## Contents

1. Introduction and Context ........................................ 4
2. Characteristics and Challenges ............................... 10
3. Vision for the Area in 2026 .................................... 16
   - Vision ........................................ 16
   - Development Objectives ......................... 17
4. A Sustainable Future - Development Strategy ............ 20
   - DS01 - Development Locations .................. 20
   - DS02 - Kidderminster Local Regeneration Area 23
   - DS03 - Market Towns ............................. 29
   - DS04 - Rural Regeneration and Services ....... 33
   - DS05 - Phasing and Implementation ............ 38
   - Key Diagram .................................... 42
5. Core Policies .................................................. 44
6. Adapting to and Mitigating Against Climate Change .... 48
   - Delivering Sustainable Construction Standards 49
   - Water Management .............................. 53
   - Promoting Transport Choice and Improving Accessibility 59
7. A Desirable Place to Live ..................................... 64
   - Providing Affordable Housing .................. 65
   - Delivering Mixed Communities ................. 68
   - Provision for Gypsies and Travellers ......... 71
   - Delivering Community Wellbeing .............. 74
8. A Good Place to do Business ................................ 80
   - A Diverse Local Economy ....................... 81
   - Retail and Commercial Development ............ 86
   - Sustainable Tourism ............................. 90
   - Supporting Transport Infrastructure and Sustainable Freight Movement 93
9. A Unique Place ............................................... 96
   - Quality Design/Local Distinctiveness ............ 97
   - Landscape Character ............................. 101
   - Historic Environment ........................... 104
   - Providing a Green Infrastructure Network .... 108
   - Providing Opportunities for Local Biodiversity and Geodiversity 111
   - Regenerating the Rivers and Canal ............... 114
10. Monitoring and Implementation Framework ............... 120
11. Infrastructure Schedules .................................. 126
12. Appendices ................................................ 132
   - Jargon Guide ................................... 128
   - Evidence Base .................................. 136
1: Introduction and Context

Background

1.1 Wyre Forest District Council is preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) to replace its Adopted Local Plan. The LDF is a portfolio of documents which will set out what type of development is to be located where, and which areas of land are to be safeguarded, covering the timescale to 2026. The Core Strategy is the first and most significant document in the portfolio to be produced.

1.2 The Core Strategy is the key strategic level document within the LDF and sets out the broad strategy and vision for development within the District up until 2026. It provides the overall context for the more detailed, site specific elements of the LDF and the focus for decision-making on planning applications. Although the Core Strategy does not address specific sites, it does set the overall development strategy for the District and the broad areas where new housing and employment development will be located. Further details on the other Development Plan Documents (DPDs) within the LDF and the timetables for their production can be found within the District Council's Local Development Scheme at http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk.

1.3 A number of stages of consultation have been undertaken in preparing the Core Strategy. The Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the consultation standards and requirements set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. An Issues and Options Paper was published for consultation in June 2007. Following responses to this paper from key stakeholders, a further consultation was undertaken on a Revised Issues and Options Paper in January 2008. Consultation responses were then used to inform the development of a Preferred Options Paper which was subject to a consultation period commencing in January 2009. All of the representations received on the Preferred Options Paper have informed the development of this Publication version of the Core Strategy.

Structure Of The Core Strategy

1.4 This Publication Core Strategy sets out the District Council's intended Core Strategy for submission to the Secretary of State.

1.5 The Core Strategy is centred on an appreciation of the issues and challenges that face the District both now and in the future. The issues and challenges have been used to shape the vision and objectives for the District's future development. The Vision and Objectives feed into a Development Strategy for the area which is set out in five strategic policies relating to the broad location of future development, the role of the District's settlements and the phasing and implementation of new development. ------ Core Policies have been developed which will be used to deliver the specifics of the strategy when addressing future development.

1.6 It is important to note that the policies provide the local interpretation of both national and regional planning policy and guidance. Applicants should consider the Core Strategy policies alongside other material guidance which is outlined in the "Additional Information for Applicants" set out under each policy.

1.7 It should be noted that the more detailed and site specific policies will be set out in the Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPDs. The Core Strategy provides the overarching guidance and context for these DPDs.
How Has The Core Strategy Been Developed?

Sustainability Appraisal

1.8 The Core Strategy must contribute towards achieving sustainable development and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been introduced to ensure that it is fully considered as an integral part of the plan-making process. SA is a tool which evaluates the social, environmental and economic impacts of a plan. It incorporates the requirements of the European Union Directive relating to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

1.9 The policies set out within the Core Strategy have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal at every stage of their development. A Final SA Report has been published which details the assessment of all of the options and the development of the Publication Core Strategy. The Report is available to view and comment on at http://wyreforestdc-consult.limehouse.co.uk This report includes a summary of the sustainability implications of the Core Policies set out within this document and the mitigation measures which will be required to reduce any negative impacts identified.

Evidence Base

1.10 The Core Strategy has been developed from a robust evidence base in order to ensure that it truly reflects and addresses local issues and challenges and responds to the needs of local communities. A number of studies have been prepared to underpin the Core Strategy and these are set out at Appendix B: Evidence Base. All of the studies are available to download from www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk

National and Regional Policy

1.11 The Core Strategy has fully considered national planning policy and advice as set out in Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and current Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs). Although National Planning Policy is a material consideration when determining planning applications, where appropriate, the Core Strategy presents a local interpretation of these policies.

1.12 Full account of regional policy has been taken to ensure that the Core Strategy is in general conformity with the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS). The regional context in relation to future residential, employment, retail and office development is set out within the Development Strategy section. The Core Strategy has also had regard to the West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy, the Regional Housing Strategy and the Regional Transport Plan.

Links with other Plans and Strategies

1.13 The Core Strategy provides a wide-ranging mechanism for delivering sustainable development objectives by addressing social, economic and environmental issues and relating them to the use of land. The Strategy will help to implement other strategies and plans that cover the District, including the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan. The Strategy has been produced with close involvement from the Wyre Forest Matters Local Strategic Partnership. Its vision is aligned with the priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

1.14 In summary, the Local Development Framework will help to deliver the following strategies and plans:

- **Wyre Forest District Sustainable Community Strategy**: through aligning visions and helping to deliver the priorities set out within the Sustainable Community Strategy.
• **Worcestershire Local Transport Plan:** to help deliver and integrated package of transport measures across the District.

• **Worcestershire Housing Strategy:** through providing better and more affordable housing choice and options for the community.

• **Parish Plans:** to help address rural housing needs in many of the District's villages and rural settlements and to sustain local services and promote rural transport options.

**Cross Boundary Issues**

1.15 The Core Strategy takes into account the implications of the planning policies of neighbouring authorities. The District Council has consulted neighbouring authorities in the preparation of the Core Strategy and will continue to liaise over the development of planning policies within neighbouring authorities. The main cross-border issues which have been taken into account are:

- The relationship and role of Hartlebury Trading Estate and the Roxel plant which straddles the border between Wyre Forest District and Wychavon District.
- The known development pressures for an urban extension south of Stourport-on-Severn into Malvern Hills District.
- Working with Malvern Hills District Council to ensure complementary planning policies for the village of Clows Top which straddles the district boundary.
- Shared areas of nature conservation importance including the Wyre Forest (Shropshire Council), Hartlebury Common (Wychavon District), Kingsford Country Park/Kinver Edge (South Staffordshire District).
- Cross boundary public transport services with adjoining authorities.
- Cross boundary issues with traffic and watercourses, particularly within the Severn Valley.
- Consideration of economic links with nearby centres of the Black Country, Birmingham and Worcester.

**What Happens Next?**

1.16 The District Council is now publishing the Core Strategy for a period of 6 weeks and inviting representations on it until the **ADD DATE 2010**.

1.17 Once the publication period has closed, the District Council has to consider all of the representations made and determine whether any are so significant as to warrant further consideration within the Core Strategy. Government guidance suggests that this should only take place in exceptional circumstances. As a number of consultation stages have already been undertaken during the preparation of the Wyre Forest District Core Strategy and it is based on considerable evidence, it is not anticipated that this will be the case.

1.18 It is expected that the Core Strategy and all other supporting material, including the representations made on this document, will be submitted to the Secretary of State on or around the **INSERT DATE 2010**. At this point an Inspector will be appointed by the Secretary of State to undertake a Public Examination of the document's soundness.

1.19 Once completed, the Inspector will produce a report stating whether the document is fundamentally 'sound' and what changes are required to make it a sound Core Strategy. The Inspector's Report will be binding on the Council.
The Council will then include any changes as required by the Inspector and 'adopt' the Core Strategy, which will form part of the Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework. The table below shows the key milestones involved in the production of the Core Strategy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i. Commencement of Preparation:</td>
<td>April 2007 (Consult stakeholders on Sustainability Appraisal Scope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Issues and options consultation:</td>
<td>January 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. Preferred options consultation:</td>
<td>January 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv. Publication:</td>
<td>January 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. Submission:</td>
<td>February 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi. Pre-hearing meeting:</td>
<td>April 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii. Hearing sessions:</td>
<td>June 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii. Inspector’s Report (final):</td>
<td>September 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii. Adoption:</td>
<td>November 2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to make your representation on the Publication Core Strategy.

The simplest way to make representations on the Publication Core Strategy is by logging on to the District Council's consultation portal [http://wyreforestdc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal](http://wyreforestdc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal).

If you do not wish to make your representation electronically, you can download and print a response form from [http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk), or alternatively you can request a response form by contacting 01562 732928 or in person at the Worcestershire Hub.

Completed response forms should be addressed and sent to:

**Policy and Regeneration Manager**  
Planning and Regulatory Services Directorate  
Duke House  
Clensmore Street  
Kidderminster  
Worcestershire  
DY102JX

For further information on the consultation, please contact a member of the Policy and Regeneration team on 01562 732928 or by e-mail Planning.Policy@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

The closing date for receipt of representations is INSERT DATE 2010. Representations received after this time cannot be considered.
1: Introduction and Context
Characteristics and Challenges
2: Characteristics and Challenges

Settlement Hierarchy

2.1 Wyre Forest District takes its name from one of the largest ancient semi-natural woodlands in the Country and is situated within north-west Worcestershire. Covering 75 sq. miles, it has a population of approximately 98,600, which has grown at a modest rate since 1991, with stable migration rates. The over 65 age group is significantly higher than both national and regional averages and is anticipated to increase.

2.2 The District comprises the three towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley, together with a rural hinterland which includes a number of small villages. The three towns form a triangle of settlements at the centre of the District separated by narrow areas of open countryside. Despite their close proximity, each has its own particular character and community identity.

2.3 Kidderminster (56,000) is the main centre for commerce and is recognised in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) as a local regeneration area. It developed rapidly in the 19th Century with the expansion of the carpet industry to become a world leading centre for carpet production. Since the 1970s the town’s carpet industry has been in decline and a gradual process of economic diversification has taken place. It is one of 25 strategic centres in the West Midlands and is a Tier 4 retail town in the RSS.

2.4 Stourport-on-Severn (20,000) developed as an important industrial Georgian Canal Town at the confluence of the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal and the River Severn. For over 100 years this attractive town with its riverside meadows has been a popular day trip destination for residents from Birmingham and the Black Country.

2.5 Bewdley (9,000) is a Georgian riverside town, an inland port with surviving wharves which saw significant development during the 1960s. Today Bewdley is an attractive historic market town and a popular visitor destination.

2.6 The District’s rural settlements have a limited range of facilities and are poorly served by public transport. Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley provide an important role in serving their rural hinterlands. Part of the rural area to the north west is covered by the Rural Regeneration Zone (RRZ) including the Bewdley Ward. The economy within the RRZ is changing, with employment in agriculture declining. However, some small businesses have been created and there has been significant growth in leisure and tourism in this area. To the east, the larger more accessible villages include Chaddesley Corbett, Blakedown, Cookley and Wolverley. Whilst to the West of the River Severn the smaller settlements of Clows Top, Far Forest, Callow Hill, Bliss Gate and Rock provide limited services to rural residents. The rural areas are influenced by the adjacent conurbation in terms of attractiveness for commuting and house prices here are generally higher than in the District’s main towns.
Environment

2.7 Topography is uniquely shaped by the Severn and Stour river valleys which flow through the town centres of Bewdley and Kidderminster respectively, before joining at Stourport-on-Severn. Part of the medium and high-risk flood zones pass through the regeneration areas of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn where there is pressure for brownfield redevelopment including potentially contaminated land.

2.8 The District has an intricate network of main rivers, streams and pools resulting in some of the richest remaining wetland and marsh habitat in Worcestershire as well as presenting significant flood risks. Average temperature changes resulting from climate change could increase by 4.5 degrees in the long term across Worcestershire, with more short duration extreme weather events with potential implications for flood risk and surface water run-off.

2.9 The rural landscape and Severn Valley play an important supporting role to the local economy. All countryside to the east of the District and as far west as the River Severn is included within the West Midlands Green Belt. The towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn, Bewdley and the larger villages of Blakedown, Cookley and Fairfield are excluded from the Green Belt. The District has a network of designated wildlife sites and a wide range of habitats of importance for nature conservation. There are significant areas of lowland heathland, acid grasslands, wetlands and traditional orchards, which make a key contribution to biodiversity. The Linear landscape of the Severn and Stour Valleys accommodate a degree of annual flooding. To the west the land is elevated and is dominated by the Wyre Forest ancient semi-natural woodland. This part of the District also falls into the Abberley & Malvern Hills Geopark. There are red Triassic sandstones to the east of the District and older Carboniferous and Devonian sandstones in the west. This gives rise to typical brown earth soils in the east and west and brown sands soils in the central belt. The District is home to a number of protected species which are often found along the watercourses and in the pools and marshland areas. Potential impacts on the habitats of the area (in particular wetlands) from extreme weather resulting from climate change and habitat fragmentation are key challenges for the future.

2.10 The canal and river networks provide an important green resource within the urban environments. Particularly within Kidderminster town centre, the opportunities to access green spaces are currently limited. The urban environment requires improvements to make it more attractive and to encourage opportunities for biodiversity.

2.11 A rich heritage is present, including buildings, conservation areas, monuments, landscapes and archaeology. The physical environment is a key factor in the quality of life for local residents and access to nature parks, open spaces and the rural hinterland is highly valued. The District is noted for the extent of its woodlands, which notably include the Wyre Forest, Eymore Wood, Areley Wood and Chaddesley Wood. There are some 2,800 static holiday caravans in the area, which results in a proliferation of caravan sites, particularly concentrated along the Severn Valley and to the west of the District in the sensitive Landscape Area.
Employment

2.12 There are pockets of high unemployment, noticeably in the urban wards of Oldington & Foley Park (6.8%) and Broadwaters (4.3%). The manufacturing industry remains the most significant employer in the District. Some of the District's largest employers are in the manufacturing sector including Brinton Carpets, Sealine Industries and Titan Steel Works. Recent years have seen a growth in the service sector and small-medium sized enterprises (SMES) are becoming more prevalent. There are marked commuting flows of 5,965 people from Kidderminster to the conurbation (Birmingham and the Black Country) and to Worcester and Droitwich Spa. The District also has a significant number of people working from home, at approximately 10%. The District enjoys some self containment in employment due in part to its location to the west of the conurbation and lack of direct motorway access. However, it has not enjoyed significant office-based development, other than generally local service sector companies.

2.13 Employment sites are concentrated in Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn with the main focus on the Stourport Road Corridor (A451) running south out of Kidderminster. Well established as a manufacturing area, it contains some modern high quality premises together with significant major brownfield redevelopment opportunities. Although the majority of employment focuses on the urban areas including Worcester Road and Hoo Farm in Kidderminster and the Sandy Lane Industrial Estate in Stourport, there are some existing rural business sites such as Rushock Trading Estate and Titan Steel Wheels in Cookley, which often employ local workers and contribute significantly to the rural economy. Agriculture remains the main activity in the rural areas, with high quality productive best and most versatile land around Kidderminster.

2.14 Tourism is an important facet of the District’s economy and its proximity to the West Midlands conurbation makes it a popular day visitor and tourist destination. In particular the Severn Valley Railway and the West Midlands Safari Park attract a large number of day visitors to the area.

Transport and Access

Kidderminster Bus Station

2.15 The proximity of Birmingham provides opportunities for higher order and knowledge based jobs assisted by the improving rail service from Kidderminster. Worcester City is also accessible both by rail and road. Linkages with other nearby towns, such as, Wolverhampton and Bromsgrove, are hindered by the quality of road connections and the absence of direct rail services.

2.16 Traffic congestion is prevalent within and between the three main towns. Kidderminster Ring Road experiences severe congestion at peak times and from visitor traffic to the safari park during the summer months. The Stourport Road Corridor is a particularly congested route. Air quality is deteriorating in the town centres and there are two designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) at Horsefair in Kidderminster and Welch Gate in Bewdley.
Currently, bus service coverage is poor, particularly within the District’s rural areas, with few high frequency routes linking to the town centres and key services. The quality of passenger transport accessibility between the Wyre Forest and key locations of employment, major health carers, retail and leisure is compromised by limited bus access to Kidderminster Rail Station, compounded by poor bus and rail infrastructure facilities at the station.

Passenger numbers at both the District’s railway stations – Kidderminster and Blakedown, have increased significantly in recent years. Kidderminster Station is a key gateway to the town and forms part of the core route into central Birmingham where 4 trains per hour operate.

Quality of Life

There is a complex network of communities ranging from the isolated rural areas, and market towns to the urban neighbourhoods of Kidderminster. Generally perceived to be relatively prosperous, the District is also home to the most deprived Worcestershire ward – Oldington & Foley Park, which along with the Greenhill and Broadwaters wards has also been identified as a "health hotspot." Here the major causes of death are circulatory diseases and cancers, which are lifestyle related. Access to health care remains a major concern for local residents. Since Kidderminster Hospital was downsized, residents are now required to travel further distances for A&E facilities.

Levels of crime are lower than the national average although there are some areas of high incidence in the Kidderminster ward of Greenhill (which includes the town centre). Anti-social behaviour is the most common offence reported. The fear of crime amongst local residents remains disproportionately high. Educational attainment is lower than the regional and national averages and is particularly poor within the Oldington & Foley Park and Broadwaters Wards. However, the number of 16-18 year olds unemployed or in jobs without training is decreasing in the area.

There are approximately 44,300 dwellings in the District. Over 80% of new housing has been provided on previously developed sites since 1996. There has been an increase in the average density of housing developments within the urban areas of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. Below average wage rates result in substantial demand for affordable housing provision across the District. In particular there is unmet demand for more affordable 2 and 4-bed dwellings. Evidence of the last five years suggests social re-lets will decrease, therefore extra pressure will be placed on increasing the supply of affordable housing.

The following key challenges are highlighted and future development within the District will need to address these:

- Retaining the separate role and identity of the three main towns.
- Implementing brownfield regeneration and improving the urban environments within the main towns of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn.

1 April 2008
• Addressing the needs of the District’s rural communities whilst safeguarding distinctive landscape character
• Reducing flood risk and balancing this with the District’s regeneration needs.
• Diversifying the local economy and reducing pockets of high unemployment within the District.
• Addressing traffic congestion within and between the three main towns and improving transport choice.
• Delivering more affordable housing choice in both urban and rural areas.
• Preventing habitat fragmentation and mitigating against the impacts of climate change.
• Helping to reduce health hotspots within the District and improving access to health care facilities.
• Helping to address the fear of crime amongst local residents.
3: Vision for the Area in 2026

Vision

3.1 The Vision sets out the aspirations for the type of place the Wyre Forest District will be in 2026. It complements the vision and priorities for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

How will Wyre Forest District be in 2026?

3.2 In 2026 Wyre Forest District comprises an interactive triangle of the thriving riverside towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley and outlying villages. The distinctive and separate identities of the three towns are maintained and enhanced. The Rivers Severn and Stour and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal together with other green infrastructure are valued links for both wildlife and residents within and between the town centres, the surrounding countryside and villages.

3.3 The District’s varied natural habitats, diverse and historic landscapes are thriving, and offer a range of outdoor interests, contributing to local educational opportunities and sustainable tourism. Residents and businesses rely increasingly on energy from locally generated renewable sources, including solar photo voltaic cells, solar hotwater and passive gain, heat pumps and biomass. The level of domestic recycling is high and the amount of waste produced is greatly reduced. The threat of flooding is reduced due to a programme of flood plain management, softer landscaping and extensive use of Sustainable Drainage Systems in new developments incorporating water efficiency and minimisation techniques.

3.4 Kidderminster has benefited from sustainable brownfield regeneration with the remediation of contaminated land, which has capitalised on its unique industrial heritage. The attractive and accessible town centre fosters community pride, providing many opportunities to enjoy urban greenspace. It serves the District’s needs with quality leisure, learning, health care, shopping facilities and employment opportunities. Kidderminster supports a vibrant visitor economy and its evening economy is flourishing, providing a choice of quality commercial leisure facilities, restaurants and cultural opportunities.

3.5 Stourport-on-Severn offers convenient leisure, learning, health care and shopping facilities to its residents and its canal and riverside assets continue to be a key visitor attraction. Its public realm is enhanced through the restoration of its unique heritage including the canal basins and the regeneration of Bridge Street.

3.6 Bewdley remains a thriving market town which meets the local community’s needs. The town’s historic character is preserved and its flourishing riverside environment offers many opportunities for visitor attraction.

3.7 To the east of the District, the larger villages of Wolverley, Cookley, Blakedown and Chaddesley Corbett continue to provide local residents and the surrounding rural hinterlands with key local services. Limited services remain viable to serve their local communities in settlements to the west such as Rock, Clows Top and Far Forest.
3.8 The District's population has a choice of housing, catering for the needs of family and single households, the elderly and those with special needs. Vulnerable people have a choice of alternative forms of accommodation. Attractive, affordable housing with low carbon emissions, supported by reliable infrastructure is accessible in the three towns and to meet local needs within the rural settlements.

3.9 A vibrant and sustainable economy exists providing a range of jobs across the service, retail, research and development and manufacturing sectors, with the infrastructure and a skilled population in place to support it. The urban areas of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn and the South Kidderminster Business and Nature Park offer attractive, accessible and high quality employment locations. There has been significant growth in innovative manufacturing, recycling, and sustainable technologies. Sustainable tourism contributes significantly to the economy assisted by the Severn Valley Railway and the West Midlands Safari Park.

3.10 Many rural residents now have the option to work from home. Farming retains an important role in local food and biofuel production and helps to conserve the District’s varied landscape character.

3.11 The three towns and rural areas are well served by a sustainable transport network that delivers high levels of accessibility to key services and attractions. Local residents benefit from a variety of transport choices and no longer have to rely on the private motor car. There are bus priority measures and an extensive cycle route network facilitated by a number of multi modal infrastructure projects. There has been a significant shift from car use to more sustainable forms of transport. The urban environments experience reduced levels of traffic congestion and air quality within the town centres has improved. Kidderminster Rail Station acts as a high quality gateway to the District providing convenient interchange for bus users, pedestrians and cyclists alike. Frequent rail links to the nearby Regional Centre of Birmingham and the sub-regional centre of Worcester are provided.

3.12 Crime and disorder in the District remain low and local residents feel safer. Residents have the opportunity to lead healthier lifestyles with improved access to clean and attractive green spaces, facilitated by a comprehensive network of walking and cycling routes. Young residents can access a variety of activities and facilities in the three towns and can make better use of community facilities in the rural villages. Educational achievement rates have improved, particularly in the more deprived wards of Oldington & Foley Park and Broadwaters. Local residents are more skilled through improved access to training opportunities within the community. As they get older, residents' good health and well being continues through easy access to quality health care and community facilities.

**Development Objectives**

3.13 The following objectives will help to address the key challenges facing future development and to deliver the vision set out on the previous pages. The objectives provide a basis for the Development Strategy.
Development Objectives

1. To provide a range of high-quality, highly energy efficient market and affordable housing options for residents of all ages and needs to achieve sustainable communities.
2. To diversify and grow the District’s economy, emphasising the development of the service sector, high tech industry and sustainable tourism.
3. Continue to develop Kidderminster as the strategic centre for the District and to maintain the important roles of Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley as market towns.
4. Support the viability of the District’s villages and rural areas and assist in opportunities for diversification.
5. Safeguard and enhance the District’s unique landscape character, Green Belt, natural environment and green infrastructure.
6. To conserve and enhance the District’s heritage assets.
7. Safeguard and enhance natural resources, minimise waste and increase recycling, especially the reuse of land and buildings.
8. Safeguard and replenish the District’s rich and varied biodiversity and geodiversity, including that within the three town centres.
9. Ensure the District is equipped to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change by ensuring that future developments are low or zero-carbon and that they do not increase flood risk to new and existing property.
10. Improve the District’s air quality, particularly in the town centre areas of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley.
11. Support the development of an accessible, integrated, sustainable transport network through new and existing developments to provide attractive alternatives for all residents and visitors and promote sustainable freight transport.
12. Help foster community pride and healthy lifestyles in the District through supporting and involving its many local communities in both the urban and rural areas.
13. Maximise community cohesion and safety and ensure new developments positively contribute towards crime reduction, improved healthcare and education across the District for the benefit of all residents.

Themes:

3.14 A number of cross cutting themes emerge from the development objectives and these have been used as a basis to develop the Core Policies.

• Theme 1: Adapting to and mitigating against climate change.
• Theme 2: A desirable place to live.
• Theme 3: A good place to do business.
• Theme 4: A unique place.
4: A Sustainable Future - Development Strategy

4.1 The development strategy sets out the broad framework for future development within the District. It brings together the vision and LDF development objectives into a strategy to address the issues and challenges facing the District and to guide development into the future. It also establishes a clear role for the District’s settlements in accommodating future development.

4.2 The development strategy is made up of five policies which address the general location strategy for new development (DS01); the role of Kidderminster as the strategic centre (DS02); the role of Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley as market towns (DS03) and the role of the rural settlements (DS04). A policy on phasing (DS05) is also included to set out how new development requirements will be implemented effectively over the plan period.

4.3 The Development Strategy policies include a list of additional information for applicants, which provide the national and regional policy background and the key pieces of evidence base to the policies. These documents should be referred to when preparing a planning application as they set out the national and regional planning policy and provide further guidance on the issues covered within the policies. Many of these documents will be material considerations when determining planning applications. It should be noted that the documents are current at the time of preparing the Core Strategy DPD and that these may be superseded during the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

4.4 Each policy is also accompanied by a summary of how it is to be implemented during the plan period and what measures are in place to monitor its continued effectiveness. This information is included in more detail within the Monitoring and Implementation Framework towards the end of the document.

4.5 The Key Diagram supports the development strategy by showing the opportunities and constraints to guide new development and significant transport infrastructure in the future.

DS01 - Development Locations

4.6 The policy below sets out the levels of development that will need to be planned for during the plan period to 2026 and the overall approach to the location of new development within the District. The strategy for locating new housing, employment and commercial development within the District is governed by the need to promote the regeneration of the main towns of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn and to assist with the prevention of out migration from the Main Urban Areas of the Birmingham and Black Country Conurbation to the surrounding shire towns and rural areas.

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<tr>
<th>Type of development required</th>
<th>Provision to be made</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Land</td>
<td>44 Hectares</td>
<td>11 hectares (5yr res)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33 Hectares (Long term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison retailing</td>
<td>25,000 sq.m (2)</td>
<td>2006-2026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office development</td>
<td>40,000 sq.m</td>
<td>2006-2026</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Locating New Development

New development will be primarily concentrated on previously developed land within the urban areas of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. Limited opportunities for development to meet local needs will be identified in Bewdley and on sites within the rural settlements. Development in the open countryside will be closely controlled to safeguard the integrity of the District’s Green Belt and landscape character.

### Settlement Hierarchy

Proposals for new development should be located in accordance with the District’s settlement hierarchy shown below. This will ensure that development contributes to the regeneration priorities for the area, reduces the need to travel and promotes sustainable communities based on the services and facilities that are available in each settlement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement Type</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Suitable Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Centre</td>
<td>Kidderminster</td>
<td>• Comparison and Convenience A1 Retail (to meet District requirements and needs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Commercial Leisure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Large Scale Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Hotels, tourism and leisure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Major services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Market Town (Population c. 20,000)</td>
<td>Stourport-on-Severn</td>
<td>• Convenience A1 retail (to meet the needs of Stourport-on-Severn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Local services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Small scale business/office development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Town (Population c. 10,000)</td>
<td>Bewdley</td>
<td>• Convenience A1 retail to meet local needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Small scale business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Housing to meet local needs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

2 This figure is consistent with the required level of provision in WMRSS although within an extended timeframe to 2026. This takes account of local circumstances as demonstrated by the Wyre Forest District Retail and Commercial Leisure Study 2006 as updated in 2009.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement Type</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Suitable Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Villages</td>
<td>Fairfield</td>
<td>• Housing to meet local needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cookley</td>
<td>• Local services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blakedown</td>
<td>• Small scale rural employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wilden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Settlements</td>
<td>Chaddesley Corbett</td>
<td>• Housing to meet local need identified through rural exceptions sites in appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clows Top</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bliss Gate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Far Forest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Callow Hill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Guidance for Applicants**

- PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPG2: Green Belts
- PPS3: Housing
- West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision

**Reasoned Justification**

**Wider Influences on the Development Strategy**

**4.7** The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) provides the overall regional strategy to guide the preparation of Local Development Frameworks to deliver a coherent framework for regional development. It seeks to stem the historic movement of people and jobs away from the Major Urban Areas. The principle elements of the development strategy for the West Midlands Region are:

- To make the Major Urban Areas more attractive to retain an economically active population.
- To focus housing provision on named Settlements of Significant Development that are capable of balanced and sustainable growth.
- To provide for a spread of development to meet the requirements of other settlements, market towns and rural areas.

**4.8** The WMRSS sets out the indicative levels of development required to meet the District’s housing need, employment land requirements, comparison retailing and office development. These figures have guided those levels set out in Policy DS01, with the exception of comparison retailing, where local circumstances have been taken into account. A full explanation is included within Core Policy 9 relating to retail and commercial development.

**4.9** The Development Strategy will help to deliver the Wyre Forest Sustainable Community Strategy priorities. These include:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the impact of climate change.
• Developing economic infrastructure and ensuring access to economic benefits.
• Increasing affordable, appropriate and decent housing
• Reducing the impact of traffic congestion on the District.
• Protecting and improving the District’s natural environment.

Settlement Roles

4.10 The purpose of the settlement hierarchy is to provide a clear steer on the future role of the District’s settlements and to focus new development in locations which will promote sustainable communities.

4.11 The Settlement Hierarchy reflects the regeneration priorities for the District and has taken full account of conformity issues with the WMRSS. It is based on an assessment of the services and facilities that are available in each settlement and further information on this can be found in the evidence base documents.

Implementation and Monitoring

4.12 The development strategy will be implemented through the Core Policies and more specifically through the Site Allocations process to be undertaken through the next stages of the Local Development Framework. Monitoring will take place through the Annual Monitoring Report and through the specific monitoring indicators set out for the Core Policies.

DS02 - Kidderminster Local Regeneration Area

4.13 The three towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley, as well as the surrounding villages and rural settlements, each have their own distinct identities and roles within the District. It is important that the role for each settlement is recognised and supported by the Core Strategy into the future. The Development Strategy above sets out the District’s settlement hierarchy which reaffirms this.

4.14 As the District's settlements all have a unique role in providing differing levels of services and facilities, then they all have individual requirements in terms of their future development.

4.15 Kidderminster is the principal town in the District. It has the main employment centre with the best access to public transport facilities. The town centre is already home to the greatest range of retail and leisure facilities and is easily accessible from most areas of the District. Kidderminster does not lie within within the West Midlands Rural Regeneration Zone area, but it has an important role in serving those areas that are, including Bewdley.

4.16 Kidderminster contains the only mainline train station in the District and therefore provides access to/from outside the surrounding area. It is therefore considered appropriate that the town should be the focus for development within the District. As such, there are significant opportunities for redevelopment and regeneration throughout the town.
Development Strategy Policy DS02

Kidderminster Regeneration Area

Kidderminster will be promoted as the strategic centre for the District and its role in providing a focus for new housing, retail, office and leisure development is to be enhanced. New development will focus on the regeneration opportunities present on identified brownfield sites.

As an indicative guide the town will accommodate the following levels of development during the period up until 2026:

- Kidderminster will meet at approximately 60% of the District’s requirement for new homes.
- Kidderminster town centre will meet the District’s comparison retailing requirements for up to 25,000 sq.m.
- Kidderminster will meet the majority of large scale office development requirements for 40,000 sq.m up until 2026. Proposals will be required to follow a sequential approach which focuses on the Strategic Centre of Kidderminster.

Development proposals which help to promote Kidderminster as the tourism ‘hub’ of the District will be encouraged during the plan period. This includes the provision of supporting facilities such as hotels and developments that improve the evening/night time economy and cultural offer of the town. Sustainable transport links and infrastructure to promote ease of access to the Wyre Forest, Bewdley, West Midlands Safari Park and Kidderminster railway station will be sought.

The future development needs of Kidderminster will be allocated and implemented through the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (KCAAP) and Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Documents as well as the ReWyre Initiative and Regeneration Prospectus.

Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- PPS1 - Delivering Sustainable Development Standards
- PPS6 - Planning for Town Centres
- Looking After Our Town Centres - DCLG (2009)
- West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy: Phase 2 Review
- Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus
- Kidderminster Economic Regeneration Strategy
- White Young Green Retail Study
Reasoned Justification

4.17 Kidderminster is a former carpet manufacturing town which has been, and still is, experiencing an economic restructure as a result of the decline in activity of these industries. As a result, Kidderminster now faces a number of economic challenges and contains areas which experience acute deprivation. The challenges include lower than average household incomes, low skill levels, and poor educational attainment.

4.18 However, there is great potential for regeneration in Kidderminster. The Staffordshire & Worcester canal and River Stour both run through the town centre, providing a significant opportunity to create new waterside destinations. The town also benefits from considerable areas of brownfield land suitable for redevelopment - the 24ha former British Sugar site being one such example.

4.19 As one of only 25 'strategic centres' in the West Midlands region and a WMRSS designated Local Regeneration Area the town has a unique role within the District. There are key opportunities to improve the town’s tourism and employment roles, boosted by the Severn Valley Railway, the West Midlands Safari Park, and the British Sugar site. Overall, opportunities to create additional employment and learning opportunities, improve the natural and built environment, increase tourism and provide new housing, through regeneration are all present in Kidderminster.

4.20 The town has a number of major brownfield sites in its central area which have great redevelopment potential as demonstrated through the Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus. The development of residential, office and comparison retail development is to be in line with the WMRSS Phase 2 requirements as set out in policy DS01.

4.21 All new development should make a positive contribution to the vitality and viability of the town and support the creation of a safe, attractive and accessible urban environment, and improve both the overall mix of land uses in the town and its connectivity to adjoining areas.

Implementing Regeneration

Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (KCAAP) DPD

4.22 The KCAAP DPD will form part of the Local Development Framework and will set out the appropriate sites and policies to be applied within the boundary of the Plan area to meet a large part of the town’s future development needs up until 2026.

4.23 The document is directly informed by the work completed through the ReWyre Initiative and will provide the statutory framework for the proposals set out for the future regeneration potential of Kidderminster.
4.24 It will provide a focused development strategy for the town centre and its surrounding communities, where some major regeneration opportunities exist. It aims to maximise the economic vitality and viability of central Kidderminster whilst adapting to climate change and enhancing the environment of the area as a place to live.

4.25 The KCAAP Issues and Options Paper is available to view at www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk. Its objectives include:

- Maximising the economic potential of the town centre including shopping, the evening and visitor economies and offices.
- Realising the potential of the area’s canalside setting.
- Opening up the River Stour to create an enhanced biodiversity potential and environmental setting.
- Improve the environment by enhancing streets and spaces for people.
- Connect and integrate the main developments and environmental assets.

Site Allocations and Policies DPD

4.26 Whilst the KCAAP will deal exclusively with the Kidderminster central area, the Site Allocations and Policies DPD will be responsible for setting out the future development needs of the rest of the town, along with the rest of the District, up until 2026.

4.27 Possibly the most important site in this document with regard to the regeneration of Kidderminster is the former British Sugar site which will be allocated under this DPD. As mentioned above, this site provides a large opportunity for brownfield redevelopment and could provide new industry and employment opportunities. Joined together with the Stourport Road Economic Corridor and the other surrounding industrial estates, the former British Sugar site will help form the District’s largest employment area.

Regeneration Prospectus - The ReWyre Initiative

4.28 The District Council has produced a Regeneration Prospectus for Kidderminster as part of the ReWyre Initiative that promotes the town’s various regeneration opportunities and provides a blueprint for its future. A number of themes underpin the structure of the prospectus, and these are aligned with the four strands of the West Midlands Economic Strategy.
4.29 The Prospectus document sets out the vision for the town and the main regeneration objectives. It identifies specific development areas where significant opportunities for regeneration and redevelopment are present, as well as a number of key thematic issues that are cross-cutting across Kidderminster.

4.30 The Prospectus introduces the town’s four main ‘action areas’:

- **Town Centre** - Creating a vibrant high quality mixed use town centre
- **Churchfields** - A new mixed use ‘urban village’ adjacent to the town centre and Horsefair
- **Comberton Hill** - Improving the gateway to the town centre and encouraging visitors into Kidderminster.
- **The Beet** (former British Sugar site) - Establishing South Kidderminster Business & Nature Park as a regionally significant development opportunity anchored by ‘the Beet’

4.31 The Prospectus is focused on delivery and will lead to the establishment of a ‘delivery body’, made up of key public and private sector partners, who will work together to drive forward the ambitions of the Prospectus and help deliver essential regeneration projects in the town. These partners include Advantage West Midlands, British Waterways and the Homes and Communities Agency.

4.32 The Rewyre Initiative and Prospectus document will directly contribute and inform the development of the KCAAP DPD.

4.33 Further information on the Regeneration Prospectus can be found at [www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk).

**Implementation and Monitoring**

4.34 Specific proposals and policies for the Kidderminster central area will be allocated within the KCAAP document in accordance with the Phasing and Implementation Policy.

4.35 The policies contained both within the Core Strategy and the KCAAP will be delivered through the development control process with planning applications to be assessed against their contribution towards the general development principles set out in this policy. More detailed requirements will be included within the KCAAP and Site Allocations and Policies DPDs.

4.36 The following bodies and initiatives will help to deliver the future regeneration proposals for Kidderminster:

- Wyre Forest District Council
- Worcestershire County Council (Local Transport Plan)
- Developers
- ReWyre Initiative


- Advantage West Midlands
- British Waterways
- Wyre Forest Matters Local Strategic Partnership

**4.37** The indicators below will be used to measure the delivery of this policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Monitored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of residential development within Kidderminster</td>
<td>60% by 2026</td>
<td>Housing Land Availability Report</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Regeneration Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of new retail development located in primary retail area of Kidderminster</td>
<td>by 2026</td>
<td>Retail Monitoring Report</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Regeneration Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of new office development located within, or on the edge, of Kidderminster Town Centre</td>
<td>by 2026</td>
<td>Employment Land Availability Report</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Regeneration Section</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DS03 - Market Towns

4.38 Both Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley have benefited from their status as ‘market towns’ under Advantage West Midlands (AWM) Market Towns Initiative. The two towns provide a range of services and facilities which are important for meeting the needs of the local population as well as attracting a significant number of visitors in their own right. They are reasonably well served by public transport and have good access to Kidderminster and its greater range of services. Therefore, it is considered appropriate that a limited amount of new development should be located within these Market Towns.

Development Strategy Policy DS03

Market Towns

Within the District’s Market Towns of Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley, the following development proposals will be encouraged:

- Small-scale employment, and start-up business units in particular, to provide local employment opportunities and enhance economic viability;
- Current A1 retail provision will be safeguarded where possible, however, diversification may be acceptable where there is a positive contribution to the town centre. New retail development proposals should be appropriate to the town’s position in the District’s settlement hierarchy;
- Developments which provide additional community and health facilities for the local area;
- Sustainable transport infrastructure should be enhanced to ensure ease of access to the town’s services and facilities; particularly from the surrounding rural areas. Access from the market towns to the higher order services available in Kidderminster will also be improved.

Stourport-on-Severn:

- Due to its role in the settlement hierarchy and mix of employment and service opportunities, Stourport-on-Severn is expected to make an important contribution to meeting the District’s requirements for new homes. The focus will be on existing brownfield sites within the town, which will accommodate up to 30% of the District’s housing requirements up until 2026.
- Developments which will increase the variety and mix of the tourism offer in the town will be encouraged and facilities which focus on heritage tourism, particularly capitalising on the historic canal basins, will be especially promoted.

Bewdley:

- Bewdley’s contribution towards the District’s housing need will be limited primarily to the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs on allocated sites. This reflects the town’s conservation context and the more limited availability of jobs and services within the town.
- The role of Bewdley as a sustainable tourist destination is to be enhanced, with sustainable transport links to the Wyre Forest, Severn Valley Railway, West Midlands Safari Park and Kidderminster Rail station being a particular focus.
Reasoned Justification

4.39  The Market Towns Initiative was set up to provide funding towards projects that help support the viability and prosperity of towns for the benefit of their people and their rural hinterland. Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley have both benefited from projects that have been funded through this initiative. In addition to this, Bewdley also qualifies for funding through the AWM Rural Regeneration Zone initiative.

4.40  The WMRSS states that market towns should be the focus of rural renaissance and should be defined within LDFs. Within market towns, local people, and those in the surrounding rural hinterland, should be able to buy most things they need and have sufficient access to housing, jobs, education, and entertainment.

4.41  The geography of the District means that Kidderminster is just 3 miles from each of the market towns with reasonably good public transport links between them. Therefore, the need for Bewdley and Stourport-on-Severn to provide facilities and services needs to be balanced with their proximity to Kidderminster and the services it provides in its function as the strategic centre of the District.

Stourport-on-Servern

4.42  With a population of 20,000 Stourport-on-Severn is a large market town that is well served by local amenities such as shops and community facilities. It is relatively well served by public transport, although some outlying housing estates have poor access to bus services, and provides a good level of existing employment opportunities.

4.43  The town has the potential to accommodate a significant amount of new development on brownfield sites within or adjacent to the town centre. However, regeneration will need to be carefully considered in the the context of the town’s historic character and heritage in addition to the settlement hierarchy.
4.44 Traffic congestion is a major issue within the town centre as high levels of traffic pass through it to access the river crossing. The strategic transport infrastructure in the town is a key consideration. Accessibility to the town centre by alternative modes for residents and visitors alike is extremely important to the town's future functionality and viability.

4.45 Stourport-on-Severn has unique origins as a canal town and has five historic basins which have recently undergone a major restoration programme. The town is also located on the banks of the River Severn which has helped it become a popular visitor destination. The town is a particular attraction for day trippers, and especially for people from the Birmingham and Black Country areas. The tourism offer of the town has a great potential for generating economic activity, but this has not been fully utilised in the past. A key opportunity is available to promote Stourport-on-Severn's history as a canal town, with its historic basins, and take advantage of its heritage assets. This would help to enable the town to tap into new tourism markets and potentially attract a higher-spending, longer-stay visitor.

**Bewdley**

4.46 Bewdley has a smaller population at around 9,000 but has a greater interdependent relationship with the surrounding rural parishes. It also falls into the West Midlands Rural Regeneration Zone.

Load Street, Bewdley

4.47 There is a reasonable level of service provision in the town with shopping and community facilities to serve the local population. However, higher order services and goods are on offer in Kidderminster and therefore are available within a short distance from Bewdley.

4.48 Employment opportunities are very limited within the town with the majority of workers having to commute out to the surrounding areas.

4.49 Like Stourport-on-Severn, Bewdley is also a popular tourist destination. This is largely due to its attractive and historic Georgian architecture, its setting on the River Severn, and the Severn Valley Railway station close to the centre. The town's setting within the countryside is also an important factor and the Wyre Forest is located just on the town's outskirts. Therefore, Bewdley is well located within a tourist setting and provides opportunities for developing sustainable tourism.

4.50 The ability to accommodate new development on brownfield sites within or adjacent to the town centre is limited due to the heritage setting of the town's as well as its geomorphology. Development within the town's Conservation Area itself, which covers most of the town centre, is especially sensitive and will need to preserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area. There are few development opportunities within the built environment and conservation is a priority. However, there is a major opportunity to accommodate a mixed use scheme, with a focus on health and community uses, within the town centre.
Implementation and Monitoring

4.51 Specific proposals for the Market Towns will be allocated and implemented within the Site Allocations and Policies document. The policy will be delivered through the Development Control process with planning applications to be assessed against their contribution towards the general development principles set out in this policy and the more detailed requirements to be included within the Site Allocations and Policies DPD.

4.52 The following bodies will take an active role in implementing the policy by acting as accountable bodies for certain funding sources and as a project management vehicle to help deliver new development and initiatives in the Market Towns:

- Wyre Forest District Council
- Worcestershire County Council (Local Transport Plan)
- Bewdley Development Trust
- Stourport Forward
- British Waterways (Canal Basins)
- Forestry Commission (Grow with Wyre)

4.53 The following indicators will be used to assess the effective implementation of this policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of residential development within Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley.</td>
<td>93% by 2026</td>
<td>Housing Land Availability Report</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of new retail development located in the primary shopping area (Kidderminster and Stourport) centres</td>
<td>95% by 2026</td>
<td>Retail Monitoring Report</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration Section</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DS04 - Rural Regeneration and Services

4.54 In terms of land mass, the majority of the District can be classed as rural (about 85% rural). Therefore, the state and future of the District's rural areas is a significant consideration. The rural area contains a network of thriving villages and rural settlements with their own distinct characters and identities. It is vital that these features are preserved and enhanced into the future. Providing an element of balanced growth to address local needs in these areas is crucial to their viability. This is an important factor in creating a sustainable and diverse rural economy and helping to combat rural poverty. The surrounding countryside with its attractive landscape also underpins the important tourism economy in the area that can provide significant economic opportunities.

Development Strategy Policy DS04

Rural Regeneration

Providing Affordable Housing

New residential development in the District's villages and other rural settlements will be to meet local housing needs only as established through parish surveys.

Sustaining Community Facilities and Services

Developments that provide the rural community with essential facilities and services will be supported in principle.

The network of local groups of shops will be safeguarded in order to support nearby settlements and reduce the need to travel.

Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn, and Bewdley will remain the most sustainable places to provide higher order services and facilities to the rural areas, but access to them by public transport should be improved.

The Rural Economy

The rural economy will be supported by promoting development which contributes to traditional rural employment sectors as well as encouraging appropriate farm diversification schemes. This includes proposals that improve the sustainable tourism offer of the rural areas. Development proposals will not be permitted where they would be likely to have an adverse impact on the District's Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.

The provision of rural based workspace and live/work units will be permitted providing the proposals are small-scale and that they are appropriate to the character of the area and do not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the Green Belt. Priority will be placed on the re-use or replacement of existing rural buildings.
Reasoned Justification

Parish Plans

4.55 A number of Parishes within the District have produced Parish Plans, for example Upper Arley, Rock and Chaddesley Corbett. The Parish Plans include a number of locally identified objectives and actions to help promote rural revitalisation. In particular, Parish Plans include actions to provide more affordable housing choice to younger local residents and a number of objectives in relation to the design of new development.

The Rural Economy

4.56 Agriculture is the most predominant user of land in the District’s rural areas. The quality of agricultural land is generally very high in the area running from east and south east of Kidderminster to the District boundary. There are also significant blocks of high quality land to the north of Kidderminster and around Rock.

4.57 Part of the District, including Bewdley and its rural hinterland immediately to the west, also falls within the AWM Rural Regeneration Zone (RRZ). The RRZ initiative was set up to develop and implement a programme of economic regeneration for rural areas. It is centred around developing a diverse and sustainable economy, raising skill levels, reducing rural poverty and providing access to services, and promoting environmental excellence.

4.58 Economic and employment opportunities in rural areas go beyond the traditional land based and agricultural sectors. There are great opportunities for sustainable farm diversification, particularly with regard to the tourism and leisure sectors. New employment opportunity sectors such as creative industries and environmental technologies may also be available in rural areas. The provision of high-speed broadband will be essential in developing the economic base of the rural areas.

4.59 Equestrian activities and horticulture are also prominent uses in rural areas. Horticulture, and commercial horticulture in particular, can contribute significantly to the rural economy and provide employment for local people. However, equine related development will need to be balanced with the potential impact on the landscape and character of the rural environment and the continued need to preserve the best and most versatile agricultural land to enable localised food production in the future.
4.60 However, the economic development of the District’s rural areas does not need to be at the expense of environmental protection and enhancement and must be balanced by the pressure to regenerate the adjacent towns. A large part of the District also falls within the West Midlands Green Belt and/or a Landscape Protection Area. Development and regeneration can deliver environmental, social and economic benefits if done in the right way.

4.61 Sustainable living is as important in rural areas as it is in urban areas. Measures that encourage working practices that cut down on commuting and improve the work/life balance should be encouraged. It is also important to help establish life-style changes that support the local economy and the sustainability of the rural community. However, much of the rural area is close to the combined urban area of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley and to the employment opportunities and services they provide. Therefore, significant numbers of the rural population will be expected to visit these centres regularly to access these facilities. Transport links between the urban and rural areas should be improved to increase the sustainability of the relationship between the two areas.

4.62 The Local Development Framework will support and help to deliver the following initiatives within the rural areas:

Grow with Wyre

4.63 The 'Grow with Wyre' initiative was set up to ensure the long-term social, environmental and economic sustainability of the area. The initiative was primarily concerned with restoring and enhancing the ancient Wyre Forest landscape and its associated ancient woodland habitats. However, the project is also concerned with identifying training needs and retaining traditional forestry skills and practices, as well as improving accessibility to the forest and increasing visitor numbers.

4.64 One of the projects includes the restoration of the Wyre’s woodlands into active management, utilising traditional management skills and techniques. In addition, it aims to stimulate a market for timber, woodland crafts, and the by-products of forestry activity and encourages more young people to enter the forestry industry as an attractive career choice. In all, it aims to revive the economic value of the forest.

4.65 The Grow with Wyre initiative not only promotes natural restoration, but also how the area can benefit economically from the forest in a sustainable manner. The forest’s role as a tourist attraction is perhaps its major economic opportunity. However, opportunities are also present in sustainable timber production and woodland crafts through re-establishing traditional forest management as well as producing bio-fuel as a sustainable energy source.

Rural Economic Strategy
4.66 In November 2008 a Rural Economic Strategy was adopted which covers the period from 2008 to 2014. This Strategy provides a framework to address the economic development needs of the District’s rural areas and population. The plan below shows the area covered by the Strategy.

4.67 The Rural Economic Strategy aims to develop a sustainable and competitive economic base by encouraging new business formation through innovation, diversification and entrepreneurship. This will be aided by providing rural communities with a choice of quality learning and training opportunities. The Strategy is also about creating a sustainable rural environment with good public transport facilities and adequate access to rural services. There is also emphasis on the impact of climate change on the rural economy and supporting a low carbon energy infrastructure.

4.68 Furthermore, the Strategy does not forget the need to maintain, conserve and enhance the natural and historic environmental qualities which contribute to the overall character and quality of rural landscapes including their landscape character, biodiversity and locally distinctiveness.

4.69 Further information on the Rural Economic Strategy can be found at www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk.

**Implementation and Monitoring**

4.70 Specific proposals for the rural areas will be allocated within the Site Allocations and Policies document. The policy will be delivered through the Development Control process with planning applications to be assessed against their contribution towards the general development principles set out in this policy and the more detailed requirements to be included within the Site Allocations and Policies DPD.
4.71 The following bodies and initiatives will help to deliver rural regeneration in the future:

- Wyre Forest District Council - Rural Economic Strategy
- Worcestershire County Council Local Transport Plan
- Advantage West Midlands - Rural Regeneration Zone
- Parish Councils and Parish Plan Groups
- Registered Social Landlords
- Local Community Groups and land owners.

4.72 The indicators below will be used to assess the effective implementation of this policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount of best and most versatile agricultural land lost to development.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>In-house monitoring</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of planning permissions granted in the Green Belt.</td>
<td></td>
<td>In-house monitoring</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of villages with key facilities, i.e., primary school, post office, GP, Pub, convenience store, village hall.</td>
<td></td>
<td>In-house monitoring</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport travel time of key facilities.</td>
<td>AMR</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of VAT registered businesses in rural areas.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Neighbourhood Statistics</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DS05 - Phasing and Implementation

4.73 The phasing and implementation policy sets out how the District Council will proactively achieve the Development Strategy through sustainable and balanced delivery of housing and employment for the duration of the plan period.

Development Strategy Policy DS05

Phasing and Implementation

Housing

To deliver the WMRSS requirement for 4,000 net additional dwellings for the period covering 2006 - 2026, a five year supply of deliverable sites will be maintained and monitored in accordance with the Annual Monitoring Report.

The Local Development Framework will deliver the following average annual net additions of dwellings within the District across the five year phasing periods:

- 2006/07-2010/11 - 240 dwellings per annum
- 2011/12-2016/17 - 326 dwellings per annum
- 2016/17-2020/21 - 196 dwellings per annum
- 2020/21-2025/26 - 94 dwellings per annum

The Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and Site Allocations and Policies DPDs will phase and manage the release of allocated sites to reflect the District's regeneration agenda. This will ensure that a ten year provision of sites suitable for residential development is maintained.

Employment

To deliver the WMRSS requirement for 44 hectares of employment land for the period covering 2006-2026, a five year supply of deliverable sites to meet the 11 hectare requirement will be maintained and monitored in accordance with the Annual Monitoring Report.

Additional Guidance for Applicants

- PPS3: Housing
- PPS4: Prosperous Economies
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009)
- Employment Land Review (2008)

Reasoned Justification

Housing
4.74 The WMRSS states that to ensure that progress on urban renaissance is not undermined, the phasing of housing development is essential. Phasing is also important to provide developers with more certainty as to when larger regeneration projects will go ahead in the future.

4.75 The housing trajectory at Appendix __ depicts the managed delivery targets necessary to achieve the overall WMRSS target for residential development per annum. It demonstrates past performance on delivering housing within the District and provides an estimate for future performance. The housing trajectory is reviewed on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report process. The trajectory demonstrates that a higher build rate will be required for the first ten year period up until 2016.

4.76 During 2009 the Council undertook a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to assess the indicative capacity for potential residential sites within the District and to inform the production of the LDF. The sites identified through the SHLAA process have also been subject to independent viability appraisal. Based on the evidence provided through the SHLAA process and reflecting the principle to provide the majority of new housing development within the main towns of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn, the table below sets out the level of housing that could be delivered within each five year phasing period:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>2006-11</th>
<th>2011-16</th>
<th>2016-21</th>
<th>2021-26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kidderminster</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stourport-on-Severn</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bewdley</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Areas</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District total</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>1630</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.77 The evidence provided through the SHLAA process and its subsequent viability appraisal provides no robust demonstration that genuine local circumstances exist within the District that will prevent specific sites from being allocated for residential development through the LDF process. Therefore no windfall allowance is included within the trajectory assessment although historically trends have indicated high levels of windfall development in the District. The number of windfalls will be closely monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report.

Employment

4.78 The WMRSS identifies that the District should plan for an indicative longer term requirement of 44 hectares of employment land from 2006 - 2026. Within this requirement a 5-year rolling reservoir of 11ha of readily available and deliverable employment land will be maintained.

4.79 The Employment Land Review identified that enough employment sites exist within the District to achieve the indicative longer term requirement over the plan period. The 5-year 11ha requirement will continue to be closely monitored and sufficient sites will be allocated through the KCAAP and
the Site Allocations and Policies DPD’s to ensure that the targets are met. These documents will play a crucial role in prioritising areas for regeneration and in particular identifying key brownfield regeneration sites within Kidderminster, specifically along the Stourport Road Employment Corridor.

Retail and Commercial Development

4.80 In accordance with the WMRSS it is not considered appropriate to phase development that will meet the District’s retail and commercial requirements as set out in Policy DS01 at this stage. This is because there is considerable uncertainty in projecting future comparison retail requirements and this is likely to increase over time. However, Core Policy 9 sets out a proactive approach to ensuring that appropriate retail and commercial development is achieved within the District. This has been informed by the White Young Green Retail and Commercial Leisure Study.

Infrastructure

4.81 The availability of the necessary infrastructure and the potential need to provide additional capacity in some of the locations will be key factors in determining the timing of the release of key sites. The Infrastructure Schedules set out at Appendix__ provide an indication of what infrastructure will be required, who will be responsible for delivering it and an approximate timescale for its delivery.

Implementation and Monitoring

4.82 In order to reflect the District’s regeneration needs, the mechanism for the phasing of site releases for the LDF period up until 2026 will be through the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (KCAAP) and Site Allocations and Policies DPDs. These documents will play a crucial role in prioritising areas for regeneration. In particular, key brownfield regeneration sites within Kidderminster will be phased earlier on during the plan period. In addition to the KCAAP, the Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus will also be a key delivery vehicle in this process. The following bodies will be responsible for the implementation of this policy:

- Wyre Forest District Council
- Worcestershire County Council
- Developers
- Advantage West Midlands
- Key Infrastructure Providers

4.83 The housing trajectory is a core indicator and will be reviewed on an annual basis. Procedures will be put in place to respond to any significant deviation from the required rate of housing provision should this be demonstrated through the Annual Monitoring Report. The SHLAA will also be updated on an annual basis to ensure that the availability of housing sites is closely monitored.

4.84 The delivery of employment land within the District is a core indicator and is reviewed on an annual basis through the Employment Land Availability Report and demonstrated through the Annual Monitoring Report. The Employment Land Review will also be updated regularly to ensure that the recommendations remain valid.
Key Diagram

4.85 The Key Diagram is the principal illustration of the spatial strategy. The diagram identifies broad locations for development, key areas of constraint, the main patterns of movement and also outlines the classification of settlements, reflecting the settlement hierarchy included within the Spatial Development Strategy. The Key Diagram can be viewed on the following page.
5: Core Policies

5.1 The Development Strategy and Objectives will be delivered through a number of core policies which flow from the themes. It should be noted that the Core Policies are not mutually exclusive and should be considered in the context of each other as a means to delivering the Spatial Vision for the future of the District.

5.2 Each core policy area includes a list of additional information for applicants. The documents set out within these boxes provide the national and regional policy background and the key pieces of evidence base relevant to the core policies set out. These documents should be referred to when preparing a planning application as they set out the national and regional planning policy and provide further guidance on the issues covered within the Core Policies. Many of these documents will be material considerations when determining planning applications. It should be noted that the documents set out are current at the time of preparing the Core Strategy DPD and these may be superseded, and new guidance may emerge, during the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

5.3 The table below sets out the Core Policies and highlights those Spatial Objectives and Sustainable Community Strategy priorities that they will help to deliver.

- Communities that are Safe and Feel Safe
- A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow
- Economic Success that is Shared by All
- Health and Wellbeing
- Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People
- Stronger Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Policy</th>
<th>Development Objectives</th>
<th>Sustainable Community Strategy Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development Strategy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS01 - Development Locations</td>
<td>3 / 5 / 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS02 - Kidderminster Local Regeneration Area</td>
<td>1 / 2 / 3 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / 11 / 12 / 13</td>
<td>Economic Success that is Shared by All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stronger Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS03 - Market Towns</td>
<td>1 / 2 / 3 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 10 / 11 / 12 / 13</td>
<td>Economic Success that is Shared by All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stronger Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS04 - Rural Regeneration and Services</td>
<td>1 / 2 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 11 / 12 / 13</td>
<td>Economic Success that is Shared by All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Policy</td>
<td>Development Objectives</td>
<td>Sustainable Community Strategy Priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Development Strategy** | | • Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People  
• Stronger Communities |
| DS05 - Phasing and Implementation | 1 / 3 / 4 | • Stronger Communities |
| **Theme 1: Adapting to and Mitigating Against Climate Change** | | |
| Delivering Sustainable Construction Standards | 1 / 2 / 7 / 9 | • A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow  
• Stronger Communities |
| Water Management | 3 / 5 / 7 / 9 | • A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow |
| Promoting Transport Choice and Improving Accessibility | 3 / 4 / 10 / 11 | • A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow  
• Stronger Communities |
| **Theme 2: A Desirable Place to Live** | | |
| Providing Affordable Housing | 1 / 3 / 4 / 12 / 13 | • A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow  
• Stronger Communities  
• Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People |
| Delivering Mixed Communities | 1 / 3 / 4 / 12 / 13 | • Stronger Communities |
| Provision for Gypsies and Travellers | 1 / 12 | • Stronger Communities |
| Delivering Community Wellbeing | 1 / 3 / 4 / 6 / 8 / 12 / 13 | • Stronger Communities  
• Improving Health and Wellbeing  
• Communities that are Safe and Feel Safe |
| **Theme 3: A Good Place to do Business** | | |
| A Diverse Local Economy | 2 / 3 / 4 / 11 | • Economic Success Shared by All |
| Retail and Commercial Development | 2 / 3 | • Economic Success Shared by All |
| Sustainable Tourism | 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / 12 | • Economic Success Shared by All |
| Supporting Transport Infrastructure and Sustainable Freight Movement | 2 / 3 / 10 / 11 | • Economic Success Shared by All  
• Stronger Communities |
| **Theme 4: A Unique Place** | | |
| Quality Design/ Local Distinctiveness | All | • A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow  
• Stronger Communities |
<p>| Landscape Character | 4 / 5 / 7 / 8 | • A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Policy</th>
<th>Development Objectives</th>
<th>Sustainable Community Strategy Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic Environment</td>
<td>3 / 4 / 5 / 6</td>
<td>• A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing a Green Infrastructure Network</td>
<td>3 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 12</td>
<td>• A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Opportunities for Local Biodiversity and Geodiversity</td>
<td>5 / 8 / 12</td>
<td>• A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regenerating the Rivers and Canal</td>
<td>3 / 4 / 5 / 6 / 7 / 8 / 9 / 12</td>
<td>• A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow • Stronger Communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6: Adapting to and Mitigating Against Climate Change

6.1 The LDF has a significant role to play in the efforts to tackle climate change. Adaptation and mitigation measures taken now will determine how robust the District’s built and natural environments will be when faced with future climate change predictions. There are only a small number of developments in the County that have systematically addressed mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and a few that have attempted to take into account adaptation to climate change.

6.2 The Worcestershire Climate Change Impact Study (2004) investigated the likely impacts of climate change on Worcestershire. The study looked at predicted changes for three thirty-year periods centred on the 2020s, 2050s and the 2080s under two different global emissions scenarios. Climate change is already having a wide-ranging impact on Worcestershire including flooding, landslip, increased average temperatures and increased intense rainfall events. Future climate change scenarios predict a range of impacts upon the climate of the UK and Worcestershire including:

- Increased average maximum temperatures - up to 4.5°C by the 2080s
- More frequent hot summers and less frequent very cold winters
- Summer rainfall to decrease by up to 50% by the 2080s
- Winter rainfall to increase by up to 23% by 2080s
- More frequent extreme weather events such as storms and floods

6.3 Transport emissions are a major contributor to climate change and therefore the LDF needs to promote sustainable transport opportunities including walking, cycling and public transport and reduce reliance on the private car.

6.4 The LDF will need to ensure that: development is located to reduce the need to travel; energy efficiency is maximised and an increasing proportion of energy is sources from renewables and that development is located to, and incorporates measures to, minimise flood risk.
Delivering Sustainable Construction Standards

6.5 This policy area seeks to ensure that new development within the District will meet the highest standards of energy efficiency; incorporate on-site renewable and low-carbon energy technologies; reduce the volume of waste going to landfill; and mitigate against climate change.

6.6 Transport and accessibility issues are closely linked to climate change and are considered further under .Promoting Transport Choice and Improving Accessibility.. This policy is also closely linked to .Water Management. and .Providing a Green Infrastructure Network..

Core Policy 1

Delivering Sustainable Construction Standards

1. All new development proposals within the District must demonstrate how they reduce their impact on the environment. The design, layout, siting and orientation of developments should seek to maximise energy conservation and efficiency.

2. A minimum of 10% of the energy requirements of new developments on sites of 10 dwellings or more, or 1,000 sq m or more for commercial developments, should be met on-site from low or zero-carbon energy sources. The technologies installed should be retained and maintained during the full lifetime of the building. Consideration should be given to the use of combined heat and power systems on larger sites, particularly on industrial sites or sites of new community infrastructure.

3. Free-standing renewable energy developments will be supported subject to them being appropriate to the sensitivity of the landscape and meeting the requirements of all other policies within the LDF.

4. The implementation of the Code for Sustainable Homes will be supported in line with the national timescale. Developers will be encouraged to meet a higher code level than is mandatory where this is economically viable. Non-residential buildings will be encouraged to achieve a BREEAM rating of ‘very good’ or higher.

5. All new developments must make provision for waste recycling and as a minimum, developments will be required to provide sufficient space to store materials for recycling.

6. All new developments will be required to demonstrate that they have considered the impact of climate change upon them and that they are suitable for the predicted changes in climate.

7. The West Midlands Sustainability Checklist should be applied to all major new developments.

Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS1 Supplement: Planning and Climate Change
- PPS22: Renewable Energy
- Code for Sustainable Homes
- Regional Spatial Strategy (insert more info after EiP)
- West Midlands Regional Energy Strategy
6.7 It is important that steps are taken to reduce the amount of energy which we use. Energy conservation is the first, and most important, step to reducing carbon emissions. It is therefore important that new developments take measures to reduce energy demand and to increase energy efficiency. In order to contribute to meeting national targets, new development proposals will need to substantially reduce their energy consumption through energy efficient design and layout. Design and layout can also help to maximise the potential for renewable energy, for example, ensuring that south facing roof space is available for the installation of solar water heating or solar photovoltaic power.

Solar Panels at Stourport Sports Club

6.8 Nationally, there is a drive to increase the amount of energy generated from renewable sources with targets to reduce CO₂ emissions by 80% by 2050 and for 10% of UK electricity supply to come from renewable resources by 2010 and 20% by 2020. The District is currently heavily reliant on fossil fuels with low consumption of renewable energy, and very few examples of renewable energy schemes. In 2006, Wyre Forest District is estimated to have released 619,000 tonnes of CO₂, of which, 244,000 tonnes were domestic (End User Local and Regional Estimates of Carbon Emissions, DEFRA (2006)).

6.9 A County-wide study has been undertaken to identify potential for large-scale renewable energy installations by District. The report is centred around three different scenarios, the third of which assumes that much more supportive planning and financial regimes are in place. The study maps areas of search within the District, however, this does not imply that development would be appropriate in these areas and all proposals would have to be thoroughly tested through the planning process. The Site Allocations and Policies DPD will allocate sites for renewable energy development where this is considered appropriate.

6.10 In line with PPS1 Annex: Planning and Climate Change, a minimum target has been set for the percentage of energy requirements in new developments which should be generated from renewable sources. How this target is achieved will vary by developments. Where it is considered economically viable, higher targets will be set out on a site-by-site basis through the Site Allocations and Policies DPD.
6.11 The West Midlands Sustainability Checklist provides an interactive toolkit for developers to assess the extent to which a development site proposal will deliver on different aspects of sustainability. Targets for achieving particular levels will be set for individual sites where appropriate through site development briefs.

**Maximise Opportunities for the Re-cycling of Waste**

6.12 Waste minimisation and re-cycling is a major issue facing the District. The WEEE Directive 2002/96/EC and 2003/108/EC sets out a responsibility for the provision of Designated Collection Facilities for recycling. The waste hierarchy sets out the three 'R's of waste management: Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Recycling rates within the District have been low in the past but are improving, aided by a Council operated household recycling collection service. It is therefore important that future development proposals should manage waste in accordance with the waste hierarchy with a particular focus on increasing levels of waste recycling, including the re-use of existing on-site materials. A site waste management plan will be required for all major new developments. The environmental impact of raw materials should be considered and where possible recycled materials should be used. The use of locally sourced raw materials will be encouraged in order to reduce the carbon emissions associated with transporting raw materials to the site.

**Adapting to a Changing Climate**

6.13 Climate change will have an impact on our lives with temperatures predicted to rise by up to 4.5°C by the 2080s across Worcestershire. Rainfall is likely to become more intense and greater levels of flooding can be expected. Measures need to be taken now to ensure that new developments are climate ready and will be fit for purpose in the future. This means developments will need to consider the following issues:

- **Subsidence**
  The District is primarily underlain by sandstone and mudstone. The gradient of the River Stour and River Severn valleys means that landslips could become a more frequent occurrence within some areas of the District as a result of warmer wetter winters. Subsidence can also occur as a result of drought caused by warmer, drier summers. These issues will need to be taken into consideration and appropriate designs and construction techniques will need to be used to overcome these risks. Development will not be permitted in those areas vulnerable to landslips. Parts of Wyre Forest District are areas of former mining activity. This may have implications for land stability within these areas. This will be considered further through the Site Allocations and Policies DPD.

- **Managing High Temperatures:** Warmer summer temperatures are likely to cause discomfort for residents and workers and an increased demand for mechanical air conditioning. The design, orientation and layout of buildings needs to be adapted to deal with higher temperatures. Coupled with this is the urban heat island effect where built-up areas are warmer than the surrounding rural areas. Adequate green space and tree cover will need to be provided within the town centres to help alleviate this.
6.14  This policy will be implemented on a site-by-site basis through the development control process. The Council will require evidence as to how this policy has been met to be included within the Design and Access Statement.

6.15  The Site Allocations and Policies DPD and the KCAAP DPD will allocate sites which should achieve a higher proportion of renewable energy where this is considered to be economically viable through achieving economies of scale. Subsequent DPDs may also allocate sites specifically for the delivery of free-standing renewable energy schemes should this be considered appropriate.

6.16  The following indicators will be used to assess the effectiveness of this policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of flatted residential and all commercial developments providing facilities for recycling (permissions granted)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of major new developments incorporating on-site renewable energy generation.</td>
<td>3% reduction per annum 2005: 6.2 tonnes per annum</td>
<td>Defra</td>
<td>Health and Sustainability Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District per capita CO₂ emissions</td>
<td>3% reduction per annum 2005: 6.2 tonnes per annum</td>
<td>National Indicator - data available via Covalent</td>
<td>Chief Executive Directorate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume of household waste recycled (NI192)</td>
<td></td>
<td>National Indicator - data available via Covalent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average energy rating of new housing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Building control records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Water Management

Water in the Wyre Forest

6.17 The 'Planning for Water in Worcestershire technical research paper' identifies a number of key issues which need to be addressed by the planning system within Worcestershire, these are:

- Adapting to the challenges of climate change
- Preventing and managing surface ground and fluvial flooding
- Ensuring sufficient water supply
- Ensuring sufficient sewerage capacity (infrastructure)
- Biodiversity enhancement and the role of Green Infrastructure (wetlands, woodlands etc) in flood management and water cycle
- Improving water efficiency in developments
- Improving water quality

6.18 A number of these issues have been included within this core policy to help alleviate the situation with regard to all aspects of the water cycle within the Wyre Forest District. Other core policy areas that are particularly relevant to this area include Delivering Sustainable Development Standards and Providing a Green Infrastructure Network.

Core Policy 2

Water Management

Flood Risk

The Council will determine planning applications in accordance with the guidance contained within Planning Policy Statement 25 (Development and Flood Risk). In considering proposals for development the District Council will follow the sequential risk-based approach, including the application of the “exception test” where continuing development is necessary for wider sustainability reasons. This approach will target development to areas of least risk and will be informed by the District Council’s SFRA. All developments proposed within flood plains 2 & 3 will need to be accompanied by a suitable site-specific Flood Risk Assessment.

New developments will be required to incorporate appropriate Sustainable Drainage Measures (SUDS). The level and type of SUDS that are required will depend on the location and the scale of the development proposed.

For developments in areas with known surface water flooding issues, \(^3\) appropriate mitigation and construction methods will be required.

New development proposals should seek to:

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\(^3\) Identified by the SFRA, the Environment Agency or the Council’s emergency planning team
i. Conserve the ecological value of the water environment, including watercourse corridors; and

ii. Open up any culverted watercourse where practicable (Proposals involving the creation of new culverts will not be permitted)

Applications which relate specifically to reducing the risk of flooding (e.g. defence / alleviation work, retro-fitting of existing development) will be supported so long as they do not conflict with other objectives within the LDF.

The Site Allocations and Policies and KCAAP DPD's will carefully consider the loss of flood plain storage when allocating future development. Where significant loss as a result of new development is anticipated, then comparable storage should be discussed with the Environment Agency to offset the impact of development.  \(^4\)

**Water Resources**

New development proposals should:

i. Improve water efficiency through including appropriate rainwater harvesting / water conservation techniques

ii. Connect to the main sewer network wherever feasible

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**Additional Guidance for Applicants:**

- PPS25: Development and Flood Risk
- Development and Flood Risk: A Practice Guide Companion to PPS25
- The Water Framework Directive
- West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy
- Draft River Basin Management Plan for the River Severn Basin District
- River Severn Catchment Flood Management Plan
- Planning for Water in Worcestershire: Technical Research Paper
- Wyre Forest District SFRA Level 1 and Level 2
- Wyre Forest District Water Cycle Study

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**Reasoned Justification**

**Flood Risk**

6.19 Water is a vital resource and its management is fundamental to sustainable development. The way in which water is managed can determine whether new development, land management, water usage, mineral working and waste management have a positive or negative impact on people and the environment. Good planning of water issues can provide us with clean and reliable water supplies, areas for recreation, habitats for wildlife and flood mitigation.

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\(^4\) Flood Plains in the District could provide benefits as part of a wider Green Infrastructure Network to contribute to health and biodiversity opportunities. This is further outlined under the ‘Providing a Green Infrastructure Network Core Policy
6.20 The two main national policy drivers in relation to water and spatial planning are PPS 25: Development and Flood Risk and the Water Framework Directive (WFD). PPS25 main aims are to ensure that flood risk is taken into account at all stages in the planning process, this is achieved through the requirement to undertake a number of different scales of flood risk assessments depending on the stage of the process. The WFD is designed to improve the ecological health and prevent further deterioration of the whole water environment, promote the sustainable use of water, reduce water pollution and ensure a progressive reduction in groundwater pollution. It is therefore vital that the LDF seeks to achieve the aims of these documents taking into account the influences and challenges that exist at a local scale.

6.21 At the regional level, the Regional Spatial Strategy Panel Report (September 2009) recommended that a new policy pertaining to flood risk within the Region should be included within the RSS. It is therefore important that this Core Policy reflects the objectives of the RSS.

6.22 The Environment Agency has also produced two important strategic level documents that affect the Wyre Forest District. The first is the Draft River Basin Management Plan for the River Severn Basin District, which seeks to implement the policies of the WFD. This document sets out detailed proposals to achieve the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment along the River Severn Basin. The second document is the River Severn Catchment Flood Management Plan, which is a long term flood risk management plan for the River Severn Catchment. The document splits up the catchment into ‘policy-units’ and identifies appropriate policies for addressing flood risk within these units. The Wyre Forest falls within two policy units - ‘Kidderminster and Bromsgrove’ and ‘Middle Severn Corridor’. It is important, therefore, that the LDF reflects the principles of these two documents and the District Council will continue to work in close partnership with the Environment Agency to ensure that the objectives of these strategic documents can be realised at the local scale.

6.23 At the local scale; within Worcestershire climate predictions suggest an increase in winter rainfall by up to 23% by the 2080s. There are likely to be more short duration extreme weather events such as storms and floods and there is already evidence of increased flash flooding within the County, including in Wyre Forest.

6.24 Wyre Forest District has an intricate network of rivers, streams and pools, and therefore flooding is seen as a key issue that should be considered through all stages of planning. Due to the risk of flooding within some of the main settlements in the District a number of flood alleviation schemes have been constructed. A flood alleviation scheme was constructed in 2003 to protect Kidderminster from flooding. The scheme comprises a large bund with a concrete culvert which serves to limit the flow of the River Stour through a dam structure, causing flood water to back up on the Puxton Marshes, creating a temporary reservoir. The flood alleviation scheme also included channel improvements downstream through Kidderminster. Bewdley is the other town in the District that benefits from a flood alleviation scheme. Bewdley is protected through a combination of walls through the town and the operation of temporary and demountable defences. The nature of flooding from the River Severn at Bewdley is such that adequate warning is given in order to deploy the flood defences.
Although flood alleviation schemes exist in these two towns, all three towns are identified as being at risk from flooding. Flood risk is not just confined to the urban areas however, many rural areas with watercourses were subject to severe flooding episodes in summer 2007.

Therefore, due to the importance and potential impact of flood risk within the whole of the District a Level 1 and subsequent Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been carried out by consultants Royal Haskoning. These studies have helped to identify the issues pertaining to flooding within the District and have made recommendations for consideration through the LDF. The SFRA will also help to facilitate the application of the Sequential Test as well as the Exception Test.

One of the key issues, which will be informed by the Sequential and Exception tests, is to avoid inappropriate development within the flood zones. However, this will need to be carefully balanced with the need for continuing regeneration within the main towns, particularly Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. A large part of the flood zones (2 and 3) pass through these main settlements but due to their locations, these are seen as the most sustainable areas of the District to focus major new development. Therefore, it is envisaged that there will continue to be large pressure for continuing development within these areas. It is important, therefore, that the exception test and the guidance from PPS 25 is applied rigorously in these areas. Further site specific issues will need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis and explored further in any future planning applications and in the Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan.

However, it is not just fluvial flooding which is of concern within the District, other types of flooding are also prevalent, most notably surface water run-off. This type of flooding can lead to problems with foul water drainage and can adversely affect watercourses. Future development proposals will therefore need to take full account of their impact on surface water run-off. Construction methods will need to adapt to the impacts arising from climate change, such as increasing flood risk and subsidence, and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures.

SUDS

Historically, surface water drainage systems have been designed to remove surface water from a site as quickly as possible by means of underground piped systems. This has the potential to increase flooding problems downstream and does not contribute to the natural recharge of groundwater levels. Such systems contribute to the transport of pollutants from urban areas to watercourses and groundwater. With concerns surrounding the impacts of climate change and the requirements of PPS25 and the Water Framework Directive, a more sustainable approach to drainage is required to reduce flood risk, manage water quality and provide integrated amenity benefits. The favoured approach to dealing with surface water are Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). SUDS aim to mimic natural drainage processes and remove pollutants from urban run-off at source. They comprise a wide range of techniques, including:

- Green Roofs
- Permeable Paving
- Rainwater Harvesting
- Swales
- Detention Basins
6.30 Due to the existence of flood risk within the District, it is identified that all developments will be required to incorporate SUDs. There are a number of potential options to consider when implementing SUDS and developments should use the systems that are considered most appropriate in dealing with surface water in that specific locality. It is important that site specific issues are taken into account in new developments as while SUDS are important in limiting flooding issues they also have the ability to mobilise contaminants in the subsurface. As a result, the choice and types of SUDS should take into account the specific location. For example, the use of infiltration methods of SUDS on contaminated land sites is discouraged, notwithstanding this however, there are a number of techniques which could be appropriate in such areas (some of which are listed above). The multi-functional role of SUDS should also be considered in developments. This is because SUDS can provide, alongside flood alleviation measures, green corridors and wildlife habitat creation and therefore could provide holistic solutions for development sites.

Water Resources

6.31 Although flood risk is perhaps one of the most important issues for consideration when looking at future development, it is vital that water issues are considered holistically, taking account of water resources, water supply networks and infrastructure, groundwater, sewer networks and waste water treatment. A Water Cycle Study of the District has been undertaken in order to understand the pressures and opportunities for all aspects of water within the Wyre Forest District.

6.32 Water supply within the District is a finite resource with a significant amount of the water for public consumption coming from groundwater abstraction. Therefore, sustainable abstraction rates are essential to avoid negative impacts on the landscape and the District’s wetlands. Part of the District falls into an area which is currently over-abstracted, and most of the remaining area of the District falls into the 'no water available' category. The Environment Agency is working with water companies and other abstractors to reduce abstraction to sustainable levels and therefore developments need to be mindful of this.

6.33 Through the LDF it is important that water management techniques are incorporated into new developments. Water recycling is a key component of integrated water cycle management. The implementation of water recycling can help to reduce inputs of nutrients and other contaminants to surface waters, conserve drinking water and provide economic and social benefits. Developments should therefore incorporate appropriate measures for grey-water recycling and Rainwater Harvesting, in order to maximise the opportunity for on-site efficiency savings.

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5 This is not a comprehensive list and applicants should identify the most appropriate scheme, or combination of schemes to suit the proposed development.
6.34 There is also a need to recognise that warmer, drier summers brought about as a result of climate change could lead to periods of drought. It is therefore important to consider the capacity of the existing infrastructure to handle new development.

Statement 1

Implementation and Monitoring

6.35 This policy will be implemented through the Development Control Process. Further policies relating to implementation will also be contained within the Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Development Plan Documents.

6.36 The following indicators will be used to assess the effectiveness of this policy:

<table>
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<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
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<td>Internal Records</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of new developments incorporating SUDS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Promoting Transport Choice and Improving Accessibility

6.37 Traffic congestion is rapidly increasing within the District and is prevalent within the three main towns. This has resulted in accessibility and transport influenced challenges in parts of the District and particularly within Kidderminster. The urban areas are experiencing declining air quality and there are two Designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). Further growth will exacerbate these problems unless it is delivered in conjunction with investment in public transport infrastructure and services and pedestrian, cycle and highways infrastructure. The transport infrastructure and services in the Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley area will require significant enhancement to cater for growth.

Core Policy 3

Promoting Transport Choice and Improving Accessibility

Enhancing accessibility

Development proposals should have full regard to the traffic impact on the local highway network. Major development proposals or those that are likely to have a significant impact on the local transport network will be required to submit a Travel Plan to demonstrate that they have fully considered access by all modes of transport. The Travel Plan should set out targets and measures for addressing travel demand through a package of measures.

Delivering transport infrastructure

Where appropriate new developments will be required to connect in to the surrounding infrastructure and contribute towards new or improved walking and cycling facilities within the District and the provision of an integrated public transport network across the District.

Developers must take account of the proposals included within the Wyre Forest Transport Measures Package as set out in the current Worcestershire Local Transport Plan. In appropriate circumstances, new development will be required to contribute towards these schemes.

Taking account of air quality

Proposals for new development should fully consider their impact on air quality, particularly for areas within or adjacent to designated Air Quality Management Areas. Development within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area will be required to proactively demonstrate that it has fully considered the promotion of access by alternative modes of transport.

Parking standards

The Site Allocations & Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan will consider the specific local circumstances to set out parking standards for the main towns. Prior to the adoption of these Development Plan Documents parking standards for new development should be provided in accordance with national guidance.
Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- Planning Policy Statement 13: Transport
- West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy
- Worcestershire Local Transport Plan
- Wyre Forest District Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document

Reasoned Justification

6.38 In the recent Wyre Forest Place survey, residents raised transport and congestion as one of their major concerns. Historically, due to the lack of transport options, there is an over reliance on the private motor car particularly to access key services within the District.

6.39 The Development Strategy seeks to direct the majority of new development in the period up until 2026 within the urban areas of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. This strategy will help to reduce the need to travel to access key services. Locating development within these areas will help to sustain and improve the public transport network. Within the District's rural areas, public transport accessibility has continued to decline with the discontinuation of many services. For many residents within these areas, the private motor car is likely to remain as an important mode of transport choice due to the lack of transport options. In the longer term, rural transport options will be supported by more innovative and flexible public transport solutions.

6.40 The high level of trips taken by the private motor car is exacerbated by the poor public transport service, which has seen a rapid decline in local bus services in recent years in both the urban and rural areas. There is a lack of quality passenger transport infrastructure and bus priority measures in the District. Providing more sustainable transport choice is vital to both local residents and visitors and is a key element to the future sustainable development of the District.

6.41 Worcestershire County Council is responsible for producing the Local Transport Plan which sets out a 5 year action plan for delivering sustainable transport infrastructure and measures across Worcestershire. The LTP includes a package of measures for the Wyre Forest District and is reviewed every 5 years. Further information on the LTP is available from www.worcestershire.gov.uk. The Wyre Forest Local Development Framework will help to deliver those measures set out in the LTP.

6.42 Car parking standards are very important as part of a package of demand management measures. Standards need to be carefully balanced with the need to enhance the economic viability of the town centres. Across the District, car parking standards for new development should generally be provided in accordance with national guidance as set out in PPG 13: Transport. However, through the Local Development Framework, site specific parking standards will be considered through the Site Allocations & Policies and KCAAP Development Plan Documents. Standards for the town centres will need to be carefully considered within the context of regeneration proposals to ensure that they remain viable and that development is not perversely incentivised to locate in out of centre locations.

6.43 This Core Policy should be considered alongside "Supporting Infrastructure and Sustainable Freight Movement" under a Good Place To Do Business. The provision of strategic infrastructure including new roads needs to be considered as part of an overall integrated sustainable transport network. All new land use developments should be located, designed and provided with the necessary multi modal transport infrastructure and services to ensure that they are sustainable.
Implementation and Monitoring

6.44 The District Council will work closely with Worcestershire County Council as the Highway and Passenger Transport Authority to ensure new development is accessible and where appropriate contributes towards strategic transportation measures.

6.45 The Site Allocations and Policies and KCAAP will help to deliver the specific accessibility and sustainable transport schemes identified within the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan.

6.46 Car Parking policies for the three main towns will be considered in detail through the Site Allocations and Policies and KCAAP Development Plan Documents.

6.47 Travel Plans will be monitored in accordance with the requirement to submit alongside a major planning application. When submitted the targets included within Travel Plans will be monitored through enforcement processes.

6.48 The District Council will closely monitor the impact of new development on Air Quality Management Areas through its Pollution Control processes.

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<thead>
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<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
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<td>Planning Applications</td>
<td>Development Control/Planning Enforcement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amount of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport travel time of key facilities: GP, Hospital, Employment, Primary School, Secondary School, Retail Centre</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Regeneration Section</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adapting to and Mitigating Against Climate Change
7: A Desirable Place to Live

7.1 One of the key issues facing Wyre Forest District is the provision of housing to meet the needs of all. Although house prices are relatively low compared to other parts of the County, the supply of affordable housing is a particular issue within the District which has been exacerbated by rising house prices in recent years. The shortage of affordable housing is most apparent in the rural areas of the District where average house prices are highest. The provision of appropriate accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople is a further issue locally.

7.2 Although housing is a fundamental aspect of sustainable communities, it should not be considered in isolation of the infrastructure and services which are required for day-to-day living. It is important that communities have access to jobs, good-quality health facilities, play areas, shops, schools, community facilities and leisure facilities. This theme therefore has close links with 8: A Good Place to do Business. and 6: Adapting to and Mitigating Against Climate Change.
Providing Affordable Housing

The Wyre Forest Matters Sustainable Community Strategy includes the provision of more affordable housing across the District as a priority. The scale of need for affordable housing is one of the key challenges facing the District for the future and is evidenced by the South Housing Market Area Assessment (SHMAA). The Core Strategy identifies the Council’s strategic aims for the provision of affordable housing across the District in the policy below:

Core Policy 4

Providing Affordable Housing

An annual average of at least 65 units of affordable housing will be delivered during the plan period until 2026. In accordance with the Council’s adopted definition of affordable housing this will include an indicative tenure split of 70% social housing and 30% intermediate housing.

The District Council will generally seek to secure affordable housing provision of 35% on sites of ten or more dwellings within Kidderminster and Stourport on Severn and 35% on sites of 5 or more dwellings within Bewdley and the rural areas* (6) Where this level of affordable housing provision is proven to undermine the viability of a development, particularly due to existing land values and site remediation costs, then this would be subject to further individual site viability assessment undertaken by the applicant.

For smaller housing developments that fall below the minimum specified thresholds off site contributions towards the provision of affordable housing will be sought, unless the applicant demonstrates that this is not achievable through an independent viability assessment.

A proactive approach to the provision of affordable housing within the District’s rural areas will be encouraged through working in conjunction with Parish Councils to identify appropriate sites for the sole provision of affordable housing through the site allocations process, within or immediately adjacent to the District’s rural settlements where a local need exists.

In exceptional circumstances, small scale affordable housing schemes will be permitted as exception schemes on unallocated sites, to meet identified local housing need. Applicants will be required to demonstrate clear evidence through a Parish Housing Needs Survey.

Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing
- West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision
- Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (February 2007)
- Wyre Forest District Council Affordable Housing Toolkit
- South Housing Market Area Assessment
- Wyre Forest District Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- GVA Grimley - Viability Assessment of Potential Residential Sites (October 2009)

6 To apply to all types of residential development including conversions and change of use.
Reasoned Justification

The regional context

In accordance with the WMRSS the District will accommodate at least 4,000 net additional dwellings up until 2026. In order to meet this level of housing provision, this will require an indicative annual average of 200 net additional dwellings during the plan period. The WMRSS specifies a regional affordable housing target of 35% of the net housing increase, with the minimum target for net annual provision of affordable housing within the South Housing Market Area being 1,200 dwellings. The District Council is required to set an overall minimum target for the Wyre Forest area for the amount of affordable housing to be provided per annum. This target should take account of local and sub-regional assessments of need and be subject to economic viability assessment.

Assessing local housing need

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007) examined the South Housing Market Area of the West Midlands Region, into which the Wyre Forest District falls. The Assessment confirms that average household incomes within the District are lower than elsewhere in the South Housing Market Area (which also incorporates the Worcestershire Districts, Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon.) Consequently, although house prices are generally lower than the surrounding areas, there is still a significant need for affordable housing within the District.

The Assessment concludes that the net affordable housing need across the District for both social rented and shared ownership is projected at 175 dwellings per annum up until 2012. Overall it concludes that there is a high need for low cost market housing in the District. The supply of open market housing for sale at a price which newly forming households can afford is only slightly more than the estimated need.

During 2006/07 windfall sites made up 59% of total housing completions within the SHMA. This has had a negative effect on the supply of affordable housing and very little has been secured on these generally smaller sites, which often come in below the current threshold requiring affordable housing provision. The Assessment therefore recommends that an element of affordable housing should be provided on smaller sites where such housing is strategically needed.

Parish housing needs surveys have now been undertaken for a number of the District’s parishes including Upper Arley, Rock, Chaddesley Corbett, Wolverley, Cookley and Stone. These surveys provide a snapshot on housing need within the rural parishes and also highlighted a high degree of support for small affordable housing schemes to meet local needs within these settlements.

Taking account of economic viability

* Provide a summary from GVA Grimley Viability Assessment report (not yet available)

Implementation and Monitoring

The District Council will work closely with its sub-regional partners and Registered Social Landlords through the South Housing Market Area Partnership to increase the proportion of affordable homes provided.
Further detailed site viability appraisal work will be undertaken to inform the Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPDs. Guided by the general target for affordable housing provision set out in this policy, these documents will set out site specific policies in relation to the proportion of affordable housing required and the tenure split on a site by site basis.

The District Council will work closely with Parish Council’s to bring forward appropriate smaller scale sites within the rural areas to respond to local needs assessments. Where it is not possible to allocate sites within the Site Allocations & Policies DPD, rural exceptions sites may be brought forward during the plan period.

The Planning Obligations SPD, which is used by the Council as a tool to implement Section 106 Agreements, will be revised accordingly to reflect changes in affordable housing policy.

Affordable housing provision will be carefully monitored through the SHMAA updates and the Annual Monitoring Report.

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<th>Monitored By</th>
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<td>Policy &amp; Regeneration Section</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of housing completions that are affordable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of affordable housing units provided in rural areas</td>
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<td>Policy &amp; Regeneration Section</td>
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</table>
Delivering Mixed Communities

This Core Policy provides the basis for considering dwelling type, density and mix specific to certain localities for housing developments coming forward within the plan period. The careful design of new housing developments and the consideration of local housing needs is of the utmost importance to the future quality of life for residents within the District. New housing should offer real opportunities to meet the needs of local communities.

Core Policy 5

Delivering Mixed Communities

Density of new housing development

As an indicative guide:

- within Kidderminster Town Centre, new development will be expected to secure housing densities of 70 dwellings per hectare. In areas adjacent to the town centre and the railway station, new development should incorporate housing densities of at least 50 dwellings per hectare.*
- within Stourport on Severn town centre new development should meet housing densities of 50 dwellings per hectare.*
- within Bewdley and the rural areas new development should meet housing densities of 30 dwellings per hectare.*

*There may be circumstances where applying these minimum density requirements will not be appropriate due to the character and surroundings of the proposed site.

Dwelling type and mix to meet local housing needs

New housing developments must be well designed to address local housing needs, incorporating a range of different types, tenures and sizes of housing to create mixed communities. New developments should take account of the District’s housing needs as set out in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. In particular, larger developments will be required to incorporate a number of more affordable 2 and 4 bedroomed houses to accommodate the growing needs of families.

Meeting the needs of older people and those with mobility impairments

The District Council will promote innovative housing schemes which assist older and vulnerable people to live securely and independently in sustainable locations with access to local services.

All new private sector dwellings constructed after 2013 should be built to lifetime homes standards in accordance with the national target, to accommodate flexible living arrangements for life episodes.
Reasoned Justification

As set out in Policy DS01, Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn provide a good range of jobs and services and opportunities for accessing the public transport network within these urban areas are higher. The higher density levels set for these towns reflect their roles as set out within the settlement hierarchy and will help to support existing public transport infrastructure into the future. Residential density levels for Bewdley and the rural areas reflect national planning guidance and the more limited opportunities to access infrastructure and services within these settlements.

Care needs to be taken to safeguard and enhance the local character of the District's residential areas. For this reason, the densities set out in the Core Policy are intended as an indicative guide and applicants will need to consider local character carefully in their accompanying Design and Access Statements.

The South Housing Market Area Assessment (SHMAA) establishes that there has been a continuing increase in household formation within the District and indeed the West Midlands Region - this is projected to be maintained up until 2026. Within the District this will arise principally from the growth in one person households and to a lesser degree from the formation of multi-person households. The SHMAA also evidenced a growing need for more affordable 2 and 4-bedroom dwellings within the district to accommodate the needs of families. This need has been exacerbated through an increasing trend in family break-ups, more single households forming early and increasing life expectancy.

The SHMAA found that within the District there is a growing need for more suitable housing for older people and vulnerable groups in both private and public sectors. Research undertaken in 2009 into the Housing and Support Needs of Older People in Worcestershire suggests that across the County there is marked demand for sheltered housing for sale; greater provision of extra care housing for rent or sale and more residential care places.

The District has an ageing population profile and research also suggests that many older people across Worcestershire continue to live at home. During the past 6 years there has been a 60% increase in the proportion of older people supported at home. Lifetime homes are designed to allow dwellings to meet the changing needs of their occupiers over time and enable people to stay in their own homes for longer. The District Council therefore considers that the provision of lifetime homes will play an important role in meeting future housing needs.
Implementation and Monitoring

The Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan will set out in more detail the appropriate mix of housing types for those sites allocated through the LDF Process. These will generally be based on the needs set out in the current South Housing Market Area Assessment and will be subject to further site specific viability appraisal modelling.

Applicants will be required to submit an analysis of site and local area characteristics as part of the Design and Access Statement. The individual impact of development density on the character of an area will be judged on the merits of the particular application and how existing character and amenity would be affected.

The housing mix will alter with current needs identified in future Housing Market Assessments. Monitoring targets set out in and the Annual Monitoring Report will be altered if future Assessments indicate the need to do this.

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<td>% of housing completions by tenure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of extra-care units completed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Housing Land Availability Report</td>
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</table>
Provision for Gypsies and Travellers

Gypsies and travellers form a large ethnic minority group within the District with the most marked concentrations in the Sandy Lane area of Stourport-on-Severn and resident settled traveller community in Oldington & Foley Park. There is a well established and largely settled gypsy and traveller community with extensive family ties. Ninety percent of families have remained in the same area of the District for over 3 years.

Core Policy ___ sets out a criteria based approach to identifying sites for providing accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople within the District. As a guide, the policy also establishes the broad areas where new sites will be directed through the Site Allocations and Policies DPD.

Core Policy 6

Providing Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Safeguarding Existing Authorised Sites

Existing authorised sites for Gypsies and Travellers within the District will be safeguarded unless it is proven that they are no longer required to meet identified needs.

Sustainable locations for gypsy and traveller accommodation

The Site Allocations and Policies DPD will adopt a sequential approach towards the identification of sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. This will give preference to potential sites within the existing settlement boundaries on previously developed sites.

Sustainable and good quality sites for gypsies and traveller accommodation will be allocated within the settlement areas of Stourport-on-Severn and Kidderminster, in accordance with the levels of identified need set out in the South Housing Market Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

Criteria for allocating new gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople sites within the District

New sites will need to accord with the following criteria to ensure that they meet the specific needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople within the District:

1. For a publicly managed site it is large enough to accommodate 15-25 pitches.
2. Privately managed sites should be smaller in size and generally be capable of accommodating up to 10 pitches.
3. If the site is to meet the identified needs of travelling showpeople, it should be large enough to be suitable for the storage of mobile equipment and accord with circular 04/07.
4. Local schools, services and facilities can be easily accessed on foot, cycle or public transport from the site.
5. The site should not fall within areas at higher risk of flooding such as Flood Zones 2 and 3 and its exact location should take account of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
6. Neighbouring uses should be complementary to the amenities of the proposed site.
7. The development of the site should not negatively impact on biodiversity or green infrastructure and should be capable of integration with the landscape character of the area.
8. The site is capable of providing adequate on site services for water supply, power, drainage, sewage and waste disposal facilities.
9. There is safe and convenient vehicular and pedestrian access and that the site can be easily accessed by towing caravans.

Additional Guidance for Applicants:
- Circular 01/2006 "The Provision of Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites"
- Circular 04/2007 "Planning for Travelling Showpeople"
- South Housing Market Area Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment

Reasoned Justification

Regional Planning Policy specifies that Local Development Frameworks should ensure that adequate provision is made for suitable sites to accommodate gypsies and travellers and that this should reflect demand in the area. The requirement for additional gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople accommodation is identified regionally and also at the sub regional level across Worcestershire. In March 2008 the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was published. This established that within the Wyre Forest District almost all need for accommodation arises from established sites from gypsy families who are seeking accommodation to form a permanent base.

Current gypsy site provision within the District is concentrated to the South East of Stourport-on-Severn within the Sandy Lane area. This comprises a mixture of Local Authority run sites, a number of tolerated sites and privately run sites within Broach Meadow. There is also an established site through lawful use, which is used by travelling showpeople at Long Bank, Bewdley.

The GTAA has established a need for 30 additional pitches over the next 5 years. In particular it recommends that the majority of this provision should be provided through Local Authority and Registered Social Landlord Sites within the Stourport-on-Severn and Wyre Forest District area. A lower level of public provision would be sufficient if further small private sites are identified. The study recommends that the suitability and sustainability of the local authority and private sites at Sandy Lane should be considered and further additional pitches identified if appropriate.

The emerging Phase 3 Revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy sets out the future requirements for additional pitch provision at the sub regional level up until 2017, based on the findings of the updated GTAAs. This establishes a need for 35 additional residential pitches up until 2017 within the District. 22 additional plots for travelling showpeople are required across Worcestershire up until 2012.

Implementation and Monitoring

The Site Allocations and Policies DPD will identify appropriate sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople accommodation in accordance with the identified need set out in the GTAA.
Grant funding - Sally Horne/Richard Osborne to provide brief detail

The provision of additional pitches will be monitored through the Regional Monitoring System and future rounds of the GTAAs.

The following indicators will be used to assess the adequate provision of sites within the District in the future:

Table 7.1

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The total number of new permanent pitches available within the District per annum.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The number of unauthorised and illegal encampments and enforcement actions per annum</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The level of need identified within the latest GTAA</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Desirable Place to Live
Delivering Community Wellbeing

7.3 The provision of community facilities and services is essential to the quality of life of local residents. It is important that good quality facilities are available in accessible locations throughout the whole of the District. Ensuring appropriate provision of community facilities reduces the need for people to travel to obtain essential services, which particularly benefits the less mobile and more deprived members of society. This core policy seeks to ensure that future development fully considers the needs of local communities and seeks to promote and enhance facilities wherever practicable. The policy should also be considered alongside Core Policies CP03, CP04, CP10 & CP14.

Core Policy 7

Delivering Community Wellbeing

Existing and improved community facilities

The Council will resist the loss of any community services and facilities unless an appropriate alternative is provided or, evidence is presented that the facility is no longer required and suitable alternative uses have been considered. Any alternative provision should be of equal or better quality and be located in an appropriate and, where feasible, sustainable location.

Opportunities to expand, enhance or maximise existing community uses will be supported (subject to other material considerations) and the shared use of community and educational facilities will generally be promoted.

Providing Community Infrastructure

New development proposals must contribute towards the retention and formation of sustainable communities within the District. Applicants will be required to provide evidence that the provision of community infrastructure has been fully considered as part of major new development proposal.

Permission for development will only be granted where adequate infrastructure and services exist or can be provided. The preference will be for new facilities to be provided within new developments rather than in lieu of actual provision.

As an indicative guide*, the Council will require developer contributions with regard to the following areas of social infrastructure:

- Affordable housing provision.
- Sustainable transport initiatives, including schools and libraries.
- Highways infrastructure and local utility infrastructure.
- Education and learning, including schools and libraries.
- Sports, recreation, youth facilities, play space and amenity space.
- Health and community safety facilities and services.
- Community and shared use facilities.
- Cultural facilities (define)
- Public art, public realm, heritage and environmental improvements.
- Biodiversity, geodiversity and green infrastructure.
Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- Planning Circular 5/05
- Wyre Forest District Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (2007)
- Wyre Forest Matters (Sustainable Community Strategy)
- Wyre Forest District Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Audit (2008)
- Viability Assessment of Potential Residential Sites (2009)
- Wyre Forest Community Facilities Audit (2009)

Reasoned Justification

The WMRSS identifies that Local Development Frameworks should make provision for the full range of requirements needed to create sustainable communities. This includes services and social infrastructure to meet the needs of the population including health, education and skills, spiritual, sport and recreation and cultural facilities.

Education

Kidderminster College

Worcestershire County Council has recently undertaken a Wyre Forest Schools Review. Under these proposals the number of mainstream schools was reduced from 45 to 30, as the 3-tier system of first, middle and high school was replaced by a 2-tier one of primary and secondary schools. The new secondary schools are identified as top priority for funding under the 'Building Schools for the Future Initiative'. There is an increased emphasis on the shared use of these new educational facilities under the extended schools initiative and these schools, along with others in the District, will make an important contribution to the local community.

Aside from the schools within the District, Kidderminster College is a successful educational institution and plays an important role in vocational learning for self employment. It is vital that the Core Strategy and other elements of the LDF seek to protect and enhance the educational institutions that exist or are planned to be developed during the life-time of the plan.

Health

Also central to community wellbeing within the District is the provision of health care facilities. Worcestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT) plans and provides the healthcare facilities within the District. There are health hotspots within the Oldington and Foley Park and Greenhill/Broadwaters wards of...
Kidderminster. Here access to healthcare facilities remains a major concern for local residents. The District Council will need to work closely with the PCT to sustain and deliver appropriate facilities in the future.

**Sport and Recreation**

In 2008 consultants PMP undertook an assessment of all open space, sports and recreation facilities in the District. The Audit recommends that the District should protect and enhance the quality of its existing facilities; improve accessibility to greenspace; prioritise the development of new facilities where the audit has identified deficiencies in current levels of provision and provide new facilities for children and young people at school sites to optimise the use of resources.

**Social and Community Facilities**

A recent audit of the social and community facilities currently available within the District, demonstrates that a wide diversity of social groups make use of these facilities. It is important that community halls, churches, theatres and social clubs remain safeguarded from inappropriate development and that their roles are enhanced and promoted wherever possible.

The provision of multi-use facilities, that provide access to a number of services from a single location, will be particularly encouraged within the District’s rural areas. In order to ensure that community facilities and services are enhanced and provided in the most effective and accessible way, it will be important that the council works with other providers and the voluntary sectors.

**Securing Community Infrastructure Provision in New Development**

The level of contribution required towards social infrastructure will be dependent upon the type and size of the development proposed, its cumulative impacts on particular areas and the existing facilities and services into which the proposed development falls. Detailed information on the range of contributions relating to social infrastructure provision and those circumstances under which contributions would be required is set out in the Adopted Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document 2007.

Summary of viability work undertaken by GVA.

A number of evidence base studies have been undertaken since the SPD was adopted, such as the Leisure and Open Space Audit and Viability Assessment of Potential Residential Development Sites. The Planning Obligations SPD will be reviewed to bring it up to date and to take account of the findings of these studies.

CiL proposals - Proposals for a tariffed based approach using the Community Infrastructure Levy will be progressed in consultation with Worcestershire County Council and other stakeholders.
Implementation and Monitoring

The Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Development Plan Documents will identify the infrastructure and service priorities relating to future development areas and site specific allocations. Infrastructure will be delivered in line with a phased approach identified for development concerned through the Site Allocations DPDs.

The District Council will continue to liaise with key stakeholders and infrastructure providers such as Worcestershire County Council, the utility companies, The Primary Care Trust, Sport England and local community groups to ensure that appropriate community infrastructure is provided to support new development in the future.

Monitoring

7.4 The following indicators will be used to assess the effectiveness of this policy:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of planning permissions approved where it would result in the loss of a viable community facility without replacement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Development Control records</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of new community facilities granted planning permission (sqm)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult participation in sport</td>
<td>1% increase per year</td>
<td>Covalent</td>
<td>Policy and regeneration</td>
</tr>
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8: A Good Place to do Business

8.1 The vision and strategic objectives of the Core Strategy provides the framework for the continued prosperity and evolution of the District’s economy. The proposed strategy reflects that of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy and the West Midlands Economic Strategy (WMES), as well as emerging Government advice in PPS.4. Some of the main aims of the Core Strategy is to direct employment development to the most sustainable locations possible, that development of brownfield land takes precedent over greenfield release, that existing employment sites are protected, where appropriate, and that a flexible approach to the supply and use of land is advocated.

8.2 Due to the historical influence of the Manufacturing Industry within the District, and especially in Kidderminster, there are a number of historic sites that exist which provide opportunities for future employment development. Diversification of the Districts economy has occurred steadily over the recent past and it is important that the Core Strategy facilitates the suitable environment for the continued diversification of the Districts economy. In line with national and regional policy, sites for economic development will be provided primarily by the reuse of employment land and encouraging urban development whilst regard will be had to the needs of the rural economy and rural diversification.

8.3 It is important to understand that the 'Good Place to do Business' theme refers to more than just employment sites. The role of tourism and the need for appropriate facilities to enhance opportunities is also part of the wider economic strategy. Therefore, sustainable and appropriate tourism opportunities within the District, which will help to strengthen the District's economy, will also be encouraged.

8.4 Ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is in place to serve the needs of businesses will play a central role for future prosperity. Access to and from economic areas will be crucial to the effectiveness of businesses. Therefore, any new employment land opportunities will need to be in accessible locations and well supported by infrastructure.
A Diverse Local Economy

8.5 The strength of the District’s economy is vital to the future prosperity and the quality of life of its residents. Economic growth can increase employment opportunities and income and help to regenerate deprived communities.

8.6 A strategic approach to the provision and location of employment opportunities for the District is set out in the Spatial Strategy. To help deliver a diverse local economy the LDF needs to address the development of the underused and vacant sites, identified in the Employment Land Review (ELR), into high quality employment areas. It is the aim that these new employment areas will attract new companies, encourage people to stay in the area and connect people to economic opportunity through enhancing accessibility, skills and learning.

Core Policy 8

A Diverse Local Economy

Up to 44 hectares of employment land will be brought forward in the period up to 2026 in line with Policy DS01: Development Locations.

Major new employment development will be located within the urban area of Kidderminster, particularly within the Stourport Road Employment Corridor (S.R.E.C). All future employment development within the urban areas will be on previously developed land and should be located in highly accessible locations. Employment sites will need to provide for a range of businesses (B1, B2 and B8 (7)) needs in terms of location, size and quality and the development of small scale businesses and starter units will be particularly encouraged.

Land and premises within the District’s existing employment areas will be reserved for uses which generate employment. Applications for expansion, updating and intensification of employment uses on existing sites will be supported where they do not compromise the activities of the employment area or conflict with other policy objectives in the Local Development Framework.

Rural employment sites will be safeguarded for employment uses where appropriate. Applications for small-scale employment proposals in the rural areas will be assessed on their merits and should have regard to national and regional policy as well as Policy DS04 - Rural Regeneration and Services.

Development that would result in a loss of employment land from a site will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated that:

1. The site is identified in an up-to-date Employment Land Review as being suitable to be considered for alternative uses
2. The continued use of the buildings, or their redevelopment for an employment use, is not viable (in physical, operational or commercial terms) and this is supported by robust evidence, such as the marketing of the site and evidence that the site is unable to be developed for employment use;

7 Some sui-generis uses would also be permissible on employment land due to the nature of their activities, such as car showrooms, vehicle maintenance, repair and service centres.
3. The proposed new use would be compatible with neighbouring uses and would not prejudice the amenity, viability or future development of other businesses.

4. When considering alternative uses a sequential approach must be taken, with preference given to mixed-use development prior to any single-use development.

Employment development on brownfield sites must ensure that contamination issues have been considered and that appropriate remediation measures are proposed where necessary.

**Additional Guidance for Applicants:**

- PPS.4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development (Consultation)
- Regional Spatial Strategy - Policies: PA6, PA6A, PA6B
- Wyre Forest District Employment Land Review
- Wyre Forest District Employment Land Availability, Annual Reports

**Reasoned Justification**

**Employment Land Availability**

8.7 National Planning Policy outlined in the emerging PPS4 encourages Local Planning Authorities to identify a good range of sites for economic and mixed-use development. It is also important to identify a supply of land and buildings which offers a range of opportunities for large and small businesses and start-up firms to create jobs.

8.8 The Regional Spatial Strategy and the West Midlands Economic Strategy provide the basis for the economic strategy within the West Midlands (WMES). Regional Policy reflects the national approach and places priority on ensuring sufficient, appropriate and deliverable areas of land, with the focus on brownfield redevelopment.

8.9 The provision of well-located employment land that is available and capable of being developed into new floorspace is essential to the District’s future economic prosperity. Reflecting national guidance, a wide choice of types and sizes of sites needs to be provided to give flexibility so that all sectors of the economy have the opportunity to expand.

8.10 To ensure that there is enough available land to meet the District requirements an Employment Land Review (ELR) was undertaken in 2007 - 2008. The ELR provided an assessment of the current employment sites within the District and calculated potential future requirements for new employment land. The requirement for new employment land identified by the ELR was for a potential demand of 43.95ha - 46.47ha up until 2026. This figure is closely aligned to the emerging indicative longer term requirement as identified in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Panel Report (September 2009), set at 44ha.
8.11 Important, the ELR reviewed the potential future supply sites within the District, with one of the key outcomes being that:

"Even taking into account a flexible approach to the supply of employment land, the analysis suggests that Wyre Forest has enough employment land of the appropriate type to be able to accommodate its employment needs to 2026"

8.12 Within this, there are a large number of vacant and underused brownfield employment sites and these will provide ideal areas for regeneration for new employment floorspace. Safeguarding and recycling these accessible and well located industrial and commercial sites are an important element of the District's strategy for future employment development. These sites will be assessed and allocated further through the Site Allocations and Policies DPD and the KCAAP DPD.

8.13 It is therefore envisaged that the vast majority of employment activity will continue to take place from existing locations within the District. The strategy for future employment development, therefore, is to focus new employment on existing vacant and underused employment areas, which negates the need to consider further allocations in Greenfield and / or Green Belt locations.

Existing Employment Sites

Wilden Lane Industrial Estate

8.14 An important aspect of providing an appropriate portfolio of employment sites is to ensure that the existing employment sites within the District are retained, where appropriate. The existing employment sites and premises within the District are a valuable resource to the local economy and it is therefore vital that sites that make an important contribution to the portfolio of employment land are protected and safeguarded for continuing employment use. The Employment Land Review (ELR) has assessed all of the existing employment sites within the District to ascertain the continuing suitability of sites for employment use and to ensure that there is a continuing supply of available and attractive sites for all types of businesses.

8.15 The ELR identified that the majority of existing employment sites within the District should continue to be safeguarded from competing uses in the future. However, a number of sites are recommended to be considered further for alternative uses. These sites will be assessed through the Site Allocations and Policies and KCAAP DPD’s. It will be important to assess the issues on a site-by-site basis and in accordance with Core Policy 16 and Policy PA6B: Protection of Employment Land and Premises, of the WMRSS.

8.16 It is also important to note that the quality and success of each employment area does vary and it is recognised that environmental, access and security improvements may be required in order to retain and to attract new businesses. Some improvement work has already been undertaken in areas such as Sandy Lane but further improvements may be required over the plan period. The Council will continue to work with landowners and organisations such as Advantage West Midlands, to improve the quality and image of existing industrial estates and business parks as appropriate.
Stourport Road Employment Corridor (S.R.E.C)

8.17 One of the key areas for employment use and future development, where high concentrations of current and potential new sites are located, is along the Stourport Road in Kidderminster, identified as the Stourport Road Employment Corridor (S.R.E.C).

8.18 The S.R.E.C is seen as a key strategic area within the District. Its central location, geographically within the District, makes it an accessible and sustainable area. Stourport Road is also the only high frequency bus route within the District. There are a number of historic, currently vacant, former industrial areas within this corridor which provide real opportunities for regeneration and could provide businesses with the type of facilities that are required for modern business practices. The corridor is also located predominantly within the Oldington and Foley Park Ward which is one of the most deprived Wards in Worcestershire, and therefore could provide the catalyst for further job creation with the aim of decreasing the level of deprivation.

8.19 This area is considered to be vital to the regeneration of the local economy and the focus for future employment development within the District. It is therefore important that the existing sites within this corridor are retained and enhanced while opportunities for new businesses and sites in this area are developed. This focus reflects the corridor’s importance as a manufacturing and business area and its potential in offering major brownfield redevelopment opportunities. However, it should be recognised that there are a number of issues to address to secure the delivery of these sites, relating to traffic congestion and potential site contamination.

8.20 Perhaps the most important site for future redevelopment within this corridor is the former British Sugar Site. The site is 24 hectare in size (Split into 2 phases of roughly 12ha each) and is located about a mile south of the town centre. The site, the former home of a sugar beet factory, is identified as having significant redevelopment potential that could be of strategic importance to the District and the wider sub-region. The site could have a key role to play in providing more modern and efficient business premises which would have the potential to provide space for Kidderminster’s existing businesses to relocate, as well as enticing new firms into the area.

Contaminated Land

8.21 With the focus for new development to be located primarily on previously-developed land, and taking into account the Districts past industrial heritage (especially with regard to former carpet manufacturing sites) it will be vital to ensure that any potential contamination issues have been considered. This issue will be considered further through the site specific DPD’s however, it is essential to ensure that any sites that materialise prior to this are adequately characterised prior to re-development.
Implementation and Monitoring

8.22 The policy will be delivered through the Development Control Process.

8.23 The following indicators will be used to assess the effectiveness of this policy:

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<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
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<tr>
<td>The amount of employment land developed (Ha)</td>
<td>2.5ha?</td>
<td>Internal Records</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The percentage of employment land developed on brownfield land</td>
<td>90%?</td>
<td>Internal Records</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of employment floorspace 'lost' to competing uses</td>
<td>0%?</td>
<td>Internal Records</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of firms registering for VAT</td>
<td>ABI</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Retail and Commercial Development

8.24 Town centres are crucial to the social, economic and environmental well being of the District. The concentration of a range of goods, services and facilities in one area creates a centre for communities and activities and enables people to make one trip for many reasons.

8.25 In order to deliver the Government’s objective of promoting vital and viable town centres, and in line with PPS.6, development should be focused in these existing centres in order to strengthen and where appropriate, regenerate them. The settlement hierarchy in the development strategy provides the basis for identifying the locations which are suitable for new retail, leisure and commercial developments and therefore regard should be had to the Development Strategy when considering this Core Policy.

Core Policy 9

Retail and Commercial Development

Support will be given to safeguarding, maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the existing retail centres throughout the District

In line with the settlement hierarchy and national policy, new development for retail and commercial uses should be directed to Kidderminster Town Centre, as the strategic centre in the District.

Retail and office development within the Market towns will be supported subject to proposals being in keeping with the settlement hierarchy and proposals not causing adverse affects to the built and natural environment.

All new proposals will be assessed using the tests outlined in PPS.6.

For new office development in Kidderminster, the following sequential approach will apply:

- Brownfield - In centre
- Brownfield - Edge-of-centre
- S.R.E.C
- Other allocated employment areas

Additional Guidance for Applicants

- PPS4: Planning for Prosperous Economies (Consultation Draft)
- PPS.6: Planning for Town Centres
- Wyre Forest District, Retail and Commercial Leisure Study
Reasoned Justification

Retail Development

8.26 The Retail sector within the area forms a key element of the District’s economy. Jobs in the wholesale and retail sector accounted for approximately 18.5% of the workforce in 2001, which was higher than the national average. National policy identifies the importance of ensuring that town centres retain their vitality and viability and that planning authorities should positively plan for anticipated growth, with a sequential approach advocated for any new proposals, focusing on a town-centre first approach.

8.27 For the avoidance of doubt, the future development of ‘retail’ uses refers to Use Classes A1 - A5. However, proposals should ensure that there is not an over-dominance or cluster of non-retail (A1) uses within the retail centres, in order to ensure that the vitality and viability of these areas remain.

Kidderminster

Comparison Floorspace (8)

8.28 The WMRSS identifies that for the Strategic Centre of Kidderminster an indicative longer term requirement of 35,000sqm of comparison retail floorspace should be planned for up until 2026. The floorspace requirement set out in the policy should be treated as specific to each centre and should not normally be exceeded. However, the WMRSS also indicates that these figures can be reviewed through Core Strategies and that any significant variations should be justified on the basis of clear evidence.

8.29 On this basis the District Council commissioned a Retail Report (undertaken by White Young Green Planning) in 2006, and updated in 2009, to analyse the retail and leisure market within the area. These studies identified the need for new retail floorspace, for both comparison and convenience retailing, taking into account quantitative and qualitative considerations. The Retail update of 2009, suggested that by 2026 approximately 25,000sqm of comparison floorspace may be required within Kidderminster. This figure differs from the one set out in the WMRSS. However, it is considered that given the large expansion of the retail offer within Kidderminster over the recent past, and the detailed nature of the retail reports pertaining to the Wyre Forest District commissioned by the Council, that the figure of 25,000sqm of comparison retail floorspace would be a more appropriate indicative longer term figure to plan for. This is in line with the approach outlined in the WMRSS, where variations to the figures can be justified on the basis of clear evidence.

8.30 The following extract from the White Young Green Report of 2009 identifies the potential need for comparison floorspace in Kidderminster up until 2026.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison Retail Requirements in Kidderminster (Sqm)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidderminster</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

8 All figures expressed in this section refer to gross retail floorspace.
8.31 It is therefore identified through this policy and the Development Strategy that 25,000sqm of new comparison floorspace will be developed within Kidderminster up until 2026. It is also anticipated that the demand for new retail floorspace will primarily be towards the later stages of the plan period. It will be important that this figure is closely monitored through the life time of the plan.

Other Retail Areas

8.32 Although the strategic centre of Kidderminster provides the main focus for large retail developments, the town, village and neighbourhood retail centres provide vital facilities and services to serve the local populations. It is important that these areas are safeguarded for retail use into the future in order to ensure a sustainable approach to future provision is realised.

8.33 It will be important to closely monitor the floorspace requirements through the life-time of the plan. It will also be important to target areas of decline within Kidderminster town centre. Pockets of vacant units exist within the town centre and as part of improving the vitality and viability of the centre these areas will require careful consideration. The subsequent DPD’s will also create a basis for delivering improvements in the town centres, for example better parking facilities and the provision of public art thus creating a more pleasant and pedestrian friendly shopping environment. This will be further delivered through the KCAAP and the Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus.

Office Development

8.34 National Planning Policy identifies offices as a town centre use, and seeks to direct new office development to in-centre locations. This approach is reflected in RSS Policy PA13A which seeks to direct new office development within or on the edge of Kidderminster town centre. The requirement set by the RSS is for 40,000sqm (Gross) of office floorspace to be provided within Kidderminster up until 2026. The rationale behind this is to direct office development to more sustainable locations which are accessible by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.

8.35 New office development will, therefore, be directed to the strategic centre of Kidderminster in the first instance. Sites for new office development will be allocated primarily through the Kidderminster Central AAP. The sequential approach advocated by this policy identifies the need to continue focus for new development on brownfield land within, or on the edge, of Kidderminster town centre. If demand for offices cannot be met within these locations then two other areas are identified. Firstly, the Stourport Road Employment Corridor. This is due to the employment nature of this corridor and because of the high frequency bus route that exists on this route. Additionally, there may be future opportunities for a rail link to the Severn Valley Railway in this location and therefore it is considered to be more appropriate location for new office development, should the need arise and if demand can not be met closer to the town centre. The final site area considered suitable for office development is other allocated employment areas, whose make-up is generally supportive for office development.

8.36 The focus for brownfield regeneration within sustainable areas should negate the need for any new greenfield allocations to be made.

8.37 Aside from the strategic centre of Kidderminster, and in line with the Development Strategy, new office development within the market towns and in rural areas would be generally supported subject to the proposals being suitable to the size of the settlement proposed and in conformity with other policies in the LDF.
Implementation and Monitoring

8.38 The policy will be delivered through the Development Control Process.

8.39 The following indicators will be used to assess the effectiveness of this policy:

Table 8.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
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Sustainable Tourism

**8.40** Tourism in the area has continued to grow steadily and there are a number of regionally significant tourist attractions such as the Severn Valley Railway and the West Midlands Safari Park that exist within the District. The attractive and diverse landscape character of the area has also contributed to a growing number of visitors to the Wyre Forest and the surrounding areas.

**8.41** The following core policy seeks to protect and enhance existing tourist facilities within the District whilst providing opportunities for new development, without compromising the high quality of the Environment in the District. Other core policies that are particularly relevant to this area are Landscape Character and Transport Choice and Sustainable Transport Links.

### Core Policy 10

**Sustainable Tourism**

The strategy is to support the local tourism industry through:

- Supporting sustainable proposals that improve the quality and diversity of existing tourist facilities, attractions, accommodation and infrastructure, subject to the proposals not causing adverse impacts on the surrounding environment and infrastructure. New developments should incorporate sustainable transport links wherever possible.
- Identifying the strategic centre of Kidderminster as the primary area for new tourist accommodation development.
- Safeguarding important existing tourist facilities and attractions from inappropriate development.
- Supporting sustainable tourism opportunities within the market towns of Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley and within the rural settlements provided that the development:
  - Does not have a detrimental affect on the character of the area
  - Does not adversely affect the surrounding infrastructure
  - Benefits the local community and is proportionate to the size of settlement in which it is located
  - Where feasible, involves the re-use of existing buildings or is part of farm diversification
  - Is consistent with other policies in the plan

### Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- The National Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism
- West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy
- West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy

### Reasoned Justification

**8.42** The National Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism (2006) identifies that tourism, in all its forms, is of crucial importance to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the whole country. The planning system has a vital role to play in terms of facilitating the development and improvement of tourism in appropriate locations.
Tourism is the fourth largest contributor to the economy of the West Midlands. Each year more than 140 million visits are made to the region, generating over £5 billion to the economy and supporting more than 130,000 jobs. Additionally, business tourism is now worth over £6.6 billion and offers employment to more than 100,000 people. (Advantage West Midlands)

As identified in the West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy: Visitor activity plays an important part in place making and in place marketing. There are strong links between the visitor economy and delivering the Place and Powerful Voice themes of the WMES. There has always been a strong tourist economy within the Wyre Forest District which has not only shaped the economy (Powerful Voice) but also the landscape (Place) of the area, contributing to its local distinctiveness.

The strategic centre of Kidderminster offers visitor opportunities in terms of its retailing offer and through the Severn Valley Railway. The market towns of Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley are also popular visitor destinations. Stourport-on-Severn is a Georgian town developed around the historic canal basins of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and the River Severn. This waterside location, coupled with the town’s unique heritage, make it a popular visitor destination. Similarly, Bewdley, with its location on the banks of the River Severn and its Severn Valley Railway Station, attracts a great number of visitors all year round.

The rural areas of the District also prove popular with visitors to the area. Tourism and leisure activities are an important element of the local rural economy. These activities and facilities often help to sustain rural businesses, and are an important source of employment for the rural communities. Areas such as the Wyre Forest and Upper Arley, specifically for the Severn Valley Railway and the Arboretum, are often very popular with visitors to the area.

As identified above, the District has a wide variety of tourist attractions, with perhaps the largest attractions being the Severn Valley Railway and the West Midlands Safari and Leisure Park. These two attractions are identified within Policy PA10 of the RSS as key regional tourism and cultural assets and on average they attract approx. 700,000 visitors to the District each year, which has a number of impacts on the District and the surroundings.

Due to the value of the tourist industry within the District it is important that the LDF promotes tourism opportunities, whilst ensuring the very character of the District, which is often what attracts visitors to the area, is not compromised.

All proposed schemes will have to be considered on their individual merits, however it will be important to reflect the objectives of the WMVES which seeks to ensure that local businesses and cultural life are supported and enhanced through promoting what is distinctive and unique within the District.

In line with the objectives of PPS.6, opportunities for new hotel accommodation should be primarily located within Kidderminster town centre, where maximum access by public transport is available. Outside of Kidderminster town centre, but within the built up areas, opportunities may
arise for the construction or conversion of buildings to provide tourist accommodation. Support for schemes will be given, subject to detailed consideration on the effects on the surrounding local environment and infrastructure.

8.51 It will also be important that there is an element of flexibility for small development proposals in rural areas, which would help to boost the rural economy. Small developments, subject to proposals not adversely affecting the character of the area, can help provide jobs in the rural areas and aid in their regeneration. It can also provide additional income to support agricultural businesses. The potential for re-use of existing rural buildings or farm diversification should be supported wherever appropriate. Furthermore, support for new tourism proposals within the rural areas needs to be carefully balanced against the potential impacts on other issues such as biodiversity enhancement and protection. When considering proposals, regard should be had to the Rural Regeneration Core Policy.

8.52 Tourism, by its very nature, attracts new people into the District and this can have a large impact on the surrounding travel network. Some of the tourist attractions in the District are large 'trip generators' and therefore, when considering any proposals for tourist-led development, the impact on the surrounding infrastructure must be closely analysed.

8.53 The District is currently an area which is popular with day visitors, the challenge for the LDF will be to broaden the offer and facilitate an appropriate environment to enable visitors to stay in the District for a greater length of time which should help to secure greater economic benefit for the area as a whole. The Council will continue to work with key partners, such as AWM and Destination Worcestershire, to try and achieve this aim and the other aims and objectives as identified in this policy.

Statement 2

Implementation and Monitoring

8.54 This policy will be implemented through the Development Control Process. The policy will also be implemented through continued working relationships with key stakeholders involved in the sector.

8.55 Monitoring

8.56 The following indicators will be used to assess the effectiveness of this policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The number of bed spaces developed per annum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of tourism related jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supporting Transport Infrastructure and Sustainable Freight Movement

8.57 The Spatial Strategy for the future focus of employment land places emphasis on Kidderminster and in particular the Stourport Road Employment Corridor (SREC), where the former British Sugar Site has been identified as a delivery priority. The regeneration of key employment and town centre sites will require the delivery of improved infrastructure and in particular transport links. This policy should be considered alongside Core Policy __ which places an emphasis on a sustainable package of measures to enhance accessibility to new developments by all modes of transport. Nevertheless, due to the scale of requirements for regeneration in the District there are inevitably requirements for more strategic infrastructure schemes.

Core Policy 11

Strategic Transport Infrastructure and Sustainable Freight Movement

The following strategic transport infrastructure schemes will be sought to support regeneration during the plan period:

Sustainable transport links and infrastructure to promote ease of access to the Wyre Forest, Bewdley, West Midlands Safari Park and Kidderminster railway station will be sought.

- The provision of a new Kidderminster Railway Station building and improved access for all modes of transport to the station facilities.
- The progression of feasibility works into proposals to provide a new A451/A449 Hoobrook Link Road.
- The provision of a Stourport Relief Road as a longer term scheme for delivery later on in the plan period 2021-226.
- Measures to improve the sustainable movement of freight for employment uses along the Stourport Road Employment Corridor.

Contributions towards these strategic transport infrastructure proposals will be sought from major development proposals.

Future development proposals that will include part of an identified strategic transport route or transport infrastructure, must be designed to accommodate this provision and reserve the land required for the scheme. Proposals which are likely to prejudice the future development of strategic transport infrastructure will not be permitted.

Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- Planning Policy Statement 12
- Worcestershire Local Transport Plan
- Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus
Reasoned Justification

8.58 Relative distance from strategic regional transport routes and an ageing infrastructure are particular challenges for the sustainable economic regeneration of this area. The regeneration of key employment and town centre sites will require the delivery of significantly improved sustainable transport infrastructure to help promote the area’s attractiveness. There is heavy congestion along the A451 Stourport Road throughout the day, which also has a negative impact on communities within the deprived ward of Oldington and Foley Park.

8.59 Future investment in transport infrastructure and services must be focussed primarily on delivering the levels of accessibility and quality of services which provide realistic alternatives to the car to encourage and maximise the use of sustainable transport modes. Where investment in highways infrastructure is accepted, all proposals must be accompanied by a robust justification in terms of traffic flows, scheme designs and operation.

8.60 Rail Station Improvements.

8.61 Historically the indicative line of the Stourport Relief Road has been safeguarded and the scheme proposal was included in the indicative list of post 2004 transport schemes contained in the West Midlands Regional Funding Allocations. Limited sections of the scheme have already been provided in conjunction with development schemes. Worcestershire County Council recently commissioned a Wyre Forest Transportation Study looking at future movement patterns particularly in and around the Stourport-on-Severn to Kidderminster corridor.

8.62 The provision of a link road connecting the A451 Stourport to the A449 at Hoobrook, to facilitate the regeneration of the SREC and in particular the British Sugar Site has been subject to discussion with Worcestershire County Council and Advantage West Midlands. A pre-feasibility assessment was also undertaken in early 2009.

8.63 Sus movement of freight.

8.64 Kidd Prospectus as a delivery vehicle.

Implementation and Monitoring

8.65 The Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan will identify those site specific accessibility and sustainable transport schemes required as part of the development of larger brownfield sites.

8.66 Worcestershire County Council is producing Supplementary Planning Guidance on securing developer contributions towards transport infrastructure. This will provide detailed guidance for the site specific allocations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
9: A Unique Place

9.1 The built and natural environment includes everything that surrounds us from open space to historic buildings, rivers and canals and the wider countryside. The environment of Wyre Forest District is made unique by the valleys of the Rivers Severn and Stour and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal which flow through the District and shape the landscape. The District has a number of sites and features which are designated either nationally or locally for conservation interest.

9.2 A high quality environment can have numerous benefits for an area. Businesses are more likely to locate in areas where the built and natural environment is attractive. The natural and built environment of the District is also attractive to tourists and can create a strong sense of place, helping to retain residents within the District.

9.3 Access to high-quality, well-maintained public space is an essential part of promoting active, healthy lifestyles. Well-designed streets can encourage walking and cycling and good access to public space can facilitate participation in sport and active recreation. A comprehensive network of green spaces and corridors will support a range of biodiversity and will help to tackle climate change.

9.4 This chapter sets out policies to define quality design and safeguard and enhance the natural and historic environment of Wyre Forest District.
9.5 The Wyre Forest District is a considerably diverse area with particularly distinctive characteristics. It is therefore important to strive for high quality design in any future developments in order to preserve this local distinctiveness and create a good quality environment.

**Core Policy 12**

**Design Quality and Local Distinctiveness**

It is essential that all new developments are of a high quality design that respects the character of the area and has regard for and reflects the local distinctiveness of the locale.

Before any new developments are approved they will be required to demonstrate that they have undergone a Design Quality Assessment as set out in the Design Quality SPG.

To achieve design quality and local distinctiveness developments will only be permitted if:

- They have demonstrated that they take into account locally distinct features;
- They make a positive contribution to the public realm;
- The materials used are of a high quality and harmonise with existing materials found in the immediate area;
- They protect and/or enhance key views towards important natural and built features;
- They are accessible for all potential users with no real or perceived barriers to their use;
- The scale, density, massing and height is appropriate to the context of the development; and
- They minimise the opportunity for crime and contribute to natural surveillance.

**Town Centres**

In addition to the above points, developments in town centres must:

- Have a strong relationship with the public realm and provide an active frontage onto public space such as streets and waterways;
- Have signage and building frontages that are of a high quality and enhance the character of the centre;
- Acknowledge the importance of the historical and cultural heritage of the towns;
- Contribute positively to the unique image of the towns, including where appropriate new landmark buildings.

All development proposals will need to have regard to the principles for 'designing out crime'. Developments should, where feasible:

- Maximise natural surveillance whilst maintaining appropriate levels of privacy
- Ensure an appropriate mix of uses
Reasoned Justification

9.6 The importance of good design cannot be overstated - it is integral to people's quality of life and has big impact on where people choose to live, work and visit. New developments should not only respect the character of the surrounding environment but also enhance it.

9.7 Design also has a crucial role in achieving environmental excellence by ensuring that new developments are built in a sustainable manner to include high energy efficiency standards, provision for on-site renewable and low carbon technologies, and use recycled building materials.

9.8 Good design can also contribute greatly to the prevention of crime and in reducing the fear of crime. Creating new developments that increase the level of natural surveillance and which provide a sense of enclosure to public space are important factors in achieving this. As is the appropriate use of lighting and CCTV.

9.9 The legibility and connectivity of a place, particularly in urban areas, can often be determined by the design of developments. This particularly the case with a large scale development of an area where an entirely new built environment is to be created. Therefore, developments must create a structure which is well integrated with surrounding streets and spaces and which is well connected in itself.

9.10 High quality, well thought out design is especially important to the District's town centres. Town centres are the hubs of activity, hosting large numbers of people day to day, and contain large areas of publicly accessible space. It is important that they are high quality environments if they are to remain attractive and competitive to retain and draw in visitors and businesses alike.

Design Quality - Supplementary Planning Guidance

9.11 In 2004 the District Council adopted a Design Quality Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to help secure high quality design throughout the District. The SPG provides more detailed and practical design advice to developers and their designers, in respect of key design issues, whilst providing the flexibility for creativity and originality.

9.12 The SPG further promotes design quality as a material planning consideration and enables the District Council to use its planning powers to secure high quality design in all new developments.
Community Safety

9.13 Crime and the fear of crime are often a big issue within local communities and can affect the wellbeing of the District communities. Although recent surveys indicate that community safety in the District is a falling concern (9) even the low levels of anti-social behaviour and fear of crime can have a significant impact on people’s lives and community cohesion. The issue of safe communities is reflected in one of the Sustainable Community Strategies themes - ‘communities that are safe and feel safe’, and is also reflected in Spatial Objective 12. Community safety is essential to creating sustainable communities and is a key component of PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development. The issue of crime and community safety is dealt with at a local level by the Wyre Forest Community Safety Partnership, which is the Crime and Disorder Partnership that operates within the District. The Partnership brings together a variety of stakeholders who share the vision ‘Wyre Forest - an even safer place to live, work, visit or do business in’. The Partnership has identified four strategic priorities for its partnership plan 2008 - 2011. This includes:

- To reduce the number of recorded offences of criminal damage
- To reduce the number of recorded offences of vehicle crime, focusing on theft of and theft from a vehicle
- To reduce the number of recorded offences of violent crime, focusing on common assault (assault without injury) and wounding (assault with injury)
- To increase public reassurance across all wards, so that the level of concern is proportionate to the level of risk

9.14 The LDF must therefore seek to try and help achieve some of the above objectives, wherever feasible. It is important, however, to acknowledge that the nature of crime is a complex issue and other mechanisms such as education and a degree of personal responsibility are also essential in combating crime and the fear of crime. Nonetheless, the planning system can play a key role in reducing crime through good quality design, despite the other social issues which affect the levels of crime.

9.15 A wide variety of schemes, ranging from large developments through to small-scale infills and schemes requiring a change of use or variations to a planning condition, can affect community safety. The potential impact on community safety must be carefully considered at the earliest opportunity to ensure that measures are integrated into the scheme without compromising other objectives, such as the need for high quality design. Measures such as natural surveillance and the creation of active neighbourhoods through the design and layout of buildings, as well as a mix of dwelling types and the creation of connected movement networks can help in reducing crime levels.

Implementation and Monitoring

9.16 Developments must also be in conformity the District Council’s Design Quality SPG. Further design guidance relating to specific sites may be set out in the Site Allocations & Policies and Kidderminster Area Action Plan Development Plan Documents as well as future site Design Briefs. These must also be given full consideration where applicable.

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9 Source: Wyre Forest Place Survey 08/09
The District Council will be able to ensure the quality of new developments through the requirement for schemes to undergo a Design Quality Assessment. This method will provide an effective way of determining whether a development is in accordance with the core policy as well as an effective monitoring mechanism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications refused as a result of poor quality design.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Development control records</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Landscape Character

9.18 The landscape character of the District is an important asset. A Citizen’s Panel Survey (2006) established that people value the beautiful and peaceful environment and countryside within the District and the difference which this makes to quality of life.

Core Policy 14

Landscape Character

1. New development must protect and where possible enhance the unique character of the landscape including the individual settlement or hamlet within which it is located. Where necessary, landscape enhancement works will be required to prevent new development from having an adverse impact on the landscape.

2. The Worcestershire County Council Landscape Character Assessment will be used as a basis for determining applications for development within the rural areas. The Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment will form the basis for the development of thematic policy relating to landscape character.

3. Where it is considered appropriate to the landscape character, small scale development which can reasonably be considered to meet the needs of the rural economy, outdoor recreation, or to support the delivery of services for the local community will be supported subject to it meeting all other relevant criteria within the LDF.

4. Applications for further mobile home, caravan and chalet developments within the District’s rural areas will be resisted due to the collective impact which the existing sites have on the landscape.

5. The establishment of a Severn Valley Regional Heritage Park will be supported and promoted through the development of thematic policy relating to landscape character.

Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
- Regional Spatial Strategy (insert more detail after EiP)
- Worcestershire County Council Landscape Character Assessment

Reasoned Justification

9.19 Landscape character is defined as "a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (soil, landform) and/or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse". (Natural England).

9.20 Worcestershire County Council have undertaken a Landscape Character Assessment covering the rural areas of the County. Landscape Character Area (LCA) is a tool for identifying the features that give a locality its 'sense of place' and is used to sub-divide the landscape into areas of similar character.
The process of Landscape Character Assessment identifies commonalities in landscapes, recognising repeating patterns of natural and cultural attributes that reflect how geographically separate areas have evolved in a similar way. This allows this information to be classified into Landscape Types. The following landscape types have been identified within the District:

- Principal wooded hills
- Wooded forest
- Forest small holdings and dwellings
- Timbered plateau farmlands
- Principal timbered farmlands
- Sandstone estateland
- Estate farmlands
- Principal settled farmlands
- Riverside meadows

The Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment will be used as the basis for determining applications within rural areas across the District. The LCA determines the sensitivity of the landscape. Areas of high landscape sensitivity are those which are the least able to accommodate changes without damage to their character. Less sensitive areas of landscape are more likely to be able to accommodate change without damage to their character. It is these areas which are the most likely to be suitable for future small-scale development such as community facilities and rural affordable housing, which is needed to keep the District’s villages viable.

One of the biggest development pressures in the rural areas of the District in recent years has been in relation to mobile home and caravan sites. The issue is most prevalent along the River Severn and to the west of the River Severn around the Wyre Forest itself. The District has around 3000 caravans; approximately 200 are permanent dwellings and the remainder are licensed for holiday use. There are also around 380 chalets which were constructed pre-1947 Town and Country Planning Act.

The landscape of the Severn Valley is particularly distinctive. The River Severn is a cross-boundary feature and the establishment of a linear Severn Valley Heritage Park to celebrate and promote the Severn Valley will be supported through the development of thematic policy on landscape character.

**Implementation and Monitoring**

The policy will be delivered through the preparation of thematic policy on landscape character. Landscape Character SPD for the District. This will provide further detailed guidance for applicants. The determination of planning applications will also contribute to the delivery of this policy.

The following indicators will be used to assess the effectiveness of this policy:
Table 9.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount of best and most versatile agricultural land lost to development (Ha)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications refused as a result of poor quality design</td>
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<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of developments (applications approved) which benefit the green infrastructure network.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of additional caravans/mobile home sites granted permission.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Historic Environment

9.27 The historic environment underpins the character, and creates the local distinctiveness of the Wyre Forest District, its towns and villages, and rural landscapes. Incorporating all designated historic assets such as Schedules Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, the historic environment also includes undesignated sites, areas and landscapes of local historic, architectural, archaeological and/or artistic interest.

9.28 It is important that a positive approach to the protection and conservation of these areas is set out within the LDF. Safeguarding and enhancing the distinct historic character of the three main towns and the wider historic environmental resource is important in delivering wider social and economic benefits.

Core Policy 14
Safeguarding and Enhancing the Historic Environment

1. New development must safeguard the District’s historic environment by ensuring that it preserves and enhances the special character of, and does not have a detrimental impact upon, the historic environment. Any new development affecting or likely to affect the historic environment will require sufficient information and justification with the relevant application to enable the Local Authority to determine the impact of the proposals on the historic environment.

2. The sympathetic restoration and re-use of historic buildings will be encouraged, especially where these buildings contribute to the character of their locality.

3. Development within Kidderminster Town Centre will need to have regard to the historic character of the town, its conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeology, and other elements of the historic environment. Further details will be set out within the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD.

4. New development within conservation areas must preserve and enhance the District’s historic environment and should be informed by the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal.

5. New development must not have a detrimental impact on archaeological sites. Developers must establish the potential for negative impact on the historic environment prior to submission of any application. Where the potential for such negative impact is identified, it will be necessary to include a statement indicating any proposed mitigation needed to ensure the appropriate protection and/or recording of the historic environment. Any sites discovered during development should be notified to the District Council and recorded on the Historic Environment Record.

6. In the District’s sub-urban areas new development should respect its surroundings and the removal of individual houses in large grounds and replacement with cul-de-sac developments will not be permitted where this has a detrimental impact on the character of established residential areas as defined within the Design Quality SPD.

7. Ensure that any SPD providing guidance on development affecting the historic environment, including the Landscape Character and Revised Design Quality SPD, will take full account of the historic elements of the landscape and settlements, including, but not exclusively,
Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment
- PPG16: Planning and Archaeology
- Draft PPS15: Planning for the Historic Environment
- Regional Spatial Strategy (insert more info after EiP)
- Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans
- Historic Environment Record
- Parish Plans and Village Design Statements

Reasoned Justification

9.29 The District has a rich historic and built environment, which is a finite and non-renewable resource. The careful and considered conservation of this historic environment can play a key part in regeneration, helping to identify buildings, structures, sites and landscapes which are valued and which can make a positive contribution to a development, promoting economic prosperity. It can help to ensure that new development does not have a detrimental impact on the character of the historic environment. Those features with statutory protection, for example, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens are considered to be nationally important. However, there are a wealth of features that have no statutory protection, including locally listed buildings, but also those features which have not yet been specifically identified. These features should be preserved wherever possible.

9.30 There are nearly 1000 Statutory Listed buildings and structures within the District, together with 16 Conservation Areas and 9 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. In addition, there are over 1000 buildings and structures on the Wyre Forest District Local List, and 31 landscaped Parks and Gardens identified by the Hereford and Worcester Gardens Trust. There are also semi ancient woodland……

9.31 The Historic Environment Record has over 2,600 entries for the Wyre Forest District, including records relating the River Severn; the Wyre Forest; Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval archaeological remains; and buildings, structures and earthworks associated with activities ranging from industrial through to agricultural, all reflecting the diverse physical and cultural heritage of the District. The HER helps to afford protection, and increase understanding and awareness of the historic environment. These historic features are an important part of the Districts identity, giving it local distinctiveness, individual character, and a sense of place. There is the potential for further sites of archaeological interest to be discovered as development takes place. Such sites must be registered on the Historic Environment Record.

9.32 Within Kidderminster the carpet industry heritage is very important to the identity of the town. Stourport-on-Severn was built around the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and Basins. Bewdley is based around an early Medieval settlement focused on crossing points for the River Severn, and contains many buildings of interest. The Severn Valley Railway also brings a heritage legacy to the
towns of Kidderminster and Bewdley, and the surrounding landscape. Through its local distinctiveness policy, the Core Strategy will seek to preserve and/or enhance these elements of the historic environment.

9.33 The County Council will undertake Historic Landscape Characterisation for the District. This will bring together the Landscape Character Assessment and the contents of the Historic Environment Record, as part of a County-wide project, helping to improve understanding of the County’s landscape and provide a context for its archaeological sites and monuments. Once completed, this will provide an historic landscape framework for informed landscape management strategies, spatial planning, development control and conservation issues at a local, regional and national level.

9.34 A programme for undertaking and reviewing the Conservation Area Character Appraisals is being undertaken by the District Council, ensuring that all the District’s Conservation Areas have an appropriate and up-to-date Appraisal, and, where necessary, an associated Management Plan. These appraisals help to identify the specific characteristics and features which make the areas desirable to preserve and/or enhance, and those which do not contribute to the Conservation Areas significance. The Historic Environment Record will be continually updated to provide and up-to-date record of the District’s historic environment.

9.35 Within the District’s residential stock, a broad range of character types can be identified. Associated with older character types is the presence of detached houses within large grounds. There is concern that some of these properties are being removed and replaced with infill cul-de-sac developments which do not respect the character of the immediate area. In order to preserve the historic character of established sub-urban areas, this type of development will be resisted.

9.36 Kidderminster town centre will be the focus for a large amount of new development during the LDF time-frame – therefore a separate Kidderminster Central Action Plan DPD is being produced for this area which will guide development. Due to the historic character of much of the town, and the presence of a number of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings within the area, as well as other sites of historical and/or archaeological interest, this document will need to take account of an assessment of the historic character of the area. An initial base-line survey of the town has already been carried out as part of the Central Marches Historic Town Survey, and this will be expanded on to inform the development of the DPD.

Implementation and Monitoring

9.37 The policy will be implemented through the development control process. Up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisals, and Management Plans where appropriate, are currently being produced for each Conservation Area within the District, and these will be used to inform the Development Control process. The County Historic Environment and Archaeology Service will undertake Historic Landscape Characterisation, and will provide advice on the wide range of historic sites and landscapes within the District. The District Council will continue to identify those parts of the historic environment which have significance at a local level, for their historic, archaeological, architectural and/or artistic interest, and record them as local heritage assets.
The following indicators will be used to monitor this policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications refused as a result of poor quality design</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring systems to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of planning permissions granted in Conservation Areas</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring systems to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Listed Building consents granted</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring systems to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of demolition consents (Listed Buildings)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring systems to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of demolition consents (Conservation Areas)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring systems to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of buildings on the national and local BARs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal database</td>
<td>Conservation Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of derelict buildings brought back into use</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications requiring archaeological mitigation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Conservation Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new records added to the Historic Environment Record</td>
<td></td>
<td>County Historic Environment Section</td>
<td>Conservation Officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Providing a Green Infrastructure Network

9.39 Green infrastructure planning will deliver a comprehensive network of green spaces, corridors and stepping stones across the District. This will help to promote active lifestyles, improve health and well-being, promote walking and cycling as a means of sustainable transport, support biodiversity and help to deliver UK and local BAP targets and objectives, address climate change, and safeguard and enhance the District’s unique landscape character. Green infrastructure is an important and cross-cutting issue and therefore, this policy has linkages with Providing Opportunities for Local Biodiversity and Geodiversity, Adapting to and Mitigating Against Climate Change, and Delivering Community Wellbeing. and as such should be read in conjunction with these themes and Core Policy Areas.

Core Policy 15

Providing a Green Infrastructure Network

1. New development will be required to make a financial contribution towards the District’s green infrastructure network. The Green Infrastructure Study and Green Infrastructure Strategy will be used to identify where green space contributions are spent/requirements on individual sites. Open spaces typologies identified within the PPG17 audit as being deficient will be prioritised for further provision.

2. The existing green infrastructure network within the District, as set out within the emerging Green Infrastructure Strategy, will be safeguarded.

3. The integrity of the Rivers’ Severn and Stour will be safeguarded and new developments must contribute towards this both in terms of landscape and biodiversity.

4. All new development will be expected to provide open space where technically feasible. Where private garden space is not provided for each dwelling, communal gardens or allotment spaces will be required in order to improve health and well-being and to support local biodiversity. Roof-top gardens and green roofs will be encouraged in order to help address climate change and enhance biodiversity.

Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change: Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1
- Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation
- Worcestershire County Council Landscape Character Assessment
- Wyre Forest District Green Infrastructure Study
Reasoned Justification

9.40 There are a large number of green spaces and green corridors within the District which are currently fragmented but have the potential to provide a comprehensive, well-linked network of green infrastructure. The District's waterways in particular offer the opportunity to link the urban areas with the open countryside beyond. This is particularly important within Kidderminster where the ring road severs links between the town centre and open spaces such as Brinton Park, St. George's Park and open spaces adjacent to the canal.

9.41 A PPG17 compliant audit of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities has been undertaken which has mapped all of the existing sites within the District falling into the typologies set out within the Companion Guide to PPG17. The audit has set and applied quantity, quality and accessibility standards and has made recommendations for the improvement of facilities across the District. One of the recommendations is that the District Council should undertake a Green Infrastructure Study to look at a wider range of sites and more importantly, how these sites are linked to each other and to the wider countryside. As such a Green Infrastructure Study has been produced for the District and this will be developed into a Green Infrastructure Strategy. The Green Infrastructure Study maps all existing green infrastructure within the District and identifies broad opportunities for enhancing provision. The green Infrastructure Strategy will identify a network of green infrastructure for the District, setting out where new space and linkages need to be delivered to create a comprehensive network of green infrastructure throughout the District. The District has some of the County's most important and distinctive acid/lowland heath communities. These will be safeguarded through future development.

9.42 Green infrastructure will need to be carefully planned into all new developments from the outset. When determining planning applications, the way in which the proposals contribute to delivering the Green Infrastructure Strategy for the District will be an important consideration. Open space provided as part of new developments should be usable and multi-functional, it should also contribute to the green infrastructure network and provide benefits for both people and nature.

Implementation and Monitoring

9.43 This policy will be implemented through the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the District which will be taken forward through the development control process. Developer contributions will be used to take forward the green infrastructure network in line with the Green Infrastructure Study and the Green Infrastructure Strategy and further details of the requirements will be set out within a Revised Planning Obligations SPD. The Site Allocations and Policies DPD and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD will identify the green infrastructure sites to be safeguarded and site specific considerations.

9.44 The following indicators will be used to monitor this policy:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of developments (applications approved) which benefit the green infrastructure network.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hectares of open space and recreation/amenity space lost to development.</td>
<td>0ha</td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wyre Forest District supports a wide range of habitats and species which are recognised in both the UK and local BAP. Of particular note are the District’s lowland acid/heathland communities, wetland river corridors, including some of the most important wetland and wet woodland, and extensive ancient semi-natural broadleaf woodlands such as the National Nature Reserves of the Wyre Forest and Chaddesley Woods. A large area of the District falls into the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark.

This policy is closely linked to Providing a Green Infrastructure Network.

Core Policy 16
Providing Opportunities for Local Biodiversity and Geodiversity

1. Biodiversity sites (SSSIs, NNRs, LNRs SWSs) and species and habitats recognised within the Worcestershire BAP will be safeguarded from development. The District Council will support the establishment of new sites where this is considered to be appropriate. Development which has a detrimental impact on habitats or provision for protected species will not be permitted.

2. New development will be required to contribute towards biodiversity within the district, either by enhancing opportunities for biodiversity within the site or by making a contribution to off-site biodiversity projects.

3. New developments must take measures to ensure that they have a positive impact on the ability of species to migrate to ensure diversity and as a response to climate change.

4. The biodiversity value of the Rivers Severn and Stour and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal will be safeguarded. New development alongside these watercourses should maintain and enhance their biodiversity value.

5. In order to provide opportunities for increased biodiversity, existing trees and woodlands which have TPOs will be conserved and enhanced and, on appropriate development sites, new trees and woodlands will be planted in keeping with the landscape character of the area.

6. New development must not have a detrimental impact on the geodiversity of the District.

Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- European Protected Species Legislation
- UK Biodiversity Action Plan
- PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation
- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Wyre Forest District Green Infrastructure Study
- Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan
9.47 Legislation places a duty of care on local authorities to conserve biodiversity within their area (NERC Act 2006). This emphasises that decisions taken on planning applications should be taken using up-to-date environmental characteristics of the area, which includes the biodiversity and geodiversity resources of an area. The District Council will strive to enhance biodiversity and geodiversity across the District and this links closely to the policy on providing a Green Infrastructure Network.

9.48 Connectivity between habitats is an important element of safeguarding biodiversity and allowing it to adapt to a changing climate and migrate. This can be achieved through the use of green roofs, street trees, stepping stone sites and green corridors. Biodiversity is expected to be a key part of all new developments, regardless of scale. Developments should consider the incorporation of biodiversity from an early stage.

9.49 The District has a number of sites which are important for biodiversity and geodiversity. The Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) identifies a number of significant species and habitats which occur within the District which will be protected from development. Wildlife sites outside of the designated areas are also important, they help to connect habitats and provide for species migration. Such corridors and stepping stones, both existing, and those which are desirable to achieve into the future, will be identified through the Green Infrastructure Study and Strategy and will be safeguarded from future development.

9.50 Requiring all major new developments to make a contribution towards biodiversity projects will help to achieve BAP targets. The BAP targets most relevant to Wyre Forest District which need to be considered through the Core Strategy are:

- Ensuring that all known BAP habitats are safeguarded within the LDF, e.g., SSSIs, SWSs, heathland, acidic grassland pastoral communities, orchards, ancient and semi-wet woodlands, fens and marshes and wet grasslands.
- Promote and ensure that SUDs are used wherever feasible in new developments.
- Ensuring that culverted watercourses are restored where they fall within the site of a new development.
- Include planning policies for the protection and enhancement of river and other wildlife corridors within the LDF.

9.51 It is important to consider the impact of the development strategy which seeks to locate the majority of new development on brownfield sites. Brownfield sites can have high biodiversity value and it is important that where this is the case, features are retained. Landscaping schemes, the provision of gardens in all new residential developments (where technically feasible) and the provision of SuDS can help to increase the biodiversity value of new development. In addition, all reasonable measures should be taken to ensure that trees, hedges and watercourses which occur within development sites are retained.

### Implementation and Monitoring

9.52 This policy will be implemented through the development control process. The revised Planning Obligations SPD will set out further details on the developer contributions which will be required for biodiversity, the KCAAP will set out further details on biodiversity requirements.
within the town centre area. The KCAAP, the Site Allocations and Policies DPD, and Revised Design Quality Guidance SPD will include detailed policy relating to the increase of tree cover within the District’s town centre areas.

9.53 The following indicators will be used to monitor this policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications refused because of their potential impact on biodiversity/geodiversity</td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of SSSIs by area which are in ‘favourable’ or ‘unfavourable but recovering’</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>AMR</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications approved contrary to Natural England recommendations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of Local Sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented (NI197).</td>
<td></td>
<td>Worcestershire County Council</td>
<td>WCC BAP Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in areas of biodiversity importance</td>
<td></td>
<td>AMR</td>
<td>Policy and Regeneration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regenerating the Rivers and Canal

9.54 The District has three main waterways: the River Severn, River Stour, and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. The District’s three main towns all feature at least one of these waterways and have been significantly influenced by them.

9.55 The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and River Stour both flow through Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn, and the River Severn flows through Bewdley and onto Stourport-on-Severn.

Core Policy 17

Regenerating the Rivers and Canal

The allocation of specific development sites will be set out in The Site Allocations and Policies and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPDs.

Any developments, projects and initiatives that assist in promoting the waterways as a tourist attraction will be encouraged. In particular the enhancement of the canal for use of boaters, that help to increase visitor numbers and overnight stays, will be encouraged.

Rivers

- All proposals for development adjacent to the District’s rivers must take into account Core Policy 2 - Managing Water and adhere to the national flood risk guidance as set out in PPS25.
- The river is to be enhanced as an integral part of the green infrastructure and a biodiversity corridor for the District.
- In Kidderminster, the opening up and enhancement of the River Stour through the town centre will be encouraged.

Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal

- All new development in areas adjacent to the canal must have a positive relationship to it, providing a strong, active frontage onto the waterside. Developments must contribute towards creating an attractive waterside environment that provides natural surveillance to the area and promotes a high level of activity throughout the day.
- The canal’s capacity as a sustainable pedestrian and cycle route should be developed and promoted.

Additional Guidance for Applicants:

- PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS6: Town Centres
- PPS25: Development and Flood Risk
Reasoned Justification

9.56  The canal and rivers are very prominent features of the District and as well as helping to shape the area’s past, they have great potential to bring benefits and influence the future development of the District.

Tourism

9.57  Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley already have a well established tourism sector in which the River Severn plays an important role. However, Kidderminster has not utilised its tourism potential or the fact that the River Stour and the canal both run through the centre of town.

9.58  There is great economic potential in Kidderminster provided by canal-boating tourism. Currently a lot of boaters travel through Kidderminster on the canal, but strong anecdotal evidence suggest that the majority of boaters do not stay long in the town and use it as a stop off for supermarkets. This appears to be largely due to the fear of antisocial behaviour. Antisocial behaviour is an issue on the town centre stretch of the canal and it suffers particularly with problems of litter and graffiti, this is not helped by the fact that the canal does not benefit greatly from natural surveillance. A further problem is that the town does not relate well to the canal and therefore does not advertise itself well from the boaters point of view and misses out on this passing trade.

9.59  Although a large and successful restoration of the Stourport canal basins has taken place in recent years the town has still not maximised the potential of it as a visitor attraction. The town mainly attracts day visitors drawn to the riverside amusements but there is an opportunity to capitalise on heritage based tourism also and encourage longer stays.

Nature

9.60  The District’s waterways present a great opportunity to provide essential green infrastructure and biodiversity corridors and habitats. This is especially important as the waterways travel through the centre of the three towns where green infrastructure and natural habitats are most lacking and are needed to provide vital connections with the urban centres to the surrounding countryside. In Kidderminster, the enhancement of the Stour as part of the development of the Tesco and Morrisons supermarkets have reintroduced wildlife habitats and green infrastructure in the centre of town. These projects have shown how the river can be better utilised.

Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal

9.61  The Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal is of great historical and cultural significance to the District, and to Stourport-on-Severn and Kidderminster in particular. The network through the two towns was built by James Brindley and was opened in 1771 and considerably shaped the future development of the District.

9.62  Stourport-on-Severn is uniquely the only town in Britain built solely as a consequence of the coming of the canals, growing around its canal basin. After Birmingham it was the
Midlands busiest inland port attracting a rapidly expanding industrial sector\(^{(10)}\). In recent times, despite the significant decline of industry in the town, the canal still plays a crucial part of the town’s tourism offer.

9.63 The canal is also important to industrial heritage of the Kidderminster and was intrinsic to the carpet manufacturing industry. Canal basins, forming arms off the main canal channel, served the town’s major factories bringing in essential materials and allowing the manufacturers to transport their goods outside of the town. However, unlike Stourport-on-Severn, Kidderminster has tended to turn its back on the canal in recent times and has underutilised this important feature.

River Severn and River Stour

9.64 The Districts two major rivers are fundamental to the history, heritage and future of the District.

9.65 The River Severn helped Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley become thriving river ports and industrial towns and, although the river no longer has an industrial role in these two towns, it still remains a very dominant and important feature both culturally and economically.

9.66 Bewdley’s town centre does particularly well in relating to the river, providing a strong frontage onto it and having a thriving waterfront including art studios, bars and cafés. In Stourport-on-Severn the riverside provides the main focal point of the town’s main tourist activities and links directly to the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal.

9.67 Unlike Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley and the River Severn, Kidderminster has not made the most of the fact that the River Stour runs right through the middle of the town centre. A lot of the river has been culverted and is hidden from view. To those unfamiliar with the town it would be easy to forget that the river runs through it at all. However, like the canal, it was a key part of the Kidderminster’s industrial growth.

Implementation and Monitoring

9.68 This policy will be implemented through the development control process. The revised Planning Obligations SPD will set out further details on the developer contributions which will be required for enhancement works, the KCAAP will set out further details on requirements within the town centre area.

9.69 The following indicators will be used to monitor this policy:

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\(^{(10)}\) Stourport Forward- [http://www.stourporttown.co.uk/history.html](http://www.stourporttown.co.uk/history.html)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of waterways enhanced by development</td>
<td>Planning applications</td>
<td>Policy and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>schemes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### 10: Monitoring and Implementation Framework

#### Adapting to, and Mitigating Against, Climate Change

**10.1 Delivering Sustainable Development Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of new developments incorporating recycling facilities</td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of new dwellings built to Code Level 4 or above</td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of new developments incorporating on-site renewable energy generation</td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average energy rating of new dwellings</td>
<td>Internal monitoring system to be established</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO₂ emissions per capita</td>
<td>3% reduction per annum 2005: 6.2 tonnes per annum</td>
<td>Defra</td>
<td>Health and Sustainability Team</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**10.2 Addressing Flood Risk**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The number of planning permissions granted which are contrary to Environment Agency advice</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Internal Records</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of new developments incorporating SUDS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**10.3 Sustainable Transport**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of developments under construction which incorporate a travel plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport travel time of key facilities: GP, Hospital, Employment, Primary School, Secondary School, Retail Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
### A Desirable Place to Live

#### 10.4 Affordable Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
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<th>Monitored By</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 10.5 Delivering Mixed Communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling Mix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 10.6 Provision for Gypsies and travellers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### 10.7 Delivering Community Well-Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of community facilities as a result of development</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Data Source</td>
<td>Monitored By</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of new community facilities developed (sqm)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult participation in sport</td>
<td>1% increase per year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### A Good Place to do Business

#### 10.8 A Diverse Local Economy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The amount of employment land developed (Ha)</td>
<td>2.5ha?</td>
<td>Internal Records</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The percentage of employment land developed on brownfield land</td>
<td>90%?</td>
<td>Internal Records</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of employment floorspace 'lost' to competing uses</td>
<td>0%?</td>
<td>Internal Records</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of firms registering for VAT</td>
<td></td>
<td>ABI</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 10.9 Sustainable Tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The number of bed spaces developed per annum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning Applications - Completions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of tourism related jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td>ABI - Nomis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 10.10 Supporting Infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### A Unique Place

#### 10.11 Quality Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Data Source</td>
<td>Monitored By</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of agricultural land lost to development (Ha)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications refused as a result of poor quality / out-of-character design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of Green Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of additional caravans/mobile home sites granted permission.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 10.13 Historic Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications refused as a result of poor quality out of character design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of planning permissions granted in Conservation Areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Listed Building consents granted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of demolition consents (Listed Buildings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of demolition consents (Conservation Areas)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of buildings on the national and local BARs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of historic buildings converted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of derelict buildings brought back into use</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications requiring archaeological mitigation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new records added to the Historic Environment Record</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 10.14 Green Infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of green infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 10.15 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hectares of greenspace per head of population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 10.15.1 Number of applications refused/amended/conditioned because of their potential impact on biodiversity/geodiversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored by</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of applications refused/amended/conditioned because of their potential impact on biodiversity/geodiversity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of SSSIs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of sites designated for nature conservation lost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporation of features for BAP species in new developments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geodiversity indicator?</td>
<td></td>
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### 10.16 Waterways

<table>
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<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Monitored By</th>
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11: Infrastructure Schedules

Table 11.1

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Type of Indicator</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>CP01</td>
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A: Jargon Guide

Adopted Local Plan 2004-2011
The existing planning policy document for the Wyre Forest District, this was adopted in 2004 to guide future development within the district until 2011. Along with the Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 and the Hereford and Worcester County Minerals Local Plan (1997) it constitutes the Development Plan for the Wyre Forest District and will remain as such until the LDF is finished, at which time it will be replaced.

Advantage West Midlands (AWM)
Advantage West Midlands is the Regional Development Agency (RDA) for the West Midlands. For more information please see www.advantagewm.co.uk.

Affordable Housing
The District Council has adopted the definition of Affordable Housing as set out in national planning policy; Planning Policy Statement 3, Annex B as follows:

‘Affordable Housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable Housing should:

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
- Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
Areas designated by Wyre Forest District Council where the level of pollutant concentrations in the atmosphere results in the air quality not meeting the objectives set out by central government in 2005.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)
An annually produced document which sets out the progress made in achieving the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme as well as measuring the effectiveness of the development plan policies.

Area of Development Restraint (ADR)
ADRs are areas which have been protected from development in the current Adopted Local Plan. These areas are safeguarded to provide provision for longer term development and have been taken out of the Green Belt. Until they are identified for development, Green Belt policies apply to these sites.

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)
A strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving and enhancing biological diversity.

Brownfield Land/Previously Developed Land (PDL)
Land which has previously been developed. The term may encompass vacant or derelict land, infill sites, land occupied by redundant or unused buildings, and developed land within the settlement boundary where further intensification of use is considered acceptable.

Climate Change
Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the Earth’s climate. Often regarded as a result of human activity and fossil fuel consumption.

**Conservation Area**
Area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

**Developer Contributions**
Developer contributions are often required for major developments to ensure sufficient provision is made for infrastructure and services such as roads, schools, healthcare and other facilities. Contributions are usually secured through planning conditions or legal agreements (often referred to as planning obligations or Section 106 agreements).

**Development Plan Documents (DPDs)**
The collective term given to all statutory documents that form the Local Development Framework for the District. These comprise of the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Policies, Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and a Proposals Map.

**English Heritage**
English Heritage exists to protect and promote England’s historic environment and ensure that its past is researched and understood.

**Evidence Base**
The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the ‘soundness’ of the policy approach set out in Local Development Documents, including the physical, economic and social characteristics of an area.

**Flood Risk Assessment**
An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

**General Conformity**
A Local Development Document must be in ‘general’ conformity with the strategy and proposals set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy as assessed by the Regional Planning Body (West Midlands Regional Assembly). Normally, it would only be where an inconsistency or omission of a policy causes significant harm to the implementation of the RSS that it would be considered not to be in general conformity.

**Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM)**
The regional Government Office based in Birmingham responsible for implementing national policy in the region and ensuring local authority planning policies and plans are in line with national guidance.

**Green Belt Land**
Land which is situated between urban areas on which development is restricted so as to ensure urban sprawl – the uncontrolled, unplanned growth of urban areas – does not occur.

**Greenfield Land**
Land which has never been developed, this includes greenbelt land and areas of open countryside, as well as undeveloped land within urban areas.

**Heritage**
A general term used to refer to historical and archaeological features, buildings and monuments which are of local, regional or national interest.

**Infrastructure**
Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

**Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)**
An assessment of landscape character, which is defined as ‘a distinct, recognisable, and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape which makes one landscape different from another.

**Landscape Protection Area (LPA)**
An area originally outlined in the 1986 Wyre Forest Urban Areas Local Plan which is protected from inappropriate development as it is deemed to be worthy of special protection and enhancement.

**Lifetime Home Standard**
Criteria developed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 1991 to help house builders to produce new homes flexible enough to deal with changes in life situations of occupants such as caring for young children, temporary injuries and declining mobility with age.

**Listed Building**
A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II* or II, with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building and any buildings or permanent structures within its curtilage.

**Local Development Framework (LDF)**
This will provide the framework for delivering the planning strategy and policies for Wyre Forest District.

**Local Development Scheme (LDS)**
A three year timetable setting out the type of Development Plan Documents to be produced under the Local Development Framework and the key milestones for their development.

**Local Regeneration Areas (LRA)**
Areas designated as LRAs commonly face regeneration challenges associated with the decline or restructuring of traditional industries.

**Local Transport Plan**
A five-year integrated transport strategy prepared by local authorities in partnership with the community which seeks funding to help provide local transport projects.

**Major Developments**
Major developments include;

- Residential development compromising at least 10 dwellings or a site area of at least 1 hectare if the number of dwellings is not specified.
- Other uses where the floor space to be built is greater than one thousand square metres or the site area is at least 1 hectare in size.

**Major Urban Areas (MUAs)**
The focus of Urban Renaissance which underpins the Regional Spatial Strategy. Of the 4 MUAs established in the RSS, Birmingham and the Black Country have the most relevance to the Wyre Forest District.

**Natural England**
Natural England works for people, places and nature to conserve and enhance biodiversity, landscapes and wildlife in rural, urban, coastal and marine areas.

**Oldington and Foley Park Pathfinder**
A seven year regeneration programme and partnership for the Oldington and Foley Park Ward in Kidderminster which is in the 10% most deprived Wards of the Country.

**Open Space**
All space of public value, which can offer opportunities for sport and recreation or can also act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife. Areas of open space include public landscaped areas, playing fields, parks and play areas, and also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs.

**Parish Plans**
Reflect the planning issues present at a local level in the rural areas of the District. These plans carry no weight in the planning system but are designed to inform the District Council of local planning issues.

**Planning Policy Statements (PPSs)**
Documents provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government setting out government policy and advice on planning issues such as housing, transport and conservation. Local authorities must take their contents into account in preparing their development plans.

**Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)**
A strategy prepared by the Regional Planning Body for how a region should look in 15 to 20 years time and often longer. It identifies the scale and distribution of new housing in the region, indicates areas for regeneration, expansion or sub-regional planning and specifies priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals and waste treatment and disposal.

**Rural Exception Policy**
A policy contained in a development plan document (DPD) which enables sites that would not be developed for general market housing to be developed solely for affordable housing.

**Rural Regeneration Zone (RRZ)**
One of six Regeneration Zones designated by Advantage West Midlands in which the majority of its activity and funding will be concentrated over the next ten years.

**Scheduled Ancient Monument**
A 'nationally important' archaeological site or historic building, given protection against unauthorised change.

**Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**
A specifically defined area within which protection is afforded to ecological or geological features. Sites are officially notified by English Nature.

**South Housing Market Area (SHMA)**
A number of sub-regional Housing Market Areas have been identified which display similar characteristics. Wyre Forest has been included within the South Housing Market Area (SHMA) which comprises the six districts of Worcestershire together with Warwick and Stratford Districts.

Stourport Forward
Stourport Forward is a Company Limited by Guarantee that has been formed to utilise the £500,000 “Market Towns Initiative” (MTI) funding distributed by Advantage West Midlands (AWM).

Stourport Road Employment Corridor (SREC)
This is the main focus for employment within the District. This corridor runs south out of Kidderminster towards Stourport-on-Severn, is well established and contains a number of modern high quality premises together with significant redevelopment opportunities. Underused and derelict sites along this corridor include the former British Sugar site, which at 24 hectares is one of the largest sites in the region.

Strategic Centres
There are 25 town centres in the West Midlands region that are defined as in the Regional Spatial Strategy as ‘Strategic Centres’ and recognised for their crucial role in meeting the shopping and commercial needs of the region. Kidderminster is one of only three Worcestershire centres recognised in this way (together with Worcester City and Redditch).

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)
An SFRA will be undertaken to guide development decisions and meet the requirements of the Planning Policy Statement 25 Development and Flood Risk.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)
Provides additional information to guide and support Development Plan Documents.

Sustainable Communities
Defined on the Communities and Local Government website (www.communities.gov.uk), sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Sustainable Community Strategy
The Community Strategy brings together the concerns of Wyre Forest communities under six main themes which, as a partnership, the Council and its partners needs to focus its efforts on in order to improve the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the District. These are:- Communities that are safe and feel safe; A Better Environment for Today And Tomorrow; Economic Success Shared By All; Improving Health & Wellbeing; Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People and Stronger Communities. These themes will be addressed through the Core Strategy.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)
An environmentally friendly way of dealing with surface water run-off which increases the time taken for surface water to reach watercourses, thereby reducing flash flooding.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)
The purpose of SA is to ensure that all Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) conform to the Government principles of Sustainable Development, which are;
• Living within environmental limits
• Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
• Achieving a sustainable economy
• Promoting good governance
• Using sound science responsibly

Travel Plans
Travel Plans are designed to present a more economical, efficient and socially responsible way to travel. They are often used by individual organisations to encourage their employees to travel in a more socially and environmentally responsible manner to and from work.

Travel to Work Area (TTWA)
An area where, of the economically active resident population, at least 75% work within that area, and also, of everyone working in the area, at least 75% live within that area. These areas have been defined using 1991 census data.

West Midlands Regional Assembly (WMRA)
The WMRA was set up in 1999 and has 100 members from local authorities, businesses and stakeholder groups. The WMRA is the Regional Planning Body and is therefore charged with the production and implementation of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)
A planning policy document that provides the long-term land use and transport planning framework for the West Midlands region. This framework guides the preparation of the Wyre Forest Local Development Framework.

Windfall Site
A site not specifically allocated for development in a development plan, but which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of a plan. Most windfall sites are for housing.

Worcestershire Integrated Passenger Transport Strategy
The purpose of the Strategy is to set out the process and approach required to establish the best possible passenger transport network facilities addressing the needs of passengers and which delivers sustainable transport objectives.

Worcestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006-2011
This sets out Worcestershire’s transport strategy for this five year period, as well as identifying major long-term transportation pressures on the County.

Wyre Forest Matters Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)
A partnership which brings together organisations from the public, private, community and voluntary sector. The key objective of the LSP is to improve the quality of life in the District by addressing important issues affecting those who live and work here, such as health, community safety, transport and education.
B: Evidence Base

B.1 The following table identifies the background papers and technical studies that have helped to make informed, evidence based decisions for the objectives, strategies and policies within the Core Strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Completion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal</td>
<td>In House</td>
<td>Published December 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal (Critical Check)</td>
<td>Consultants (UE Associates)</td>
<td>Published June 2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) for Wyre Forest District Council</td>
<td>In house</td>
<td>September 2009</td>
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<td>Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the West Midlands South Housing Market Area</td>
<td>Consultant (Rupert Scott) commissioned by South Housing Market Area Partnership. Updates to be undertaken by Worcestershire County Council</td>
<td>Latest Update Published May 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment for the West Midlands South Housing Market Area</td>
<td>Commissioned by the SHMA Partnership as an extension of the SHMA</td>
<td>February 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viability Assessment of Potential Residential Sites</td>
<td>Consultants (GVA Grimley)</td>
<td>October 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Land Review</td>
<td>In house/consultants (GVA Grimley)</td>
<td>July 2008</td>
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</table>
| Strategic Flood Risk Assessment                                     | Consultants (Royal Haskoning)/Environment Agency | Level 1 - Published January 2008  
Level 2 - Published October 2009                                    |
| Water Cycle Study                                                   | Consultants (Royal Haskoning)/Environment Agency | Published - October 2009            |
| Retail and Commercial Leisure Study                                 | Consultants (White Young Green) | Published December 2006             
Update Study Published ???                                           |
<p>| PPG17 Audit: Leisure and Open Space Study                          | Consultants (PMP)               | Published October 2008              |
| Green Infrastructure Study                                          | In house - in partnership with Worcestershire County Council, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and Natural England | Published ???                      |
| Biodiversity (Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan)              | Worcestershire County Council   | July 2008                           |
| Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus                               | In-house                        | Published September 2009            |
| Infrastructure Study                                                | Consultants (Baker Associates) commissioned by WCC | January 2009                         |
| Transportation Modelling                                            | WCC/WFDC                        | Initial modelling 2007 - ongoing    |
| Renewables Audit                                                    | Consultants (IT Power) commissioned by WCC | Published August 2009              |
| Appropriate Assessment                                              | In-house                        | Screening report published February 2008 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Production</th>
<th>Completion</th>
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