Open

Cabinet

Agenda

6pm
Tuesday, 14th July 2015
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster

Wyre Forest District Council

Cabinet

The Cabinet Members and their responsibilities:-

Councillor M J Hart	**Leader of the Council & Strategy**
Councillor I Hardiman	**Deputy Leader and Operational Services**
Councillor J-P Campion	**Planning and Economic Regeneration**
Councillor N J Desmond	**Resources**
Councillor S Chambers	**Health Well-Being and Housing**
Councillor S Fearn	**Transformation & Change**

Scrutiny of Decisions of the Cabinet

The Council has one Scrutiny Committee that has power to investigate policy issues and question members of the Cabinet who have special responsibility for a particular area of the Council's activities. The Cabinet also considers recommendations from this Committee.

In accordance with Section 10 of the Council's Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, and Standing Order 2.4 of Section 7, any item on this agenda may be scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee if it is "called in" by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and any other three non-Cabinet members.

The deadline for "calling in" Cabinet decisions is 5pm on 24th July 2015.

Councillors wishing to "call in" a decision on this agenda should contact Sue Saunders, Committee and Electoral Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster. Telephone: 01562 732733 or email susan.saunders@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Urgent Key Decisions

If the Cabinet needs to take an urgent key decision, the consent of the Scrutiny Committee Chairman must be obtained. If the Scrutiny Committee Chairman is unable to act the Chairman of the Council or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairman of the Council, must give consent. Such decisions will not be the subject to the call in procedure.

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct ("the Code") requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's constitution for full details.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)

DPI's and ODI's are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council's Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

For further information

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information you should contact Sue Saunders, Committee and Electoral Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732733 or email susan.saunders@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Documents referred to in this agenda may be viewed on the Council's website - www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/meetings/main.htm

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If members of the public do not wish to have their image captured they should sit in the Stourport and Bewdley Room where they can still view the meeting.

If any attendee is under the age of 18 the written consent of his or her parent or guardian is required before access to the meeting room is permitted. Persons under 18 are welcome to view the meeting from the Stourport and Bewdley Room.

If you have any queries regarding this, please speak with the Council's Legal Officer at the meeting.

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Wyre Forest District Council

Cabinet

Tuesday, 14th July 2015

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	**Apologies for Absence**	
2.	**Declarations of Interests by Members** In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
3.	**Minutes** To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd June 2015.	7
4.	**CALL INS** a verbal update will be given on any decisions which have been "called in" since the last meeting of the Cabinet.	
5.	**Items Requiring Urgent Attention** To consider any item which, in the opinion of the Chairman requires consideration at the meeting as a matter of urgency.	
6.	**Public Participation** In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full Council/Cabinet, to allow members of the public to present petitions, ask questions, or make statements, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Monday 6th July 2015. (See front cover for contact details).	

7.	***Leader of the Council***	
7.1	**Leader's Announcements**	-

8.		
8.1	***Councillor J-P Campion*** **Wyre Forest District Local Plan Revision: Issues and Options Consultation** To consider a report from the Planning Policy Manager to seek Cabinet approval for the Issues and Options Consultation Paper for a six week public consultation commencing on 1st September. This represents the first stage in the District's Local Plan Review. *The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)*	10
8.2	**Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review: Revised Local Development Scheme (Project Plan 2015 – 2018)** To consider a report from the Planning Policy Manager to seek Cabinet approval for the publication of a Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS), which guides the timetable for the production of the District's Local Plans. To also consider the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 2nd July 2015. *The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)*	15
8.3	**Revised Local Development Order, South Kidderminster Enterprise Park: Adoption** To consider a report from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place to report the results of the public consultation on the revised Local Development Order (LDO) for the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park and to agree the adoption of the revised document for a period of three years from 13th August 2015. *The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)*	19
8.4	**Regeneration of Kidderminster Western Gateway Use of Compulsory Purchase Powers** To consider a report from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place to seek authority for the Council to consider the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers to facilitate the regeneration of Kidderminster's Western Gateway.	25

9.		
9.1	***Councillor I Hardiman*** **Review of Car Parking Charges** To consider a report from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place to introduce new car parking charges for the 'central' car parks across the three towns in the district; and to introduce a new 'seasonal' car parks charging band for car parks in Stourport on the Riverside.	42

10.		
10.1	***Councillor M J Hart*** **Appointment of Honorary Alderman** To receive a report from the Chief Executive which asks Cabinet to consider a recommendation to Council in respect of appointment of an Honorary Alderman.	49

11.	**To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.**	
12.	**Exclusion of the Press and Public** To consider passing the following resolution: "That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of "exempt information" as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act".	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

13.	**To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.**	

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

23RD JUNE 2015 (6.00PM)

Present:

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), J-P Campion, S J Chambers, N J Desmond, S E Fearn and I Hardiman.

Observers:

Councillors: G W Ballinger, H E Dyke and F M Oborski MBE.

CAB.1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.2 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.3 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 17th March 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.4 Call Ins

No decisions had been called in since the last Cabinet meeting.

CAB.5 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CAB.6 Leader's Announcements

The Leader of the Council advised that he had made changes to the Cabinet for the new municipal year, and introduced his Cabinet colleagues. He gave thanks to Councillors H E Dyke and A Hingley for being part of last year's Cabinet. He also advised that following the elections in May and June, the new make-up of the Council had been determined.

CAB.7 Report on Provisional Final Accounts 2014-15

A report was considered from the Chief Financial Officer which presented the provisional outturn position in relation to the Final Accounts for 2014-15.

The Cabinet Member for Resources was pleased to announce there was a positive variance of £510,800 compared to the revised budget, which will enable additional funds to be added to the Council's earmarked reserves.

Members of the Corporate Leadership Team, Service Area Managers and Staff were thanked on behalf of the Administration for achieving the savings through their prudent financial management.

Decision: To note that as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet:-

1. **Following the creation of the additional earmarked reserves detailed below, savings compared to the revised budget of £260,800 have been generated from the 2014/15 surplus.**

2. **That £100,000 from the 2014/15 savings has been used to create an earmarked reserve for Business Rate Funding shortfalls, further detail is provided in paragraph 4.2.**

3. **That £150,000 from the 2014/15 savings has been used to increase the existing earmarked reserve for the Transformation Fund to continue to meet the costs of our challenging Wyre Forest Forward Programme as detailed in paragraph 4.6.**

CAB.8 Welfare Support Fund – consultation on potential changes to council tax reduction scheme for 2016-17 onwards

A report was considered from the Chief Executive on whether to consult on potential changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2016-17 onwards.

Members were informed that Wyre Forest District Council had been at the forefront of introducing the scheme within Worcestershire in 2013, and it was an appropriate time to review the scheme following the introduction of schemes across three other Councils within the County.

Decision: The issuing of the consultation paper in appendix 1 of the report to Cabinet be approved.

CAB.9 Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Adoption

A report was considered from the Planning Policy Manager which updated Members on the responses received to the Draft Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) consultation and to agree the final version of the SPD for formal Adoption. The recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny at its meeting on 4th June 2015 were also considered.

Members were advised that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had scrutinised the report and a full discussion had been held.

Decision:

1. **The Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document as set out at Appendix 2 of the report to Cabinet be adopted and that the Consultation Statement as set out at Appendix 1 of the report be endorsed for publication.**

2. **That delegated authority be given to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place to make any final changes to the formatting and images of the Supplementary Planning Document.**

CAB.10 Extensions to Leases at Coppice Industrial Estate

A report was considered from the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place to agree to extend a number of leases on the Council owned Coppice Industrial Estate, Kidderminster.

Members were advised extending the leases of those tenants wishing to do so would support the Council's priority to enable growth in the local economy.

Decision:

1. **To extend the leases of those tenants on the Coppice Industrial Estate indicating a desire to do so and to place the premiums in the Evergreen Investment Fund.**

2. **To delegate to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place, in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council, the authority to undertake all necessary legal and financial negotiations and administration required to complete the lease extensions.**

3. **To delegate to the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place, in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council, the authority to continue to negotiate with those tenants not currently wishing to extend their leases and, if they wish to proceed at some future date, the authority to complete the necessary legal and financial negotiations and administration to complete them.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.31pm.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14TH JULY 2015

Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review: Issues and Options Consultation

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor J P Campion
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Planning Policy Manager
CONTACT OFFICER:	Rebecca Brown x 2195
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Draft Consultation Plan (June 2015) Appendix 2 – Draft Issues and Options Consultation Paper Appendix 3 – Equalities Impact Assessment Appendix 4 – Summary of recommendations from the Local Plans Review Panel Meeting (18/06/15) *The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)*

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the Issues and Options Consultation Paper for a six week public consultation commencing on 1st September. This represents the first stage in the District's Local Plan Review.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE that:

2.1 The Draft Issues and Options Consultation Paper as attached at Appendix 2 to this report is published for a six week consultation period, commencing on 1st September 2015.

2.2 The Draft Consultation Plan as attached at Appendix 1 to this report is approved as the basis for the Issues and Options consultation arrangements in accordance with the Council's Adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

2.3 That delegated authority be given to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place to make any final changes to the formatting and images of the Issues and Options Consultation Paper prior to its publication.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Core Strategy was adopted in December 2010, prior to the Government's publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Its development targets for housing, employment and retail are based on those set out in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS). The abolition of the WMRSS means that development targets are no longer set for Local Planning Authorities. The NPPF has introduced the requirement to objectively assess the need for housing.

3.2 The District Council has held an excellent record of timely Local Plan Reviews and their adoption. The consequences of not having an up to date plan in place could be serious, putting the District in a situation of "planning by appeal" rather than planned development. The lack of a co-ordinated approach to development would result in uncertainty and lack of direction for developers, residents and businesses.

3.3 Within this context it is now timely to progress a Local Plan Review and to take the opportunity to include strategic and more detailed policies along with site specific allocations into one comprehensive Local Plan for the District.

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 Local Plan Timescale
The NPPF states that Local Plans should be drawn up over an appropriate timescale, preferably a 15 year time horizon, take account of longer term requirements, and be kept up to date. It is therefore proposed that the new plan period will run from 2016-2032. This will allow the Council to consider the long term trends facing the district and to comprehensively plan for them.

4.2 What must the Local Plan Review take account of?
Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is legally required to be carried out on the Local Plan Review. The process assesses policy and site options against a SA framework and identifies social, environmental and economic effects. It recommends mitigation measures where negative effects arise and also identifies the most sustainable policy option. The Local Plan must demonstrate how the SA has been used to inform its policy development.

4.2.1 The first stage of the SA process is the preparation of a Scoping Report. This looks at other relevant plans, policies, and programmes and the influence that they will have on the Plan being prepared. This consultation is used to inform the preparation of the SA Framework Objectives against which Local Plan Review policies and options will be tested. The SA Scoping Report was subject to a five week consultation which closed on 22nd June.

4.2.2 The Localism Act introduced the Duty to Co-operate which is a statutory requirement for local authorities to work together to deal with cross boundary strategic issues. The Plan should be based on co-operation with neighbouring authorities and Councils are expected to demonstrate evidence of having effectively co-operated to plan for issues with cross boundary impacts when their Local Plans are submitted for examination.

4.2.3 Although Wyre Forest has not been required to jointly produce a Development Plan with its neighbouring authorities, we do fall within both the Worcestershire and Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). This brings

with it strategic requirements with regard to jobs growth, investment and potentially Birmingham's housing land supply that will need to be addressed through the plan review.

4.2.4 The Council already has a comprehensive evidence base in place that was used to inform and produce the Adopted Local Development Framework Documents. Work has now started on updating this and in particular the Objective Assessment of Housing Need (OAHN), the Employment Land Review and Retail Needs Assessment will be crucial in informing the Local Plan Review.

4.3 What is the Issues and Options Consultation?
The Revised Local Development Scheme includes a proposed timetable for the Local Plan Review. This commences with Issues and Options Consultation in September 2015; Preferred Options Consultation in June 2016; pre-submission publication in January 2017 and submission for Independent Examination in May 2017.

4.3.1 The Issues and Options Consultation Paper represents the first phase in the review of the District's Local Plan. The aim of this consultation is to seek views on the issues we should be developing policies on and to put forward potential options for a future development and growth strategy. Cabinet should note that at this early stage it does not commit the Council to a particular development strategy approach. Rather it provides opportunities for local residents, businesses, key stakeholders and Duty-to-Co-operate partners to submit further evidence or options for consideration. The responses received to this consultation will then be used to inform the development of preferred options and the identification of sites for potential future development.

4.4 The Draft Issues and Options Consultation Paper is attached at Appendix 2. This has been shaped by comments made by the Local Plans Review Panel after its detailed consideration of the background papers at its meeting on 18th June, (comments and recommendations are attached at Appendix 4). In addition, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also considered the background papers alongside the Panel recommendations at its meeting on 2nd July. The Committee particularly stressed the importance of promoting opportunities to improve public transport choice and air quality through the Local Plan Review. It also noted the potential need to undertake a comprehensive Green Belt Boundary Review if higher levels of development were required within the new plan period.

4.5 The paper outlines the emerging messages from the existing evidence and identifies key issues that will face the District over the next Local Plan period to 2032. It asks questions about what people think are the important issues and the ways in which future planning policy could address these. It includes a draft spatial portrait, vision and some initial objectives. It identifies potential cross boundary issues and includes strategically important questions about the future direction of the District's growth. Information and questions on developing future policies around housing, services, employment opportunities, local distinctiveness, transport and infrastructure and climate change are also included.

4.6 A brief summary of the most important aspects of the Issues and Options Consultation Paper is set out below:

- Strategic Growth and Cross Boundary Issues – this provides an explanation of those strategic issues including those arising from Duty to Co-operate and our involvement in the LEPs that will need to be addressed. It also asks some fundamental questions about the future scale and direction of growth for Wyre Forest. 7 potential growth options are included.
- Providing Quality Homes – this section includes a number of options to provide for a mix of home types to meet the District's housing needs. Options relate to housing mix, creating sustainable communities, the provision of affordable housing and gypsy and traveller accommodation.
- Providing Employment Opportunities and Retail Services - there is a need to provide a portfolio of employment sites. There is also a need to consider how we continue to provide services including the potential expansion of Weavers Wharf in Kidderminster. This section asks questions about the future location of employment sites and includes options to promote the provision of jobs within the District. It also looks at future retail options around primary shopping areas.
- Safeguarding Character and Local Distinctiveness - The district contains a rich variety of assets. The safeguarding and enhancement of both the built and natural environment is key to the economic and social health of the district. This section includes options to safeguard and enhance the local landscape, biodiversity, green infrastructure and built heritage.
- A Well Served District - Traffic congestion is an on-going problem in the towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley, especially at peak times. There are significant problems with air quality in all three towns. Declining public transport also means that there is a lack of transport choice and there is a high dependency on the private car in our area. This section includes options for enhancing sustainable transport, providing new rail and road infrastructure and addressing air quality. It also includes options around enhancing health, education and recreational services.
- Tackling Climate Change and its Impacts – Reducing the District's contribution to climate change and taking measures to respond to its effects are a key issue. In particular, flood risk is a significant issue with the River Stour flowing through Kidderminster; Bewdley's location on the banks of the River Severn and the Rivers Stour and Severn meeting at Stourport-on-Severn. This section includes options for policy development to help address flood risk, increase water efficiency and generate renewable energy.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The costs of undertaking the Issues and Options Public Consultation will be met from the existing Planning Policy budget.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out specific matters which the Local Planning Authority must have regard to when preparing a Local Plan. Regulations 8 and 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 prescribe the form and content of Local Plans.

6.2 The proposed arrangements for the Issues and Options Consultation are consistent with the Council's Adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 3 to this report. No adverse impacts have been identified.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 It is essential to progress the District's Local Plan Review commencing with the Issues and Options Consultation in September to be consistent with the timescales set out in the Revised Local Development Scheme. This will help to ensure that the District continues to have an up to date plan in place to guide future development.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Issues and Options Consultation marks the first stage in the District's Local Plan Review. The Council must progress the review in a timely fashion to ensure that we continue our track record of plan led development and secure the most sustainable development strategy for our District. This will help to provide certainty for local residents, businesses and future investors in the area.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 Local Plans Review Panel (18th June, 2015).
10.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee (2nd July, 2015).

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1

- Local Plans Review Panel Agenda Items – 18th June 2015.
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda Item No 6 – 2nd July 2015.
- Final Advice Note – Support for Wyre Forest District Council (February, 2015) Fortismere Associates/Arup.
- National Planning Policy Framework (2012).
- National Planning Practice Guidance (2013).
- Statement of Community Involvement (February, 2012).

APPENDIX 1

Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review Issues and Options

Consultation Plan

1.0 Background

It is a cornerstone of the planning system that communities and stakeholders should be able to influence the matters addressed in planning policy. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 reinforces the importance of community involvement through the first of its Core Planning principles: "planning should be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area" Between Tuesday 1st September and Friday 16th October 2015 the District Council will undertake a consultation on the Issues and Options. Developing the issues and options consultation is the first stage in the Local Plan Review process. Responses will be used to help develop the preferred policy options and site allocations.

2.0 Adopted Statement of Community Involvement Requirements

The District Council first adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in 2006, this version, following changes in legislation was updated, revised and adopted in February 2013. It sets out the Council's policy for involving the community in the planning process. The SCI sets out how the Council intends to involve all sections of the community and provides guidelines and minimum standards to involve the community, interest groups and stakeholders in the production of Local Development Documents. The statement provides guidance on:

- How people will have the chance to contribute their ideas, and the process for considering and responding to their views.
- How people will get the chance to participate in developing proposals and options.
- How the District Council will seek to provide feedback to keep the community informed on progress and outcomes.

The District Council places great emphasis on involving the community in planning issues and believes the following benefits can be achieved:

- It will help strengthen the evidence base for local plans and neighbourhood development plans.
- It will help foster community commitment to the future development of the area.
- It promotes a sense of ownership and strengthens the delivery of projects. The involvement of communities at an early stage helps to resolve issues.

3.0 The Duty to Cooperate

3.1 The duty to cooperate was created in the Localism Act 2011, and amends the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in

England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.

3.2 In order to fulfil the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate, all neighbouring authorities and consultation bodies covered by the Duty to Cooperate will receive a separate form to complete which will allow any concerns to be raised. Where there are no relevant issues the completed forms will provide an audit trail to demonstrate that the Duty has been fully considered and complied with. Where cross-boundary issues are identified, officers will offer to meet with each of the neighbouring authorities or organisations concerned to discuss the issues and how the Plan can best address them.

4.0 Targeting Consultation and Methods

4.1 The District Council will actively seek to engage all community groups within the Wyre Forest District in preparing planning policy. Local planning authorities are required to consult specific consultation bodies which they consider may have an interest in the proposed planning policy document and the general consultation bodies which it considers are appropriate. A list of the specific consultees for Wyre Forest District is set out in Appendix A to this document.

It is proposed to consult in a variety of ways, examples include manned exhibitions in Kidderminster, Stourport on Severn and Bewdley, mini poster displays in a wide range of accessible locations throughout Wyre Forest District, newspaper display as well as a leaflet distribution to all householders. All Town and Parish Council's will be sent a consultation notice and be asked to display it on parish council notice boards.

5.0 Involving Harder-to-reach Groups

5.1 Within the District there are groups which are hard to reach through consultations. The District Council recognises that these groups in particular may have different levels of access to information and therefore may find it harder to get involved in the decision making process. In particular, the District Council will employ the following methods for engaging hard to reach groups: Leaflet distribution to all residents within Wyre Forest District and manned exhibitions at public locations such as Stourport carnival, Bewdley farmers market and the shopping centre in Kidderminster.

6.0 Exhibition specifics

6.1 During the six week public consultation phase on the Issues and Options Paper a number of exhibitions will be held. These will be manned at highly accessible public locations in the three main towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley. Display boards will be erected at the

exhibitions and copies of the issues and options papers will be made available for viewing along with other materials. The exhibition will allow the public to view the issues and options in more detail and post comments. Staff will also be on hand to answer any queries raised by the public.

6.2 *Draft Exhibition Plan*

- Stourport Carnival (Saturday 5th September 2015)
- Bewdley Farmers Market (Sunday 6th September 2015)
- Weavers Wharf, Kidderminster (Saturday 12th September 2015)
- Kidderminster (Thursday 17th September 2015)

6.3 *Mini Poster Displays*

Mini poster displays will be organised at the following locations throughout the duration of the issues and options consultation.

- Kidderminster Library
- Stourport Library
- Bewdley Library

(Contact Worcestershire County Council to enquire as to whether a poster could be put on the library bus to cover the rural areas)

In addition, subject to each venue being willing to display a poster:

- Wyre Forest Hub, Kidderminster Town Hall
- Kidderminster supermarkets
- Stourport Civic Centre Reception
- Stourport Tesco
- Stourport Co-op
- Bewdley Co-op
- Blakedown Post Office
- Chaddesley Corbett Post Office
- Far Forest Stores
- Wolverley stores
- Cookley stores
- Colliers Farm Shop
- Garden centres (various)

- Wyre Forest Discovery Centre

7.0 Awareness raising – Media

7.1 To coincide with the launch of the consultation on the issues and options paper press releases will be organised for the Kidderminster Shuttle. Where households within the District receive the local free newspaper, a leaflet publicising the proposals will be distributed with it. Households that do not receive the local free newspaper will have alternative arrangements to receive the proposal leaflet. These will detail the dates and times of the exhibitions and details of places where the Issues and Options Paper can be viewed/downloaded.

8.0 Publishing on the Web

8.1 An interactive version of the Issues and Options Paper will be made available to enable electronic representations to be made. The interactive response form can be downloaded and printed or filled in and submitted online. Representations will also be accepted by e-mail or post. The consultation will contain targeted questions to ask people whether they think we have covered all of the issues and help us to begin to develop options.

8.2 The District Council will also use social media (Twitter and Facebook) to promote the consultation period and the exhibitions. In addition to this, we propose to run a live Twitter Q&A session during the consultation period. Twitter and Facebook will be used to raise key questions relevant to the consultation during the consultation period and comments made will be summarised and considered in the development of the Preferred Options.

9.0 Formally Processing Comments – Procedures

9.1 All responses submitted to the District Council online, by letter and email will be acknowledged within five working days of their receipt. The Planning Policy Team will carefully analyse all comments and suggestions and prepare a summary report detailing proposals for consideration at the preferred options stage. This will be presented to and considered by the Local Plans Review Panel, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

9.2 The summary report following Cabinet's consideration will be made available for public viewing at Council Offices and on the website.

Appendix A – List of Consultees

Specific Consultees

Wyre Forest District Parish/Town Councils

Bewdley Town Council
Broome Parish Council
Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council
Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council
Kidderminster Foreign Parish Council
Rock Parish Council
Rushock Parish Council
Stone Parish Council
Stourport on Severn Town Council
Upper Arley Parish Council
Wolverley & Cookley Parish Council

Adjacent Parish Councils

Abberley Parish Council
Astley & Dunley Parish Council
Bayton Parish Council
Clent Parish Council
Cleobury Mortimer Parish Council
Dodford with Grafton Parish Council
Elmbridge Parish Council
Elmley Lovett Parish Council
Hagley Parish Council
Hartlebury Parish Council
Highley Parish Council
Kinlet Parish Council
Kinver Parish Council
Milson & Neen Sollars Parish Council
Pensax Parish Council
Upton Warren Parish Council

Other Specific Consultees

British Telecom
Bromsgrove & Redditch DC
Central Networks
Directorate of Adult Services and Health (DASH)
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Environment Agency
Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership
Hereford & Worcester Ambulance Service
Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue Service
Highways Agency
Historic England
Homes & Communities Agency

Appendix A – List of Consultees

Malvern Hills District Council
Mobile Operators Association
National Grid
Natural England
Network Rail
Office of Rail Regulation
Oil and Pipelines Agency (The)
Severn Trent Water
Shropshire Council
South Staffordshire District Council
South Staffordshire Water Plc
South Worcestershire Development Plan
Staffordshire County Council
Staffordshire Police Authority
The Coal Authority
The Planning Inspectorate
Transco West Midlands Local Distribution Zone
West Mercia Police
Western Power Distribution
Worcestershire County Council
Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership
Worcestershire Partnership
Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Wychavon District Council
Wyre Forest Clinical Commissioning Group

General Consultees

Organisations and individuals registered in the Planning Policy database including:

Agents
Business and Commerce Groups
Conservation Interest Groups
Developers
Education and Youth Groups
Housing Interest Groups
Individuals
Interest / Pressure Groups
Land Owners
Local Interest Groups
Local Resident Associations
Registered Providers
Service Providers

Appendix A – List of Consultees

Hard to Reach Groups

Age UK Wyre Forest
Association of Retired and Persons over 50
Big Local DY10
Buddhist Community
Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group
Friends Families and Travellers
Islamic Mosque
Kidderminster & District Scout Group
Madinatul Uloom Islamic College
Meeting Deaf Community
National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups
National Travellers Action Group
Offmore Comberton Action Group
Our Lady of Ostra Brama Church
PHAB Ltd
The Showman's Guild of Great Britain Midland Section
West Midlands Consortium Education Service for Travelling Children
Wyre Forest Action Group for Older People
Wyre Forest Bangladeshi Forum
Wyre Forest Women's Aid
Wyre Forest Local Children's Trust

A New Development Strategy 2016-2032

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1 Introduction

What is the Issues and Options Paper?

1.1 This document has been prepared to provide information about the Local Plan which the District Council is preparing. It is the first consultation stage of the Local Plan Review process. The District Council wants as many people as possible to be involved in the preparation of the Plan. Your comments are encouraged and this Paper sets out a series of questions to guide responses. All of the comments we receive will help us to draft the final Plan. A Glossary is included at the back of the document to provide definitions of technical terms.

1.2 The District Council has decided to undertake a Local Plan Review to bring together the existing planning policy documents which are the Adopted Core Strategy (December 2010), the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (July 2013) and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (July 2013). The new Local Plan will identify the development needed within the District up until 2032. The new Local Plan will also respond the the changes in planning policy at the national and regional level. Most notably, the series of Planning Policy Guidance notes and Planning Policy Statements which set out national planning policy have been consolidated into the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guide (NPPG). At the Regional level, the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs), which set out the level of housing, retail and employment development that each Local Planning Authority was required to deliver, have been abolished. Local Planning Authorities are now responsible for setting their own development targets, however, these must be supported by a robust evidence base.

How to Comment

1.3 Consultation on the Issues and Options Paper will take place between Tuesday 1st September and Friday 16th October 2015. We strongly encourage responses to be made on-line via the District Council's interactive consultation system, however, you can submit your comments in any of the following ways:

- On-line by following the links from our web-site: www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/localplanreview
- By e-mail: Planning.policy@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
- By post: Planning Policy Team, Wyre Forest DC, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY11 7WF

1.4 The Planning Policy Team will host a number of drop-in sessions during the consultation period where you can come along and speak to us about the Issues and Options Paper and how the Local Plan Review might affect you. These sessions will be as follows:

- Stourport Carnival (Saturday 5th September 2015)
- Bewdley Farmers Market (Sunday 6th September 2015)
- Weavers Wharf, Kidderminster (Saturday 12th September 2015)
- Kidderminster (Thursday 17th September 2015)

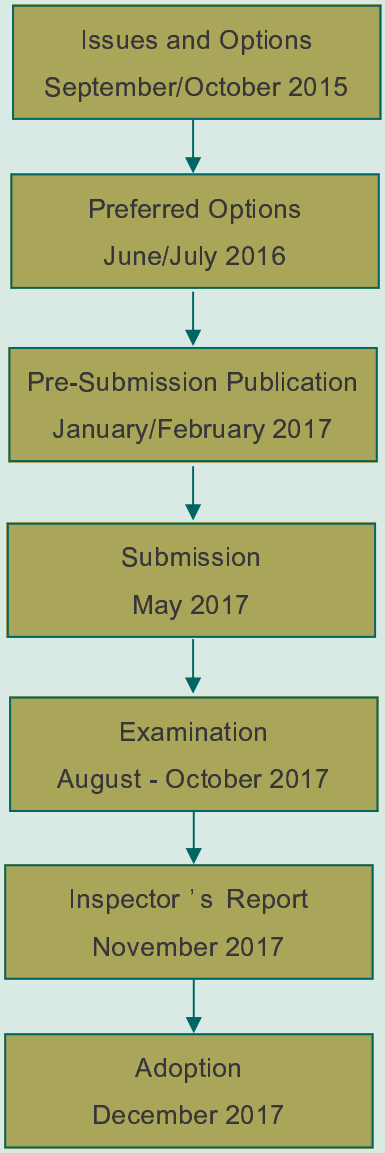
1.5 The Issues and Options consultation is the first stage of the Plan Review. At this stage, we are looking for your views on whether or not we have identified the right issues facing the District and which of the options identified is most appropriate for addressing these issues.

Following the close of the Issues and Options consultation, all responses will be summarised and the Council will respond to them. These summaries and responses will be available via the interactive consultation system in late December 2015.

The Plan Making Process

1.6 The Issues and Options consultations will inform the preparation of a Preferred Options Paper, this is the first draft of the Local Plan Review and it will include specific development targets as well as identify sites for accommodating the level of development anticipated. A Preferred Options consultation will be held during Summer 2016 to give everyone a further opportunity to comment on the emerging Plan. Following this, a Submission Draft Plan will be prepared, this is the final draft of the Plan which is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent Examination. Before it is submitted, a six week publication period will be held, this will give everyone an opportunity to make further comments. Any comments made at this stage are forwarded to the independent Inspector for their consideration. The Examination will include public hearing sessions which all are welcome to observe. Those people submitting comments on the Submission Draft Plan may be invited by the Inspector to speak at these sessions.

Key Stages in the Local Plan Review Process



1.7 At the end of the examination the independent Inspector will submit a report to the Council setting out whether the Plan meets the 'tests of soundness' - these are the legal requirements which the Plan must meet in order for the District Council to adopt the Plan and start using it as the basis for determining planning applications. It is likely that the Inspector will identify changes which are required to the Plan and it may be necessary to have a further consultation on these changes. It is anticipated that the Submission Draft Plan will be available in early 2017 and that the Plan will be adopted in late 2017.

The Role of The New Local Plan and How it Will Affect You

1.8 The new Local Plan will set out how much development is required in the District up until 2032. This will include residential (including Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation), retail and employment uses. The Local Plan will allocate the sites required to deliver the identified level of development. The current planning policy documents look forward to 2026 and there are a number of sites which are allocated within these which have not been developed yet. It is likely that most of these sites will continue to be allocated for development but new sites will also be needed as the Plan will look at a longer timeframe and will give fresh consideration to the amount of housing, employment and retail requirements.

1.9 The new Local Plan will also set out policies which will guide the determination of planning applications. These policies are likely to cover the same issues as those in the existing planning policy documents such as sustainable development, protecting and providing open space, design quality, protecting the Green Belt and managing flood risk. However, consideration will need to be given to what changes have taken place nationally and how we respond to this locally.

1.10 Once adopted the Local Plan will provide the basis for determining planning applications. It is important that we have an up-to-date Local Plan and enough land to meet our housing requirements for a rolling 5 year timeframe. Not having an up-to-date Local Plan could result in the District Council being vulnerable to speculative planning applications which would result in a piecemeal approach to new development and sites that do not relate to existing settlements being developed.

1.11 The Local Plan will result in new development happening. This could be in Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn, the District's two main towns, on the outskirts of these towns, or in the smaller town of Bewdley and the District's villages. The changes that take place may affect you in a variety of ways; you may be able to see new housing or employment development near to where you live or on your way to work; new facilities may be provided close to you such as new shops, schools or open spaces; new roads or cycle ways could be built to make journeys shorter or easier and new employers may provide new job opportunities. Planning affects many aspects of our lives and it is important that we get the balance right. If you want to have a say in how much and what type of development takes place and where it goes then this is the time to get involved.

What Happens to the Existing Local Plan Documents?

1.12 The existing Local Plan documents date from 2010 and 2013. Some of the allocations and policies from these documents will be able to be carried forward into the new Local Plan. Whilst the new Local Plan is being developed the existing documents will still be used as the basis for determining planning applications. However once we reach Draft Submission Plan stage in 2017 the new Plan will start to influence decisions on planning applications. Once the new Local Plan is adopted it will replace the existing documents.

Evidence Base

1.13 The Local Plan has to be based on robust ad credible evidence. The District Council will need to be able to prove to the independent Inspector that this is the case when the examination in public takes place. If the Inspector does not think the evidence is correct or sufficient then the Council could be required to do additional work during the examination stage to demonstrate that the Local Plan is the most appropriate plan for the area. Therefore, a number of documents will be prepared by, or on behalf of the District Council to provide the evidence required to develop the Plan. The following list sets out the range of studies which will be, or have been prepared. Some of these studies will be updates to work undertaken for the existing planning policy documents. Once completed, evidence base studies will be available on the District Council's web-site.

- Objective assessment of housing need
- Employment Land Review

- Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment
- Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Historic Environment Topic Paper
- Housing Delivery Evidence
- Community Facilities Audit
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Audit
- Settlement Hierarchy Topic Paper
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Strategy
- Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment
- Town centre study (retail and other uses)
- Viability Assessment of the plan's policies and site allocations

Question 1

Is the list of evidence set out above appropriate and sufficient to inform the Plan. If not, what should be added or deleted?

Call for Sites

1.14 As part of the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) the District Council undertook a Call for Sites exercise in Autumn 2014. This gave any landowner wishing to see their sites considered for development the opportunity to submit them to us for consideration. A large number of sites were submitted and in addition, officers identified a number of other potential development sites in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Practice Guidance. These sites swill be considered by an independent panel of development and property market professionals to assess their suitability for allocation. Any sites which are considered to be suitable for allocation will be considered as part of the plan preparation process. A report documenting all of the sites and drawing conclusions about each will be published in Summer 2016. It is important to remember that the SHELAA report is only a technical evidence document and it does not allocate sites for development.

1.15 Whilst the initial 'call for sites' has taken place the District Council is happy to receive additional sites during the consultation period. If you are aware of any site that may have development potential or you are a landowner, developer or a business and have a site you would like to bring to our attention, please complete a site submission form, available from www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk and send it to us using the details under the 'How to Comment' heading earlier in this section.

Sustainability Appraisal/Habitats Regulations Assessment

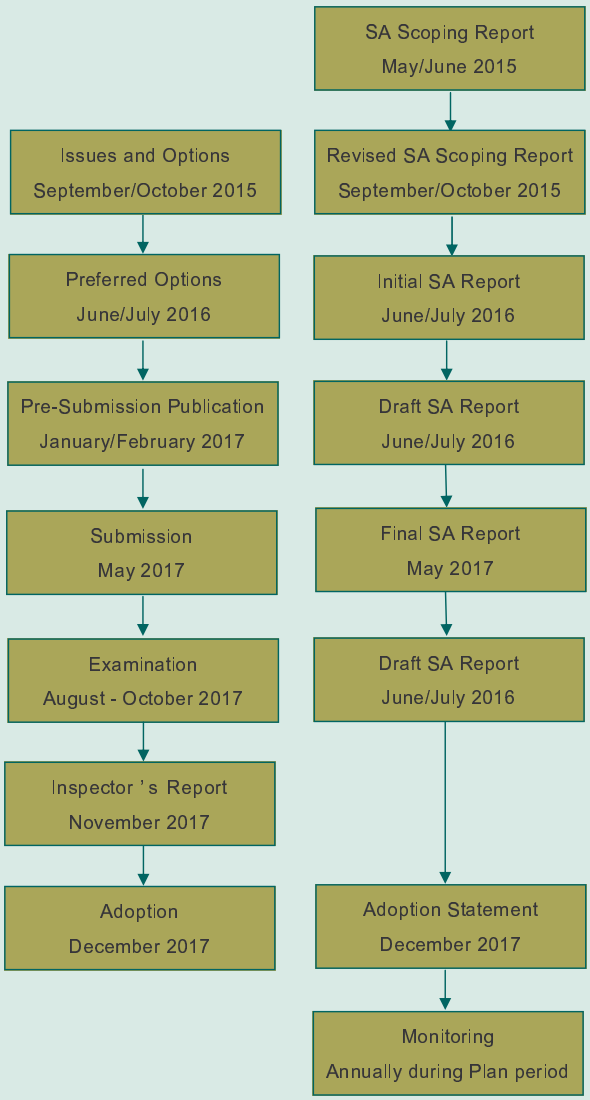
1.16 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a statutory requirement that integrates the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive with plan making. It makes sure that the environmental, social and economic effects of a plan and reasonable alternatives to the plan are being considered.

1.17 As a first step, a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was prepared and was made available for consultation with key stakeholders including Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency to establish the range of issues to be covered in the sustainability appraisal, develop the sustainability appraisal framework and identify the key sustainability issues that are relevant to the new Local Plan. This consultation took place between 18th May and 22nd June 2015. The comments received have now been incorporated into a Revised SA Scoping Report and this is available on the District Council's web-site for information.

1.18 Following the scoping stage, the next stage is the appraisal of the plan options set out in this Issues and Options Paper as well as the sites submitted through the 'call for sites' process against the sustainability objectives. This will highlight the social, economic and environmental impacts that are likely to arise from each plan option and will identify suggested mitigation measures. The findings will be incorporated into the Draft Sustainability Appraisal Report which will be made available for consultation alongside the Preferred Options Paper.

1.19 The Final Sustainability Appraisal Report will be available for consultation alongside the Submission Draft Local Plan. It will help to demonstrate that the Plan is the most suitable for the District taking into account economic, social and environmental issues.

Relationship between the SA Process and the Plan-Making Process



1.20 The Habitats Directive (an EU policy) establishes an ecological network of European Sites (Natura 2000 Network) and requires consideration of whether or not an Appropriate Assessment needs to be undertaken during the preparation of a local plan. The purpose is to assess what effects, if any, the plan might have on European sites, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), in view of the conservation objectives for these sites. Wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar sites) are afforded the same level of protection and will therefore also be considered as part of the Habitats Regulations/Appropriate Assessment.

1.21 There are no European sites or Ramsar sites in Wyre Forest District, but it will be necessary to carry out a screening exercise to assess whether the new Local Plan, in combination with other plans and programmes, is likely to have an adverse effect on other such sites beyond the plan area. The screening will be undertaken as part of the sustainability appraisal of the Plan for Submission and consultation will be carried out with Natural England.

2 Wyre Forest District Today

2.1 This section paints a picture of Wyre Forest District and provides a snapshot of its key features. It also summarises the key issues facing the District. These include continuing to make the most of brownfield regeneration, ensuring that we have thriving communities with suitable jobs and homes and ensuring that the natural environment is enhanced, used and enjoyed by all.

Settlement Hierarchy

2.2 Wyre Forest District is named after one of the largest ancient semi-natural woodlands in the Country and is situated in north-west Worcestershire. The local authority area covers 75 sq.miles and has a population of approximately 98,960. The population has only grown slightly since 1991 and remains fairly static, however after a decade with a population increase of only 1.1% (2001-2011), the population increase from 2013 to 2014 is 0.54%.

2.3 The District is largely rural, and has three towns Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley. The three towns form a triangle of settlements at the centre of the District, between each of the towns is a narrow area of countryside. Each of the towns have their own character and community identity.

2.4 Kidderminster, population 55,426 (2013), is the largest of the three towns and is the main centre for retail, industry and housing. The town developed rapidly in the 19th Century as a world leading centre for the production of carpet. This manufacturing industry has been in decline since the 1970s.

2.5 Stourport-on-Severn which has a population of 20,434 (2013), developed as an important industrial Georgian Canal Town at the confluence of the River Severn and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal. 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.

2.6 Bewdley has a population of approximately 9,000 and 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.

2.7 To the east the larger more accessible villages include Blakedown and Cookley which are served by both facilities and reasonable public transport, Blakedown having a railway station. Villages in the west which include Rock and Far Forest are smaller, have fewer facilities and more limited public transport.

Key Issues for Wyre Forest District

2.8 Wyre Forest District has many key issues these include strengths and opportunities as well as weaknesses and threats.

2.9 Wyre Forest District's strengths, which attract people to live and work within and visit the District include a wide heritage of both natural and built environment assets, such as The Wyre Forest, the rivers Severn and Stour, the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal, Special Wildlife

Sites, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas as well as high quality agricultural land and tourist attractions. The District's residents have high life expectancy at birth and in most areas although not all, low unemployment.

2.10 The District's weaknesses include a static and ageing population with very little in migration, a low birth rate, a population that has high levels of obesity and poor accessibility from the motorway network.

2.11 The District has many opportunities for the future, these include the continuing redevelopment of Kidderminster town centre. This will include the expansion of Weavers Wharf which will include cafés and restaurants as well as more shops in a pleasant environment. Wyre Forest District will have more tourist attractions with the possible expansion of facilities at the Safari Park as well as more employment through the development of sites for industrial and business use.

2.12 Threats to the District in the future include increasing pressure for development on land within the Green Belt. Current Government policy puts pressures on brownfield sites for residential development when many of these sites are needed for employment. The District has an ageing population with 30% of residents over the age of 65. Another threat to our District is flooding, this can be as a result of rivers, streams and brooks breaching their banks, also, as a result of more intense rainfall surface water flooding can be a significant issue.

Question 2

Are there any other strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to our District that you feel should be identified?

Social

2.13 The District has an ageing population with approximately 30% of the population aged 65 and over, this is considerably higher than the national average of 23%. Suitable accommodation and care is needed for an ageing population. The number of residents aged 39 or below is considerably lower than the national average. The average age of a resident in the district is 42.69 years and the district has a low birth rate. The population has been virtually static with very little in-migration, however the 2014 mid year estimate of population was 98,960 this was an increase of 539 from the previous mid year estimate. This shows an annual rise between 2013 and 2014 of 0.54%. This is slower than growth in England of 0.84%, but much higher than has been recorded in previous years in Wyre Forest District as the population between 2001 and 2011 only grew by 1.1%.

2.14 Obesity is an issue that affects the District, obesity figures for Wyre Forest at 27.7% are higher than those for Worcestershire at 25.6% and England at 24.1%. A healthy lifestyle with healthy eating and exercise needs to be encouraged, some wards within the District have much higher levels of obesity than the district as a whole.

2.15 Even though the population is static, due to the falling rate of occupants per residential unit, more housing is required. Since 2006/7 to 2013/14, 93% of housing completions have been built on previously developed or brownfield land and since 2011 the majority have been built within 30 minutes public transport time of key facilities, this helps to encourage residents to use public transport rather than being reliant on private transport.

Social issues for Wyre Forest District:

- Virtually static population growth.
- The population is ageing with a low percentage of residents in the 0-19 and 20-39 age groups. However the number of residents aged 45-64 is high and the number of residents aged 65+ is very high.
- The ageing population means that more care facilities are needed for elderly/end of life as well as specialist accommodation.
- The elderly may want to downsize to smaller residential units which could free up family sized accommodation therefore, we need to ensure that residential development caters for all groups in society.
- There are high obesity levels.
- The district has a low level of in-migration.
- Although we have a static population there is a 9% increase in the number of households as the number of residents per unit of accommodation is falling.
- The high costs of providing healthcare for an ageing population with high obesity - more medical intervention is required for eaxample, hospital stays or visits and visits to GPs.
- Leisure and sport facilities should be accessible to local residents, participation in swimming and attending the gym are highest within the district with over 10% of the public accessing these activities.

Question 3

Do you think that these are all of the social issues in Wyre Forest District, are there more that we should have included?

Economic and Retail

2.16 Kidderminster traditionally had a thriving carpet industry which was important for employment. The number of people employed in this industry has sharply declined and now over 90% of it has gone. The district, even with this loss, has low unemployment in most wards but with pockets of high unemployment. The district also has lower wages than surrounding areas. The number of businesses closing is higher than that of new businesses starting up.

2.17 The ReWyre Initiative is all about partnership working and bringing together the public, private and voluntary sectors, together with the wider community to improve Kidderminster and the Wyre Forest District.

2.18 People travel to Wyre Forest District to visit local tourist attractions such as The Safari Park, Severn Valley Railway, the Wyre Forest and Bodenham and Arley Arboretums. Often these visits are day trips and local retail centres are not visited.

2.19 GCSE results as well as NVQ level 4 and above results are both lower than the national average. The NVQ4 level of attainment could show a reduced level within the District due to out migration where those most highly qualified are travelling to other employment areas with higher wage levels such as Birmingham and Worcester.

2.20 The Government issued a statement in 2014 outlining that it expects to see local development orders (LDOs) used to get permissions for residential development in place on over 90% of brownfield sites by 2020. Currently many brown field sites are allocated for industrial development so, if approved for residential there is then a shortfall of sites for employment opportunities. The issue then is where will employment sites be located within the District?

2.21 Wyre Forest District has two railway stations at Kidderminster and Blakedown with good links to Birmingham and beyond, however at peak times the railway is congested as commuters travel to work and back. Kidderminster rail station is due to be upgraded which will improve capacity and passenger experience.

2.22 Kidderminster is the main shopping area in the District with smaller shopping areas in Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley together with local centres which serve residential areas. The expansion of Weavers Wharf, which will include more shops, cafés and restaurants, will encourage more people to shop in Kidderminster. The rural areas in the east are generally well served with local shops and services in the villages. Local centres and rural facilities provide a valuable role in meeting local needs. In the west villages have more limited facilities.

Economic issues for Wyre Forest District:

- Reduction in traditional manufacturing industries – need jobs, employment and suitable housing. Working age people are needed as economically active people improve the area. This helps retail and regenerates the area, more people spending encourages more shops, this in turn improves the town centre so that more retailers wish to open shops, restaurants and provide services.
- The ratio of economically dependent people to economically active people is high therefore, we need to attract more economically active people to the District to ensure that communities are better balanced.
- Generally low unemployment within the district however pockets of higher unemployment in Oldington and Foley Park and Broadwaters wards.
- Lower earnings both by location of employment and by residence than the West Midlands or Great Britain, it is likely that many people are commuting to Worcester or Birmingham for higher paid jobs.
- Development of brownfield sites, current Government policy states that 90% of suitable brownfield sites should have a LDO for residential development by 2020. This could potentially push industrial development into other areas such as the Green Belt.
- Diversify the economy, create more skilled jobs to reduce out of District commuting and increase the retention of young educated residents.

- Raise wage levels by attracting employers with higher wages, thus reducing the wages gap between the District and neighbouring local authority areas.
- Improve rates of qualification at both GCSE level and into further education.
- Greater diversity of shops as improvements are made to Kidderminster shopping centre to encourage more visitors to the town centres and to tourist attractions throughout Wyre Forest District.
- With the expansion of Weavers Wharf, the primary shopping area, other areas of the town centre which have been traditionally retail could change to other uses.

Question 4

Do you think that there are more economic issues within the District that we have not included?

Environment

2.23 Wyre Forest District is encompassed within the Mid-Severn Sandstone Plateau and part of the district is within the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark. The Rivers Severn and Stour run through the district and one or both of them pass through the centre of all three towns. This can lead to development pressures in the flood zones. The Wyre Forest is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest as is 6% of land within Wyre Forest District. The agricultural land within the district ranges from the best quality grade 1 down to grade 3b. The best and most versatile land which is grades 1 and 2 is found in the eastern side of the District.

2.24 The eastern side of the District falls within the West Midlands Green Belt. The purposes of the Green Belt are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). One of the main purposes is to ensure that there is enough countryside between built up areas so that they do not merge into one another.

2.25 Wyre Forest District has many important buildings and areas in the built environment. 6 Grade I Listed Buildings, 26 Grade II* Listed Buildings, and 660 Grade II Listed Buildings together with 17 Conservation Areas. There are in addition 9 Scheduled Monuments and 1 registered park and garden. There are a series of Local Heritage Lists covering parts of the District. These include 830 buildings within the district which whilst not listed on the national heritage list are considered important heritage assets within the District.

2.26 Within the Wyre Forest District are 2 Air Quality Monitoring Area's (AQMA) at Horsefair, Kidderminster and Welch Gate, Bewdley. This poor air quality is due to traffic pollution in built up areas.

Environmental issues for Wyre Forest District:

- Pressure for development in the Green Belt.
- Pressure for development in floodzones.

- Safeguarding the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- Improving air quality and water quality.
- Ensuring that new development reflects Wyre Forest District's distinctive character.
- Protecting, conserving and where it is possible to do so enhancing the District's rich natural environment and historic assets.
- Planning for the impact of climate change, which includes flooding, in new development.
- Poor air quality (AQMA) at Horsefair, Kidderminster and Welch Gate, Bewdley.

Question 5

Are there any more environmental issues that are affecting Wyre Forest District that we have not included ?

3 Vision and Objectives

What Will Wyre Forest District be Like in 2032

3.1 In 2032 the three main towns in Wyre Forest District continue to maintain their distinctive and separate identities. The outlying villages have grown organically to meet their own needs. 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.

3.2 The District's varied natural habitats,together with its 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. The risk of flooding is reduced due to a programme of floodplain management, increased water efficiency, softer landscaping and extensive use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in new developments.

3.3 Kidderminster has benefited from sustainable brownfield regeneration. The attractive and accessible town centre provides a range of retail and commercial leisure opportunities as well as civic spaces and urban grenspace. Kidderminster supports a vibrant visitor economy and a flourishing evening economy.

3.4 Stourport-on-Severn offers a range of facilities to local residents and visitors alike and its canal and riverside remain 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.

3.5 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 continues to attract visitors.

3.6 To the east of the District, the larger villages of Cookley and Blakedown continue to provide local residents and the surrounding rural hinterlands with key local services. There remains more limited services, focussing on the needs of local communities, in settlements to the west such as Rock, Clows Top and Far Forest.

3.7 The District's housing market provides a choice of accommodation responding well to local needs and catering for single households, families and the elderly in particular. Job creation is balanced with housing delivery, encouraging younger people to remain within the District and creating a balanced population structure.

3.8 A vibrant and sustainable economy exists primarily focussed around Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and the Stourport Road Employment Corridor 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 Enterprise Park are the main focus for employment but they are supported by the rural economy and sustainable tourism.

3.9 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 by a variety of modes of transport. The urban environments experience reduced levels of traffic congestion and air quality within the town centres has improved. Kidderminster Railway 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 give access to higher order services.

3.10 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 wards of Oldington & Foley Park and Broadwaters[(1)]. Local residents are more skilled through improved access to training opportunities within the community. As they get older, residents' good health and wellbeing continues through easy access to quality health care and community facilities.

Question 6

Do you agree with the vision set out above? If not, what changes would you make?

Objectives

The following objectives will help to deliver the vision for the District. They will provide the framework for the Local Plan.

1. Provide a range of high-quality, highly energy efficient, market and affordable homes to meet the needs of all residents and encourage a balanced population structure.
2. 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 beyond 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 by supporting sustainable growth and economic diversification.
5. Safeguard and enhance the District's unique landscape character, Green Belt, natural environment and green infrastructure.
6. Conserve and enhance the District's heritage assets.
7. Safeguard and enhance natural resources, minimise waste and increase recycling, especially the re-use of land and buildings.
8. Safeguard and replenish the District's rich and varied biodiversity and geodiversity, including that within the three town centres.

1 Pre May 2015 wards are referred to as data is not yet available for new wards.

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 a sustainable transport network which provides genuine alternatives to the private car and encourages sustainable freight movement.
12. Help foster community pride and healthy lifestyles in the District through providing opportunities for community involvement and active lifestyles.
13. Maximise community cohesion and safety and ensure new developments positively contribute towards crime reduction, improved health care and education across the District for the benefit of all residents.

Question 7

Do you agree with the objectives? If not, what changes would you make? Are there any other issues which need to be covered by the objectives?

4 Cross Boundary Relationships

4.1 The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy which previously shaped and guided our Core Strategy has now been abolished. With the removal of this regional tier of planning, the Government brought forward the "Duty to Co-operate" through the Localism Act to assist with strategic planning. This requires us to work with other neighbouring councils and strategic partners to make sure that planning is co-ordinated across Housing Market Areas and Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMAs).

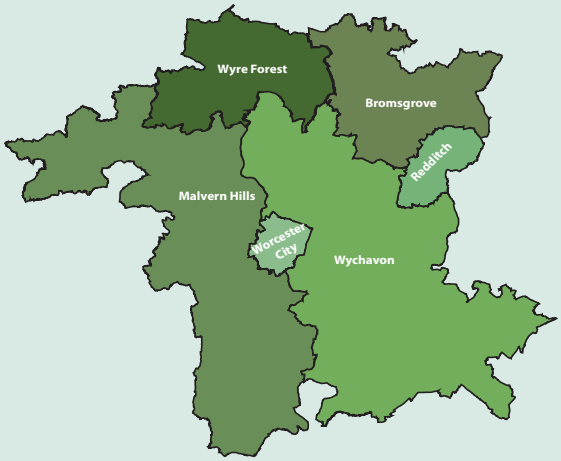
4.2 Those Local Authorities with whom we share common boundaries are listed below and we continue to have ongoing discussions with our neighbours on strategic planning issues. Wyre Forest also has strong links with the Birmingham and Dudley Metropolitan authorities.

Neighbouring Authorities:

- Bromsgrove District Council
- Malvern Hills District Council
- Wychavon District Council
- Worcestershire County Council
- Shropshire Council
- South Staffordshire District Council

4.3 **Local Enterprise Partnerships** - Wyre Forest District is also within two Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) - the Worcestershire LEP and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP.

Worcestershire LEP Area



Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP Area

4.4 The GBSLEP has a Strategy for Growth, an economic plan which underpins all of its activities and objectives. The Strategy has high level economically driven targets. The GBSLEP is preparing a Strategic Plan known as the Spatial Plan for Recovery and Growth. This will look at the scale, broad distribution and direction of growth required. It is intended that this plan will provide a strategic steer for the participating District's Local Plans.

4.5 Worcestershire LEP seeks to shape the best business environment for the county, stimulate the growth of the local economy, encourage inward investment, boost enterprise and actively promote Worcestershire as an exceptional place to work, live and prosper.

4.6 Although we have not been required to jointly produce a Development Plan with our neighbouring authorities, our participation within these LEPs brings with it strategic requirements relating to jobs growth, investment and potentially Birmingham's housing land supply. These factors will all need to be considered through our plan review.

4.7 **Housing Market Area** - Wyre Forest falls within the Worcestershire Housing Market Area. A Housing Market Area is characterised by its house prices, rates of change in house prices, household migration and search patterns, travel to work area boundaries, retail and school catchments areas. Our District does not have strong links with the Birmingham Housing Market Area but has retained some longer standing links with the Black Country Housing Market Area. It will therefore be necessary for us to work with these areas under the Duty to Co-operate requirements.

4.8 **Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)**- work is currently being undertaken by the Local Enterprise Partnerships to define the extent of the FEMA. This takes into account travel to work areas; the housing market area;flows of goods, services and information within the local economy; the transport network and catchment area. Work on the Employment Land Review will need to take full account of Wyre Forest District's position in the FEMA.

4.9 The box below sets out some of the potential strategic planning issues to be addressed in the future Local Plan:

Strategic Issues for the Local Plan:

- Housing provision needs to take account of Housing Market Areas such as the Worcestershire and Greater Birmingham HMAs.
- The scale of new employment land provision needs to take account of the LEP's growth priorities and the Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA).
- The location and scale of any new development to be located near our boundaries with adjacent authorities.
- The potential need for a Strategic Green Belt Boundary Review across the West Midlands.
- The potential impacts of new development on road and rail transport infrastructure.
- The cumulative impacts of new development on utilities infrastructure.
- The potential impacts of new development on River Basin Catchment Areas and flood prevention.

Question 8

Do you agree with the strategic planning issues identified above?

Are there any other strategic planning issues which you feel should be included here?

Are there any particular local authorities nearby or strategic bodies that you feel we should be engaging with and why?

5 Key Local Plan Approaches

Plan Themes

5.1 The Issues and Options Paper covers a series of themes as follows:

- **Providing Quality Homes** - this looks at the key issues relating to housing within the District and options for addressing them.
- **Providing Employment Opportunities and Retail Services-** this looks at the key issues relating to the District's economy, opportunities for employment and the provision of services including retailing.
- **Safeguarding Character and Local Distinctiveness** - this looks at issues and options relating to a number of topics which contribute to local distinctiveness including green infrastructure and open space, biodiversity and geodiversity, the historic environment, design quality, the Green Belt and the District's natural landscape.
- **A Well Serviced District**- this looks at issues and options relating to transport and movement within, and into and out of, the District.
- **Tackling Climate Change and Its Impacts** - this looks at all aspects of climate change including reducing greenhouse gas emissions (excluding those from transport), reducing water consumption, and responding to the impacts of climate change, particularly flood risk.

Corporate Plan

5.2 The District Council's Corporate Plan details its vision and values and sets out our strategic direction, actions and priorities for the years ahead. The Local Plan will contribute towards the vision and priorities within the District Council's Corporate Plan.

5.3 "Wyre Forest – where people have the opportunity to enjoy a good quality of life and want to live, work, visit and invest" is the Vision for the Corporate Plan. Almost al of the actions set out within the Corporate Plan are relevant to the Local Plan. There is a particular focus on regeneration. The most relevant priority is "working towards meeting current and future housing needs, with an up-to-date local development plan that provides for growth in the number of houses".

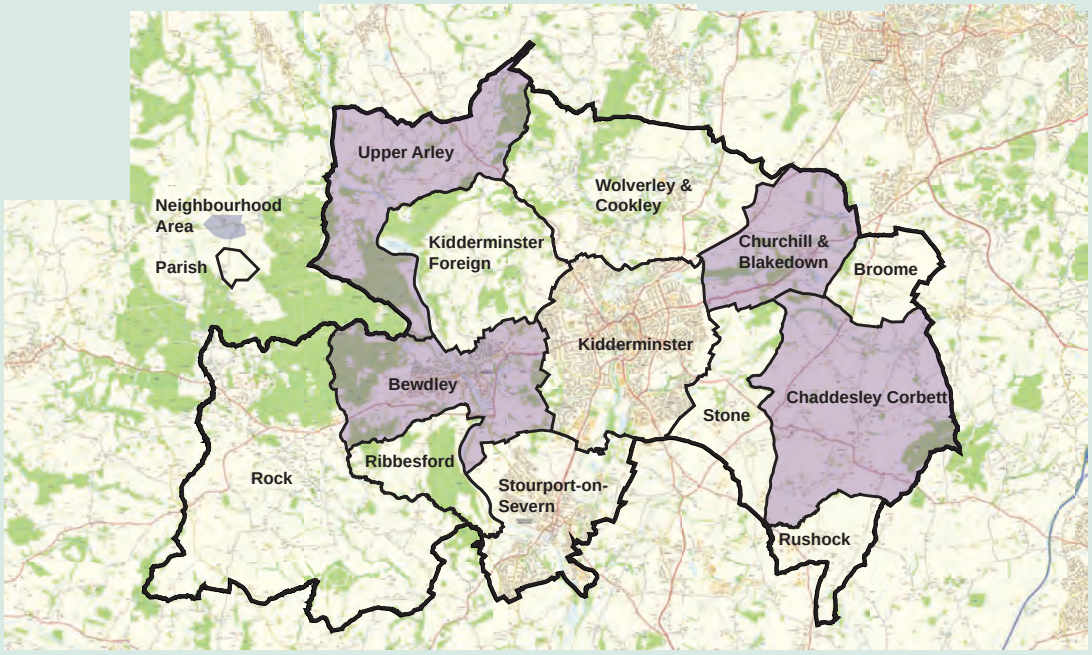
The Role of Neighbourhood Planning

5.4 Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. Through producing a Neighbourhood Plan communities can take the lead on developing planning policies for their areas , as long as certain rules are followed and any plans and policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plan policies are material considerations in determining planning applications in the area.

5.5 The Chaddesley Corbett Neighbourhood Plan was made in September 2011. This means it is now part of the statutory development plan for the District. Three further Neighbourhood Plans are being progressed within the District, they are:

- Churchill and Blakedown - Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council
- Bewdley - Bewdley Town Council
- Upper Arley Upper Arley Parish Council

Neighbourhood Areas



Wyre Forest District Council will work with these communities and other communities wishing to prepare Neighbourhood Plans to ensure timetables, aspirations and evidence are aligned.

Local Distinctiveness

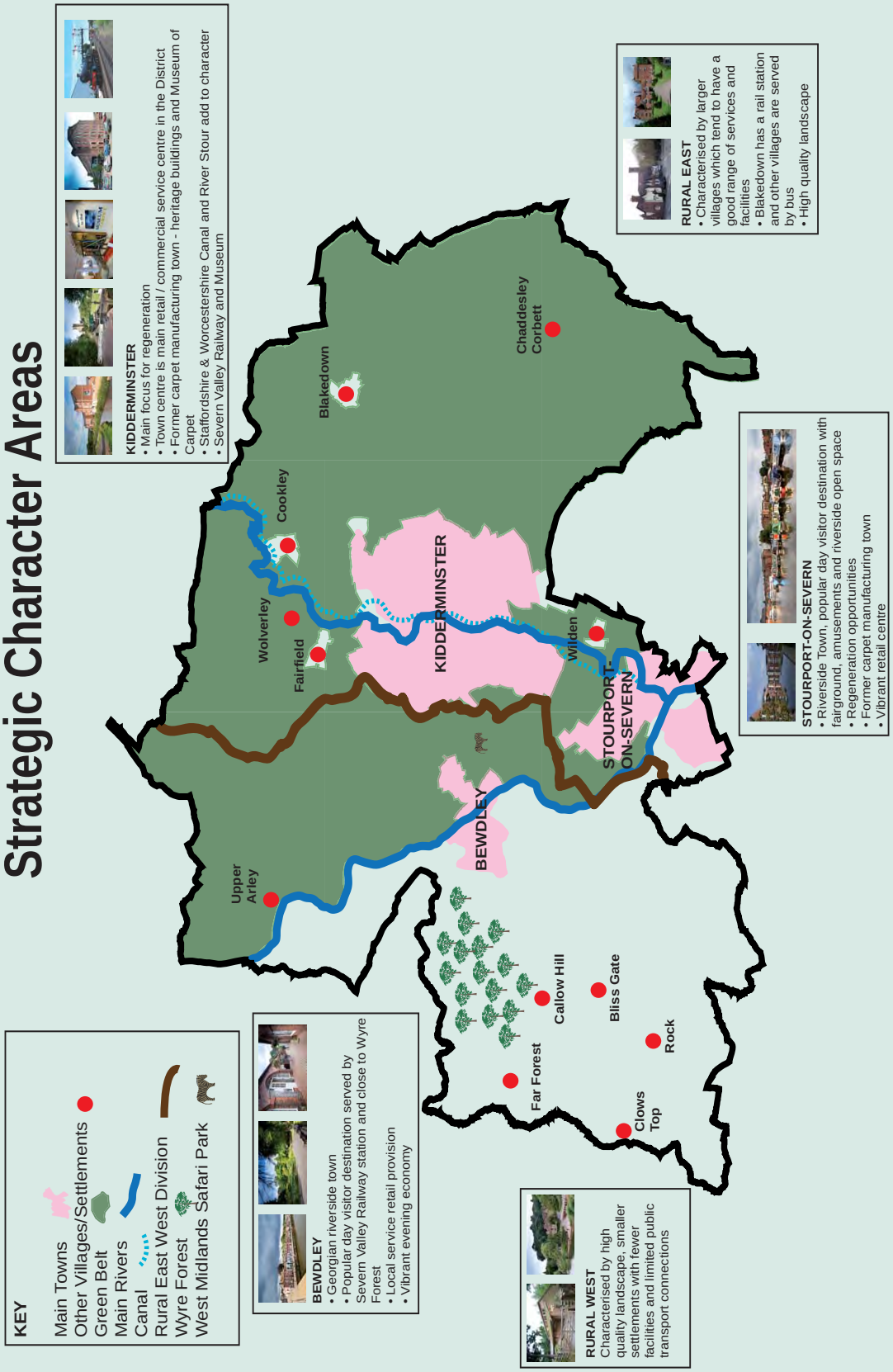
5.6 A key issue for the Local Plan to address is maintaining local distinctiveness. The diagram overleaf shows the key Character areas of the District. Whilst it is appreciated that these character areas are broad and character can differ at a much smaller scale, for example, different areas within the towns and the individual villages within the rural character areas, it is considered that these are the strategic character areas within the District. These character areas will form the basis for the site allocations which will be included at the next consultation stage.

Question 9

Do you agree with the broad character areas shown on the map overleaf and the overview of each? If, you disagree, in what way would you change the character areas? What additional character areas do you think should be identified? What would you add to or remove from the character area overviews?

Agenda Item No. 8.1
Appendix 2

Strategic Character Areas

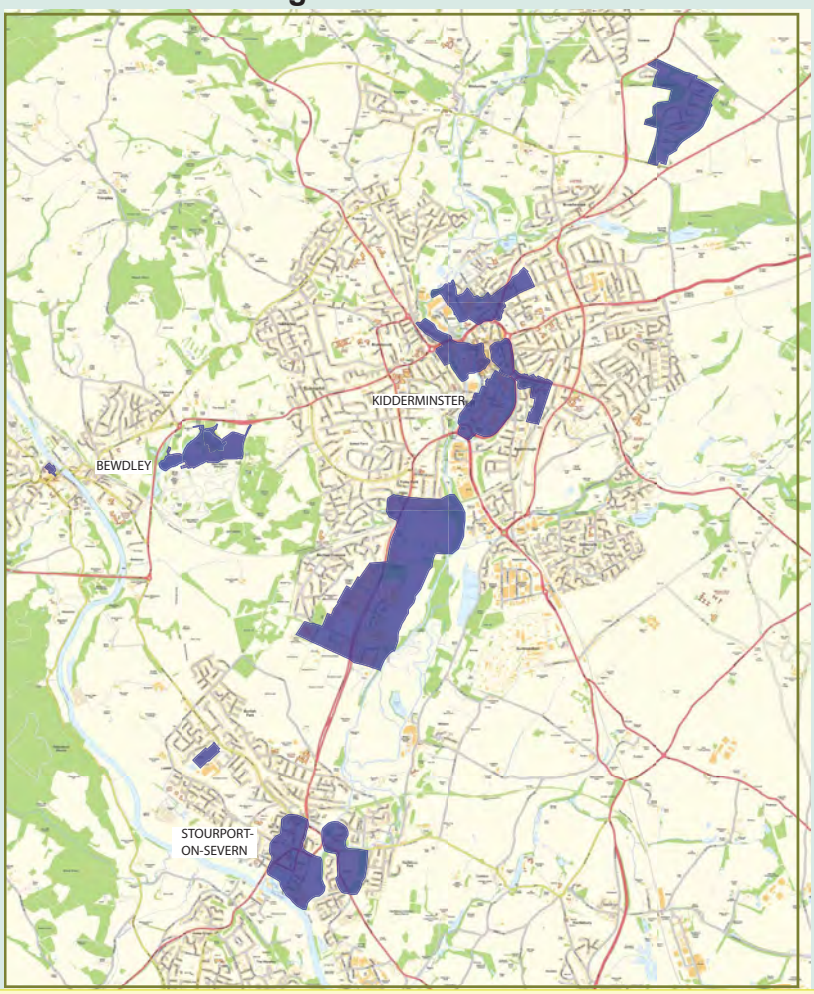


Main Regeneration Sites

5.7 The District Council's current plan sets out a brownfield regeneration strategy. Many of the sites allocated within the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan are currently being developed or have been developed. Examples of sites which have been developed include Reilloc Chain, Broadwaters Community Centre, the former Lucy Baldwin Hospital and the former Georgian Carpets site at Stoney Lane, Kidderminster . Development is currently underway on the former British Sugar Site and redevelopment of the former Romwire site is expected to start shortly. The majority of the other allocations within these documents are still expected to be developed during the period up until 2026. It is expected that most of these allocations will be carried forward and that the new plan will continue to have a strong focus on brownfield regeneration delivering a significant amount of the development required within the District.

5.8 The map below shows the District's main regeneration sites and areas.

Regeneration Areas



Question 10

Do you agree that the District should continue to focus on brownfield regeneration and that the existing allocations still provide a basis for this to happen?

Developer Contributions

5.9 Wyre Forest District Council currently seeks financial contributions from developers towards certain types of infrastructure using planning obligations which are also called S106 Agreements. These agreements are negotiated for each individual development on a case by case basis. The District Council has a Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) which sets out the details of how these agreements are negotiated. They include provision for education, affordable housing, open space and play provision, and transport improvements. The SPD is due to be revised during 2015/2016.

5.10 The Government recently introduced a new mechanism for collecting financial contributions towards the costs of providing infrastructure, from developers. This is called The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). When implementing CIL, Local Authorities are required to set out a charge for different types of development, this needs to be based on robust evidence, particularly on viability,and it needs to go through a number of stages of consultation as well as an examination in public. The authority also needs to have a formal list setting out the projects on which CIL contributions will be spent. Some CIL receipts are passed on to communities to spend, for example in areas where a Neighbourhood Plan has been 'made' the Parish Council receive 25% of CIL income generated within their Parish. So far, Wyre Forest District Council has chosen not to implement CIL because of concerns over its viability. However, it is anticipated that CIL will be implemented shortly after the Local Plan review. Even if the District Council implement CIL we will still need to use S106 agreements for affordable housing contributions and infrastructure which is site specific and is required to make a development acceptable in planning terms.

Question 11

Should the District Council aim to put a CIL Charging Schedule in place following the adoption of the new Local Plan? Do you think that this will help us to better deliver infrastructure to support new development?

6 What Level of Growth is Needed and What Broad Options Can be Pursued?

6.1 Changes to the planning system have brought an end to regional planning. This means that our development targets are no longer set through the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. We are now responsible for setting the District's own targets for homes and jobs and therefore the amount of housing, employment and retail land that needs to be allocated within the new Local Plan.

Our Existing Development Strategy

6.2 The existing development strategy for Wyre Forest District is set out in the Adopted Core Strategy and is regeneration led. It focuses new development on brownfield sites within the main towns of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. Smaller amounts of development are directed towards Bewdley and the main villages. This sustainable strategy rightly targets new housing and employment to our available brownfield sites in order to make the most efficient use of our land and local service provision. It continues to be a very successful strategy, providing certainty to developers and businesses and has seen the delivery of around 2,500 new homes and 14 hectares of employment land since 2006.

6.3 The regeneration strategy will continue to be the main focus for new development within the District, particularly within the earlier stages of the new plan. Depending on the levels of growth that are yet to be established through continuing work on housing need assessment and employment land requirements, it may also be necessary to look at additional options for accommodating future development to ensure Wyre Forest continues to grow sustainably to meet these needs. This may necessitate some greenfield development away from the town centres if there are not enough brownfield sites available.

6.4 The Local Plan Review provides the opportunity for us to look at our long term development strategy and the needs of our local communities. It is important to remember that our District is a mixed urban and rural area where many different communities live. The location of development can help to sustain and improve service provision and reduce the need to travel. This is a factor that will be important to consider in any future development strategy.

What Are The Factors That Will Influence Growth?

Housing Need

6.5 The Council has commissioned further work on our Objective Assessment of Housing Need, at this early stage we are not able to be exact about the total number of dwellings required over the plan period. However, some population modelling work was undertaken during 2013/14 which looked at the 2011-2031 time period. This tested a range of scenarios from standard population projections as a base level to jobs growth which would require higher housing numbers to support the local labour force. The results provided an indicative range of the need for 270-370 dwellings per annum.

6.6 Put simply, this could mean an indicative range of between 4,320 and 5,920 additional dwellings over the new Local Plan period (2016-2032). The current Local Plan has a housing target of 4,000 dwellings for the 2006-2026 time period and enough sites identified to meet this

requirement. With residential land already identified and allocated for growth through the existing Site Allocations, we have an existing supply of allocated land that can contribute towards accommodating some growth during the 2015-2026 timescale. This could provide a further 1,350 dwellings.

6.7 The new Local Plan may need to identify sufficient additional sites to accommodate a range of between approximately 2970 - 4570 dwellings in order to meet this indicative range of housing needs over the plan period (2016-2032). These figures will change in light of the latest Objective Assessment of Housing Need and should be considered as a guide only.

Supporting Growth in the Local Economy

6.8 Based on the latest levels of population growth, job forecasts for the District predict that there is likely to be a 5.4% growth in jobs during the plan period. There will be big increases in the utilities; wholesale and retail; accommodation, food services and recreation and information and communication sectors. It is important that enough economically active people are available to fill these jobs and to meet the skills required otherwise jobs growth and economic recovery within the District could be restrained during the plan period.

6.9 The Local Plan will need to set a target for new jobs creation over the plan period, this will be informed by projected population growth, the number of people likely to be of working age, economic trends and the number of people living in the District. This will be converted into the amount of employment land required within the District. An Employment Land Review has been commissioned and will take an in depth look at employment land requirements and potential future locations.

6.10 Similarly the Plan will also need to set a target for the provision of new retail floorspace. This will need to be based on an up to date assessment of the District's retail needs. It is likely that this will be heavily influenced by the growth in on-line shopping and the impact that this has had on shopping patterns.

Land Availability

6.11 Many landowners and developers have submitted potential sites for further consideration through the Call for Sites exercise in Autumn 2014. As the Local Plan progresses through to its submission stage, potential site allocations will be refined through the sustainability appraisal process and an independent assessment of their deliverability. They will then be subject to a final stage of scrutiny through Independent Examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The key influence in site allocations will be establishing the most suitable overarching strategy for directing growth during the plan period.

Environmental Constraints

6.12 The District is heavily affected by flooding with substantial areas of land near to the Rivers Severn and Stour falling within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The Eastern areas of the District fall within the West Midlands Green Belt and are therefore subject to Green Belt policy which restricts development except for very special circumstances. There are also a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest which could be adversely impacted by new development. These constraints will all be very important factors in considering where new development should be located.

Infrastructure Delivery

6.13 The provision of infrastructure will have a large impact on the location and scale of new development in our area. It is essential that infrastructure is provided and delivered to ensure that new development is well connected and sustainable and offers it's residents a good quality of life. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan was developed in consultation with key stakeholders and utility providers in 2012 this will be updated to inform the new development strategy.

What are the Potential Options for Growth?

6.14 This consultation identifies 7 potential options for accommodating more residential, employment and retail growth within our District. In reality it may be necessary to utilise a combination of these options. We would like you to consider these different approaches and let us have your views. You may have some alternative suggestions for options which you feel we have not yet identified.

Option 1

Brownfield regeneration which focuses on the main towns of Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn.

- This would be a continuation of our existing successful development strategy.
- Makes the most effective use of previously developed land and reduces the need to travel.
- However, depending on our growth needs there may not be enough supply of available and deliverable brownfield sites within the District for the whole of the new plan period.
- There are potentially some viability issues associated with developing brownfield sites such as land remediation costs, which could impact on the deliverability of new development.

Question 12

Do you think that there will be enough brownfield sites available to accommodate all of the new development required for the 2016-2032 Plan Period?

Do you think we should continue to focus all new development on the main towns?

Option 2

Brownfield regeneration focused on the main towns and expansion of Kidderminster to the North East via a sustainable urban extension.

- If growth levels do necessitate some greenfield development during the new plan period, then this option could focus some development to sites around the north eastern

edge of Kidderminster between the A449 Wolverhampton Road and the A456 Birmingham Road.

- Development here could make the most effective use of sustainable transport links at Kidderminster Rail Station and potentially its wider links to HS2 in the future.
- However, land to the east of Kidderminster falls within the Green Belt and in order to allocate sites in this area it will require a comprehensive Green Belt Boundary Review.

Question 13

Do you think that a Sustainable Urban Extension to the north east of Kidderminster is the most sustainable location for greenfield development?

If so, do you have any views or suggestions on appropriate development sites in this area?

Option 3

Brownfield regeneration focused on the main towns and expansion of Kidderminster to the South East via a sustainable urban extension.

- If growth levels do necessitate some greenfield development during the new plan period, then this option could focus some development to sites around the south eastern edges of Kidderminster between the A456 Birmingham Road and the A449 Worcester Road.
- Development here could be well located to make the most of the employment opportunities along the Worcester Road and Hartlebury Road Industrial Estate corridor.
- However, land to the south east of Kidderminster falls within the Green Belt and in order to allocate sites in this area it will require a comprehensive Green Belt Boundary Review.

Question 14

Do you think a Sustainable Urban Extension to the south east of Kidderminster is the most sustainable location for greenfield development?

If so, do you have any views or suggestions on appropriate development sites in this area?

Option 4

Brownfield regeneration focus for Stourport-on-Severn.

- This option would seek to meet Stourport's future housing, employment and retail needs solely on brownfield sites.
- There are still significant amounts of brownfield land available for development in Stourport. Depending on its level of housing and employment needs this may be enough to accommodate all of its development within the new plan period without the need for a sustainable urban extension.
- Land to the north east of Stourport falls within the Green Belt and therefore any greenfield sites identified here would require a comprehensive Green Belt Boundary Review.
- Land to the south west of Stourport does not fall within the Green Belt, but it does contain sensitive landscapes which fall within the open countryside.

Question 15

Do you think that Stourport will have enough deliverable brownfield sites available to meet its development needs over the new plan period?

If not, do you think that Stourport will also require a sustainable urban extension to help accommodate its development needs?

Where do you think it would be best to locate a Sustainable Urban Extension in relation to the town itself?

Option 5

Allocate some development to Bewdley through an amendment to the town's settlement boundary to accommodate new development.

- This option would see some new development allocated to Bewdley on greenfield sites to meet its future needs
- This would require an amendment to the town's existing settlement boundary. Bewdley Town Council is producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the area. Any allocations or amendments to the settlement boundary will also need to be considered through this process too.
- Through the current Development Strategy, Bewdley has seen only very small amounts of development directed to it because of the lack of available brownfield land in the town.
- Land to the east of the town falls within the Green Belt and therefore any sites allocated here would need to be subject to a Green Belt Boundary Review.
- Land to the north west of the town is not Green Belt but it is open countryside and has high landscape value.

Question 16

Do you feel that there is enough opportunity to accommodate Bewdley's development needs to 2032 on brownfield land within the settlement boundary? Are there any brownfield sites available?

If not, do you think that Bewdley's settlement boundary should be amended to accommodate further development on greenfield sites in order to meet it's future housing and employment needs?

If you do feel that new development on greenfield sites is appropriate for Bewdley, then where do you think this would be best located in relation to the town?

Option 6

Allocate more new development to the villages and settlements within the District's Rural East.

- This could provide a stronger focus on rural regeneration and help to retain local services and meet localised housing needs.
- In order to accommodate more development in these areas,it would be necessary to undertake a comprehensive settlement boundary review for villages to the east of the District.
- Some villages and settlements such as Chaddesley Corbett, do not currently have a settlement boundary and are washed over by the Green Belt
- Land to the east of the District falls within the Green Belt and any site identification in or around settlements would be subject to a Green Belt Boundary Review.
- There is the potential to identify more previously developed sites in the Green Belt for new development.
- Chaddesley Corbett village has its own Neighbourhood Development Plan and Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council is in the process of producing a plan for their area. Both of these will be important considerations in allocating further development to meet their local needs.

Question 17

Do you think we should be directing further development to these settlements to help sustain rural services and communities to the east of the District? Do you you feel that villages to the east of our area have the right capacity of services and facilities to help support their sustainable growth?

Should new development in these settlements be relative to their size and if so what proportion should it be?

Do you think the current settlement boundaries around villages to the east are correct or do they need to be amended?

Are there any brownfield (previously developed sites) located within the Green Belt that we should be considering further for new development?

Option 7

Allocate more development to the villages and settlements within the District's Rural West.

- The smaller settlements to the West of the River Severn, generally have a lower level of service provision and poorer public transport links.
- This option could provide a stronger focus on rural regeneration and help to retain local services and meet localised housing needs in these areas.
- In order to accommodate more development in these areas it would be necessary to undertake a comprehensive settlement boundary review for villages to the west of the District.
- Some of the smaller settlements in this area do not currently have a settlement boundary drawn around them.

Question 18

Do you think that we should be directing further development to these settlements to help sustain rural services and communities to the west of the District? Do you feel that villages to the west of our District have the right capacity of services and facilities to help support their sustainable growth?

Should new development in these settlements be relative to their size and if so what proportion should it be?

Do you think that the current settlement boundaries around villages to the west are correct or do they need to be amended?

Are there any settlements in this area which you feel should have a settlement boundary drawn around them?

Do you know of any sites in this area which could be suitable to meet local development needs?

7 Providing Quality Homes

7.1 Housing should be of a high quality, sufficient quantity, affordable and the type needed in order to create successful communities. It is important to plan for a mix of homes and a range of sizes and types to meet both current and future housing needs.

Housing Mix

7.2 The NPPF encourages Local Plans to provide a mix of homes to meet the needs of different groups such as families with children, the elderly, those with disabilities or particular support needs, gypsies and travellers and those wishing to build their own homes. Wyre Forest District has an increasingly elderly population with over 30% estimated to be over 60 in 2013 (it was 22.5% for England as a whole).

7.3 The District has pockets of severe deprivation where very few residents are able to access open market housing. Average household income in Wyre Forest (£33,482 in 2013) is much lower than that for Worcestershire as a whole (£37,000)with only 22% categorised as 'affluent achievers' compared with 30% in Worcestershire as a whole. Although house prices in the District are low in comparison to the County average, with wages being that much lower, there is still a real problem of affordability. The average sale price in 2014 was £179,000 in Wyre Forest compared with £222,000 in Worcestershire.

7.4 The Local Plan needs to plan positively for a mix of housing based on an assessment of the type of people that live in the district both now and in the future. Housing mix refers to both the size of property (number of bedrooms) and the type of housing, whether detached, semi, terraced or apartments. This will affect the affordability of the housing offer.

7.5 The table below shows that housing completions over the last 9 years have provided a good mix of house types and sizes. 3 in every 5 homes completed since 2006 have had 2 or fewer bedrooms to cater for smaller households.

Type of Dwelling Completed 2006-15

Year	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4 bed house	Total dwellings
2006/7	46	69	4	39	75	68	301
2007/8	44	81	2	59	47	29	262
2008/9	33	92	21	44	54	27	252
2009/10	57	89	1	34	15	23	219
2010/11	8	76	3	27	35	9	158
2011/12	25	74	1	34	71	30	235
2012/13	45	27	0	46	60	50	229
2013/14	42	68	2	67	80	122	379
2014/15	99	42	6	92	124	99	462
2006 - 2015	**399**	**618**	**21**	**442**	**561**	**457**	**2498**

7.6 This consultation identifies 5 potential options for achieving a housing mix.

Option A - Housing Mix

Continue with current policy of concentrating provision around dwellings to cater for smaller households.

- This option would cater for both newly forming households and those downsizing into smaller properties. Analysis of waiting list data shows an overwhelming requirement for 1 and 2 bed affordable units.
- Recent provision in the private rental sector has been mainly in the form of 1 and 2 bed flats, much of this being provided in town centre conversions of empty office units.

Option B - Housing Mix

Look to provide more housing suitable for families.

- The district has a declining school-aged population. A policy to provide more family-sized housing could help to revert this trend.

Option C - Housing Mix

Look to provide more choice of executive homes in Wyre Forest District.

- This would encourage more affluent people to relocate to Wyre Forest. Recent examples of developments of this type have included the Sutton Reservoir site in Kidderminster.

Option D - Housing Mix

Look to provide for a mix of house types on all large-scale developments.

- This would encourage a mix of household types and ages which will help to develop a strong sense of community

Option E - Housing Mix

Specify housing mix on an individual site basis in conjunction with a site size threshold.

- This would provide flexibility where, for example, viability issues meant certain house types would be required

Question 19

What are your views on the options set out for housing mix? Are there any other options which should be considered?

Housing Land Allocations

7.7 Allocating land for housing is a key role of the Local Plan. The Local Planning Authority will need to set housing targets for both market and affordable housing and allocate enough land to ensure that these targets can be met. The current Local Plan is based around a brownfield regeneration strategy. Thus all the remaining housing allocations which are yet to be taken up by developers are previously developed sites.

7.8 This consultation identifies three potential options for allocating housing land.

Option A - Housing Land Allocations

Seek to take existing unimplemented residential allocations forward (including mixed used).

- Many of the remaining allocations have had developer interest and schemes are being developed. Some brownfield sites may take longer to deliver due to viability issues.

Option B - Housing Land Allocations

Seek to allocate alternative sites.

- Landowners and agents have put forward sites through the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Call for Sites. Depending on the outcome of the Objective Assessment of Housing Need, it is highly possible that additional sites will be required to provide housing for the next plan period

Option C - Housing Land Allocations

Consider proposals for residential development on larger areas of garden land with strict conditions relating to impact on neighbourhood character.

- Garden land is no longer classified as previously developed land. Current Local Plan policy precludes its development for this reason. However, there may be certain cases where it would be appropriate to allocate a garden site for housing.

Question 20

What are your views on the housing land allocation options? Are there other options which you feel the council should consider?

Creating Sustainable Communities

7.9 Recent developments have seen small households moving into newly converted apartments inside of the Ring Road. Much of this housing has been provided by the private rented sector. These developments help to support other commercial uses in the town and encourage more street level activity throughout the day. Redevelopment of former industrial sites on the edge of the town centre have led to the creation of new communities catering for a wide range of households from newly formed households to families and those looking to downsize to a smaller more manageable property. These sites allow easy access into the town centre by foot or cycle along the canal and also easy access to the adjacent countryside. It is important to ensure that new developments create sustainable well-designed communities supported by appropriate infrastructure.

7.10 This consultation identifies six potential options for creating sustainable communities.

Option A - Sustainable Communities

Seek to provide housing as part of a mixed use scheme.

- The integration of residential uses with other land uses leads to a more vibrant streetscene with buildings occupied throughout the day

Option B - Sustainable Communities

Provide more housing within Kidderminster Town Centre and inside of the Ring Road.

- Prior to the construction of the ring road, there were large residential communities in the Bromsgrove Street area. Is housing the best option to kick start the regeneration of this area?

7.11 The Core Strategy contains a policy on housing density giving indicative densities of 70 dwellings per hectare (dph) within Kidderminster town centre and adjacent to the railway station and reducing to 30 dph in Bewdley and the rural areas. The NPPF now suggests that density should be determined on a site by site basis so that each development reflects the neighbourhood in which it is located. Higher densities are most appropriate in built-up areas where there is good access to jobs and services.

Option C - Sustainable Communities

Retain current density policy.

- This allows for the highest density development within Kidderminster town centre, with slightly lower densities immediately adjacent and around the railway station and within Stourport-on-Severn town centre with lower densities outside of these areas.

Option D - Sustainable Communities

Determine housing density on a site by site basis through the development management process to achieve the optimum density appropriate to the site's location, context, infrastructure and public transport accessibility.

- This would reflect the density of surrounding development and respect local character and distinctiveness.

Option E - Sustainable Communities

Set out specific density requirements for each allocated site within planning policy.

- Each allocated site will have different characteristics and viability issues may dictate the density and type of development,

Option F - Sustainable Communities

Set out a series of criteria for all other development sites.

- The local plan will need to have broad criteria in place to guide development on any other sites that are brought forward for housing use.

Question 21

What are your views on the options for creating sustainable communities? Are there other options which you feel the council should consider?

Affordable Housing

7.12 The Local Plan will need to establish a target for both market housing and affordable homes. The Objective Assessment of Housing Need study will be used to inform this. Current Local Plan policy provides for at least 60 affordable units a year with 70% of these being for rent and 30% for shared ownership. Current policy seeks to secure 30% affordable housing provision on sites of 10 or more dwellings within Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn and 6 or more dwellings in Bewdley and the rural areas. It should be noted however that the majority of affordable housing has been provided on 100% affordable sites.

7.13 Latest Government guidance suggests a minimum threshold of 11 dwellings for S106 agreements to provide affordable units except in designated rural areas.

7.14 Since 2006, there have been 730 affordable housing completions, 29% of the total number built. In only 2 years has the target of 60 homes not been met. 311 of these affordable homes have been completed in the last 2 years. There have been a couple of large scale clearance schemes of sub-standard maisonettes involving 109 dwellings meaning the net increase in affordable dwellings was only 621. There are not expected to be any more clearance schemes on that scale during the next plan period.

7.15 This consultation identifies four potential options for providing affordable housing.

Option A - Affordable Housing

Seek to reduce affordable housing requirement to minimum of 25% on brownfield sites subject to viability.

- Many of the District's larger brownfield sites have struggled to provide 30% affordable housing owing to viability issues. Reducing the requirement may enable more sites to be brought forward.

Option B - Affordable Housing

Seek to increase affordable housing requirement to minimum of 40% on greenfield sites.

- If the Council decides to release greenfield sites for later in the plan period, then a higher percentage of affordable housing could be achieved, as development costs are usually lower than on brownfield sites.

Option C - Affordable Housing

Seek to retain current affordable housing threshold of 6 units in designated rural areas.

- Government guidance states that blanket policies restricting housing development in some rural settlements and preventing others from expanding should be avoided unless robust evidence suggests otherwise. Schemes of 6 - 10 dwellings would require an off-site affordable housing contribution.

Option D - Affordable Housing

Seek to provide affordable housing on rural exception sites and allow market housing to cross subsidise affordable provision.

- Rural exception sites are sites adjacent to rural settlements that would not normally be used for housing. The recently developed affordable housing at Fairfield is an example of a rural exception site.

Question 22

What are your views on the affordable housing options? Are there any other options which you feel should be considered?

Specialist Housing Provision

7.16 Following a change in Government policy, local authorities now have the option to build housing themselves again. Wyre Forest District Council needs to decide whether it wishes to get involved in the housing market by developing public sector land or by allocating specific types of housing land in the Local Plan such as for retirement dwellings. As the authority no longer holds any housing stock of its own following the transfer to Wyre Forest Community Housing in April 2000, this may need to take the form of a partnership agreement whereby the council provides the land.

7.17 The proposed Government Starter Home programme aims to deliver 200,000 homes for first time buyers at a 20% discount on market prices. These will be on brownfield sites not previously identified for housing. A statutory register of brownfield land will help to achieve a target of 90% brownfield land suitable for housing to be covered by a pre-planning outline housing Local Development Order by 2020. Locally in Wyre Forest District we have a very good track record of brownfield housing delivery. Since 2006 housing completions on brownfield land have averaged 89% with only 2 years falling below this figure when a large greenfield allocation was built out.

7.18 Self-build housing is where a builder is contracted by an individual to create a home or where a private individual builds their home as a DIY project. This is an important element of the Government's housing strategy. Plan makers should consider setting up a register of people who wish to build their own home. Self-build housing is seen as a means of providing a lower cost flexible option to address the need for more housing.

7.19 This consultation identifies three potential options for facilitating specialist housing delivery.

Option A - Facilitating Specialist Housing Delivery

Provide specific serviced plots on larger residential schemes specifically for self-builders.

- This could potentially allow a better mix of house styles on larger schemes.

Option B - Facilitating Specialist Housing Delivery

Set up register of local authority land available specifically to self builders.

Option C - Facilitating Specialist Housing Delivery

Promote the provision of starter homes via a housing Local Development Order.

- This could enable housing to come forward on brownfield sites at 20% less than the market cost.
- It would need to be carefully considered alongside the impact on the District's allocated employment sites.

Question 23

What are your views on the different options for facilitating specialist housing delivery? Are there any other options which you feel the council should consider?

Housing provision for the Elderly

7.20 Currently, those aged 60 and over make up 30% of the population in Wyre Forest. By 2032 this is projected to be almost 40%. Planning for this increase will require looking at new options to cater for differing needs. Older people will need different types of housing of various sizes and tenures. 12% of the population are projected to be over 80 years of age by 2032 and

this will have particular implications for specialised forms of housing that includes some care provision and is suitable for those with mobility issues. It should be noted that residential care homes now count towards the overall housing target.

7.21 This consultation identifies two potential options for providing housing for the elderly.

Option A - Housing Provision for the Elderly

Allocate specific sites for housing schemes for the elderly or those requiring extra care.

- These sites should allow easy access to shops and medical facilities either on foot or by public transport

Option B - Housing Provision for the Elderly

Provide retirement flats as part of larger schemes to encourage people to downsize and release larger houses onto the market.

- This option would encourage a mixed population age structure on new developments

Question 24

What are your views on the different options for providing housing for the elderly? Are there any other options which need to be considered?

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

7.22 The Worcestershire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (GTAA) was published in late 2014. The district currently has 85 pitches, mainly in private ownership. These are nearly all located on and around the Sandy Lane Industrial Estate on the outskirts of Stourport-on-Severn. The GTAA sets out the future pitch requirements for the district as 29 pitches from 2019 to 2034. There is no requirement prior to that date. The Council will need to identify sites for these pitches through the Local Plan.

7.23 This consultation provides three potential options for providing gypsy and traveller accommodation in the district. Issues to be considered include where to locate future pitch requirements and the optimum site size.

Option A - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

Limit new sites to a maximum of 10 pitches.

- Evidence from interviews with gypsy families shows that they prefer to live in smaller groups although economies of scale are often better on larger sites.

Option B - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

Allocate sites as part of residential allocations.

- This would ensure integration with new development and better access to services for the gypsy families.

Option C - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

Allocate sites in areas other than Sandy Lane Industrial Estate, Stourport-on-Severn.

- Gypsy families have traditionally settled in this area. However, the high numbers of pitches in such a small area is starting to dominate the area. Current planning policy resists further development of pitches in this area.

Question 25

What are your views on the different options for providing gypsy and traveller accommodation? Are there any other options which need consideration?

Housing Design Issues

7.24 Through the Wyre Forest Design Guidance SPD high quality design is encouraged for all new developments. By adhering to the principles of Building for Life the Local Authority aims to get the best possible design for the local conditions. There are three key elements to consider - how the development integrates into the neighbourhood, whether the scheme creates a place with a distinctive character and developing streets and homes which are both functional and attractive.

7.25 In addition to this, through the local plan, local authorities have the option to set additional technical standards for new housing exceeding those required by Building Regulations in respect of access and water and an optional nationally prescribed space standard. Local evidence of need will be required, as well as evidence of viability, if the local authority decides to adopt

these standards. There is now an additional standard for age friendly, accessible and adaptable housing as well as wheelchair accessible and adaptable housing which Local Planning Authorities, through their Local Plans, can require a percentage of housing to meet.

7.26 The Housing Standards Review also introduces a national space standard which sets out requirements for the gross internal floor area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height.

7.27 This consultation provides three potential options for space standards and accessibility policies.

Option A - Housing Design Issues

Adopt the national minimum space standards for new housing.

- This would apply to all new dwellings across all tenures.

Option B - Housing Design Issues

Leave space and storage standards up to individual housing developers to decide.

- This could have implications for practical space and liveability within new development.

Option C - Housing Design Issues

Adopt higher wheelchair accessibility standards for new housing.

- With an increasingly elderly population, it is important that housing is available to meet the needs of wheelchair occupants.

Question 26

What are your views on the Housing Design options? Are there any other options which you feel should be considered?

8 Providing Employment Opportunities and Retail Services

Employment

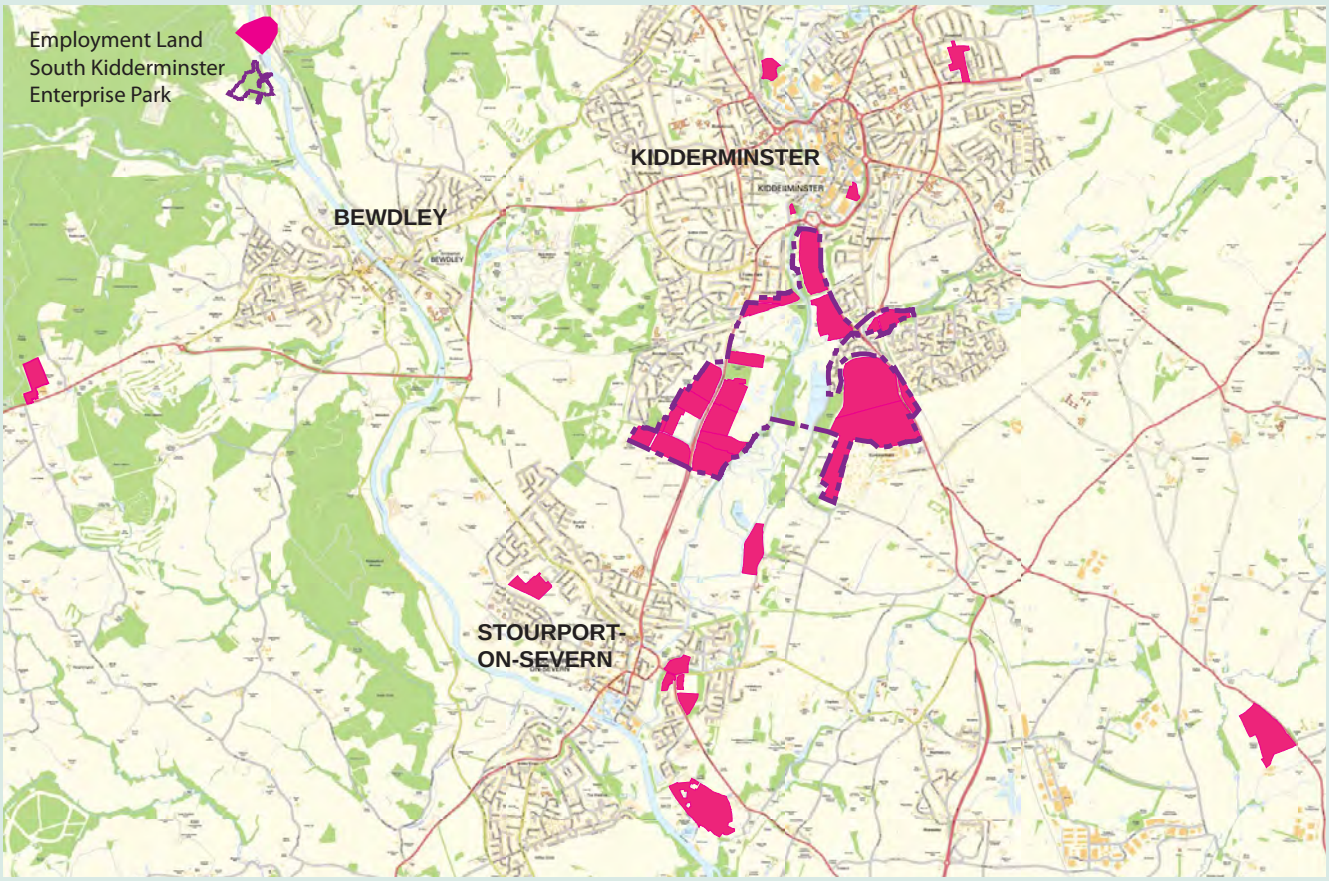
8.1 Employment opportunities within Wyre Forest District are primarily focussed around the Stourport Road employment corridor and the Worcester Road in Kidderminster. Within the rural areas employment opportunities are limited but include Titan Steel Wheels in Cookley, Bewdley Business Park and Rushock Trading Estate as well as the tourism economy.

8.2 Within Wyre Forest District new employment development is focused on brownfield sites in Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn. Stourport Road Employment Corridor provides a range of jobs across retail, manufacturing and research and development, the infrastructure and a skilled workforce is in place to support it. The ReWyre Initiative is all about partnership, working and bringing together the public, private and voluntary sectors together with the wider community to improve Kidderminster and the Wyre Forest District. The aim is to provide and develop prospects for the district and make it an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest. The Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan identifies the Stourport Road and Worcester Road employment corridors as the basis for the South Worcestershire Enterprise Park, the main focus of employment development within the District. A Local Development Order (LDO) was established in 2012 to support employment development in this area and has recently been renewed to cover the period until 2018.

8.3 Small amounts of employment development are directed to Bewdley and the main villages, this makes the most efficient use of land and service provision within the District. It is now necessary to look at future options for employment to ensure that Wyre Forest District continues to grow sustainably to support regeneration and jobs. The location of employment land is very important as it can help to sustain and improve provision and reduce the need for people to travel distances to their place of employment.

8.4 The map below indicates the location of employment land and the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park within the Wyre Forest District.

Employment Land and South Kidderminster Enterprise Park



8.5 Wyre Forest District Council has recently appointed consultants to undertake an Employment Land Review (ELR). The final report will be available in late 2015. The review will determine how much employment land is required within the District as well as looking at the quality and suitability of current employment sites. The previous ELR which dates from July 2008 identified that 44 hectares of employment land were required across the district. At the time of the previous ELR figures for employment requirements were set at regional level through the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). Since the abolition of the RSS Local Authorities are required to assess the need for employment land within their area and provide sites accordingly. It is important for inward investment to have a wide range of employment sites available for a wide range of employment requirements. Key sites need to be identified in order to secure investment.

8.6 The Government's recent drive to deliver new homes on brownfield sites is expected to put pressure on the District's employment sites. As a result there could be pressure to release greenfield sites for employment uses in order to maintain a suitable supply of employment land.

8.7 This consultation identifies three potential options for the location of employment sites.

Option A - Employment Sites

Continue to retain all existing employment sites.

- Retain all sites currently allocated for employment use as employment allocations.

Option B - Employment Sites

Consider alternative uses on some of the sites which are currently allocated for employment.

- Consider changing the allocation of any sites which are currently allocated for employment and have not been developed.

Option C - Employment Sites

Allocate new sites for employment uses within the District.

- Consider allocating new sites for employment sites, potentially on greenfield land.

Question 27

How do you think the above options could be developed to encourage investment and job creation within the District? Are there any other options we should consider?

Retaining a Skilled Workforce and Providing Jobs

8.8 It is important that there are enough economically active people available to fill jobs within the district and to meet the skills required, if this is not the case economic growth within the district could be restrained.

8.9 One of our aims is to diversify the economic base of Wyre Forest District and to promote an entrepreneurial culture to create more employment and retail opportunities for local people. To support the growth of the local economy in ways which are compatible with environmental objectives, creating conditions that sustain more and better jobs, remove the barriers to accessing jobs and raising skills including support for regeneration and diversification and strengthening tourism.

8.10 The options for developing small scale start up units and developing educational and training facilities are set out below.

Option A - Small Scale Start Up Units.

Identify specific sites for small scale units aimed at business start-ups and the creative industries.

- This option would allocate specific sites for small scale start-up units which would ensure that land was available for this use.

Option B - Small Scale Start Up Units.

Continue to designate employment sites for a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses.

- This option would allow small scale business start-up units to be developed as part of mixed use schemes.

Option C - Develop educational and training facilities.

Support the development of educational and training facilities that will develop a skilled workforce.

- This option would be promote and allocate land specifically for these facilities to help retain a skilled workforce.

Question 28

What are your views on the options above? Are there any other options that should be considered?

Creating Rural Employment Opportunities

8.11 Rural communities often have limited services and facilities. Poor public transport can prevent those without a car from accessing the facilities they need. With the decline in agriculture many farms need to diversify, for example buildings could become farm shops or holiday accommodation. Farm buildings could be used for processing and packaging, and horse livery. Diversification would help by providing jobs in rural communities as well as services.

8.12 Live/work units are where the occupier both lives and works at the same location. This can be in either urban or rural locations. The buildings may be purpose built or purposely converted from an existing building into a live/work unit. New technology and broadband is driving the trend towards combining living and working. Many live/work businesses have

established due to the fact that the nature of the business requires an on site presence both day and night. They can maintain and enhance the sustainability of other local businesses and contribute to the skills and knowledge base of the local community. It can bring an enhanced range and quality of employment opportunities locally and help to reduce the need to travel.

Option A - Creating Rural Employment Opportunities

Support and encourage genuine proposals for live/work units within the District's rural areas.

- Live/work space is defined as property that is designed for dual use, combining both residential and employment space.

Option B - Creating Rural Employment Opportunities

Allocate sites for small scale rural employment opportunities.

- This option would help to facilitate small scale employment proposals and reduce the need to travel in our rural areas.

Question 29

Do you think these options will help to increase the number of rural jobs within the District? Are there other options we should be considering to enhance rural employment opportunities?

Tourism and Leisure

8.13 Tourism makes a vital contribution to the economy of Wyre Forest District via direct spending and in creating jobs. Within the District visitors come to visit attractions such as the West Midlands Safari Park, Severn Valley Railway, the Wyre Forest, Bewdley Musuem and Bodenham Arboretum. For this industry to continue to flourish there may be a need to broaden the range and offer of visitor attractions and accommodation. There are a high proportion of visitors as day trippers from the West midlands conurbation. If they were attracted to stay for longer to visit more attractions and with a wide range of accommodation the local economy would be boosted. Visitors may use the town centres for shopping, as well as local cafés and restaurants.

Option A - Ensuring viable tourist attractions

Concentrate on our existing tourist sectors.

- This option would be to retain and expand existing tourist facilities in the District.

Option B - Ensuring viable tourist attractions

Develop new tourist attractions.

- This option would be to encourage new tourist attractions into the District.

Question 30

How should we encourage a wider range of tourist attractions and accommodation to Wyre Forest District?

Retail

8.14 Within Wyre Forest District, Kidderminster is the main retail area with smaller shopping areas in Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley. The rural areas of the District have, in the larger villages, a number of shops and in the smaller villages there are few retail facilities.

8.15 In Kidderminster, Weavers Wharf is very successful and attracts many high quality retail stores. It rarely has any empty units and vacancies are filled very quickly. The traditional shopping areas which include High Street, Vicar Street and Worcester Street do not attract the same retailers and this results in empty retail premises some of which are large and are much slower to be re let. It is proposed that Crown House will be demolished and this will allow for the expansion of Weavers Wharf to include the area around the Bull Ring.

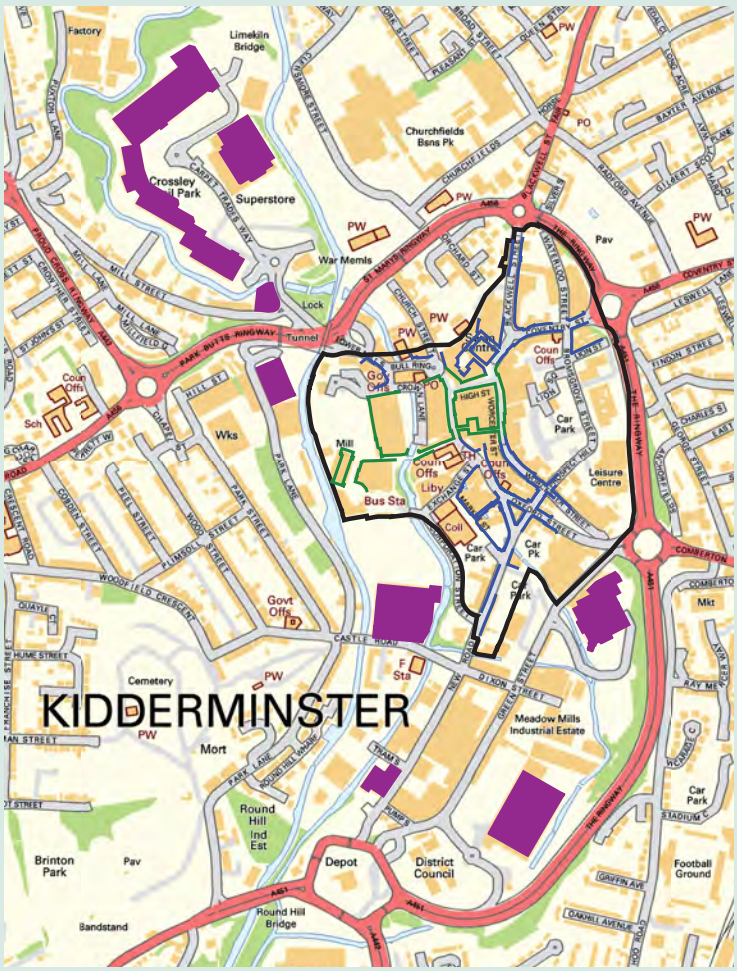
8.16 The traditional role of the town centre as a destination to buy goods and services has been impacted upon by the growth in online retail and services and the rise in click and collect facilities. Click-and-collect is seen as strengthening the high street as consumers visit the shops to collect their online purchases and may visit other retailers or services within the town centre.

8.17 National planning policy promotes competitive town centre environments. It encourages Local Authorities to recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality. Town centres and primary shopping areas should be based on the definition of primary and secondary shopping frontages. Town centres should plan for anticipated future economic changes and have a variety of uses including retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development.

8.18 Councils should define primary shopping areas based on a clear definition of primary and secondary retail frontages and set policies that make it clear which uses will be permitted in such locations. Primary shopping frontages are the most important retail frontages with the greatest pedestrian flows and greatest concentration of shops for comparison goods. Secondary shopping frontages are in close proximity to the primary frontage, but are occupied by a lower proportion of retail uses and provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses.

8.19 The diagram below shows the Primary Shopping Area for Kidderminster town centre as included within the existing Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan.

Kidderminster Retail



Primary Shopping Area
Primary Shopping Frontage
Secondary Shopping Frontage
Edge of Centre /
Out of Centre Retailing

8.20 There are two potential options for enhancing the shopping area in Kidderminster. You may have some alternative suggestions for options which you feel we have not yet identified.

Option A - Ensuring a Viable Kidderminster Town Centre

Continue to use the existing primary shopping area in Kidderminster for enhanced retail opportunity in the town centre.

- This option would retain the existing primary shopping area and does not take account of recent changes in town centre shopping patterns.

Option B - Ensuring a Viable Kidderminster Town Centre

Amend the primary shopping area in Kidderminster and remove Worcester Street and Bromsgrove Street to enable them to be developed for alternative uses.

- This option would change the primary shopping area to take account of new retail developments and changing shopping patterns within the town centre.

Question 31

Do you think that the primary shopping area should change to reflect more recent changes to Kidderminster town centre or do you think we should retain the existing allocation to encourage retail back to the Worcester Street area? What alternative land uses would contribute to the overall vitality of the town centre?

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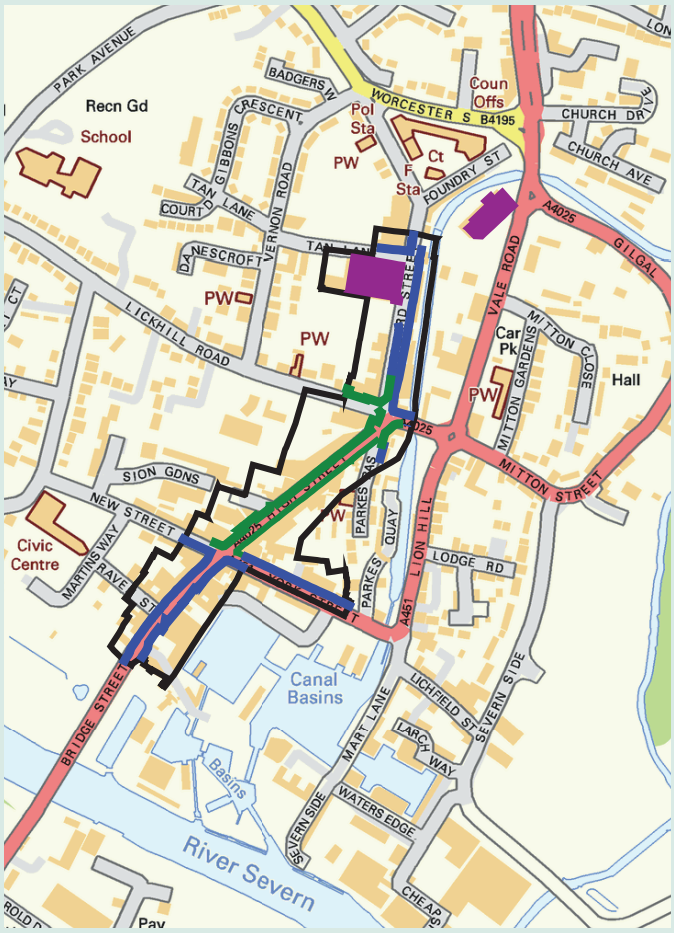
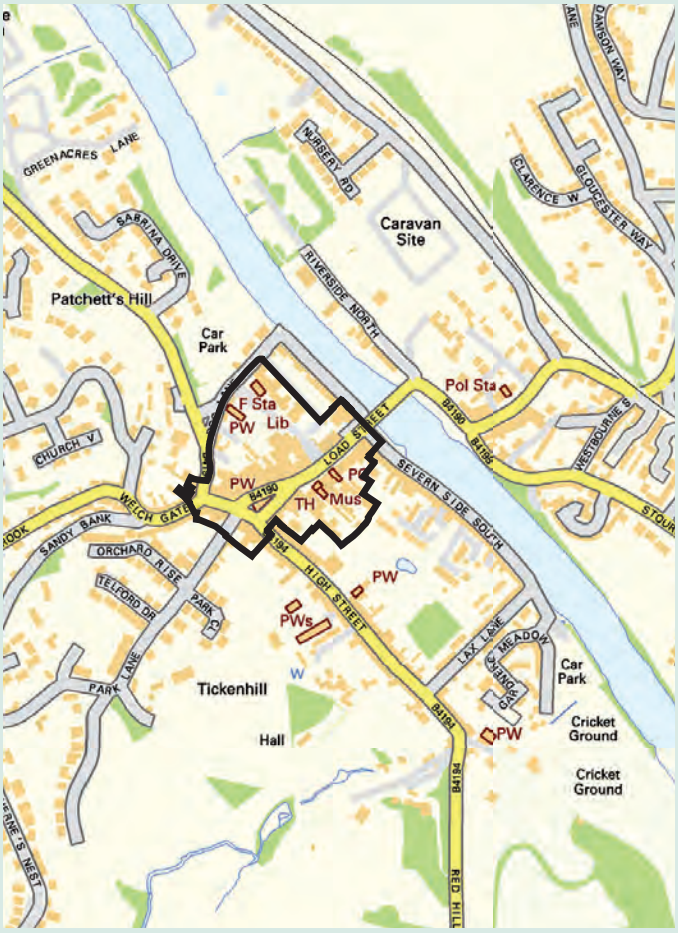
Appendix 2

8.21 Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley both have traditional High Street shopping facilities which together with local facilities provide the shops for the towns. Stourport-on-Severn is well served with supermarkets, Bewdley has smaller scale shops and convenience stores. The Primary Shopping Area of both towns is shown below.

Stourport-on-Severn Retail



Bewdley Retail



Primary Shopping Area | Primary Shopping Frontage | Secondary Shopping Frontage

Edge of Centre / Out of Centre Retailing

8.22 The potential options for a viable town centre in Stourport-on-Severn are set out below:

Option A - Ensuring Stourport-on-Severn town centre remains viable.

Retain the primary shopping area as it currently exists.

Option B - Ensuring Stourport-on-Severn town centre remains viable.

Extend or amend the primary shopping area to allow for a mix of town centre uses within the area.

Question 32

Do you think Stourport's Primary Shopping area should be amended? Do you have any further options for consideration?

8.23 The potential options for a viable town centre in Bewdley are set out below:

Option A - Ensuring Bewdley Town Centre remains viable

Retain the existing primary shopping area as it currently exists.

Option B - Ensuring BewdleyTown Centre remains viable

Extend or amend the primary shopping area to allow for a mix of town centre uses within the area.

Question 33

Do you think Bewdley's Primary Shopping area should be amended? Do you have any further options for consideration?

8.24 The retention of local centres and village shops provide a valuable role in meeting local community needs. Providing facilities close to homes reduces the need to travel by private car and creates more desirable and socially inclusive neighbourhoods. Local centres include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically, local centres might include, amongst others, shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. The options for retaining local shops and services are set out below:

Option A - Retaining local shops and services

Continue to protect and enhance local retail services.

- Designate neighbourhood and village centres. Development proposals should not result in a reduction of retail convenience uses within a settlement.

Option B - Retaining local shops and services

Provide more flexibility for conversions and extensions for retail purposes within neighbourhood and village centres.

- This would provide support for small scale conversions and extensions and would allow flexibility for businesses to assist with their viability.

Question 34

Do you think it is important to safeguard and enhance local retail services? Are there any further options that should be considered?

9 Safeguarding Character and Local Distinctiveness

9.1 The local environment, be it natural or built, is one of Wyre Forest's strengths. The District contains a rich variety of assets from historical buildings and conservation areas to the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and the Rivers Severn and Stour and their tributaries together with several regionally important habitats. It attracts both residents to live here and visitors to come for day trips or short holidays. It needs to be both safeguarded and enhanced. The District is mainly rural in terms of area with 85% classified as rural. The countryside is readily accessible from the main urban areas.

9.2 The rural areas to the east of the River Severn are safeguarded from development as they are covered by the West Midlands Green Belt. Much of this land is also of high agricultural value.

Landscape

9.3 Much of the District is underlain by sandstone which is dissected by the valleys of the Rivers Severn and Stour. A large amount of the land to the east of the River Severn is in arable use, whilst that to the west is more hilly and wooded with pastures. The Wyre Forest itself dominates the north west of the district. Development to the east of the River Severn outside of the larger settlements is strictly controlled by Green Belt policy. To the west of the River Severn, the landscape is characterised by smaller settlements, small farms, orchards and forest. The Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment SPD splits the district (outside of the built-up areas) into six distinctive landscape types as follows:

- Sandstone estatelands
- Timbered plateau farmlands
- Estate farmlands
- Principal wooded hills
- Forest smallholdings and dwellings
- Wooded forest

Question 35

What approach do you think should be taken to protect the landscape in Wyre Forest district?

Should we have different policies for each Landscape Character type?

9.4 One of the key issues facing our rural areas, especially within the Severn Valley, is the high number of chalets and mobile homes. In some parts of the district, these 'temporary' buildings outnumber permanent dwellings. Current planning policy strictly controls any expansion of this provision.

9.5 This consultation identifies three potential options for chalet developments.

Option A - Chalet Provision

Continue to strictly control any expansion of chalets and mobile homes.

- There is concern around the collective impact on the landscape of this proliferation of temporary buildings.

Option B - Chalet Provision

Allow small extensions to existing sites for future provision.

- Landscape impact would need to be carefully controlled.

Option C - Chalet Provision

Allow development of small sites for holiday purposes only.

- As part of farm diversification, this can be a useful source of additional low-cost holiday accommodation.

Question 36

What are your views on the options set out for chalet provision. Are there any other options which should be considered?

9.6 Horse-riding and keeping horses is a popular past time in Wyre Forest. It is a popular means of diversifying agriculture but development needs to be carefully controlled if it is not to impact too negatively on the existing landscape. Additional buildings, floodlighting and sub-division of fields can all negatively impact on the openness of the countryside.

9.7 This consultation identifies a further three options for controlling horsiculture. We would like you to consider these different approaches and let us have your views. You may have some alternative suggestions to put forward for consideration.

Option A - Horsiculture

Continue with current policy.

- Existing policy aims to minimise the impact of equestrian facilities on the landscape by restricting leisure stables to a maximum size and siting them where they will have

the least impact. Commercial facilities are also tightly controlled especially as regards floodlighting. Amenity of nearby residential areas also needs careful consideration.

Option B - Horsiculture

Tighten controls still further by only allowing commercial developments within existing converted buildings.

- Existing policy encourages reuse of buildings but does not rule out new build.

Option C- Horsiculture

Relax policy and rely on general policies for rural development instead.

- This would enable further diversification but adverse impacts on landscape are more likely.

Question 37

Do you consider that any of these proposals are the correct approach or is planning policy too restrictive on equine development?

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

9.8 Wyre Forest District has extensive areas of woodland, grassland and marshland. Many of these are protected as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or Local Wildlife Sites. The Rivers Severn and Stour and their tributaries together with the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal are also important contributors to biodiversity helping to bring nature right into the centre of the towns. Many of the larger nature areas are immediately adjacent to residential estates, thus bringing nature within easy walking distance of a large proportion of the population.

9.9 The District is home to several areas of acid grassland which does not occur elsewhere in Worcestershire. It is important to encourage better management of these limited resources. However, easy public access brings with it disadvantages, not least problems of anti-social behaviour, including arson, fly-tipping and dog fouling.

9.10 The Wyre Forest District also has quite a distinctive geology with several exposed sandstone cuttings along main roads and small rock dwellings, especially to the north of Kidderminster.

9.11 The local plan needs to maintain and improve the natural environment and should include policies to ensure development proposals minimise the negative impacts on biodiversity and, if possible, provide a net gain. A key challenge is how to balance the delivery of new development against the need to protect the rich biodiversity and geodiversity in the district. New development can potentially lead to habitat and species loss and may indirectly affect protected sites through increased water usage, increased waste water and recreational disturbance. Brownfield sites that have been unused for long periods of time may also have quite high biodiversity value.

Option A - Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Continue to protect all designated sites and priority species from development and, where development is proposed on an adjacent site, require a buffer zone around the site.

Option B - Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Encourage the enhancement of existing biodiversity of watercourses through development of adjacent sites.

- Many of the redevelopment sites in Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn lie adjacent to the River Stour or the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and provide opportunities for enhancement of these waterways. Examples of successful schemes include the Morrisons and Tesco developments in Kidderminster.

Question 38

How can planning policy encourage increased usage of these natural assets and thus minimise anti-social behaviour issues?

Do you consider that existing policy is robust enough to safeguard the natural environment?

Green Infrastructure

9.12 As part of the previous Local Plan, a Green Infrastructure Study was published in 2010 and it was followed up with a Green Infrastructure Strategy in October 2012. The study provides a detailed overview of the existing green infrastructure network and identifies gaps. The Strategy sets out opportunities for providing the missing links to the network as part of the delivery of regeneration schemes. It is particularly important to build on the opportunities provided by the River Stour and the canal to link a number of development sites and enhance existing provision. The Green Infrastructure Strategy will be refreshed as part of this Local Plan Review. The existing Open Space Audit will also be refreshed in the light of changes in recent years. Green

infrastructure and open space have a number of benefits, including encouraging an active lifestyle, enhancing biodiversity, reducing the carbon footprint, creating an attractive environment, enhancing community pride, alleviating flooding, increasing tourism and providing recreational routes.

9.13 This consultation identifies three potential options for green infrastructure.

Option A - Green Infrastructure

Continue to safeguard the existing green infrastructure network as set out in the Green Infrastructure Study and Strategy.

- Development will be expected to enhance nearby existing green infrastructure.

Option B - Green Infrastructure

Identify specific opportunities for major development proposals to provide additional green infrastructure to help provide the missing links in the network.

Option C - Green Infrastructure

Continue to safeguard the site of the proposed Stour Valley Country Park.

- There is a long standing proposal to create a Stour Valley Park immediately to the north of Kidderminster Town Centre. The Churchfields urban village concept is coming to fruition with the first two phases completed. With more people now living in this area, it is important to encourage residents to use the countryside on their doorstep.

Question 39

Do you consider more could be made of the green infrastructure network?

Where do you think the key gaps are?

How can we best protect and enhance existing green infrastructure?

Do you agree that the planning authority should continue to safeguard the site of the proposed Stour Valley Country Park?

Built Heritage

9.14 Wyre Forest contains large numbers of designated heritage assets including 17 conservation areas, nearly 700 listed buildings and 9 scheduled monuments together with one registered park and garden. Character Appraisals have been completed for all of the Conservation Areas. These will help developers to respond sensitively to proposals for development within conservation areas and those affecting listed buildings. Wyre Forest district contains a wealth of heritage assets which play an important part in the local character and identity of the district. It is important to protect both designated and non-designated heritage assets and, if possible, enhance them via the Local Plan. The Historic Environment Record (HER) which is held by Worcestershire County Council contains over 6,000 entries relating to the District. This is being added to all the time.

9.15 The District Council has adopted Local Heritage Lists for Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn, Bewdley, Wolverley and Cookley and Churchill and Blakedown. In the future, working jointly with parish councils, the council intends to roll these lists out to cover the remaining rural areas. These lists identify features which are considered to be of local significance and ensure that the historic value of locally important heritage assets is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

9.16 Heritage Assets are most at risk through neglect, decay and other threats. The options for addressing this are set out below:

Option A - Built Heritage

Provide site specific policies to safeguard historic landscapes, archaeological sites, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas together with non-designated heritage assets.

Option B - Built Heritage

Have an overarching development management policy to protect all heritage assets and retain conservation areas.

Option C - Built Heritage

Simply rely on national guidance contained in National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance.

Question 40

How do you think the Council should weigh the balance between harm to designated heritage assets against the public benefits of a development proposal including securing the optimum viable use?

Local Distinctiveness

9.17 Local distinctiveness is created by the unique physical, social and economic character of an area. Achieving a high standard of design is not just about architectural style. It also needs to consider the local context. The recently adopted Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document should aid developers in creating an attractive built environment.

9.18 Two potential options for reinforcing local distinctiveness are put forward below. Please let us have your views on these options.

Option A - Reinforcing Local Distinctiveness

Provide specific design guidance for specific locations and specify design criteria for each allocated site.

- This would avoid standardised design solutions.

Option B - Reinforcing Local Distinctiveness

In areas with little or no particular character, raise the design quality through innovative and high quality design approaches and the provision of specific development guidelines via a masterplan if appropriate.

- A Masterplan has been produced for the Churchfields area of Kidderminster and one is also proposed for the Bromsgrove Street area of the town.

Question 41

How should the local plan ensure that Local Distinctiveness is reinforced? Are there other potential options that need to be considered?

10 A Well Served District

Transport

10.1 Transport policy at all levels focuses on reducing the need to travel by private car and encouraging people to choose more sustainable forms of transport which are primarily walking, cycling and public transport services. The rural nature of large parts of the District can make modal shift difficult. Congestion is an on-going problem in the towns of Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley, especially at peak times.

Encouraging Sustainable Transport Choices

10.2 Sustainable transport choices can play a significant role in improving health and well-being. Walking and cycling have obvious health benefits and people who use public transport are more likely to walk for part of their journey than those who drive. The District has pockets of poor health and promoting walking and cycling as a means of transport can help to address this.

10.3 The NPPF focuses on the importance of sustainable transport choices and the wider role that this can play in achieving sustainability and health objectives as well as reducing congestion. The role of technology in reducing the need to travel, through virtual meetings and information sharing, is also recognised.

10.4 New development should be located where it is accessible by public transport, this is particularly important for developments with high trip generation. This is more difficult to achieve in rural areas and consideration needs to be given as to how new development can encourage the provision and use of public transport and how the solutions will vary between urban and rural areas. Within Wyre Forest District, the villages and rural settlements to the West of the District have better bus services than those to the East. The range of services and facilities also varies by settlement, on the whole, the villages to the East have a greater range of services and facilities than those to the West.

10.5 Key facilities such as schools and shops should be located within walking distance of most new residential properties. New development within the District which is within 30 minutes public transport travel time of a range of key facilities has exceeded the 90% target for the last three years.

10.6 New developments need to design in walking and cycling facilities and deliver the infrastructure required to support sustainable transport choices. However, encouraging sustainable transport options requires a behavioural change, this is dependant on better education to promote a range of transport options and their benefits. Whilst planning can put in place the physical infrastructure to enable a behavioural change, it can not force it to happen. By ensuring that settlements provide a basic range of services to meet day-to-day needs the need to travel into the larger towns to access these services is reduced. This issue is considered within the section entitled 'Providing Employment Opportunities and Retail Services'.

10.7 Three potential options for promoting sustainable transport are included below. We would like you to consider these different approaches and let us have your views. You may have some alternative suggestions for options which you feel we have not yet identified.

Option A - Sustainable Transport

Require new developments to demonstrate within a Transport Statement how they facilitate walking and cycling and the use of public transport.

- This option would require applicants to demonstrate how they would try to reduce car dependence in new developments.

Option B - Sustainable Transport

Require that new developments make available information on walking, cycling and public transport links to all new residents.

- This option would require developers to provide information to new residents/occupants on the public transport options available to them and the walking and cycling routes within the locality.
- This could be potentially difficult to enforce.

Option C - Sustainable Transport

Seek contributions to infrastructure to support sustainable transport choices through S106 agreements.

- This option would require S106 funding towards the provision of sustainable transport measures for example bus provision, walking routes and cycling routes.

Question 42

What are your views on the options set out for sustainable transport? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Rail Travel

10.8 The District has two rail stations. Rail station usage within the District has increased over recent years, Blakedown has doubled in passenger numbers whereas usage of Kidderminster station has trebled since the late 1990s making it the second busiest station in the country. It is likely that some of this growth is attributable to changing commuting patterns and some is attributable to people choosing the train instead of the car. It is also acknowledged that there is a trend for Wyre Forest residents to drive to Stourbridge Junction station to access Birmingham because services are more frequent and parking is more readily available and free of charge. Kidderminster Station is due to be upgraded to increase its capacity and the

passenger experience, works will include a new station building, improved passenger facilities, a new forecourt layout, and better access for pedestrians, people with disabilities, cyclists, taxi and bus operators and their passengers. Access to the station from the A448 Comberton Hill will be improved by the installation of traffic lights at the junction with Lea Street. Funding is now in place to deliver the upgrades and work is expected to start in Summer 2016 and take around 18 months to complete. This improvements could lead to additional demand for services from the station.

10.9 This consultation identifies two potential options for encouraging rail travel.

Option A - Encouraging Rail Travel

Build at higher densities on sites within 15 minutes walk of Kidderminster Rail Station to concentrate more residents within easy access of the station.

- This option would allow a greater number of properties to be built within close proximity to Kidderminster Station.
- This could attract people who relocate to Birmingham or Worcester for employment to stay within Kidderminster and commute by rail, helping to retain younger people within the District.
- The option is restricted by the fact that there are not many potential redevelopment sites within 15 minutes walk of the rail station.

Option B- Encouraging Rail Travel

Improve parking at Blakedown Rail Station to increase use of the station.

- This option would allow a greater number of people to commute from Blakedown station.
- This option could reduce congestion and demand for parking at Kidderminster Station.
- The option could also encourage more people to travel by rail, reducing congestion on the A456 towards Birmingham.

Question 43

What are your views on the options set out for encouraging rail travel? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Car Parking

10.10 The main retail centres (Kidderminster, Stourport-on-Severn and Bewdley) have a range of parking options covering short, medium and long-stay parking, some of which is located in car parks and some is located on-street. The Local Plan should seek to ensure that parking facilities within the town centres in particular balance the need to support their vitality and viability with the need to ensure that non-car modes of transport are attractive and realistic alternatives.

10.11 This consultation identifies two potential options for town centre car-parking.

Option A - Car Parking

Ensure that the town centres in particular have parking facilities of sufficient quality and quantity to ensure their vitality and viability without compromising the need to encourage people to use alternatives to the private car.

- This option is unlikely to reduce car use.

Option B - Car Parking

Plan to reduce car-parking within the town centre to force people to consider alternatives to the private car.

- This option would also free up space for new development within the town centre.

Question 44

What are your views on the options set out for car-parking? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Road Infrastructure

Stourport Relief Road

10.12 The line of the Stourport Relief Road has been safeguarded for a number of years. The current aspiration is that the road could be delivered later in the current plan period (2021-2026). This is subject to funding being secured and to some extent it is also dependant on the level of new development located within the Stourport-on-Severn area and the level of developer contributions which could be secured from this development. The most significant costs are associated with delivering the part of the road which would provide a second crossing over the River Severn. The link from the Stourport Road to the Worcester Road (via the Timber Lane housing estate where part of the road has already been delivered) are less significant in

terms of cost and there is potential to deliver sections as part of new development. If the line isn't safeguarded then development could take place along the route which would prevent the road being able to be delivered in the future.

10.13 This consultation identifies three potential options for the Stourport Relief Road.

Option A - Stourport Relief Road

Continue to safeguard the line of the Stourport Relief Road in its entirety.

- This option would safeguard the current proposed line of the Stourport Relief Road. New development would not be allowed along the line.
- The Relief Road could be developed easily if the funding were to become available.
- New developments could continue to provide pieces of the Relief Road with the long-term ambition being to complete the entire road.

Option B - Stourport Relief Road

Continue to safeguard only the line of the Stourport Relief Road which runs from the Stourport Road to the Worcester Road.

- This would allow a partial implementation of the Relief Road and would ease congestion by providing a direct link between the Hartlebury Road and Worcester Road and then onto the already completed link road over the River Stour.

Option C - Stourport Relief Road

Do not continue to safeguard the line of the Stourport Relief Road.

- Not continuing to safeguard the line of the Relief Road would meant that parcels of land could be developed which would affect the ability to implement the road if funding became available in the future.

Question 45

What are your views on the options set out for the Stourport Relief Road? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Enhancing Access to the Strategic Motorway Network

10.14 Wyre Forest District has relatively poor road links to the wider strategic motorway network. In recent years this issue has become more prominent for businesses who are either located in the District or looking to relocate to the area. Depending on the level and location of development proposed within the Local Plan Review, it will be important to think about how this issue could be addressed in the longer term through the Plan Review.

10.15 The A449 from Kidderminster to Claines Island was previously a two-lane dual carriageway for its entirety. However, in many parts the carriageway has been reduced down to one lane in each direction with a reduced speed limit of 50mph. The scheme was designed to improve access to side roads, however, it has hindered traffic flow on the main route. There is now pressure to reinstate this as dual carriageway to address logistics and journey times for businesses locating in our District.

10.16 In addition to the Stourport Relief Road, the District Council has previously historically safeguarded the route for a Kidderminster Eastern Bypass which was proposed by the Highways Agency in the early 1990s. However, in 1996 the proposed route was withdrawn from the Trunk Road construction programme and in 2004 the Council ceased to protect the line of the road.

10.17 Two potential options are highlighted for improving access to the strategic motorway network:

Option A - Improving Access to the Strategic Motorway Network

Work with Worcestershire County Council to return the A449 to a two lane dual carriageway between Kidderminster and Claines island.

- This option would require support from Worcestershire County Council.
- It may have some implications for the future location of developments in the District

Option B - Improving Access to the Strategic Motorway Network

Consider the implementation of a Kidderminster Eastern Bypass

- This option would depend on the exact amount and location of new development which the Plan will deliver.
- In order to safeguard the line of a proposed route for a Kidderminster Eastern Bypass, the District Council will need to be able to demonstrate its deliverability during the plan period.
- This option would require the support of Worcestershire County Council as well as significant funding, which would need to be sought through external funding programmes and from new developments.

Question 46

What are your views on the options set out for improving access to the strategic motorway network? Are there other options which should be considered through the Plan Review?

Lorry Route Network

10.18 The existing Lorry Route Network is safeguarded through the current planning policy documents. It is shown on the map at Appendix B. This is the network of roads which lorries are directed towards in order to keep them, as much as possible, to main roads and away from wholly residential areas.

Question 47

Is the current Lorry Route Network still the most appropriate network of roads for lorries to be directed towards? If not, where and how should it be amended?

Bus Route Network

10.19 The existing Bus Route Network is safeguarded through the current planning policy documents. This is the network of roads which reflects the bus routes within the District. There have been a number of significant changes to bus routes recently and therefore, it might be appropriate to review this. The map at appendix C shows the current bus priority network.

Question 48

Is the current bus route network still reflective of strategic bus routes within the District. If not, how and where should it be amended?

Air Quality

10.20 The District has two Air Quality Management Areas – St Mary's/Horsefair, Kidderminster and Welch Gate, Bewdley. These both arise primarily from traffic congestion within the affected areas, both result from traffic pollution. They are both located in areas where traffic struggles to flow and the fumes arising from stationary vehicles cause the air quality issues.

St Mary's/ Horesefair

10.21 The St. Mary's/Horsefair AQMA lies adjacent to the Churchfields regeneration area. The Local Plan Review will need to consider whether the existing allocations are still appropriate for the area. New development in this area will need to contribute to alleviating the transport issues which are resulting in the AQMA designation.

10.22 This consultation identifies four potential options for addressing the AQMA at St. Mary's/Horsefair.

Option A - Horsefair AQMA

Continue with the current residential led regeneration of the Churchfields area and require transport improvements to be made in the Horsefair as part of the development.

- This option would deliver a residential led development on the Churchfields site and road improvements would need to be made as part of the development in order to increase the capacity of the network.

Option B - Horsefair AQMA

Seek to provide a second vehicular canal crossing linking Churchfields to Crossley Park (Lime Kiln Bridge) as part of the regeneration of Churchfields.

- This option would provide an additional bridging point over the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal with a new access to Crossley Retail Park.
- The Ring Road would be able to be accessed via Crossley Retail Park.
- Crossley Park is already congested at peak times and this could exacerbate the situation.

Option C - Horsefair AQMA

Seek to provide an additional access to the ring road from Churchfields as part of the comprehensive redevelopment of the area. This could then lead to the implementation of a one-way system in the Horsefair.

- This option would provide an access to the Ring Road directly from Churchfields without the need to go via the Horsefair.
- The option could serve new development alone or the road network could be redesigned to reduce traffic in the Horsefair.
- The Horsefair could be made one-way as part of this option, allowing for more on-street parking and an improved pedestrian environment.

Option D - Horsefair AQMA

Demolish the buildings one side of the Horsefair allowing the road to be widened to alleviate congestion.

- This option would allow for the road to be widened and would reduce congestion, thereby improving air quality.
- This option would have a detrimental effect on the character of the area with the loss of historic buildings.

Question 49

What are your views on the options set out for the Horsefair AQMA? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Welch Gate, Bewdley

10.23 The Welch Gate, Bewdley AQMA lies within a tightly constrained area of historic development. Therefore, this AQMA will need to be addressed using road layout changes, diverting traffic onto the bypass and encouraging people to choose alternatives to the private car.

10.24 This consultation identifies three potential options for addressing the AQMA at Welch Gate, Bewdley.

Option A - Welch Gate, Bewdley AQMA

Work with Worcestershire County Council through the Local Transport Plan process to look at the road layout and amend it to alleviate the AQMA.

- This option would be reliant on joint working with Worcestershire County Council.

Option B - Welch Gate, Bewdley AQMA

Rely on the diversion of traffic onto the bypass to alleviate the AQMA issue.

- This approach would be reliant on education and promotion as well as signposting.

Option C - Welch Gate, Bewdley AQMA

Provide parking on the Wribbenhall side of the river either as part of a park and ride or park and walk scheme to reduce the number of vehicles driving through Welch Gate.

- This option would require a suitable site to be allocated for park and ride facilities to operate from on the Wribbenhall side of the river. The constrained nature of the area

near to the River crossing means that it is likely that any parking provision would be further away from the town centre and therefore a park and ride facility would be most appropriate.

Question 50

What are your views on the options set out for the Welch Gate, Bewdley AQMA? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Services and Facilities

Health Care Facilities

10.25 Access to local health care facilities is an important issue for residents given the downgrading of Kidderminster Hospital and the requirement to travel further afield to access hospital facilities. It is important that existing facilities are maintained and enhanced in the three towns and that access to health care in the District's villages and rural areas is improved. Pressure on health care facilities is heightened as a result of the District's ageing population. Since the adoption of the last plan there has been a consolidation of health care provision within Kidderminster with a new health care facility opening adjacent to Kidderminster Hospital to provide GP services. A further health care facility is due to open within Kidderminster town centre later this year to provide additional services.

Education Facilities

10.26 The move from a three tier education system to a two tier system is now well established. However, upgrades to educational infrastructure are still continuing. The loss of Building Schools for the Future funding has meant that some sites have not been upgraded as planned. Significant changes to the way new development funds infrastructure are just taking effect, meaning that new developments can not make generic contributions to infrastructure, they can only contribute to specific projects. This is a particular issue for funding education infrastructure. Parallel to this, there has been significant investment in post-16 education across the District with new college premises opening within the Town Centre.

Question 51

How can the Local Pan review ensure that adequate education infrastructure is provided to meet the needs of the District's population?

Question 52

Should larger developments be required to provide new educational facilities?

Open Space, Sport and Recreation

10.27 An open space, sport and recreation assessment was published in 2008 and is due to be updated. The study looked at both the quantity and quality of open space provision. The study assessed local provision of all categories of open space from parks, natural open space and amenity greenspace through to playspace and sports facilities as well as allotments. It concluded that most of the District was well provided with open space in terms of access and quantity but that there was a lack of allotments in certain areas and poor provision for young people.

10.28 The current Plan safeguards all open space from development. However, some areas of open space could be used to meet the need for new development, particularly where there is an over provision of space or where spaces have been identified as poor quality.

10.29 This consultation identifies three potential options for addressing open space provision.

Option A - Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Continue to safeguard all designated areas of open space.

- This option would safeguard all open space, sport and recreational facilities regardless of their quality.

Option B- Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Promote some areas as development sites.

- This option would mean that some open space, sport and recreation sites could be allocated for development. This could be replaced with compensatory provision or smaller, better quality open space facilities could be included within new development.

Option C - Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Require all apartment schemes to provide communal garden space for food production.

- This option would ensure that residents of apartment developments had the option to grow their own food.

Question 53

What are your views on the options set out for the provision of open space, sport and recreation? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Funding Infrastructure

10.30 The District Council currently requires new developments to contribute towards new infrastructure provision through Section 106 agreements. These agreements can provide physical infrastructure, for example highway improvements, open space, and play provision, or a financial contribution towards the provision of education provision or the maintenance of existing open spaces. Recent changes to Section 106 agreements have restricted their use. The District Council is also intending to progress CIL to come into effect following the adoption of the Local Plan.

10.31 This consultation identifies three potential options for funding infrastructure.

Option A - Funding Infrastructure

Continue to use Section 106 agreements to fund all of the types of infrastructure it currently funds.

- This includes education, open space, play provision, highways as well as other infrastructure specific to the development.

Option B- Funding Infrastructure

Reduce the use of Section 106 agreements.

- Use Section 106 agreements only where they are absolutely necessary to deliver the infrastructure required to make the development acceptable in planning terms. This could mean that funding for education and open space in particular is reduced.

Option C - Funding Infrastructure

Implement the Community Infrastructure Levy alongside the Local Plan Review.

- This would involve consulting on and adopting a Charging Schedule and a list of the Infrastructure to be funded through CIL.

- CIL is non-negotiable once adopted.
- S106 agreements can not be used to fund any items of infrastructure which are on the CIL list. The list can not include affordable housing which would still be secured using S106 agreements.

Question 54

What are your views on the options set out for funding infrastructure? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

11 Tackling Climate Change and its Impacts

Introduction

11.1 Climate change is a key issue within the District. Reducing our contribution to climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a key consideration but we also need to take measures to respond to the already inevitable effects of climate change to minimise the impact they have on the District. Climate change is expected to continue during the plan period. Hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters are expected together with an increase in frequency of intense rainfall events. This has implications for flooding, ground stability and the need to heat and more commonly, cool buildings.

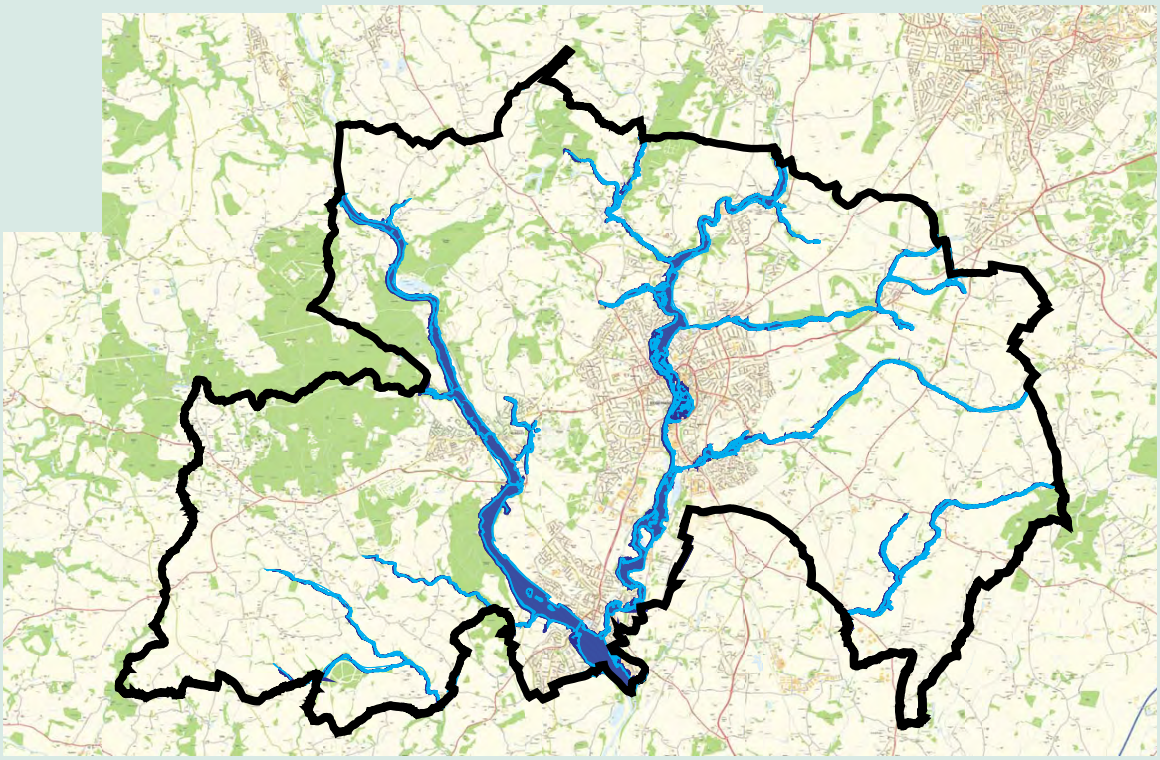
11.2 Climate change policy at all levels emphasises the importance of a two pronged approach which covers the need to reduce contributions to climate change as well as the need to adapt to the already inevitable effects. This section does not consider emissions from transport as transport is covered within the 'A Well Served District' section of this paper.

11.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights the importance of planning in tackling emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change as well as supporting the deliver of renewable and low-carbon energy. It also requires that Local Planning Authorities plan new development in a way that minimises carbon emissions and avoids increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change.

Flood Risk

11.4 The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to consider flood risk as part of their Local Plans. Flood risk is a significant issue within the District. The River Stour flows through Kidderminster, Bewdley lies alongside the River Severn and the Rivers Stour and Severn meet at Stourport-on-Severn. Additionally, the District has a number of streams and brooks which can be the source of flooding. In more recent years, surface water flooding has became an increasing concern as a result of more intense rainfall events. There are a number of flood defences in place, a bund system helps to manage flood risk in Kidderminster and demountable riverside defences to help manage flood risk in Bewdley. Within Stourport-on-Severn, the functional floodplain at Riverside Meadows provides natural flood alleviation.

Flood Zones 2 and 3



11.5 Local Plans should be supported by Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and develop policies to manage flood risk from all sources. Local Plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid where possible flood risk to people and property. The NPPG requires that Local Plans are supported by Strategic Flood Risk Assessments, Water Resources Management Plans and Water Cycle Studies.

11.6 This consultation identifies three options for addressing flood risk.

Option A - Flood Risk

Continue to permit the redevelopment of available sites within the floodplain.

- Allowing redevelopment could lead to reduced flood risk.

Option B - Flood Risk

Prevent the redevelopment of sites within the floodplain instead using land for flood prevention or other non built land uses.

- This would be costly to implement.

Option C - Flood Risk

Relocate vulnerable uses areas outside of the floodplain.

- This option would reduce flood risk by taking the most vulnerable uses out of the floodplain.

Question 55

What are your views on the options set out for managing flood risk? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Question 56

How should the Plan ensure that flood risk is adequately managed and that new development both within and outside of the flood plain does not increase flood risk to new or existing properties and assets?

Water Efficiency

11.7 The Housing Standards Review sets out a water efficiency target of 125 litres per person per day for all new dwellings which will be implemented through Building Regulations. There is an optional higher target which further reduces water consumption in new dwellings to 110 litres per person per day. In order to adopt this target within the Local Plan, we would need to demonstrate that there was sufficient evidence to support this. The evidence would need to relate to availability of water and pressure on water resources to demonstrate that the approach was necessary, as well as the financial viability of requiring new dwellings to meet this additional standard. Most of the public water supply for the District comes from groundwater abstraction. These groundwater reserves have no scope for further abstraction. In parts of the District the Environment Agency is working with the water companies and other abstractors in order to reduce abstraction to sustainable rates and avoid long term adverse impact on wetlands and landscape and nature conservation interests. The viability of the approach would be consider through a whole plan viability assessment at the Preferred Options stage.

11.8 This consultation identifies two options for water efficiency.

Option A - Water Efficiency

Implement the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day through the Local Plan Review.

- This option would impose a higher standard than is required through the Building Regulations and would need to be supported by evidence to demonstrate water stress within the area a swell as evidence to demonstrate that it is financially viable.

Option B - Water Efficiency

Continue to use the Building Regulations Standard of 125 litres per person per day.

- This option would not require a policy within the Local Plan as it is the minimum standard required by the Building Regulations.

Question 57

What are your views on the options set out for water efficiency? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Reducing Emissions and Generating Renewable Energy

11.9 The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to set any local requirement for a building's sustainability in a way consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards and to recognise the responsibility of all communities to contribute towards renewable energy generation by writing policies which maximise renewable and low-carbon energy development and considering identifying suitable area for renewable and low-carbon energy development. The NPPG sets out the importance of Sustainability Appraisal in ensuring that Local Plans help to deliver The Climate Change Act 2008.

11.10 Wyre Forest District has lower emissions than Worcestershire County as a whole because there are no motorways running through the District. There is an overall declining trend in CO_2 emissions however there was a slight increase between 2012 and 2013. Renewable energy generation can significantly reduce carbon emissions. The District Council currently has a policy to seek 10% of energy requirements from renewable sources in major new developments. However, there has been difficulties in implementing this which are mainly related to financial viability of development and this is exacerbated by the District's brownfield regeneration strategy.

11.11 This consultation identifies two options for renewable energy.

Option A - Renewable Energy

Require new developments to provide 10% of their forecast energy needs from on-site renewable energy technologies.

- This option would require developers to install renewable energy technologies to provide 10% of the forecast energy requirements in major new developments.

Option B - Renewable Energy

Do not seek a proportion of the energy requirements in new development from on-site renewable sources.

- This option would mean that new development would not have to provide any energy from renewable sources regardless of economic viability.

Question 58

What are your views on the options set out for renewable energy? Are there any other options that should also be considered?

Question 59

How best can we ensure that the Local Plan provides the correct opportunities for increasing the proportion of energy which is generated from renewable sources?

11.12 District heating systems can also contribute to reduced carbon emissions and this approach is encouraged through national guidance and. The District does not currently have any examples of district heating systems.

Question 60

Can the plan provide a framework for encouraging and facilitating the development and use of combined heat and power systems?

11.13 In addition to small scale renewable energy systems located within new developments, the District Council is also required to consider whether or not there bare areas which might be suitable for larger scale, stand-alone renewable energy developments. Examples of these include wind farms and solar farms. Sites can be allocated specifically for renewable energy generation, however, any allocations should be supported by interest from developers and operators.

Question 61

Should the Plan identify specific areas for renewable energy development? If so, are there any areas which are particularly suitable for a specific type of renewable energy development (evidence must be provided)?

Waste

11.14 The Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy Local Plan sets out how the County Council will plan for waste management facilities in Worcestershire until 2027. It was adopted by Full Council on 15th November 2012 and is now part of the development plan. It will be used by the County Council to make decisions about planning applications for waste management facilities. Wyre Forest District Council, as well as the other City, Borough and District Councils in Worcestershire, will also use it to make decisions about other types of planning applications that could have waste implications. The Strategy will guide developers as to what type of development will be acceptable where and will encourage and stimulate businesses involved in recycling and re-use of resources. The Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy sets out the need to manage waste in accordance with the waste hierarchy. The stages of the waste hierarchy are - prevention, preparing for re-use, recycling, other recovery, disposal. The District Council will need to ensure that the Local Plan Review does not conflict with the Waste Core Strategy.

Minerals

11.15 It is a national requirement that the County Council should have planning policies for the "winning and working" of minerals. Worcestershire County Council is preparing a new Minerals Local Plan for Worcestershire. This document will set out how we plan for mineral extraction in the county. It will guide how much and what minerals need to be able to be supplied, where minerals should be extracted, how sites should be "restored" when working has finished and how minerals development should protect and enhance Worcestershire's people and places. Once it is adopted it will replace the existing minerals policies in the Hereford and Worcester Minerals Local Plan and will be part of the Development Plan for Worcestershire, to be used to make decisions about planning applications for mineral extraction, processing and restoration in the county. The District Council will stay engaged with the Plan preparation process.

A Glossary

Adopted Core Strategy (2010) -this is the strategic level document within the District's Development Plan. It sets out the broad locations for delivering housing and other major development needs in the District such as employment, retail and transport. It guides the site specific policies within the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan.

Affordable Housing - the District Council has adopted the definition of Affordable Housing as set out in the NPPF (Annex 2 Glossary).

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.

Areas of Development Restraint (ADR) (also referred to as Safeguarded Land) - land which lies between the urban area and the Green Belt which is identified to meet longer term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period. Safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time and planning permission should only be granted for such land following a Local Plan review which proposes development. Until areas of safeguarded land are identified for development, Green Belt policies apply to them.

Chalets – these are buildings, also sometimes referred to as shacks, which are primarily constructed of materials of less than average permanency and used for residential occupation.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - The Community Infrastructure Levy is a planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008 as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of their area.

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.

Community Facilities - facilities which provide for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community.

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

Designated heritage asset – a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Designated Rural Areas - These are parish-level areas designated under s157 of the Housing Act 1985, as well as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Developer Contributions - developer contributions are often required for major developments to make them acceptable in planning terms.

Development Plan- the Development Plan for the District comprises of the Core Strategy, the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan. Neighbourhood Plans will also form part of the Development Plan, once adopted.

Evidence Base - the information and data gathered by local authorities to inform the production of local plans.

Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMAs) - Economic flows often overlap local authority boundaries. This means that the functional area over which the local economy and its key markets operate will not necessarily adhere to administrative boundaries. Instead, key economic markets broadly correspond to sub-regions or city regions - known as functional economic market areas (FEMAs). There is no universal approach to defining FEMAs. Ideally, FEMAs would be defined on the basis of several markets or catchment areas which best reflect the drivers of the local economy.

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.

Geodiversity - the range of rocks, fossils, minerals, soils, landforms and natural processes that go to make up the Earth's landscape and structure.

Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) - Local Enterprise Partnerships are led by businesses and local authorities across natural economic areas. They provide the vision, knowledge and strategic leadership required to drive sustainable private sector growth and job creation in their areas. The GBSLEP comprises a partnership including the local authorities of Birmingham City Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Cannock Chase District Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Tamworth Borough Council, Wyre Forest District Council.

Green Belt Land - land which is situated between urban areas on which development is restricted so as to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The Green Belt serves five purposes: 1. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; 2. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; 3. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; 4. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and 5. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Green Infrastructure - the living network of green spaces, water and environmental systems in, around and beyond urban areas. This also includes blue infrastructure (e.g. Canals and Rivers).

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.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) - the purpose of this assessment is to provide information on the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in order ascertain what the appropriate number, type and distribution of additional pitches need to be provided within the area.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) - tests the impacts of a proposal on nature conservation sites of European importance, and is a requirement under EU legislation for land use plans and projects.

Heritage Asset -a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.

Housing Market Area - an area in which households search for housing. These areas cut across local authority boundaries and can be defined based on a series of indicators including comprising house prices, migration and search patterns and contextual data including travel-to-work areas, retail and school catchments.

Infrastructure - basic services necessary for development to take place; for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (KCAAP) - Adopted plan targeted specifically to regenerating the central area of Kidderminster.

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'.

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.

Live/Work - is defined as property that is specifically designed for dual use, combining both residential and employment space.

Local Development Order (LDO) - A Local Development Order (LDO) is a simple tool to allow a Local Planning Authority to introduce new permitted development rights. They are flexible and consistent with local determination.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) - a three year timetable setting out the type of Development Plans to be produced and the key milestones for their development.

Local Heritage List - the Local Heritage List identifies those heritage assets that are not protected by statutory designations. Their local interest could be related to the social and economic history of the area, individuals of local importance. The Local Heritage List is not restricted to buildings. It may comprise sites, places or areas such as village greens or ponds.

Local Plans (LPs) - the collective term given to all statutory documents that form the Development Plan for the District. These comprise of the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Policies, Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and a Policies Map.

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 1,000 square metres or the site area is at least 1 hectare in size.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - the document which sets out the Governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) -Web based resource of planning practice guidance, launched and maintained by Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), to enable practitioners to implement the content of the NPPF.

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.

Neighbourhood Development Plans - Neighbourhood Development Plans allow local people to come together to decide how they want their area to develop. They can be developed by Town and Parish Councils or by Neighbourhood Forums outside of the Parished areas.

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.

Previously Developed Land (PDL) - land which is, or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the cartilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.

ReWyre Initiative / Regeneration Prospectus - the prospectus aims to highlight Kidderminster's challenges and opportunities in order to attract support and investment into the town.

Scheduled Monument - a 'nationally important' archaeological site or historic building, given protection against unauthorised change.

Significance (for heritage policy) – The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan - District wide adopted plan that allocates and designates areas of land for particular uses, most notably land to deliver housing but also for other major development needs such as employment, recreation, open space and community uses.

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 Natural England.

Strategic Centres - there are 25 town centres in the West Midlands region that are defined in the former Regional Spatial Strategy as 'Strategic Centres'.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) - collates information on all known sources of flooding that may affect existing or future development within the District. The SFRA identifies and maps areas that have a 'low', 'medium' and 'high' probability of flooding within the Wyre Forest.

Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) - The SHELAA is an evidence base document that identifies sites that may have future development potential for housing or employment uses. It does not allocate sites to be developed.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) - provide additional information to guide and support the Development Plan.

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.

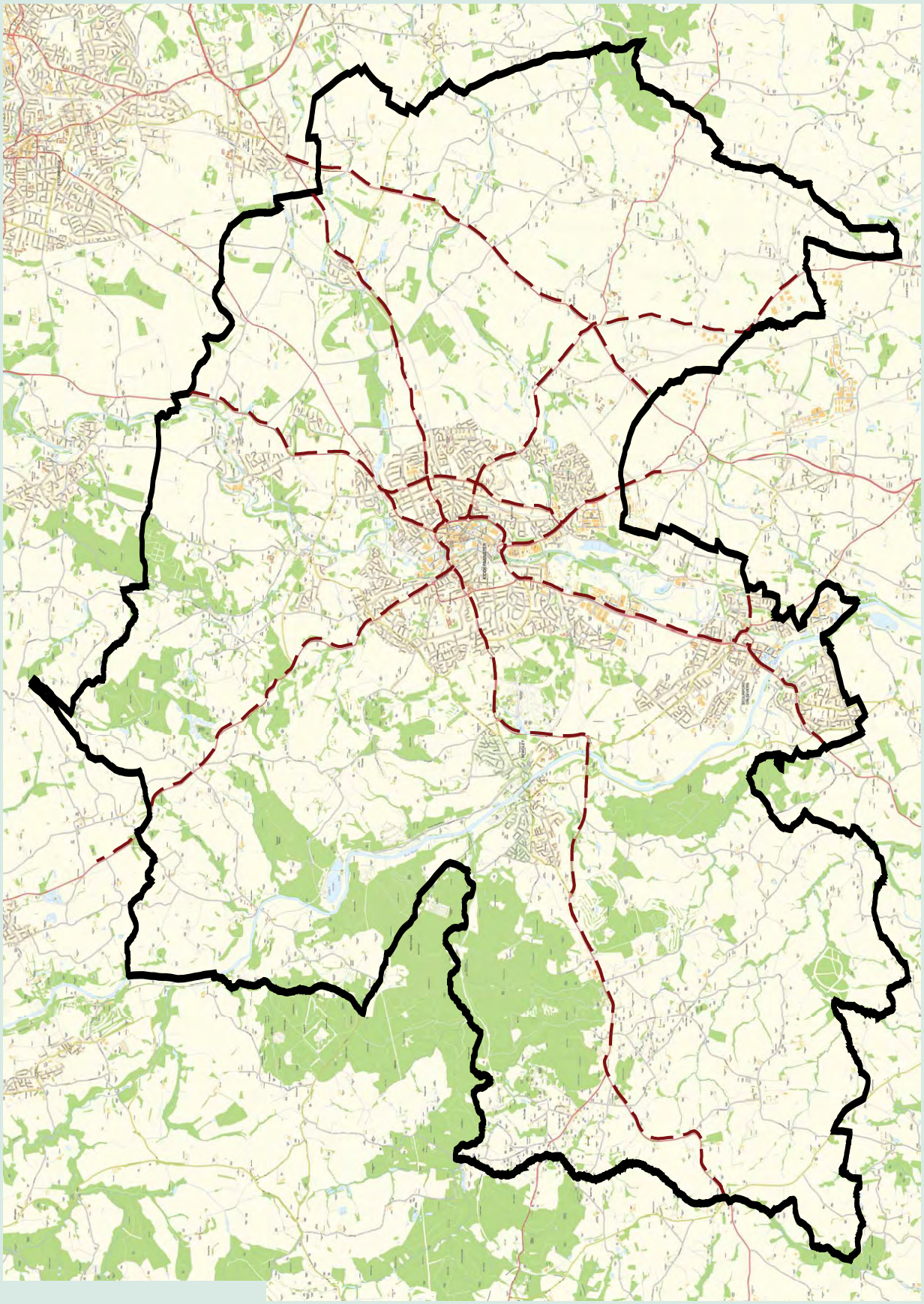
Sustainability Appraisal (SA) - the purpose of SA is to ensure that the Development Plan and associated Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) conform to the Government principles of Sustainable Development.

Water Cycle Strategy - this assesses the constraints and requirements that may arise from the scale of the proposed development on the water infrastructure in the District.

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 Local Enterprise Partnership - Worcestershire LEP is led by private sector businesses in partnership with the public sector – comprising Worcestershire County Council and the six district councils of Worcester City, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Malvern Hills, Wyre Forest and Wychavon.

Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) 2011-2026 - sets out Worcestershire's transport strategy, as well as identifying major long-term transportation pressures on the County.



B Lorry Route Network

C Bus Route Network

Equality Impact Assessment- Screening

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment is to ensure the Council:

- does not discriminate in the way it provides services and employment
- fulfils its duties as set out by the Equality Act 2010
- where possible, it does all it can to promote equality and good relations between different groups

Name of service / policy / project being assessed	Local Plan Review – Issues and options	Is this a new or existing service / policy / project?	Revision of existing.
Directorate	Economic Prosperity and Place		
Officers responsible for: a) Service / policy / project b) Completing EIA	a) Rebecca Brown b) Maria Dunn		
Date	July 2015		
What is the purpose and expected outcomes?	The Local Plan review will set out the level of development required within the District up until 2032 and allocate sites for the development.		
Will there be any affect on other council procedures or strategies e.g. Corporate Plan or the council's workforce?	No		
Are there any statutory requirements or implications?	Yes, the District Council is required to have an up-to-date Local Plan under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.		
Are there any other organisations / bodies involved?	Yes – a variety of key stakeholders, neighbouring authorities, local residents, businesses and interest groups will be involved through consultation.		
Who are the main customer groups / stakeholders affected?	Statutory consultees, developers, applicants, local residents, businesses		
What information / statistics / evidence are you using?	The Local Plan review will need to be supported by a robust and credible evidence base which includes a housing needs assessment, employment land review and retail needs assessment. Sustainability Appraisal will also inform the Plan.		

What impact does the service / policy / project have on the nine protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 – for definitions, please see overleaf.	
1. Age	The Local Plan Review will include policies to make development more inclusive for older people, particularly the housing needs of the elderly.
2. Disability	The Local Plan review will include consideration of housing needs for specialist groups including disabled people.
3. Gender Reassignment	N/A
4. Marriage and Civil Partnership	N/A
5. Pregnancy and Maternity	N/A
6. Race	N/A
7. Religion or belief	N/A
8. Sex	N/A
9. Sexual orientation	N/A
Other e.g. Deprivation, health inequalities, urban/rural divide, community safety.	The Local Plan review will seek to address deprivation, health inequalities access to services and facilities across the urban/rural divide.

Conclusion The Local Plan Review does not raise any concerns relating to equality.	Is a full assessment required? NO
Signed: Maria Dunn	Date 10/07/2015
Agreed: Rebecca Brown	Date 10/07/2015
A full EIA is required if the initial screening has identified the service / policy / project is going to have the potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community or the council's workforce.	

Prior to the Equality Act 2010, there were 3 separate public sector equality duties covering race, disability and gender. The Equality Act 2010 replaced these with a new single equality duty covering the following protected characteristics:

Protected characteristics: definitions

Age - where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).

Disability - a person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender reassignment - The process of transitioning from one gender to another.

Marriage and civil partnership - marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters.

Pregnancy and maternity - pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.

Race - It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.

Religion and belief - religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism).

Sex - a man or a woman.

Sexual orientation - whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

APPENDIX 4

Local Plans Review Panel Meeting - 18th June 2015

Consideration of Issues and Options Development

Panel Recommendations for inclusion in the Issues and Options Consultation Paper

The Panel agreed with the key issues raised in the series of background papers for inclusion in the Issues and Options Consultation Paper. Members also raised the following specific points:

SWOT Analysis

Weaknesses

- Obesity levels are a problem in the District with childhood obesity prolific in both Wyre Forest District and Redditch
- Low cultural amenities (weakness)

Strengths

- Bewdley Museum as a tourist attraction (strength)
- Well rated restaurants

General comments

- Is more statistical information available relating to the retail spend within Kidderminster?
- In bottom 20% of GVA – (This is for all Local Authority areas within Great Britain)
- Questioned high proportion of knowledge workers within the District (residence workforce).

Strategic and Cross Boundary Issues Background Paper

- The Panel requested an update on the GBSLEP's Spatial Plan for Recovery and Growth.
- The Panel requested an update on the Worcestershire High Technology Corridor.
- Clows Top is a key cross boundary issue – the most well located brownfield development site is within our District. If both Malvern Hills District and Shropshire Council propose developments here as well there will be cumulative impacts on local infrastructure.
- The Panel would like to see a map of all sites which could be classified as Previously Developed Land in the Green Belt at a future meeting.
- It will be necessary to reconsider the settlement boundaries in conjunction with those areas undertaking Neighbourhood Development Plans too.
- The Panel considers that we may need additional settlement boundaries in the rural areas.
- Members wish to be updated on the Green Investment Fund at a future meeting.
- Lea Castle Site– proposal for a science park should be encouraged as part of a mix of uses. A meeting with the Homes and Communities Agency is needed to discuss their future plans for the site.

Providing Quality Homes Background Paper

- There was concern about the loss of WFCH owned garages and replacement with dwellings which puts pressure on the local highway network on housing estates.
- Look at increasing affordable housing requirement thresholds by up to 40% subject to viability testing.
- All new homes should meet BfL12 requirements. New standards following Housing Standards Review – officers were asked to look at these and see if it is possible to implement an access requirement on the basis of aging population.
- Gypsy/traveller site review? Sites will need to be allocated in the new plan.
- Need small housing sites in rural villages, young families need to be able to live in villages – this helps to keep village schools going.
- Should continue to strive for mixed tenure schemes wherever possible.

Providing Employment Opportunities and Services Background Paper

- Apprenticeships such as business and administration are not being taken up. Local schools need to be more involved so pupils are aware what there is available.
- Retail Needs Assessment should take account of the impacts of internet shopping on local consumer patterns. How has this impacted on Kidderminster Town Centre?
- Further information/evidence on consumer spending habits and retail catchment areas is available from the town centre CACI reports.
- Need to improve transport accessibility by road and rail too to encourage skilled workers and help business logistics.

Safeguarding Character and Local Distinctiveness Background Paper

- A significant issue is whether there will be a need for a green belt boundary review to accommodate new development?
- Chalet/residential caravan parks are prolific within the District– there needs to be a limit. Concern about reaching a similar scenario as to that in South Staffordshire District.

Transport Background Paper

- Mustow Green should be identified as a pinch point which also has problems with poor air quality. New development at Hagley has exacerbated this situation with increased traffic flows over the round about and queuing
- There are significant problems associated with air quality at Welch Gate Bewdley. No solution has yet been found and this needs to be kept on the agenda.
- Poor air quality of Stourport High Street should be recognised and could provide additional evidence to support the Stourport Relief Road.
- Poor air quality at the Horsefair, Kidderminster. The Council should reconsider its policy of clearing one side of Blackwell Street to make improvements.
- In addition to the Stourport Relief Road proposals for the Kidderminster Southern and Kidderminster Eastern bypasses should be revisited with the routes to be safeguarded.
- Concerns with road network and accessibility, Members felt that if the road network was improved then more people would be encouraged to move into District and more businesses would relocate here.

Appendix 7 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee (02/07/15)

- Members would wish to see the restoration of the A449 as a dual carriageway instead of some dual and some single track.
- Members would like to request a meeting with the MP to discuss opportunities for funding availability to improve the road network and accessibility for Wyre Forest District.
- Public transport is very poor within District, what can be done to improve this? Parts of the District have no bus service and some have only one bus a day. This needs to be improved significantly to facilitate new development and promote accessibility.
- Through the GBSLEP it could be possible to generate discussion with CENTRO regarding extending the West Midlands Transport Authority Area to include the North Worcestershire authorities of Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest.
- Parking at local railway stations is insufficient particularly for coaches. There are significant numbers of people using Blakedown Rail Station and currently there is not enough parking available for them.

Climate Change Background Paper

- The Panel considers that Solar panels on new build properties including housing association dwellings need to be encouraged.
- Careful consideration should be given to the orientation of new developments to maximise solar gain.
- Permeable surfaces/tarmac how do we ensure it is being done and enforce it?
- Flood risk is a major issue for the District. Topography also has major implications for surface water run off in new developments and in our established town centres.
- Need to encourage waste water recycling and rainwater harvesting in new developments.
- The Local Plan Review needs to be the basis for bringing forward more radical options to help address climate change.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14TH JULY 2015

Wyre Forest District Local Plan Review: Revised Local Development Scheme (Project Plan 2015 - 2018)

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor J P Campion
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Planning Policy Manager
CONTACT OFFICER:	Rebecca Brown x2195
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Draft Revised Local Development Scheme (June 2015) *The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)*

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek Cabinet approval for the publication of a Revised Local Development Scheme (LDS), which guides the timetable for the production of the District's Local Plans.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE that:

2.1 The Revised Local Development Scheme as set out at Appendix 1 to the report is approved for publication.

2.2 That delegated authority be given to the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place to make any final changes to the formatting of the Revised Local Development Scheme prior to its publication.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Councils are required to publish up-to-date information on their progress in preparing their Local Plans against the LDS. Wyre Forest District Council publishes its LDS on the Planning Policy webpages of the Council's website.

3.2 The LDS was last reviewed in November 2013 and since then the Government has published National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which includes more specific detail on the requirements for Local Plans and the evidence which informs them. There will be some significant challenges ahead, particularly with regard to the objective assessment of housing need and the Duty to Co-operate requirements.

3.3 The District Council has now also adopted the Affordable Housing and Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Documents and the Chaddesley Corbett

Neighbourhood Plan has been made and forms part of the statutory planning framework for the District. Churchill and Blakedown Parish is in the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for examination and referendum. Bewdley Parish has recently been designated as a neighbourhood Area and the Town Council are beginning to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. A designation request for Upper Arley is currently pending decision, the LDS assumes that the area will be designated and will be amended before publication should this not be the case.

3.4 Officers therefore consider it is timely to reassess the project plan to focus resources on new priorities for reviewing our Development Plan during the 2015-18 time period. Work will also continue on the production of the revised Planning Obligations/Section 106 SPD with a revised timetable.

3.5 Keeping the LDS up-to-date helps to provide certainty to local stakeholders, developers and communities to assist in District wide regeneration.

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 In brief, the main areas for consideration in reassessing our priorities and resources with regard to Local Plans are as follows:

- The need to produce an up to date evidence base, including an objective assessment of the District's housing need and an employment land review.

- Duty to Co-operate requirements that may arise from the metropolitan area and the potential impact on the Local Plan Review.

- Increasing resource requirements to help facilitate Neighbourhood Development Plans in the District.

- The review of existing Supplementary Planning Documents including the Planning Obligations SPD.

- The production of a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule subject to the findings of viability evidence.

4.2 The key proposed changes in this Revised LDS are in summary:

- An update on progress with regard to milestones set out in the 2013 LDS.

- Work towards a review of the Core Strategy and production of a District Wide Local Plan with Issues and Options Consultation scheduled for early September 2015.

- The inclusion of a revised timetable for the review of the Planning Obligations SPD.

- The inclusion of timetables for progressing Neighbourhood Development Plans (it should be noted that at the time of writing the Upper Arley area designation is still subject to consultation and formal approval by the District Council. The LDS assumes that the area will be designated and will be amended before publication should this not be the case).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The costs of publishing the Revised LDS and undertaking the Local Plan Review will be met from the Planning Policy budget. The increasing interest in developing Neighbourhood Development Plans within the District also has implications for resources within the Planning Policy Team.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The LDS is required under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). This must specify the documents which when prepared will comprise the Local Plan for the area. It must be made available publically and kept up to date.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

7.1 N/A.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 The revised timetable set out in the LDS provides a firm and realistic basis for progressing the District's Local Plan Review. It will help to ensure the Council continues its track record of timely plan production to safeguard the District from piecemeal development.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 Officers consider that the revised LDS attached at Appendix 1 to this paper provides a realistic programme on which to focus the Council's objectives for development planning over the next three year period.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 None.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Wyre Forest District Revised Local Development Scheme (November 2013).

Wyre Forest District

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

REVISED PROJECT PLAN

(LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME)

2015-2018

July 2015

For more information contact:

Wyre Forest District Council
Planning Policy Section

Tel. 01562 732928
Email: planning.policy@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
Website: www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Wyre Forest District Council

DRAFT

JARGON GUIDE

AMR **Annual Monitoring Report**

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.

CIL **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

The Planning Act 2008 enables local planning authorities to charge a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in its area. The CIL must be set at an appropriate level to help fund strategic infrastructure for the Council and the local community to support planned growth, but not too high to render growth commercially unviable.

CS **Community Strategy**

Local Authorities are required by the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare this, with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of their areas. A 10 year Community Strategy for the Wyre Forest was adopted in April 2004 by the Local Strategic Partnership 'Wyre Forest Matters'. This group consists of representatives from public, private, voluntary and community sectors.

LP **Local Plan**

Collective term given to all statutory documents that form the Development Plan for the District. These comprise of the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan, Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and a Policies Map.

SA **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)**

A tool for appraising policies to ensure that they balance social, economic and environmental development objectives which incorporates the requirements of the 2001 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.. The 2004

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires SA to be undertaken for all LDDs.

SCI **Statement of Community Involvement**

This sets out the planning authority's proposals for involving the local community in plan-making. It is not a DPD but it is, however, subject to independent examination.

SPD **Supplementary Planning Document**

These will cover a range of issues and expand on the policies contained within Local Plans. They are, however, not part of the development plan and will not be subject to independent examination.

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- **Wyre Forest District Adopted Core Strategy**
- **Wyre Forest District Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan**
- **Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan**
- **Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance**

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1. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT PLAN

1.1 This project plan (the Local Development Scheme) provides up to date information for stakeholders and the general public about the status and coverage of Development Plan Documents and the Council's intention for their future preparation. It sets out:

a) Which Planning Policies are currently in force in the District
b) What the Council's intentions are for the plan making framework over the next three years to 2018

1.2 The project plan includes information relating to timescales and resources, the content of new plans and their scope and coverage.

Background

1.3 Councils should continue to prepare and maintain a "Local Development Scheme"(project plan), specifying the documents that will make up their Development Plan; their subject matter and area and the timetable for their preparation and revision.

1.4 Under changes brought about through the Localism Act 2011, aimed at simplifying the planning system, Councils are no longer required to submit the Local Development Scheme to the Secretary of State, but they must publish up-to-date information on their progress in preparing Local Plans against the project plan.

Key changes introduced to the LDS in this review

1.5 The District Council's first LDS was formally submitted to the Secretary of State in February 2005 and came into effect on 27th March 2005. Since then the Project Plan has progressively been refined through a process of monitoring and review. The last review was undertaken during November 2013 and it is considered that an update to provide a review of timescales to focus on the Core Strategy Review and the production of a single Local Plan for the District.

1.6 The key changes introduced as part of this review are the reprogramming of the timetable to focus on a refresh of the evidence base, the review of the Core Strategy and the production of the District's new Local Plan. It also provides an update on the Supplementary Planning Documents.

1.7 Since the last LDS Review, the Chaddesley Corbett Neighbourhood Plan has been made. Three more Town and Parish Councils are now progressing a Neighbourhood Plan and further information is included on these.

2. CURRENT DISTRICT LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

2.1 At present the main Planning Policies for the District are contained in the following documents:

- Wyre Forest Adopted Core Strategy (December 2010)
- Wyre Forest Adopted Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (July 2013)
- Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (July 2013)
- Worcestershire Adopted Waste Core Strategy (2012)
- Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan Saved Policies
- Chaddesley Corbett Neighbourhood Plan (September 2014)

Wyre Forest Adopted Core Strategy (December 2010)

2.2 The Core Strategy was formally adopted by the Council in December 2010 following an Independent Examination by a Planning Inspector. This is the key strategic level document for the District and sets out the broad strategy and vision for development within the District up until 2026. The Core Strategy was adopted prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework and carried forward the housing, employment and retail targets allocated to the District in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS). The WMRSS was revoked in 2013 and Local Authorities are now required to set their own development plan targets.

Wyre Forest Adopted Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (July 2013)

2.3 The Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan was formally adopted by the Council in July 2013 following Independent Examination which included a consistency assessment against the National Planning Policy Framework policies. This contains the detailed site allocations and their associated policies in order to meet the overarching Development Strategy. It also contains a number of generic Development Management policies.

Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (July 2013)

2.4 The Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan was formally adopted by the Council in July 2013 following Independent Examination which included a consistency assessment against the National Planning Policy Framework policies. This contains detailed policies for sites within the central area of Kidderminster and has a strong focus on regeneration.

Supplementary Planning Documents/Supplementary Guidance

2.5 The District Council has found it helpful to prepare additional guidance to further clarify some of the Local Plan policies. These documents have been formally adopted by the Council as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and as such can be afforded material consideration.

2.6 Worcestershire County Council has also produced Supplementary Guidance in relation to Education Contributions, Landscape Character Assessment and a Green Infrastructure Strategy. These have been endorsed by the District Council and are therefore a material consideration against which planning applications should be assessed.

2.7 The table below relates to existing Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents for the Wyre Forest District. They are capable of being a material consideration in determining planning applications.

Table 1: Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

Document Title	Current Status	Brief Description	Relevant DPD
Wyre Forest Cycling Strategy	Adopted SPG (2002)	Proposed cycle route network & promotion of cycling	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations - KCAAP
Shop Front Design Guide within Historic Areas	Adopted SPG (2004)	Design Guidance for new, replacements or alterations to existing shop fronts in historic settings.	- Site Allocations
Severn Road Development Brief	Adopted SPG (2001)	Redevelopment Proposals for three sites on the eastside of Stourport on Severn town centre.	- Site Allocations
Bridge Street Basins Link Development Brief	Adopted SPD (2005)	Redevelopment proposals for a site on the east side of Stourport-on-Severn town centre linking Bridge Street and the Canal Basins.	- Site Allocations
Planning Obligations	Adopted SPD (2007)	Sets out the District Council's requirements for developer contributions.	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations - KCAAP
Churchfields Masterplan	Adopted SPD (2011)	Development brief for Churchfields area of Kidderminster as a key regeneration opportunity.	- Core Strategy - KCAAP
Landscape Character Assessment	Adopted SG (Dec 2011)	Detailed guidance on landscape character assessment for Worcestershire produced by WCC.	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations
Affordable Housing	Adopted SPD (July 2014)	Detailed guidance on applying the District's Affordable Housing policies.	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations - KCAAP
Design Guidance	Adopted SPD (June 2015)	Guidance for applicants and developers on design and local distinctiveness.	- Core Strategy - Site Allocations - KCAAP

3. REVIEW OF THE ADOPTED CORE STRATEGY AND PREPARATION OF A DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

3.1 The remainder of this Project Plan will consider the preparation of new Local Plans which will form the Development Plan and these are set out in more detail in Appendix A (Programme Management Timetable) and Appendix B (Profiles & milestones). The proposed Documents that follow are sub-divided into five main categories, namely:

- Statement of Community Involvement
- Local Plans;
- Supplementary Planning Documents.
- Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule
- Neighbourhood Development Plans

Progressing the Local Development Framework.

3.2 Since the last review of the Local Development Scheme in late 2013, the Council has made the following progress in meeting its milestones:

- Adoption of the Affordable Housing SPD
- Adoption of the Design Guidance SPD
- Chaddesley Corbett Neighbourhood Development Plan was the first Neighbourhood Plan to be made in Worcestershire.

3.3 During 2015-18 we anticipate that our resources will be concentrated on:

- Commencing the Local Plan Review with an Issues and Options Consultation in September 2015.
- Progressing work on evidence base studies during 2015/16 to inform the Core Strategy Review and production of the Local Plan. This will include work on an objective assessment of housing needs; a review of the Water Cycle Study and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment; a retail needs assessment and an Employment Land Review.

- Facilitating progress on Neighbourhood Plans for Churchill and Blakedown, Bewdley and Upper Arley.
- Reviewing the Planning Obligations SPD in 2015/16
- Undertaking further viability assessment work on the potential impacts of a CIL Charging Tariff within the District.

4. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (SCI)

4.1 The District Council's first Statement of Community Involvement was formally adopted by the Council in April 2006. In February 2013 the District Council adopted a Revised Statement of Community Involvement in order to reflect changes to the regulations governing the preparation of Local Plans, the introduction of neighbourhood planning and changes to consultation on planning applications. The Revised Statement of Community Involvement provides a set of clear guidelines and minimum standards that the community and interest groups can expect when Local Plans are being prepared. It provides guidance on how bodies carrying our neighbourhood planning should undertake consultation and sets out the methods of consultation the District Council will use when undertaking its statutory duties in relation to neighbourhood planning. The document also clarifies the community participation and public consultation arrangements for the determination of Planning Applications.

5. LOCAL PLANS

2015 to 2018

District wide Local Plan

5.1 During 2015 we will commence a review of the Adopted Core Strategy. This will start with an Issues and Options consultation in September. We will take this opportunity to include the Site Allocations and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan into one District wide Local Plan for the District, rather than continuing with three separate plans.

6. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (SPDs)

6.1 SPDs provide further detail, guidance and clarification on specific areas of planning policy and development management within the Wyre Forest District. The Planning Policy Section will be co-ordinating a review of the Planning Obligations SPD and an early engagement consultation has already been undertaken.

6.2 The need for further SPDs will be monitored and kept under review during the 2015-18 time period and up to date information will be included in the Project Plan as and when necessary. Some of the Supplementary Planning Guidance relates to sites which are currently being developed out and will therefore be subject to review in the next LDS as developments are completed and they are no longer required.

7. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

7.1 The District Council is currently still considering the potential to bring forward a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule for the area in consultation with the other Worcestershire Authorities. The levy would allow the authority to raise funds from new developments and rates should be set in consultation with local communities and developers and will provide certainty up front about how much money developers will be expected to contribute.

7.2 Charging Authorities must produce a charging schedule setting out the levy's rate in their area, which must strike an appropriate balance between the desirability of funding infrastructure and the potential effects of the levy upon the economic viability of development across their area.

7.3 To progress a tariff we will require up to date evidence about the effect of the levy on economic viability to demonstrate that any proposed rate strikes an appropriate balance. The level of CIL charge must only be set on the basis of viability. A decision was made by Cabinet in 2013 to postpone progression on CIL and to consider it in line with the Local Plan Review.

8. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANS

8.1 Neighbourhood Planning is central to the Government's Localism Agenda. The right to produce Neighbourhood Development Plans is introduced through the Localism Act 2011.

8.2 As the Local Planning Authority we must provide advice and assistance to Parish and Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums in unparished areas, should they wish to bring forward a Neighbourhood Development Plan/Order for their area. We will take an active role in advising and supporting community groups, sharing evidence and information. This is likely to be a considerable draw on the resources of the Planning Policy Section going forward and will need to be kept under review with regard to allocating additional staff resources to this function.

8.3 Under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations it is the District Council's role to:

1) Determine applications for neighbourhood areas
2) Publish Neighbourhood Plans which are submitted to the District Council and notify relevant bodies of their receipt.
3) Organise an independent examination for a Neighbourhood Development Plan/Order
4) Organise a Local Referendum
5) Make the Neighbourhood Development Plan as part of our Local Plan if a majority "yes" vote is secured at the referendum.

8.4 The District Council has four designated Neighbourhood Areas within the District:

- Chaddesley Corbett Parish
- Churchill and Blakedown Parish
- Bewdley Parish
- Upper Arley Parish

8.5 Chaddesley Corbett Parish Council began work on their Neighbourhood Development Plan in 2012. The plan was subject to independent examination

and a referendum in which a majority yes vote was secured. It was made in September 2014 and forms part of the District's Development Plan.

8.6 Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council are preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The Neighbourhood Area was approved in April 2013. The Steering Group is currently producing a draft plan. It is anticipated that the plan will be submitted and examined in tome for a referendum to be held in May 2016.

8.7 Bewdley Town Council has recently applied to have the area designated for the purposes of a Neighbourhood Development Plan. No formal timetable has been set for the production of a plan as yet, but officers expect this to continue to progress throughout 2015/16 and that the Town Council will work towards a referendum in May 2018.

8.8 Upper Arley Parish Council has also recently been designated as a Neighbourhood Area. As above no formal timetable has yet been produced however, it is anticipated that the Parish Council will work towards a referendum being held in May 2018.

APPENDIX A - Programme for the preparation and review of Development Plan

Local Plans	2015												2016												2017		
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
Adopted Core Strategy Review - District Wide Local Plan	1						2		3		4						5	6		7				8	9		10

	2017 continued																							
	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D															
Adopted Core Strategy Review - District Wide Local Plan		11			12			13	14															

1 Evidence Base preparation and assessment of needs
2 Cabinet approval for issues and options consultation
3 Issues and Options Consultation
4 Consideration of consultation responses and development of Preferred Options
5 Council approval for Preferred Options Consultation
6 Preferred Options Consultation
7 Consideration of Consultation responses and development of Publication Plan
8 Council approval for publication consultation
9 Pre-submission Publication Consultation
10 Consideration of consultation responses and finalising submission plan
11 Submission to Secretary of State
12 Independent examination and proposed modifications consultation
13 Receipt of Inspector's Report
14 Council Adoption of Local Plan

APPENDIX A - Programme for the preparation and review of Development Plan

Supplementay Planning Documents	2015							2016												2017											
	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Review Planning Obligations SPD	2							3		4																					

Supplementary Planning Documents

1 Early Engagement Consultation
2 Preparation of Draft SPD
3 Regulation 12(b) Consultation
4 Preparation and Adoption of SPD

APPENDIX B – Local Plan Profiles

1. STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Overview:

- Role & Coverage: Sets out how the District Council will involve stakeholders and the local community in the preparation of all Local Development Documents and the consideration of planning applications.
- Coverage: District-wide
- Status: Non Development Plan LDD
- Conformity: Regulations and requirements set out by Government and the District Council's Consultation Strategy 2004

  Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended

Key Milestones:

REVIEWED: FEBRUARY 2013

MONITOR THROUGH ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT AND REVIEW IF SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES OCCUR.

APPENDIX B – Local Plan Profiles

2. CORE STRATEGY

Overview:

- Role & Coverage: Strategic document setting out the vision and spatial planning framework for the District up to 2026. Includes generic strategy and core policies on subjects including housing; climate change and the environment; economy, town centres, local distinctiveness and transport infrastructure.
- Coverage: District-wide
- Status: Local Plan
- Conformity: Regulations and requirements set out by Government National Planning Policy

Key Milestones:

ADOPTED: DECEMBER 2010
MONITOR AND REVIEW THROUGH ANNUAL MONITORING PROCESS.
REVIEW TO COMMENCE IN 2015 FOLLOWING EVIDENCE BASE COLLATION AND RENEWAL IN 2014.

3. SITE ALLOCATIONS AND POLICIES LOCAL PLAN

Overview:

- Role & Coverage: Identifies the specific sites that will provide for the District's development needs in the period up to 2026, in conformity with the Adopted Core Strategy. It will also designate specific areas for protection/safeguarding during the plan period and include some generic development control policies.
- Coverage: District-wide
- Status: Local Plan
- Conformity: Regulations and requirements set out by Government
  National Planning Policy
  Core Strategy

Key Milestones:

ADOPTED: JULY 2013
MONITOR AND REVIEW THROUGH ANNUAL MONITORING PROCESS. INCORPORATE INTO DISTRICT WIDE LOCAL PLAN IN PARALLEL WITH CORE STRATEGY REVIEW.

APPENDIX B – Local Plan Profiles

4. KIDDERMINSTER CENTRAL AREA ACTION PLAN

Overview:

Role & Coverage:	To provide a detailed planning policy framework, which sets out the strategy and policies for the development of the town's central area, and helps to achieve this regeneration. The KCAAP will help to stimulate regeneration and investment in the town by providing certainty and confidence for potential investors, as well as providing the basis for co-ordinating the actions of a range of public and private sector partners.
❖ Coverage:	Central Kidderminster including the Town Centre, Horsefair, Comberton Hill, Mill Street and Park Lane.
❖ Status:	Local Plan
❖ Conformity:	Regulations and requirements set out by Government National Planning Policy Core Strategy

Key Milestones:

ADOPTED: JULY 2013

MONITOR AND REVIEW THROUGH ANNUAL MONITORING PROCESS. INCORPORATE INTO DISTRICT WIDE LOCAL PLAN IN PARALLEL WITH CORE STRATEGY REVIEW.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet
Tuesday 14th July 2015

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 2nd July 2015

Local Development Scheme

The Committee considered a report which outlined the purpose and content of the revised Local Development Scheme 2015-18.

Members expressed concern over the increasing resource requirements to help facilitate Neighbourhood Development Plans within the District. Notwithstanding the District Council's statutory duty under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations to provide advice and assistance to Parish and Town Councils, Members agreed that if there was a possibility of Parish and Town Councils contributing a reasonable amount towards the cost of the Planning Policy Team's time, it should be explored.

Recommend to Cabinet:

1. **The proposed Revised Local Development Scheme 2015-18 as set out in Appendix 1 of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be endorsed.**

2. **To explore the possibility of introducing a reasonable charging structure for Parish and Town Councils to contribute towards the resource requirements in developing Neighbourhood Development Plans within the District.**

Background papers:
Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Thursday 2nd July 2015
http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/com193.htm#mt7616

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14TH JULY 2015

Revised Local Development Order, South Kidderminster Enterprise Park: Adoption

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor J P Campion
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Director of Economic Prosperity and Place
CONTACT OFFICER:	Jonathan Elmer EXT 2552 Jonathan.Elmer@nwedr.org.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Revised Local Development Order – South Kidderminster Enterprise Park Appendix 2 – Consultation responses and officer comments *The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)*

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To report the results of the public consultation on the revised Local Development Order (LDO) for the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park and to agree the adoption of the revised document (attached at Appendix 1) for a period of three years from 13th August 2015.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE that:

2.1 The revised Local Development Order for South Kidderminster Enterprise Park, as attached at Appendix One, is adopted for a period of three years from 13th August 2015

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A Local Development Order (LDO) is an Order created by a Local Planning Authority, through which permitted development rights additional to those granted nationally by Government, are granted to certain types of development within a defined area. In this particular instance, the Local Development for the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park helps to provide a less restrictive planning regime for businesses within, and locating to, the corridor.

3.2 The South Kidderminster Enterprise Park LDO was first introduced by the District Council in August 2012. The Order was adopted for a 3 year period meaning that it would cease in August this year if it were not revised or renewed.

3.3 Overall, it is considered that the LDO has been a success for the District. The Order has helped to attract further investment into the area and has been well received by the businesses who have used it to date. The developments that have been secured through the Order so far are identified in the following table.

Company Details	**Development**	**Notes**
Amada UK Spennells Valley Road	Refurbishment of existing headquarters and creation of additional floorspace.	This £5 million investment has transformed the Amada UK building and has safeguarded 50 jobs within the District.
Beakbane Ltd Stourport Road	Overcladding and extension of existing building	This investment by Beakbane has radically changed the appearance of the building and has provided further manufacturing space. The investment made by the company was circa £1.2 million.
Oakleaf Commercial Services Finepoint	Development of a new warehouse unit with associated storage area, hard and soft landscaping and car parking. Development of a 2 storey Office block including associates landscaping and parking provisions.	This project is currently under construction and will see a new depot be delivered at Finepoint. The investment of £1.5 million will initially provide a total of c. 15,000 sqft of floorspace with the opportunity to expand as the business grows.
WEMICO Hoo Farm Industrial Estate	Extension for new workshop and storage space	The proposal will increase floorspace by almost 1000sqft.
Specsavers Former Romwire Site Stourport Road	Development of two new warehouse buildings on the former Romwire Site	Investment in the site is c. £12 million and will provide potentially 200+ new jobs within the District.
Vision Labs Foley Business Park Stourport Road	Extension to rear of existing building	This development will increase the floorspace at Vision Labs and provide an additional 3 permanent jobs.

3.4 It is clear to see from the above table that new employment development has been stimulated by the Order. This has resulted in c. £20 million of investment into the District and the safeguarding and creation of over 300 jobs. This pro-active approach to helping businesses develop has been well received and it is for this reason that the Council decided to consult on extending the lifetime of the Order.

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 The Council agreed to undertake a period of consultation on a slightly revised Local Development Order in May 2015. The main revisions proposed through the amended order were as follows:

- Identification of 'Redevelopment Sites'. Since the original Order was introduced a number of sites that were previously identified for redevelopment are no longer available (for example the Parcel of land at Finepoint where Oakleaf are currently developing). Conversely, there are new areas of land that are now considered suitable to be identified through the Order for redevelopment purposes (e.g. Former Brintons Warehouse Buildings). The identification of sites has therefore been reviewed and the full list of proposed areas of land are included in the revised document at Appendix 1 of this report;

- Extension of permitted development to include:

    - Plant and machinery;
    - The replacement of windows and doors; and
    - Additional flexibility in relation to extensions of buildings, moving from the need for extensions to be no closer to the highway boundary to extensions not being within 5 metres of a highway boundary

  Although the above changes are considered to be fairly minor in nature, it is anticipated that this will provide further flexibility for businesses to make changes that would otherwise require a planning application;

- Parking Requirements. The current Order requires development to not exceed the parking standards identified by Worcestershire County Council. This particular condition has caused some problems for businesses seeking to use the Order. Therefore, it is proposed within the revision to allow for the District Council to make the final decision on parking (as would be the case with a planning application) if the proposals are not in conformity with Worcestershire County Council's standards. It is considered that this proposed amendment would provide bring the Order in line with the National Planning Policy framework and would allow for local decision making and accountability.

4.2 The public consultation on the revised LDO was undertaken from Friday 8th May to Friday 12th June 2015. Notification letters were sent to all addresses within the boundary of the LDO, as well as adjoining properties. Furthermore, statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency and Historic England were also contacted. Site notices were also placed throughout the boundary of the Local Development Order.

4.3 A total of 14 representations were received during the consultation period and a summary of the responses received, along with officer comments, are provided at Appendix 2 to this report. On the whole the responses received were supportive of retaining the Order for a further three years and support was also received from one of the businesses, Oakleaf, who have used the Order to develop a new facility in the District.

4.4 Whilst some of the comments received were supportive or just observations, there were also a number of representations that have helped to shape the final version of the document. The following table identifies the representations that have been made which have resulted in a change to the document.

Consultee	Changes proposed to the LDO

Consultee	Changes proposed to the LDO
Worcestershire Regulatory Services	WRS provided a number of suggest amendments to the Order that covered the following conditions: • Noise; • Air Quality; and • Contaminated Land The LDO has been amended to reflect these comments and picks up on the more recent guidance that is available within these areas.
North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM)	A number of comments were raised by NWWM relating to flood risk and drainage within the South Kidderminster Area. A number of changes have been made to the LDO to pick up issues in relation to new guidance for Sustainable Urban Drainage and updating flood warning and flood advice information.
Network Rail	Have asked that a new condition is included so that they are contacted if any development is proposed within 10m of their operational boundary. This has been included as an additional condition within the revised Order.
Environment Agency	Although a number of comments were received form the Environment Agency these were generally supportive of the continued approach of the LDO, which was developed originally in close consultation with them. A couple of slight amendments have been made to the Order to reflect the new information that is now available.
Worcestershire County Council	Only one comment was received from the County and this was to ask that Mineral's as well as Waste is a County Matter and should be expressly excluded from the Order. This change has subsequently been made.
Natural England	Natural England provided the most comprehensive response to the consultation on the revised Order. The main issues raised were in relation to preserving and enhancing the SSSI that is located within the South Kidderminster area. A number of changes have been made to further enhance the protection of these areas, however, it is worth noting that no development is permitted on the SSSI and Green Belt in the South Kidderminster area through the Order. Furthermore, the buffer zone around the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal provides further protection to these areas, due to their close proximity to the waterways. A new condition has been included in the revised Order to identify if developers need to contact Natural England to discuss their proposals if in close proximity to the SSSI

4.5 The amendments to the LDO that are identified in the above table are mainly to deal with changes in legislation or processes since the original Order was first developed. The amendments proposed mainly deal with points of detail rather than being more significant issues with the principle of the Order itself. It is considered that, overall;

these proposed changes will still ensure that development is able to come forward in a timely fashion, whilst providing key safeguards against undesirable consequences.

4.6 Overall, it is considered that the LDO has been a success for the District. The Order has helped to stimulate interest within a key employment corridor and has both safeguarded jobs and provided new job opportunities during a time of economic recovery. The LDO has been well received by the business community and this simplified planning regime has allowed business to flourish. It is considered that the renewal of the LDO will help to continue this trend and may enable further development to come forward within this key employment corridor.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The cost of adopting the revised LDO will be met from existing resources. However, there is a financial implication to the Council in terms of 'lost' planning fees as a result of the Order being in place. The loss of planning fees to the authority whilst the current Order has been in place is estimated to be approximately £58,000. It is sensible to assume that a similar figure could be 'lost' as a result of extending the lifetime of the Order. It is also worth noting that any development secured through the Order is exempt from S.106 contributions.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The procedures for making a Local Development Order are set out in sections 61A to 61D and Schedule 4A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended and article 38 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

7.1 An equality impact screening test was carried out when the Order was first introduced. This screening identified that the proposals will not have any negative impact on equality. It is considered that the updated Order is in broad conformity with the original document and therefore the same conclusions have been drawn, that the proposals will not have any negative impact on equality.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 The use of conditions and restrictions to ensure development is appropriate helps to minimise any risks that might arise through the implementation of the Order. The Council also has the power to revoke the Order if it so wishes before the expiry date and this also helps to manage the risk associated with its implementation.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Local Development Order has been well received by the local business community and developers since its introduction in August 2012. There have been a number of successful developments that have used the Order and these have been identified in the main body of the report. Whilst there is a financial implication for the District Council in relation to extending the Order for a further three years, it is considered that this needs to be judged against the potential for new business development, the growth in business rates and job creation that the LDO could bring.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 Corporate Leadership Team.
Development Manager.
Planning Policy Manager.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- ReWyre Initiative: A Prospectus for Regenerating Kidderminster, September 2009.
- Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (Adopted July 2013).
- South Kidderminster Enterprise Park – Local Development Order (Adopted August 2012).

Agenda Item No. 8.3
Appendix 1

South Kidderminster Enterprise Park

Local Development Order

August 2015

Wyre Forest District Council

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Annex 4 – Contaminated Land Checklist

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Map of LDO Boundary and identified redevelopment sites

Appendix 2 – Constraints Map

Appendix 3 – Environmental Considerations Map

Statement of Reasons

1.1 Introduction to the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park

1.2 The South Kidderminster Enterprise Park area is a key employment and regeneration focus for Wyre Forest District. The area, which is formed of two key corridors of primarily business premises is identified, in part, within the Council's Adopted Core Strategy as being a key business and regeneration area. This is further supported by the work on the Council's Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document as well as forming a key part of the Council's regeneration work in terms of the ReWyre initiative. The Local Development Order (LDO) for this area will provide a further incentive that will enable the ambitions for economic growth to be realised. A map of the LDO area is attached at Appendix 1.

The LDO was first introduced in August 2012 and it has resulted in a number of developments being brought forward within the corridor. Due to the success of the Order to date it is proposed to extend the lifetime of the Order for a further three years. Some amendments have also been proposed to provide further support and flexibility for businesses considering development in this location.

2.0 Potential Benefits from the Implementation of a Local Development Order (LDO)

2.1 The LDO enables a simplified planning regime to be introduced, allowing the implementation of new development to come forward quicker, whilst providing added benefits to existing businesses through providing greater flexibility for the development of their existing assets.

2.2 The provision of a LDO within this location has already helped to provide an important stimulus for economic development in an area that has seen rapid decline and restructuring over the past 30 years. Companies that have developed using the Order since August 2012 are:

- Amada
- Beakbane
- Oakleaf
- WEMICO

3.0 Existing Planning Provisions

3.1 Support for the retention and enhancement of existing businesses as well as the development of new businesses within the Enterprise Park area is already provided for within the Adopted Core Strategy (December 2010) and the Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (Adopted July 2013). Although the LDO does not have to implement local planning policies, in this instance there is a clear synergy between the aims, ambitions and policies of the adopted statutory development plan and the proposals that are included within the draft LDO.

3.2 It should be noted that the LDO does not prevent development taking place that is not specifically covered by the Order. A planning application for such development would need to be made in the normal way and nationally existing permitted development rights within the area would remain unchanged.

4.0 Identified Constraints

- **HSE Zones –** There are a number of zones that surround potentially hazardous installations located within the LDO area. These include land surrounding Ashland Chemicals on the Stourport Road and land surrounding Flogas on the Hoo Brook Industrial estates. These zones have been identified by the Health and Safety Executive as areas where new development would need to be closely managed. Given the potential restrictions placed on development within these areas, developers and landowners must satisfy themselves that any potential development falls within the LDO restrictions. A guide to the limitations is included within the LDO at Annex C and the boundaries of the zones are also included in Appendix 2. Notably, there is also a HSE zone located around the existing Roxel factory and a condition has been attached to the LDO to ensure that development in close proximity to this area (at either Hoo Farm or Easter Park) requires consent from the HSE before development commences.

- **Contamination –** Given the ex-industrial nature of most of the area contamination issues could arise. Conditions are attached to the LDO to ensure that contamination is investigated prior to the commencement of any development.

- **Pollution Prevention -** The plan area overlies a principal (formally major) aquifer of regional strategic importance. The entire area falls within the combined total source protection zone (SPZ) of a number of public water supply boreholes. In addition, the northern extent of the area lies within the outer protection zone of a public water supply borehole. The depth to water table across the area is variable; however within the valley of the Stour the water table is shallow. The area is therefore located in a sensitive hydrogeological setting. The River Stour runs through the area. Under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) the River Stour is currently classified as poor ecological status. The ecological status includes chemical and biological data to give this overall classification. The Stour is currently failing on a number of parameters, including phosphates and invertebrates which has lead to the overall poor classification. The WFD objective is to improve the status of the water body to achieve overall good status by 2027. It is therefore particularly important that any contamination is appropriately addressed and that measures are undertaken to protect the water environment. Conditions are attached to this order to protect the water environment.

- **Conservation Areas –** Part of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area is located within the proposed LDO boundary. Therefore, safeguards have been put in place to ensure that development does not have a detrimental impact on the character of the conservation area, or the structural integrity of the Canal. There are currently no listed buildings or structures within the area. However, should any be identified and listed through the lifetime of the Order then the relevant permissions for any proposed changes would be required before any development occurred.

- **Flood Risk –** The area includes both the River Stour and the Hoo Brook and as such parts of the land within the LDO boundary are affected by Flood Risk (as identified at Appendix 2). These areas have been conditioned in accordance with the '*Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework*, which accompanies the NPPF. The conditions have been included and amended in conjunction with the Environment Agency.

- **Environmental Conservation–** The District Council have already undertaken a Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report for the adopted Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD). The results of this Screening Report, which were

agreed by Natural England, were that the DPD would not result in likely significant effects upon a Natura 2000 site (this is a site of European significance). Given that the LDO follows the aims of the Site Allocations and Policies DPD for this area of the District it is considered that the same conclusions could be drawn from the implementation of the LDO, and this approach has also been supported by Natural England.

- **Sustainability Appraisal -** The Council have produced an Environmental Statement to accompany the LDO, which sets out further detail on the Sustainability Appraisal process. This includes an extract of the relevant Sustainability Appraisal for land within the LDO boundary, which has been undertaken to inform the Site Allocations and Policies DPD. Also included within the Statement is a copy of the Appropriate Assessment Screening report and conformation of its suitability from Natural England.

  More information on the Sustainability Appraisal and the Appropriate Assessment can be viewed by looking at the accompanying Environmental Statement. Alternatively, the full Sustainability Appraisal reports can be viewed by visiting the Council's website (www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

5.0 Pre-Development Requirements

5.1 The LDO does not remove the need to comply with other legislative controls such as building regulations approval or environmental protection legislation. Appropriate safeguards are also provided to protect the character and structural integrity of the adjacent Canal together with the amenity enjoyed by the occupiers of those residential properties immediately adjacent to, or proposed to be built within, the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park Area. These conditions are provided at Annex 1.

5.2 **It is the responsibility of landowners and developers to ensure that all other statutory requirements beyond the scope of the planning system are adhered to. Failure to comply with any statutory requirements may result in appropriate enforcement action being taken by the Council and/or other agencies.**

6.0 The Order

Local Development Order for South Kidderminster Enterprise Park

Within the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park area planning permission is granted for new buildings on **redevelopment sites**, as identified in Appendix 1, for the following uses:

- B1a (offices);
- B1b (Research and Development);
- B1c (Light Industry);
- B2 (General Industrial);
- B8 (Storage and Distribution);
- Car/Vehicle Hire Business and the selling and displaying of motor vehicles; and
- Vehicular access to development

Furthermore, **for existing premises** that fall under use classes B1, B2, B8 and car vehicle hire businesses/displaying and selling of motor vehicles, within the area (as identified in Appendix 1) planning permission for the following development is granted:

- recladding of building exteriors including changes to roofing materials;
- Installation or replacement of windows or doors;
- installation of solar panels and other renewable energy systems (such as biomass and combined heat and power boilers);
- sub-division of existing units (for B1a, b and c, B2 and B8 use);
- Extensions no more than 10 linear metres from the existing building, subject to extensions not being within 5 metres of the existing highway;
- The installation or replacement of plant or machinery not exceeding a height of 15 metres;
- The construction of ancillary buildings within the existing curtilage, not exceeding 100sqm Gross Floor Space; and
- Car parking - subject to adherence to the thresholds identified in Annex 1.

Change of use is also permitted as follows:

- B1 – to B2 or B8, where no more than 1,000sqm;
- B2 – to B1 or B8 where no more than 1,000sqm; and
- B8 – to B1 or B2 where no more than 1,000sqm.

Demolition, in conjunction with any redevelopment of existing premises within the identified use classes, is also permitted.

All proposed development shall be in line with the restrictions and conditions identified within this Order.

6.1 The Local Development Order is therefore split into two main component parts:

- Provisions relating to redevelopment sites within the boundary (as identified at Appendix 1)
- Provisions for existing business premises within the boundary (including change of use)

6.2 All development proposed through the Order must be in conformity with the uses identified as well as being in conformity with the conditions attached at Annex 1.

7.0 Restrictions

7.1 A number of restrictions to development are identified in the following table. No development is permitted if it falls under the following categories.

Restriction	**Reason**
Any development that is considered to require an Environmental Impact Assessment as set out by the Regulations (or any subsequent Regulations which replace the above with or without modification)	Development that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) would need to be assessed through a planning application. The scope of development proposed through the LDO is based on a broad spectrum of speculative industrial development. It is very difficult for the Council to screen and assess the scope/quantum of development coming forward without receiving definite proposals and plans in advance. Therefore if an EIA development is proposed it would not be suitable to be brought through the LDO route. A planning application would need to be submitted. For more information see Condition 1 in Appendix 1
Any development where the planning application would normally be determined by the Secretary of State or a body other than the District Council	The District Council can only consider allowing development through the LDO in an area where it has responsibility. This would exclude development relating to waste and minerals management such as all planning applications relating to the use of land (and buildings) or the erection of buildings, plant or machinery for the purposes of waste or minerals management, which are determined by the County Council. The following classes of operations and uses of land are considered to be 'county matters': i. The use of land, the carrying out of building, engineering or other operations, or the erection of plant or machinery used or proposed to be used, wholly or mainly for the purposes of recovering, treating, storing, processing, sorting, transferring or depositing of waste; ii. Operations and uses ancillary to the purposes in (i) above, including development relating to access to highways.
Proposals for development that fall within other use classes of the 1987 Use Classes Order as amended.	The LDO identifies the use classes that are considered to be appropriate within this area. No other use classes are considered as being suitable without planning permission. Furthermore, development falling into any of the following categories is not permitted through this Order: • Storage of hazardous substances; • Retail linked trade operations; and • Rail freight proposals.
No development is permitted within the Green Belt or the SSSI that falls within the LDO Boundary	To ensure that the Order is in line with the national and local policy in relation to development within the Green Belt and SSSI's.

Restriction	Reason
Flood Risk	Development is not permitted within 8m of the River Stour and Hoo Brook, in order to protect the watercourses and their associated floodplain.
Development that would prejudice the delivery of the Hoo Brook Link Road	The delivery of the Hoo Brook Link Road is a key strategic transport priority for the District, as identified in the Adopted Core Strategy and therefore development that would affect the delivery of the link road is not permitted through this Order. Developers and landowners are advised to contact the District Council to ensure that their development would not prejudice the delivery of the road.
Development that would effect a Public Right of Way	If it is necessary to divert/extinguish existing public rights of way, in order for development to proceed, then planning permission will be required.
Development that would effect the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal	A buffer zone has been included around the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal in order to protect the Conservation Area designation and the structural integrity of the Canal. No development is permitted within this zone (as identified in Appendix 2). This exclusion zone has been derived in conjunction with Canal & River Trust, Historic England and the District Council's Conservation Officer.
Listed Buildings	Should any buildings or structures become listed during the lifetime of the Order then the buildings and associated curtilage would be exempt from the provisions of the Order and would require consent through the existing framework of listed building consent and/or a planning application.

8.0 Conditions

8.1 There are also a number of other conditions that are attached as part of the LDO to ensure that development is appropriate, which are included in Annex 1 as well as a constraints map that is attached at Appendix 2.

9.0 Justification for the Order

9.1 The Government is committed to boosting local growth and creating jobs to support the economic recovery of the country. It has embarked on a radical reform programme to support this, and has established enterprise zones to support and encourage private sector growth. Although the South Kidderminster Enterprise Park was unsuccessful in its bid for Enterprise Zone status it is considered that the implementation of an LDO would bring about some of the benefits that EZ status would have brought to the District.

10.0 Lifetime of the Order

10.1 The LDO will be active for a period of 3 years after the date of its adoption.

10.2 Development which has started under the provision of the LDO prior to its expiry will be allowed to complete in the event that the LDO is revoked or revised[1]. The Council does have the ability to revoke the LDO at any time, should it lead to undesirable and unforeseen consequences.

[1] Commencement of development is defined as an undertaking of a material operation as defined in Section 56 (4) (a) – (d) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. A lawful commencement of development shall only be adjudged to have been carried out if the full notification process as set out in the Order has been completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to any development commencing.

10.3 Developments that have taken place under the LDO will be allowed to continue to operate in the event that the LDO is revoked or revised. However, no new development will be allowed under the terms of the LDO following its expiry without planning permission.

10.4 The conditions attached to this LDO will continue to apply to any development permitted during its lifetime.

11.0 Policies that the Order will help to implement

11.1 National

- National Planning Policy Framework
- National Planning Policy Guidance

11.2 Local (Adopted Policy)

- Wyre Forest Core Strategy (Adopted December 2010)
- DS01: Development Locations
- DS02: Kidderminster Regeneration Area
- CP08: A Diverse Local Economy
- CP09: Retail and Commercial Development
- Site Allocations and Policies Local Plan (Adopted July 2013)
- Policy SAL.GPB1: Employment Land / Economic Development
- Policy SAL.CC5: Renewable Energy
- Policy SAL.SK1 – South Kidderminster Enterprise Park
- Policy SAL.SK2 – Former British Sugar Site
- Policy SAL.SK4 – Former Romwire Site

12.0 Monitoring the LDO

12.1 LDO monitoring needs to be appropriate to the ambition and circumstances of the development.

12.2 Conditions on the LDO will require that the developer notifies the local planning authority when undertaking development permitted by the LDO to ensure that an accurate record of development is maintained.

12.3 Notification of development will also be circulated to District Councillors, via the weekly planning application list, so that members are aware of development being delivered through the LDO.

12.4 The Order will be revisited at the end of the three year period where a decision will be made to continue the Order, amend and review the Order or abolish the Order.

Contacts:

Wyre Forest District Council

LDO, Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF

Email: ldo.consultation@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01562 732928

Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF

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Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire County Council, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NP

Email: worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk.

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Annex 1 - Conditions

No	Condition	Reason
1	**EIA Development** The permissions granted by this Order shall not apply if: • An application for planning permission for the proposed development would be a Schedule 1 application within the meaning of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. • An application for the development would fall within the descriptions of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011, unless the Local Planning Authority has, following the submission of a request for screening opinion, determined in accordance with the criteria within Schedule 3 of the same Regulations, that the development is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location and is therefore not EIA development. Developers should therefore satisfy themselves that development would not fall within any of the above categories prior to work commencing. This condition will also be applied any subsequent EIA regulations which replace the above with, or without, modifications.	To ensure any new development is not an EIA development.
2	**Development Height** Development must not exceed 15 metres in height, inclusive of all development such as flue gas stacks and micro wind turbines	To protect the amenity of current and potential new occupiers/residents of the area.
3	**Environmental Protection** All development should conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the: • Statutory conservation sites (principally Wilden Marsh and Meadows SSSI and River Stour Floodplain SSSI) by mitigating any impacts that development adjacent to these sites might have on their ecological function/integrity • Non-statutory nature conservation sites by mitigating any impacts that development adjacent to these sites might have on their ecological function/integrity Development will need to have checked Natural England's SSSI Impact Risk Zones, which can be accessed here to ascertain whether or not their proposal requires consultation with Natural England. In addition development should have regard to all protected species and habitats and BAP species and habitats where identified The sites are identified at Appendix 3 of this Order.	To protect important Environmental habitats within the area.
4	**Health and Safety Executive** Development will need to be in line with the Health and Safety Executives advice on planning for developments near hazardous installations (PADHI). Please refer to Table 2 for further information. Any development above these thresholds would require planning permission.	To ensure development meet Health and Safety criteria.

No	Condition	Reason
5	**Health and Safety Executive – Explosives** Any development proposed on Easter Park or Hoo Farm (sites identified on Appendix 1) will need prior written approval from the HSE Explosives directorate. Developers must send their proposed plans to the HSE, who can be contacted at the following address: Specialised Industries, 5S.2 Redgrave Court, Merton Road, Bootle Merseyside, L20 7HS Tel: 0151 951 4000 Explosives.licensing@hse.gsi.gov.uk If planning permission is required then early consultation with the District Council is recommended.	To ensure development meet Health and Safety criteria.
6	**Network Rail** Any proposal within 10m of the operational railway boundary will require review and approval by Network Rail. Developers must secure prior written approval before any development commences, if located in this area. Network Rail can be contacted at the following address: Town Planning Team LNW, Network Rail, 1st Floor, Square One, 4 Travis Street Manchester, M1 2NY Email: TownPlanningLNW@networkrail.co.uk	To protect the integrity of the railway infrastructure
7	**Traffic Generation** Any development proposed that is greater than the following thresholds would require a Transport Assessment (TA): B1 – Gross Floor Area greater than 2,500sqm B2 – Gross Floor Area greater than 4,000sqm B8 – Gross Floor Area greater than 5,000sqm Should development be higher than these thresholds identified then a TA will need to be submitted and agreed in writing with Worcestershire County Council before any development commences. Where appropriate, mitigation measures may be required, which will need to be provided by the developer, within an agreed timescale. No development may commence until agreement has been reached with the Local Planning Authority	To ensure that development does not have a detrimental impact on the adjoining Highway network.
8	**Highways / Access** Access to the highway network will require the issue of a licence under Section 278 of the Highways Act, 1980. New accesses on to classified roads will require planning permission. Development must not reduce the amount of space available for vehicle turning or manoeuvring.	To ensure development meets highways standards. To ensure development does not adversely affect existing vehicular space.
9	**Parking** Car and cycle parking must be provided in line with the parking standards of Worcestershire County Council Highways Design Guide (Appendix A), unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority	To ensure development has sufficient parking available

No	Condition	Reason
10	**Flood Risk** Development within Area A or B, as identified by Appendix 2, must comply with the following conditions to mitigate flood risk: **Protection to buildings** **Area A (River Stour):** Finished floor levels shall be set no lower than *30.62m AOD (this level is based on 600mm freeboard above a 1% plus climate change flood level)* **or** flood proofing measures shall be incorporated into the building to this level. **Area B (Hoo Brook):** Finished floor levels shall be set no lower than existing ground levels and flood proofing measures shall be incorporated into the building to a level set at least 1 metre above the finished floor level of the building. Further information can be located on the Environment Agency's website here **Protection to Occupiers** Prior to the first occupation of the development, a Flood Evacuation Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA in consultation with the LA Emergency Planning Officer and Emergency Services. In preparing the plan, regard should be had to the guidance on the Environment Agency's website as follows: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/flooding/32362.aspx **Development in Area A** - The Applicant /future occupiers should contact 03708 506506 to be set up on the Environment Agency flood warning system for the River Stour. **Development in Area B** - The Applicant /future occupiers should contact 03708 506506 to be set up on the Environment Agency flood warning system for a Flood Alert for the Hoo Brook. Given that there is only a Flood Alert available for the Hoo Brook, any evacuation management plan will also need to consider other available data to inform timing for implementation of evacuation procedures. For example, a combination of met office data and local weather announcements.	To ensure adequate flood risk protection is provided. To protect the proposed development from flood risk for the lifetime of the development. To minimise the flood related danger to people in the flood risk area.
11	**Surface Water and Drainage** New developments should incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage in line with the following guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-drainage-systems-non-statutory-technical-standards Unless agreed in writing by the Environment Agency or Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. All foul drainage from new development must be connected to the mains foul sewer. If not, then planning permission will be required.	To ensure adequate drainage is provided and to ensure that the ground and surface waters are protected. In order to protect ground and surface waters.
12	**Water Quality** Any facilities for the storage of oils, fuels or chemicals shall be sited on impervious bases and surrounded by impervious bund walls. The volume of the bunded compound shall be at least equivalent to the capacity of the tank plus 10%. If there are multiple tanks, the compound shall be at least equivalent to the capacity of the largest tank, vessel or the combined capacity of	To prevent pollution of the water environment.

No	Condition	Reason
	interconnected tanks or vessels plus 10%. All filling points, associated pipework, vents, gauges and sight glasses must be located within the bund or have separate secondary containment. The drainage system of the bund shall be sealed with no discharge to any watercourse, land or underground strata. Associated pipework shall be located above ground and protected from accidental damage. All filling points and tank/vessels overflow pipe outlets shall be detailed to discharge downwards into the bund.	
13	**Outside Storage** Outside storage space is restricted to 10% of the total area of the curtilage and the overall height of any items stored shall not exceed 4 metres. Any development above these thresholds would require planning permission.	To protect the visual amenity of the area.
14	**Infrastructure** Developers should register with and use www.Linesearch.org. This will provide an instant response advising whether or not any of the 29 infrastructure providers have apparatus that may be affected through development. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the advice and guidance given, and development shall not be commenced until written approval has been received from the relevant Authority.	To protect infrastructure within the area.
15	**Noise** All buildings, extensions, plant and machinery developed under the provisions of the Order will need to comply with the Worcestershire Regulatory Services 'Noise Technical Guidance': http://www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/media/448878/noise-technical-guidance-v-1-2-4.pdf	To protect the amenity of current and potential new occupiers/residents of the area.
16	**Air Quality** Worcestershire Regulatory Services should be consulted to determine if an air quality assessment is required, and/or if one has been produced in the following situations: • Commercial/Industrial development >100 parking spaces; • Biomass Boiler (50kW to 20MW) proposed* • Large Vehicle Depot such as a Bus Station, Lorry Park or Park and Ride * Note under the Clean Air Act 1993 approval from the LPA for the Chimney Stack Height for boilers burning >45.4kg/hr is also required If an assessment is required then the scope and detail of the assessment and any necessary mitigation measures, including a timescale for their implementation, will need to be agreed in writing with WRS, prior to the commencement of development and carried out in accordance with the agreed scheme.	To ensure that no deterioration of the local air quality occurs.
17	**Archaeology** Where archaeological remains are discovered as a result of development commencing, the developer should notify the County Council's Historic Environment Team before proceeding any further.	To record and or protect historic features that may be discovered through development.
18	**Contamination** Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority development, other than that required to be carried out as part of an approved scheme of remediation, must not commence until conditions 1 to 6 identified in Annex 3 have been complied with.	To ensure that risks from land contamination to the environment and human health are minimised.

No	Condition	Reason
19	**Development Notification** 14 days before development starts the Local Planning Authority must be notified of the proposal so that a record of development provided through the LDO can be kept.	To ensure that an accurate record of development is maintained.

The responsibility for interpreting the requirements of the LDO and ensuring that development is compliant with the above conditions falls on the developer/landowner.

Annex 2 - Design Guide

Although not a conditional requirement of the LDO, it is desirable that new developments follow good urban design principles to contribute to a quality environment. Therefore, the following table provides a summary of the key design principles to take into consideration.

Provide innovative architecture	• Development should be based on function but should also be visually pleasing. • Materials, colour, massing, projections, set backs and variety in the sky line can all add more interest.
Provide a coordinated design	• Larger areas of colour on buildings should be sympathetic to the landscape • A limited palette of colours is generally preferred for buildings.
Provide a positive public frontage	• Greatest attention to design quality and investment should be focused onto public faces of main frontages • Entrance foyers and reception areas should be located on the primary public face of buildings, preferably onto surrounding streets. • Outdoor storage areas should be designed and located to be unobtrusive from the street, using screening and/or landscaping as appropriate.
Provide a sense of enclosure on to streets and spaces	• Buildings should be positioned close to highways to provide a positive relationship with the street. • Buildings set to the back of large plots of car parking or storage areas should be avoided.
Provide green infrastructure and landscaping	• New developments should incorporate green landscaping, encouraging biodiversity habitats and incorporating SUDS. • Landscaping can form part of open spaces and recreation areas for employees. • Landscaping areas are ideally located onto public areas close to front entrances of main frontages. • Development should take into account, where relevant, of the area's context being adjacent to the Canal Conservation Area.
Provide development that is Secured by Design	• Secured by Design principles should be followed where possible. • Particular focus should be on site layout, perimeter security, building design, physical security, and electronic security.
Provide sustainable developments	• New development should aim to score 'Good' or better on the BREEAM rating system. • Sustainable building design elements such as natural ventilation, passive solar gain, low energy lighting, water collection and storage, and on-site recycling facilities should be considered.

Informative - Flood proofing: Flood proofing measures can include, but are not limited to, removable barriers on building apertures such as doors and air bricks; flood resilient materials within the building; and providing electrical services into the building at a high level so that plugs are located above possible flood levels. Additional guidance, including information on kite marked flood protection products, can be found on the Environment Agency website at https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-a-flood

Annex 3 – Contaminated Land Conditions

1. A preliminary risk assessment must be carried out. This study shall take the form of a Phase I desk study and site walkover and shall include the identification of previous site uses, potential contaminants that might reasonably be expected given those uses and any other relevant information. The preliminary risk assessment report shall contain a diagrammatical representation (conceptual model) based on the information above and shall include all potential contaminants, sources and receptors to determine whether a site investigation is required and this should be detailed in a report supplied to the Local Planning Authority. The risk assessment must be approved in writing before any development takes place.

2. Where an unacceptable risk is identified a scheme for detailed site investigation must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to being undertaken. The scheme must be designed to assess the nature and extent of any contamination and must be led by the findings of the preliminary risk assessment. The investigation and risk assessment scheme must be compiled by competent persons and must be designed in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's "Model Procedures for the Management of Contaminated Land, CLR11"

3. Detailed site investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken and a written report of the findings produced. This report must be approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to any development taking place. The investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken by competent persons and must be conducted in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's "Model Procedures for the Management of Contaminated Land, CLR11"

4. Where identified as necessary a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to identified receptors must be prepared and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority in advance of undertaking. The remediation scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as Contaminated Land under Part 2A Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

5. The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development, other than that required to carry out remediation, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

6. Following the completion of the measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a validation report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced, and is subject to the approval of the Local Planning Authority prior to the occupation of any buildings.

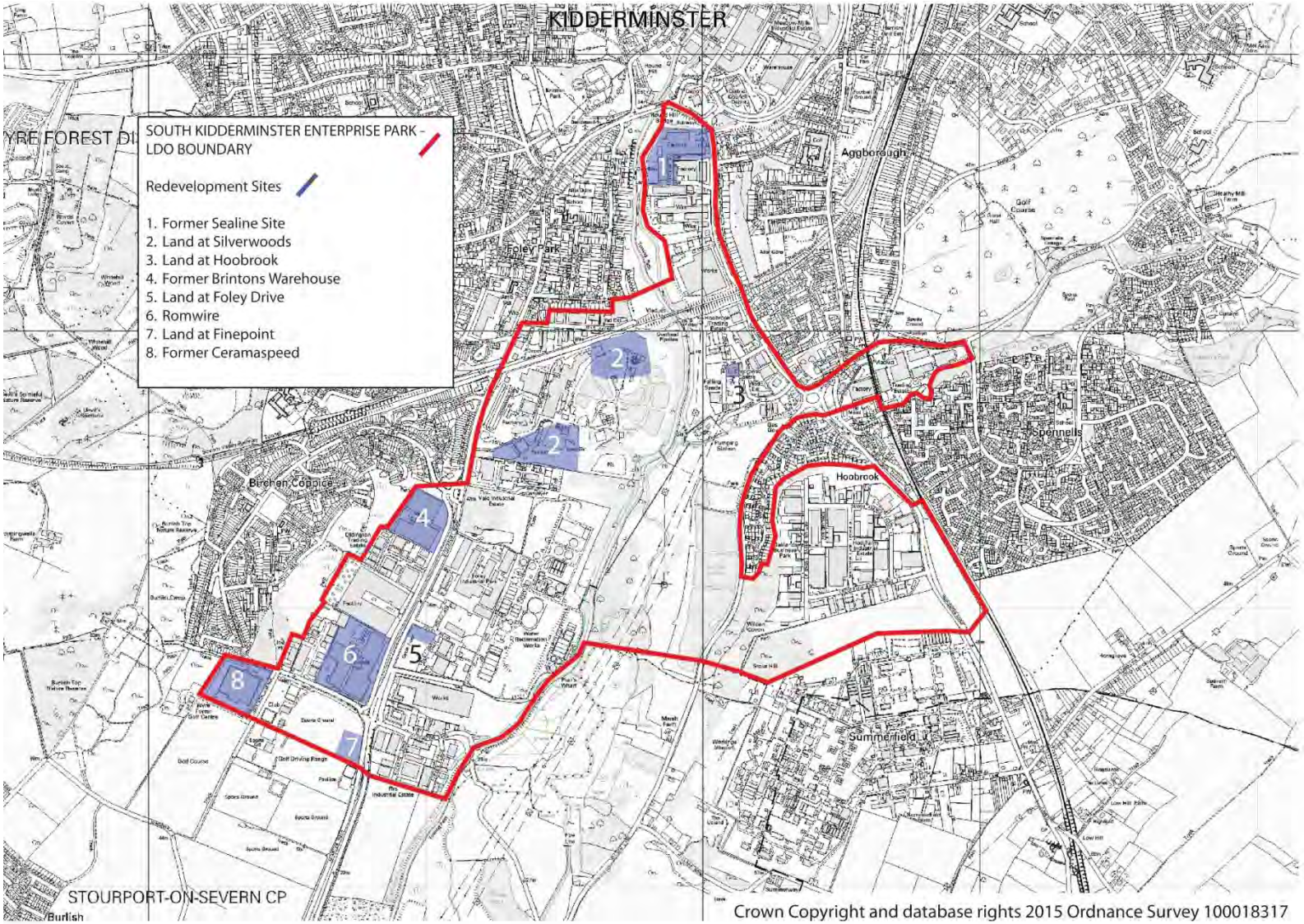
Annex 4 - Health and Safety Executive Advice

There are a number of areas within the Local Development Order boundary where there are buffer zones around potentially hazardous workplaces. Development near to these installations is controlled in order to minimise any potential risk. The Health and Safety Executive provide 'Planning Advice for Developments near Hazardous Installations' (PADHI). This advice is split into the inner, middle and outer zones that exist, and gives advice for development that may fall within the different zone areas. Developers should therefore satisfy themselves that their proposals are in line with the recommendations of the HSE. For workplaces, which are the focus of this Order, the following guidance is given.

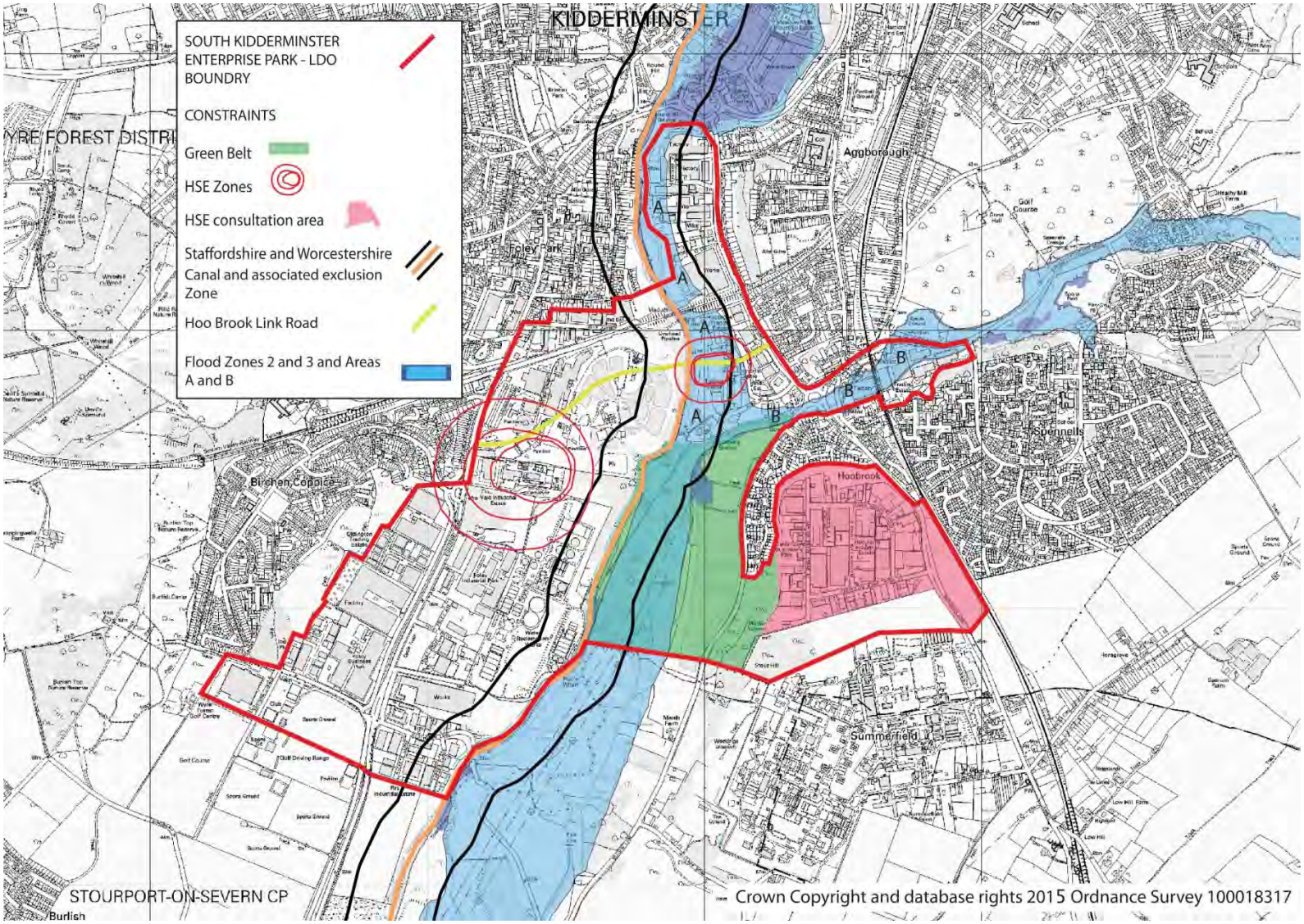
Development Type	Examples	Development detail and size	Justification	Sensitivity Level	Development in Inner Zone	Development in Middle Zone	Development in Outer Zone
Workplaces	Offices, factories, warehouses, haulage depots, builders yards	Workplaces at the major hazard site itself	Risks to workers, and others, at the workplace of the major hazard company are under control of that company	1	Don't Advise Against development	Don't Advise Against development	Don't Advise Against development
		Workplaces (predominantly non-retail) providing for less than 100 occupants in each building and less than 3 occupied storeys	Places where the occupants will be fit and healthy, and could be organised easily for emergency action. Members of the public will not be present or will be present in very small numbers and for a short time	1	Don't Advise Against development	Don't Advise Against development	Don't Advise Against development
		Workplaces (predominantly non-retail) providing for 100 or more occupants in any building or 3 or more occupied storeys in height	Substantial increase in numbers at risk with no direct benefit from exposure to risk	2	Advise Against Development	Don't Advise Against development	Don't Advise Against development
	Sheltered workshops. Remploy	Workplaces specifically for people with disabilities	Those at risk may be especially vulnerable to injury from hazardous events and/or they may not be able to be organised easily for emergency action.	3	Advise Against Development	Advise Against Development	Don't Advise Against development

Therefore, developers will need to be aware of which zone their site is located in and ensure that the thresholds meet the criteria set out by the Health and Safety Executive (The areas designated by the HSE are included on the constraints map attached at Appendix 4). Any development that would fall in the *'Advise Against Development'* category is not be permitted by the Order.

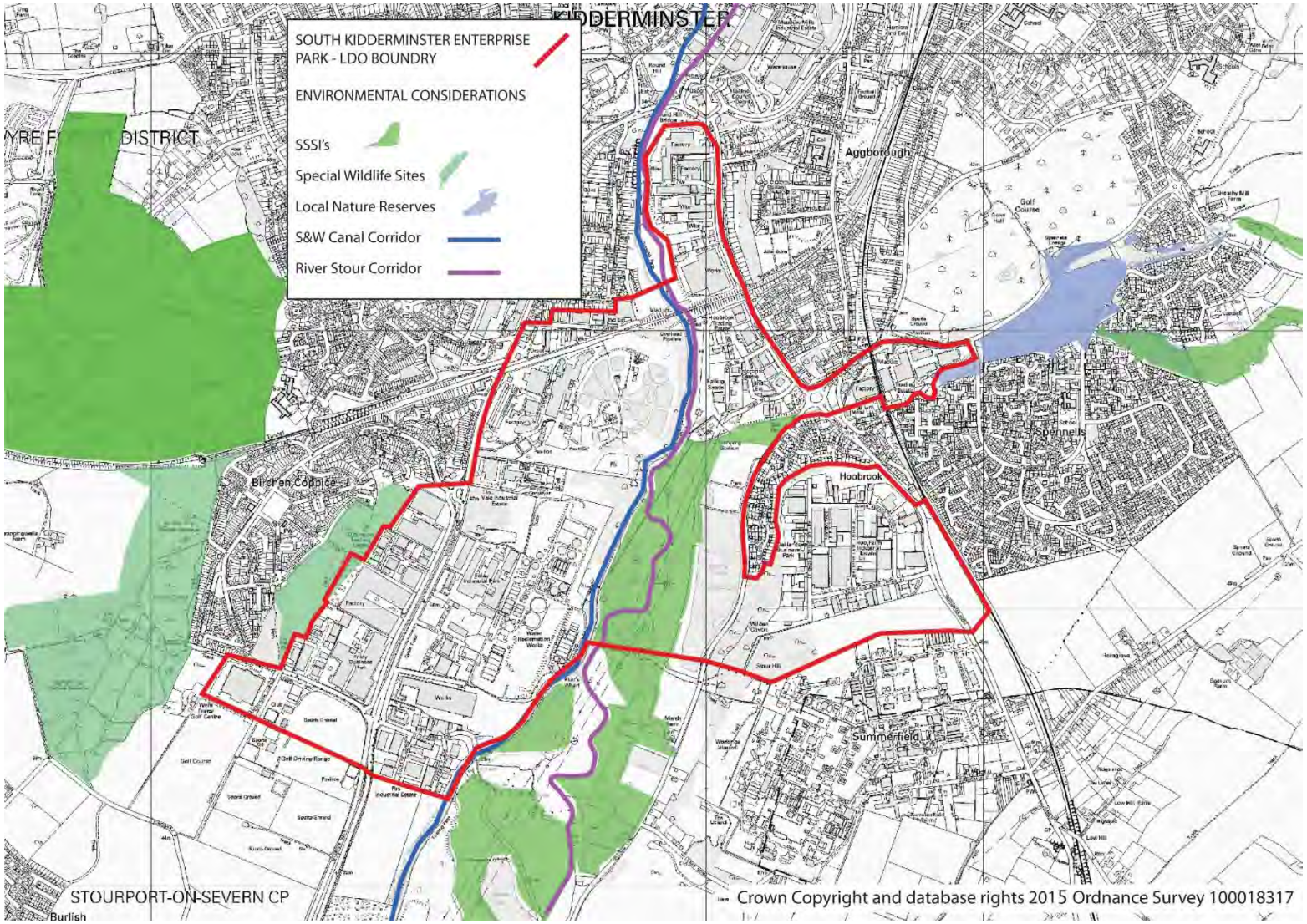
Appendix 1 - Map of LDO Area and Identified Redevelopment Sites



Appendix 2 - Constraints Map



Appendix 3 – Environmental Considerations Map



REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER SOUTH KIDDERMINSTER ENTERPRISE PARK (JUNE 2015) – TABLE OF RESPONSES

Respondent	Summary of Response	Officer Comments
CPRE Worcestershire	The floodplain of the Stour valley and specifically the wetland known as Wilden Marshes should be excluded from the ambit of the order	Whilst these areas fall with the LDO Boundary, development is not permitted in these locations. No change
Worcestershire Regulatory Services – Environmental Health	**Annex 1 Conditions 14 Noise** It is recommended that development under the LDO should comply with WRS Noise Technical Guidance recommendations which provides comprehensive guidance for developers of commercial and industrial buildings : - http://www.worcsregservices.gov.uk/media/448878/noise-technical-guidance-v-1-2-4.pdf	Amend Condition to reflect guidance suggested
Worcestershire Regulatory Services - Land, Air & Water Quality Team	**Air Quality Condition 15** Since the previous LDO in 2012, WRS have developed a number of standard mitigation measures to address the cumulative impact of development on local air quality. WRS recommend the condition is updated to reflect current local and national policies, and ensure developments within the LDO have no adverse affect on local air quality. Suggestion as follows: WRS should be consulted to determine if an air quality assessment is required, and/or if one has been produced, in the following situations: • Commercial/Industrial development >100 parking spaces • Biomass Boiler (50kW to 20MW) proposed* • Large Vehicle Depot such as Bus Station, Lorry Park, Park and Ride or Businesses that receive a large number of HGVs *Note under the Clean Air Act 1993 approval from the LPA for the Chimney Stack Height for boilers burning >45.4kg/hr is also required. **Contaminated Land Condition 17** WRS recommend the full tiered condition wording, developed from DCLG advice in 2008, should be incorporated into LDO to ensure risks to human health and the environment are appropriately addressed.	Amend Condition to reflect guidance as suggested Wording to be included as separate Appendix

REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER SOUTH KIDDERMINSTER ENTERPRISE PARK (JUNE 2015) – TABLE OF RESPONSES

Respondent	Summary of Response	Officer Comments
OGL Computer	I am in favour of extending the LDO from August 2015 for a further 3 years. Hopefully, it will encourage a business to take on the derelict site previously occupied by National Standard/Romwire.	Support is welcomed. In relation to the former Romwire Site it is worth noting that Specsavers have recently submitted plans to develop this site under the LDO
North Worcestershire Water Management	A number of comments received, as follows: How does the LDO deal with the sequential test?	The LDO allows development to come forward in line with Adopted Local Plan Policies. Therefore, it is considered a sequential test is not required as identified in para 104 of the NPPF.
	In terms of finished floor levels it would be better to have a condition for the entire LDO area instead of targeting area A and B. In addition I believe it would be better to relate the required finished floor level to the actual local modelled flood level (available from EA on request) where available and only refer to existing ground levels where a modelled flood level is not available.	This approach was agreed with the Environment Agency and is to be retained.
	With regard to condition 9, Would it be possible to include map of the areas receiving full flood warnings and flood advice in one of the annexes or perhaps even better guide the readers to the what's in your backyard website of the environment agency, that shows the areas so people can see what service is available?	This map is already in Appendix 2. However, the reference to the website will be included in condition 9
	Regarding condition 10. This is no longer in line with the new non statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems that have been issued earlier this year by Defra. Suggestion is that that any major developments would need to meet these non statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems (March 2015). The doc can be found here https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-drainage-systems-non-statutory-technical-standards	Condition to be updated to reflect latest standards as suggested
	As some of the development is near watercourses, I believe that it would be good to include under condition 11 that all works will need to comply with the PPG5 Guidance on Pollution Prevention –	Whilst the intention of this is agreed, there is a concern this will

REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER SOUTH KIDDERMINSTER ENTERPRISE PARK (JUNE 2015) – TABLE OF RESPONSES

Respondent	Summary of Response	Officer Comments
	Works in, near or over watercourses. PPG5 can be found here https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/pollution-prevention-guidance-ppg The information regarding flood proofing, currently in Annex 2, should be included in condition 9 instead as including it in annex 2 wrongly suggests that flood proofing is not a conditional requirement. Under condition 9 it should also be added that "Where flood mitigation leads to a loss in flood storage, compensatory storage will need to be created as part of the development on a level by level basis Redevelopment site 2 is land at Silverwoods. Would it be worth mentioning somewhere that the site needs to fit in with the already existing outline planning permission. For instance, the drainage needs to conform with the overall drainage strategy that was agreed for this site	date the LDO when PPG5 is revised This is only for information and so will remain in Annex 2 No change proposed. No change proposed.
N & J Logistics	Very interested in the LDO. Considering growing the business and welcome any advice available	Officers have spoken separately to this business to outline support available.
Network Rail	We would request developer's should contact Network Rail for any proposals within the area to ensure that: • Access points / rights of way belonging to Network Rail are not impacted by developments within the area. • That any proposal does not impact upon the railway infrastructure / Network Rail land e.g. In addition we recommend that any proposal within 10m of the operational railway boundary will require review and approval by the Network Rail Asset Protection Team, and such schemes should be accompanied by a risk assessment and a method statement. All initial proposals and plans should be flagged up to the Network Rail Town Planning Team London North Western Route. We would highlight in the first instance that the LPA is requested to notify Network Rail of any planning proposal within 10m from our boundary. Also, any proposal that is on, over or under Network Rail land and the operational railway (including stations, freight or maintenance depots).	Comments noted. The Order has been amended to pick up on the comments raised by Network Rail

REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER SOUTH KIDDERMINSTER ENTERPRISE PARK (JUNE 2015) – TABLE OF RESPONSES

Respondent	Summary of Response	Officer Comments
Bewdley Town Council	Councillors acknowledged that the existing LDO has been well received and noted the intention to adopt it again (with revisions) for a further three years. No further comments were considered necessary at this time.	Comments noted.
Environment Agency	We undertook detailed discussions with your Council on the environmental content and conditions of the current adopted LDO as part of the original consultation process.. The text on the environmental constraints (section 4.0) and Annex 1 conditions remains the same and we are satisfied that this information is generally up to date and would cover the slight amendments to the sites and LDO boundary proposed. In reviewing the LDO document we would take this opportunity to note the following points:	Comments noted.
	Flood Risk	
	Flood Zone Map: The flood outlines on our Flood Map for Planning (rivers and sea) have altered slightly to reflect the latest flood model information we have available for the River Stour in this location. I have attached a copy of our latest Flood Map for your information. The flood levels for the River Stour used to inform condition 9 of the LDO remain relevant.	Comments noted.
	Flood Warning: The flood warning information for Area A and B in condition 9 is still relevant. It is important to note that for Development in Area B the flood alert issued is for the Kidderminster area, covering the River Stour and its tributaries, and does not specifically relate to the Hoo Brook. It might be that a flood alert is issued and the Hoo Brook is not affected. As there are no gauges on the Hoo Brook used to inform the flood alert there is also the potential that Brook levels may be high and no alert issued. The reference in the condition to other available data (e.g. met office data/local weather announcements) will therefore be important to inform timing for evacuation procedures.	Comments noted.
	With regards to section 7.0 of the LDO, we support the flood risk restriction to ensure that development is not permitted within 8m of the River Stour and Hoo Brook in order to protect the watercourses and their associated floodplain. Ideally, development within the Flood Zones outlined on the constraints map should not encroach closer to the watercourses, classified as 'Main River' (River Stour and Hoo Brook). However, we acknowledge that the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal	Comments noted and support is welcomed.

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Respondent	Summary of Response	Officer Comments
	exclusion zone provides some protection to development within the floodplain. Where there are existing buildings within 8m of the top of bank of the watercourses we would look for betterment over the existing situation to improve flood risk in addition to opportunities for biodiversity enhancements and in meeting the objectives of the WFD. Annex 2 Design Guide – the link in the flood proofing informative could be updated for our current website, available via: https://www.gov.uk/prepare-for-a-flood **Contaminated Land** We are generally satisfied with the wording of condition 17 relating to contamination in securing the remediation of sites where necessary. This condition could be expanded or an additional advice note included in clarifying the information requirements for remediation and validation, to assist developers in ensuring appropriate remediation of the site. The following is suggested for your consideration: The second paragraph of condition 17 refers to the developer submitting details of any mitigation measures to ensure any contamination is dealt with appropriately. As part of this a remediation method statement should be produced based on the results of the site investigation, giving full details of the remediation actions required to reduce the risk and how they are to be undertaken.	Amendment made to the Order to reflect this. Comments noted. THE LDO has been amended based on comments received by WRS relating to contaminated land and this picks up the points raised here.
Canal and Rivers Trust	We welcome the retention of the restriction *"Development that would effect the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal"* in Section 7 of the Order. This restriction continues to reflect the fact that we have several large cuttings and embankments in this area and therefore it is imperative that the impact of development on these structures shall need to be assessed by us prior to development commencing. Site 1 of the Redevelopment Sites, Former Sealine Site, is significantly covered by the restriction relating to *"Development that would effect the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal"*, which does not permit development under the LDO in the identified area. As such it is unclear how the Council anticipate any development proposals seeking comprehensive redevelopment of this site will come forward in relation to the operation of the LDO.	Comments noted. It should be noted that this is a potentially large regeneration site and therefore some development would be outside of the 'buffer zone'
Worcestershire County Council	Our only observation is that, for completeness, minerals development, as well as waste, is a 'county matter', and is expressly excluded from Local Development Orders. The table of restrictions in section 7.1 currently only refers to waste. It would be helpful if the Order referred to this and directed	LDO amended to reflect this.

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Respondent	Summary of Response	Officer Comments
	developers considering such matters to the County Council's development management team.	
Oakleaf /WFCH	I am responding on behalf of Wyre Forest Community Housing and Oakleaf Commercial Services Ltd. confirm that the LDO has been useful to Oakleaf, in particular in being able to develop its new depot and office facilities very quickly. This has enabled investment via the construction to be made in Wyre Forest and enabled us to move forward quickly with our expansion plans to create new local jobs. You will see the construction is happening at a rapid pace and we intend to move into the site during July 2015. We have no objections to the revised LDO and in fact support its extension for a further 3 years.	Comments noted and support is welcomed.
Historic England	We made recommendations on the original draft LDO on 29/3/12. Our professional staff has considered this proposal for the extension of the LDO and do not wish to add any comments.	Noted. Previous comments helped to shape the current LDO. No change required.
Natural England	**Designated Sites** The Local Development Order area includes part of Wilden Marsh and Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is also adjacent to the River Stour Floodplain SSSI. We note that the LDO gives clear reference to the presence of Wilden Marsh and Meadows SSSI and the River Stour Floodplain SSSI, and defines their boundaries on the map in Appendix 3. The LDO should clearly express the need to conserve and enhance these SSSI. The LDO conditions at this time simple suggest that " All development should have regard to" designated sites (see Annex 1 on the LDO Conditions (condition 3)). Also the map of environmental considerations in appendix 3 is not considered a "constraints" map as per appendix 2 which also has associated conditions. It appears the map in appendix 3 is for information only. Given that a proposal on, or affecting, a SSSI's special interest would be considered a significant environmental impact and so subject to EIA (see below) Natural England advises that the location and boundary of the SSSIs is added to map 2 (constraints map). In addition we would like to discuss with you land around the SSSIs where development may indirectly impact on the SSSI (again see below) which may also trigger the need for EIA. The response identifies the legislative framework covering development affecting biodiversity, namely: • The National Planning Policy Framework, which requires the planning system to contribute to	Comments noted. This has been picked up through amendments to the conditions in the Order. No development is permitted on SSSI through the Order and the buffer zone around the Canal further protects these areas from development

Respondent	Summary of Response	Officer Comments
	and enhance the natural environment, as identified under paragraph 118. • The *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) imposes a general and overarching duty under Section 28G that requires an authority to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of the features for which sites are of special interest (Paragraph 57: ODPM Circular 06/2005).	
	Development in the LDO area has the potential to contribute towards the enhancement of Wilden Marsh and Meadows SSSI. The marshland SSSI suffers from drying-out and development could contribute towards the re-wetting of the site. Potential opportunities including directing clean water onto the SSSI using gravity-fed systems or pumps, or directing clean water into the River Stour through Sustainable Drainage Systems. The LDO removes the mechanism for agreeing such enhancement measures on a case by case basis. Natural England advise that the LDO includes a condition around enhancement of the SSSI. We would be pleased to work with the Council and other agencies to better define the opportunities and the mechanisms for delivery.	Comments noted. However, planning contributions are not permitted through the LDO. Although the LDO does prevent such mechanism an amendment has been made to Condition 3 to try and ensure this is picked up.
	Designated sites and EIA. We note that 'Appendix 1 – Council that it is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment, in accordance with the criteria in Schedule 3. The presence of the SSSI should inform the EIA Screening decision. This should be explained in the LDO. Natural England advises that any adverse impacts to the special interest of a SSSI should be considered a significant environmental effect for the purposes of EIA screening.	Comments Noted.
	The LDO states that an LDO cannot remove the need for other forms of consent (see Paragraph 5.1 of the revised LDO document dated April 2015; Paragraph 17: DCLG Circular 01/2006), therefore any application involving works within the SSSI may still require assent/consent from Natural England.	Comments Noted.
	Designated sites Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) We welcome the Council's consideration of this matter and agree that when we commented on the existing LDO that the Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report for the Site Allocations and	Comments Noted. Whilst the HRA screening report is from 2012 it

REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT ORDER SOUTH KIDDERMINSTER ENTERPRISE PARK (JUNE 2015) – TABLE OF RESPONSES

Respondent	Summary of Response	Officer Comments
	Policies Preferred Options DPD was sufficient to underpin the LDO. Therefore, taking into account Regulation 78 of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010*, Natural England did consider that the developments included in the LDO would not have been likely to have a significant effect on a European site. This revised LDO relies on the HRA screening report, done in 2012, for the original LDO. Natural England advises that after 3 years the HRA screening report should be revisited, and you should update the HRA screening report.	informed the development of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan, which runs until 2026. Therefore it is considered appropriate to utilise the same document for the LDO, which will only run until 2018. It is also worth noting that an updated HRS will be produced to inform the Local Plan Review.
	Local Sites The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and the River Stour are both designated as Local Wildlife Sites. We advise that their status is recognised in the LDO. The opportunities described in relation to the SSSI also apply to these Local Sites. We note that the River Stour is currently classed as being in a 'poor' status under the Water Framework Directive, due to issues around water quality. Directing clear water into the river could improve this situation through increasing dilution.	Comments noted. However, the buffer zone around these features prevents any development from occurring that may have otherwise produced these benefits.
	Protected Species Natural England has published Standing Advice on protected species. The Standing Advice includes a habitat decision tree which provides advice to planners on deciding if there is a 'reasonable likelihood' of protected species being present. It also provides detailed advice on the protected species most often affected by development, including flow charts for individual species to enable an assessment to be made of a protected species survey and mitigation strategy. As Standing Advice it is a material consideration in the determination of applications in the same way as any individual response received from Natural England following consultation.	Comments noted. Protected species are picked up via other legislation.
	SSSI Impact Risk Zones The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, which came into force on 15 April 2015, has removed the requirement to consult Natural England on notified consultation zones within 2 km of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Schedule 5, v (ii) of the 2010 DMPO). The requirement to consult Natural England on "*Development in or likely to affect a Site of*	A revision to the conditions has been made to ensure that developers check the online mapping and consult Natural

Respondent	Summary of Response	Officer Comments
	Special Scientific Interest" remains in place (Schedule 4, w). Natural England's **SSSI Impact Risk Zones** are a GIS dataset designed to be used during the planning application validation process to help local planning authorities decide when to consult Natural England on developments *likely to affect a SSSI.* The dataset and user guidance can be accessed from the gov.uk website.	England if required.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14TH JULY 2015

Regeneration of Kidderminster Western Gateway
Use of Compulsory Purchase Powers

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor J-P Campion
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Director of Economic Prosperity and Place
CONTACT OFFICER:	Mike Parker, Ext. 2500 mike.parker@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 – Plan of land subject to proposed CPO

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1. To realise the Council's agreed vision for Kidderminster Town Centre regeneration through the redevelopment of the Western Gateway, including the demolition of Crown House, through the use of its compulsory purchase powers in order to acquire land at Lower Mill Street and the surrounding area. The report principally concerns the freehold interest in the land, it is intended that a subsequent process will deal with any leasehold interests that may exist. The proposed development is set out in the Council's adopted Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Development Plan Document and has detailed planning permission (ref: 13/0670 FULL) which was granted on 25 April 2014. The Council remains committed to working with Henderson UK Retail Warehouse Fund (HUK), the owners of Weavers Wharf, to provide a new gateway into the Town Centre.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Cabinet is asked to DECIDE:

2.1. **To note the progress achieved to date in the purchase of properties through private treaty; and subject to there being no reasonable prospect of such purchases reaching a final conclusion by the end of September 2015,**

2.1.1. **That, subject to entering into an indemnity agreement with HUK in respect of the total costs associated with the compulsory purchase and acquisition of the land; and an agreement for the acquisition of properties as set out in 2.2.4 below, that the Council makes a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) under section 226(i) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 for the acquisition of the land and new rights within the areas shown shaded on the attached Plan for the purpose of securing the comprehensive redevelopment of the land in accordance with Policy KCA.WG3 of the Adopted Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Local Development Plan Document for retail purposes.**

2.2. **That the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council be authorised to:**

2.2.1. **Take all necessary steps to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of the CPO, including the publication and service of all notices and the presentation of the Council's case at any Public Inquiry.**

2.2.2. **Acquire interests in land and new rights within the CPO either by agreement or compulsorily.**

2.2.3. **Approve agreements with land owners setting out the terms for the withdrawal of objections to the CPO, including, where appropriate, seeking exclusion of land from the CPO and/or making arrangements for relocation of occupiers.**

2.2.4. **Enter into an Agreement with HUK for the acquisition of the properties to be purchased compulsorily (a 'back to back' Agreement) before any CPO is made.**

2.3. **That, subject to the above referenced indemnity agreement being entered into, the Director of Economic Prosperity and Place appoints consultants as required to act on behalf of the Council in progressing the CPO, including any negotiations for the purchase of any land.**

Cabinet is asked to RECOMMEND to Council:

2.4. **That the Capital Programme be amended to include the acquisition of properties that are the subject of the CPO, while recognising that there will be no cost to the Council as a result of the indemnity agreement and "back-to-back" agreement as set out in recommendations 2.1 and 2.2.4 above."**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1. Council set out its aspirations for the renaissance of Kidderminster Town Centre as far back as 2009 when it launched its ReWyre regeneration prospectus and has since reaffirmed its commitment through State of the Area debates in 2012 and 2013. The Council committed £1.5m to support the recovery of its local economy. At the heart of the Council's aspirations has been the desire to restore a sense of place in Kidderminster Town Centre. To acheive this aspiration the District Council is already working with Worcestershire County Council to deliver a significant public realm scheme throughout the Town Centre. However it is recognised that limited resources and lack of direct control over land means that the public sector needs to work with the private sector to deliver a wider scheme for the town. To this end the Council has been working in partnership with HUK to achieve the redevelopment of the area known in the local plan as the 'Western Gateway'.

3.2. Within the Western Gateway is located 'Crown House', which is generally regarded as one of the ugliest buildings in the region. A common theme when the Council has consulted upon proposals to improve the Town Centre has been the need to demolish Crown House. The Council recognised that by working with HUK a solution could be found that achieved the demolition of Crown House, the laying out of new public space in its place and the redevelopment of the western edge of Weavers

Wharf at no cost to the public purse. This outcome would not be achieved without the resources and land ownership of HUK.

3.3. The Council is committed to supporting the vitality and viability of the Town Centre and has previously used High Street Innovation Fund monies, as well as its own resources, to support small and medium sized traders to open shops in the area. The Council has also included in its recent budget funding for the progression of the Eastern Gateway (Including Worcester Street) through the development of a masterplan to bring about the redevelopment of that traditional part of the town.

3.4. At its meeting on 22 July 2014 the Cabinet considered the detailed case for the making of a CPO. Cabinet agreed to the principle of the making and implementation of a CPO, subject to entering into an indemnity agreement with HUK in respect of the total costs associated with the CPO. Since the resolution of July 2014 HUK has continued its negotiations with third party landowners to seek acquisitions without recourse to the use of CPO powers. Whilst progress has been made in agreeing heads of terms to purchase one of the freehold interests that has the majority of the tenanted interests, it has not yet been possible to secure all of the interests required to bring forward the regeneration project and accordingly it is recommended that if no significant progress is made by the end of September 2015 the Council should then proceed with the CPO.

3.5. Almost 12 months have passed since the initial Cabinet resolution and whilst it is not necessary as a matter of law for Cabinet to reconsider its decision in principle to use CPO powers, it is considered prudent to do so in order to provide a robust basis for proceeding. It also provides an opportunity to update Cabinet on the current state of proceedings with third party landowners and to advise of further information regarding tenanted interests (detailed at paragraph 5.6 below). As a result, the recommendations in this report are almost identical to those contained in the July 2014 report.

3.6. This report outlines:

i. the development proposals (referred to as the “Scheme”);

ii. the extent of the interests to be compulsorily acquired (referred to as the “Order Land”);

iii. the statutory powers under which the Council will proceed and the guidance contained in Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Circular 06/2004: “*Compulsory Purchase and the Crichel Down Rules*” (referred to as the “Circular”), which provides policy and guidance to be followed in the exercise of compulsory purchase powers;

iv. the public interest case for the use of compulsory purchase powers, how the “well-being test” is met, an assessment of the development in relation to the national and local planning framework, the resource implications of acquiring the Order Land and implementing the Scheme, the issue of whether there are any impediments to the Scheme proceeding and whether the development could be achieved by any other means.

3.7. The land to be included in the CPO (the “Order Land”) comprises approximately 0.9 hectares located in the northwest section of Kidderminster town centre, adjacent to the north / north east of Weavers’ Wharf Retail Park. This is within the area known as the Western Gateway. The Order Land is described in section 5 of this report.

3.8. The Council has an ambition to facilitate the redevelopment of the Order Land where a clear regeneration need exists and planning policies have been put in place to promote such development.

3.9. HUK shares the Council's ambition to see the redevelopment of this area. HUK owns the adjoining Weavers' Wharf Retail Park which comprises approximately 30,000 sq m (323,000 sq ft) of retail floorspace and restaurants and around 400 surface-level car parking spaces. HUK acquired Weavers' Wharf in 2007 and expanded it in 2010 with the conversion of Slingfield Mill for occupation by Debenhams.

3.10. The Council and HUK have been working collaboratively to deliver the regeneration benefits of the proposal, the effect of which has been to interpose HUK as leaseholder of the Crown House building to enable them to secure vacant possession and demolition of the building; for its part the Council has agreed to consider using its powers of compulsorily purchase to assemble the land at Lower Mill Street to facilitate redevelopment. Before making the CPO the Council will enter into an agreement to dispose of the land to HUK following its compulsory acquisition in order that HUK can undertake the redevelopment.

3.11. The Scheme proposals represent the second phase of HUK's regeneration plans and represent a significant investment in the town centre. The Scheme will better integrate Weavers' Wharf into the town centre and broaden its overall attraction by providing a new civic space for a range of uses, with complementary retail, food and beverage outlets and a large retail anchor unit of the type not currently available in the centre of Kidderminster. The Scheme is described in greater detail at section 4.

3.12. HUK secured full detailed planning permission for the Scheme in April 2014. The next stage in the process is for the land to be assembled. HUK already owns a significant area of the land which is required for the Scheme, however, there are a number of freehold and leasehold interests in third party ownership which are also required for the Scheme to proceed in its entirety. HUK has been in negotiations to acquire the remaining properties since 2011 and these negotiations remain ongoing.

3.13. HUK remains committed to acquiring the remaining interests in the Order Land by private treaty negotiation where practicable, however, over the last year since the Council first indicated it would be prepared to consider using its CPO powers, these private negotiations have not progressed as quickly as either the Council or HUK would like and this has caused some considerable uncertainty for the owners and tenants of the affected properties. It is not uncommon in CPO situations for freeholders to overestimate the value of their interest and this can lead to protracted negotiations. In order to provide certainty and inject more pace into the realisation of the regeneration it is considered necessary now for the Council to use its compulsory purchase powers to enable the Scheme to be implemented within a reasonable timeframe. This report outlines what the Council needs to have regard to when making a CPO, with a recommendation that the Council resolves to use its compulsory purchase powers.

4. <u>THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS</u>

4.1 In December 2013 the District Council received a planning application (13/0670 FULL) from HUK, the owners of Weavers' Wharf, for:
"The redevelopment of land within and adjacent to Weavers' Wharf; the demolition of Crown House and buildings between Lower Mill Street and Weavers' Wharf (excluding McDonalds); the erection of a retail store (Use Class A1), canal side

restaurants and cafes (use Class A3), retail/restaurants (flexible use within Class E for A1/A3/A4) and altered vehicular and pedestrian accesses, landscaping, construction of infrastructure and public realm works, car parking and associated works, including bridges over the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and River Stour".

4.2 The Planning Application was considered by the Council's Planning Committee on 8 April 2014 where it was agreed that permission be granted; and planning permission was duly granted for the redevelopment proposal on 25 April 2014.

4.3 The principal uses proposed are set out below.

Use	**Gross External Area (square metres)**
Anchor Retail Unit (Class A1) over two storeys	5,552
Three Retail/Restaurant Units (Class A1, A3 or A4) in units of 204m^2, 284 m^2 and 594 m^2 sq m with outside seating areas	1,082
Three Restaurant Units (Class A3) each extending to 319 m^2	957
New Public Square incorporating the opening up of the currently culverted River Stour	N/A
Bridge Link to enable multi-modal access over the Canal in both directions to link the Scheme with Weavers Wharf, including improvement works to the Canal towpath	N/A

5. THE ORDER LAND

5.1 The proposed CPO is to include all of the land shaded on the indicative CPO Boundary Plan appended to this report. In addition to seeking powers to compulsorily acquire land and interests in the land, the Council is seeking powers to create new rights for the purpose of executing or facilitating the development, such as rights of access and oversailing rights for cranes.

5.2 The Order Land is located in the northwest section of Kidderminster Town Centre, to the north/northeast of the existing Weavers' Wharf Retail Park. It is bounded by Lower Mill Street, Bull Ring, Pitts Lane, Crown Lane and Blackhorse Lane. Negotiations for purchase by private treaty will continue in parallel with the CPO process and any land acquired through this process and any interests already in the ownership of the Council or HUK will be excluded from the CPO.

5.3 The existing third party land uses comprise:

a. Crown House;

b. Retail, restaurant and cafe and residential uses at 4 – 10 Lower Mill Street;

c. Job Centre Plus at 12 Lower Mill Street;

d. Pizza Hut, Weavers Wharf ;

e. Airspace for bridge crossings, including footings if required, over River Stour and Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal and generally across the whole site for craneage clearance.

5.4 The Order Land comprises currently developed land and is allocated in the adopted Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan (July 2013) as a town centre site which is to be transformed to form a fully integrated extension of the town centre.

5.5 The Order Land does not contain any statutorily listed buildings or locally listed buildings. With the exception of the canal corridor, the site is not in a Conservation Area. Conservation Area Consent is not required to implement the planning permission.

5.6 Further to the July 2014 report further investigations have revealed that the first and second floors of 7 Lower Mill Street are currently used as a "House in Multiple Occupation" (HMO) with six letting rooms with shared communal facilities.

5.7 The Order Land comprises the entire area required for the Scheme including areas already owned by the Council and HUK in order to ensure that in the event that any ownerships or interests come to light as a result of the CPO process that are currently unknown, theyare also captured by the CPO and to ensure that any third party rights or covenants can be expunged, thereby giving the Council a title without the continued existence of third party interest or rights. The Order Land includes areas of public highway adjoining the main development site. This is because it is common for the title of frontage land adjoining the public highway to include the half width of the adjoining highway. Therefore the public highway has been included within the CPO boundary to ensure clean title. The intention is that any land within the highway boundary that is acquired from third parties be transferred to Worcestershire County Council as highway authority on completion of the Scheme and will not be included in land forming the 'back to back agreement'. Any land within the highway boundary that is already owned by the County Council will be excluded from the CPO and remain in the ownership of the County Council.

6. ATTEMPTS TO ACQUIRE BY PRIVATE TREATY NEGOTIATION

6.1 It is proper that in considering the use of compulsory purchase the Council receives reassurance that HUK has made all reasonable efforts to acquire the properties in question through private negotiation and that those negotiations have been conducted diligently and expeditiously, in the manner appropriate for such an important issue. The Council recognises that it would be inappropriate for HUK to share the details of those negotiations due to their commercially confidential nature and if any such details were to be reported it would have to be in an exempt forum. In order to assure itself that HUK has acted reasonably and properly, Council relies on the advice from the Director of Economic Prosperity & Place who has been party to more detailed discussions with HUK and their advisors, CBRE and Carter Jonas where such commercially confidential information regarding offers made, together with information relating to meetings and correspondence has been shared in support of HUK's efforts. The Director of Economic Prosperity & Place has advised that in his professional opinion HUK has acted properly in this matter, that they have acted fairly and reasonably and in good faith in attempting to secure the freehold interests in the land in question, that appropriate offers to purchase the properties have been made and that they have been frustrated by inaction on the part of the current landowners to conclude the transactions. The result is that the Council's active intervention is now required.

6.2 In summary HUK has been in negotiations with all landowners since late 2011. The intensity of these negotiations increased in late 2013 following the submission of the planning application, and again following the July 2014 resolution by Cabinet. HUK have been negotiating directly with Telereal Trillium who are the non-occupational subtenants of Crown House and owner occupiers of Job Centre Plus. As part of these negotiations HUK has agreed to provide a replacement Job Centre Plus at Castle Road.

6.3 HUK has appointed a local agent, Baxter Charles Property Consultants, to undertake the negotiations with the remaining property owners on Lower Mill Street. Support has also been offered in looking at suitable alternative premises elsewhere within the town centre for relocation. HUK has also appointed Carter Jonas LLP to assess likely compensation levels and ensure that proper process is followed in respect of the use of compulsory purchase powers and payment of compensation to affected parties.

6.4 Negotiations have taken place through a combination of formal written offers, emails, telephone conversations and face to face meetings. Baxter Charles have confirmed 23 email and telephone exchanges with one freeholder, 21 with another over an 18 month period from the end of 2013 and two meetings and three phone calls with the remaining freeholder (although no calls have been returned since the beginning of 2015. Further, although at this stage the focus of all negotiations has quite properly been with the freeholders, two of the tenants have been visited on three occasions and had various emails and telephone conversations and all other remaining tenants have had at least one meeting with HUK.

6.5 Following the July 2014 resolution Carter Jonas formally wrote to affected landowners and occupiers to advise of the redevelopment proposals and inform them of the potential use of compulsory purchase powers. Within these letters parties were advised of the preference to undertake acquisitions by private treaty voluntary negotiations and in order to ensure that owners had access to proper professional advice, Hendersons made an offer to pay reasonable surveyors and solicitors fees for progressing negotiations. Since then further discussions have taken place with affected parties and most of them have taken up the offer of appointing their own professional advisors whose reasonable fees will be reimbursed by HUK.

6.6 Terms have been agreed for the acquisition of the largest freehold interest on Lower Mill Street and solicitors instructed. Increased written offers have recently been made for the two remaining properties on Lower Mill Street.

6.7 Despite these negotiations it has not so far been possible to reach agreements with all landowners and it may not be possible to do so within a reasonable timeframe. The current landowners are showing little sign of urgency in progressing negotiations are not responding to communications and may feel that twelve months after the Council first resolving to use CPO powers as no CPO has been made, that the Council was not serious about its intentions; that is why the Council needs to re-affirm its commitment to assembling the land necessary for this redevelopment and now to formally commence the CPO process. However, in accordance with the guidance set out in paragraphs 24 and 25 of the Circular, negotiations will continue alongside the compulsory purchase process.

6.8 The Council's commitment to use its CPO powers by resolving to use a CPO will demonstrate the seriousness of the Council's intentions to deliver this regeneration scheme as part of its commitment to bring a step change to the town centre offer.

The use of a CPO will provide added focus to the private treaty negotiations and a means of delivering the Scheme in the event that agreement cannot be reached.

6.9 Work to date has been undertaken to identify all of the known land interests within the Order Land. Once a resolution to use CPO powers has been made, the land title will be formally checked by a process referred to as Land Referencing and final details of owners and occupiers will be determined by use of a statutory requisition procedure before the CPO is made in line with statutory requirements.

7. THE COUNCIL'S POWERS AND USE OF COMPULSORY PURCHASE

7.1 The Council has the power under Section 226(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to acquire land compulsorily for planning purposes. The relevant tests are set out in Section 226(1)(a). First, the local authority must think that the acquisition will facilitate the development, redevelopment or improvement of the land. The Council considers that this first test will be met by the implementation of the Scheme which will facilitate the redevelopment of the area.

7.2 Further Section 226(1A) requires local authorities utilising the powers under Section 226(1)(a) to show that they think that the development, redevelopment or improvement is likely to contribute to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area. This is mirrored in the Circular which contains the guidance that acquiring authorities should follow when exercising compulsory purchase powers. The Circular confirms that any land assembly needs to be set within a clear planning framework and that the use of the powers needs to be in furtherance of the "well-being" of the area. The justification for using these powers is considered in the next section.

7.3 The Council's preference is that if at all reasonably practicable, all interests will be acquired through private treaty negotiation. All attempts to do this are continuing to be made and will continue to be made throughout the CPO process. The signalling of its intentions to use compulsory powers will demonstrate that the Council is committed to the proposal. With a CPO timetable, that has a clear end point, meaningful negotiations will be easier to undertake.

8. REASONS FOR THE DECISION AND THE JUSTIFICATION FOR MAKING THE PROPOSED CPO

8.1 The Circular provides guidance as to the factors the Secretary of State can be expected to consider when considering the confirmation of a CPO. One key test is that a CPO should only be made where there is "*a compelling case in the public interest*" and that the purposes for which the CPO is made sufficiently justify interfering with the human rights of those affected. Paragraph 17 of the Circular states that:

> "*A compulsory purchase order should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest. An acquiring authority should be sure that the purposes for which it is making a compulsory purchase order sufficiently justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected. Regard should be had, in particular, to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and, in the case of a dwelling, Article 8 of the Convention*."

This therefore not only represents National Policy but also ensures compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Additionally it is necessary to show that there are no impediments to the Scheme proceeding within the relevant timeframe. Furthermore paragraph 16 of Appendix A of the Circular sets out four matters on which the Secretary of State requires to be satisfied in order to confirm a CPO under s226 of the Act. All of these Circular tests are considered and addressed below:

8.2 Whether there is a compelling case in the public interest which justifies the use of CPO powers

a) The Order Land largely comprises an under utilised brownfield town centre site with little architectural or heritage merit. The site is identified in adopted local planning policy as an area where retail growth should be targeted and refers to a stated ambition to transform the area from its current eclectic state of low grade urban environments and poorly defined land uses into a fully integrated section of the town centre.

b) The Scheme accords with the adopted local planning policy framework for the area, as summarised at paragraph 8.4 below, and has the benefit of detailed planning permission.

c) The proposed re-development will deliver a significant number of improvements for the benefit of the area, which are identified in paragraph 8.5 below.

d) It is the Council's view that the significant public benefit which will be derived from these proposals outweighs the interference with the human rights of those parties affected by the CPO. In addition the fact that there are clear proposals for the re-development of the land which have the benefit of a planning permission, taken together with the experience and the financial standing of HUK to ensure the delivery of the Scheme within a reasonable timescale further supports the Council's view that the use of the CPO powers is justified in this case.

8.3 Whether there are any impediments to implementation, including potential financial impediments, physical and legal factors

a) The Council is content that there are no financial impediments to the Scheme proceeding for the reasons set out at paragraph 8.6. The Council is also satisfied that there are no material planning impediments to the Scheme proceeding given that there is a detailed planning permission. There are no physical impediments to the Scheme proceeding. The Council is satisfied that if the CPO is made and confirmed there is a reasonable prospect that the Scheme will proceed.

8.4 Whether the purpose for the acquisition fits with the adopted planning framework

a) The proposed development has the benefit of a detailed planning permission. The conformity of the Scheme to national and local planning policy document was fully considered and reported in the Officer's Report to the Planning Committee of 8 April 2014. This concluded that there is clear and demonstrable planning policy support for the principle of the development, at both national and local level.

b) The Officer's Report referred to the investment, job creation, provision of enhanced facilities, improvements to the public realm and contribution toward identified retail need which all weighed heavily in favour of the proposals which were granted planning permission.

c) The relevant adopted local planning policy documents are the Core Strategy (December 2010) and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Local Development Plan Document (KCAAP) (July 2013), supported by the ReWyre Prospectus (September 2009). The Scheme is in conformity with the strategic framework adopted in these policy documents. The proposals will provide further development in the central area of the District's main town and will further strengthen the town centre offer and support the social and economic well-being of the town. The Scheme will also ensure that the waterways in Kidderminster are brought back in to the heart of the town through the re-opening of the River Stour that is currently culverted under Crown House and providing new units fronting the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.

d) The strategic concepts and objectives highlighted within the ReWyre Prospectus and the Core Strategy were taken forward in further detail and form a key part of the KCAAP. Within the KCAAP the Council set out its policies and plans for the Western Gateway, being an area focused on Park Lane and Weavers' Wharf, Kidderminster. Policy KCA.WG3 of the KCAAP focused on the Weavers' Wharf retail park itself, including at its north/north eastern edge, the properties in Lower Mill Street, comprising JobCentre Plus, Woolwise, the Pharmacy, Paradise Balti House, Swinton Insurance, La Brasserie, Angelina's Hair & Beauty, The Three Shires and Crown House.

e) The Reasoned Justification (RJ) associated with the policy set out "*The ambition [is] to transform the area from its current eclectic state of retail park and low grade urban environments including bus station, Crown House and poorly defined Lower Mill street, into a fully integrated extension of the town centre to form a more traditional shopping centre*" (11.16). "*Developments will be focused around the bus station, Lower Mill Street and Crown House where links to the traditional town centre will be improved*" (11.17).

f) The RJ goes on to describe Crown House as "*a much maligned feature of the town and there is a desire from the general public to see it removed*". (11.23) The relationship between Crown House and the Bull Ring is noted in the RJ and it is acknowledged that "*the site should be considered in the context of the wider Western Gateway and be integrated as part of a comprehensive approach to the development in this area*" (11.24), where "*any new development should retain an active frontage onto the surrounding streets and spaces*" (11.24) and "*any redevelopment of the site should be considered in this context [the relationship with the Bull Ring] and contribute to the creation of a high quality public realm*" (11:25).

g) Policy KCA.WG3 itself sets out inter alia a mixture of retail, leisure and residential uses as being acceptable on the Weavers' Wharf site and particularly highlights that any new development on the site should:

"vi. Incorporate high quality and well-connected streets and spaces within development proposals.

vii. Enhance access to the town centre via Exchange Street and Bull Ring and contribute towards links across the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal.

viii. Contribute towards improvements to the town centre public realm including square proposals at Town Hall Square and Bull Ring (Crown House)".

h) The Scheme also conforms with national planning policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which came into effect in March

2012 and replaced nearly all of the previous national planning policy statements and guidance and the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) which supports it. At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It supports the positive promotion of town centres and policies for the management and growth of town centres and states that the needs for retail, leisure and other main town centre uses should be met in full and not compromised by limited site availability. The Scheme will provide new economic development in a central area of the District's main service centre which is in accordance with a number of the key principles of the NPPF.

8.5 <u>The extent to which the proposed purpose will contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area</u>

i) The existing site comprises under utilised brownfield land with little architectural merit. The site is identified in local planning policy as a location where new retail development should be targeted. The regeneration benefits are summarised as:

   i. provide 7,591 sq m (gross) of new retail and leisure accommodation including a 5,552 sq m large anchor retail unit of the type not currently available in the centre of Kidderminster;

   ii. respond to an identified need for additional retail accommodation to attract more visitors, reduce "leakeage" out of the town and encourage existing shoppers to extend their "dwell time". Additional expenditure in the town will further enhance the trading vitality and viability of Kidderminster;

   iii. integration of Weavers' Wharf into the town centre and improve linkages and circuits within the town centre;

   iv. improvements to the public realm by the removal of Crown House, creation of a new public square and improved access and enhancements to the waterways which run through the town;

   v. an investment of over £11 million of private sector money in the town centre during the construction phase;

   vi. create an estimated 70 full time equivalent (FTE) direct jobs during the construction phase, plus a further 11 indirect jobs within the supply chain, and an estimated 300 FTE jobs once the development is operational;

   vii. generate around £9.2 million of net additional gross value added (GVA) during construction and £4.5 million of net additional GVA per annum during operation;

   viii. generate approximately £400,000 of business rate revenue per annum.

8.6 <u>The resource implications of the Scheme for which the land is being acquired including a general indication of funding intentions</u>

a) The developer of the Scheme will be Henderson UK Retail Warehouse Fund (HUK), which is a Jersey Property Unit Trust Fund. HUK is managed by Henderson Real Estate Asset Managment ltd which is part of TIAA Henderson Real Estate (THRE). THRE has its headquarters at 201 Bishopsgate in the City of London and has approximately £13 billion of assets under management.

b) THRE has significant experience in delivering major retail-led projects in recent years such as Buchanan Galleries in Glasgow, and is currently involved with over £3bn of retail-led mixed use developments both in the UK and globally. Recently it has been actively involved on behalf of investors in the development of Westfield Stratford City, Buchanan Street in Glasgow including the currently proposed extenstion, St James Quarter in Edinburgh, Silver Hill in Winchester city centre and Old River Lane in Bishop's Stortford town centre.

c) THRE has the capability and resources to fund and carry out the proposed Scheme and has a track record of delivery. HUK has a vested interest in the success of the Scheme being the owner of the existing Weavers' Wharf Retail Park which it extended in 2010.

d) Before the CPO is made HUK will enter into a CPO Indemnity Agreement with the Council to fully underwrite the Council's costs of pursuing and implementing the CPO process and the payment of compensation to affected parties. THRE is committed to delivering a successful Scheme, one it has already invested in significantly to date.

e) In light of the above, the Council is satisfied that there is a reasonable prospect of the Scheme proceeding within a reasonable timeframe. Given the proposed indemnity agreement between HUK and the Council both the resource implications of the land acquisitions and the delivery of the Scheme will be adequately secured as a result of THRE's financial standing and ability to fund the redevelopment proposals.

8.7 <u>Whether the purpose for which the acquiring authority is proposing to acquire the land could be achieved by any other means</u>

a) The local planning policy referred to at paragraph 8.4 above specifically directs new retail development to an area referred to as the Western Gateway which the Order Land sits within. The policy also seeks the removal of Crown House which is clearly very location specific. The location of the Order Land is the only location which will enable the form of redevelopment which will achieve the Council's objectives of integration with the existing town centre and creating linkages and circuits between the existing town centre and Weavers' Wharf, whilst also delivering the regenerative benefits summarised at paragraph 8.5.

b) The Scheme for which HUK has obtained planning permission has been subject to extensive public consultation and complies with national and local planning policy. The Order Land is currently under utilised and there is no alternative location for the Scheme. No other party has come forward with proposals that will achieve the Council's objectives.

9. <u>HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1998 AND EQUALITIES ACT 2010 CONSIDERATIONS</u>

9.1 Circular 06/04 advises acquiring authorities in paragraph 17 that CPOs should only be made where there is a compelling case in the public interest. The Council acknowledges that these proposals will have an effect on the human rights of those with interests in the Order Land and the purposes for which the CPO is made should justify the interference with human rights of those with an interest in the affected land. In this case officers have considered the relevant factors and are satisfied that the many benefits that the Scheme delivers provide a compelling case in the public

interest for the use of CPO powers and outweigh the impact on existing owners and occupiers. Regard has been taken in particular to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and Articles 6 and 8.

Article 1 of the First Protocol

9.2 Article 1 of the First Protocol provides that:

"Every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions. No one shall be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law. The preceding provisions shall not, however, in any way impair the right of a State to enforce such laws as it deems necessary to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest or to secure the payment of taxes or other contributions or penalties"

9.3 The CPO will affect the Article 1 rights of the present owner/occupiers, including those in residential occupation, if confirmed by the Secretary of State. However, there will be no violation of those rights as officers are content that there is a compelling case in the public interest and it is lawful as required by Article 1 of the First Protocol. Those directly affected by the CPO will be entitled to compensation as provided by law, such compensation to be settled in the absence of agreement by the impartial Upper Tribunal.

Article 8

9.4 Article 8 of the Convention provides as follows:

(1) "Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.

(2) There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the Country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedom of others".

9.5 Article 8 is a qualified right and interference can be justified in appropriate cases by reference to Article 8(2).

9.6 The CPO will be made pursuant to s226(1)(a) of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 which authorises the Council to acquire land compulsorily subject to following the procedures laid down in the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. There is a compelling case in the public interest to acquire the Order Land and the public benefit will outweigh the private loss, including those of the residential occupants. In the circumstances, the compulsory acquisition of the Order Land will not conflict with Article 8 of the Convention.

Article 6

9.7 Article 6 provides that:

"In the determination of his civil rights and obligations…… everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law"

9.8 The CPO when made will be publicised and all those affected by the CPO will be notified and have the opportunity to make objections and to be heard at a public inquiry before a decision is made on whether or not the CPO should be confirmed. A right of legal challenge exists to this process in accordance with section 23 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981. Any dispute as to compensation payable falls to be determined by the Upper Tribunal, a court established by law.

Application of Human Rights to the CPO

9.9 In pursuing this CPO officers of the Council have carefully considered the balance to be struck between individual rights and the wider public interest and in particular the rights of those in residential occupation on the land.

9.10 To the extent that the CPO would affect those individual rights, officers recommend that the Council finds that the proposed interference with them would be in accordance with the law, proportionate and necessary in the public interest in order to secure the redevelopment of the Order Land and improvements and benefits that the Scheme will bring.

9.11 All of those whose Article 1, Article 6 and Article 8 rights would be affected by the CPO will have an opportunity to object to it and to have their objection considered at an independent and public hearing. Statutory judicial challenge provisions also exist.

9.12 Appropriate compensation will be available to those entitled to claim it under the relevant provisions of the compensation code and any disputes over compensation are determined by an impartial tribunal established by law.

Equality Act Considerations

9.13 The Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics namely: age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or beliefs and sex and sexual orientation. It places the Council under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers. In particular the Council must pay due regard to the need to:

i. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;

ii. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and

iii. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

9.14 The Council considers that the Scheme is fully compliant with the Equality Act. The CPO required to facilitate the Scheme is not anticipated to have any additional effects. The Council will undertake an Equality Impact Assessment before making the CPO.

10. PROPOSALS

10.1 As part of the collaborative relationship the District Council has with HUK it is proposed that the Council agrees the use of compulsory purchase powers to acquire the land interests in Lower Mill Street if negotiations between HUK and the landowners do not progress satisfactorily, as appears to be the case currently. In order to make such progress, the Council will need to enter into further indemnity agreement(s) with HUK to enable initially the CPO preparatory work and subsequent making of the CPO to progress and, ultimately, the ownerships to be acquired without any costs to the Council in either obtaining external assistance and advice in preparing and making the CPO, including any inquiry costs should one be held, or in actually acquiring and holding the land interests until they pass to HUK.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Before proceeding, the Council will be fully indemnified against the CPO value and any costs as a result.

11.2 Despite the full indemnification of all costs, if the CPO is made, this expenditure will still be classed as the Council's capital expenditure for accounting purposes. Accordingly, revision to the Capital programme to include the associated expenditure and matching funding is required. It is not possible to estimate the capital costs until progression of the CPO, these will become known in due course, matched by the indemnification funding.

11.3 It is envisaged that significant VAT implications of the land and property transaction will be mitigated by careful tax management (exercising an option to tax) to protect the Council's overall VAT recovery position. It is highly likely that this will be the developer's expectation.

12. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (s226) is the legislative background which enables the Council to use compulsory purchase powers to acquire land, as long as it is satisfied that the pre-requisites of the legislation are met in so doing.

13. RISK MANAGEMENT

13.1 The presence of the indemnity agreement and the 'back to back' agreement proposed will ensure that the Council is protected from any risks associated with this proposal to compulsorily purchase the land interests identified.

14. CONCLUSION

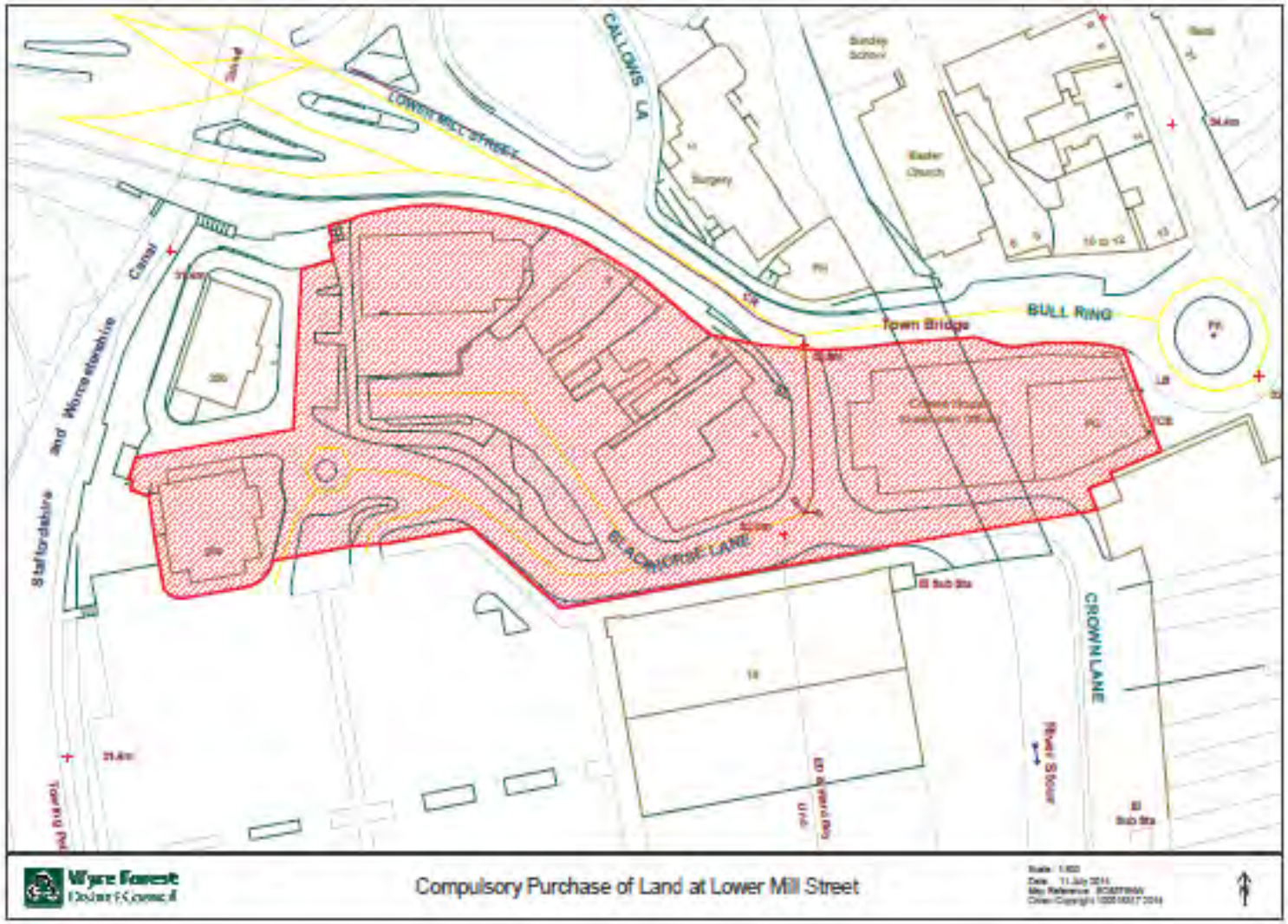
14.1 The Council has been working collaboratively with HUK to realise their mutual interests in achieving the comprehensive redevelopment of the northern edge of Weavers' Wharf to improve the gateway into Kidderminster town centre and better link Weavers' Wharf to the traditional heart of the town. The pursuance of the Council's compulsory purchase powers is necessary to complete the acquisition of the land interests in Lower Mill Street. The Council is able to justify the use of CPO and meet the legislative and guidance tests for doing so.

15. CONSULTEES

15.1 Corporate Leadership Team.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD Adopted July 2013.
16.2 Planning Application Ref 13/0670FULL.
16.3 Cabinet Report of 22 July 2014.


CALLOWS LA
LOWER MILL STREET
Canal
Staffordshire and Worcestershire
Surgery
Baptist Church
Sunday School
BULL RING
Town Bridge
BLACKHORSE LANE
CROWN LANE
Wyre Forest District Council
Compulsory Purchase of Land at Lower Mill Street

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14TH July 2015

Review of Car Parking Charges

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Ian Hardiman
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Director of Economic Prosperity and Place
CONTACT OFFICER:	Mike Parker, Ext. 2500 mike.parker@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES	Appendix 1: Current Charges & Bands Appendix 2: Plan of proposed 'seasonal' car parks

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1. To introduce new car parking charges for the 'central' car parks across the three towns in the district; to introduce a new 'seasonal' car parks charging band for car parks in Stourport on the Riverside and to introduce new ticketing arrangements for free parking periods.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet DECIDE:

2. 1 **To include the new 'seasonal' category of car park with its published charges and to levy an initial charge of £2.00 for up to 2 hours; £5.00 for up to 24 hours and £10.00 for up to 48 hours on the car parks at Severn Meadows 2 and 3 and Riverside Meadows to take effect from 5th October 2015.**

2. 2 **To increase the charges in the 'central' car parks of Raven Street, Load Street and Market Street to £1.00 for up to 30 minutes and £1.50 for up to one hour, to take effect from 5th October 2015.**

2. 3 **To require that a ticket be obtained from the pay & display machines in the appropriate car parks for any of the free parking periods in operation at that time and for the ticket to be displayed in the vehicle in the usual manner.**

3. BACKGROUND

3. 1 In 2010 the Council undertook a major review of its public car parks across the three principal towns in the district and the outlying car park in Blakedown. The review was a thorough 'root & branch' analysis of car park charging, length of stay and use of season tickets. Extensive public engagement was secured through the then Community & Regeneration Overview & Scrutiny Committee who undertook a series of scrutiny exercises through a Scrutiny Review Panel.

3. 2 Applying the principles of fairness, equity and consistency across the three towns, the Cabinet considered a number of recommendations in reports presented in July, September and November 2010 and February 2011. These established the car

park charges and banding that has been in place since that time. The last increase in parking charges was in October 2014.

3. 3 Across all three towns new banding was introduced with all three having a car park designated as a 'central' car park which is most closely located for access to the town centres and within which the length of stay is limited to a maximum of an hour; each town then had designated 'inner' and 'outer' car parks which reflected distance from the town centre and length of stay, with the least accessible car parks incentivising longer periods of stay. A separate 'rural' band was introduced for The Avenue at Blakedown.

Current bands and charges are shown in Appendix 1 to this report.

3. 4 Following a report considered by Cabinet at their July 2014 meeting on 'Maximising the Value of Council Property Assets', further consideration has been given to the Council's car park charges and how they contribute to the way in which the charging strategy supports the value of the Council's assets in fostering local economic growth and how the Council's car park income meets the current and future costs of administering, monitoring and enforcing across all public car parks.

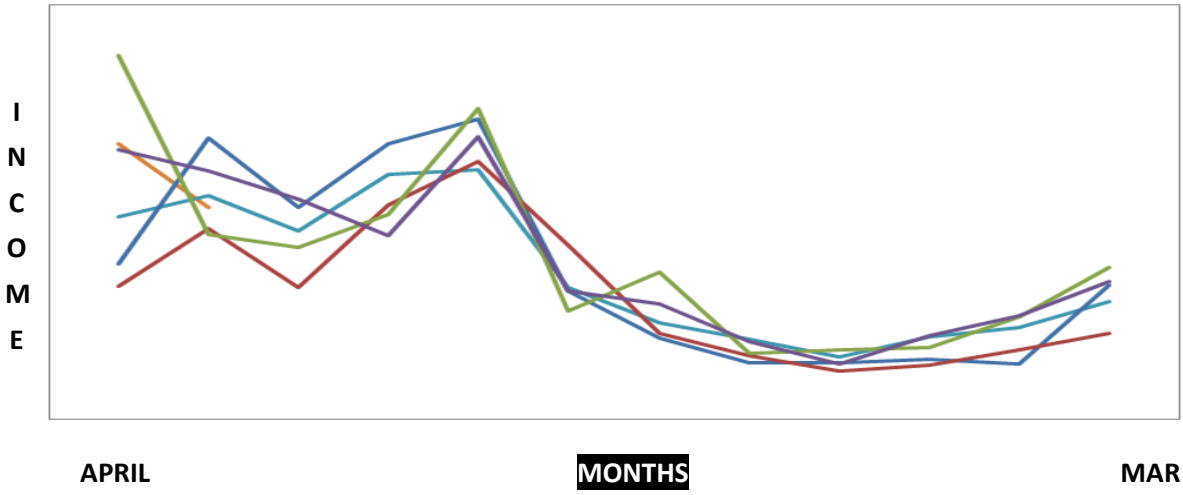
4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 The review of the Council's charging strategy has revealed three issues for further consideration:

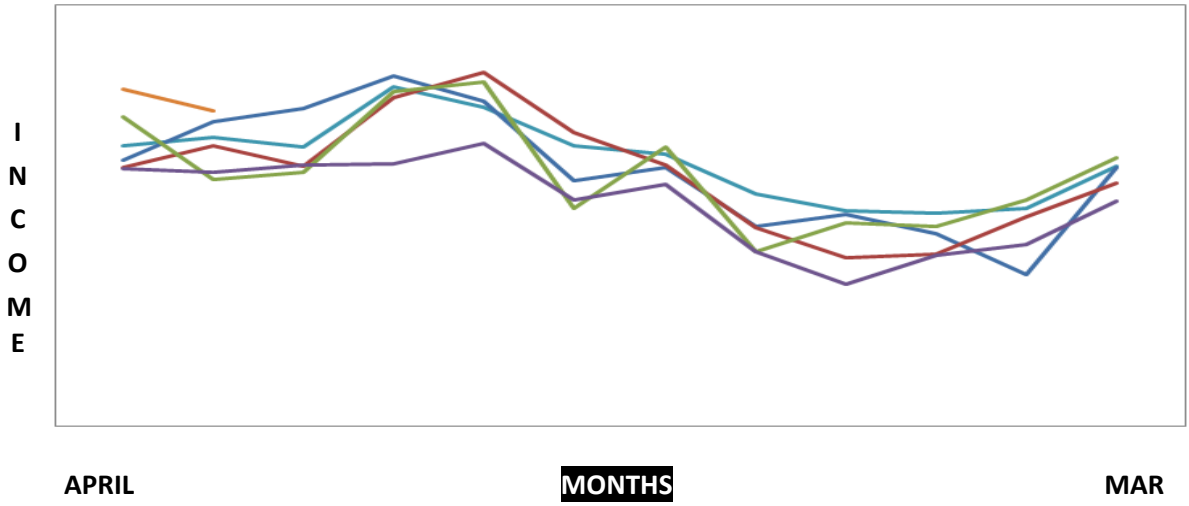
i. Whether the charges reflected the seasonal nature of some of the car parks.
ii. Whether the charges supported town centres
iii. Whether tickets should be issued for the 'free hour' – in the 'outer' car parks

4.2 In Stourport and Bewdley there are patterns of car park usage that suggest that some of the car parks only function at capacity during the peak visitor season between Easter and September; nowhere more so though than the car parks alongside the River Severn in Stourport. These car parks are known as Severn Meadows Numbers 2 and 3 and Riverside Meadows and are accessed when the barrier is open from the bottom of Martin's Way. The graphs below indicate the pattern of seasonal usage measured by income at these car parks:

Stourport-on-Severn Car Park Occupancy: April to March – the past 5 years



Bewdley Car Park Occupancy: April to March – the past 5 years



4.3 At present all of these car parks are treated as 'inner' car parks in the same way as Severn Meadows Number 1 which is situated immediately at the rear of the former Civic Centre, but they clearly operate differently. Severn Meadows Number 1 car park is accessible all the year round from Martin's Way and is part of the car park hierarchy operating in Stourport as described in 3.3 above, whereas the Severn Meadows Numbers 2 and 3 and Riverside Meadows are clearly different and operate on a seasonal basis only. When these latter car parks are in operation, the costs for the Council's Civil Enforcement Officers to administer and enforce them and for the Streetscene team to cleanse the area increases over the summer period and, at present, these costs are subsidised across all of the Council's car parks. The car parks have to be maintained to the same level as the Council's car parks elsewhere in the district and, again, the costs of maintaining them are subsidised by other car parks with all year round income.

4.4 In order to redress this inequity, it is proposed to re-classify Severn Meadows 2 and 3 and Riverside Meadows as 'seasonal' car parks, as shown on the plan at Appendix 2, with new charging rates of:

- Up to 2 hours - **£2.00**
- Up to 24 hours - **£5.00**
- Up to 48 hours - **£10.00**

It is anticipated that this will generate additional revenue, net of VAT, of £31,000 which will be used to support the additional costs associated with administering, operating, enforcing and maintaining these car parks due to their increased usage over the summer period.

4.5 The second issue to be addressed is regarding the functioning of the town centre car parks and especially the 'central' car parks at Raven Street, Stourport; Load Street, Bewdley and Market Street, Kidderminster. These car parks are strategically placed and the charging strategy designed accordingly to reflect their status as the most accessible to the town centres; they are therefore designed to be short stay and high turnover to ensure that they best serve the retail and leisure activities of the town centres.

4.6 It is important that these car parks are seen as ‘premium’ places to park within the town centre and their charging designed to reflect that.

4.7 The Council faces increasing costs of maintaining its car parks and ensuring that their condition does not give rise to any insurance risk from deteriorating condition. This is partly because maintenance costs are increasing, partly because the Council has added an additional temporary car park at Bridge Street, Stourport and partly because the Council has a limited repairs and maintenance budget currently, but no capital provision for wholesale car park resurfacing works.

4.8 The Council also faces increasing costs of enforcing the appropriate use of its car parks and particularly in terms of the ‘central’ car parks it is important that these operate as described in 4.5 above to support our town centres. The Council intends to continue to provide the hour free parking in the ‘outer’ car parks and there will therefore continue to be an element of cross subsidisation across all the other car parks to meet the costs of this.

4.9 It is therefore proposed that the charges for using the central car parks across the three towns be increased from 70p to £1.00 for 30 minutes and from £1.20 to £1.50 for up to an hour. It is anticipated that the net of VAT effect of this increase would be £36,000 and, as above, it is intended that this increase will be used to meet the increasing costs to the Council as set out in paragraphs 4.7 and 4.8 above.

4.10 The final matter is regarding the ticketing arrangements for the free parking periods across the Council’s car parks. For many years the Council has operated free parking periods across its car parks after 4pm between November and January in support of the festive shopping period. As part of the 2010 charges and in response to matters raised through the scrutiny process the Council introduced first hour free parking (hour and a half on Sundays) in the ‘outer’ car parks; and more recently the Council has introduced free parking between 10.00am and 4.00pm in selected car parks across the three towns. None of the free parking periods has hitherto required the display of a ticket. This has caused some confusion amongst users about when they require a ticket and when they do not and it has also made it difficult for enforcement officers to determine the time at which the vehicle entered the car park to begin its free stay. It may also have created an unintended consequence of people working in the towns using the free parking instead of parking where they normally would have done on others days when it is not free. In order to rectify this, it is proposed that in future, from October 2015, car park users will be required to obtain a ticket from the machine for any of the free stay periods and to display it in their vehicle. The issue of a ticket for these periods will enable more spaces to be used by visitors and shoppers rather than workers and will also assist the Council in collecting more reliable data about car park usage which will assist in future finance and usage modelling.

4.11 It is proposed that the charges described above take effect from Monday 5th October 2015 as historically the Council has increased its charges from the first Monday in October. The Council will be required to advertise these charges in the usual manner and this will be undertaken in September in advance of the charges. The Council is aware that these proposals will need to be supported by carefully planned and widespread publicity and communication in order to ensure that drivers are aware of the requirements and particularly that they will need to display a ticket to be able to park for free. It is intended that any communications will be tested before use to ensure use of plain English to enable complete understanding of the arrangements.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It is anticipated that the overall net of VAT effect of these charging amendments will be to generate £67,000 of revenue income in a full year from 2016/17. For 2015/16 additional income of up to £18,000 is forecast since the timing will exclude the additional seasonal income. This additional revenue will support the ongoing costs of administering, enforcing and maintaining the Council's public car parks.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Council is mindful of the provisions in the 1984 Road Traffic Regulation Act which sets out the ability to provide off street car parking. The Council is satisfied that the additional revenue generated through these increased charges is necessary to offset the legitimate costs of providing its public car parks.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT (EIA)

7.1 An equality impact screening assessment has been completed and no detrimental impact has been found resulting from these proposals.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 If the Council fails to recognise the strategic role of its car parks there is a risk that they will not be used as planned and will undermine the ability of the district to fulfil its potential to ensure the viability and vitality of its town centres and tourist attractiveness of the River Severn in Stourport.

8.2 The Council is mindful of the costs of supporting the provision of public car parking and recognises the need to keep its charges under regular review to ensure that these costs are met through revenue generated by them.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Council has given careful consideration to the way in which some of its car parks in Stourport alongside the River Severn are used on a seasonal basis and is recommended to introduce a new charging band for 'seasonal' car parks as a result. Further, the Council has considered the role of its central car parks across the three towns in the context of their role in supplying a vibrant and active town centre and it is recommended that charges for 30 minutes and one hour are increased.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 Corporate Leadership Team.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

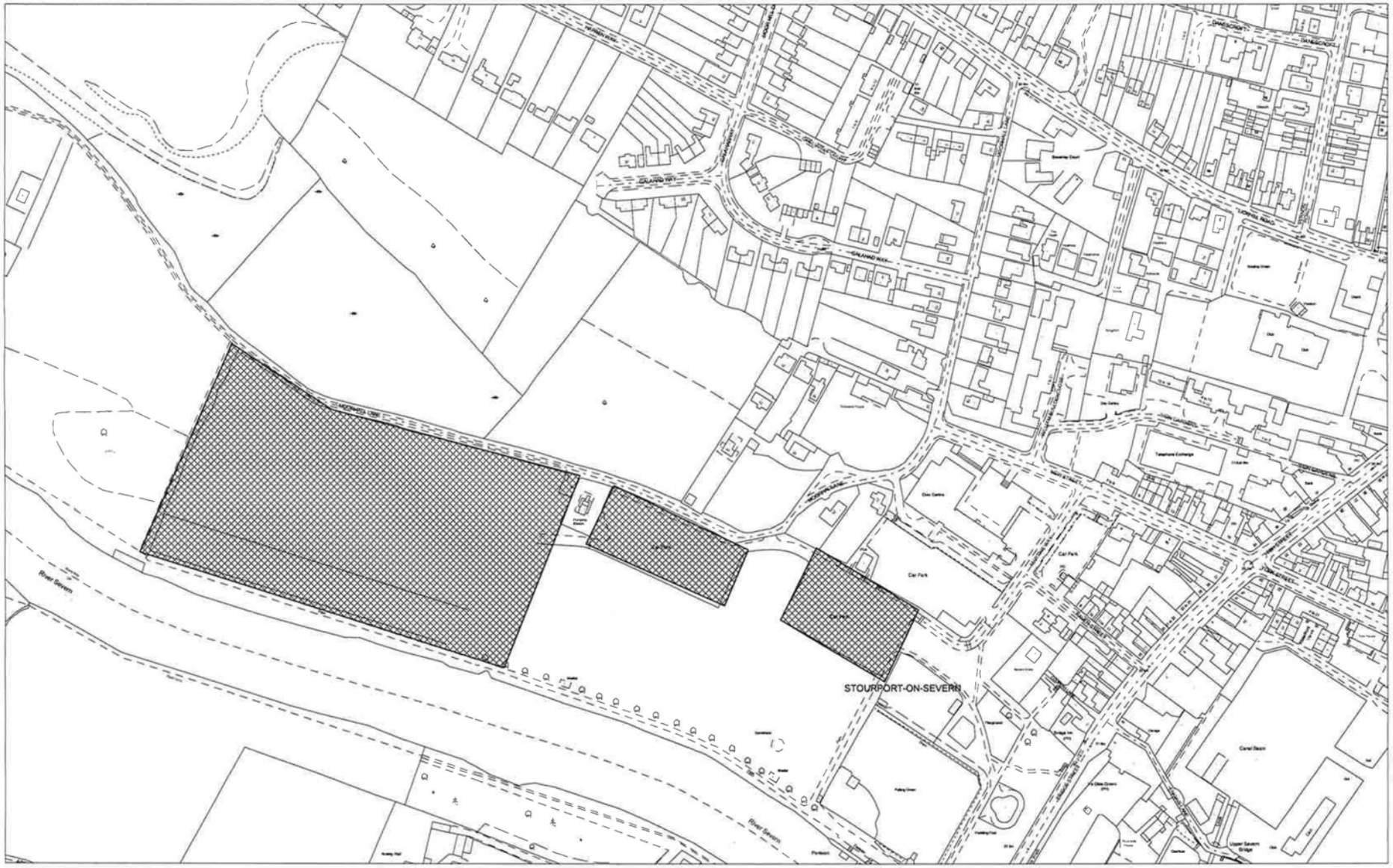
11.1 Community & Regeneration Committee 10th June 2010 - report of Parking Review Panel.
11.2 Cabinet 20th July – Car Parking Review.
11.3 Cabinet 21st September 2010 – Variation to Car Park Places Order.
11.4 Cabinet 16th November 2010 – Car Parking Review Phase II.
11.5 Cabinet 15th February 2011 – Car Parking Review Phase II.

APPENDIX 1

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CURRENT CAR PARKS FEES AND CHARGES

CENTRAL	
Market Street Raven Street Load Street	Up to ½ hour 70p Up to 1 hour “£1.20
INNER	
Pike Mills, Aldi, Bateman’s Yard Bromsgrove Street, Youth Centre, Severn Meadow 1,2 & 3 Riverside Meadow Dog Lane, Bridge Street	Up to 1 hour £1.10 Up to 2 hours £1.50 Up to 3 hours £2.50 3 -24 hours £4.80 24 – 48 hours £9.60
OUTER	
Castle Road, Horsefair (Broad Street), Comberton Place, Stadium Close, St. Mary’s, Vale Road, Gardner’s Meadow, Stourport Sports Centre Nos 1,2 & 3	Up to 1 hour free (Monday to Saturday) Up to 1½ hours free (Sunday) Up to 2 hours £1.40 Up to 3 hours £2.30 3 -24 hours £3.80 24 – 48 hours £7.60
RURAL	
The Avenue Blakedown	Up to 1 hour free, up to 2 hours 80p 2 - 24 hours £3.00 24 – 48 hours £6.00
OTHER	
Weavers Wharf	Up to 1 hour £1.10 Up to 2 hours £1.50 Up to 3 hours £2.50 Up to 4 Hours £4.80 Over 4 hours £10.00
SEASON TICKETS	
Full Season Ticket (valid for all above named car parks except Weavers Wharf)	1 month £70 6 months £336 12 months £605
Restricted Season Ticket (valid for Outer and Rural car parks (except Comberton Place and Stourport Sports Centre 3) and Dog Lane, Severn Meadows 2 & 3 and Load Street short stay only)	1 month £35 6 months £168 12 months £302.50
Senior Citizen Season Ticket (valid for all above named car parks except Weavers Wharf)	6 months £84 12 months £151.25



Scale: 1:3000 Wyre Forest District Council

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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14TH JULY 2015

Appointment of Honorary Alderman

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor M J Hart
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Chief Executive
CONTACT OFFICER:	Ian Miller, Ext. 2700 ian.miller@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES	None

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider a recommendation to Council in respect of appointment of an Honorary Alderman.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Cabinet consider recommending the Council to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on Councillor Pauline Hayward in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 It falls within the Cabinet's terms of reference, under the appointment procedure for Honorary Aldermen agreed by Council on 27 May 2015, to consider and make a subsequent recommendation to Council on nominations to the position of Honorary Alderman.

3.2 The Cabinet is requested to consider applications by Councillor Marcus Hart and Councillor Helen Dyke to nominate Councillor Pauline Hayward to the position of Honorary Alderman of the District.

3.3 The appointment procedure provides that a person shall be deemed to be eligible for consideration to be nominated to the position of Honorary Alderman if he or she:-

(i) has rendered a minimum of 20 years service as a Member of Wyre Forest District Council; and

(ii) has rendered eminent or notable service to the District by serving as Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Leader of the Council, Chairperson of a major Council Committee, member of Cabinet or Leader or Deputy Leader of any political group.

3.4 Councillor Pauline Hayward was first elected to the Council in 1983 and she retired in May 2015. She represented the Blakedown & Chaddesley Ward. At the time of her retirement, Councillor Hayward's 32 years as a member of Wyre Forest District Council represented the second longest continuous service. She was Chairman of

the Council in 2003/04. Councillor Hayward remains involved in local government as a member of Churchill and Blakedown Parish Council.

3.5 The nominee has indicated her willingness to accept nomination for the position of Honorary Alderman.

3.6 If the Cabinet is so minded to support the nomination, in accordance with the Council's Appointment Procedure, it will be necessary for the Cabinet's recommendation to be submitted for consideration at an extraordinary meeting of the Council, convened for that purpose.

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 The nominee meets the eligibility criteria set out in the appointment procedure. The other requirements of the appointment procedure have been met: the application has been submitted by members of two different political groups and the nominee has confirmed her willingness to accept nomination.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The cost of holding an extraordinary meeting of Council, the Badge of Office and Scroll can be met from existing budgets for democratic and civic services.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Council has the power to appoint honorary aldermen and alderwomen under section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT (EIA)

7.1 The report relates to an appointment that would be made by Council and no equality impact screening assessment is required. .

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 No relevant risks have been identified.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Cabinet is invited to consider recommending the Council to confer the title of Honorary Alderman on Councillor Pauline Hayward.

10. CONSULTEES

10.1 The Leader of the Council.
10.2 Corporate Leadership Team.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Honorary Alderman appointment procedure – report to full Council, 27 May 2015.

Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/249