. These aims are consistent with those of sustainable development. Flooding can threaten human life, cause substantial damage to property and have a devastating impact on the wider environment. Washlands can be defined as areas of flood plain where water is stored in times of flood. Development should not compromise these areas or the creation of new areas, which may be required as part of the overall flood defence strategy for river catchments.

4.3.3. The Environment Agency holds information regarding the risk of flooding for some watercourses in the form of indicative flood plain maps. For other watercourses not shown by the Environment Agency enquiries can be made with the Council's Engineering Department. The policies in this section need to be read in conjunction with the indicative flood plain and catchment area maps.

4.3.4. For undeveloped and sparsely developed areas (Part 2 of Policy ENV17), residential, commercial and industrial development is not suitable unless a particular location is essential, for example, for navigation and waterbased recreation uses, agriculture, transport and utilities infrastructure and an alternative lower risk option is not available. Caravan and camping sites should not be located in these areas.

4.3.5. The functional flood plain is defined as unobstructed or active areas where water regularly flows in times of flood (Part 3).

4.3.6. The onus is on the applicant to investigate and evaluate the extent of risk from flooding. The Council will require the developer to submit a detailed flood risk assessment where the proposed development:

- lies within a river flood plain or washland shown on an indicative flood plain map prepared by the Environment Agency;
- lies within or adjacent to any watercourse;
- is adjacent to any flood bank or other flood control structure;
- lies within an area where indications suggest there may be drainage problems;
- is likely to involve the culverting or diverting of any watercourse;
- is of such a scale relative to the receiving watercourse/drainage system that there could be a significant increase in surface water run-off from the area.

4.3.7. Failure to provide an appropriate flood risk assessment where required may result in an application for planning permission being refused.

ENV19 SURFACE WATER RUN-OFF

All development proposals will be encouraged to incorporate and maintain Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), which provide for the use or disposal of surface water where site conditions are favourable.

Where acceptable reasons are provided why SUDS are not feasible, an alternative drainage system will need to be agreed by the Council. The re-use and recycling of water within the development will be encouraged.

4.3.8. PPG25 states that Flood risk and other environmental damage can be managed by minimising changes in the volume and rate of surface run off from development sites through the

use of sustainable drainage systems. This should be complementary to the control of development within the flood plain.

4.3.9. Traditionally, run-off is routed directly into pipes and drains to be moved as quickly as possible to the nearest discharge point, typically a brook or a stream. These traditional methods have resulted in the following:

- an increase in watercourse pollution;
- an increase in flooding, bank erosion and loss of aquatic habitats; and
- reduction in groundwater supply.

4.3.10. Continuing to drain built-up areas without taking these wider issues into consideration is not a sustainable long-term option. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) constitute a series of alternative methods for dealing with surface water run-off in new developments. The main objective of SUDS is to manage water on-site by minimising run-off, slowing discharge rates and retaining water for treatment. For larger sites this can be achieved by using a series of porous surfaces, swales (broad open ditches), ponds and wetlands. SUDS have the added bonus in that attractive landscape features are created that can enhance biodiversity. For smallscale proposals, water management can be achieved through the use of water butts and porous surfaces, for example.

4.3.11. Certain sites for new development will need to demonstrate as part of the application how SUDS have been considered. Such sites will include applications for dwellings and all new commercial developments (except minor extensions). Commercial developments include industrial and office employment, retail, tourist, agricultural and leisure uses. Planning obligations will be used to ensure the long-term maintenance of

systems. Generally, all applications for development will be required to demonstrate that the most sustainable method of surface water run-off has been incorporated in the design and layout, since it is the cumulative impact of development that can exacerbate flooding problems. However, it is acknowledged that such systems are not always suitable in all circumstances and will depend on site conditions. A SPD on the use of sustainable drainage techniques will be prepared and will give details on the methods and applications of SUDS.

ENV20 DEVELOPMENT LIKELY TO GIVE RISE TO POLLUTION OR THE RISK OF POLLUTION

Proposals will not be permitted for development that will exacerbate, or could potentially give rise to, water, air, noise, light or other pollution unless:

- a) adequate mitigation measures have been taken to ensure that any discharges or emissions will not cause harm to land-use, including the effects on health or the wider environment; and
- b) adequate mitigation measures have been taken to ensure that there is not an unacceptable risk of discharges or emissions occurring which could cause harm to land use, including the effects on health and the natural environment; and
- c) the proposed development, through its potential to pollute, will not have an adverse effect on investment confidence in the surrounding area.

- 4.3.12. Pollution is the release of substances into the environment that can cause harm to human health, property or any other living organism supported by the wider environment. It can be detrimental to the quality of our air, rivers and soil. The Government attaches great importance to controlling and minimising pollution as part of its objectives for sustainable development (PPS23 Planning and Pollution Control). Noise and light pollution can adversely affect human health and the wider environment.

- 4.3.13. The control of the release of substances into the environment is directly administered by the Environment Agency and Local Authorities under the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999. The planning system's involvement relates solely to controlling the location of development and changes in the use of land which could give rise to pollution, or the risk of pollution. The potential of sites with existing sources of pollution to affect the use of other land for development is also a material planning consideration. In determining applications, the Council will consult with the relevant pollution control agency and will, in appropriate circumstances, require the submission of detailed assessments of the effects of proposals.

Air Pollution

- 4.3.14. Good air quality is essential for human health and the well-being of the environment as a whole. Generally, air pollution from smoke and the burning of domestic fuels has greatly reduced. However, pollution from road traffic has increased substantially. Planning has an important role in preventing new development, which would result in increased pollution levels. Design, construction and the use of materials can mitigate against high levels of pollution, but a major impact on reducing pollution from road traffic can be made by locating new development near to existing facilities (such as schools and shops) and with access to public transport. For larger new developments reference will be made to the Council's Environmental Health Department and in particular consideration will be given to the Council's Review and Assessment of Air Quality to ensure compliance with National Air Quality Objectives.

Water Pollution

- 4.3.15. The Council will strictly control any development that threatens surface water quality. However, far more fresh water is found underground than on

the surface. Groundwater resources are an invaluable source of water for public supply, industry and agriculture as well as sustaining the base flows of rivers and wildlife wetland habitats. Activities such as the disposal of effluent in soakaways, landfilling or inappropriate storage of chemicals can result in the pollution of groundwater. The potential risk of pollution of ground and surface water is a material consideration in determining planning applications. The impact of new development in terms of affecting water resources is addressed in Policy RES4.

Land Pollution

- 4.3.16. Land contamination is specifically addressed in Policy ENV22 of this Section.

Light Pollution

- 4.3.17. Outdoor lighting is often used for security and safety reasons as well as to allow for certain evening sports activities. However, poorly designed lighting schemes can have safety implications for motorists and other road users by way of dazzle. Equally, the privacy and amenity of residential occupiers can be adversely affected through light spillage; the rural character of areas can be detrimentally affected by the introduction of an urban feel (skyglow). Excessive lighting can damage wildlife habitats and be a drain on energy resources. The visibility of stars is much reduced by light pollution.
- 4.3.18. Where buildings, public spaces and car parks warrant lighting, the intensity, time-length of illumination and focus of such lighting should be designed to minimise unnecessarily obtrusive and glaring light and light spillage. Details of external lighting schemes for certain new developments will be required as part of a planning application.
- 4.3.19. The Council will permit floodlighting and ancillary lighting for major sports and recreational development except where such provision will cause an

unacceptable disturbance or will be visually intrusive. Where permission for floodlighting is given, the hours during which it may be used may be limited. The installation of shielding or screening may be required.

Noise Pollution

- 4.3.20. Noise can have a significant effect on the quality of people's lives and on the wider environment. Excessive noise levels can cause stress and other health problems. Noise can also adversely affect wildlife as well as the character of an area.
- 4.3.21. In determining applications where noise disturbance is an issue, regard will be given to detailed advice and technical assessments provided in PPG24 (Planning and Noise) together with advice from the Council's Environmental Health and Building Consultancy Officers. PPG 24 states that the planning function should aim to minimise the adverse impact of noise wherever possible. This can be achieved through directing the location of development itself and/or by the use of conditions or Section 106 Agreements to mitigate against high noise levels. Mitigation measures may include the provision of natural or purpose-built barriers, changes to layout, restriction of operating times or the specifying of noise limits. Mitigation measures can help to allow for a mix of uses in more sustainable town centre locations.

ENV21 BAD NEIGHBOUR USES

Proposals for development will not be permitted adjacent to established bad neighbour uses unless adequate mitigation measures have been taken to prevent unacceptable harm to the occupiers of the development proposed.

- 4.3.22. Bad neighbour uses should be located such as to minimise detrimental impacts on amenity. It would therefore be inappropriate to allow residential development adjacent to these uses.

ENV22 CONTAMINATED AND UNSTABLE LAND

Proposals for the development of contaminated or unstable land will be permitted provided that the contaminant or instability can be remedied to adequately alleviate the risk of harm to human health and the wider environment.

4.3.23. The Government encourages the full and effective use of land that has previously been developed. It states that, given proper safeguards to human health and the environment, land that is contaminated or unstable can be put to a suitable use PPS 23 and PPG 14 (Development on Unstable Land). The re-use of contaminated or unstable land is in line with the principles of sustainable development because it effectively recycles land and can reduce the pressure on greenfield sites.

4.3.24. To determine the suitability of the site for development, the applicant will be required to provide a detailed assessment as part of any proposal which should include the following:

- a) a thorough appraisal of the site to an agreed specification, historical records concerning the site and its relation to the surrounding area;
- b) a targeted risk assessment; and
- c) appropriate remedial measures to overcome any problems involved in the development of the site (including the environmental impacts of the remediation) and a validation report confirming completion of any agreed remedial measures. A waste management licence may be required if contaminated material is to be retained on-site. Any contaminants to be removed from the site have to be disposed of at a registered landfill site.

4.3.25. Potentially contaminated land includes those sites where former or current use may cause significant harm, or have

the possibility of causing significant harm to human health or cause the pollution of controlled waters or the potential to cause pollution of controlled waters. DETR Circular 2/2000 'Contaminated Land' gives guidance on those types of industrial use that would be considered potentially contaminated land.

4.3.26. The Council has a duty to inspect the District for contaminated land. The Public Register of Contaminated Land is a Register of sites designated as Contaminated Land, where enforcement action is to be taken to ensure appropriate remedial measures are completed. The Register is maintained by the Council and is available for public inspection at the Civic Centre in Pershore.

4.3.27. Unstable land, and more particularly subsidence, is an issue in the District along the old salt runs in and around Droitwich Spa. The areas affected by subsidence are constantly changing through natural processes, but information regarding specific sites may be obtained from the Council's Building Consultancy section. The presence of unstable land does not necessarily mean that development cannot take place. An appraisal will be required to ascertain whether remedial measures could overcome the instability to prevent risk of harm to human health and the general environment.

ENV23 DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Proposals that would involve the presence of hazardous substances or proposals involving the storage and use of hazardous substances will not be permitted if the proposal:

- a) poses an unacceptable level of risk to the public or the natural environment;
- b) cannot provide adequate emergency access to the site and adjoining areas of human activity that potentially may be affected; or
- c) will seriously prejudice the development of neighbouring land.

4.3.28. Certain manufacturing and other processes that use substances defined under The Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990, are considered to be a risk to human health. This can be due to their toxicity or reactive nature. Hazardous Substance Consent needs to be obtained for the use or storage of such substances above certain quantities. In addition, planning permission may be required for development involving hazardous substances.

4.3.29. The development of hazardous installations and the storage and use of hazardous substances must not increase the risks to persons in the area, the wider community or the environment to an unacceptable degree. The Council will aim to keep hazardous installations and substances separate from land uses, with which they may be incompatible in accordance with Planning (The Control of Major Accident Hazards) Regulations 1999 (as amended 2005).

ENV24 DEVELOPMENT CLOSE TO HAZARDOUS INSTALLATIONS AND PIPELINES

Within the defined consultation zone of a hazardous installation or pipeline, development will only be permitted if the development and its uses will not be subject to an unacceptable risk of an accident from the installation or the pipeline.

4.3.30. Where hazardous installations exist, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is responsible for notifying consultation zones around such sites. Local authorities are required to seek the HSE's view on the likely risks to any proposed development within those zones (DoE Circular 11/92 'Planning Controls for Hazardous Substances'; DETR Circular 04/00 'Hazardous Substances').

4.3.31. In Wychavon, consultation zones exist around several sites as well as some oil and gas pipelines. These zones are

subject to review by the HSE, and their number and extent may change during the Plan period. Information regarding location may be obtained from the Planning Department.

4.4. Environmental Statements

4.4.1. The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999, require developers to submit an Environmental Statement with certain development proposals. The purpose of the Statement is to provide an assessment and analysis of the potential environmental effects of proposals to assist the decision making process. An Environmental Statement is mandatory for projects listed under Schedule 1 of the regulations. Schedule 2 lists development for which a Statement may be required. All proposals for development covered by Schedule 2 will be screened by the Local Planning Authority to establish whether an Environmental Statement is required.

4.4.2. The Regulations also extend the requirement for an Environmental Statement to Permitted Development that is likely to have significant environmental effects. Where this is the case, Permitted Development Rights will not apply and a planning application, accompanied by an Environmental Statement will be required.

Section 5 –

SOCIAL PROGRESS

5.1. Introduction

- 5.1.1. This section sets out policies that help to develop the District as a sustainable, well-designed, high quality and attractive place in which to live and work. It is divided into two parts - Building Sustainable Communities and Enhancing People's Surroundings - and recognises both the social needs of individuals and communities and the development needs of the District.
- 5.1.2. The Government is committed to developing strong, vibrant and sustainable communities and to promoting community cohesion in both urban and rural areas. This means meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, promoting personal well-being, social cohesion and inclusion and creating equal opportunity for all citizens. The policies in the first section provide the planning tools to ensure a balance of private, social and other housing needs in the District as well as encouraging and facilitating community facilities, access to open space, and leisure and recreation opportunities.
- 5.1.3. The second section on Enhancing People's Surroundings recognises that the condition of our surroundings has a direct impact on the quality of life, and the conservation and improvement of the natural and built environment brings social and economic benefit for local communities. This section also promotes the use of good design principles in the layout of buildings and their relationship with their surroundings. Where buildings integrate well, and their design addresses the connections between people and places, they will provide attractive places in which to live,

work and socialise. The policies ensure that the potential impacts of developments at all levels are fully assessed so that the living environment continues to be enhanced.

5.2. Building Sustainable Communities

COM1 MIX OF DWELLING TYPES

The Council will seek to ensure that proposals for new residential development and residential conversions (including changes of use) incorporate a mix of dwelling types, sizes and affordability that reflect and respond to the housing needs of the individual settlements across the District.

This Policy will apply to proposals for residential development consisting of 10 or more dwellings within the towns of Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore and to proposals of 5 or more dwellings in other settlements.

In the application of the Policy, regard will be had to:

- a) the extent to which a diversity of dwelling sizes and types is proposed having regard to the overall scale of development and the physical characteristics of the site;
- b) the existing profile of the housing stock in the settlement; and
- c) the findings of a Parish Plan or the consideration of any statistical or other relevant evidence as to housing need where available.

Applications for extensions to dwellings will be assessed against the need to retain an appropriate range and mix of dwelling types within the individual settlements.

- 5.2.1. The Policy complies with PPG3 (Housing), which states that Local Authorities should adopt Policies that take into account changes in housing needs in their areas (para. 9). PPG3 goes on to indicate that Local Authorities should ensure new housing developments help secure a better

social mix by avoiding the creation of large areas of housing of similar characteristics (para. 10). They should also secure an appropriate mix of dwelling size, type and affordability to meet the changing composition of households in their area, in light of the likely assessed need (para. 11). A mix of housing types and sizes is important for providing local choice and building balanced communities.

5.2.2. Furthermore, there is some concern that extensions are impacting on the mix and eroding the stock of smaller housing (up to about 90 to 100 m²). In this regard, and in addition to the design elements in Policy SUR6, the Council will consider proposals for extensions against their effect on a settlement's mix and will refuse proposals where it considers the impact to be unacceptable in these terms. The Council will analyse 2001 Census information to help inform the application of the policy.

5.2.3. Demographic trends indicate the proportion of the population requiring smaller dwellings is rising, largely due to the changing composition of households. The evidence suggests the majority of predicted growth will be in one-person households. The Council will assess proposals in the light of available information, including the Council's Housing Strategy, to promote dwelling mix. It will prepare a Development Plan Document (DPD) on Balanced Housing Markets as set out in the adopted Local Development Scheme (LDS).

COM2 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In order to help meet demonstrated affordable housing needs, the Council will seek the provision of affordable housing within all residential developments, including conversions (and including adjacent land if it can be expected to form part of a larger site), of either:

- a) 0.5ha and over, or 15 dwellings, whichever is the lesser; or
- b) in settlements of less than 3000

population, either 0.25 ha and over, or 7 dwellings or more, whichever is the lesser where there is an identified housing need.

On the above qualifying sites the Council will seek up to 30% of the units to be affordable, but the number, type, tenure and dispersal of units to be provided will be subject to negotiation following analysis of the Housing Needs Survey, Common Housing Register, Parish Survey, and any relevant site-specific factors. The Council will require affordable housing to be provided on-site. Exceptionally, where it is jointly agreed between the Council and developer that on-site provision is inappropriate, the subsequent sequence for provision of affordable homes shall be:

- a) in the first instance, on an agreed alternative site, usually within the same town or, within rural areas, in the same or adjoining parish. In such cases the alternative site should either have planning permission for affordable housing, or there is a reasonable prospect of achieving planning permission; and
- b) if no suitable alternative site is available, by payment of commuted sums. This option only applies to brownfield sites that could otherwise not be brought forward for development.

Planning permission for the schemes will not be granted unless the proposal incorporates the following details to the satisfaction of the Council:

- a) the number (or proportion if in outline) of affordable housing units and the means by which these will be provided;
- b) the sector(s) of the housing market whose needs the housing units are intended to meet;
- c) secure arrangements to ensure the units will remain affordable and available to meet the requirements of those in housing need in perpetuity;
- d) a justification of how the site benefits from reasonable access to local services and public transport; and
- e) for proposals in rural parishes, arrangements for ensuring preference for occupants with a local connection.

- 5.2.4. The planning system has a role to play in helping to provide housing for all sectors of society and to create 'mixed and balanced communities' as promoted by PPG3 (para. 10). DETR Circular 6/98 (para. 1) 'Planning and Affordable Housing' advises that "a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration", it being recognised that the market will only provide part of the range of housing which a community requires. The Council will, therefore, seek a proportion of new units on qualifying sites to be affordable. This will help to meet the needs of those on lower incomes in the District and the aims of the Council's Housing Strategy, although it is recognised that the provision of new units is only one (albeit an important one) of several mechanisms for meeting the housing needs of the District.
- 5.2.5. The general definition of affordable housing to be used in the Plan is that used by Judge Boggis in the case of Wychavon District Council and Westbury Homes (2000) and supplemented by the definition in the Council's 2002 'Affordable Housing' Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).
- "Housing in the area of the relevant Council which is available to those who cannot afford to rent or buy what is available on the open market" (HH Judge Boggis, 2000).
- 5.2.6. Affordable housing is generally categorised into two types:
- a) "housing provided by an organisation allocating on the basis of need. While such dwellings will normally be made available for rent, they may also include subsidised home ownership, such as shared ownership, where a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) [or Local Authority] retains a continuing interest"; and
 - b) "low-cost market housing, helping to meet the needs of first time buyers, single people, the elderly and other low income households,
- that cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally on the open market" (Affordable Housing SPG, 2002).
- 5.2.7. To help determine affordability in this respect, the Council may have regard to local incomes and house prices/rents.
- 5.2.8. In 2000, Fordham Research Ltd undertook a district-wide Housing Needs Survey (HNS) on behalf of the Council. The HNS estimated that an additional 2400 affordable homes would be required up to 2005 for the Council to meet all of its current and projected housing need.
- 5.2.9. The level of housing need demonstrated by the HNS exceeds the total amount of housing development that the Local Plan has to allocate. The Council is, therefore, adopting a common sense approach to addressing this housing need as the planning system is only one, albeit important, method of delivering affordable housing. The thresholds and levels of provision of affordable housing set out in this Policy strike a reasonable balance between increasing the delivery of affordable homes on qualifying sites, ensuring that appropriate sites come forward for development and achieving balanced communities. Policy SR1 identifies the approximate level of affordable housing provision to be sought on allocated sites during the Plan period. These figures may vary depending on identified needs and site conditions.
- 5.2.10. Proposals should comply with the Council's Affordable Housing SPG.
- 5.2.11. In accordance with DETR Circular 6/98 'Planning and Affordable Housing', justification is provided below for adopting lower thresholds for qualifying sites.
- 5.2.12. Assessment of the Housing Land Availability (HLA) records from April 1986 to March 2001 showed that approximately 5427 new homes,

approximately 83% of the total, were provided within Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore on sites (including adjacent and cumulative sites) of greater than 24 units, whereas, approximately 381 new homes, or 6%, were on sites between 15 and 24 units. Many of the sites allocated in the 1998 Local Plan exceeded 24 units. In this Plan there are insufficient sites of greater than 24 units to deliver enough affordable housing to meet the needs of the District. Furthermore, the number of units on smaller sites is proportionally greater, primarily because of the preference for regenerating brownfield sites. For these reasons the threshold has been lowered to 15 or 0.5ha. Sites of this size and nature have been included to help achieve national and local objectives intended to make the best use of land and re-use previously developed land.

5.2.13. Similar reasoning has been applied to justify lower thresholds for the villages as permitted by para. 10 of DETR Circular 6/98. Analysis of the HLA records (1986 to 2001) indicate that approximately 67% of new housing in rural areas was achieved on sites of less than 25 units, 59% on sites of less than 15 and 45% on sites of less than 7 units. It is, therefore, considered reasonable to reduce the threshold for rural settlements to 7 or 0.25 ha whichever is the lesser (i.e. half of that for the urban areas), to ensure that there is a reasonable chance of satisfying some of the need for affordable housing in the rural areas where a local need is demonstrated.

5.2.14. The number and type of affordable units to be sought by the Council on a particular site will be informed by interrogation of the HNS, the Common Housing Register and, where relevant, Parish Survey. Exceptionally, and only on problematic brownfield sites, a figure which is less than that revealed as the housing need for the area may be accepted where there are proven significant abnormal development costs.

5.2.15. The Council considers, in accordance with advice from PPG3 (paras 21; 22), that it is appropriate for the developer to provide the required affordable housing element on all qualifying sites. In exceptional cases, however, and subject to agreement between the Council and the developer, it may be appropriate to allow the developer to provide the affordable housing element on an alternative site which would contribute towards the affordable housing needs of the area. In such cases the alternative site should have planning permission for such a use or have a reasonable prospect of securing planning permission. In instances where planning permission is required on the alternative site, the Council would expect the submission of both applications, which would be considered simultaneously. A Section 106 Agreement would also be required to ensure the original site is not developed unless the secondary site is also developed. In the absence of a suitable alternative site for affordable housing, and subject to agreement with the developer, the Council may accept a financial contribution in lieu of affordable housing. The monies provided in this way will be used by the Council to provide additional affordable accommodation within the District.

5.2.16. In most instances, it is anticipated that the provision plus the initial and subsequent occupation of affordable housing will need to be controlled via a Section 106 Agreement. The considerations to be secured are set out in the Council's Affordable Housing SPG. The RSLs have an important role with regard to the long-term management, and in some instances, direct provision of affordable housing. Developers are, therefore, advised to involve the RSLs early in the planning process.

5.2.17. Applications for affordable housing will be to the same high standard of design expected for market housing, provide quality and choice, incorporate energy efficient designs and appropriate use of materials. Generally, the grouping

together of more than 10 affordable housing units should be avoided to maximise social inclusion.

5.2.18. For initial and subsequent allocations of affordable homes on sites in rural areas, preference should be given to those in housing need with a local connection. This would normally be achieved by a clause in the Section 106 Agreement.

5.2.19. Generally, it is considered that local connection would comprise one or more of the following:

- a) existing residents in unsuitable housing within the local area;
- b) people currently living within but requiring separate accommodation in the local area, for example, those living with parents or in tied accommodation;
- c) people who work locally but are unable to afford housing locally;
- d) people who currently live elsewhere, or are homeless, but have firm links to the local area, for example, elderly people returning to an area to be close to relatives.

5.2.20. For the purpose of this Policy, 'local area' would normally be considered to comprise the parish or adjoining rural parishes within the Wychavon area.

5.2.21. The Council will annually monitor the provision of affordable housing through the HLA Survey and Housing Strategy. This will be used to help inform the number of units requested on individual applications in conjunction with the Housing Needs Survey (and any subsequent review) and the Common Housing Register.

COM3 RURAL EXCEPTION SITES

In rural areas, as an exception to normal development policy, proposals will be permitted for affordable housing sites on the edges of villages, to meet the specific housing needs of the local area where:

- a) the need has been proven and no other suitable or appropriate and available

sites exist within the development boundary of the settlement;

- b) the site has reasonable access to public transport and local services/facilities; and
- c) secure arrangements exist to ensure the housing will remain affordable and available to meet the needs of local people in perpetuity.

5.2.22. The Council would normally expect housing for local needs to be provided within the development boundary or on allocated sites. However, DETR Circular 6/98 and Annex B of PPG3 Housing Update (January 2005) recognises that it is often difficult to secure adequate land for affordable housing in rural areas, particularly in villages where new housing allocations have not been made, and enables the deficiency to be met via a rural exception policy. This Policy facilitates affordable housing developments to be permitted on suitable sites within or on the edge of rural settlements where development would not normally be permitted, provided that it will meet a genuine local need and that there is no cross-subsidisation with high value or general market housing. The size of the application site and the number of units proposed should be commensurate to the existing settlement to avoid over-development.

5.2.23. The Council will need to be satisfied that priority is given to those in housing need with a local connection for the initial and subsequent allocations – this would normally be achieved via a Section 106 Agreement. Local connection is defined in the reasoned justification to Policy COM2. The local area is normally defined as the parish and immediately adjoining rural parishes within Wychavon.

5.2.24. For reasons of sustainability, the Council considers it is generally inappropriate to locate new affordable housing on sites that do not have ready access to public transport and

local services and facilities, because it is more likely that provision of affordable housing in locations with poor accessibility will lead to increased problems of social and economic isolation and a greater dependency on the car.

- 5.2.25. It is expected that the developments should achieve a good standard of quality, design and appropriate materials and satisfy the general housing amenity and design Policies in this Plan as amplified by the Council's Affordable Housing SPG.
- 5.2.26. The need for a rural exception site should be clearly demonstrated with reference to the Housing Needs Survey, Common Housing Register and, where relevant, Parish Plans and/or surveys prepared by the Rural Housing Enabler Officer.

COM4 PROVISION OF SUPPORTED AND SHELTERED HOUSING

Where a need is identified in the Local Housing Strategy, the Council will permit the provision of supported and sheltered housing within defined development boundaries or through the conversion of an existing building, in locations which have good access to a range of local services and to public transport.

- 5.2.27. Supported housing is housing for people who are unable to live independently or who need a particular kind of support. The Housing Needs Survey (HNS) indicates that at 2000, 10.6% of the households within the District have such needs and includes the physically disabled, frail elderly, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, vulnerable young people, children leaving care and people with hearing and sight impairments.
- 5.2.28. Wychavon is a member of the Worcestershire Supporting People Group, a multi-agency network which examines the need for supported

housing in the county and identifies priorities for meeting that need.

- 5.2.29. In assessing sites for supported housing, a prime consideration will be the accessibility to services and public transport with preference for sites, including mixed-use sites, close to the town centre. Developers will be encouraged to design the accommodation in accordance with the 'Lifetime Homes' concept (originated by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation) and 'Egan' principles.

COM5 GYPSY SITES – EXISTING PROVISION

In order to ensure the provision of adequate permanent gypsy caravan sites within the District, the following official sites as identified on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded for continued use:

- Site A - Cleeve Prior;
- Site B - Hinton-on-the-Green;
- Site C - Hipton Hill;
- Site D - Pinvin;
- Site E - Lower Smite Farm.

Private sites with planning permission will be safeguarded for continued gypsy accommodation use at their permitted level.

Appendix 5 lists gypsy accommodation sites which do not have planning permission, but are tolerated for continued use at the level of the June 2005 'Count of Gypsy Caravans'.

- 5.2.30. This Policy relates to gypsies as defined in the Caravan and Control of Development Act 1960 as "persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin".
- 5.2.31. In May 1994 the Secretary of State for the Environment brought into force the Gypsy Encampments (District of Wychavon) Order, which gave designation to the District under the terms of Section 10 of the Caravan Sites Act 1968.
- 5.2.32. The designation acknowledges the provision made for public pitches at Hipton Hill, Pinvin, Hinton-on-the-Green, Cleeve Prior and Lower

Smite Farm. As at June 2005, figures from the County Council indicates that there were 129 permanent pitches across the District. The Council's policy on the toleration of existing specified private sites is in accordance with Policy COM5.

- 5.2.33. Although the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 means that Local Authorities no longer have a statutory duty to provide adequate accommodation for gypsies residing in, or resorting to, their area, the Council wish to maintain the current level of approved/tolerated provision. These sites should be protected from other forms of development to ensure adequate provision for gypsy needs which can be demonstrated.

COM6 GYPSY SITES – NEW PROVISION

Proposals for new or extensions to existing gypsy caravan sites will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that a genuine need for additional sites exists to accommodate gypsies residing in or with clear ties to the District and the proposed development satisfies the following criteria:

- a) is capable of being satisfactorily assimilated into the surrounding landscape;
- b) is of satisfactory scale in keeping with surrounding settlements; and
- c) is reasonably close to service facilities, in particular schools, shops and health facilities.

- 5.2.34. Current legislation relating to gypsy provision is such that any increase on the current levels of provision is likely to be by way of private provision. Applications for new gypsy caravan sites and extensions to existing permitted ones must demonstrate that a genuine need exists and that the site is satisfactorily located.

- 5.2.35. Government advice on gypsy sites and planning as set out in ODPM Circular 01/2006 'Planning for Gypsy and

Traveller Caravan Sites' requires that Local Planning Authorities shall encourage private site provision through advice and practical help with planning procedures to gypsies who wish to acquire their own land for development.

- 5.2.36. However, it goes on to state that "It is strongly recommended that gypsies and travellers consult Local Planning Authorities on planning matters before buying land on which they intend to establish any caravan site, for which planning permission will almost always be required". The aim should be, as far as possible, to help gypsies to help themselves, to allow them to secure the kind of sites they need, and thus help avoid breaches of planning control.

COM7 AGRICULTURAL WORKERS' AND OTHER RURAL WORKERS' DWELLINGS

Permanent agricultural workers' dwellings in the countryside will only be permitted where:

- a) it is essential for the long-term operation of the agricultural holding for a worker to live on site;
- b) the need is based on a full-time agricultural worker, or one who is primarily employed in agriculture;
- c) the enterprise has been established for at least three years, has been profitable for at least one year and is financially sound and has a reasonable prospect of remaining so;
- d) the need could not be met by:
 - an existing dwelling on the holding;
 - the conversion of an existing suitable building on or adjoining the holding; or
 - any available dwelling elsewhere in the vicinity that is affordable to an agricultural worker;
- e) the size and specification of the dwelling is reasonably related to the functional requirement of the unit and appropriate in terms of scale and design to its setting and surroundings; and
- f) the proposed dwelling is sited to minimise its impact on the appearance

and character of the area - preferably adjacent to existing buildings.

Permitted development rights to extend the dwelling which are normally available for dwellings may be removed by condition. Planning permission may be granted subject to a Section 106 Agreement preventing the severing of the agricultural worker's dwelling from the Agricultural holding.

In exceptional circumstances, rural workers' dwellings will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the operation needs to be located in the countryside and that it is necessary for the operation of the business to live on site. In addition, all proposals will be required to comply with the same tests outlined for agricultural workers' dwellings.

applicant to demonstrate that for the efficient functioning of the unit there is a genuine long-term need for one or more full-time workers, primarily employed in agriculture, to be readily available at most times and that this could not be achieved by the use of an existing dwelling, or a building suitable for conversion, either on the holding or in the locality. A case based solely on grounds of security will rarely be sufficient. Furthermore, the Council will investigate the history of the site to establish whether buildings, which may have been a potential source of accommodation, have been disposed of previously – in the Council's opinion this may constitute lack of evidence for accommodation to serve the needs of the holding.

5.2.37. Development is strictly controlled in the countryside in order to maintain its character and openness. One of the few circumstances in which residential development may be justified in the countryside is to serve the needs of agriculture or in exceptional circumstances rural workers' dwellings, where it is necessary to the operation for workers to live on the site. Whether this is essential will depend upon the business activity concerned and not on the personal preferences or circumstances of any particular individual – generally, it is as appropriate for such workers to live in nearby settlements and not on the site.

5.2.38. Rural workers' dwellings will be required to follow the same tests as agricultural workers' dwellings and permissions will be subject to conditions tying the dwelling to the business.

5.2.39. Government advice contained in PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) Annexe A, states that proposals for new permanent agricultural dwellings should only be allowed where they satisfy the functional and financial tests and these will be used when considering applications.

5.2.40. The functional test requires the

5.2.41. The applicant will also have to demonstrate that the proposal satisfies the financial test referred to in PPS7 Annexe A – that the unit and the agricultural activity have been in operation for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are economically sound and have the potential to remain so. A planning application should, therefore, be accompanied by an independent, comprehensive appraisal of the functional need for a dwelling with supporting financial information. It should be noted that the economic viability relates to the agricultural activity as well as the unit as a whole. Therefore, on an established farm it would not be appropriate to allow a new permanent dwelling for a new agricultural activity, unless the activity itself is proved viable.

5.2.42. Proposals for a new home to accommodate a retired agricultural or rural worker will not be acceptable and are not in accordance with this Policy.

5.2.43. The Council is keen to minimise future problems of affordability of agricultural dwellings for agricultural wage earners and will therefore not accept unusually large or expensively constructed dwellings that would be difficult to sustain in the long term on an

agricultural income. It is, therefore, generally anticipated that the habitable accommodation (i.e. excluding garaging, but including office space, for example), should not exceed 150 m² in area (as measured externally). Furthermore, the dwelling should be in keeping with its setting and surroundings, and sited and designed to minimise any harmful impact on the landscape or environment.

5.2.44. Where planning permission is subsequently granted:

- a standard occupancy condition will be imposed stating that the occupancy of the dwelling will be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality, in agriculture, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to resident dependants;
- the Council may impose an occupancy condition on any other dwelling on the agricultural unit concerned;
- the applicant will generally be requested to enter into a Section 106 Agreement to tie the dwelling to the holding that originally justified its existence.

In order to prevent agricultural dwellings being extended disproportionately in relation to agricultural wages a condition may be imposed removing the permitted development rights normally available to extend dwellings.

COM8 TEMPORARY AGRICULTURAL AND OTHER RURAL WORKERS' DWELLINGS

Proposals for temporary agricultural dwellings will only be permitted where:

- a) the proposal is to satisfy the needs of a new agricultural activity or expansion where clear evidence exists of a firm intention and ability to develop the business concerned, together with evidence of sound financial planning; and
- b) there is a functional need for the accommodation proposed; and

- c) the need could not be met by:
 - an existing dwelling on the holding; or
 - the conversion of an existing suitable building on or adjoining the holding; or
 - any available dwelling elsewhere in the vicinity; and
- d) it is sited to minimise its impact on the landscape (preferably adjacent to existing buildings) and would not cause unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the area.

In exceptional circumstances, temporary rural workers' dwellings will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the operation needs to be located in the countryside and that it is necessary for the operation of the business to live on the site. In addition, all proposals will be required to comply with the same tests outlined for temporary agricultural workers' dwellings.

5.2.45. This Policy is intended to complement Policy COM7 relating to the provision of permanent new agricultural or rural workers' dwellings in the countryside. It is also important to address the accommodation requirements arising from a new enterprise – whether on a newly created agricultural unit/rural business or an established one.

5.2.46. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate that there is a functional need for the accommodation, together with evidence that there is a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise. In addition, the Council will only grant permission for proposals that are considered acceptable in terms of their landscape and environmental impact.

5.2.47. Where planning permission is subsequently granted:

- a standard occupancy condition will be imposed stating that the occupancy of the temporary dwelling will be limited to a person solely or mainly working, or last working, in the locality, in agriculture, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to resident dependants;

- it will be for a temporary period of up to three years with a condition requiring the removal of the accommodation and re-instatement of the site after the permission expires if planning consent has not been granted for a permanent dwelling;
- generally, it will be inappropriate to either repeatedly renew temporary permissions or approve for periods longer than three years because this is considered sufficient time to demonstrate the viability of the enterprise.

COM9 AGRICULTURAL OR RURAL WORKERS' OCCUPANCY CONDITIONS

Generally, occupancy conditions will be retained on agricultural and rural workers' dwellings. However, occasionally, circumstances may have changed such that the Council may agree to the removal of the condition. Proposals to remove an occupancy condition will be permitted where the Council is satisfied that:

- a) the dwelling is now located within a defined development boundary; or
- b) the long-term need for the dwelling in the locality has ceased.

5.2.48. New agricultural workers' dwellings are permitted as an exception to the normal strict planning control operating in the countryside in order to meet specific economic and social needs of the rural community. Policy COM7 aims to ensure that such dwellings are only permitted where there is a genuine long-term need. However, changes in farming may result in these dwellings no longer being required for agricultural purposes – this may be particularly relevant to tied dwellings built more than 20 years ago. Although it is not appropriate for them to remain permanently vacant, applications for the removal of the condition will need to be carefully assessed in order to establish whether there is a continuing need for agricultural dwellings in the

locality (not just on the specific holding) as stated by PPS7 Annexe A.

5.2.49. Applications submitted under criterion b) will be a requirement to demonstrate that a vigorous marketing campaign has been undertaken to sell or lease the property to such persons who would satisfy the 'occupancy' condition. This will normally require that the property has been continuously and actively marketed in the local press, in the national agricultural press and visibly on site for a minimum of 12 months at a price that reflects the agricultural occupancy condition. The Council may require a longer marketing period for properties with a restricted, niche market – such as large dwellings which may only be affordable to farm managers rather than the average agricultural worker. The Council may also require applicants to demonstrate that they have a definite intention to move. Similarly, changes in the rural economy may result in tied dwellings no longer being required in the locality to accommodate rural workers. All proposals to remove the occupancy condition will be required to demonstrate that the long-term need has ceased and that a vigorous marketing campaign has been undertaken in accordance with the above.

5.2.50. Occasionally, a tied dwelling may, subsequently, have been surrounded by more recent development so that it now falls within a defined development boundary. In such instances, the Council will support the removal of the occupancy condition.

COM10 PROVISION OF RURAL COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Proposals for the building of new, or extensions to existing, community facilities will be permitted provided:

- a) the site and the facility is within or adjacent to, a defined settlement boundary;
- b) the proposal will not impact upon existing

community facilities or the established retail hierarchy of the area; and

- c) the proposal is easily and safely accessible by cycle and on foot.

5.2.51. Community facilities are essential elements of sustainable communities and include places of worship, village halls, shops, fuel stations, post offices, human burial grounds, libraries, banks, schools, local cinemas, play areas, doctors surgeries, pubs, children's nurseries and recreation/leisure uses. A full range of these facilities cannot be provided in all of the local parishes due to limited population levels and, therefore, the facilities available need to cover a number of communities or a range of uses. The provision of new local facilities in towns and villages is important in terms of sustainability, as they can reduce the length and number of car trips and provide a service to those who do not have access to transport. Consideration of new community facilities may be necessary to address issues of social exclusion, as new community facilities may help to cater for the elderly and young people in order to encourage and enable them to stay in their community.

5.2.52. The crucial role of village shops in maintaining villages as viable communities is recognised by PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres). All communities need access to a range of community facilities and it is, therefore, felt that a full range of facilities should be provided wherever possible and all community facilities should be given a similar level of protection to that suggested for shops. PPS 7 states that people who live in rural areas should have reasonable access to a range of services and that planning authorities can facilitate the provision of these services and help to retain existing services.

5.2.53. There are, however, difficulties associated with funding of public facilities and it is often commercial

factors, rather than need, that determine the location of facilities provided by the private sector. Therefore, the Council cannot ensure that all the facilities required will be provided. It would not be appropriate to allocate land for their provision and instead the Council's position is to facilitate development for community facilities rather than to provide for them; therefore, any appropriate applications will be determined on the basis of relevant criteria and other Policies in the Plan. Development arising from the private and voluntary sectors will be dealt with in the same way.

5.2.54. The most appropriate location for such facilities is within or adjacent to settlements where the greatest concentration of residents and visitors can be served and the impact on the open countryside is minimised. However, in some instances, it may be more appropriate to site the facility next to settlements, such as in the case of village halls or where a facility requires a larger land take which is unlikely to be accommodated within the defined development boundary. These may include village cricket pitches, bowling greens, and football pitches/playing fields with small-scale changing facilities. Proposals for new or extensions to such facilities will be permitted adjacent to settlements where provision within a development boundary is not feasible. This is providing the development is of a minimum size to meet the requirements of the likely user groups and is acceptable in terms of its impact on the landscape and residential amenity, particularly in terms of noise and floodlighting.

5.2.55. The Council will permit the floodlighting and ancillary lighting for small-scale sport and recreational facilities except where such provision will cause an unacceptable disturbance or will be visually intrusive. Any form of lighting allowed must meet the requirements of Policy ENV20. The hours of use may be

restricted and the installation of shielding or screening will be considered by the Council to minimise impact.

COM11 PROTECTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Proposals for any new development which would result in the loss of a community facility or adversely affect the operation of a community facility will only be permitted where an acceptable and feasible alternative facility exists, or a replacement can be provided within an easy and safe walking distance, subject to compliance with other policies within the Local Plan.

5.2.56. In order to sustain the vitality of the main town centres in the District, the Council will endeavour to support the evening economy. Although retailing underpins such centres, it is the Council's opinion that town centres should contain and retain a wide range of uses that need to be accessible to a large number of people, including employment, shopping, offices, leisure and entertainment uses, hospitals and higher education amongst other uses. PPS6 makes clear that the diversity of uses in town centres, and their accessibility to people living and working in the area, make an important contribution to their vitality and viability. The Council will determine applications that concern the evening economy in accordance with the general principles set out in PPS6.

5.2.57. Due to the importance of community facilities in villages and local centres to the sustainable objectives of this Plan, it is vital that improvements to existing facilities are encouraged and that existing facilities are protected. There needs to be strong justification for doing otherwise. Such justification would include where the facility has remained unused over a long period of time, despite reasonable efforts to secure its re-use or where there is a proven lack of demand or local need

demonstrated in consultation with the local community. This approach would apply to all proposals involving a change in the use of all or part of a community facility or proposals that would unduly compromise the operation of a community facility.

5.2.58. Some community facilities are commercially run enterprises, including pubs, shops and fuel stations. In these cases, applicants must demonstrate that they have actively marketed the site in its existing use for a period of at least 12 months, providing comprehensive documentary evidence of such, including details of any genuine enquiries and where and when the site was marketed. The applicant must demonstrate that the use is no longer viable or could not be made viable or is not locationally or operationally capable of providing a reasonable return. The Council will require evidence in the form of 2 consecutive years of accounts and will take into consideration whether there is scope for an alternative community use for the facility or whether there are any feasible measures available to improve viability.

COM12 PROVISION OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Proposals for new residential development of 5 dwellings or more will be required to provide public open space (POS) where the adopted standard or assessed standard indicates a deficiency of provision in the local area.

Where on-site provision is not appropriate, financial contributions will be sought to provide new or enhance existing provision according to local circumstances.

The long-term maintenance of such facilities may be met by a lump sum payment secured by means of condition or by legal agreement as appropriate

5.2.59. PPG17 (Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation) defines open space as all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water, including parks and gardens, green corridors, outdoor

sports facilities, amenity green space, allotments, cemeteries, civic and market squares and natural and semi natural green spaces. However, it does not include spaces left over after planning (SLOAP) and other incidental areas of land, such as road-verges, which are not intended for a specific use.

5.2.60. PPG17 stresses that open spaces, sport and recreation all underpin people's quality of life and the following are the long-term outcomes that it aims to deliver:

- networks of accessible, high-quality open space and sport and recreation facilities, in both rural and urban areas, that meet the needs of residents and visitors, are fit for purpose and economically and environmentally sustainable.
- an appropriate balance between new provision and the enhancement of existing provision.
- clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and landowners in relation to the requirements and expectations of Local Planning Authorities in respect of open space, sport and recreation provision.

5.2.61. The Government is firmly of the view that achieving these outcomes depends on Planning Authorities first undertaking local assessments of need and audits of provision, as it is considered that national standards cannot cater for local circumstances. Forthcoming 'Provision of Open Space Development Plan Document' (DPD), as set out in the Council's LDS, will provide further guidance. The preparation of this document will draw on a district-wide Open Space Audit to be completed by September 2006. In tandem with the adopted standard, the Council will also use existing open space survey work that provides a solid basis for the new approach and will inform how the Council will apply the standards in the meantime.

5.2.62. In order to implement the revised guidance in PPG17 the Council is

undertaking further consultation with stakeholders on current provision and future needs of open space, sport and recreation facilities through the Open Space Audit. The local standards will include quantitative and qualitative assessments, accessibility and consideration of the cost of using a facility and will form the basis for redressing deficiencies through the planning process. The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) recommend a minimum standard of 2.43 ha (6 acres) per thousand population, which is broken down into two broad categories: one for adult and youth recreation 1.6 – 1.8 ha (4.0 – 4.5 acres) necessary per thousand population; with the remaining 0.6 – 0.8 ha (1.5 – 2.0 acres) identified for children's play. This is a minimum standard and, in addition to formal recreational space, there is a need for informal areas for walking, jogging, sitting, etc. for both local people and visitors. POS for such use is expected to make up the remaining area of the Council's 2.8ha (7 acre) standard, which is as follows:

5.2.63.

Public Open Space Standards

<u>Category</u>	<u>Hectares</u>	<u>Space required per 1000 population</u>
Children's Play	0.7	To include equipped play space (0.02 ha), other opportunities for outdoor play, and casual space.
Sports Grounds	1.7	Of which at least 1.2 ha should be for pitch sports.
General Use	0.4	Informal, such as walking, and could be accounted for within the landscaping of the development
Total	<u>2.8</u> ha	

5.2.64.

The Council's adopted SPG 'Developer Contributions Towards Services Infrastructure' provides further

information on designing new areas of open space and the categories that should be provided. In certain instances it may not be appropriate to require any open space provision even if the development exceeds 5 dwellings. These may include cases where the viability of a redevelopment scheme is an issue or where the amount and quality of open space provision within the locality meets or exceeds the adopted standard for the local area, such as if the amount and quality of provision within the appropriate distance thresholds matches or exceeds the adopted provision standards for the local area. Certain forms of development, such as rest homes or sheltered homes for the elderly, will normally be exempt from part or all of the requirements and will be judged on their merits. A full list of exempt developments can be found in the SPG.

5.2.65. Well designed public open space can greatly enhance the aesthetic value and safety of an area. For example, lighting can decrease the risk of criminal activity and, therefore, increase the feeling of safety which, in turn, leads to an increase in the use of a facility. Where a need for equipped children's play space is identified, the Council will require this to be integrated within the development itself where it will be well supervised and safe to use. When considering planning applications that will incorporate an element of open space or a sport or recreational facility, the Council will seek to ensure that they are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport as alternatives to the use of the car in accordance with PPG17. In instances where improvements to an existing open space or a sport or recreational facility is sought as an alternative to on-site provision, the council will seek to encourage better accessibility to the existing sites, taking into account the mobility needs in the local population. The following levels of accessibility (from a person's home to a facility) will be used in the assessment of

proposals.

Toddler play area	within 200m (1/8 mile)
Children's play area	within 400m (1/4 mile)
Small local park	within 800m (1/2 mile)
Local park	within 1200m (3/4 mile)

5.2.66. The Council also recognises that Public Rights of Way are an important recreational facility that needs protection and enhancement. The Council will seek opportunities to provide better facilities for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, for example, by adding links to existing rights of way networks.

5.2.67. The Council has adopted the approach of only requiring on-site open space provision or a contribution to off-site open space provision if the development results in a site exceeding 5 dwellings or more. This is due to the cost of negotiating and administering an agreement likely to be higher than the benefit gained to the local community in developments of less than 5 houses. The Council will, however, seek open space contributions on sites that have been purposefully subdivided or reduced in size to below this threshold. Similarly, the requirement for open space will also include smaller parcels of land that are perceived as consecutive or cumulative, but together exceed 5 dwellings. Any existing dwellings that are to be retained and not subdivided will be excluded from the threshold calculation. However, where existing properties are to be either subdivided or demolished and replaced, then all the resulting units will be taken into account to establish whether the site falls above the relevant threshold for triggering the need for open space provision.

5.2.68. As the Local Planning Authority the

Council expects developers to contribute to open space requirements as part of the development site itself, particularly in respect of children's play area provision. However, it recognises that there may be circumstances under which on-site provision is not appropriate. This may be due to the Council's assessment identifying that there is adequate open space in the vicinity but the quality of that space is poor or specific site conditions prohibit the provision of open space or facilities. In such circumstances an appropriate financial contribution will be sought from the developer, thus allowing the developer to contribute towards public open space facilities and their maintenance in the local area. The Council will enter into a Section 106 Agreement with the developer to secure appropriate finances to fund improvements to facilities in the locality, where a deficiency exists, or whereby the development will lead to such a deficiency, as identified by the assessment and audit carried out by the Council. The planning decision will only be issued after the Section 106 Agreement has been completed. The Council's SPG explains financial contributions in further detail.

5.2.69. It is important that arrangements are made to ensure that on-site open space or off-site contributions to existing open space and facilities are maintained in the long-term. There are a variety of mechanisms that can achieve this, which are covered in more detail in the SPG. The Council will use planning obligations under various circumstances in line with the revised PPG17 and ODPM 05/2005 'Planning Obligations' in order to improve the quantity or quality of open space, sports and recreation provision.

COM13 PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE AND SPORT AND RECREATIONAL BUILDINGS AND LAND IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Proposals for development that would result in the loss of, or would adversely affect the character of, open space or sport or recreational buildings and land, will only be permitted where:

- a) an improved or an equivalent replacement facility to meet the local need can be provided in an accessible location; or
- b) the development is for recreational and/or community purposes related to the use of the space, buildings or land; or
- c) an assessment of community need has been undertaken clearly showing the space, building or land to be surplus to requirements; and
- d) the development results in the improvement of the open space, building or land.

In all cases, the proposal must be sited so as not to compromise the essential character of the space, building or land.

5.2.70. During recent years, the development pressures on open space and sport and recreational buildings and land within towns and villages has increased, threatening the amount of land available for recreation and amenity purposes, and the visual character of the area that may contribute to local distinctiveness.

5.2.71. Government advice contained in PPG3 and PPG17 stresses the need to retain and protect valuable amenity and recreational open spaces, buildings and land within both rural and urban areas. Parks, playing fields, informal open spaces, allotments and private gardens are some of the uses that can be of great importance to the appearance of a neighbourhood. Planning permission will only be granted for development affecting open spaces or sports and recreational buildings or land where the reasons for the development outweigh the value of the space in

connection with the assessment of need and an audit of open space.

5.2.72. Public Open Space (POS) is an essential part of the urban heritage and is important for the character, appearance and identity of an area. It plays an important educational and ecological role and helps to foster community development. Towns and villages need open space to function properly and efficiently. It is a legitimate aim of the planning system to protect important open areas for their recreational, environmental, visual or ecological value and for the general amenity of the community in which they are located. Small spaces in village conservation areas can be particularly important in terms of village character and form. POS can be a valuable asset whether it is in private or public ownership and whether or not it is publicly accessible. Additionally, in protecting this land, the Council will have regard not only to its individual value but to its contribution to the overall open space network within the built-up area and links to the open countryside and the rights of way network.

5.2.73. PPG17 emphasises that existing open space and sport and recreation buildings and land should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken that clearly shows the open space, land or buildings to be surplus to requirements in accordance with the standards adopted for the local area. The Council has undertaken a district-wide assessment in accordance with Policy COM13, which will inform the DPD for Open Space Provision. For open space to be considered surplus to requirements, consideration will be given to all of the functions that the open space can perform. Not all open space or sport and recreation buildings and land are of equal merit and some may be available for alternative uses.

5.2.74. In accordance with PPG17 the Council will give careful consideration

to any planning applications involving playing fields, with the presumption against any alternative development. The Council will also use the approach that any development providing the opportunity to exchange the use of one site for another to substitute for any loss of open space, or sports or recreational facility should be at least as accessible to current and potential new users. Any replacement should also be at least as equivalent in terms of size, usefulness, attractiveness and quality, and in the case of allotments, similar land quality. In all cases the Council will seek to ensure that obligations or conditions to secure the exchanged land and its maintenance is undertaken.

5.2.75. PPG17 stresses that parks, recreation grounds, playing fields and allotments must not be regarded as Previously Developed Land as defined in Annexe C of PPG3. If other open spaces or sport and recreational land or buildings do fall within the definition of Previously Developed Land (PDL), its existing and potential value for recreation and other purposes should be properly addressed before development is considered.

5.2.76. Many large areas of open land are attached to community facilities such as schools, hospitals, sports grounds, etc. The Council recognises the occasional need for these facilities to be developed and will balance this need against the need to retain open land. Exceptionally, therefore, the Council will permit community facility development on areas of protected land. Where such development is permitted as part of a community use, it should be sited in a manner that does not prejudice the value of the open space, buildings or land, or the reason for protection. If, for example, an area is protected as part of a linear run of open space through a built-up area, any development permitted should be sited to protect the linear nature of the whole, particularly on its public frontage, and not lead to its

fragmentation and subsequent loss in value.

- 5.2.77. If an existing open space is extended in any way, or if new open space areas are created, for example, on new housing developments under the terms of Policy COM12, then these areas will be protected by Policy COM13.
- 5.2.78. Most of the larger open spaces that contribute to the quality or character of a particular area within the District are shown on the Proposals Map. However, smaller areas of soft landscaping that can greatly enhance the character of housing areas are considered too small to be consistently defined on the maps. In addition, not all areas of open space or sport and recreational land and buildings are presently shown on the maps. The assessment and audit, as required by PPG17, will provide more detailed information on protected areas. However, in the meantime, the Council will use the open space definition used in Policy COM12 as a guide to whether a proposal will need to be considered as being or affecting important open space, land or buildings against this Policy.

COM14 SPECIALIST SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Planning permission for specialist sport and recreation in the countryside will be granted provided:

- a) new buildings are kept to a minimum in line with the operational requirements of the activity based on the needs of the user groups; and
- b) proposals do not cause undue disturbance to the tranquillity of the countryside or general nuisance to other users of the countryside or residents; and
- c) floodlighting and/or ancillary lighting would not cause an unacceptable disturbance or be visually intrusive and, where necessary, shielding or screening is provided.

5.2.79. The development of recreational and sporting facilities within the countryside is an important aspect of developing the District's potential in terms of tourism and to encourage the use of the countryside by local people. Those facilities likely to be considered under this Policy include off road motor sports facilities, clay pigeon shoots, stud farms and other general outdoor pursuits.

5.2.80. The Council wishes to ensure that the character and landscape of the countryside is improved and will require proposals for all recreational facilities and activities to make a positive contribution to the character of the surrounding area. The character of the countryside, its ecology, wildlife and any historical or archaeological features are vital to its attraction as a place for recreation and must be protected.

5.2.81. Due to their likely significant impact on the countryside and possible detrimental affects on wild habitats and biodiversity, proposals for golf courses will be subject to special scrutiny by the Council. Locations closer to the main areas of population are to be preferred, as they will help to minimise the need to travel and distances to be travelled. It is important that care is taken in landscaping to ensure that any new species planted are indigenous to the area and the pattern and form of new planting is characteristic of the area. Developers should demonstrate how they will safeguard existing habitats and incorporate new habitats into the development.

5.2.82. It is mainly rural sporting activities that generate high levels of noise, for example, clay pigeon shooting and motor car/bike events. Whilst noise nuisance would normally be dealt with under a separate legislation, land use planning can minimise the associated conflicts by directing such development to areas where potential conflicts are reduced. The criteria for selection of sites for regular use

should have regard to the potential impacts to the site, to the adjacent land and to nearby residents. Sites close to existing noise generators such as main roads would be preferable. Where sport uses cannot keep noise levels within acceptable limits, they will not be permitted. Proposals will need to comply with Policy ENV20.

5.2.83. The waterways, ponds and lakes of the District are important features and should be protected for use by local people and tourists. It is important that the natural attributes of a waterway are not adversely affected by any form of water-based recreation on rivers, canals, ponds and lakes. It is essential that the ecosystem is protected and pollution prevented. Existing walkways and cycleways should be retained and where possible enhanced as part of the proposed development. Fishing should be managed properly in order to ensure sustainable fish stocks.

5.2.84. Proposals for riding schools, stud farms and development associated with hunting, cross country, polo, driving, livery, horse breeding, horse training and the hire of horses should take into account the need to provide adequate pasture at a standard of 0.6 to 0.8 ha per horse, and the potential problems of the noise and smell arising from such developments. Other concerns can arise from the excessive subdivision of fields into small paddocks, perhaps for renting to individual horse-owners, which may lead to a proliferation of pressures, for example, for individual loose-boxes, jumping equipment and fencing. In extreme cases, authorities have considered the use of Article 4 Directions to control such subdivision. The availability of public bridleways and their ability to withstand erosion may be factors in considering the locational appropriateness of particular proposals. The impact on the local road network will also be assessed when considering proposals for such developments.

5.2.85. Recreation and sport in the countryside create a significant contribution to the rural economy and are often important ways for farmers to supplement their incomes. Small-scale schemes that support the greater use of the countryside will be encouraged provided they are designed sympathetically. All proposals should undertake proper management measures to promote sustainability and respect for the countryside, and avoid unacceptable environmental impacts.

COM15 WATERWAYS

Proposals for new build structures or extensions to existing structures including marinas, boating stations and permanent moorings will be permitted where:

- a) the proposal is situated on the edge of or within urban areas; and
- b) the proposal is required to enhance and improve access to the waterway or is required for the proper functioning of the facility; and
- c) the proposal will meet a demonstrated need.

5.2.86. Wychavon District has a number of waterways, which unfortunately have relatively poor public access. This Policy is aimed at increasing access and opportunities for recreation along navigable rivers and canals and assisting, where environmentally acceptable, in their restoration. There are many opportunities for the promotion and development of tourism along the waterways of the District and further opportunities to link towns and villages through a network of footpaths and cycle paths along the banks of waterways.

5.2.87. The Council has prepared an SPD on the Droitwich Spa Canals restoration scheme. The Droitwich Canals are also referred to in Policy SR6 and WCSP Policy RST9.

- 5.2.88. The character of the waterway, its ecology, its wildlife and any historical or archaeological features are vital to its attraction as a place for passive recreation and therefore must be protected.
- 5.2.89. Hence, the building of any new structures along the waterway is restricted to, within, or adjacent to, urban areas. Marinas offer a wide range of facilities and invariably include new development. Such development can have an urban appearance and generate significant road traffic movements, and is considered inappropriate in rural areas including those within villages.
- 5.2.90. Boating stations consist of off-river moorings under shore surveillance with facilities concerned with the running repairs and maintenance of craft, together with sewage disposal point and fuel and fresh water supplies. These should be located half way between marinas and within an urban area.
- 5.2.91. Moorings can, collectively, have a negative impact on the landscape of a waterway. It is, therefore, important to restrict the development of permanent or residential moorings to basins, marinas and urban locations or sites used historically for this function. Where possible, the Council will also encourage the transposition of existing moorings into basins and 'cuts', which would improve the appearance of the banks of waterways and the flow of river traffic. The development of moorings, other than overnight stays, will be judged on their merits, having regard to their impact on the landscape, access and parking arrangements and the number of existing moorings in the vicinity. Overnight or short-stay moorings will be permitted where they can be accommodated without harm to the character of the canal or river and the local area and, usually, where there is public footpath access.
- 5.2.92. Where appropriate, advice will be sought from the Environment Agency and other agencies to determine the need for a proposal.
- 5.2.93. Any development or works in or close to a watercourse may require the prior formal permission of the Environment Agency in the form of Land Drainage Consent. Notwithstanding this, the Environment Agency will be consulted on applications involving waterways for advice on the need for a proposal and whether it is likely to create an unacceptable impact either individually or cumulatively.

5.3. Enhancing People's Surroundings

- 5.3.1. Government guidance has established a major role for design in delivering both its sustainability and planning agendas. The Government's thinking on design is that high-quality and inclusive design should create well-mixed and integrated developments which avoid segregation and have well-planned public spaces that bring people together and provide opportunities for physical activity and recreation. PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) states that "High quality and inclusive designs should be the aim of all those involved in the development process". PPG3 states that "local planning authorities and developers should think imaginatively about designs and layouts which make more efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the environment".
- 5.3.2. It is the intention of the Council through consideration of development against the Policies contained in this plan to ensure that developments are sustainable, durable and adaptable, making efficient and prudent use of resources whilst achieving a visually attractive, locally distinctive, legible and secure environment. One of the key principles is in delivering Sustainable Development whilst ensuring it makes the best use of land.

5.3.3. PPS1 advocates that Local Development Documents (LDD) should contain robust design policies based on stated objectives for the future of an area and an understanding and evaluation of its present defining characteristics. Given the diversity of character in Wychavon's built and natural environment, the design policies of this Plan are intended as a guide to general principles that will be considered as part of the development control process.

5.3.4. Policy SUR1 establishes the general design principles to be applied in the Plan. There are four key elements the Council will consider in determining development proposals:

- Context and Structure considers development in its wider setting.
- Street scene considers the interface between development and what is around it.
- Built Form considers the design, layout and juxtaposition of buildings.
- 'Resource Conservation' considers how design can contribute to efficient use of resources.

5.3.5. Policy SUR1 is underpinned by a range of adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). The Council has set out, in its Local Development Scheme (LDS), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and Development Plan Documents (DPD) which will address specific design issues both topic-based and site-specific (Appendix 3):

- Topic-based guidance will include a residential design guide; 'Shopfront Design Guide' and 'House Extensions Guide'. The County Council has produced a draft 'Landscape Character Assessment' SPG, and transportation design guidance (including parking standards) that the Council will

consider adopting.

- The Council will continue its policy of adopting site and area specific design guidance as appropriate – including site specific Design Concept Statements (DCS), area specific development frameworks, urban design strategies for the towns, conservation area appraisals and village design statements.

5.3.6. Applicants are directed to the Council's Advisory Leaflet No 2 (Advice Note on Design Statements and Drawings to Support Planning Applications in Wychavon), which clarifies the need for planning applicants to set out a statement of design principles. Detailed advice on house extensions is contained in the Council's 'House Extensions Advice Note' SPG.

5.3.7. There is a range of advice and guidance on design in the built environment including spaces and streets, either published or endorsed by the Government. This includes 'Places, Streets and Movement' (DETR 1998), 'By Design' (DETR 2000), 'The Urban Design Compendium' (English Partnerships, 2000), 'Better Places to Live' (DTLR, 2001) and 'Buildings in Context' (English Heritage and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment 2002). These all give more details on the principles outlined below.

SUR1 BUILT DESIGN

All proposals for new buildings must demonstrate a high standard of design and make a positive contribution to the visual quality of the environment.

In the consideration of development proposals, the following design aspects will be taken into account:

- a) scale, height and massing;
- b) architectural detailing;
- c) quality of materials;

- d) visual interest, particularly in terms of its contribution to the street scene;
- e) appropriate levels and form of landscaping;
- f) local distinctiveness, as appropriate; and
- g) vitality and community safety.

Proposals should make the best use of land and buildings and incorporate energy efficiency and water management measures, whilst respecting the criteria set out above.

5.3.8. The aim of Policy SUR1 is to establish a set of broad-based criteria that will help to produce an environment that:

- reflects and enhances local character;
- is safe;
- functions effectively and efficiently and is easily used by all;
- contributes to sustainability objectives – particularly related to movement, energy efficiency and the best use of land; and
- has a high standard of design quality.

Context and Structure

5.3.9. Settlement and building form is a result of the interaction of a number of factors – these include landscape, topography, local materials, movement patterns and local economic and social history. This interaction gives each settlement a special form, resulting from its own unique set of circumstances – this is its context. Policy ENV1 clearly establishes the need for proposals to sit within the capacity of the landscape.

5.3.10. The Council is increasingly concerned that some recent developments ignore these locally unique elements as more are undertaken by developers and businesses operating nationally and/or using standard design approaches. Policy SUR1 is intended to address this concern by requiring new development to reflect, and not ignore, locally distinctive elements. In drawing on local distinctiveness and character,

the built form should not become a pastiche of earlier forms, but rather one that draws its themes from them.

5.3.11. A combined Design and Access Statement should accompany all applications, including listed building consent (except household extensions and ‘change of use’) for full/outline planning permission in accordance with Section 3 of DCLG Circular 01/2006 ‘Guidance of Changes to the Development Control System’.

The Street Scene

5.3.12. Below this contextual level, new developments need to address uses of:

- linkages – integration with surroundings, both visually and in the development of the movement network and movement choices;
- identity – creating a sense of place which strengthens local identity;
- legibility – easily understood routes, landmarks and buildings; and
- functional diversity and efficiency – ensuring that streets, spaces and buildings are designed to be:
 - a) efficient (make best use of land and reduce the need to travel);
 - b) effective (locate land uses in places where people want to use them); and
 - c) diverse (contributing to variety, choice, vitality and the creation or enhancement of sustainability in settlements in order that they can provide for a range of needs).

5.3.13. A consideration of the structure of a settlement is the basis for the detailed design work of any proposal, and can establish a coherent framework for developments.

- 5.3.14. The Council expects the spaces in any scheme to be the result of a well considered design approach – whether it is a hard or soft open space, a highway or a footway, the setting or curtilage of buildings or a public square enclosed by buildings. Broadly, the same design principles should apply whether the space is in the private or public realm. Thus, this Policy addresses the space that is the setting of buildings, the publicly accessible spaces within a settlement (highways, footpaths, squares, open spaces) and the three-dimensional elements which enclose it (building frontages, planting, walls, fences, etc.). A street is intended to describe any part of the highway.
- 5.3.15. Highways and parking are frequently the major influence on the form of the public realm. Their impact is felt, not only in its design quality, but also in terms of meeting objectives based around making the best use of land and maximising movement choices (both in terms of routes and travel mode). In recent years the Government has published or endorsed much advice on highway design and layout – of particular relevance are ‘Places, Streets and Movements’ (DETR 1998); The Urban Design Compendium (English Partnerships 2000); and guidance such as PPG3 and PPG13. The main principles of this advice are:
- the need to consider the place not the car;
 - the importance of designing to maximise movement choices, particularly to promote walking, cycling and use of public transport; and
 - the need for a flexible, objective driven approach to design and layout.
- 5.3.16. Whilst it is important to meet the requirements of the Highway Authority, Government guidance stresses the need for street design to be linked to a sensitive design-led approach that addresses the needs of all users as established in the movement hierarchy.
- In residential areas this will often require an approach based on ‘Home Zone’ principles.
- 5.3.17. Access in and around buildings should be available for people of all abilities – this is a requirement of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- 5.3.18. Safety and security is a vital element in designing the built environment – this should be achieved as much as possible through the layout and positioning of buildings, spaces and uses, rather than through the need to introduce other elements such as security fencing, shutters or cameras. Streets and spaces in settlements should have high levels of passive surveillance – through their general use and through overlooking by the active edges of buildings. A mix of uses – particularly in central areas and local centres – will help to achieve this. Public and private space should be clear and unambiguous and the layout of buildings should reflect this. Pavilion style buildings – frequently used on commercial, industrial or retail parks – have the potential for public access on all sides and need to rely on additional security measures to address their shortcomings. They rarely contribute to good urban spaces and will not be encouraged. Layouts should protect private space from areas with public access. Detailed building and landscape design should consider security – for example, avoiding the creation of dark threatening areas (recessed doorways, remote footpaths, etc.), which contribute to opportunities for crime or generate a fear of crime. Incorporating elements that reach out to the street (balconies, bays etc.) can contribute to passive surveillance and increased security.
- 5.3.19. Landscape treatments need to consider appropriate locally distinctive elements incorporating existing features that contribute to character or local distinctiveness. The materials and landscaping elements used in streets and spaces need to be suited to their

purpose and layouts should avoid clutter. Both landscape and building design should consider opportunities for incorporating public art. The Developer Contributions SPG supports Policy GD3, and establishes a mechanism for its provision. Clearly, the function of a building will have a significant impact on its form, but the principles set out in this Policy will apply whatever that function, be it residential, commercial, industrial, retail, community or a petrol filling station.

- 5.3.20. Tandem development is frequently difficult to achieve in a manner that maintains privacy. However, if backland sites are sufficiently large, a satisfactory design solution can frequently be achieved, with care, that delivers brownfield land and density objectives without impacting on privacy.

Built Form

- 5.3.21. Well designed buildings and places should emerge from an understanding of function – whether it be the function of the building itself or the function of the wider area. Buildings that have a function of significance within the community (religious or civic buildings, banks, etc.) should be given a visual significance by way of their size, location or features and used as landmarks, visual stops or feature corner buildings.
- 5.3.22. Privacy is an important consideration in both layout and detailed design. In terms of layout, modern housing developments have frequently relied on distance standards to achieve privacy between the habitable rooms of facing dwellings. However, such standards frequently fail to deliver density or design quality objectives. In such circumstances, privacy is often better achieved by offsetting the windows of facing buildings or setting their frontages at angles slightly off the parallel to obscure views. This allows distances between facing buildings to be reduced, contributing to objectives

intended to make the best use of land and achieve higher design quality. This approach needs a sensitive design treatment that considers the relationship between distances and elements such as enclosing building heights. The aim is to ensure a satisfactory built environment that allows sufficient levels of light and air.

- 5.3.23. Retail premises should be designed so that refuse can be stored in a manner that does not interfere with public or private amenity or interfere with design quality (see ‘Shopfront Design Guide’ SPG). Homes should have adequate internal area for bulky goods or long-term storage to meet their reasonable needs. Provision should be made for adequate space to facilitate the recycling of waste generated within the building(s). Where an unmet need is identified, larger developments, including those with a significant public, tourist or customer presence, should incorporate a designated area for a waste recycling facility which is easily accessible and would not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring uses.

- 5.3.24. Landscape around buildings should be used positively, to enhance the setting of a building and its relationship with the public realm. See also Policy SUR2. Outside settlements, spaces, streets and landscape treatment necessarily have a different function, but still need the considered approach outlined in this section. Where rural buildings are converted for employment or housing use or where farmland is incorporated within a residential curtilage, landscape and boundary treatments need to reflect and enhance their wider rural setting.

- 5.3.25. Buildings should have appropriate levels of amenity, for example, privacy or garden space in housing. This amenity should be provided for on new developments, and that of neighbouring properties should be protected from infringement by new developments.

5.3.26. As with spaces and streets, the built form can incorporate art. This can be on a small or large scale, depending on the size, function or location of the building. It might, for example, include a mosaic floor in a shop entrance, relief brickwork or the introduction of a stained glass fanlight. The Council's SPG on Developer Contributions, that supports Policy GD3, provides a mechanisms for the provision, funding and maintenance of public art.

5.3.27. One of the primary aims of this Policy is to produce quality design – this need not always require the highest quality materials, but it does require a considered approach. Innovative modern design treatments are unlikely to be appropriate in all situations. However, in central areas, landmark locations, commercial areas or occasionally within a domestic scale street scene, they may suit specific circumstances. Where they are considered to be appropriate, an approach that addresses the design principles set out in this Plan is required.

Resource Conservation

5.3.28. Where interesting or distinctive features and materials exist they should be retained, where appropriate, and incorporated within developments – this helps to maintain links with the past, adds to visual interest and encourages local distinctiveness. Developers should consider what opportunities there are to re-use materials, in order to reduce demands on finite building resources. This need not necessarily be within the built form, but may be as base courses or fill material.

5.3.29. Buildings should be capable of adaptation in order that their internal arrangements can meet the requirements of a range of occupiers and that occupants can adapt them to their own changing needs across the period of their occupancy.

5.3.30. Designers should also consider the implications of layout and detailing on energy efficiency. There are a number of ways in which this can be achieved:

- the siting, orientation, and/or layout of development can maximise the opportunities for using natural light and passive solar gain. Reducing the impact of wind can minimise the rate at which heat is lost from a building;
- the use of integrated approaches to energy generation and use, such as combined heat and power schemes or renewable energy practices;
- the choice of construction methods and the use of materials with reduced energy input such as recycled products. Techniques such as Life Cycle Analysis can also play a part to identify where improvements can be made to reduce the environmental impact of a product or process in terms of energy and raw materials used and wastes produced. It can also be used to guide the development of new products;
- adaptable building design so alternative uses can be found if the building is no longer required or suitable for its present use;
- the design of the building should take into account the minimum standards of the current building regulations in respect of conservation of fuel and power and, where possible, efforts should be made to exceed the requirements using locally available products; and
- water conservation measures.

5.3.31. In addition, new developments offer the potential to incorporate water saving mechanisms, such as rainwater harvesting butts and grey (bath and sink) water recycling for use in gardens. Such devices serve to reduce the overall demand for water.

Developers will need to show how water management measures will be incorporated into new development proposals at the application stage. See also Policy ENV19.

SUR2 LANDSCAPE DESIGN

In appropriate cases development proposals should be accompanied by an assessment of their landscape impact to justify the approach taken to the landscape of the site. Such assessment will need to incorporate a landscape scheme that:

- a) is planned as an integral part of the development;
- b) is appropriate to the character of the surrounding locality;
- c) retains and enhances significant natural habitats/features and other features of landscape, amenity or historical value;
- d) includes soft landscaping features or habitat using indigenous species and hard landscaping features that are appropriate to the character of the locality; and
- e) provides for adequate maintenance and long-term management.

5.3.32. The landscape of new development is an important way in which its impact can be softened or reduced and the quality of the environment retained or enhanced. It is important that landscape is integral to the design of development schemes and that its function is clear. Sometimes, a landscape scheme may be required to screen a development or to assimilate it into a setting, so that the development sits well in relation to its surroundings.

5.3.33. Proposals for new development should respect existing landscape features and seek to retain and enhance those that are of value to the character and appearance of the locality, amenity, nature conservation or cultural heritage. This includes natural features, such as ponds, trees, hedges and other habitat, and open spaces as well as hard landscape features such as walls. Wherever possible,

development will be sited in order to retain features of value as part of a scheme. Indeed, their inclusion can frequently enhance the quality of a scheme. Planning applications will be accompanied by landscape schemes and detailed survey information to a standard required by the Council in order to establish the impact of a scheme on natural features in particular. Landscape schemes will be submitted with planning applications in order that they can be considered as part of the overall proposal. They will establish the timing of any planting within the development and details of measures to protect features during construction.

5.3.34. Many landscape schemes will, additionally, require the use of new 'hard' landscape features, such as fencing, walls and paving, as well as 'soft' landscape.

5.3.35. It is important that hard and soft landscape schemes take account of the local character, as the design, type and location siting of landscape can be visually intrusive and can undermine character if it is designed without reference to that character. Additionally, landscape schemes offer the opportunity to enhance biodiversity by creating new habitats or by improving the continuity of wildlife corridors and to enhance local distinctiveness through the use of specific planting materials and features. The introduction of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) (Policy ENV19) into a development may have an impact on the nature of the landscaping provided and will often provide an opportunity for habitat improvements. The Council will liaise with applicants to ensure the submission of appropriate schemes.

5.3.36. Conditions will be used or legal agreements sought to ensure the implementation of long-term maintenance and management of a landscape scheme.

SUR3 PARKING PROVISION

Development proposals will be required to satisfy the parking standards set out in PPG13 (Annexe D), PPG3 and Traffic Advisory Leaflet 05/95. The Council will apply these standards to all developments regardless of size.

Proposals will be required to provide:

- a) minimum disabled, cycle, motorcycle and lorry parking provision; and
- b) maximum car parking provision.

The required level of parking below maximum standard will be determined by various factors including highway safety, local on-street and off-street parking provision and the accessibility of the site by non-car transport modes. Where on-site car parking cannot be fully provided, proposals that would otherwise be acceptable may be supported provided that highway safety is not compromised and the developer proposes mitigation measures that meet the Council's objectives.

- 5.3.37. Restricting the supply of car parking is necessary in order to reduce the land take of development, tackle traffic congestion and promote sustainable travel choices. PPG13 and RSS both advocate restricting parking provision, particularly in relatively accessible locations, and the use of maximum standards for broad classes of development. As the Highway Authority's parking standards are currently in draft form, detailed parking standards will be provided through a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 5.3.38. The Council needs to strike a balance between encouraging new investment in town centres by providing adequate levels of short-term parking and potentially increasing local traffic congestion caused by too many cars. The application of maximum parking standard will be influenced by location and that location's accessibility potential by non-car modes of transport.
- 5.3.39. For proposals requiring more parking provision than that required by the previous use, the Council will require

the developer(s) to fund mitigation measures if it is considered that the on-site parking shortfall would have a detrimental impact on either the character of the area or the highway safety issues arising from increased on-street parking.

SUR4 SHOPFRONTS AND SIGNS

Applications for the installation or alteration of shopfronts or signs will be granted where:

- a) the scale, proportions, appearance and character of all elements relate well to those of the building and the street scene;
- b) traditional features both within the shopfront and on the building frontage are retained; and
- c) security features are accommodated in a manner that is sympathetic to the character of the shopfront, the building and the street scene.

Contemporary materials and designs will be permitted where they conform to the principles of scale and enclosure traditional in shopfronts.

In Conservation Areas and on listed buildings:

- a) the Council will have particular regard to the impact of illumination on the character and appearance of the building, the street scene and the Conservation Area, including its setting. Internally, illuminated signs will not normally be permitted.
- b) traditional materials will be required;
- c) plastic projecting or fascia box signs will not be permitted; and
- d) fixed canopies will not be permitted.

Proposals for signs will be considered on their merits having regard to the interests of public safety and amenity. The Council will have particular regard to the materials used, the form of lettering and the style of any projecting signs in order to ensure that they do not adversely affect the character of the building or the area.

Matters regarded as important in design will take precedence over corporate style.

5.3.40 Policy SUR1 establishes a set of general principles for design throughout the District. Intended to supplement Policy SUR1, the above Policy is included because shopfronts and their signs have a significant impact on their locality, particularly in town centres and Conservation Areas. The Council has adopted a 'Shopfront Design Guide' SPG that develops the principles established in Policy SUR1 and is a material consideration in determining applications for consent on shopfronts and their signage.

5.3.41 Traditionally, shop frontages have followed well-trying principles with a fine attention to architectural detailing and a respect for character of the building and the street within which the shop is set. Together with new construction techniques, the development of modern materials (such as plastics for signs and canopies or anodised aluminium for window frames) has allowed shopfront design to move in a direction that can effectively ignore the character of the building or the street scene. The Policy does allow for the use of modern materials, as they can be used to good effect in shop design. However, they should not disregard the need for a sense of balance and structure in building design and the street scene and should avoid the ground floor becoming divorced in visual terms from the building of which it forms part or its surroundings. Similarly, corporate house styles are usually developed to apply in a range of situations – they will normally need to be individually tailored to address the character of either buildings or streets.

5.3.42 Many shops are fitted with security shutters and grilles to protect display windows outside opening times. The design of both the shutter itself and any housing use for its storage can have a significant impact on the appearance of the building or the street scene. Where security screening is absolutely necessary, grilles that cover only the window and allow displays to

be viewed will be favoured. They should be removable and proper arrangements must be made for their storage in a location that does not detract from the shopfront.

5.3.43 Given the unavoidable design relationship between a shop's frontage and its signage, the proposed shopfront must make provision for signage that accords with the design and materials. Applications for new shopfronts on listed buildings must be accompanied by fully detailed drawings.

SUR5 ADVERTISEMENTS

Consent will be granted for outdoor advertisements, including poster advertisements on hoardings, provided their display will not adversely affect the amenities of the area (including residential amenities and the appearance of the building, structure and surroundings to which they relate), or public safety.

Illumination will be considered against its impact on amenities, public safety and Policy ENV20 on light pollution.

5.3.44 PPG19 (Outdoor Advertisement Control) acknowledges that outdoor advertising (including shopfront fascias – see Policy SUR4) is essential to commercial activity in a free and diverse economy. However, the appearance of a building or place can easily be spoiled by a poorly designed or located advertisement or sign, or by an insensitive choice of materials.

5.3.45 Within retail or other commercial areas in towns, well designed advertisements and signs related to businesses in the area (including well designed illumination) can add to the sense of vitality of the area, including evening vitality. Harmony will not be achieved, however, by excess in number or scale, by inappropriate positioning, colours or materials, or by over-dominant illumination. In considering applications the Council will have regard to the full range of aspects of

amenity (including residential amenity) and public safety (including highway safety), which are set out in PPG19. Where applications relate to listed buildings or Conservation Areas, the same tests apply but in the additional context of the formally recognised qualities of the building or area. Listed Building Consent may also be required in such instances. The Council's 'Shopfront Design' SPG provides detailed guidance on many of the considerations included in the Policy and may also assist in consideration of other advertisements applications that may need to be considered under the Policy.

- 5.3.46 Within rural areas, including villages, the landscape character and any village setting will be particular considerations to take into account. Under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992, advertisements within the Cotswolds AONB will have strict control.
- 5.3.47. Poster hoardings and other freestanding outdoor advertisements are rarely linked in content to the premises or areas to which they relate. Their larger scale rarely harmonises with that of a street or rural scene. Where the Council may, having considered issues of amenity and safety, be minded to consider granting consent, this may be subject to amelioration or enhancing measures of design or landscaping.

- i. private amenity space (for residential extensions); or
- ii. ancillary operational space (for non-residential extensions); or
- iii. the local supply of smaller residential units.

- 5.3.48. PPS1 states that "design which is inappropriate in its context ... should not be accepted" (para. 34). Extensions to residential and non-residential buildings constitute the most frequent proposals for development. It is important to ensure all extensions are of an appropriate design and do not have an adverse impact on the residential amenity of any occupants of nearby properties or the character of the area. The term 'original' means, in relation to a building existing on 1 July 1948, as existing on that date and, in relation to a building on or after 1 July 1948, as so built.
- 5.3.49. Detailed design guidance on residential extensions is contained in the SPG on House Extensions.
- 5.3.50. There is some concern that extensions are impacting on the mix and eroding the stock of smaller housing (about 90 – 100 m²). To counter this trend, this Policy should be read in conjunction and comply fully with Policy COM1 relating to dwelling mix, which is why this approach is being taken and how it will be implemented.

SUR6 EXTENSIONS TO BUILDINGS

Proposals will be permitted for extensions to buildings where:

- a) their scale is subservient to the original building; and
- b) they harmonise with the character of the existing landscape or streetscape; and
- c) there is no adverse effect on the amenity that neighbouring residents could reasonably expect to enjoy; and
- d) they do not result in an unacceptable reduction in either:

SUR7 ANNEXE ACCOMMODATION

Residential annexe accommodation will be permitted where it is an extension to an existing building that is accessed from within the main building. Detached new build annexe accommodation will only be permitted where an extension is not a practical option.

In all cases, the proposal will:

- a) be ancillary to the function of the main house; and
- b) be subservient to the main building; and
- c) have no adverse impact on the amenity of

the main building or adjoining properties;
and

d) have no new vehicular access.

5.3.51. Residential annexes to main dwellings can provide for changes in the accommodation needs of families over time. As such, accommodation should be dependants of the occupants of the main house. Where annexe accommodation requires planning permission, it should be provided through an extension to a main dwelling, without an adverse effect on the character of a dwelling, the site or a locality. Separate buildings will only be considered if accompanied by evidence that an extension is not a practical option in design terms. It is important that, in any case, the design of a scheme is acceptable, that the dwelling retains sufficient amenity space and that the amenity of adjoining occupiers is not undermined. A condition or Section 106 Agreement will be used to ensure any accommodation is retained as ancillary to that of the main dwelling. The intention of the Policy is to restrict opportunities for the future use of such accommodation as separate residences where this is inappropriate in planning terms. In all cases, the proposals will be subservient to the main building and minor in nature.

residential can, however, result in the erosion of the quality of the landscape. In the open countryside this can have significant effects on the appearance and character of the landscape, particularly when domestic paraphernalia, landscaping and fencing are added. In settlements, extensions to curtilages can also adversely affect the traditional and historic layout and character of villages.

5.3.53. Where permission is granted, conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, that require the implementation of a suitable landscaping scheme/boundary treatment, and Permitted Development rights may be removed.

SUR8 EXTENSIONS TO CURTILAGES

Proposals for the extension of residential curtilages will only be permitted where:

- a) there are no unacceptable effects either individually or cumulatively on the character or appearance of the locality or wider area; and
- b) there are no unacceptable effects on the amenity of adjoining occupiers.

5.3.52. Proposals for extensions to residential curtilages can arise if adjacent land, which is not in residential use, becomes available. The change of use of land to

Section 6 –

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

6.1. Introduction

- 6.1.1. The policies in this section of the Plan seek to enhance economic prosperity and opportunity within the District in a way that does not undermine the quality of the District's environment.
- 6.1.2. As a predominantly rural area traditional agricultural and horticultural activity and related businesses have long been a significant element of the local economy. The south of the District around the Vale of Evesham is renowned for its fruit and vegetable production, packaging and distribution activities. Light industrial and manufacturing activity also contributes to the local economy and is concentrated mainly in the north. The service sector, tourism, distribution and wider haulage activity are also elements of the local economy.
- 6.1.3. The quality of the District's environment, its location and accessibility – particularly in relation to the motorway network, coupled with historically, a good supply of employment land has meant that the District has been successful in attracting inward investment covering most sectors including the introduction of limited hi-tech activity.
- 6.1.4. Whilst the economic base across the District is relatively broad and unemployment levels are low, the local economy is not without its weaknesses. The dominance of manufacturing, service and food based activities means that the District has a relatively low wage economy, in which average earnings are only 81% of the

national average.² Additionally, many of the more traditional sectors of the economy have undergone restructuring to enhance their competitiveness, and this has led to the localised loss of employment opportunities. Agriculture itself has faced significant structural changes and continues to decline as a major employer with significant impacts upon the rural economy.

- 6.1.6. The Policies in this Plan aim to safeguard and improve employment opportunities. They build on and assist those sectors that have historically contributed to the economy of the District. Additionally, the Policies aim to assist the diversification of the District's economic base, by maximising the advantages of the area and facilitating the development of wider economic activity, in particular, hi-tech and office sectors, and providing new economic uses in the countryside.
- 6.1.7. The Plan also recognises that town centres and settlement vitality and viability are important to the local economy and Policies aim to regenerate and enhance these areas.

6.2. Employment Land

ECON1 PROTECTION OF EXISTING EMPLOYMENT LAND

Proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of land or premises identified for or currently in employment use will not be permitted unless:

- a) there is a sufficient supply of sites for a range of employment uses to meet both immediate and longer-term requirements over the Plan period; and
- b) the applicant can demonstrate that the site/premises is no longer capable of meeting employment needs; or
- c) development of the site for other appropriate uses will facilitate the relocation of an existing business to a more suitable site; or
- d) unacceptable environmental problems are

² Figure from 'Worcestershire County Economic Assessment 2005 – 2006' (WCC 2006)

- associated with the current use of the site and the proposal will remove them; or
- e) the use is ancillary to an employment use; or
- f) the site is located in a town centre and the proposed use will contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre or forms part of a regeneration project.

- 6.2.1. The supply of employment land in the District is made up of the core sites identified under the previous Policy, together with smaller unidentified sites which frequently accommodate valuable employment uses within the towns or in the rural area. It is important that policies in this Plan seek to protect employment land to ensure that there is sufficient land in a range of locations to cater for the different land/locational requirements of a variety of business uses. Employment land can often be subject to pressure to accommodate alternative uses. Once lost, however, it will be difficult to replace it. The Council is limited in terms of the amount of land it can make available for such development. The incremental loss of employment land will erode the variety of sites/premises necessary for a strong employment base. The Council is particularly concerned about pressure to redevelop both small-scale local employment sites for non-employment purposes within the urban area and villages which add to the important mixture of uses necessary for communities in the District.
- 6.2.2. To ensure that the District can accommodate and retain a range of employment uses, this Plan will protect all employment sites to ensure that a balanced range in terms of size and location is retained. Proposals for the loss of any employment site will be considered, in the first instance, in terms of the quantitative and qualitative effect the proposed loss would have on this supply, and proposals that would have a detrimental effect individually or cumulatively will be refused. Where a proposal is considered not to have a

detrimental effect on the supply of sites, applicants will still be required to demonstrate that there are overriding reasons why the land should be developed to other uses by satisfying any of criteria b) – f) outlined in the Policy. This may include the requirement for a site to have been continuously marketed for a minimum of 18 months, to demonstrate that the site/premises is no longer capable of meeting employment needs.

- 6.2.3. It is important that once land is allocated for industrial or business uses that, subject to other Plan policies, in particular Policy GD1, Policy GD2, Policy SR5, Policy ENV1, and Policy ECON2, new development should be directed towards it. Proposals for additional employment use within the towns and settlements are generally supported where they accord with other Plan policies.

ECON2 EXPANSION OF EXISTING RURAL EMPLOYMENT SITES

- Outside defined development boundaries, proposals for the expansion of existing employment sites and/or uses will be permitted, providing:
- a) the site/use is currently operating without significant harm to its surroundings and the rural environment;
 - b) the proposal is for the reasonable and limited needs for expansion of an existing business or businesses; and
 - c) the site and its surroundings can accommodate such limited expansion without significant harm to the character, appearance or amenity of the area.

- 6.2.4. Wychavon has a large number of employment sites, including some protected by Policy ECON1, and uses in rural locations. Although the strategy of the Plan is primarily urban focused (and would not normally direct development to such areas) the continued viability of the existing businesses is important to the local economy. Such proposals, however, will only be permitted on sites or for

businesses that are currently operating without any significant adverse impact. Furthermore, mindful of their rural location and in order to minimise adverse impacts and ensure acceptable design solutions, proposals should be minor and should not lead to a level of use that is beyond the capacity of the site, the surrounding area or the wider landscape. This Policy is not intended to apply to larger, more strategic sites outside settlements, such as those allocated under Policy SR2. This Policy does not apply to the Plan's principal employment allocations under Policy SR2 at Throckmorton Airfield and Vale Park (Phase 2).

6.3. Lorries in the Vale

6.3.1. The Vale of Evesham is well known as a major location for fruit and vegetable production, and storage and distribution activity associated with this activity is widespread throughout the District.

6.3.2. In a number of instances the scale and location of activity associated with the larger operators, alone or in combination with others, has resulted in significant problems associated with traffic movements. The east of Evesham, in particular, experiences frequent movements of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) generated by storage and distribution activity which has historically been located on former military bases, farms and airfields in the countryside at some distance from the primary road network. The cumulative effects of growth in the industry has increased, the frequency and size of vehicular movement resulting in significant disturbance and safety implications for residents of settlements located on the main lorry routes. The following three policies aim to address these issues. Wychavon, along with the neighbouring districts of Cotswold and Stratford-on-Avon, have adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) 'Lorries in the Vale of Evesham – in 2001' intended to address the problem of intensification of B8 space (under the Uses Classes, i.e. storage and distribution centres). It is a material

consideration in determining planning applications. The SPG identifies a control zone within the three districts to which it applies. Policy ECON3 and Policy ECON4 will operate within Wychavon but will accept relocations from anywhere within the zone.

ECON3 B8 'EXCEPTIONS' POLICY

As an exception to other locational policies in the Plan, planning permission will be granted for existing food storage and distribution businesses operating in the Vale of Evesham Control Zone to relocate to sites better situated on the primary Lorry Route Network, provided that:

- a) transport movement associated with the business in its existing location has resulted in unacceptable environmental impact and the applicant can demonstrate that operation from the proposed site will result in transportation/environmental improvement; and
- b) the proposed site is a brownfield site or a greenfield site adjacent to established business activity which can accommodate the business without an unacceptable transport, landscape or environmental impact.

The Council will require that the future use of 'evacuated' sites is restricted by a legal agreement to ensure that it does not replicate the existing transportation and environmental problems.

6.3.3. As an exception to other policies in this Plan, that restrict new development in the open countryside, this Policy aims to facilitate and support the relocation of existing food storage and distribution operations – whose activities demand the use of HGV vehicles that individually or cumulatively result in serious environmental impact – to new sites that are better located for access onto the primary Lorry Route Network. To ensure that this Policy can help achieve its desired objective, planning permission will, however, only be granted for such relocation if it is in the power of the applicant to enter into a legal agreement to restrict the future use of the existing site.

ECON4 B8 RELOCATION

Four hectares of land adjacent to the Vale Business Park at Evesham is identified to accommodate the relocation of existing food storage and distribution businesses operating in the Vale of Evesham Control Zone.

Planning permission will be granted for such a relocation provided transport movement associated with the business in its existing location has resulted in unacceptable environmental impact and the applicant can demonstrate that operation from the proposed site will result in transportation/environmental improvements.

The Council will require that the future use of evacuated sites is restricted by a legal agreement to ensure that it does not replicate the existing transportation and environmental problems.

6.3.4. This Policy seeks to address this particular local issue through the allocation of 4 ha of land at Vale Park, Evesham, to help facilitate the relocation of existing food and distribution businesses, which have resulted in significant adverse environmental impact in the Vale. The land, together with about 5.5 ha at Vale Park, is already restricted for this purpose and planning permission will only be granted for the relocation when it can be demonstrated that the environmental impact associated with HGV movement would be improved and where the future use of the site currently accommodating the business can be restricted by a legal agreement.

6.3.5. The allocation of this area of land is in addition to that allocated to meet WCSP requirement and has been secured by the Council as part of the larger Vale Park allocation, for the purpose of relocating existing HGV activity. As the only readily available land capable of providing a relocation site, it is an essential addition to the employment land portfolio. The benefits that this allocation affords, in terms of addressing the exceptional

environmental, traffic and economic issues prevailing in the Vale of Evesham, provides the justification for exceeding the level of employment land provision provided by the WCSP.

ECON5 EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE VALE OF EVESHAM HGV CONTROL ZONE

Within the Vale of Evesham Control Zone indicated on the Proposals Map, proposals for any uses likely to generate HGV movements including expansions to existing businesses, will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the use and scale of activity proposed will not generate an increase in HGV movements through any of the settlements within the zone. Planning permission will only be granted for proposals that would result in an increase in lorry movement (over 7.5 tonnes maximum gross weight) where it can be demonstrated that:

- a) there is a need for the development to be sited in that location and that the development cannot be sited elsewhere in locations with better access to the main Lorry Route Network; and
- b) the reasons for the development in that location outweigh the harm that would be caused by any increase in HGV traffic; and
- c) transportation requirements would not result in more than a 5% increase in HGV traffic generated by the business over the level prevailing at the time of the application; and
- d) the routes proposed to serve the development would minimise environmental impact.

6.3.6. This Policy seeks to control the extent to which new development or expansion of existing businesses generates HGV movement in the Vale of Evesham. It aims to ensure that the policies aimed at facilitating the relocation of HGV generating uses are not undermined when planning applications for new development are received, which could further exacerbate environmental problems associated with HGV traffic

movements in the Vale. The Policy supports a Cross Boundary Strategy for dealing with Lorries in the Vale that has been adopted as SPG by a number of authorities affected by the issues (see para. 6.3.2).

6.3.7. In general, employment uses which can demonstrate that an increase in HGV movement would not be generated will be acceptable under this Policy and where they are acceptable under other policies in this Plan.

6.3.8. Where, however, a proposal would result in an increase in HGV movement, schemes will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the reasons for the proposal, such as economic benefits to the local community, outweigh the impact of the increase in traffic. Additionally, proposals will need to demonstrate why it is necessary that they require the proposed location and why the proposal cannot be located elsewhere outside the control zone, on sites with better access to the Lorry Route Network. Once development satisfies these tests, applications will be considered against the extent to which increases in lorry movements occur. Permission will not be granted for uses that would result in more than a 5% increase in HGV traffic, individually or cumulatively, over the level prevailing at the time of the application.

6.3.9. The SPG includes details of further information that will be required to be submitted as part of any application for development.

6.4. Employment Locations and Activities

6.4.1. The District is a predominantly rural area that has seen agriculture and land based rural economic activity restructure and decline as a major employer over the years. Whilst business in and around the towns and outside the District are the major sources of a range of employment opportunities, it is important that

economic activity is encouraged in the wider rural area. This can help to diversify and enhance the area's economy and provide for those wishing to work locally. A strong rural economy can also ensure that the rural landscape of the District is maintained and managed so that it retains its diverse character and quality, which is itself a prime asset to the economy of the District.

6.4.2. As stated, the Plan supports appropriate employment development within defined development boundaries in the rural area. In addition, a number of Policies support limited employment development outside these areas where the need to facilitate new employment in the rural area can be balanced against the need to protect the countryside, in accordance with national policy. Policy RES7, Policy ECON8, and Policy ECON6 are examples.

ECON6 EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT ADJACENT TO DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES OF VILLAGES

Proposals for new, small-scale employment development (for B1 and B2 uses only) outside but adjacent to village development boundaries will be permitted, providing:

- a) no suitable alternative sites are available within the development boundary;
- b) the proposal is in scale and character with the site, nearby buildings, and the wider locality;
- c) it would not cause noise, disturbance or other nuisance to nearby dwellings; and
- d) the village is served by a regular public transport service.

6.4.3. Whilst PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) generally aims to restrict new development in the countryside, it also recognises that an increasing number of economic uses are appropriate. The majority of purpose built employment accommodation and land in the District are located adjacent to the main towns

and this is appropriate in furthering general sustainability objectives. It is important, however, that the Plan finds specific ways in which to assist rural regeneration and to provide for more sustainable rural communities. To minimise landscape impact and to encourage new employment development in the rural area (which can be out competed by the housing market within villages) the Policy provides for small-scale employment development in locations immediately abutting settlements having regard to the nature and character of those settlements. To assist in achieving objectives of diversifying the rural economy, uses will be restricted to those falling within B1 and B2 use.

ECON7 AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

Where planning permission is required, development for the purposes of agriculture or forestry will be permitted, provided:

- a) it is necessary and designed for these purposes;
- b) it makes acceptable arrangements for the storage/disposal of waste; and
- c) any new buildings or structures are sited close to existing farm or forestry buildings, unless the functional need for a more isolated site can be clearly demonstrated.

6.4.4 A significant amount of applications for agricultural development are received each year. It is particularly important that new buildings, structures and works are not visually intrusive in the landscape.

6.4.5 It is important to note that not all agricultural development requires planning approval. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 effectively grants planning permission for a range of buildings/works via a system of notification, whereby the Local Planning Authority is only required to approve the details of a scheme, relating to its siting, design and external appearance.

6.4.6 The location, design and size of modern agricultural development is influenced by a number of factors which include modern and changing farming techniques and operational requirements, the agricultural economy, and increasingly stringent environmental and animal welfare regulations. Farm buildings present the most obvious example of the influence of the above. Present building requirements tend to be for large industrial scale buildings of utilitarian design using prefabricated materials and construction methods and these can potentially have a significant impact on the landscape of an area.

6.4.7 Whilst small-scale agricultural development, such as sheds or underground slurry tanks, may have little impact on the landscape, larger modern buildings, of the type outlined above, and other larger structures, particularly in prominent locations, can be potentially visually intrusive.

6.4.8 Therefore, in considering applications for development or schemes submitted under the notification system, the Council will seek to balance and respond to the changing requirements of the farming industry with the need to ensure that the landscape impact of agricultural development is minimised.

6.4.9 In this respect, new buildings, structures and works will be required to be acceptable in the landscape in terms of their siting, size, scale and design, including the type and colour of materials. The siting of works, structures and, in particular, buildings is of prime importance. Buildings should be located so as to be seen in the context of existing buildings. Skyline sites should be avoided and landscape features and landforms should be utilised to reduce visual impact. Proposals should be capable of being provided without extensive earthworks. A landscaping scheme will frequently be required to accompany proposals that should help 'knit' buildings or works into the surrounding landscape.

5.4.10. The Council will consider imposing a condition on appropriate planning permissions requiring the removal of the building if it is no longer needed for agricultural purposes or if it is considered unsuitable for another appropriate use. It is likely that such conditions will only be used where the operational requirements of a farm require a particularly obtrusive building or it would be sited in an isolated or prominent location.

5.4.11. The sub-division of farm buildings and, in particular, the separate sale of land and buildings are of particular concern. These can lead to an increase in demand for new buildings on existing or new holdings, which can have a significant impact on the landscape and detract from the open nature of the countryside, particularly on a cumulative basis. Proposals for new development on 'bare' land, or on holdings that have sold or found alternative uses for buildings will be scrutinised thoroughly, and particular regard will be paid to the impact the proposed development will have on the landscape. It should not, therefore, be assumed that permission for new buildings will necessarily be forthcoming. Applicants may be required to demonstrate a functional need for a proposed building that will need to explain or justify any prior disposal of suitable buildings. The re-use of buildings for uses to supplement farm incomes, for example, would provide such a justification.

- c) any associated open storage, including vehicles, is limited in extent and well screened; and
- d) existing buildings are used where possible, and converted to conform with Policy RES7 (Conversion of Existing Buildings); alternatively, where new buildings are essential, they should be small in scale and sited close to existing buildings.

6.4.12. There is a need to facilitate the diversification of farm-based operations in order to supplement farm incomes and to help sustain the rural economy. In accordance with PPS7, the Council will support well-conceived farm diversification schemes for business purposes that help to sustain farming or contribute to the local economy but which, at the same time, are sustainable in the countryside and do not detract from the character of the local area with respect to landscape and amenity. In particular, the transport implications of any proposal must be fully assessed and their impact minimised. Proposals will be considered against employment policies that address the principle of the location together with Policy GD2.

6.4.13. PPS7 encourages the re-use of existing buildings for farm diversification schemes, as the visual impact of a proposal will be reduced if it can be accommodated through the conversion of an existing farm building. However, some enterprises or proposals may require new build accommodation. Applicants must, therefore, demonstrate why it is not possible to accommodate a proposal through the re-use of an existing building. Whilst PPS7 seeks to strictly control new development in the countryside, it also recognises that new buildings to accommodate farm diversification schemes may be considered a reasonable exception to this general rule but should be small in scale. The Council may use conditions or planning obligations to prevent the severance of a diversified use from the

ECON8 FARM DIVERSIFICATION

Well conceived proposals for farm diversification will be permitted, provided that:

- a) the scale and intensity of activity are appropriate to a rural environment. Any new uses generating HGV traffic will only be acceptable if the site is readily accessible from the Lorry Route Network, without compromising road safety or residential amenity;
- b) the proposed use is compatible with, and helps to sustain agricultural operations on the farm;

parent farm holding, particularly if new buildings are allowed.

ECON9 FARM SHOPS AND ROADSIDE STALLS

6.4.14. The provision of overnight accommodation for tourists is an important form of farm diversification and a valuable source of additional income to the farming community. Proposals will generally re-utilise existing buildings. New buildings will only be permitted if small scale and where the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal has been specifically designed for the purpose and will not result in substantial, permanent building(s) with the potential for general residential use.

Permission for roadside stalls or farm shops (in cases where planning permission is required), and related signage, will only be granted where:

- a) the range of goods to be sold is restricted principally to unprocessed foodstuffs, plants, and rural craft products, produced locally; and
- b) it is demonstrated that the proposal would not detrimentally affect the viability and vitality of a sequentially preferred retail operation.

6.4.15. The traditional role of the District in relation to fruit and vegetable production, combined with its geographical location makes it an attractive location for storage and distribution activity, particularly relating to the food industry. The problems associated with such activity in the Vale of Evesham relate in the main to the historic development and location of sites, and policies to address these issues are included in this Plan (Policy ECON3, Policy ECON4 and Policy ECON5). Other policies in the Plan do not negate additional B8 uses in the District but B8 uses, or other uses generating HGV traffic on unsuitable roads, are usually not appropriate for farm diversification schemes. This is primarily because of the problems associated with traffic movements of heavy goods vehicles on local road networks, unless the site is readily accessible to the Lorry Route Network. Where a scheme is considered reasonable, the Council will be justified in ensuring that any open storage, for example, of goods, vehicles, containers, waste materials or finished products, is limited in extent and well screened. This may be achieved by way of condition or legal agreement.

6.4.16. The sale of locally grown produce and plants from roadside sites is a long established practice in Wychavon, enabling growers to supplement their income and provide a useful service. Small craft products, from businesses established as part of agricultural diversification, are a newer potential feature where the viewing of the craft processes themselves can be an added attraction to the visitor.

6.4.17. These operations, if not controlled, can have a detrimental impact on visual amenity and compromise highway safety. Also, if the range and source of goods sold is not restricted, there could be an adverse impact on nearby shops. Large farm shops/roadside stalls could also generate additional car journeys as their locations are not normally easily accessible via other modes of transport. Issues of landscape and retail impact are strategic concerns that are reflected by WCSP Policy D36. Signage may be individually or cumulatively discordant in countryside settings.

6.4.18. For the purposes of the Policy, 'produced locally' is taken to be within the parish or adjacent parish.

6.4.19. Planning permission is not needed for farm shops where the food produce sold is grown on the agricultural holding itself, and is sold in its natural state and has not been processed except for its packaging.

ECON10 THROCKMORTON AIRFIELD

Within that part of the former Throckmorton Airfield, defined on the Proposals Map, planning permission will be granted for up to 10ha of new B1 and B2 (High-Tech) uses, subject to the prior completion of a new road link from the site to the A44 Wyre Piddle bypass. Permission will be granted for new build within this 10ha, and for the re-use or redevelopment of existing established lawful buildings within the wider defined Policy ECON10 policy area, provided:

- a) the intensity of use and density of development, whether for an individual proposal or cumulatively, is consistent with the rural location, the character of the site and its categorisation as a Technology Park;
- b) any new buildings do not exceed the height of existing buildings; and
- c) any proposals include adequate arrangements for access, servicing and landscaping.

In addition, proposals for the re-use or redevelopment of existing buildings should not lead to a major increase in their combined footprint. The main development principles for the site, covering all these matters, will be set out in a development brief as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

6.4.20. Throckmorton Airfield is a previously developed site which lies approximately 5 kilometres to the north-east of Pershore and has subsequently been used for a variety of employment uses including research, storage, and training, some of which are associated with its former military use. The core area extends to approximately 23ha and includes 5 large hangars and numerous smaller buildings.

6.4.21. The Council's aim, in association with Advantage West Midlands and the landowner (who is a well recognised international leader in the high technology industry), is to redevelop the site as a Technology Park. The provision of a Technology Park will complement the existing Malvern Hills

Science Park by enabling businesses to grow within the area, providing opportunities to diversify the local economy, and will support the RSS economic aims of the Central Technology Belt (RSS Policy PA3).

6.4.22. As identified on the Proposals Map, Policy ECON10 allows for up to 10ha of the core area to be re-used or redeveloped for new B1 or B2 uses. B1 and B2 proposals, which support the development of a Technology Park, will be permitted where they are of a high quality design and would enhance the character of the area, and where the proposal would not result in an unacceptable level of traffic movements.

6.4.23. The Council, in conjunction with the landowner, will produce a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide development for the site. All proposals will need to demonstrate that they are in accordance with the Council's SPD for the site and include adequate and appropriate arrangements for access, servicing and landscaping. Any development proposals for this site will require a travel plan illustrating links to public transport and may also require Transport Assessments to ensure compatibility with local transport networks.

6.4.24. Policy ECON2 will not apply to this site.

ECON11 FREIGHT

Proposals that would generate significant heavy goods vehicle traffic will only be permitted where:

- a) the site is easily accessible via the Lorry Route Network (as defined in the Proposals Map);
- b) there is no adverse environmental impact on residential amenity; and
- c) the proposal would not reduce the potential to either increase rail freight or provide rail freight facilities.

In all cases, the developer must demonstrate that the goods cannot be moved by rail.

6.4.25. Heavy goods vehicle traffic can have unacceptable environmental impacts, including damage to infrastructure, noise, and pollution, as well as social impacts, such as discouraging cycling and walking. The Council, whilst recognising the need to encourage local employment opportunities of a scale appropriate to their location, aims to minimise the environmental impacts of heavy goods vehicle traffic on local communities and infrastructure.

6.4.26. For proposals that impact on the Vale of Evesham, applicants will need to comply with other policies of the Plan and the SPG on Lorries in the Vale.

the area coverage plots and the alternatives examined, including existing masts and sites that might be shared.

6.4.27. Mobile phone technology continues to evolve rapidly and offers the potential to reduce the need to travel. The telecommunications industry has now commenced its 'third generation' (3G) programme, which is likely to require a significant number of new masts. Although, in principle, some of these could be accommodated on existing telecommunications sites, the technical requirements for the new programme are different and much of the existing infrastructure is operating at full capacity. Approximately 78% of all UK households use a mobile phone, so the Council recognises the need to facilitate the necessary infrastructure to accommodate this demand.

ECON12 TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Proposals for the erection of telecommunications infrastructure will need to demonstrate and/or satisfy the following:

- a) clear evidence of need;
- b) that the ICNIRP Guidelines for safe emissions can be met;
- c) there are no environmentally preferable and technically feasible alternatives, in particular, brownfield sites;
- d) mast or site sharing, including non-telecommunication structures, is not practicable and would result in a greater detrimental impact on the landscape;
- e) that, in cases where the proposed infrastructure would be within 3 kilometres of an airfield boundary, the appropriate airfield has been notified.

Prior approval will be required in respect of the details of siting and appearance of development permitted under the GPDO 1995 (as amended) for free-standing mast proposals, or if the site could adversely affect the Green Belt, Cotswolds AONB, Areas of Special Landscape, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, other landscape designations, historic designations, Conservation Areas (and their settings) and listed buildings (and their settings). In all these cases a network connectivity diagram is required which shows the proposal's place within the wider network,

6.4.28. The Council has, however, a duty to safeguard visual amenity, particularly in landscape/townscape designated areas, and the policy complements the advice contained in PPG8 (Telecommunications) WCSP Policy D44 (Telecommunications). In order to minimise environmental impacts, the Council will, in appropriate cases, seek a Section 106 Agreement to ensure satisfactory sites are available for other telecommunications infrastructure. The Council also has a duty to ensure that the health of people living or working near telecommunications infrastructure is not compromised. The Stewart Report 'Mobile Phones and Health' (2000) suggests that there is no general risk, from electromagnetic fields, to the health of people living near telecommunications base stations but there is a need to ensure that new developments comply with ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection) Guidelines. Because of the public perception regarding telecommunications infrastructure operators are required to enter into

preplanning application discussions.

- 6.4.29. Telecommunications masts that are less than 15 metres in height do not require planning permission. Nevertheless, in such cases, operators must submit a prior approval application (notification) and such applications should be supportive of the aims of Policy ECON12.
- 6.4.30. In order to help operators and speed up the decision making process, the Council will maintain a register of masts and sites that are considered suitable for further telecommunications investment.

6.5. Retail

- 6.5.1. The Local Plan Retail Strategy is supportive of national Planning Policy Guidance, in particular, PPG6 (Town Centres and Retail Development) and subsequent ministerial statements, as it emphasises a plan led and sequential approach to retail development. The Proposals Map identifies where retail investment is encouraged and supported.
- 6.5.2. The Wychavon retail hierarchy, supportive of both the 'Wychavon Retail Study' (2001) and the WCSP Policy D.31 (Retail Hierarchy), is defined as follows:

Town Centre	(Droitwich Spa, Evesham, Pershore)
Edge of Town Centre	(Normally within 300m of the town centres of Droitwich Spa, Evesham, Pershore)
District Centre	(No District Centres within Wychavon)
Local Centre	(Identified on the Proposals Map and subject to COM12)
Local Shops	(Within defined development boundaries; not identified on the Proposals Map but subject to Policy COM12)
Out of Centre	(The Link Evesham; Worcester Road (Evesham); Kidderminster Road (Droitwich Spa); and Racecourse Road (Pershore).

- 6.5.3. This hierarchy forms the basis of the sequential approach to determining retail planning applications.
- 6.5.4. The Retail Strategy complements the sustainable development strategy by directing retail growth at the town centres in order to improve their vitality and viability. Town centres are more accessible by a range of modes of transport and there is greater potential for linked trips because of the range of land uses. Town centre retail development can therefore reduce the need to travel.
- 6.5.5. The Council has, therefore, allocated three sites for retail development in the town centres as set out in Policy SR3.
- 6.5.6. The 'Wychavon Retail Study' provides a robust basis for determining planning applications, and any that do not clearly demonstrate that they are supportive of the retail strategy will be refused. The Council recognises that the degree of uncertainty attached to forecasts of retail expenditure and floorspace requirements is likely to increase over the life of the Plan because of changes in the retail industry and shopping habits, for example, likely growth in internet-based retailing. The Council, in line with PPS6, will continue to monitor retail provision and carry out a mid-term review of retail expenditure forecasts to identify retail capacity and provide an indication of the quantity of retail floorspace required.

- 6.5.7. The 'Wychavon Retail Study' undertook a health check to assess the vitality and viability of the town centres and identified the level of qualitative and quantitative need for new retail development during the 2001 to 2011 Local Plan period based on the following:

- diversity of uses;
- pedestrian flows;
- prime shop property yields;
- prime shop rents;
- retailer demand;
- retailer representation;
- retailer views;
- shopping habits; and
- shop vacancies.

6.5.8. The main conclusions of the 'Wychavon Retail Study' are as follows:

- the town centres are neither robust nor vibrant and are vulnerable to competing higher order retail centres;
- there is insufficient growth in convenience goods expenditure to support a new large food store in Evesham;
- comparison goods expenditure growth could support new floorspace subject to retailer demand and suitable town centre sites;
- potential to 'clawback' convenience goods expenditure leakage in Droitwich Spa and Pershore; and
- support for the continuation of Wychavon's Town Centres Initiative.

6.5.9. It is inevitable that Wychavon's town centres will be subject to increased competition from neighbouring higher-order centres, in particular, Cheltenham and Worcester. In order to at least maintain their vitality and viability, the town centres must improve their retail offer. Retail development in locations 'out-of-centre' and 'out-of-town' can easily jeopardise the town centre retail offer. Therefore, such proposals will have to clearly demonstrate the 'need' for the development as defined below.

6.5.10. Outside town centres the need for large scale (in excess of 250m² net floor space) must be clearly demonstrated. The constituent elements of need will vary from time to time and place to place but normally comprise the following:

- expenditure capacity;
- market/ retailer demand;
- physical capacity;
- qualitative requirements/deficiencies;

- sustainability objective; and
- impact on town centre viability/vitality.

6.5.11. The preferred locations for large-scale food and non-food retail are the town centres of Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Pershore. Proposals for smaller-scale, including local needs, retail are subject to Policy COM11.

ECON13 LARGE SCALE RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

Large-scale retail development should be focused on the town centres and well related to the primary or secondary shopping frontages as defined on the Proposals Map. For proposals outside the town centre the need for the development must be demonstrated. Proposals must:

- a) demonstrate why the development cannot be accommodated on a sequentially preferred site(s);
- b) provide a Retail Impact Assessment, which demonstrates that there will be no detrimental impact on the viability and vitality of a town centre or prejudice shown to any planned town centre retail scheme;
- c) be easily and safely accessible by public transport, cycling and walking;
- d) demonstrate that it will achieve a net reduction in the number and length of car journeys; and
- e) be of a size that is consistent with the scale, function and catchment of the town.

6.5.12. Given the size of the District's town centres and their position in the wider retail hierarchy, for the purposes of this Policy, large-scale refers to a proposal of 250m² (net). However, smaller proposed developments will be scrutinised and may be refused if they clearly fail to satisfy the Policy.

6.5.13. Wychavon's town centres are the focus for a range of services and therefore offer the opportunity for linked trips, thereby reducing the overall need to travel. The town centres, relative to other locations, are also more accessible to non-car modes. The 'Wychavon Retail Study' highlights the

need to focus retail development in the town centres, as diluting the retail offer would jeopardise their vitality and viability. In line with PPS6 the Council will continue to monitor retail provision. Government Retail Policy, as set out in the 2000 Rural White Paper, recognises the critical role that market towns play in helping rural areas thrive, principally by being a focus for economic development and regeneration. The sequence for retail development is set out in the reasoned justification to Policy SR3.

ECON15 SECONDARY SHOPPING FRONTAGE

Proposals for a change of use of retail (A1) to non-retail (A2, A3, D2) uses at ground floor may be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that:

- a) it will not individually nor cumulatively have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the Secondary Shopping Frontage; and
- b) it will not create a concentration of non-retail units.

Proposals for a change of use to residential at ground floor may only be permitted if criteria a) and b) are satisfied and that it is clearly demonstrated that without such a change of use the unit will remain vacant.

ECON14 PRIMARY SHOPPING FRONTAGE

Proposals for a change of use of retail (A1) ground floor units will only be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that:

- a) it will not individually nor cumulatively have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the Primary Shopping Frontage; and
- b) it will not create a cluster of non-retail uses nor fragment the retail shop frontage; and
- c) the proposed uses will be in Financial and Professional A2 or Food and Drink A3.

Non-retail uses will generally be supported on the upper floors particularly if these are currently empty.

6.5.14. The 'Wychavon Retail Study' shows that due to competition from higher order retail centres there is a need to strongly resist proposals that would reduce the proportion of retail units in the Primary Shopping Frontage. In order to safeguard the retail function of town centres, the Council will have consideration to the guideline of no more than 15% of non-retail units within the Primary Shopping Frontage. Concentration of non-retail units and the break up of large retail units often dilute the retail offer, which, due to the subsequent decline in 'footfall', can have a detrimental impact on the remaining retail units.

6.5.15. A1 Secondary Shopping Frontages, by definition, are subordinate to Primary Shopping Frontages in terms of the retail function of the District's towns. Therefore, the Council will generally take a more flexible approach to the use of existing commercial properties. The principal function of Secondary Shopping Frontages is, however, retail and the Council will have consideration to the guideline of no more than 30% of non-retail units in these locations. Residential proposals will need to be justified by an appropriate 12 month marketing exercise which clearly demonstrates that any use within A1, A2, A3 or D2 uses is not commercially viable.

ECON16 FOOD AND DRINK RETAIL

Proposals for new or extensions to existing class A3 uses will be acceptable where it can be clearly demonstrated that:

- a) the proposal will not reduce town centre retail viability and vitality; and
- b) the proposals will not have a significant adverse impact on crime and disorder.

6.5.16. The uses are part of the entertainment and leisure market and can be an important element of the local

economy. They can also enhance the vitality of places through increased footfall and natural surveillance. However, these uses need to be carefully designed and controlled so that they do not have negative environmental impact through noise, smell, litter and disturbance issues. The Council has a duty, under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 16), to try to minimise opportunities for anti-social behaviour. In considering proposals, the Council will be guided by the view of West Mercia Police's Architectural Liaison Officer. Proposals should also comply with Policy SUR4, Policy ECON14, and Policy ECON15.

ECON17 RETAIL SALES AT PETROL FILLING STATIONS (PFS)

Proposals for convenience goods retailing from a PFS will have to demonstrate that it is clearly ancillary to the main use as a PFS unless:

- a) it serves an identifiable local need; and
- b) there are no sequentially preferred convenience stores serving the locality.

6.5.17. Petrol filling stations (PFS) can provide a valuable local service where there is a clear local need that cannot be met from a local convenience store. The Council will limit the size of PFS retail outlets to 250m² so that they primarily serve local and motorists needs and do not generate car journeys from settlements further afield which already have a convenience goods outlet. In order to reduce the potential for car journey generation there is a need to protect local sequential preferred convenience stores which, by their nature, generally offer greater accessibility.

ECON18 GARDEN CENTRES

A proposal for a new or extended garden centre will be permitted outside a defined development boundary, provided all the following criteria are met:

- a) it is on the site of an existing horticultural

business and would primarily sell produce from that business and/or other local horticultural businesses;

- b) it would serve a demonstrable local need;
- c) it would not harm the vitality or viability of any nearby centre; and
- d) it would be readily accessible on foot, bicycle or public transport.

6.5.18. This Policy is aimed at businesses where retail sales are intended to be the primary function rather than ancillary to an existing agricultural or horticultural business operated from the site. PPS6 is clear in the need to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres. Therefore, in order to prevent the emergence of out-of-town retail operations, the Council will strictly limit the range of products to be sold and the amount of retail space afforded to goods not linked to the land or produced locally by horticultural and nursery businesses operating in the Vale of Evesham. Otherwise, there is a risk of creating out-of-town retail sites which generally attract car-borne customers from a wide catchment area and divert trade, particularly in comparison goods, from existing town centres. Proposals will need to comply with other policies of the Plan, in particular, Policy ECON8 and Policy ECON13.

6.6. Tourism

ECON19 TOURIST ACCOMMODATION OUTSIDE DEFINED DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES

Additional tourist accommodation outside defined development boundaries will be permitted where the proposal involves:

- a) the conversion and/or change of use of an existing building Policy RES8 (Conversion to Residential Use); or
- b) the limited extension of existing tourist accommodation. Other new-build tourist accommodation in the countryside will be strictly controlled.

Proposals for new hotels or motels will only be permitted on the edges of Droitwich Spa, Evesham or Pershore, where:

- i) there is a demonstrable need in that location, and no suitable alternative site within the development boundary; and
- ii) the site is readily accessible (including by public transport) to and from the town centre, and from the trunk road network.

6.6.1. New permanent accommodation may be provided either through the building of new hotels and guesthouses, extending existing hotels and guesthouses or through the conversion of existing buildings.

6.6.2. It is important that new hotels and guesthouses are built in areas that have the amenities to support them and their guests, and that the size of the hotel is relative to the size of the settlement. Large-scale developments, for example, will only be considered in larger urban areas. However, in order to develop the area sustainably, it may become necessary to limit development.

6.6.3. By encouraging the development of tourist accommodation in built-up areas, the environmental impact of building in the open countryside is avoided. Sites within settlements are more practical as they already have the infrastructure and the public transport links required by this Local Plan. The Council will give detailed consideration to proposals within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to ensure additional development does not undermine its character.

6.6.4. So that tourism enhances the local community, it is important that it does not conflict with the local population. The conversion of buildings to guesthouses and hotels, especially within residential areas, can generate patterns of activity that are disruptive to

local residents. This should be avoided at all costs.

6.6.5. In all cases the proposals should not have a harmful affect on the character of the local area or the amenity of adjoining occupiers, there should be no conflict with other policies in the Plan and they should comply with Policy ECON19.

6.6.6. The Council will give detailed consideration to proposals within the Cotswolds AONB to ensure additional development does not undermine its character.

ECON20 CARAVAN SITES AND CAMPING SITES

A proposal for a new or extended caravan or camping site will only be permitted where:

- a) the proposal is for a small number of units, unobtrusively sited and well screened from public view;
- b) it would not harm the character or appearance of the countryside, or cause noise or disturbance to any nearby dwellings;
- c) any new buildings would be demonstrably necessary, sited as unobtrusively as possible, and designed to complement the site's surroundings; and
- d) the vehicular traffic generated could be safely accommodated on the local highway network.
- e) it would make adequate provision for water supply and utilities, and for sewage and waste disposal.

6.6.7. Caravanning and camping are popular recreational pursuits and provide flexible tourist accommodation and mobile holidays at the moderately priced end of the market. They can be of great benefit to the local economy. As most are self-catering, local shops, pubs and restaurants can benefit. Also, the large numbers of visitors contribute greatly to local attractions and other local businesses.

- 6.6.8. All proposals for new or extensions to existing caravan and campsites will have to meet criteria a) – e). All holiday (i.e. non-gypsy) caravan sites, whether touring or static, as well as camping sites (where planning permission is required) and holiday chalets will apply. The planning implications of mobile homes (residential caravans) parks and gypsy sites will be considered against the same criteria for housing development. Proposals should seek to minimise the impact on the landscape through careful siting and should be well screened by landscaping or the existing landform. It is also important that there should be no adverse affect on the surrounding environment, wildlife, agricultural uses, or archaeological and historic sites of interest.
- 6.6.9. The number of pitches proposed will be a key consideration in assessing the impact of proposals. Accordingly, small sites are likely to be viewed more favourably than large sites. The Council defines 'small sites' as no more than 15 pitches or units.
- 6.6.10. Access is of particular importance and sites must be located close to major roads. The Council must be satisfied that the extra traffic generated does not compromise highway safety. Static sites however do not need to be located near to major roads, but the road network must be able to cope with the initial delivery of caravans and the consequent traffic of visitors and service vehicles. Access to public transport, public footpaths and cycle routes will be considered when dealing with planning applications.
- 6.6.11. Landscaping and locational conditions will be particularly stringent for applications for caravan sites, to prevent them from becoming obtrusive in the countryside because of inadequate indigenous screening or poor topographical location. Sensitive areas include exposed riverbanks and high or sloping land that is visually prominent or land within the Cotswolds AONB.
- 6.6.12. It is essential that sites are well screened all year round, not just in the summer months when vegetation is at its thickest. Where screening is seasonal, touring caravans or the removal of static caravans from the site in winter will be required.
- 6.6.13. For static caravans, conditions will be imposed on any planning consent, limiting occupation to a period not exceeding 10 months in any one year, thus avoiding permanently sited caravans being used as residential accommodation.
- 6.6.14. The Department for Communities and Local Government 'Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism' (2006) recognises the need for Local Authorities to examine the scope for improvements in the quality of their sites (Annexe 4, para. 22). In special circumstances, therefore, the Council may consider minimal expansion of a site so that improved layout and/or better landscaping can be implemented.

Section 7 –

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

7.1. Implementation

- 7.1.1. The implementation or use of the policies and proposals of this Plan will involve the co-operation of all those concerned with the development process. The Council's primary role will be to ensure that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations can demonstrate otherwise. It also has a role in assisting with the formulation of high-quality development proposals, negotiating with developers on behalf of the community and through the direct provision of certain facilities and services.
- 7.1.2. The development process provides an opportunity for the Council to negotiate improvements in infrastructure and community facilities, which may be needed to secure an acceptable balance of uses and form of development. This opportunity will be implemented through Policy GD3 and through the production of Development Briefs, which may be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents where appropriate.
- 7.1.3. Where the determination of applications falls to other agencies, such as the Worcestershire County Council or Secretary of State, the Council will expect those agencies to have regard to the Policies and Proposals of this Plan in reaching their decision.

7.2. Monitoring

- 7.2.1. Monitoring is the process of collecting, collating and presenting information on indicators which have been selected as defining or influencing development trends in Wychavon and needs to be undertaken as a continuous process. By monitoring chosen indicators, the Council can measure the performance of the Plan's policies

and their implementation and can determine whether the aims and objectives of the Plan are being achieved. The 'plan, monitor, manage' approach to the delivery of housing in PPG3 (Housing) will also be fully addressed through this process. Monitoring will assist the managed release of land for housing and will indicate whether the Plan's intended approach to phasing is working and will inform future allocation of land for housing in the emerging Wychavon Local Development Framework (LDF).

- 7.2.2. The Plan's Development Strategy and policies have been appraised as part of a Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan. This has been undertaken to inform and enhance the environmental, social and economic integrity of the Plan. To assist this task and for monitoring purposes, the Council has developed a series of Sustainability Indicators, which are set out in Table 4 below.
- 7.2.3. As the Plan was developed under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 1991 these criteria are not intended to measure every Policy in the Plan, but address key aspects of the objectives based on the aims of sustainability, which are at the heart of the Plan's Strategy. They concentrate on performance indicators, which the Local Plan can have a direct influence over, and avoid the use of general environmental, economic and social capital indicators, which are only influenced to a limited extent by land-use planning.
- 7.2.4. Under the new system, introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning should take a holistic approach to the provision of, and for, future development. This will be reflected in the Local Development Documents (LDD) which, in time, shall replace the Local Plan in the emerging Wychavon Local Development Framework.

Table 4 Sustainability Indicators for Monitoring

Sustainability Criteria	Relation to Local Plan objectives objective(s)	Monitoring Indicator
Prudent Use of Resources		
Safeguarding soil resources	2	Area of Grade 1, 2 and 3a agricultural land lost
Safeguarding ground and river water resources	2	No. of developments using sustainable drainage
Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use and water conservation	2	No. of developments utilising renewable energy schemes No. of developments utilising energy conservation measures. No. of developments utilising water conservation measures
Re-using previously developed land	1, 3	%age of new homes and employment built on previously developed land compared to greenfield
Re-using buildings	1, 3	Change of use of vacant buildings
Protecting the Environment		
Protecting ancient woodlands	1	Loss of Ancient Woodland
Protecting the Green Belt	1, 3, 7, 8	Exception development allowed in the GB
Protecting the AONB	1	Development allowed in AONB
Safeguarding LB/AM, archaeology, other cultural assets	1	Developments resulting in damage/destruction of LB /AM (Enforcement Notices)
Impact on biodiversity	1	Area of development allowed within SSSI/SWS
Protection from flooding	9	Area of development allowed within river flood plains
Reducing pollution	2, 8, 9	Developments incorporating conditions
Reducing the need to travel by car	1, 2, 5, 7, 8	Levels of road traffic % homes built with access to public transport No. of Travel Plans completed Value of developer contributions towards sustainable transport Car parking provision in new developments
Promoting walking/cycling	7, 9	Length of new cycleways/pedestrian routes
Social Progress		
Improving quality of surroundings	5, 7, 8, 9, 10	No. of developments incorporating design assessments
Ensuring safety and security	9	No. of developments incorporating 'Secured By Design' principles

Sustainability Indicators for Monitoring Cont...

Providing housing for all	4	Supply of residential land measured against the Structure Plan Number of dwellings negotiated for affordable housing and achieved through rural exception site as %age of overall supply Value of contribution towards affordable housing through Section 106 Agreements Types and mix of sizes of housing Density achieved in new housing developments
Providing for the needs of leisure/recreation	5, 7, 8, 10	Area of open space negotiated for new housing developments Value of developer contributions to public open space Area of existing public open space lost to other developments
Effectively involving local people in decision making and action	5	Percentage number of respondents to consultation exercises
Providing for the needs of community	5, 6	Losses of existing commercial /communal facilities Creation of new commercial/communal facilities
Economic Opportunity		
Providing for employment	8, 10	Unemployment rates %age of new employment land measured against the Structure Plan
Improving the vitality and viability of town and village centres	5, 8, 10	Number of vacant shops
Providing for Tourism	8, 10	No. of holiday lets approved

7.3. Review

- 7.3.1. The majority of this Plan will be 'saved' within the LDF until 2011; however, some sections will be replaced earlier as LDD on the Core Strategy, Balanced Housing Markets and Open Space in accordance with the Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 7.3.2. The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will continue to monitor the aims and objectives of the Plan and this monitoring will inform future policy development.

Assessment Methodology for Proposed Housing in or adjoining Villages

Proposals for open market housing which is not 'infill', will be assessed against all the following criteria:

- i) the ability to support a primary school that is within the Policy GD1 boundary or is within a reasonable and safe walking distance;³
- ii) the overall accessibility rating of the village (see Annexe 2) and the availability of a regular bus service to a nearby town;
- iii) the availability of other more sequentially preferable sites or buildings within the village;
- iv) the scale and mix of any existing allocations and/or windfall permissions;
- v) the impact on appearance and/or character of the area or other site-specific considerations; and
- vi) the availability of existing capacity to accommodate the development or ability to support new capacity in physical and social infrastructure.

³ The definition of "safe walking distance" is that it should be reasonable and safe. The precise distance will depend on local circumstances and will be determined in consultation with the Highway Authority (Worcestershire County Council).

VILLAGE ACCESSIBILITY

VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	VERY LOW	NONE
5	4	3	2	1	0
BRETFORTON	BADSEY	ASHTON UNDER HILL	BREDONS HARDWICKE	ABBOTS MORTON	ABBERTON
BROADWAY	BREDON	BECKFORD	BROUGHTON HACKETT	ASTON SOMERVILLE	ALDINGTON
CLEEVE PRIOR	COOKHILL	BIRLINGHAM	CONDERTON	BEVERE	ATCH LENCH
ECKINGTON	CHARLTON	BISHAMPTON	CROSSWAY GREEN	BLACKMINSTER	HADZOR
HANBURY	CROPTHORNE	CHILDSWICKHAM	TRENCH LANE	BREDONS NORTON	HATFIELD
HARTLEBURY	CROWLE AND CROWLE GREEN	CHURCH LENCH	GREAT COMBERTON	BROAD MARSTON	HINDLIP
HARVINGTON	DEFFORD	CUTNALL GREEN	HIMBLETON	GRAFTON FLYFORD	HINTON ON THE GREEN
INKBERROW	DRAKES BROUGHTON	ELMLEY CASTLE	LITTLE COMBERTON	HAMPTON LOVETT	HUDDINGTON
OMBERSLEY	FERNHILL HEATH	FLADBURY	MARTIN HUSSINGTREE	KINGTON	NAUNTON BEAUCHAMP
PINVIN	HONEYBOURNE	FLYFORD FLAVELL	MIDDLE LITTLETON	KINSHAM	NETHERTON
STOKE PRIOR	KEMERTON	HILL & LOWER MOOR	NORTON JUXTA KEMPSEY	ODDINGLEY	NORTHAMPTON
TIBBERTON	NORTON & LENCHWICK	LITTLEWORTH	OLDFIELD	ROUS LENCH	SALE GREEN
UPTON SNODSBURY	OFFENHAM	NORTH LITTLETON	STOCK & BRADLEY	STRENSHAM	SNEACHILL
WYCHBOLD	PEOPLETON	OVERBURY	SUMMERFIELD	SYTCHAMPTON	THROCKMORTON
	SEDGEBERROW	PEBWORTH	WICK	WESTMANCOTE & LOWER WESTMANCOTE	UPHAMPTON
	WICKHAMFORD	SOUTH LITTLETON	WADBOROUGH	WHITE LADIES ASTON	
	WYRE PIDDLE	STOULTON & HAWBRIDGE			
		UPTON WARREN			
		WHITTINGTON			

Guide to village assessment

Obtain one point for the availability of:

Village shop or other outlet where general groceries may be bought

Community facility such as a hall or club

Public house

School which has part of the County's 8% surplus spaces

Regular bus service

Villages can score from zero to five, with zero taken as no accessibility and five to suggest the highest levels of accessibility, at village level. Some villages with a score of 4 or 5 may feel they have little access to services, or find it difficult to believe that they are termed accessible. However, accessibility may be seen as a relative concept, operating at different levels, and the facilities assessed are those relating to essential day to day needs within a local community.

Ancient Monuments

Parish	Monument No.	Grid Ref
Abbots Morton	31953 Moated site adj St Peter's Church	SP 0264 5506
Ashton-under-Hill	29366 Village cross 80m east of St Barbara's Church	SO 9974 3769
Birlingham (Eckington)	319 Eckington Bridge	SO 922 423
Bredon	303 The Tithe Barn	SO 918 368
Charlton	202 Roman settlement north-west of Ryden Farm	SP 020 456
Charlton	287 Enclosures north/north-east of Fernhill Farm	SP 006 469
Charlton	288 Settlement site north-east of Fernhill Farm	SP 009 469
Childswickham	29370 Village cross	SP 075 384
Childswickham	31956 Moated site	SP 075 384
Churchill	31943 Moated site, Churchill Court	SO 9237 5359
Conderton	228 Conderton Camp	SO 971 383
Crowle	30049 Moated site, Crowle Court	SO 9210 5598
Dormston	30054 Moated site at Moat Farm	SO 9840 5727
Doverdale	31952 Moated site, west of Church of St Mary	SO 8595 6600
Droitwich Spa	241 Roman settlement, Bays Meadow	SO 898 639
Droitwich Spa	339 Dodderhill Roman Fort	SO 902 636 SO 902 637
Droitwich Spa	30097 Vines Park, Salt Workings	
Eckington	229 Ditched enclosures south-east of Eckington Field Farm	SO 932 404
Eckington	230 Ditched enclosures 1/2 mile (800m) north of Woollashall Farm	SO 943 417
Eckington (Birlingham)	319 Eckington Bridge	SO 922 423
Elmley Castle	29369 Village cross	SO 980 414
Elmley Castle	280 Elmley Castle	SO 979 403
Elmley Castle	290 Moated site	SO 985 401
Elmley Castle	31966 Moated site, Manor Farm, Kersoe	SO 9851 4012
Elmley Lovett	27577 Churchyard cross, St Michael's Church	SO 8656 6965
Elmley Lovett	30081 Medieval settlement surrounding St Michael's Church	SO 8657 6954
Evesham	221 Abbot Chryton Wall, Boat Lane	SP 029 437- SP 032 437
Evesham	253 Evesham Abbey (remains of)	SP 038 436
Evesham	254 Abbot Reginald's gateway and old vicarage	SP 038 438
Evesham	255 West porch of Bengeworth Old Church	SP 043 435

Ancient Monuments Cont...

Parish	Monument No.	Grid Ref
Fladbury	201 Settlement site north of Spring Hill	SO 984 467
Grafton Flyford	200 Deserted medieval village	SO 960 559
		SO 962 558
Hadzor	338 St John the Baptist Church	SO 915 625
Hanbury	31950 Moated site Huntingdon Farm	SO 9287 6239
Hanbury	31948 Moated site 450m west of Parkhall Farm	SO 9731 6179
Hanbury	31978 Icehouse and Ponds, Hanbury Hall	SO 9411 6383
Hanbury	31975 Standing cross, School Road and Astwood Lane	SO 9546 6415
Hanbury	31977 Dovecote, south of Pumphouse Farm	SO 9549 6319
Huddington	31944 Moated site at Huddington Court	SO 9425 5729
Inkberrow	31942 Moated site east of Gannow Farm	SP 0026 5905
Honeybourne	292 Deserted village of Poden	SP 127 435
Cookhill	256 Cookhill Nunnery	SP 054 573
Inkberrow	31941 Moated site	SP 017 572
Kemerton	212 Settlement site north-east of Kinsham	SO 939 357
		SO 938 358
Kemerton	220 Double ditched enclosures south of Robin Mill	SO 954 364
Kemerton	233 Kemerton Camp	SO 958 402
Naunton Beauchamp	294 Sheriff's Naunton deserted village north-east of Naunton Court	SO 959 524
Netherton	236 Ditched enclosures 1/4 mile (400m) north of Chapel Farm	SO 991 421
Netherton	259 Netherton Chapel	SO 990 416
North and Middle Littleton	309 Tithe barn	SP 080 470
Norton and Lenchwick	295 Prehistoric enclosures 3/4 mile (120 m) east of Norton Church	SP 054 477
Ombersley	242 Hawford Roman Camp	SO 844 604
		SO 845 604
Ombersley	310 Dovecote at Hawford Grange	SO 846 607
Overbury	205 Double ditched enclosure north of Oakey's Lane	SO 959 367
Overbury	215 Enclosures and ring ditches west of Crashmore Lane	SO 957 355
Pershore	260 Pershore Abbey (site off)	SO 948 458
Pershore (Wick)	321 Pershore Bridge	SO 952 452
Rous Lench	31955 Moated site east of St Peter's Church	SP 015 534
Strensham	31947 Strensham Castle	SO 904 405
Throckmorton	31946 Moated site and medieval settlement	SO 9814 4977

Ancient Monuments Cont...

Parish	Monument No.	Grid Ref
Ullington	30058 Medieval settlement	SP 1097 4709
Upton Snodsbury	203 Castle Hill Camp	SO 938 554
Upton Snodsbury	29867 Churchyard cross, St Kenelm's Churchyard	SO9431 5436
Upton Warren	31954 Moated site and fishponds south-west and north of Durrance Farm	SO 9073 7102 SO 9093 7159
Whittington	239 Crookbarrow	SO 875 524
Wick	204 Double ditched enclosure north-east of Wick Village	SO 963 464
Wick	207 Settlement site south-east of Wyre Piddle	SO 967 465
Wick	216 Settlement site north-east of Wick Village	SO 967 456
Wick	217 Cursus and trackway north-west of Oakland Farm	SO 975 433
Wick	29815 Churchyard cross 40m north-west of St Mary's Church	SO 9623 4530
Wyre Piddle	29368 Village cross	SO 963 474
Wyre Piddle	324 Wyre Bridge	SO 961 476

Conservation Areas

Settlement	Area	Designated
Abberton	The central core around a twisting road in this small settlement	3/76
Abbots Morton	Most of this very pleasant village	11/69
Aldington	The central core of this small settlement	7/75
Ashton-under-Hill	The central area of this village	11/69
Atch Lench	Most of this small settlement	7/96
Badsey	The central area in the centre of the village	7/75
Beckford	The central area of the village	3/72
Bevere	Most of the older part of the settlement	8/75
Birlingham	A small area adjoining the almshouses	11/75
Upper Birlingham	A small area around the church	7/96
Bredon	The central area of the village	11/69
Bredon's Norton	Most of the village	8/75
Bretforton	The central area of the village	11/69
Broad Marston	The core of the settlement	3/76
Broadway	The central area of the village and area of open countryside to south	11/69
Childswickham	The central area of the village	11/69
Church Lench	The central area of the village	8/75
Cleeve Prior	The central area of the village	11/69
Conderton	Most of the village	3/72
Crothorne	Most of the village	11/69
Crowle	The central area of the village	11/69
Droitwich Spa	High Street, Friar Street, St Andrew's Street, Victoria Square and parts adjoining, including St Peter's Fields	8/75
Droitwich Link Canal	Running through Vines Park connecting to Worcester/Birmingham canal at Hanbury	10/87
Droitwich Canal	All the locks and bridges and including Salwarpe Village	8/75
Eckington	The central area of the village to both sides of the main road	10/75
Elmley Castle	The central area of the village	11/69
Evesham	High Street, Vine Street, Merstow Green, Bridge Street, Waterside and part of Church Street	1/68
	Extended to include an area to the north along High Street	5/89
Fladbury	The central area of the village	2/73
Great Comberton	The central area of the village	11/69
Hadzor	The central area of the village	7/96
Hampton	Small central core of settlement	4/88

Conservation Areas Cont...

Settlement	Area	Designated
Hartlebury	The central area of the village, Hartlebury Castle and environs	11/69
Harvington	The central area of the village	11/69
Himbleton	Almost all of the village	7/75
Honeybourne	The central area of the village	8/75
Huddington	All the village	7/75
Inkberrow	The central area of the village	11/69
Kemerton	Most of the village	3/72
Kinsham	The central core of the settlement	8/75
Little Comberton	The central area of the village	11/69
Lower Moor	Small area around the historic core of the village	7/96
Martin Hussingtree	Most of central area around the church	7/96
Middle Littleton	The core of the settlement	3/76
Naunton Beauchamp	Most of this small settlement	11/75
Northampton	Most of this small settlement	11/75
North Littleton	The central area of the village	7/75
Norton (Evesham)	The central area along the main road	7/75
Offenham	The central area of the village	11/69
Omersley	The central area of the village	11/69
Overbury	Most of the village	3/72
Pebworth	Most of the village	3/72
Peopleton	A small central core of the village	11/75
Pershore	High Street, Bridge Street, Broad Street, most of Newlands, Abbey Grounds and Pershore Sports Ground	11/68
Rous Lench	Most of the village	7/75
South Littleton	The central area of the village	8/75
Stoulton	Small area around the church	7/96
Uphampton	Most of the village	1/75
Upton Snodsbury	The central core around the church	11/69
Upton Warren	Most of the settlement	9/75
Westmancote	Most of the settlement	8/75
Whittington	Small central area of village around the church	9/76
Wick	Most of the village	8/75
Wickhamford	All the old village	8/75
Worcester/Birmingham Canal	Bridges, Locks, etc., and a few buildings associated with the canal	8/75
Wyre Piddle	The central area of the village	8/75

**SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE
Including
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

The following table sets out all the adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) including Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). The table also sets out proposed new SPD, some of which are under preparation at the time of publication. Please note that a more detailed programme of SPD preparation is set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme, which is available to view in the Council's Community Contact Centres and on its website www.wychavon.gov.uk. The Council has also published a series of planning advice notes. These are not SPG or SPD and are set out in the publications section on our website.

Site-Specific SPG/SPD

Title	Status	Adoption Date (anticipated date)	Supporting Local Plan Policy
Accessible Historic Environment	Adopted SPD	January 2006	ENV13, ENV14
Historic Parks and Gardens	Adopted SPD	January 2005	ENV11
Droitwich Canals (includes proposed development sites at Netherwich Basin, Saab Garage, Land Rover Garage and Hanbury Road	Adopted SPD	September 2004	SR1, SR4
Evesham Riverside Strategy: Development Framework	Adopted SPD	January 2002	SR1, SR4
Evesham Riverside Development Guide: Mill Street/Common Road	Adopted SPG	November 2001	SR1, SR4
Evesham Riverside Development Guide: Port Street	Adopted SPG	January 2002	GD1
Evesham Riverside Development Guide: Abbey Road Depot	Adopted SPG	September 2002	SR1, SR4
Land Rear of High Street Pershore Development Guide	Adopted SPG	August 2002	SR1, SR4
Design Concept Statement: Peewit Road, Evesham	Adopted SPD	October 2005	SR1
Design Concept Statement: Bewdley Lane/Blind Lane, Evesham	Adopted SPD	May 2006	SR1, SR4
Design Concept Statement: Badsey Road, Evesham	Adopted SPD	October 2006	SR1
Design Concept Statement: Throckmorton Airfield	Proposed SPD	(January 2007)	SR2, ECON10
Ombersley Conservation Area Appraisal	Adopted SPD		
Pebworth Conservation Area Appraisal	Adopted SPD		
Lorries in the Vale of Evesham	Adopted SPG	November 2001	ECON5
Parish Plans *	Potential SPD	Please refer to LDS	SUR1

* Many parishes are preparing Parish Plans or Village Design Statements (VDS). Some of these documents (or elements of them) could be adopted as SPD.

Topic-Based SPG/SPD/Advice Notes

Title	Status	Adoption Date (anticipated date)	Supporting Local Plan Policy
Shopfront Design Guide	Adopted SPG	February 1995	SUR1, ECON14, ECON15
House Extensions Advice Note	Adopted SPG	January 2001	SUR1, GD2
Affordable Housing	Adopted SPG	November 2002	COM2
Developer Contributions Towards Service Infrastructure	Adopted SPG	October 2003	GD3
Cycling Strategy	Adopted SPG	November 2003	SR5
Re-use of Rural Buildings	Proposed SPD	(June 2007)	RES7, RES8, ECON8
Biodiversity	Proposed SPD	(August 2007)	GD2, ENV3, ENV4, ENV5, ENV6, ENV7, ENV8
Developer Contributions (S106) for Education	Proposed SPD	(May 2007)	GD3
Parking Standards	Proposed SPD	Not yet programmed	SUR3

* At time of publication of this Plan

Description of Strategic Gaps – Appendix to Policy SR10.

- a) **Beckford – Inset Map 58** There are two areas of land that form important breaks between the built-up areas of Beckford. One lies to the north of the A46 (T) and comprises flat arable land, allotments and some domestic development, although its general appearance is one of an open area, detached from the main built-up settlement. The second gap is an attractive part-wooded area bound by mature hedges and includes part of the Manor House grounds and bridges Carrant Brook. Both gaps have the function of preventing the erosion of gaps between distinct areas of development to maintain the setting and character of the settlement.
- b) **Crowle and Crowle Green – Inset Maps 20 and 67** The large open area of land between the two settlements is in agricultural use and comprises two separate farms, sloping gently to the road. The land is bound by mainly mature hedging. The Strategic Gap has been designated in this area with particular importance to maintaining the separate identities of Crowle and Crowle Green and therefore preventing their coalescence.
- c) **Droitwich – Inset Map 1** The Strategic Gap straddles the A442 and forms an important break in built development comprising Berry Hill industrial estate and Westlands to the south of Hampton Lovett and Stonebridge Cross industrial estate to the north. The western portion is more extensive, comprising rising land to the north and is very prominent in the landscape from a number of public vantage points. The northern section has been recently landscaped as part of the Stonebridge Cross development. Within this section there is some limited development comprising Jakemans Farm. The eastern section has greater tree cover and there is no built development.
- d) **Evesham – Inset Map 2** Separating Evesham from Hampton is an extensive area of agricultural land that follows the river Isbourne up to Pershore Road. The land is largely undeveloped and includes a wooded walkway enclosed by field boundaries and farm tracks. The land gently slopes towards the river on both sides and presents a very attractive visual break between Evesham and Hampton, preventing their coalescence, thus allowing them to maintain their different identities.
- e) **Hinton-on-the-Green – Inset Map 32** This village has developed into two distinct parts separated by the land around the River Isbourne. The Strategic Gap here comprises land either side of the principle road through the village, which forms an important open feature within Hinton. The northern part comprises attractive sloping grazing land and the southern side is agricultural and scrubland. Both present an important break to the village, enhancing its character.
- f) **Norton (and Lenchwick) – Inset Map 79** Norton comprises two distinctive parts separated by an open undeveloped area of gently sloping grazing land situated to the south of St Egwin's Church. This break in an otherwise built-up frontage provides an important visual gap between the traditional buildings in the northern part of the village and the more modern developments to the south. The gap also has the function of protecting the setting of the Church, contributing to its character.
- g) **Norton-Juxta-Kempsey – Inset Map 78** Norton-Juxta-Kempsey's proximity to the city of Worcester poses a threat of the two settlements merging. This will result in the loss of identity of this settlement, which is centred around the church with a large more modern development between the city and the village at Norton Barracks. The Strategic Gap in this location serves an important function in preventing urban sprawl from Worcester and protecting the visual gap between the two settlements. The Strategic Gap is undeveloped and is currently in agricultural use bound and contained by firm edges. The proximity of the M5 motorway and the open space adjacent to it, which is protected by Policy NE11 of the Worcester City Local Plan, is another important consideration in protecting this land at Norton-Juxta-Kempsey.
- h) **Pebworth – Inset Map 83** Pebworth is divided into two distinct areas of development each displaying its own different character and form. A large area of land separates the two parts of the village; the land plays a significant role as a recreational facility and creates an important visual

break. Its character creates a village green ambience with an open frontage bound by mature trees and hedges which contributes to the amenity of the area. The remainder of the land behind is currently in agricultural use and stretches to the school boundary to prevent the two identities from coalescing.

- i) **Pershore – Inset Map 3** This Strategic Gap incorporates a large triangular piece of land between the two neighbouring villages of Pinvin and Wyre Piddle with a mixture of uses on it. The northern edge of the built-up area of Pershore and Pinvin, along Station Road, contains sporadic development comprising Pershore High School and the Pershore Trading Estate. Between Pershore and Wyre Piddle, apart from the builders' merchants, there is no development, the land being in agricultural use, and to the south of the road, within the flood plains of the River Avon and Piddle Brook. This Strategic Gap has an important function in maintaining the three separate identities of Pershore and the two villages and prevents the sprawl of development in this general location.
- j) **Pinvin – Inset Map 84** Pinvin is an elongated settlement split into two parts by the B4084. The open area adjacent to the road that splits the two parts is itself divided by the road leading to the centre of the village. On the eastern side, the Strategic Gap is open flat grazing land and to the west is a small copse presenting a very attractive entrance to the village. The function of the Strategic Gap is to maintain the identity and character of Pinvin, preventing the coalescence of the two separate parts. It is also highly important to prevent the merging of the open land between Pinvin, Pershore and Wyre Piddle.
- k) **Upton Snodsbury – Inset Map 89** Upton Snodsbury comprises two main parts; the main built-up area forming the central part of the village and an isolated group of properties that straddle the A422. The Strategic Gap has been designated to protect the separate identities of the village and its open approach to the settlement also serves as an important visually pleasing entrance. The land is currently used for grazing and is mainly bound by hedges.
- l) **Whittington – Inset Map 91** Whittington is a scattered settlement presenting gaps in the clusters of development, which form significant visual breaks in the built form contributing to its rural character. These spaces have been designated as Strategic Gaps in their own right. The area adjacent to the Berkley Close development straddles Church Lane and is undeveloped segmented grazing land that slopes towards the motorway. The area adjacent to the village hall is also undeveloped gently sloping grazing land in close proximity to the motorway. The third area is situated on the western side of the dual carriageway, which slopes up towards St Peter's and comprises grazing land, Whittington Hall, several low-key business uses and a few residential properties. There is a strong need to preserve the identity of Whittington given its proximity to Worcester, making it a vulnerable area under pressure for development. The designation of the Strategic Gap will prevent the coalescence of Worcester and Whittington whilst maintaining the unique development pattern that has involved. The M5 motorway runs to the east of Whittington and its proximity along with the open space adjacent to it, which is protected by Policy NE11 of the adopted Worcester City Local Plan, is another important consideration in protecting this land at Whittington.
- m) **Wyre Piddle – Inset Map 95** The designated Strategic Gap at Wyre Piddle lies to the north-west of the main built-up area and has the function of separating Wyre Piddle from both Pershore and Pinvin, in order to maintain their separate identities and character. The land itself is elevated grazing land bound by mature trees and hedges between Wyre Hill and Wyre Road. It presents an important area of land that needs to be protected from further development and threat of sprawl from Pershore.

Occupation of 'Tolerated' Gypsy Sites

Site	Reference	Occupied	No. of Caravans
Cutnall Green	T201	Yes	5
Fladbury	T053	Yes	1
Hipton	T053A	Yes	0
Twyford	T179	Yes	6
Evesham	T081	Yes	5
Crophorne	T082	Yes	5
Badsey	T100	No	0
Badsey	T102	No	0
Comberton	T104	Yes	0
Lineholt	T007	Yes	3
Holt Fleet	T018	No	0
Ombersley	T019	Yes	5
Waresley	T005	No	0

Source: Count of Gypsy Caravans (June 2005)

APPENDIX 6

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – Policy ENV2

Area	Name	Description	Area	Perimeter	Grid Reference
Bredon Hill	Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	AONB	37599187	30831	396238
Broadway	Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	AONB	11194648	15543	409236

Sites of International Importance for Nature Conservation – Policy ENV3

Name	Site	Area	Perimeter	Grid Reference
Sites of International Importance for Nature Conservation	Bredon Hill	3591364	25433	394240

Sites of Special Scientific Interest – Policy ENV4

Area	Name	Area	Perimeter	Grid Reference
Birlingham	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	5748	1290	392242
Nafford	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	9095	522	394241
Crophorne	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	1133	161	399244
Dormston	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	12950	466	398257
Wadborough	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	19829	940	391248
Defford	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	39625	1658	392243
Defford2	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	3374	325	391242
Eckington	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	10343	593	391241
Defford3	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	34876	1056	391242
Woodmancote	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	17920	1417	390241
Craycombe	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	10363	458	401248
Craycombe	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	10363	458	401248
Fladbury	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	23727	1806	398245
Birlingham2	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	56194	1341	393243
Fosters green Hanbury	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	121777	2201	397264
Middlelitleton	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	63373	1832	407247
Rabbitwood Grafton Flyford	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	160181	1624	395257
Woodnorton	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	7670	372	402247
Naunton Beauchamp	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	17196	665	396252
Beckford	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	2320	249	397236
Bredonhill4	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	53899	1368	394238

Area	Name	Area	Perimeter	Grid Reference
Bredon	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	160740	1591	392283
Bredon	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	160740	1591	392238
Bredon2	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	2735	261	392237
Wyre Piddle	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	1780	228	396247
Wyre Piddle2	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	6689	485	396247
Naunton Beauchamp2	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	10619	428	398253
Lowermoor	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	14049	681	397264
Earls Common	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	29964	950	396259
Stockwood Inkberrow	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	17678	578	399258
Radford	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	50743	1284	401255
Trenchwood Salegreen	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	619170	3427	392258
Martin Hussingtree	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	60629	1085	389260
Martin Hussingtree	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	60629	1085	389260
Pershore	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	3361	256	395245
Pershore2	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	12055	954	395245
Tiddesley Wood Pershore	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	799508	4536	392245
Great Pool Westwood House	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	296034	2257	388263
Pensham	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	6832	634	394243
Flyford Flavell	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	15567	566	398254
Flyford Flavell2	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	9355	454	398254
Hanbury	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	157671	3100	395265
Upton Warren	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	423529	4781	393266
Littleworth	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	83158	1854	388250
Littleworth	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	83158	1854	388250
Besford	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	5376	512	392245
Shell	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	43355	1508	394260
Naunton Beauchamp3	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	48220	1553	395253
Broadway	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	150939	2954	410236

Area	Name	Area	Perimeter	Grid Reference
Strensham	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	84999	2702	391239
Bredonhill2	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	60739	1393	397241
Bredonhill3	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	3704034	24174	394239
Hartlebury Common	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	689539	5127	382271
Harvington Mill	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	23172	1073	406247
Hartlebury Common	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	64636	2310	383270
Hartlebury Ccommon	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	64636	2310	383270
Hartlebury Common	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	1255	188	382270
Hartlebury Common	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	111304	1572	382270
Hartlebury Common	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	2130	215	381270
Hartlebury Common	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	2062	253	381270
Hartlebury Common	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	1187	193	381270
Hartlebury Common	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	12744	523	381270
Grafton Wood	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	489591	5334	397256
Salwarpe Valley Droit	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	210412	3471	388262
Lower Saleway Farm Meadows	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	44416	925	392260
Lower Saleway Farm Meadows	Sites of Special Scientific Interest	44416	925	392260

Glossary

Affordable Housing – for those who are unable to buy or rent housing on the open market. Comprise rented or part-owned accommodation (usually provided and managed by Housing Associations) or low-cost market housing. Occupation may be limited to people with a local connection.

Areas of Development Restraint (ADR) – an area of land safeguarded for consideration for possible long-term development needs. Areas are excluded from the Green Belt.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – a specifically defined and protected environmental area. Areas of national importance for their landscape value within which the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty is most important.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land – land that should be protected as a national resource for future generations and is defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the DEFRA Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) scheme.

Biodiversity – the whole variety of life encompassing all genetic, species and ecosystem variations.

Biodiversity Action Plan – a Plan intended to focus resources to conserve and enhance biodiversity by taking account of national and local priorities.

Brownfield – see previously developed land.

Community Plan – a document that sets out the overall aims, priorities and plans for a particular local area. As the name suggests, a Community Plan should address the present and future needs of the local community. The LDF aims to provide the 'spatial planning' context to the Community Plan.

Commuted Sums – see Planning Obligations.

Conservation Area – a specifically defined and protected environmental area in view of its special architectural or historic interest. They are designated by Local Planning Authorities.

County Structure Plan – provides County-wide strategic framework for the control of development. The County Structure Plan will be saved under the Local Development Framework until 2007.

Defined Development Boundary – Development boundaries for the villages have been defined having regard to their size, character and form. They have been drawn to reflect where new development, through infilling or minor consolidation, would be appropriate. See Policy GD1.

Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC) – Government Department which promotes social equality and is responsible for housing, planning, urban regeneration and local government. Formerly the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) until May 2006.

Design Concept Statement (DCS) – sets out the development principles and master plan to inform future planning applications. Adopted as SPD.

Development – for planning purposes, the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 defines 'development' as 'the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land'. Unless a particular activity is exempt by statute, the carrying out of any form of development requires planning permission. Additionally, there are specific exclusions from and inclusions within the definition. For the avoidance of doubt, you are advised to contact the Council's Planning Unit.

Development Brief/Guide – guidance for prospective developers and other interested parties about how a site or area should be developed, taking account of constraints and opportunities, and building on Local Plan Policy. Development Briefs are a form of Supplementary Planning Guidance or Supplementary Planning Documents.

Development Plan Document (DPD) – The Documents that a local planning authority must prepare under the new planning system, to constitute a DPD, and which have to be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination. The DPD should include the following elements:

- core strategy;
- site-specific allocations of land;
- area action plans (where needed); and
- Proposals Map (with Inset Maps, where necessary).

Edge-of-centre – for shopping purposes an edge-of-centre location needs to be within an easy and safe walking distance (maximum 300m) of a primary or secondary shopping frontage. For office, leisure and other uses the threshold distance is 500 m.

English Nature – Government agency responsible for promoting, protecting and enhancing nature conservation. To be incorporated within Natural England from October 2006.

Environment Agency – Government agency with wide ranging powers for environmental protection. Was formed by the amalgamation of the National Rivers Authority, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution and the Waste Regulation Authorities.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) – this process refers to the evaluation of the impacts likely to arise from a major project on the natural and man-made environment. The Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1999, impose significant new duties upon Local Planning Authorities.

Exception Site – a location where development would not otherwise be granted planning permission under normal circumstances.

Flood Plain – is defined as unobstructed or active areas where water regularly flows in times of flood.

Green Belt – a specifically defined area where development is controlled to prevent settlements merging and to keep land open.

Greenfield sites – undeveloped or vacant land not included in the definition of 'previously developed land'.

Housing Needs Survey – a detailed assessment of housing need by examining the suitability of present housing and the ability of households to afford market-priced housing.

Listed Building – buildings and structures which have been deemed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport as being of special architectural or historic interest, and which it is desirable to preserve, including any object or structure fixed to the building or any object or structure which is within the curtilage of the building and which forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948.

Local centre – small grouping of shops of a local nature normally comprising a newsagent, general grocery store, sub-post office, chemist.

Local Area for Play (LAP) – unsupervised, casual, informal element of play space, within 200m of home.

Local Development Documents (LDDs) – will comprise:

- Statement of Community Involvement (SCI);
- Strategic Environmental Assessment/Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA);
- Development Plan Documents (DPD); and
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).

Local Development Framework (LDF) – the LDF, prepared under the new planning legislation, will contain a series of LDDs, which will provide the local planning authority's policies and proposals for meeting the community's economic, environmental and social aims for the future of their area where this affects the development of land.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) – the LDS sets out the programme for preparing the LDDs.

Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) – unsupervised play area, equipped for children of 4 – 8 years, within 400m of home.

Local Nature Reserve – area of publicly owned land which is conserved and managed for its wildlife interest. Bylaws can be applied to prevent disturbance.

Local Needs – anticipated requirements (for example, for housing) generated by local growth or other (for example, demographic) trends. This specifically excludes demands generated by inward migration.

Local Transport Plan – a plan prepared by Highway Authorities (ie. the County Council) detailing transport priorities and actions to be taken.

Mixed-use Development – developments that include a combination of land uses, which may include housing, employment, leisure and community facilities.

Multi-Modal Studies – transport studies in which consideration is given to problems and solutions affecting all modes of travel.

Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) – equipped, unsupervised areas for formal sport for both children and adults.

Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) – unsupervised play area, equipped mainly for older children (8+), but to accommodate younger children, within 1200m of home.

Net Site Density – includes only those areas that will be developed for housing and directly associated uses. It is solely based on the form of development envisaged and does not need to reflect the inclusion of non-residential uses. It is the most commonly used approach in allocating housing land. It is further defined in PPG3 Annex C.

Out-of-centre – locations that are clearly separate from the town centre but still within a development boundary.

Out-of-town – locations outside the development boundary.

Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest – parks and gardens listed in a register maintained by English Heritage. Like listed buildings, they are graded by reason of their historic layout, features and architectural ornaments.

Planning Obligations – agreements between developers and the Council to properly accommodate or mitigate proposed development.

Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) – a series of documents produced by the Government covering a wide range of planning issues. PPGs advice on the implementation of the law and Government policy regarding the purpose and function of the planning system. As at March 2002 the following have been issued:

- PPG2 Green Belts, January 1995
- PPG3 Housing, March 2000
- PPG4 Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms, November 1992
- PPG5 Simplified Planning Zones, November 1992
- PPG8 Telecommunication, August 2001
- PPG13 Transport, March 2001
- PPG14 Development on Unstable Land, April 1990
- PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment, September 1994
- PPG16 Archaeology and Planning, November 1990
- PPG17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, July 2002
- PPG18 Enforcing Planning Control, December 1991
- PPG19 Outdoor Advertisement Control, March 1992
- PPG20 Coastal Planning, September 1992
- PPG21 Tourism, November 1992
- PPG24 Planning and Noise, September 1994
- PPG25 Development and Flood Risk, July 2001.

Planning Policy Statements (PPS) - Government statements of national planning policy being phased in to supersede Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs).

- PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development, February 2005. This replaces PPG1: General Policies and Principles (published February 1997).
- PPS6 Planning for Town Centres, March 2005. This replaces Revised PPG Note 6: Town Centres and Retail Developments (published 1996) and subsequent policy statements.
- PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Area, August 2004. This replaces PPG Note 7: The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development (published February 1997).
- PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, August 2005. This replaces PPG Note 9 on nature conservation (published October 1994).
- PPS10 Planning for Sustainable Waste Management, July 2005. This replaces PPG Note 10: Planning and Waste Management (published 1999).
- PPS11 Regional Spatial Strategies, September 2004. This replaces PPG Note 11: Regional Planning.
- PPS12 Local Development Frameworks, September 2004.
- PPS22 Renewable Energy. Includes the companion guide, August 2004. This replaces PPG Note 22.
- PPS23 Planning and Pollution Control, November 2004. This replaces PPG Note 23: Planning and Pollution Control (published 1994).

Previously Developed Land (PDL) – fully defined in PPG3, Annexe 3. Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development and is also known as 'brownfield' land.

Ramsar Sites – a wetland site of Special Scientific Interest, which is designated under the Ramsar Convention as being of international importance.

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) – the RSS, incorporating a regional transport strategy, provides a spatial framework to inform the preparation of local development documents, local transport plans and regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land-use activities. By 2007 it will provide the overall strategic planning context for the West Midlands Region.

Registered Social Landlord (RSL) – a housing association or not for profit company registered by the Housing Corporation to provide social housing.

Renewable Energy – energy forms that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, for example, wind, solar and tidal power.

Scheduled Ancient Monument – features (both underground or on the surface) of archaeological or historic interest identified by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which are subject to legal protection to prevent them being damaged or destroyed. The regulations are similar to those applied to listed buildings but are administered by English Heritage rather than Local Authorities.

Section 106 Agreement – a legal document which seeks to ensure compliance with the necessary requirements of a planning permission to which it relates.

Sequential Approach – order-of-preference approach to the location of all new development in the following order: locations within urban areas on previously developed land; and locations within urban areas on greenfield land. These are followed by locations adjacent to urban areas outside the Green Belt and adjacent to the urban area in Areas of Development Restraint, and, in exceptional circumstances, by locations adjacent to urban areas on land currently designated as Green Belt.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – a specifically defined area where protection is afforded to ecological or geological features. The protection is not fool-proof, and is subject to Government regulations.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – designated areas under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of wild fauna and flora intended to protect the habitats of threatened species of wildlife.

Special Protection Areas (SPA) – areas classified under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds intended to protect the habitats of threatened species.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – SPDs are intended to elaborate upon the policy and proposals in DPDs but do not have their status or are not given as much weight at Appeals. However, they are statutory planning documents (unlike SPG) and form part of the Local Development Framework.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) – planning guidance that supplements the policies and proposals in the Plan by providing advice at a greater level of detail to help those preparing planning applications. Following public consultation and a resolution from the Council, the guidance can be used as a ‘material consideration’ in determining planning applications.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) – a formal, systematic process evaluating the social, economic and environmental impacts of a policy, plan or programme and its alternatives, including the preparation of a written report on the findings.

Sustainable Development – is defined as: ‘Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’ (Brundtland Commission Report, 1987).

Urban Capacity Study – study to determine the potential of an area to accommodate development, its density and its wider implications for sustainable development.

Urban Design – the objective of addressing the challenges facing urban and rural areas in the region and to maintain viable and sustainable urban communities.

Use Classes Order – a statutory instrument within the Town and Country Planning legislation. It defines various classes of use for buildings or land.

Village Design Statement (VDS) – sets out design guidance for new development based on distinctive local character.

Washland Creation - the creation of an area of flood plain where water is stored in time of flood. Such an area may have its effectiveness enhanced by the provision of structures to control the amount of water stored and the timing of its release to alleviate peak flood flows downstream (PPG25 Development and Flood Risk).

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy – see RSS.

Windfall Sites – development that is granted planning permission within the Plan period which had not been specifically identified as an allocation in the Plan. Usually sites comprise less than 10 units.