



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

MONDAY, 12TH DECEMBER 2005
AT 3.00 P.M. *

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE

(* Please note time of Meeting)

MEMBERS: Councillors Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. (Vice-Chairman), G. N. Denaro, Mrs. K. M. Gall, R. Hollingworth, G. H. R. Hulett, Mrs. J. D. Luck, D. McGrath, D. C. Norton, N. Psirides, J. A. Ruck, Mrs. M. A. Sherrey, C. J. Tidmarsh, P. J. Whittaker and C. J. K. Wilson

AGENDA

Council Agendas and Minutes are available on our website at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/meetings

1. Election of Chairman
2. To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutes
3. To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting of the Working Group held on 25th October 2005
4. Annual Monitoring Report
5. Core Strategy Preferred Options Draft
6. Draft Housing Supplementary Planning Documents
7. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the Meeting and which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next Meeting

S. NIXON
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

2nd December 2005

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY

Tuesday, 25th October 2005 at 2.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. M. M. T. Taylor (Chairman), Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. (Vice-Chairman), G. N. Denaro, Mrs. K. M. Gall, G. H. R. Hulett, D. C. Norton, N. Psirides, C. J. Tidmarsh, C. J. K. Wilson and P. J. Whittaker (substituting for R. Hollingworth)

09/05 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. Hollingworth, Mrs. J. D. Luck, D. McGrath, J. A. Ruck and Mrs. M. A. Sherrey.

10/05 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Local Development Framework Working Party held on 7th June 2005 were submitted.

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Meeting be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

11/05 **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

Members received a report on proposed changes to the Bromsgrove Local Development Scheme in view of the closure of the Rover factory at Longbridge and the need for an Area Action Plan for the site, together with changes to the timetable for the submission of certain key documents. It was noted that the final adoption date of the Core Strategy would remain the same. Following discussion, it was

RECOMMENDED: that the Local Development Scheme be amended to include the changes referred to in the report, and submitted to the Government Office for approval.

12/05 **LONGBRIDGE SITUATION**

Members gave consideration to the report relating to the long-term future of the section of the Longbridge site within the Bromsgrove District. The initial discussions which had taken place between a number of parties had led to the proposal to produce a long-term Action Plan to determine the future land uses of the entire Longbridge site.

Consideration was also given to the funding of the plan work required, and it was reported that some European Union funding had now been awarded to Birmingham City Council. A further report would be submitted to Members on any financial implications for this Authority.

The Working Party were fully appreciative of the urgent need to provide an appropriate land use framework for the redevelopment of the site and it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the need to revise the Local Development Scheme to include reference to an Area Action Plan for Longbridge be acknowledged; and
- (b) that the contents of the report be noted.

13/05 **STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Consideration was given to the report on representations received in response to the Statement of Community Involvement. It was noted that the Council would be

required to meet the costs of the assessment of the document by the Planning Inspectorate but that these would be reduced as there were no requests for a public examination. The costs could be met from within existing planning budgets. Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be noted; and
- (b) that Officers be authorised to respond to any additional comments made by objectors prior to the Statement of Community Involvement being assessed by the Planning Inspectorate.

14/05

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

Consideration was given to the report on the requirement for the Authority to provide an Annual Monitoring Report under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It was noted that the report had to be submitted to the Government Office by 31st December 2005. It was requested that a draft report be circulated in advance to Members in order that comments could be submitted. It was

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

15/05

HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Members received a presentation on the results of the informal consultation on two new Supplementary Planning Documents relating to managing housing and affordable housing in the District. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

The Meeting closed at 3.15 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP MEETING
12TH DECEMBER 2005
ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mr P. Whittaker
Responsible Head of Service	Peter Allen - Interim Head of Planning & Environment Services

1. Summary

1.1 Bromsgrove District Council is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The AMR is a Local Development Document and forms part of the Local Development Framework. The Annual Monitoring Report will assess:

- i.) the implementation of the Local Development Scheme; and
- ii.) the extent to which policies in the Local Development Documents are being achieved.

2. Recommendation

2.1

- i) That Members agree to the Annual Monitoring Report 2004/05 being forwarded to Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM).
- ii) In the event that any further changes to the AMR are necessary Members delegate authority to make changes to the Head of Planning & Environmental Services.

3. Background

3.1 As required by Section 35 of the Act, Local Planning Regulation 48, and SEA Regulation 17, authorities must undertake the following five key monitoring tasks:

- i.) review actual progress in terms of local development document preparation against the timetable and milestones in the local development scheme;
- ii.) assess the extent to which policies in local development documents are being implemented;
- iii.) where policies are not being implemented, explain why and to set out what steps are to be taken to ensure that the policy is implemented; or whether the policy is to be amended or replaced;
- iv.) identify the significant effects of implementing policies in local development documents and whether they are intended; and

v.) set out whether policies are to be amended or replaced.

3.2 The AMR covers the period 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2005. It must be submitted to Government Office by 31st December 2005. It will be published on the Council's website and made available to local communities in hard copy form at local libraries in January 2006.

4. Conclusions

4.1 The Annual Monitoring Report is a compulsory component of the Local Development Framework. It must cover the period 1st April to 31st March and be submitted to Government Office in December on an annual basis.

4.2 A draft copy of the Annual Monitoring Report 2004/05 has been made available to Members for comments.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 If the Annual Monitoring Report is not submitted on time the Council will miss an important best value target, leading to a reduction in Planning Delivery Grant. The grant for 2005/06 was £267,000. There are a number of posts that are directly funded by Planning Delivery Grant, so any reduction in grant would have an impact on the financial planning of the Council and the future delivery of elements of the Planning Service.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 None.

7. Attached Documents

7.1 Annual Monitoring Report 2004/05

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Bromsgrove District Council

Annual Monitoring Report

DECEMBER 2005



Planning and
Environmental Services

Bromsgrove District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

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Annual Monitoring Report

Introduction

The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act, which came into force in September 2004, requires Bromsgrove District Council to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR is a compulsory component of the Local Development Framework and must be submitted to Government Office in December on an annual basis. This document is the first AMR produced by Bromsgrove District Council and covers the period 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2005.

The AMR is a Local Development Document and forms part of the Local Development Framework. The AMR will assess:

- i.) the implementation of the local development scheme; and
- ii.) the extent to which policies in the local development documents are being achieved.

As required by Planning Act and associated regulators, Bromsgrove District Council must undertake the following five key monitoring tasks:

- i.) review actual progress in terms of local development document preparation against the timetable and milestones in the local development scheme;
- ii.) assess the extent to which policies in local development documents are being implemented;
- iii.) where policies are not being implemented, explain why and set out what steps are to be taken to ensure that the policy is implemented; or whether the policy is to be amended or replaced;
- iv.) identify the significant effects of implementing policies in local development documents and whether they are intended; and
- v.) set out whether policies are to be amended or replaced.

Source: Local Development Framework Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide, ODPM, (2005), p. 9.

Methodology

The structure of this Annual Monitoring Report is as follows:

Section 1: Context

Section 1 sets out the social, environmental and economic characteristics, and the key issues in respect of the local authority area. It also sets out the objectives of the Local Development Framework.

Section 2: Implementation of Local Development Scheme

Section 2 monitors the progress in meeting the targets and milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme and the need for any new documents to be introduced. It

also gives an indication of any adjustments that will be required to the LDS timetable since its adoption in January 2005.

Section 3: Local Development Framework Indicators

Section 3 of the AMR sets out the core output indicators as required by Government Office. The core output indicators include:

- Business Development
- Housing
- Transport
- Local Services
- Environment

All local authorities are expected to monitor these indicators, which are considered to provide the basis for all policy monitoring.

Section 4: Local Indicators

Section 4 of the AMR will cover the local indicators. These local indicators will be incorporated to provide greater policy coverage and will reflect local circumstances. These include the policy targets set out in the adopted Bromsgrove District Local Plan. It will not be possible to include an indicator for every policy in the Local Plan, as this would be impractical. Instead, policies that have data sources available for the AMR period 1st April 2004 – 31st March 2005 have been selected for monitoring purposes.

Section 5: Summary

The final section will be a summary of the key findings and any key actions to be taken in revising the strategy for the area.

SECTION 1

1.0 Context

1.1 District Profile

Bromsgrove District is located in north Worcestershire and is on the southern border of the West Midlands Conurbation. The District covers approximately 21,714 hectares. Although close to the centre of Birmingham, the District is largely rural with approximately 90% of land designated as Green Belt.

The area is well served by motorways. The M5 runs north to south and the M42 from east to west. The M5 and M42 connect with the M6 to the north of Birmingham and the M40 to the east. The District also benefits from train connections into Birmingham City Centre.

Development pressures are high due to the District's proximity to the Birmingham Conurbation and the motorway and railway connections.

1.2 Characteristics of the District

This section outlines the main characteristics of Bromsgrove District that have been identified in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. Following the approach taken in the Scoping Report, the characteristics are split into social, environmental, and economic topics.

1.3 Social Characteristics

At the time of the 2001 Census Bromsgrove District had a population of 87,837. This was an increase of approximately 5.5% since the previous Census in 1991. Projections for the District anticipate a total population rise to 92,250 by 2011. The average age of the District's residents is 40.7 years, which is slightly higher than the national average of 38.6. The District therefore has a rising population with a slightly older population than the national average. This has implications for service delivery including, accessible transport options for the less mobile and suitable housing for the needs of the older person.

The District has low instances of deprivation compared to other areas of the West Midlands. However, there are small pockets of deprivation that need to be tackled. The most deprived area in the District is the northern part of Sidemoor, which is ranked 8,558th out of the 32,482 most deprived areas nationally.

Bromsgrove District is considered to be a safe place to live, with levels of crime being lower than the national and regional figures. Vehicle crime and criminal damage are the most common offences. However, there is still a fear of crime that needs to be addressed.

The housing market in the District has been buoyant in recent years due to its close proximity to the West Midlands Conurbation. In 2005 the average house price (£218,637) is significantly higher than the national average (£156,429).

At the time of the 2001 Census there were 35,168 dwellings in the District. Of this 29,136 were owned, 2178 were private rented or people living rent free, 138 were shared ownership and 3716 were social rented. The majority of people in the District live in households (98%), while the remainder of people (2%) live in communal establishments. Household tenure is dominated by the owner-occupier sector with around 83% of properties in the District owner-occupied. This figure is significantly higher than County (75%) and National (68%) figures. The Council's social rented housing stock has been transferred to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust which is a registered social landlord (RSL). Social housing now accounts for 11% of the District's housing stock, which is below the national average of 19% (2001 Census).

Education in Bromsgrove is administered by Worcestershire County Council, which controls 27 schools in the District. These include: 15 first, 5 middle schools, 2 high schools, and 5 special schools. There are also independent schools such as The Bromsgrove School. Over the past ten years demand for school places has increased by 18.75%. This is largely due to the amount of new housing that has been built in the District. Worcestershire County Council has received approval for a £60 million PFI bid to help fund the rebuilding of 7 of the District's schools, in order to accommodate the extra demand now being placed upon them.

1.4 Environmental Characteristics

The landscape within Bromsgrove is a major attraction. It is dominated by the Lickey and Clent Hills which form a natural barrier between the District and the West Midlands Conurbation. The rest of the District is characterised by farmland, small woodlands and pockets of urban development. The main concentration of urban form in the District is Bromsgrove Town, which sits at the bottom of the Lickey Hills. The landscape of the District provides swathes of open countryside, immediately adjacent to the dense urban form of the West Midlands Conurbation. The mixture of rural and urban environments provides a rich biodiversity across the District.

There are currently 5 Landscape Protection Areas within the District, which include the Clent and Lickey Hills and the Birmingham and Worcester Canal. These Landscape Protection Areas identify places where the landscape forms an important element of local and regional importance. The District has 8 Sites of Special Scientific Importance (SSSIs), which are in various states of recovery, decline or stability. There are also 96 Special Wildlife Sites (SWS) and a number of smaller localised sites such as ponds, marshes, and streams. These all serve as important habitats for many species of plants and animals. Public accessibility must be monitored so as not to harm these important landscape features.

The District has a high dependence on car ownership compared to the national average. The number of people travelling to work by car (68%) is higher than the national average (55%). This could be due to the District's close proximity to the West Midlands Conurbation and the employment opportunities it provides. Also, the District's excellent motorway and A road network contributes to the high dependency on car use. Improvements need to be made to public transport infrastructure to encourage people to use alternative modes of transport.

Although the District benefits from an excellent road system, it does experience environmental pollution problems caused by high traffic volumes. In 2003 the Council

designated junction 1 of the M42 as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) due to its high levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). The AQMA consists of a number of proposals to try to improve the air quality in this part of the District. The measure of whether the Council has achieved better air quality is the designation of no more air quality management areas and achieving the targets set out in the Air Quality Management Action Plan. However, there are limits to what can be done to reduce vehicle pollution within the District due to the presence of two motorways and a number of A roads which pass through the District. These main traffic routes also pose problems with noise pollution for local residents. The majority of residents in the main urban areas within the District are affected by noise pollution. Noise pollution from traffic can be reduced by using better road treatments, barriers and by slowing traffic. Localised pollution is also caused by closed landfill sites.

New development is being concentrated on brownfield sites to protect the openness of the Green Belt and ensure the quality of the environment and important areas of biodiversity in the District are protected. At October 2004, almost 90% of new housing was being built on Brownfield land, which exceeded the national and regional targets. The current regional target for future housing provision to be built on previously developed land is 65%, but this is to rise to at least 70% between 2011-2021 (Worcestershire State of the Environment Report). However, some brownfield sites have become important resources for public open space and wildlife. Therefore comprehensive assessments should be taken of these sites prior to development.

The District has over 470 Listed Buildings and 839 known Sites of Archaeology Interest, 10 of which are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are also 10 Conservation Areas that are designated as being areas of special architectural or historic interest. The District also contains two gardens of historic interest; these are Hagley Park and Hewell Park. A rich history exists in Bromsgrove District that needs to be protected and recognised.

1.5 Economic Characteristics

Unemployment levels within the District are low with only 2.1% of the population unemployed in 2005, which compares favourably to the national average of 3.3%. Although unemployment is low within the District, income levels of people who work within the District are low. Over the last three years jobs within the District have provided incomes below the national average. Conversely, the income levels for residents in Bromsgrove District are considerably higher than the national average. This would suggest that the District's population earn higher salaries than average, but they earn them in employment locations outside the District. Therefore, it appears that there is an imbalance between the type of jobs and pay available in the District to the average wages of its population. Industries with higher paid jobs need to be encouraged to stay or locate in the District so as to correct this imbalance and reduce the daily flow of the population to other employment centres which is unsustainable.

A High Technology Corridor known as the Central Technology Belt runs through Bromsgrove District. The corridor stretches from Birmingham in the north to Malvern in the south. The intention is to provide the infrastructure and design quality that will attract technologically innovative businesses to such a location.

The District's retail activity is focussed on Bromsgrove town centre, which currently has approximately 370 different businesses operating in a variety of different sectors. There are a number of alternative shopping centres relatively close to Bromsgrove with a wider range of shops and facilities. While Bromsgrove has its own attractions trade is lost to such centres in neighbouring areas.

1.6 Key Issues

The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report identified a number of environmental and sustainability issues from its baseline study and assessment of national, regional, and local plans and strategies. The key issues that need to be tackled by the LDF are detailed below:

- **Rising older population**
- **Barriers to housing and services in rural areas**
- **Large identified greenfield sites for future development needs**
- **Housing to meet local needs**
- **Reducing fear of crime**
- **Under-provision of affordable housing**
- **Implications of redeveloping brownfield sites**
- **School rebuilding and resiting programme**
- **High car usage and congestion**
- **Commuting out of District**
- **Local facilities to meet the needs of the population**
- **Air quality**
- **Changing economy**
- **Degradation of the Natural and Built Environment**

1.7 Objectives of the Local Development Framework

The proposed objectives for the Local Development Framework are outlined below. These objectives were developed using evidence from the baseline characterisation study set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report, and an analysis of national, regional, and localised plans and policies.

Social Objectives

- Create communities where people want to live, work and socialise
- Meet the housing requirements of all members of the community
- Ensure the community has accessible healthcare
- Provision of leisure and educational facilities to meet the needs of the community
- Better quality of life through a safer and better designed urban and rural environment
- Promote thriving, balanced, inclusive and sustainable rural communities
- Ensure all members of the community have a viable choice of transport options
- Seek an improvement in retail opportunities and choices throughout the District.

Environmental Objectives

- Protect our existing special natural environment
- Promote biodiversity enhancement
- Conserve and enhance the historic environment
- Enhance existing conservation areas
- Seek to identify and protect further areas of historical and natural importance
- Seek to reduce travel and promote an improvement in sustainable transport options
- Promote efficient use of the earths resources and promote renewable energy
- Maintain the principles of Green Belt designation

Economic Objectives

- Maintain a high and stable level of employment by supporting economic modernisation
- Improve peoples' access to job opportunities in new technologies
- Ensure opportunities for growth are linked to meeting the needs of the community
- Enable schemes that promote sustainable tourism
- Ensure sufficient sites are provided to ensure sustainable economic growth
- Provide positive support towards rural diversification
- Encourage cross-border economic linkages

SECTION 2

2.0 Implementation of Local Development Scheme

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) introduces a new system for the preparation of development plans in England. Under the new Act, Bromsgrove District Council is required to produce a Local Development Framework (LDF) in replace of the old Local Plan system. The first stage of the LDF is the preparation of a Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS is critical to successful programme management of the LDF. The LDS is a public statement identifying which local development documents will be produced, in what order and when.

The LDS sets out Bromsgrove District Council's three-year project plan for the LDF and was submitted to Government Office on 23rd December 2004. The LDS was formally adopted on 25th January 2005.

2.1 Monitoring the progress of performance against Local Development Scheme Milestones

As part of the 2004 Act, Bromsgrove District Council is required to set out in its Annual Monitoring Report how the Planning Department is performing against the milestones contained in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). This section will set out the Council's performance and progress. It will also give an indication of any adjustments that will be required since the adoption of the LDS in January 2005.

Key Milestones:

Each milestone will be assessed against criteria of 'excellent', 'fair', or 'poor'.

Submission of Local Development Scheme to Government Office – December 2004 – Milestone achieved? Yes

Bromsgrove District Council submitted the Local Development Scheme to Government Office on 23rd December 2004. Government Office did not request any changes to be made to the LDS and it was formally adopted on 25th January 2005. Therefore, the key milestone in relation to the LDS submission has been achieved. Bromsgrove District Council considers the performance against this milestone to be **excellent**.

Submission of Statement of Community Involvement to Government Office – 14th July 2005 – Milestone achieved? Yes

The LDS set out that Bromsgrove District Council would submit the Statement of Community Involvement to Government Office by 14th July 2005. This milestone was achieved. The six-week consultation period ended in August 2005. Assessment by an Inspector is expected in January 2006. Milestones have been met; therefore the Council's performance can be reported as **excellent**.

Consultation on Preferred Options for Core Strategy – Sept/Oct 2005 – Milestone achieved? No

This milestone has been adjusted to February 2006. The LDS will be revised to include this change of milestone. The reason for adjustment is due to staff changes and Council reorganisation. The Council would assess this milestone adjustment as **fair** because of unforeseen circumstances.

Begin preparation of issues & options for Affordable Housing SPD – January 2005 – Milestone met? Yes

This milestone set out in the LDS was met. The Council is on target for consulting on Draft Affordable Housing SPD in February 2006. The Council would therefore assess this milestone as **excellent**.

Begin preparation of issues & options for Managing Housing SPD – January 2005 – Milestone met? Yes

This milestone set out in the LDS was met. The Council is on target for consulting on Draft Managing Housing SPD in February 2006. The Council would therefore assess this milestone as **excellent**.

Consultation on Affordable Housing SPD – November / December 2005 – Milestone met? No

This milestone has been adjusted to February 2006. The LDS will be revised to include this change of milestone. The reason for milestone adjustment is due to resource issues and Council reorganisation. The Council would assess this milestone adjustment as **fair** because of unforeseen circumstances.

Consultation on Managing Housing SPD – September / October 2005 – Milestone met? No

This milestone has been adjusted to February 2006. The LDS will be revised to include this change of milestone. The reason for milestone adjustment is due to resource issues and Council reorganisation. The Council would assess this milestone adjustment as **fair** because of unforeseen circumstances.

Begin preparation of the Longbridge Area Action Plan – October 2005 – Milestone met? Yes

Following the closure of the MG Rover plant at Longbridge, the Local Development Scheme will be revised to include an Area Action Plan for the Longbridge site. Bromsgrove District Council, Birmingham City Council and Worcestershire County Council are working together on this Plan. Preparation work began in October 2005, so the Council feel that progress for this milestone is **excellent**.

Conclusion

Many of the key milestones contained in the Local Development Scheme, adopted in January 2005, have been met. Some delay to work on the Core Strategy and Supplementary Planning Documents has occurred as a result of staff losses but at present no attention to the projected end date for completion of these elements of the LDF is anticipated.

2.2 Adjustments to the Local Development Scheme Timetable

Since the adoption of the Local Development Scheme in January 2005, a number of issues have arisen that have necessitated changes to the LDS timetable.

The closure of the MG Rover plant at Longbridge earlier this year has led to the need to undertake an Area Action Plan for the Longbridge site. This has necessitated a change to the original LDS timetable and the insertion of this new Development Plan Document.

In February, August and November 2005 the Local Plans team lost three of its four policy members, two of whom were experienced planning officers. The Planning Department has had difficulty recruiting experienced planning officers. This combined with an increased draw on officer time due to the restructuring of the Council, has inevitably slowed the production of key areas of work. Although the Council has submitted all documents on time to Government Office to date, minor timetable changes are proposed to the LDS to acknowledge the slippage in respect of key milestones.

The changes to the LDS are as follows:

- The insertion of a Longbridge Area Action Plan
- Delaying the production of the Core Strategy Preferred Options until January/February 2006.
- Delaying the production of the 'Affordable Housing' and 'Managing Housing' SPDs to January/February 2006.

In respect of the Core Strategy it is intended that, subject to approval from Government Office, the final adoption date (September 2007) will remain the same.

SECTION 3

3.0 Local Development Framework Core Indicators

The core output indicators chosen for Bromsgrove District Council's Annual Monitoring Report 2005 are as follows:

- Business Development
- Housing
- Transport
- Local Services
- Environment

These core output indicators follow the guidelines set out in the LDF Monitoring: Good Practice Guide (ODPM, 2005). The main purpose of the core output indicators is to measure quantifiable physical activities that are directly related to, and are a consequence of, the implementation of planning policy. For Section 3 of the Annual Monitoring Report, these indicators will be used as chapter headings with data presented under each heading.

4.0 Business Development April 2004 – March 2005

4.1 Employment totals by type

Use Class Orders	Amount (m ²)
B1	8,673
B2	12,500
B1, B2, B8 (Permission granted for all three uses)	11,083

Applications solely for B1 uses (Offices)

Application	Description	Site Area Ha	Floorspace
2001/1103	Buntsford Hill, Two office buildings of 3 and 4 storeys together with ancillary car parking	0.5	5,825 m ²
1999/0801	Buntsford Hill Business Park, Offices, Phase 7	0.1	890 m ²
2002/1307	Plot 24, Harris Business Park, Construction of 8 new B1 units	0.3	1,958 m ²
		Total:	8,673 m²

Applications solely for B2 uses (General Industrial)

Application	Description	Site Area Ha	Floorspace
2003/1226	Council Yard Aston Road, waste transfer station	0.4	4,000 m ²
2003/0655	Silver Birches Business Park, Phase 3 Industrial units	0.9	8,500 m ²
		Total:	12,500 m²

Applications for B1, B2, & B8 uses (Offices, General Industrial, & Warehouses)

Application	Description	Site Area Ha	Floorspace
2004/0042	Saxon Business Park Plot 4 Phase IV commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use	0.3	1,186 m ²
2004/0432	Saxon Business Park Plots 2, Phase IV, 2 No. commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use	0.4	1,146 m ²
2004/0816	Saxon Business Park Plot 3, Phase IV 4 No. commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use	0.3	720 m ²
2003/1106	25 Aston Road Pittaway Transport Erection of 3 No. commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use	0.2	975 m ²
2002/0432	Saxon Business Park Plot 8, Phase II, two commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use	0.26	854 m ²
2003/1122	Saxon Business Park Plot 1, Phase IV, 5 No. commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use	0.3	1,030 m ²
2001/1260	Harris Business Park Plot 18, Two small industrial units with integral offices	0.3	1,072 m ²
2003/0516	Lower Park Farm, Barns 6 & 7	0.03	300 m ²

2003/0842	Lower Park Farm, Barns 10 & 11	0.09	900 m ²
2004/1074	Lower Park Farm, Barns 8 & 9	0.03	300 m ²
2003/0846	Weights Farm	0.26	2,600 m ²
		Total:	11,083 m²

4.2 Employment in employment areas

Use Class Orders	Amount (m ²)
B1	8,673
B2	12,500
B1, B2, B8 (Permission granted for all three uses)	6,983

B1, B2, B8 (Permission granted for all three uses – offices, general industrial, & warehouse)

Application	Description	Site Area Ha	Floorspace
2004/0042	Saxon Business Park Plot 4 Phase IV commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use	0.3	1,186 m ²
2004/0432	Saxon Business Park Plots 2, Phase IV, 2 No. commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use	0.4	1,146 m ²
2004/0816	Saxon Business Park Plot 3, Phase IV 4 No. Commercial Units for B1, B2 and B8 use.	0.3	720 m ²
2003/1106	25 Aston Road Pittaway Transport Erection of 3 No. commercial units for B1, B2 & B8 use	0.2	975 m ²
2002/0432	Saxon Business Park Plot 8, Phase II, two commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use	0.26	854 m ²
2003/1122	Saxon Business Park Plot 1, Phase IV, 5 No. commercial units for B1, B2 and B8 use.	0.3	1,030 m ²
2001/1260	Harris Business Park Plot 18, Two small industrial units with integral offices.	0.3	1,072 m ²
		Total:	6,983 m²

4.3 Employment on previously developed land

Use Class Orders	Amount (m ²)
B1	8,673
B2	12,500
B1, B2, B8 (Permission granted for all three uses)	6,983

4.4 Employment land available by type

Use Class Orders	Amount (m ²)
B1, B2, B8	316,000

4.5 Losses of employment land in (i) employment/regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area

	Losses of employment land (m ²)
Employment/regeneration in local authority area (316,000 m ²)	21,647 <i>(2004/0538, 2004/0539 – Toyota / Rover Dealerships, Buntsford Drive)</i>

4.6 Amount of employment land lost to residential development

	Loss (m ²)
Employment land lost to residential development <i>(2003/1035 – The Button Factory, Willow Road, Bromsgrove)</i>	5,000

4.7 VAT registered businesses

Figure 6.1 shows the number of VAT registered businesses in Bromsgrove District. VAT registered businesses are an indicator of the health of the business population. In 2004, Bromsgrove District had slightly more registrations than deregistrations. The number of registrations was less than the national and regional levels, which implies that the business economy is not quite as healthy as it could be.

Figure 4.1: VAT registered businesses

Percentages are based on stock (at end of year)

	Bromsgrove (numbers)	Bromsgrove (%)	West Midlands (%)	GB (%)
Registrations	310	9.2	9.8	10.1
Deregistrations	300	8.9	9.8	9.9
Stock (at end of year)	3,360	-	-	-

Source: Nomis website – vat registrations/deregistrations by industry (2004)

5.0 Housing

5.1 Housing Type

At the 2001 Census, the number of resident households in Bromsgrove District was 35,168.

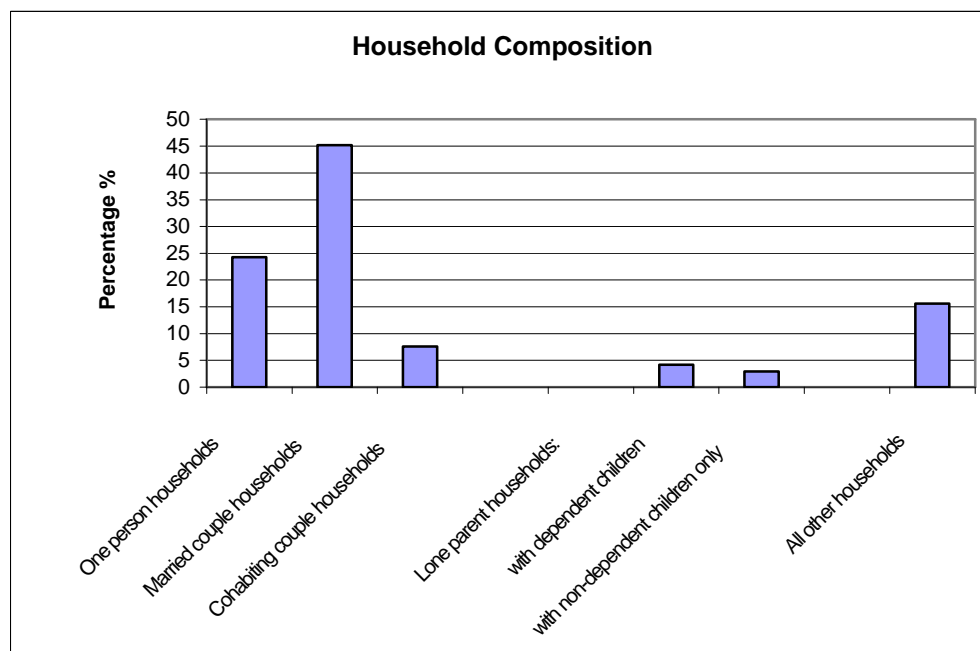
Housing (all households)	Value	Eng & Wales Rank/376 (proportion)	Regional Rank/34 (proportion)
Number of households with residents	35,168	286	26
Number of people per hectare	4.0	212	18
Average household size	2.44	59	9
Vacant household spaces	755	326	30
Owner-occupied	29,316	11	2
Without central heating	1,539	281	34
Without own bath/shower & toilet	35	375	34
Overcrowding indicator	954	359	34

Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

5.2 Household Composition

At the 2001 Census, 45.2% of households in Bromsgrove District consisted of married couples, and 24.3% were one person households.

Figure 5.1: Household Composition (2001 Census)

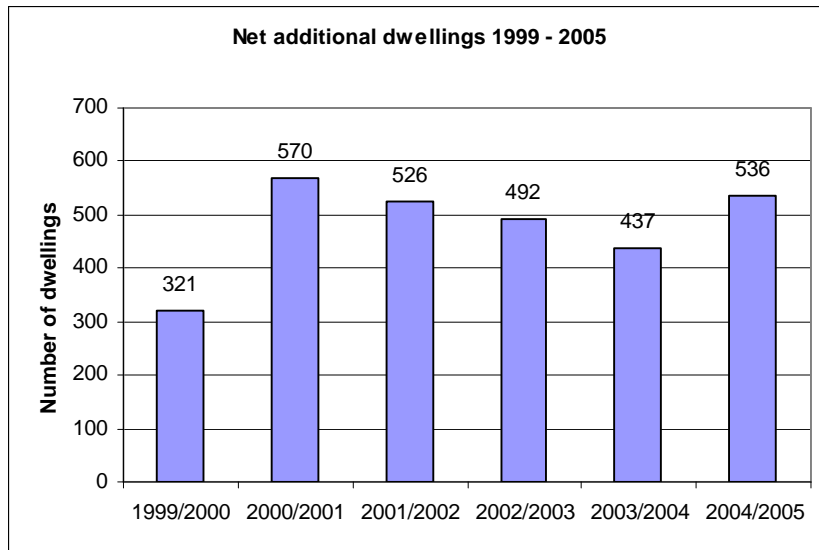


Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

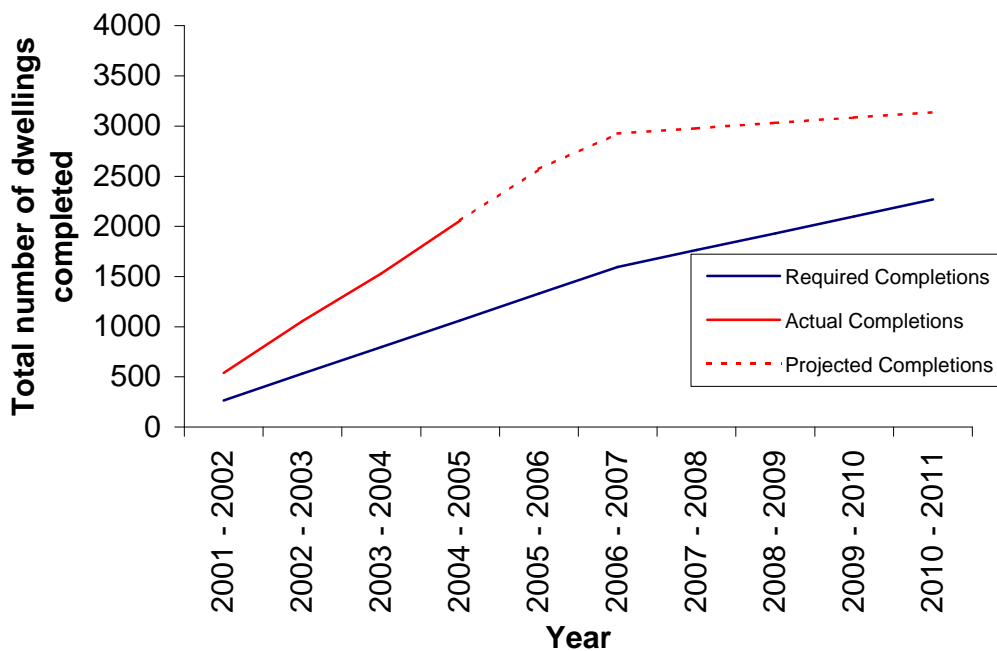
5.3 Housing trajectory

- i) net additional dwellings over the previous five year period or since the start of the relevant development plan document period, whichever is the longer;

Figure 5.2: Net Additional Dwellings 1999 - 2005



Housing Completions 1996 - 2011



ii) net additional dwellings for the current year;

Indicator: Net additional dwellings for the current year	
Year	Number of completions
Completions April 04 – March 05	536

iii) projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant development plan document period or over a ten year period from its adoption, whichever is the longer;

Indicator	Projected net additional dwellings
Projected net additional dwellings up to 2021 (Regional Spatial Strategy Plan 2021)	1605 <i>(814 currently with permission, 797 further dwellings required)</i>

Calculation:

Target	
Requirement (05 – 21)	2604
Supply (05)	1807
Remaining Requirement	797

NB: The requirement figures to 2021 are an estimate based on an agreed approach with GOWM to project Structure Plan proportions forward but using Regional Spatial Strategy numbers.

iv) the annual net additional dwelling requirement up to 2021;

Indicator	Dwelling Requirement
The annual net additional dwelling requirement	53

Calculation:

797 dwellings / 15 years left of the RSS plan period = 53 dwellings per annum

v) annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performances.

53 Dwellings = 12% of current average completions.

Calculation:

514 completions per annum currently 53 dwellings required per annum to meet RSS targets = 12% of current completion rate.

5.4 Development on previously developed land

Indicator	Percentage
New and converted dwellings on previously developed land	93%

5.5 Density of new housing development

Indicator	Percentage %
Less than 30 dwellings per hectare	28%
Between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare	36%
Above 50 dwellings per hectare	36%

5.6 Affordable housing completions

Indicator	Number
Affordable housing completions	40

6.0 Transport

Responsibility for the transport network falls on three agencies: The Highways Agency, Worcestershire County Council and Bromsgrove District Council. Bromsgrove District Council is responsible for the provision of public car parks and for ensuring that planning proposals are compatible with transport policy. The Highways Agency is responsible for the M5 and M42 motorways and those lengths of the A38, A435 and A456, which are trunk roads. Worcestershire County Council as Highway Authority is responsible for public transport, and other highways and traffic management and the maintenance of public footpaths.

6.1 Car Ownership

Transport (all households)	Value	Eng & Wales Rank/376 (proportion)	Regional Rank/34 (proportion)
Households without car/van	4,686	355	34
Households with 1 car or van	13,971	341	33
Households with 2 or more cars/vans	16,511	21	2

Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

6.2 Travel to Work

Travel to work (all people aged 16-74 in employment)	Value	Eng & Wales Rank/376 (proportion)	Regional Rank/34 (proportion)
Travel to work by car	32,232	15	4
Travel to work by public transport	2,496	250	15

6.3 Amount of completed non-residential development within UCOs A, B and D complying with car-parking standards set out in the local development framework

Indicator	Amount (m ²)
Completed non-residential development within UCOs A, B and D complying with car-parking standards set out in LDF	33,156

Calculation:

32,256 m² B1, B2, B8 uses + 900 m² D1 uses = 33,156 m²

6.4 Amount of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of: a GP; a hospital; a primary school; a secondary school; areas of employment; and a major retail centre(s)

The Council is unable to comment on this indicator, as information is not available.

7.0 Local Services

7.1 Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development

9,573 m²

Calculation:

8,673 m² office development Buntsford gate / Harris Business Park
900 m² Artrix Centre

$8,673 \text{ m}^2 + 900 \text{ m}^2 = 9,573 \text{ m}^2$

7.2 Amount of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres

None

7.3 Amount of eligible open spaces managed to Green Flag Award standard

There are currently no open spaces in Bromsgrove District managed to the green flag award standard. However, the Council is currently working towards a green flag award for Sanders Park. Site improvements and a management plan have been introduced to ensure Sanders Park achieves a green flag award in 2006.

8.0 Environment

8.1 Biodiversity

Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including:

- i) change in priority habitats and species (by type); and
- ii) change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional, or sub-regional significance.

Response:

The Council is unable to comment on biodiversity indicators, as no progress has been made on the Biodiversity Action Plan since 2000.

8.2 Renewable Energy

Renewable energy capacity installed by type.

Response:

The Council is unable to comment on renewable energy indicator, as no records are available.

8.3 Flood Protection & Water Quality

Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality.

Response:

None.

SECTION 4

9.0 Local Indicators

The Bromsgrove District Local Plan was adopted in January 2004. This section of the AMR deals with the policies and proposals set out in the adopted Plan which cover:

- District Strategy
- Housing
- Shopping
- Conservation
- Landscape
- Woodlands
- Transport
- Recreation
- Environmental Services
- Area Policies

The information for this section also relates to the AMR period 1st April 2004 – 31st March 2005. The choice of policies reflects the availability and quality of existing data sources and their relevance to the local level.

Local Plan Policies:

9.1 District Strategy

Policy DS3: The majority of growth during the Plan period will be centred on the urban area of Bromsgrove. This area has the majority of the population and is well served by existing public transport networks including the railway station.

Comments on Policy DS3: The Plan period to 2001 saw a majority of housing growth directed towards the Bromsgrove Town area. Other non-Green Belt locations also experienced some additional development albeit at a lesser scale while only exceptionally was housing permitted in rural locations. In these instances the prime source of new dwellings came from barn conversions. This approach to the distribution of new growth continued after 2001 until the introduction of a housing moratorium in July 2003.

Policy DS15: The Council will promote the creation of new works of art as part of the enhancement of the built environment.

Comments on Policy DS15: While this policy can only work with the cooperation of the developer, on larger developments the Council has sought to encourage the inclusion of public art as 'gateway' features, e.g. Breme Park housing development. In some cases art can provide a link back to the former use of the site as well as being a visual asset in its own right.

9.2 Housing

Policy S4: The District Council will monitor the release of sites for housing purposes to enable the maintenance of a 5 year supply of housing land and to ensure that there is a relatively even supply of land for any given period of time.

Comments on Policy S4: The Council has consistently monitored housing development over two decades. This has meant the Authority has met previous housing targets and maintained a 5 year supply of housing land. The current monitoring regime led to the introduction of a housing moratorium in July 2003 in order to regulate housing growth, which was rapidly expanding at a time when the Regional Spatial Strategy was seeking to reduce the levels of housing growth in shire districts.

Policy S14: The District Council, in partnership with other agencies, will endeavour to increase the range of housing types available in the District. Proposals leading to the provision of affordable housing will be welcomed where these provide housing for rent, sale or for shared ownership. The majority of units will be provided in existing urban areas whilst the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs may also be forthcoming in appropriate rural settlements.

Comments on Policy S14: The Council has undertaken housing needs studies to inform its planning and housing strategies and with a view to identifying the need of its residents, both existing and newly-forming ones. It has acknowledged the need for affordable housing in both urban and rural locations and is currently examining how future provision can be made.

9.3 Shopping

Policy S20: Bromsgrove will remain the main location for general shopping facilities relative to other locations within the District. The District Council will seek to strengthen Bromsgrove's shopping role in order to compete more successfully with other shopping centres in the surrounding area.

Comments on Policy S20: Bromsgrove Town Centre is the primary shopping location in the District. Although it is in competition with larger centres in adjacent areas, the District Council has identified the Town Centre as a key location for improvement in future years.

9.4 Conservation

Policy S35: The District Council will consider designating the following new or extended Conservation Areas:

- a) Bromsgrove Town Centre adjacent to the existing Conservation Area including Worcester Road (extension);
- b) The Worcester and Birmingham Canal (extension);
- c) The Stratford-upon-Avon Canal;

- d) **Burcot/Blackwell: Around Alcester Road and Greenhill;**
- e) **Hunnington: The Harry Vincent Estate;**
- f) **Hagley Park;**
- g) **Hewell Park;**
- h) **Weatheroak Hill/Icknield Street;**
- i) **Dodford (extension).**

Comments on Policy S35: None of these conservation areas or extensions have been designated yet. Initial officer work has been carried out on the reconfiguration of the boundaries of some of the existing conservation areas e.g. Belbroughton, Bromsgrove Town Centre, the Worcester to Birmingham Canal and the potential boundaries for new conservation areas such as Hewell Park, Belbroughton, and the Stratford upon Avon Canal.

Policy S38: Where buildings of architectural or historic value are under threat the District Council will endeavour to protect them. Unlisted buildings which are considered to satisfy the criteria set-down by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport will either be put forward for spot listing or made subject of a building Preservation Notice. Protection of listed buildings under threat will be achieved by serving a notice for urgent or full repairs.

Comments on Policy S38: We have supported applications for spot listing made by other parties such as Abberley House, Worcester Road, Bromsgrove and Lane House, Aqueduct Lane, Alvechurch. We have served Building Preservation notices on 57 & 59 Bewell Head, two buildings under threat. Lane House and 57 & 59 Bewell Head have subsequently been added to the list.

9.5 Landscape

Policy C6: The District Council will identify sites and implement schemes for environmental improvements at ‘gateway’ locations into the District and along main transport routes and waterways, particularly within urban areas. The Council will liaise with landowners and other relevant agencies when implementing and maintaining schemes.

Comments on Policy C6: While the Council has identified sites; no environmental improvement schemes have been implemented to date. This is mainly due to lack of opportunities arising. The success of this policy is dependent on the development industry agreeing to initiate suitable schemes. To date, no suitable schemes have been put forward.

9.6 Woodlands

Policy C19: The District Council recognises the importance of mature trees and woodlands within the District and will serve Tree Preservation Orders (T.P.O.’s) on appropriate trees under threat and on other trees and woodlands of high

environmental amenity or ecological value in order to ensure their long term protection.

Comments on Policy C19: The Council sees its natural environment as a fundamental asset which contributes significantly to both the urban and rural quality of the area. In seeking to maintain this asset 13 Tree Preservation Orders were made during the period 1st April 2004 – 31st March 2005.

9.7 Transport

Policy TR5: The District Council will seek to encourage more use of rail services for the transport of goods by supporting proposals for railhead connections from existing employment areas.

Comments on Policy TR5: The Council has endeavoured to promote freight carriage on the railway system. However, commercial interest in this is negligible and existing railhead facilities are unlikely to be retained.

Policy TR10: The District Council will require a percentage or minimum number of car-parking spaces in public car parks of wider dimensions for the benefit of disabled motorists.

Comments on Policy TR10: Provision is required on larger commercial and public developments for a number of disabled spaces to be provided. Provision is implemented through the development and building control systems and seeks to provide spaces appropriate to the type of usage generated by the land use.

Policy TR15: The District Council will seek to encourage more use of rail services by enhancing car parking at railway stations. Potential sites are allocated at Barnt Green (BG2) and Bromsgrove (BROM31). Planning permission will not be granted for development which would prejudice the use of at least part of these sites for that purpose.

Comments of Policy TR15: The Council in conjunction with rail operators and the County Council have provided additional parking facilities at Bromsgrove Station. Further improvements are being sought and could come from the development of adjacent areas of brownfield land. The potential for improvements at Barnt Green Station also exist although land ownership issues remain outstanding.

Policy TR16: The District Council will pursue opportunities to improve/provide cycle facilities in the District and to develop a network of cycle routes. For new developments the Council will expect developers to provide secure parking facilities and cycle paths where appropriate (See Policy TR11).

Comments on Policy TR16: Part of the Sustran national cycle route runs through the District. The Council are committed to extending cycle routes to link to this network and to provide facilities in major developments. Recent large housing schemes have all been required to provide cycle links.

9.8 Recreation

Policy RAT5: The District Council will seek the provision of play space throughout the District in accordance with its standards.

Comments on Policy RAT5: A revised planning guidance note on open space provision was issued as supplementary planning guidance by the District Council in July 2004. This places a requirement on developers to provide a minimum standard of open space on all residential developments.

9.9 Environmental Services

Policy ES12: The District Council will make provision for recycling facilities at its Depot site at Aston Fields and selected public parking locations throughout the District.

Comments on Policy ES12: While a new site for a waste transfer station is being sought, the Council has provided a range of recycling facilities at strategic locations throughout the District. Most recently a recycling facility for paper, card, and three-coloured glass has been set up at the Prince of Wales Public House in Hagley. The Aston Fields depot site was fully instated for recycling purposes in April 2004.

Area Policies

9.10 Barnt Green

Policy BG2: Land at Station Approach Barnt Green, as indicated on the Proposals Map, is suitable for residential/commercial uses although as part of any development the District Council will require that a portion of the site is capable of acting as an overspill car park to the railway station.

Policy BG3: The District Council will support schemes which lead to an improvement in car parking provision meeting the needs of both the railway station and shopping area.

Comments on Policy BG2 & BG3: Discussions have taken place during 2004/05 with the landowners of the identified site with a view to providing a mixed development of residential accommodation and parking, the latter to serve both the railway station and the village shopping facilities. The current housing moratorium and issues over security have prevented further progress.

9.11 Bromsgrove

Policy BROM31: A site is identified for car parking purposes adjacent to Bromsgrove Railway Station. The site is identified on the Proposals Map.

Comments on Policy BROM31: A new car park was provided on this site, which opened in April 2003.

9.12 Wythall

Policy WYT10: The District Council will support a scheme for a ‘park and ride’ facility in the vicinity of Wythall Railway Station. A proposal for this purpose should be as close as practical to the station and should be designed to minimise its appearance and effect on adjacent lane uses.

Comments on Policy WYT10: The District Council has been supporting the work of ‘The Shakespeare Line Promotion Group’ in identifying a suitable location for a car park to serve the railway station. While there are difficulties in delivering new facilities there is also considerable potential for encouraging more people to use the rail network.

SECTION 5

10.0 Summary

Section 1: Context

The key issues that need to be tackled by the LDF are as follows:

- Rising older population
- Barriers to housing and services in rural areas
- Large identified greenfield sites for future development needs
- Housing to meet local needs
- Reducing fear of crime
- Under-provision of affordable housing
- Implications of redeveloping brownfield sites
- School rebuilding and resiting programme
- High car usage and congestion
- Commuting out of District
- Local facilities to meet the needs of the population
- Air quality
- Changing quality
- Degradation of the National and Built Environment

Section 2: Implementation of Local Development Scheme

The key milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (adopted in January 2005) have largely been met, with the exception of the Core Strategy and consultation dates for Affordable Housing SPD and Managing Housing SPD. Although the Council has been successful in submitting all necessary documents to Government Office to date, these three milestones have been compromised by staff changes and Council restructuring, and the need to include an Area Action Plan for the Longbridge site following the closure of the MG Rover plant. The action taken has been to adjust the LDS timetable to incorporate new milestone targets:

- The insertion of a Longbridge Area Action Plan
- Delaying the production of the Core Strategy Preferred Options until January / February 2006.
- Delaying the production of the 'Affordable Housing' and 'Managing Housing' SPDs to January / February 2006.

Although it has been necessary to make adjustments to the LDS timetable, the Council is confident that the final adoption date (September 2007) for the Core Strategy will remain the same (subject to Government approval).

Section 3: Local Development Framework Core Indicators

Business Development

The Council monitors employment change annually (April) which provides a good source of information on business development. During the AMR period 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2005, the District lost 21,647 m² of employment land. The amount of employment land lost to residential totalled 5,000 m². There is currently 316,000 m² of employment land available in the District.

Housing

The Council produces an annual housing report in April and has information covering two decades.

The AMR's housing trajectory has illustrated the actual, projected, and required housing completions for the District. The number of actual housing completions is far greater than the required number of completions. The number of net additional dwellings for the AMR period 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2005 is 536; this is an increase of 18.5% since the previous year (2003/04 = 437). There has been a high percentage (93%) of new and converted dwellings built on previously developed land, but only a small number (40) of affordable housing completions have been achieved.

Transport

The 2001 Census revealed that only 2,496 people use public transport, compared to 32,232 people who travel to work by car. This indicates a need for the Council and other agencies to promote the use of public transport in the District.

At present, there is no data available to comment on the following transport indicator: *'Amount of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of: a GP; a hospital; a primary school; a secondary school; areas of employment; and a major retail centre(s)'* The Council will have to investigate methods of obtaining the necessary data to ensure this indicator can be commented on in future Annual Monitoring Reports.

Local Services

No open spaces in Bromsgrove District have been awarded the green flag standard. However, the Council is hoping to secure a green flag award for Sanders Park in 2006.

Environment

The Council was unable to comment on the biodiversity indicators, as no progress has been made on Biodiversity Action Plan since 2000. This is mainly due to loss of experienced staff. This is an area of work that the Planning Department needs to push forward to ensure future targets are met.

The Council was unable to comment on the renewable energy indicator, as no records are available. If this is to be included as an AMR indicator for future years, the Council will have to explore ways of recording renewable energy schemes in the District.

Section 4: Local Indicators

Local Plan Policies:

District Strategy: The majority of development growth has been centred on the urban area of Bromsgrove.

Housing: Following guidelines set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy, the Council introduced a housing moratorium in July 2003 to regulate housing growth that was rapidly expanding. The Council has undertaken housing needs studies, and acknowledges the need for affordable housing in both urban and rural locations.

Shopping: Bromsgrove Town Centre has been identified as the primary location for shopping in the District, and will therefore be targeted for improvements in future years.

Conservation: The areas listed in Policy S35 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan (2004) have not yet been designated as conservation areas.

Landscape: No environmental improvement schemes have been implemented to date.

Woodlands: During the AMR period 1st April 2004 – 31st March 2005, 13 Tree Preservation Orders have been issued.

Transport: The Council has been working with rail operators to provide enhanced car parking facilities at Bromsgrove Station. The Council is committed to extending cycle routes to link to the Sustran national cycle route that runs through the District.

Recreation: The District Council issued a revised planning guidance note on open space provision in July 2004. This places a requirement on developers to provide a minimum standard of open space on all residential developments.

Environmental Services: The Council has provided a range of recycling facilities at strategic locations throughout the District.

Limitations and Improvements to Annual Monitoring Report

As this is the first Annual Monitoring Report that the Council has produced under the new regulations, much of the information and data has been gathered for the first time. As many of the indicators are new for this year, trends cannot easily be identified and some of the information is not yet available. For future AMR's the Council will have to implement new monitoring systems to ensure the relevant information is collected. As the data is collected over time for future AMR's, trends will be identified and the effectiveness of new policies more readily gauged.

The local indicators for this AMR relate to Bromsgrove District Council's adopted Local Plan (2004), as the Core Strategy for the LDF has not yet been written. Future AMR's will relate to the new policies set out in the Core Strategy once these begin to be implemented.

APPENDIX

11.0 Demography

11.1 Population

Bromsgrove District's population at 2001: 87,837 (Census 2001)

Total number of people	
Males	43,141
Females	44,696
Aged 0 to 15	16,979
Aged 16 to 74	63,823
Aged 75 and over	7,035

Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

		Eng & Wales Rank/376 (proportion)	Regional Rank/34 (proportion)
Population Change since 1991	4,600	129	11

Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

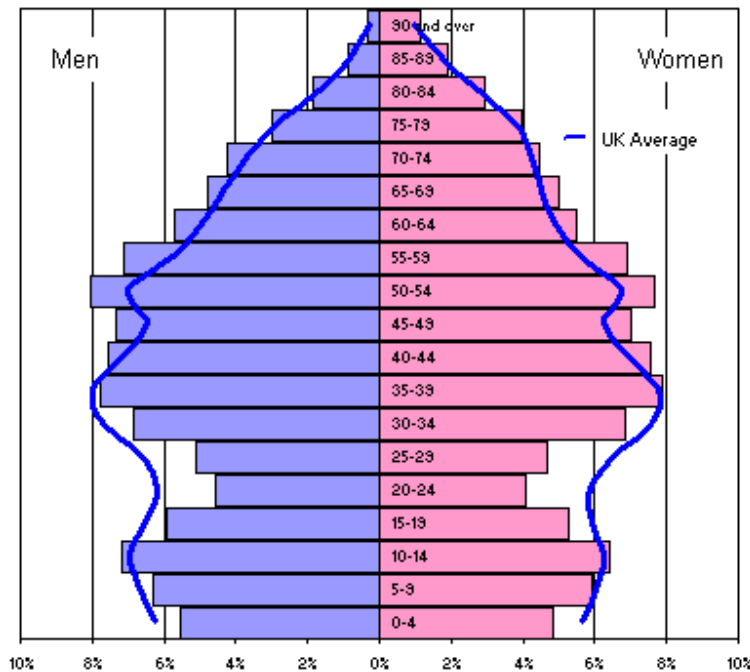
11.2 Density

		Eng & Wales Rank/376 (proportion)	Regional Rank/34 (proportion)
Number of people per hectare	4.0	212	18

Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

11.3 Age Groups

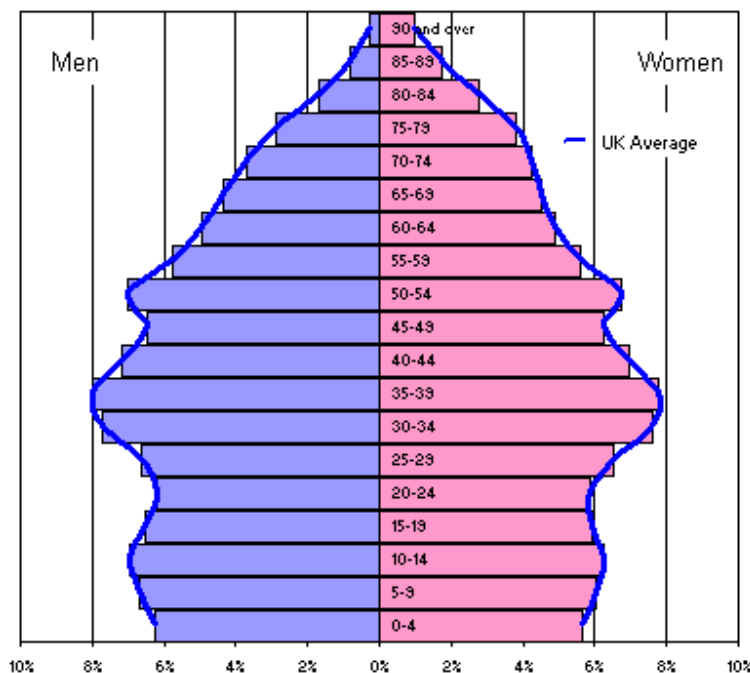
Figure 11.1: Bromsgrove District Age/Sex Pyramid (Census 2001)



Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

Bromsgrove District's age/sex pyramid shows a large proportion of the population are in the age groups 35 – 55 years of age. There is a noticeable smaller proportion of young people aged 20 – 29 years old compared to the national average (see figure 4.2). The proportion of people living in the District aged 70 – 84 is greater than the national average.

Figure 11.2: United Kingdom Age/Sex Pyramid (Census 2001)



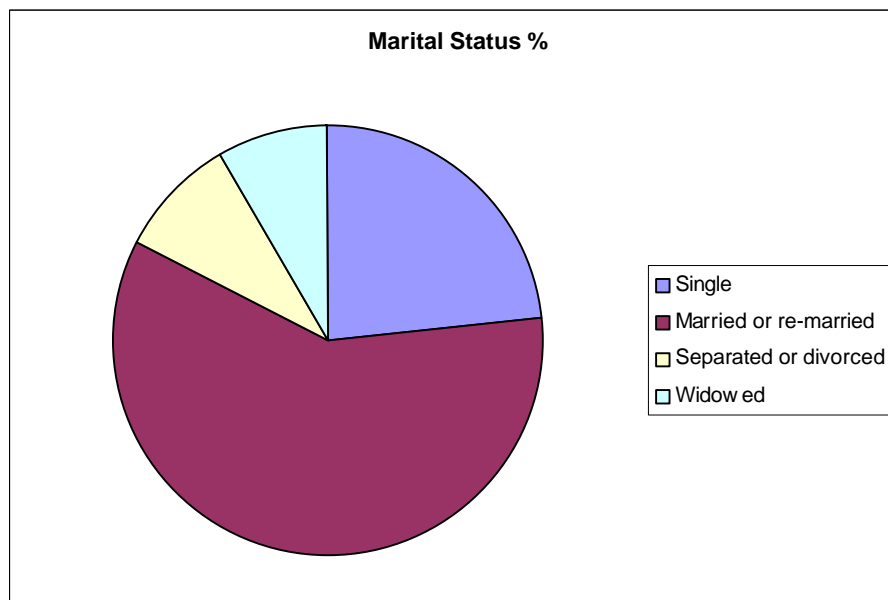
Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

11.4 Marital Status

Marital status (all people aged 16 and over)		Eng & Wales Rank/376 (proportion)	Regional Rank/34 (proportion)
Single people (never married)	16,488	324	29
Married or re-married people	41,915	24	3
Separated or divorced	6,552	328	27
Widowed	5,903	208	20

Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

Figure 11.3 Marital Status % (Census 2001)



11.5 Ethnicity and Religion

97.8% of the population in Bromsgrove District are white (Census 2001).

The largest minority ethnic group is Indian (0.6%).

The largest religious groups are:

Christian	80.09%
Sikh	0.33%
Muslim	0.29%

6.84% of the population indicated that they have no religion.

12.0 Economy

12.1 Economically Active

	Bromsgrove (numbers)	Bromsgrove %	West Midlands %	National %
All people				
Economically active	44,200	83.7	77.5	78.2
In employment	42,300	80.1	73.5	74.4
Employees	36,000	68.1	64.9	64.9
Self employed	6,200	11.7	8.1	9.0
Unemployed	1,900	4.3	5.2	4.8
Males				
Economically active	24,200	88.7	82.9	83.3
In employment	22,900	83.8	78.4	79.0
Employees	17,900	65.6	66.1	65.6
Self employed	4,900	17.9	11.8	13.0
Unemployed	1,300	5.5	5.5	5.1
Females				
Economically active	20,000	78.3	71.7	72.8
In employment	19,400	76.1	68.2	69.6
Employees	18,000	70.7	63.7	64.2
Self employed	1,300	5.0	4.0	4.8
Unemployed	600	2.8	4.9	4.5

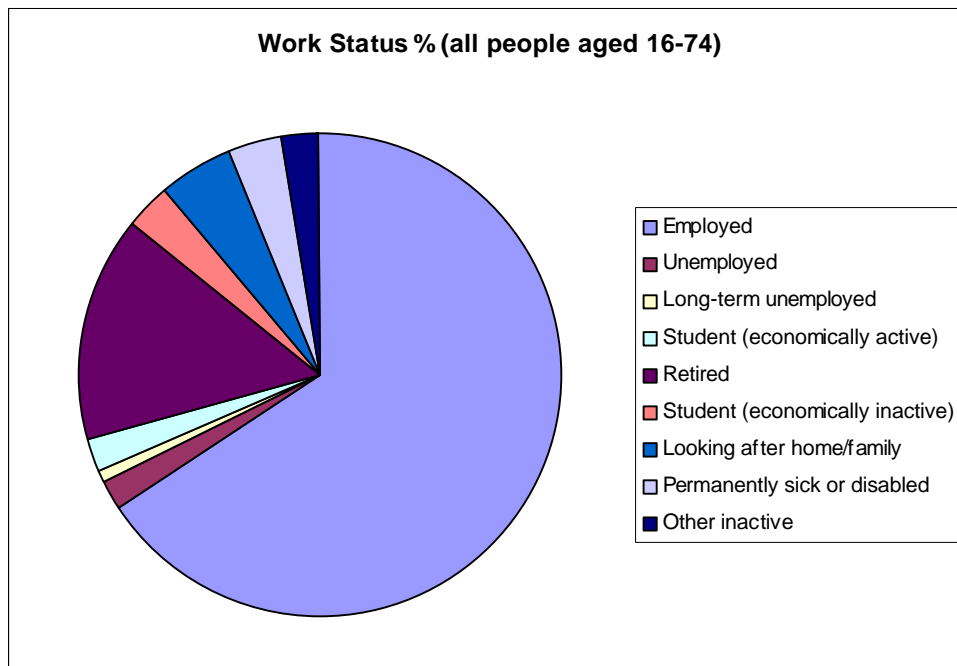
Source: Nomis website - annual population survey, (Jan 2004-Dec 2004)

12.2 Economically Inactive

	Bromsgrove (numbers)	Bromsgrove %	West Midlands %	National %
All People				
Economically inactive	8,600	16.3	22.5	21.8
Wanting a job	1,000	1.9	4.8	5.2
Not wanting a job	7,600	14.4	17.7	16.6
Males				
Economically inactive	3,100	11.3	17.1	16.7
Wanting a job	(Estimate is less than 500)	1.2	4.1	4.3
Not wanting a job	2,700	10.0	12.9	12.4
Females				
Economically inactive	5,500	21.7	28.3	27.2
Wanting a job	700	2.7	5.5	6.2
Not wanting a job	4,900	19.0	22.7	20.9

Source: Nomis website - annual population survey, (Jan 2004-Dec 2004)

12.3 Work Status % (Census 2001)



Source: Office for National Statistics, Crown Copyright, Revised February 2003

12.4 Unemployment rates

The unemployment rate in Bromsgrove District is measured by the proportion of working age people unemployed and claiming job seekers' allowance (JSA). The table below shows the number of people in Bromsgrove District who are unemployed and claiming JSA as at September 2005.

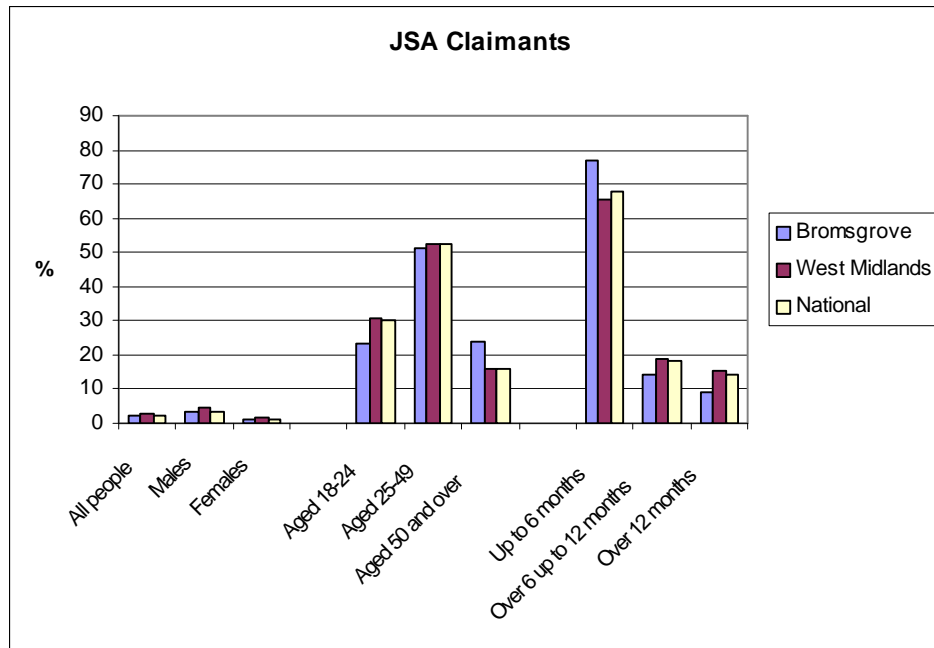
	Bromsgrove (numbers)	Bromsgrove %	West Midlands %	National %
All people	1,223	2.2	3.0	2.3
Males	949	3.3	4.3	3.3
Females	274	1.1	1.6	1.3

Source: Nomis website: claimant count – age & duration (September 2005)

Figure 5.2 indicates that the majority of unemployed and claiming JSA in Bromsgrove District are in the age group 25 – 49 years of age (51.1%). There are a higher percentage of males unemployed (3.3%) than females (1.1%). These figures are below the regional average.

76.9% of those registered as being unemployed have been claiming JSA for less than six months. This is above the national and regional average. Only 8.9% have been claiming for more than 12 months. This is below the national and regional average.

Figure 12.1: JSA Claimants



Source: Nomis website: claimant count - age & duration (September 2005)

12.5 Jobs Density

The density figures in the table below represent the ratio of total jobs to working-age population.

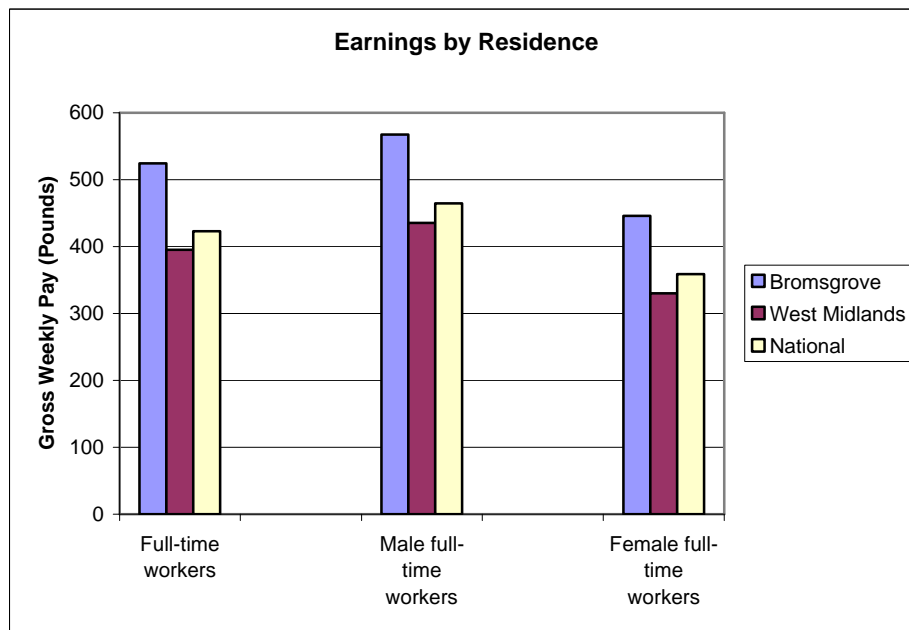
	Bromsgrove (jobs)	Bromsgrove (density)	West Midlands (density)	National (density)
Jobs Density	36,000	0.7	0.8	0.8

Source: Nomis website – jobs density (2003)

12.6 Earnings

Figure 5.3 shows the median earnings in pounds for employees living in the area. Figure 5.4 shows the median earnings in pounds for employees working in the area.

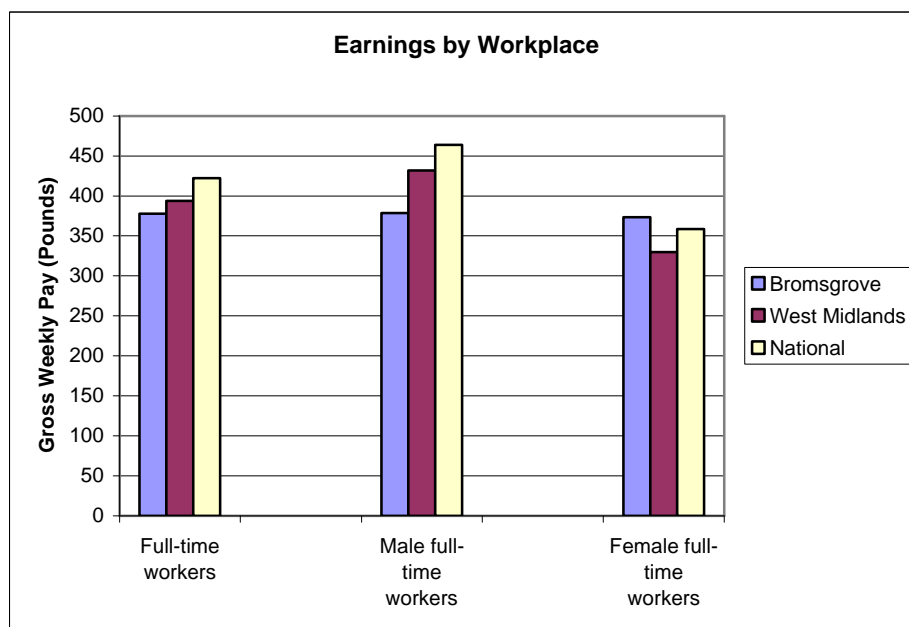
Figure 12.2: Earnings by Residence



Source: Nomis website – Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings (2004)

On average, Bromsgrove District residents are paid relatively well when compared to the national and regional average. In contrast, workplace earnings are lower than the national and regional average.

Figure 12.3 Earnings by Workplace

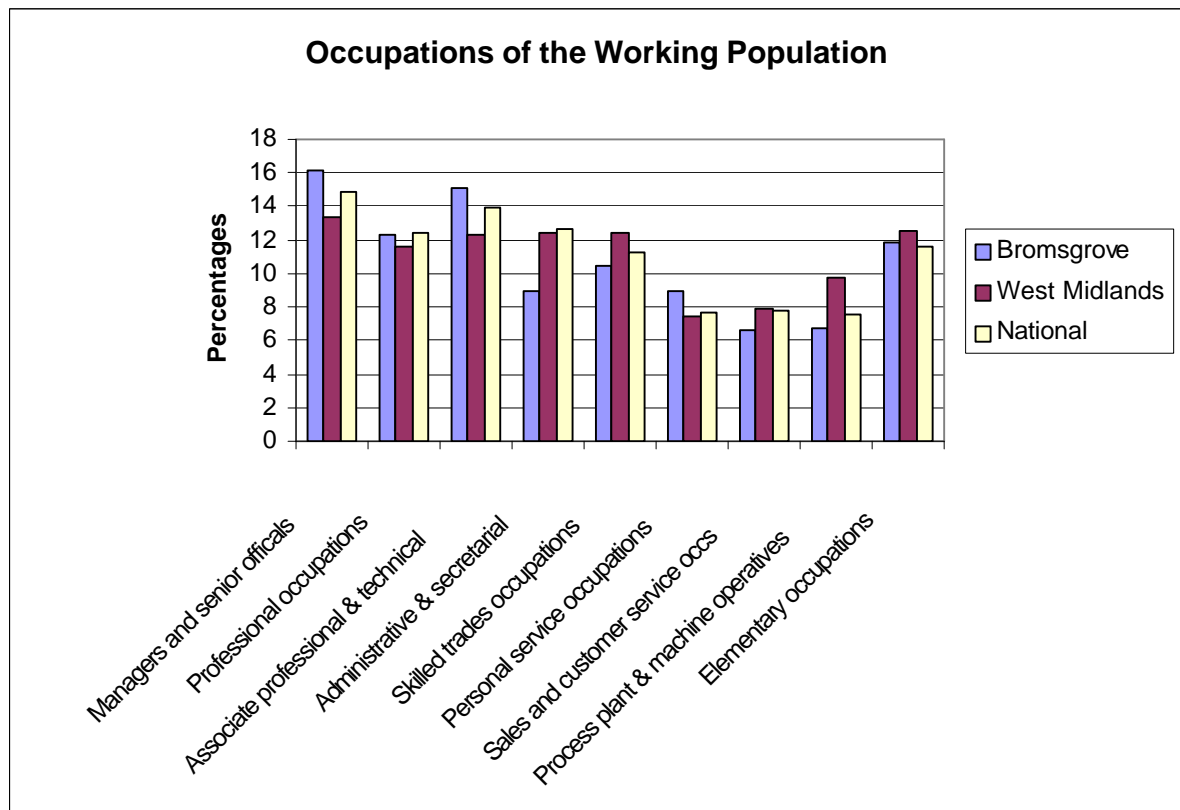


Source: Nomis website – Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings (2004)

12.7 Occupations of the Working Population

Figure 5.5 shows that the number of people in Bromsgrove District with occupations in managerial, technical, personal service, and elementary occupations are higher than the national average.

Figure 12.4: Occupations of the Working Population



Source: Nomis website – annual population survey (Jan 2004 – Dec 2004)

Table 1: Key milestones in the production of local development documents

Document	Begin preparation of issues & options	Consultation on Preferred Options	Date of Submission to Inspectorate	Consultation on Submission document (or Draft SPD)	Estimated date for pre-examination meeting	Estimated date for Commencement of Examination	Estimated date for receipt of Binding Report	Adoption Date
Local Development Scheme	<i>October 04</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>January 05</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>February 05</i>
Statement of Community Involvement	<i>October 04</i>	<i>February 05 / March 05</i>	<i>14th July 05</i>	<i>July / August 05</i>	<i>October 05</i>	<i>N/A</i>	January 06	March 06
Core Strategy	January 05	February 06	July 06	July / August 06	November 06	January 07	June 07	September 07
Proposals Map	N/A	N/A	N/A	July / August 06	N/A	N/A	N/A	September 07
Longbridge AAP	October 05	August 06 / Sept 06	March 07	March / April 07	July 07	September 07	After September 07	After September 07
Generic Development Control Policies	January 06	September / October 06	July 07	July / August 07	After September 07	After September 07	After September 07	After September 07
Affordable housing SPD	January 05	N/A	N/A	February 06	N/A	N/A	N/A	June 06
Managing Housing SPD	January 05	N/A	N/A	February 06	N/A	N/A	N/A	June 06

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP

12th DECEMBER 2005

CORE STRATEGY PREFERRED OPTIONS DRAFT

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor P. J. Whittaker
Responsible Head of Service	Mr. P. Allen, Interim Director of Planning & Environmental Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Core Strategy is a key document in the overall scheme of producing a Local Development Framework. It sets out the broad objectives of the Council and is crucial in providing the strategic base for future development plan documents. This first draft of the document provides members of the Working Group with the opportunity to examine and comment on its contents.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Members consider the contents of this draft document prior to the completion of a further version for public consultation in January/February 2006.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Core Strategy is the first of a series of development plan documents (DPDs) which together with other types of plan form the Local Development Framework for each local authority area. A copy of the draft Strategy is attached as an appendix although members should note that not all parts of the document have been fully completed.
- 3.2 This document provides a basis for other policy documents and reflects key objectives derived from national and regional planning policy and the influences of the Bromsgrove Community Plan. Subsequent plans produced by the Council will need to adhere to the principles set out in the Core Strategy.
- 3.3 It is intended that a 'Preferred Options' consultation version of the Core Strategy will be finalised by the end of January 2006. This document will then be subject to public consultation after which the Council may wish to modify the document in the light of representations made. A final version of the document will then be required to undergo a further round of consultation for six weeks after which representations to the Plan will be considered by a planning inspector at a subsequent examination (Inquiry).

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Comments on any aspect of this document would be welcomed before a final version is produced. Members may wish to do this during the meeting although ideas can be considered during the remainder of December prior to the drafting of a final version. This will be brought to the Working Group before the next consultation stage commences.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Provision has been made through the Planning Delivery Grant in 05/06 to support the cost of the consultation process outlined in the report. Financial provision was made within the medium term financial plan for 06/07, approved by Council on 1st March 2005, to cover the potential cost of an examination (inquiry) during 2006/07.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Background Papers

None

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- Submission, Examination and Adoption
- Monitoring and Review

1 Introduction

1.1 As required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Bromsgrove District Council is producing a Local Development Framework to replace the current Adopted Local Plan. A timetable for producing a Local Development Framework for the District is set out in the Local Development Scheme. The Local Development Scheme for the District was adopted in January 2005 and amended in November 2005.

1.2 The first key component of the Local Development Framework will be the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy will cover the period to 2021, and contain three key elements

- An overall spatial vision for the District.
- A set of spatial objectives outlining the main policy directions that will need to be pursued.
- A series of policies for addressing the spatial vision and objectives.

1.3 The Core Strategy will not deal with site specific issues or contain detailed criteria to assess planning applications. All subsequent plan documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework must be in conformity with the Core Strategy. At the same time the Core Strategy is submitted to the Secretary of State, we will also publish a proposals map which will show the spatial extent of new and saved policies. The Core Strategy itself will only contain an indicative key diagram.

1.4 The first formal stage in producing a Core Strategy is the publication of the Council's Preferred Policy Options and Draft Sustainability Report. However, much preliminary work has already been done to lead up to this stage. Further information on initial 'front-loading' consultation undertaken by the Council is contained in Section 2 of this document. Section 3 of this document sets out the context, including a profile of the District. Section 4 sets out the spatial vision for the District together with the key objectives of the Local Development Framework. Section 6 contains the preferred policies that the Council is seeking to adopt and will form the basis of the Core Strategy. The final section contains details on the next steps including, consultation

on the preferred options, submission of the final document to the Secretary of State for examination and the final adoption by the Council of the Core Strategy.

2 Background

Issues and Options Consultation

2.1 The publication of the Council's preferred policy options is a key stage in preparing a Core Strategy for the District. The preferred options have resulted from the Council's consideration of policy options arising from 'front-loading' consultation exercises, the sustainability appraisal process, national and regional policy documents and other research. Full public participation on the Council's preferred options will now take place before the document is finalised and submitted to the Secretary of State for public examination. In summary the following has been undertaken prior to the publication of this document;

- March 2005 – Community workshop on the new planning system including a discussion on the key planning issues.
- June 2005 – Initial sustainability appraisal of issues and options.
- June 2005 – Publication of Council's Issues and Options.
- June / July 2005 – Community focus group meetings on key issues.
- July / August 2005 – General consultation on Key issues and options.

Key Influences

2.2 The process in selecting the Council's preferred options reflected a number of important considerations, including the following key influences:

- **National policies**

The Council's preferred policies take into account national planning policies, including latest guidance on Local Development Frameworks, planning policy statements, guidance notes, circulars and national studies.

- **Regional policies**

The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (Adopted June 2004) represents the spatial vision for the West Midlands to 2021. The Core Strategy must be in general conformity with policies in the Regional Spatial Strategy. Each preferred policy makes reference to relevant national and regional policy sources. Further information on the key objectives of the Regional Spatial Strategy and how they will impact on planning in Bromsgrove is contained in section 3 of this document.

- **Bromsgrove Community Plan (2003-2013)**

The Community Plan is a ten-year strategy to address issues important to the local community. It provides an overall vision based on issues identified through consultation. The Core Strategy will play a key role in delivering those aspects of the Community Plan that relate to the development and use of land.

- **Other local plans and strategies**

The contents of a number of other local plans and strategies have been taken into account during the preparation of the Core Strategy Preferred Options. These include the following:

- Bromsgrove Housing Strategy (2005)
- Bromsgrove Council Corporate Plan (2005-2008)
- Local Air Quality Management Action Plan (2004)
- Community Strategy for Worcestershire (2003)
- Worcestershire Countryside Access and Recreation Strategy (2004)
- Bromsgrove District Biodiversity Action Plan (2000)
- Worcestershire Local Transport Plan (2001-2006)
- Bromsgrove Community Safety Strategy (2002-2005)
- Tourism Strategy (2002-2005)
- Cultural Strategy (2002-2007)
- Arts Strategy (2003-2008)
- Redditch and Bromsgrove PCT Local Delivery Plan (2003-2006)

Information Base

2.3 In addition to the above influences the preferred options is also based on the results of key studies undertaken by the Council. Key studies and information sources include the following:

- Bromsgrove Town Centre Study (2004)
- Housing Capacity Study (2004)
- Housing Needs Survey (2004)
- Housing Land Availability Study (2005)
- Employment Land Availability Study (2005)

Sustainability Appraisal

2.4 European Directive 2001/42/EC requires that planning authorities undertake an environmental assessment of plans that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment. This requirement is reinforced and expanded by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) which requires that local planning authorities undertake a sustainability appraisal of all emerging development plan documents such as the Core Strategy Preferred Options. Any documentation produced by the Council as part of the sustainability appraisal process will have regard to the requirements of both items of legislation. While the combined process will be called Sustainability Appraisal it will be made clear how the requirements of the European Directive will be or have been met.

2.5 The process of sustainability appraisal has been a key influence on the Core Strategy Preferred Options. The Sustainability Appraisal process runs parallel with the preparation of the Core Strategy to assess the extent to which emerging policy options will achieve relevant environmental, social and economic objectives. A list of the sustainability objectives is contained in Section 4 of this document.

2.6 The first step in the process was the production of a Scoping Report. This report set the context, objectives and established the baseline for deciding the scope of sustainability appraisal. A set of key issues were identified which fed into the core Strategy Issues and Options paper. As well as setting objectives against which policy options were assessed a number of indicators were selected which can be used to monitor the success of policies against the sustainability objectives. Many of these indicators will be used as part of the annual monitoring of policies through the publication of the Annual Monitoring Report in December of each year.

2.7 The Sustainability Appraisal Report is published alongside this Preferred Options document to inform the consultation process and show how the appraisal process has influenced the selection of policy options.

3 Context

Profile of the District

3.1 The Bromsgrove District covers approximately 21,714 hectares and at 2001 had a population of 87,837, (2001 Census). Bromsgrove District remains largely rural, although it supports a varied and dynamic economy based on a range of small and medium sized businesses. The area is well served by motorways, the M5 running north to south and the M42 from east to west. These routes connect with the M6 to the north of Birmingham and the M40 to the east. The District is also well served by train connections with a number of commuter routes passing through the District into Birmingham. Due to these links and the attractiveness of the area historically as a desirable place to live has resulted in sustained inward migration from the nearby conurbation.

3.2 Due to excellent strategic links the area has also become attractive to businesses considering expansion, relocation or establishing for the first time. As a result and combined with inward migration, there is continuing pressure to meet increased demand for leisure, health, education, housing and other personal and social requirements. The need for an improved highway network and better local transport facilities are inextricably linked to these developments.

Issues

3.3 The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report combined with a public participation exercise in March 2005 and the formal Issues and Options consultation in July/August 2005 identified a number of issues that will need to be addressed by the Local Development Framework. These issues have been identified and categorised as either a Social, Environmental, Economic or Cross-boundary.

Social Issues

3.4 The District has a rising population with a slightly higher older population than the national average. This older population has implications for service delivery including, accessible transport options for the less mobile and suitable housing for the needs of the older person. As such the Local Development Framework (LDF) will need to taken account of the specific needs of the District's slightly older population.

Generally the District has low instances of deprivation compared to other areas of the West Midlands. However there are small pockets of localised deprivation that need to be tackled. Barriers to housing and services is identified as an issue of deprivation in rural areas. With house prices rising many young people have had to look to the conurbation for cheaper housing so leading to the fragmentation of rural communities. The provision of housing that meets the needs of rural communities and access to services, including public transport, jobs, healthcare etc are issues that need to be addressed.

3.5 The District has a clear under provision of social housing accommodation in its major settlements as well as its rural areas. This could be due to a number of factors including, lack of affordable and available land, too much market housing compared to affordable housing and little on site affordable housing provision on market housing schemes. The level of in-migration pressure for affordable housing also needs consideration. Whatever the cause it is a serious issue that needs to be tackled through the LDF. Lack of future provision could have serious implications for the creation of sustainable mixed communities in the District. The Local Development Framework will seek to redress the balance and provide for more mixed tenure communities.

3.6 Bromsgrove is a safe place to live. However, as with many other parts of the Country, it is the fear of crime that is a concern rather than actually incidences of crime. The LDF can play a key role in ensuring safe neighbourhoods and development that designs out crime. Reducing fear of crime can also lead to less car use, a healthy population and increased use of local facilities as people feel safer exploring their local environment on foot.

3.7 To ensure that the countryside is protected and greenfield sites are not unnecessarily used for development then current high use of brownfield land will need to be continued with future growth linked to the availability of brownfield sites. However due to the finite amount of brownfield land available then new development cannot always be accommodated on brownfield land. This also has implications for the quality of local environments and an appropriate balance needs to be struck between the use of brownfield and greenfield sites.

3.8 The redevelopment and resiting of a number of schools in the District presents an opportunity to widen the use of school buildings for the benefit of the whole community. The reuse of the redundant school sites also presents an opportunity for new mixed use development of brownfield sites.

3.9 The District has a relatively healthy population in respect of illness. However this does not take account of how fit the population is or how much physical exercise is taken. The promotion of good health must be seen in a wider context than just about incidences of illness or the provision of health facilities and the associated land use implications of this. The LDF needs to help shape the commercial and cultural environment we live in so that it is easier to choose a healthy lifestyle. This can be through encouraging exercise through walking and cycling to a healthier environment for people to live in.

Environmental Issues

3.10 Protection of the Green Belt and ensuring separation of the main settlements in the District from the conurbation are seen as key aims of the Local Development Framework. The last Local Plan removed land from the Green Belt to be used for future growth in the District as it is recognised that not all future growth will occur within existing settlement boundaries. These areas of land are called Areas of Development Restraint (ADRs) and are greenfield.. The Local Development Framework will take account of the availability of brownfield land before releasing greenfield ADR land for development and will create a hierarchy of locations so that development occurs first in the most sustainable locations.

3.11 The concentration of new development on brownfield sites not only protects the open aspect of the Green Belt but it also ensures the quality of the environment and important areas of biodiversity in the District are protected. However brownfield sites are not always devoid of wildlife and comprehensive assessments should be taken of these sites prior to development.

3.12 The District has a high amount of car use compared to public transport. This is perhaps explained by the proximity of the district to the West Midlands conurbation

and the employment opportunities it contains, the District's rural character and the excellent motorway and A road network. Improvements need to be made to the public transport infrastructure to try and halt the upward trend in car use. Priorities include the improvement of Bromsgrove Station, including additional car parking and improvements to Bromsgrove Bus Station and the wider Town Centre. The LDF will need to address the problem of increased car use and identify potentially radical approaches to effect change.

3.13 It is essential that options are provided in the District for the cultural and leisure needs of the population so as to promote sustainable communities and reduce travel. The provision of facilities that meet the needs of the population and are easily accessible is vital to reduce travel and impact on the environment. The District also attracts visitors, primarily from the conurbation, who explore the District's special landscape features such as the Lickey Hills. Visitors need to be able to access these recreational opportunities without using the car. A balance should be made between the value of maintaining allotments against the need to find land for development in sustainable locations.

3.14 The District has a landscape dominated by the Lickey and Clent Hills which form a natural barrier between the District and the Conurbation. The rest of the District is characterised by farmland and small woodlands. Trees play a very important role in the character of the District whether in wooded form or single urban trees. Balance must also be achieved between maintaining the historic farmland character of the area and promoting diversification in the rural environment.

3.15 While the District has an efficient and comprehensive road system the consequences of this are the pollution effects that high traffic incidences create. The Council has one Air Quality Management Area and has produced a strategy to improve the air quality in this area. The LDF will have a role in not just attempting to improve air quality in this location but also through the promotion of a more sustainable lifestyle better air quality throughout the District. However there are limits to what can be done within the District as most of the traffic passes through the District due to the presence of the two motorways. Increasing traffic on the main routes

through the District also poses noise pollution issues. Most residents of the main urban area in the District can hear and are effected by road noise.

3.16 Climate change is sometimes wrongly seen as global issue tackled by Governments rather than at a local level. On a local level the improvement and promotion of public transport, business practices, new building techniques etc, can all help to reduce the effects, along with the implementation of LA21 projects associated with the sources of climate change.

3.17 Flooding is not seen at the moment to be a significant issue in the District. However it is important to monitor the levels and amount of localised flooding that does occur especially that caused by water run-off. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems can play an important role in reducing run-off and preventing pollution of water courses.

3.18 The District is constantly changing and further changes including the redevelopment of the town centre will have a major effect on the image of historic character of Bromsgrove Town. Outside the major urban areas there are remnants of historic farmsteads that are just as important to the character of the District as the more visual and recognisable historic urban built form. Development in the District must be managed carefully so as to preserve the unique historic and rural character of parts of the District.

Economic Issues

3.19 The District has a diverse economy. Historically the economy was based on agriculture and although some farming continues new employment sources have emerged. With the changing economic base most opportunities are now situated in the urban areas. There is an imbalance between the type of jobs and pay available in Bromsgrove compared to the average wages of its population. A broader employment market needs to be encouraged to locate in the District so as to lessen this imbalance and reduce the unsustainable daily flow of the population to other employment centres.

3.20 The Local Development Framework will also seek to support the rural economy through farm diversification to permit the re-use of farm buildings for small scale employment use. While employment opportunities outside Bromsgrove Town should be supported a judgement must be made between the desire for more sustainable communities and the need to maintain the unspoilt quality of the countryside.

3.21 Bromsgrove Town Centre is the focus for new retail development. However, it cannot compete with other centres in adjacent towns and cities. Shopping will continue to be an important activity and future proposals for the town centre should promote a mix of uses including leisure as a means of stimulating the evening economy and attracting residential development to support the regeneration of the town centre.

Cross-boundary Issues

3.22 A number of issues for Bromsgrove District relate directly to neighbouring authorities. These include the following:

Housing: Bromsgrove is currently facing an oversupply of housing with the result that no market housing is being allowed. The housing moratorium in Bromsgrove has had the effect of shifting the housing burden to neighbouring authorities, in particular Worcester. In the short term the moratorium will help to deflect development pressures but ultimately it is likely to have an adverse impact on the local economy including the affordability of housing. Future housing provision and commuting patterns will remain as key issues to be addressed through the LDF process.

Commuting: Bromsgrove has a very high commuting population because of its attractiveness and good transport links. This tends to result in house price inflation and a negative impact on housing affordability, a problem compounded by the current housing moratorium. Furthermore, the economic benefits to be derived from residents tend to remain in the major urban centres. Traffic is a further consequence of commuting patterns and congestion levels, particularly across the borders, has a direct affect on environmental quality.

MG Rover - Longbridge Plant: The closure of the MG Rover Plant at Longbridge has had profound effects on both workers and the local economy with effects being felt in many neighbouring districts. Both Birmingham City and Bromsgrove Councils have recognised the need to respond and are addressing the future potential of this area through a joint action plan for Longbridge. This Action Plan has now become one of the first main components of the LDF system with draft proposals for the former car site being worked up as quickly as possible.

4 The Spatial Vision

Spatial Objectives

4.1 The proposed spatial vision draws upon policies and proposals from a wide range of plans and strategies, together with the research and consultation that has been carried out so far. The Local Development Framework is central to delivering the land-use aspects of the Community Plan. The preferred policy approaches have also taken into account national planning policies and guidance and are in 'general conformity' with the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. Each preferred option is followed by details on national and regional policy linkages, together with reference, where applicable, to relevant policies in the Community Plan.

4.2 The objectives below represent the spatial vision for the District and are the objectives of the Local Development Framework. These objectives also provide a yardstick against which the social, environmental, and economic effects of a plan can be tested.

LDF - Social Objectives

- 1) Create communities where people want to live, work and socialise;
- 2) Meet the housing requirements of all members of the community;
- 3) Ensure the community has accessible healthcare;
- 4) Provide leisure and educational facilities to meet the needs of all the community;
- 5) Achieve a better quality of life through a safer and better designed urban and rural environment;
- 6) Promote thriving, balanced, inclusive and sustainable rural communities;
- 7) Ensure all members of the community have a viable choice of transport options;
- 8) Seek an improvement in retail opportunities and choices throughout the District.

LDF - Environmental Objectives

- 1) Protect the existing natural environment;
- 2) Promote biodiversity enhancement;
- 3) Conserve and enhance the historic environment;

- 4) Promote the enhancement and proper management of existing conservation areas;
- 5) Seek to identify and protect further areas of historical and natural importance;
- 6) Seek to reduce travel and promote improvements in sustainable transport options;
- 7) Promote efficient use of the earth's resources and renewable energy;
- 8) Maintain the principles of Green Belt designation.

LDF - Economic Objectives

- 1) Maintain a high and stable level of employment by supporting economic modernisation;
- 2) Improve people's access to job opportunities in new technologies;
- 3) Ensure opportunities for growth are linked to meeting the needs of the community;
- 4) Enable schemes that promote sustainable tourism;
- 5) Ensure sites are provided to ensure sustainable economic growth;
- 6) Provide positive support towards rural diversification;
- 7) Encourage cross-border economic linkages.

Sustainability Appraisal

4.3 The Core Strategy has a fundamental purpose in contributing to sustainable development. In essence sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, both present and future generations. The emphasis on sustainability is now embodied in both the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and European Union Directive 2001/42/EC. This legislation requires that the Council undertake an environmental assessment of all Local Development Framework documents.

4.4 In practice Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic process undertaken during the preparation of a plan or strategy to aid the implementation of sustainable development. It does this by testing the objectives and policies of the plan against the sustainability objectives set out below. It should not be seen as an end in itself, but as a continual process throughout the development and monitoring of the plan.

Documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework may have only a

marginal influence on some of the sustainability objectives, such as to improve health and well being. In this area the Local Development Framework will need to rely on links to other plans and strategies to have an effect.

4.5 The first step in producing a sustainability appraisal was the production of a Scoping Report. This involved assessing the character of the District and from this preparing a baseline study. The report also considered the impact of other plans, policies and programmes on the LDF, identified the issues that need to be addressed and identified an appropriate set of criteria for appraising policies.

4.6 Using the Scoping Report consultants were employed to carry out an Initial Sustainability Appraisal of broad policy options. The results of this exercise were published on the Council's website. The findings of this appraisal together with early community participation exercises were used to help the Council determine the preferred policy options for the Core Strategy.

4.7 A Draft Environmental Report detailing the sustainability process and how sustainability considerations have influenced the preparation of the Core Strategy has been published alongside this preferred options document.

SA - Social Objectives

- 1) The provision of housing to meet identified needs;
- 2) An improvement in the health and well-being of the population;
- 3) A reduction in poverty and social exclusion;
- 4) Quality education opportunities for all;
- 5) A reduction in crime and fear of crime;
- 6) The promotion of vibrant and locally distinctive communities;
- 7) Providing accessible services and opportunities for culture, leisure and recreation for all;
- 8) Increased travel choice and accessibility through integrated transport facilities;
- 9) A reduction in ambient noise levels and incidences of noise pollution.

SA - Environmental Objectives

- 1) To conserve and enhance the District's biodiversity;

- 2) To protect the countryside, green spaces, green belt and best agricultural land;
- 3) To preserve and enhance the district's high quality landscapes
- 4) Protect and enhance the historic environment;
- 5) To address waste issues (to reduce, reuse and recycle waste)
- 6) To protect and enhance water quality and maintain sustainable water resources;
- 7) To reduce the number of properties at risk from flooding;
- 8) To guard against land contamination and encourage remediation of contaminated sites;
- 9) To achieve optimum use of previously developed land to support regeneration;
- 10) To increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- 11) To improve air quality throughout the District.

SA - Economic Objectives

- 1) To achieve high and stable levels of employment;
- 2) To encourage sustainable economic growth and a diverse economy;
- 3) To support the development of a skilled workforce to meet the needs of business;
- 4) To achieve the sustainable use and development of material assets.

Key Diagram

4.8 The Core Strategy key diagram shown overleaf is a diagrammatic interpretation of the spatial strategy as set out in the Core Strategy. This diagram identifies the key locations of growth in the District and areas where there will be little anticipated change. It also shows linkages and relationships with neighbouring authorities. A proposals map will also be published alongside the adopted Core Strategy. This will show in more detail, on an Ordnance Survey base, the spatial extent of all policies including those contained in this document as well as those saved from the Local Plan and Structure Plan.

5 Preferred Policies

Key Principles – Sustainable Development

Background

5.1 Sustainable development is the core principle underpinning planning. At the heart of sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, both now and in the future. A widely used definition was drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987:

“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

5.2 The Government set out four aims for sustainable development in, ‘A Better Quality of Life – A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK’. These are:

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- effective protection of the environment;
- the prudent use of natural resources; and,
- the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

5.3 Achieving sustainable development will lie at the heart of the Bromsgrove Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy will attempt to pursue the aims of sustainable development in an integrated way, through an economy that delivers high levels of employment, social inclusion and sustainable communities whilst ensuring the protection and enhancement of the physical and natural environment and the optimisation of resources and energy.

5.4 All new development proposals from single dwellings to business parks must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Core Strategy and other documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework have a key role to play in accomplishing this.

Preferred Policy

CS1 - Sustainable Development

All development proposals must contribute to the pursuit of sustainable development. The following criteria will be used to assess a proposal's contribution to achieving the principles of sustainable development. All development will need to:

- a) Make efficient use of land;
- b) Minimise greenhouse gas emissions by incorporating renewable energy sources;
- c) Promote waste reduction and the reuse of construction materials;
- d) Incorporate a sustainable drainage system and have no adverse impact on water resources;
- f) Enhance the range of habitats and biodiversity of the District;
- g) At a minimum conserve the historic character of buildings or areas of the District;
- h) Be accessible to all members of the community;
- i) Contribute to the social and economic well-being of the local population;
- j) Limit the need to travel by private motor vehicle and increase opportunities to undertake journeys by foot or cycle or by public transport.

Policy Sources

PPS1, Planning for Sustainable Development (DETR, 1998), A Better Quality of Life – A Strategy for Sustainable Development for the UK' (ODPM, 1999).

Reason for Preferred Approach

The concept of sustainable development needs to lie at the heart of the Local Development Framework. As such this is the overarching policy in the Core Strategy and sets the principles and criteria to be used in judging whether a proposal meets these objectives.

Key Principles – Location of Growth

Background

5.6 The Regional Spatial Strategy has fundamentally reassessed the approach to future growth and development. Increasing decentralisation from the Major Urban Areas (Birmingham, the Black Country, Coventry and the North Staffordshire conurbation) to adjacent settlements (such as Bromsgrove) has contributed a migrational flow of both people and investment. The corresponding dispersal of population and activities also contributes to unsustainable development patterns that have resulted in people making increasingly longer journeys between workplace, home and leisure/shopping destinations. At the same time settlements in the rural areas have suffered from a loss of jobs even as the population has grown. This has been compounded by a lack of suitable housing to support the rural population. People now have to travel further to support their lifestyles.

5.7 The Regional Spatial Strategy classifies Bromsgrove District as a rural area with the only named settlement on the Spatial Strategy Key Diagram being Bromsgrove Town.

Preferred Policy

CS2 - Location of Growth

The requirements for development in the District will primarily be met through the re-use of previously developed land or buildings. When determining the location of new housing, employment or retail development in the District the following hierarchy will be used:

- a) New development in the District will primarily be located within the settlement boundary of Bromsgrove;
- b) Only development for proven local needs will be allowed in other service settlements outside the Green Belt. The primary location for new development will be in the larger service villages shown on the Key Diagram;
- c) If additional land is needed outside existing settlement boundaries then it will be located within an Area of Development Restraint (ADR) shown on the Proposal Map. These are locations excluded from the Green Belt within

- which no development is currently proposed during the Plan period. If land is needed in the Plan period to 2021 it will only be released for development through the adoption of a Land Allocations Development Plan Document;
- d) in Green Belt villages shown on the Key Diagram affordable housing, local services and employment will be allowed where this is of an appropriate scale and there is supporting evidence to show that it will meet local needs.

Policy Sources

To be added

Reason for Preferred Approach

In order to achieve sustainable development the Core Strategy must establish a hierarchy of locations in the District. Bromsgrove is the largest settlement in the District and is a logical choice to accommodate growth before other settlements are considered. The potential of other settlements has not been ignored and it is accepted that limited growth may bring benefits. The policy attempts to strike a balance between locating most new development in the most sustainable location whilst also ensuring that smaller villages can, if appropriate, accommodate new development to meet local needs.

Key Principles – Green Belt

Background

5.8 Green Belt designation identifies areas of countryside protected from most forms of development. This designation serves a number of purposes including the prevention of urban sprawl and coalescence of settlements; the preservation of the character of existing settlements and to encourage development to locate within existing built-up areas.

Preferred Policies

CS3 - Green Belt

The Green Belt boundaries are shown on the Proposals Map. There will be no adjustment of Green Belt boundaries during the Plan period. There will be a presumption against allowing inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Permission for development of new buildings in the Green Belt will not be given, except in very special circumstances, unless it is for one of the purposes detailed in PPG2 or successor documents.

Policy Sources

PPG2

Reason for Preferred Approach

Bromsgrove's Green Belt forms an integral part of the West Midlands Green Belt. This was established to prevent the outward expansion of the conurbation and has successfully done so for many years. Detailed boundaries to the current Green Belt in Bromsgrove District were set through the Local Plan and it is not envisaged that any significant changes to these boundaries will be necessary during the period to 2021.

Key Principles - Climate Change

Background

5.9 The Earth's climate has been relatively stable since the end of the last ice age, about 10,000 years ago, but it is now changing. The average global temperature is rising. The 20th century was probably the warmest century in the last 1,000 years and the 1990s was the warmest decade in the last 100 years. A significant human impact on climate is the cumulative effect of greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions can be attributed to a range of human activity but especially transport, housing and the economy. The implications of increased greenhouse gas emissions include greater flood risk, more extreme weather conditions, water shortages and microclimatic changes.

5.10 To attempt to combat Climate Change the Government, under the Kyoto protocol, has agreed to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% from 1990 levels by 2020. Other targets include producing 10% of UK energy from renewable sources and a 60% cut in emissions by 2050. Planning has a key role both at a national and local level in preventing the most serious impacts of climate change and looking to accommodate changes that are already occurring such as increased flooding. The Council has a responsibility to help meet national targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases.

5.11 The Council can help reduce carbon emissions by promoting more sustainable patterns of urban and rural living in the District. This means aiming to deliver an increase in sustainable and accessible transport options, energy efficiency and renewable energy.

CS4 - Climate Change

Climate change and its effects will be a primary consideration in the determination of development proposals. The following mechanisms that promote a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions or militate against the effects of climate change will be considered;

- a) Positive support for developments that involve a reduction in carbon emissions;.
- b) Support for development which seeks to reduce the need to travel by car;
- c) Prevention of water runoff and protection of existing watercourses and flood plains (Policy CS20);
- d) An increase in tree cover through new planting;
- e) The use of recycled building materials;
- f) Support for new industries and technologies that address climate change;
- g) Support for renewable energy proposals and energy conservation (Policy CS16).

Policy Sources

PPS1, PPS22, West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, UK Climate Change Programme (ODPM), Energy White Paper, The Planning Response to Climate Change (ODPM).

Reason for Preferred Approach

PPS1 requires that development plans contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change. This can be encouraged by adopting policies which reduce energy use, reduce emissions, promote the development of renewable energy resources and take climate change impacts into account in the location and design of development.

This policy provides the basis at the local level for the mitigation of the effects of, and adaptation to, climate change through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Living in the District - Sustainable Communities

Background

5.11

Preferred Policies

CS5 - Sustainable Communities

Proposals for development should support the objective of an improved balance between housing, employment and community facilities in settlements. In addition, adequate infrastructure should exist or be provided to support new development at the time of construction. The following criteria should be used to enable the co-ordination of decisions on land use with improved infrastructure;

- a) Development should not lead to the loss of essential local facilities such as shops, health facilities and employment;
- b) An increase in population resulting from new housing will require an appropriate contribution from developers towards improved local facilities. These may include health care, education, affordable housing and sustainable transport options.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

Living in the District - Rural Development

Background

5.12 Bromsgrove is a predominately rural district with a number of rural communities. Rural areas have seen a steady decline in farming and related industries. However, as an authority on the 'urban fringe' house prices in the District's villages have climbed out of reach of young people wanting to stay in their home communities. The District has seen a rise in commuting out of the District, leading to dormitory villages and a decline in local rural facilities. The Local Development Framework needs to promote rural communities where people can live, work and access essential local facilities.

5.13 The Local Development Framework will support the sustainable diversification and development of the rural economy through the growth of existing businesses and the creation of new enterprise. This will be undertaken in ways that meet local employment needs, maintain viable and sustainable local communities, conserve and enhance environmental assets and respect local character and distinctiveness. Priority will be given to economic activity with strong links with the rural area, including businesses ancillary to farming, tourism and leisure. A sustainable agricultural industry is likely to be supported through farm diversification, for example conversion of rural buildings to offices and workshops as well as the expansion of existing industries in rural areas.

5.14 Improving the range and quality of services available to rural communities is a key component of rural renaissance. Some services will be improved by bringing them closer to where people live, some may need to be concentrated in towns and other centres accessible from the surrounding area, and some can be provided jointly. As such the Local Development Framework will adopt a positive approach to proposals which improve the viability of or accessibility to community services or facilities e.g. village shops and post offices, rural petrol stations, village and church halls and rural public houses. These can all have an important role in sustaining rural communities.

Preferred Policy

CS6 - Rural Development

Development in rural areas must meet local needs. Proposals which encourage migration from the major urban areas will not be permitted. Development designed to meet local needs must not have an adverse impact on the existing character of area. Proposals in rural settlements should demonstrate they can satisfy one or more of the following criteria which may provide the very exceptional circumstances for development in a Green Belt location:

- a) The sustainable diversification and development of the rural economy through the growth of existing businesses and the creation of new enterprise;
- b) The improvement of the range and quality of services available to a rural community;
- c) The provision of affordable houses in rural settlements where there is a proven local need;
- d) The protection of the rural landscape.

Policy Sources

PPG2 'Green Belts', 1995; PPS7 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas', PPG4 'Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms', Policy PA1 of the West Midlands Regional Spatial.

Reason for Preferred Approach

Living in the District - Sustainable Transport

Background

5.16

Preferred Policies

CS7 - Sustainable Transport

The Local Development Framework will deliver an improvement in accessibility throughout the District for all of those living and working in the District, especially by more sustainable means of travel. New developments will be assessed against the following criteria so as to ensure that there is a reduction in the need to travel and where travel is necessary an increase in the usage of sustainable transport modes:

- a) Developments which generate significant travel demands should be located adjacent to existing or proposed public transport links;
- b) Commercial developments which generate significant commercial movements should be located close to suitable rail freight facilities or roads designed and managed as traffic distributors;
- c) To support increased public transport usage only essential car parking will be allowed at new developments close to public transport interchanges;
- d) All new developments should be accessible by sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling;
- e) All major developments should incorporate proposals to promote an increase in walking and cycling.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

Living in the District - Recreation and Healthy Communities

Background

5.17

Preferred Policies

CS8 - Open Space and Recreation

The Local Development Framework will seek the retention and enhancement of all public and privately owned open space of recreational and/or amenity value including allotments and green corridors. Provision will be required on new developments in accordance with standards published as part of the Local Development Framework Only in exceptional circumstances will the Council permit the loss of open space.

Proposals, which compromise the following criteria, are unlikely to be acceptable:

- a) Open land which contributes to the distinctive form and character of the settlement including views in or out;
- b) Open areas which provide a setting for locally important buildings or structures;
- c) Land which is used for formal or informal recreation and where its loss would result in a shortfall of recreational land;
- d) Land which has recognised biodiversity value and/or forms a 'green corridor' for wildlife.

Where the use of open space/open land is permitted there must be a net gain achieved through the provision of replacement open space and/or facilities in a location as close as possible to the loss.

CS9 - Healthy Communities

The Local Development Framework together with other plans and strategies will seek to improve the health of those living and/or working in the District in the following ways:

- a) The provision of adequate open space to meet the needs of the local community;
- b) Provision of both indoor and outdoor sports and recreation opportunities at locations that are easily accessible to those without a car;

- c) Provision of new housing away from key poor air quality locations.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

Housing for Everyone - Managing Housing

Background

5.18

Preferred Policy

CS10 - Managing Housing

The Local Development Framework will manage the release of housing land to ensure that the housing requirements for the District as identified in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy are met. In allocating sites for housing or considering applications for residential development regard will be had to the following:

- a) Accessibility to public transport options;
- b) Proximity to employment opportunities;
- c) The capacity of health, education and other public services to accommodate growth;
- d) The capacity of the road network to accommodate increased traffic;
- e) Provision of a mix of housing include affordable, retirement accommodation and size to meet identified local needs;
- f) The availability of previously developed sites;
- g) Impact on the character of an area;
- h) Compliance with guidance contained in SPDs produced as part of the Local Development Framework.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

Housing for Everyone - Affordable Housing

Background

5.19

Preferred Policy

CS11 - Affordable Housing

Through the Local Development Framework and other partners the Council will seek to create more mixed communities through the provision of a range of housing types and tenures. Proposals for affordable housing will be welcomed where there is identified local need subject to the following criteria:

- a) Affordable housing should contribute towards or match the needs identified through housing surveys;
- b) Affordable housing will be provided in Bromsgrove Town on all large sites with a capacity in excess of 10 dwellings or 0.5ha;
- c) Affordable housing will be provided in other settlements outside the Green Belt on all sites with a capacity in excess of 5 dwellings or 0.25ha;
- d) In other locations affordable housing should be situated in settlements outside the Green Belt with public transport options;
- e) Exceptionally, affordable housing will be allowed on the edge of settlements in the Green Belt where a proven local need has been established through a comprehensive and recent survey and where the choice of site meets other relevant planning criteria;
- f) Where proposals accord with guidance contained in the Affordable Housing SPD produced as part of the Local Development Framework.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

The Local Economy - Employment Growth

Background

5.20

Preferred Policy

CS12 - Employment Growth

Economic growth will primarily be focused in Bromsgrove Town. Exceptionally employment may be permitted on the edge of the Town where there is evidence to suggest this is of wider community and economic benefit. Sites in other settlements may be permitted where this achieves a better balance between housing and employment and has the potential to limit the need for commuting. In particular the Local Development Framework will promote the following:

- a) New technology opportunities as part of the 'Central Technology Belt';
- b) A range and choice of readily available employment sites to meet the needs of the local economy.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

The Local Economy - Retailing

Background

5.21

Preferred Policy

CS13 - Retailing

Bromsgrove Town Centre is the main location for retailing facilities in the District. The Local Development Framework will strengthen its role and seek improvements and expansion of the Town Centre to meet the needs of Bromsgrove Town and its surrounding area. Only limited retail development will be allowed in other parts of the District to meet local needs. Retail development outside local shopping centres shown on the Proposal Map will generally not be allowed, especially if it would effect the vitality or viability of a nearby local centre.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

The Local Economy - Tourism and Culture

Background

5.22

Preferred Policy

CS14 - Tourism and Culture

The Local Development Framework will encourage both the improvement of existing tourist and cultural facilities and the creation of new facilities subject to the following:

- a) The capacity of the local infrastructure to accommodate new facilities and the visitors associated with them;
- b) Accessibility to public transport options;
- c) The impact of any new facility on the rural character of the District.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

Our Built Environment - Urban and Rural Design

Background

5.23

Preferred Policy

CS15 - Urban and Rural Design

Development proposals in the District will need to demonstrate a high quality of design in respect of layout, form, detailing and contribution to the character of an area.

Particular attention will be given to the following:

- a) The creation of high quality townscapes and urban forms through building and landscape design which reflect not just local character, culture and history but also promote the urban areas as vibrant and forward looking places to live;
- b) The incorporation of an element of public art in all new major developments.
- c) The incorporation of measures to reduce energy use by using sustainable construction techniques, building orientation, recycled materials and quality materials to increase the lifespan of buildings;
- d) Design and layouts which lead to safer communities and discourages crime;
- e) In rural areas building design that respects the areas historic character.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

Our Built Environment - Energy Conservation

Background

5.24

Preferred Policy

CS16 - Energy Conservation

The Local Development Framework will promote energy conservation so minimising energy demands. To achieve increased energy conservation the following will be encouraged:

- a) The use of sustainable construction techniques and energy efficiency design;
- b) The incorporation of renewable energy systems into new developments;
- c) The orientation of buildings to maximise passive solar gain;
- d) The use of good quality combined heat and power systems.

Policy Sources

Reason for Preferred Approach

Our Built Environment - Historic Conservation

Background

5.25 Our historic past should be valued as it forms a central part of our cultural heritage and contributes to national and local identity. Our historic environment is an irreplaceable record that contributes to our understanding of both the present and the past.. The Local Development Framework will seek to protect our heritage, having regard to its importance for leisure and recreation through the effective conservation and reuse of historic buildings.

5.26 The Core Strategy and additional plans produced as part of the Local Development Framework will identify, protect, conserve and enhance our diverse historic environment and manage change in such as way that respects local character and distinctiveness. Of particular significance are the Districts rural landscapes and the historic settlement patterns set within this landscape.

5.27 There are over 474 Listed Buildings in the District, which receive special statutory protection. These buildings are an important local cultural resource, reflecting the historic heritage of many settlements and farmsteads. A number of other important local buildings exist that are not listed and for different reasons e.g. alterations or age, are unsuitable for statutory listing. These buildings will form a list of locally important buildings.

5.28 The Government's commitment to the re-use of previously developed land requires the Council and other agencies to work together to avoid unnecessary damage to sites of potential archaeological interest. Through management agreements, enhancement of District owned sites and the use of display material, archaeological sites can provide a valuable recreational and educational resource.

5.29 Bromsgrove currently has 10 Conservation Areas that have been designated to reflect their special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance. The Council has a duty to review its conservation areas. It may therefore amend existing boundaries and if appropriate designate new conservation areas

Preferred Policy

CS17 - Historic Assets

The Council will seek the protection and, where appropriate, the enhancement of all heritage assets. This includes statutory listed buildings, scheduled monuments, archaeological remains, locally listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, historic parks and gardens and the wider historic landscape.

In particular the Council will:

- a) Only allow development proposals that preserve the listed building or scheduled monument and/or its setting;
- b) Produce a list of buildings of local importance and take full account of these where they may be affected by planning proposals;
- d) Only approve development that takes full account of the archaeological remains that relate to the development site;
- e) Ensure that development proposals secure the preservation and/or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas and their settings;
- f) Ensure development proposals preserve or enhance the historic landscape interest of registered parks and gardens and their settings;
- g) Ensure development proposals preserve or enhance the historic landscape interest of regional historic parks and gardens and their settings;
- h) Ensure development proposals do not harm the wider historic landscape of the District.

Policy Sources

PPG15, 'Planning and the Historic Environment', Policy QE5 of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy.

Reason for Preferred Approach

The close link between controls over 'listed' buildings and conservation areas and planning decisions means that development and conservation need to be considered together. The Council has a statutory duty to protect its heritage which is done

through the listing of buildings and the designation of Conservation Areas. Listed buildings and those on a local list, together with conservation areas in the District, are an important local cultural resource and need protecting for the wider community benefit.

Our Natural Environment - Biodiversity

Background

5.30 The wildlife of Britain is an integral part of the countryside, towns and coasts. Biodiversity is the term used to describe the variety of life on earth. It includes all living things, the genes that make them what they are, the habitats they live in, and the way they live together. The UK signed the Biodiversity Convention at the UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Brazil in June 1992. This Convention includes provisions on habitat conservation and impact assessment.

5.31 Biodiversity is important. It not only has an intrinsic worth, but is equally important for the contribution it makes to people's quality of life. Attractive environments, where attention is given to nature conservation, are essential to social well-being and quality of life. An appealing environment which supports a diversity of flora and fauna underpins some of our most important economic sectors, with strong links to tourism and to the chosen location of new businesses.

5.32 The Government requires that the components of diversity should be managed sustainably; that is, in a way which maintains their potential to meet the needs of present and future generations. Local authorities must ensure that development is compatible with wildlife conservation using careful planning and control.

5.33 The West Midlands Region contains a wide variety of wildlife and landscapes but in recent decades our plants and animals have suffered major declines. There are continuing pressures from changing land uses and climate change. In and around urban areas, open areas which support habitats and species are vulnerable to demands for development, much more so than in rural areas. At present less than 2% of Bromsgrove District has statutory protection. Pressure on open areas are abundant in an urban fringe authority such as Bromsgrove requiring due diligence to avoid the irreplaceable loss of key habitats and landscapes.

Preferred Policy

CS18 – Biodiversity

The conservation of biodiversity will be an important consideration in the determination of development proposals. The potential impact of proposed developments on sites of

importance for biodiversity will be carefully evaluated, and the use of alternative sites encouraged where appropriate. The Local Development Framework will positively promote developments that support existing biodiversity, protect habitats from adverse impacts, or improve the biodiversity of the area by restoring or re-creating locally characteristic habitats.

Policy Sources

PPG 9, PPG 11, RPG for the West Midlands, DEFRA's report entitled "The Government's Response to the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee Report, UK Biodiversity", UK BAP, the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership, Bromsgrove Biodiversity Action Plan 2000.

Reason for Preferred Approach

PPG 9 and PPG 11 require local authorities to consider biodiversity and nature conservation as an integral part of determining development proposals. Guidance states that development which is seen as potentially detrimental to biodiversity interests should not be allowed unless all other material factors are sufficient to override nature conservation considerations. It goes on to state that wherever possible, negative effects should be minimised or accounted for elsewhere.

Our Natural Environment - Landscape Protection and Enhancement

Background

5.34 The landscape determines the character of our countryside. All landscapes are important. Often it is the differences in character between landscapes, the contrasts, for example, in settlements and land use, which provide the interest to those who visit, and the sense of belonging to those who live there. Landscape protection aims to safeguard not only designated areas of high quality but also the important landscapes where we live and work.

5.35 An attractive landscape is valuable not only for its intrinsic worth but also for the environmental, economic and social benefits which it provides. Open countryside provides an important habitat for supporting wildlife. Landscape benefits the economy of an area by attracting investment and tourism. Its appearance also affects social well-being as people value living in an attractive environment.

5.36 North Worcestershire has some of the finest and most varied landscape in the region. Bromsgrove District has outstanding landscape features which vary from the hills and intimate valleys in the north to extensive lowland pasture and the patchwork of agricultural land and woodland. This landscape is especially important as it forms a boundary between major urban and rural areas. For many residents this 'urban fringe' represents their nearest countryside and is viewed as a highly valuable resource.

5.37 The Government's policy directs that the countryside should be safeguarded for its own sake and non-renewable and natural resources should be offered protection. The priority for local planning authorities is to find new ways of enriching the quality of the whole countryside whilst accommodating appropriate development. This can be achieved by setting conditions for any development or changes in land use to ensure that the landscape is conserved, enhanced and, where necessary, restored thus promoting diversity and distinctiveness.

Preferred Policy

CS19 - Landscape Protection and Enhancement

The protection and enhancement of the landscape will be a primary consideration in the determination of planning proposals. Developers must demonstrate that they are informed by, and sympathetic to, the landscape character of the area. Where a development is allowed it must pay additional attention to factors that could be detrimental to the overall landscape quality, such as noise and light pollution, and minimise these wherever possible. Where a development proposal is deemed unsuitable to landscape character it will not be allowed.

Policy Sources

PPG 2, PPG 7, Worcestershire County Structure Plan, RPG for the West Midlands, The Countryside Agency report entitled "Countryside Character, vol.5, West Midlands".

Reason for Preferred Approach

PPG 2 and PPG 7 require local authorities to consider the potential effects on the landscape of all developments. Guidance states that developments should be integrated with the local landscape character and advantage taken of opportunities to enhance this wherever appropriate. In line with PPG 7 developments, which could be detrimental to the local landscape, will be deemed unacceptable and not allowed.

Our Natural Environment - Watercourse Protection and Flooding

Background

5.38 Flooding of river courses and coastal areas is a natural process that plays an important role in shaping the physical environment. Flooding can cause substantial damage to property and threaten human life. The experience of recent years suggests that problems due to flooding may be getting worse, both in frequency and scale.

5.39 The cumulative effect of development can have a significant effect on flood plains which, combined with the hard landscaping of porous surfaces leads to an increase in water runoff and flash flooding during periods of heavy rain. As Bromsgrove has expanded land which previously absorbed rainwater has been built on. This has led to an increase in the amount of water entering the drainage system, which at times of heavy rain, is unable to cope. The adverse effects of development, however small, could lead to significant problems in the longer term.

5.40 The aim of the Local Development Framework is to reduce the risks to people and the environment from flooding. While the District contains little land in flood plans it is still essential that development is located away from areas of flood risk. The Council can help to reduce such problems by both rejecting schemes in vulnerable locations by identifying solutions to reduce the level of runoff in urban areas.

Preferred Policy

CS20 - Watercourse Protection and Flooding

Watercourse protection and the management of flood risk will be a material consideration when determining development proposals. The importance of the natural watercourse system in draining land is recognised. Proposals for new development will not be permitted where there is a known risk of flooding, where the development would lead to greater water runoff or where it would lead to flooding elsewhere. Measures which reduce runoff e.g. storm water diverted to soakaways, will be sought where appropriate.

Policy Sources

PPG25, Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands, The Environment Agency Policy and Practice for the Protection of Floodplains.

Reason for Preferred Approach

PPG 25 requires that local authorities adopt a risk-based approach to proposals for development in flood-risk areas. Guidance states that the precautionary principle should be used when making decisions about developments affecting natural watercourse systems and the flood plain. The guidance suggests that development deemed to be inappropriate should not be allowed to take place. In line with PPG25 conditions will be applied requiring appropriate mitigation measures where any developments is permitted and flood-risk is considered to be an issue.

6 Next Steps

Participation on Preferred Options

6.1 Consultation is anticipated on the Core Strategy 'Preferred Options' in late January/February 2006. It will be made clear that the Council is not committed to the provisions set out in the document and that the consultation period represents an opportunity for all stakeholders to respond with comments and alternatives.

6.2 In the light of representations at this stage, the Council may wish to review its proposals before producing a final document.

Submission, Examination and Review

6.3 A final version of this document will be produced as a 'Submission Document' to be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. It is anticipated that this final version of the Core Strategy will be published in July 2006. At that time regulations require that notice of a six-week period for formal representations is given. Only those parties making representations during this period will have the right to have their objections considered at any subsequent examination.

6.4 An examination of the Core Strategy is anticipated commencing in January 2007. This examination will test the soundness of the Plan and consider representations. The Inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the examination, will produce a report with recommendations that will be binding on the Council. Once changes have been incorporated the Council will then adopt the Core Strategy as a formal development plan document which then becomes part of the Local Development Framework for the District.

Monitoring and Review

6.5 Monitoring and review are important components of the planning system. The Council is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which is intended, amongst other things, to gauge the effectiveness of policies in local development documents. Action may be necessary to amend areas of policy where deficiencies are identified. The Core Strategy will ultimately be one of several policy documents

where changes will be needed to ensure local policy remains consistent with national and regional changes.

CS17 - Historic Assets

The Council will seek to protect redundant historic buildings. Where appropriate re-use is contemplated to locally important buildings this will be supported. The Council will promote the preservation and/or enhancement of existing Conservation Areas and the designation of new Conservation Areas. In particular the Council will:

- a) Only allow development proposals that do not cause harm to the fabric or setting of a listed building, structure or asset;
- b) Produce a list of buildings of local importance and seek to protect these buildings from demolition or an inappropriate use that would be detrimental to the character or setting of the building;
- c) Only consider the complete or partial demolition of a listed building or building of local importance in exceptional circumstances such as when a building is structurally unsound and beyond reasonable repair or if redevelopment would bring wider and significant community benefits;
- d) Only approve building forms, materials and detail that are characteristic of the area and/or enhance the character of the Conservation Area;
- e) Seek the retention of traditional features and buildings in Conservation Areas that contribute to the character of the area;
- f) Seek to protect and enhance other areas of historic importance including Historic Parks and the character of the rural areas.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING GROUP

12th DECEMBER 2005

DRAFT HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mr P Whittaker
Responsible Head of Service	Peter Allen: Interim Director of Planning and Environment Services.

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the proposed new approach to the provision of affordable housing and the management of housing supply.
- 1.2 It is intended that a finalised draft will be presented to members at a working group meeting in February 2006 for approval to go out to formal 6-week consultation commencing late February 2006. The purpose of these drafts is to give members a chance to discuss and suggest alterations it maybe felt necessary to make.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Members

1. Note the documents and provide officers with feedback, where necessary
2. Approve these initial drafts for circulation to Hyder Consulting to undertake a sustainability appraisal of both SPDs.

3. Background

- 3.1 Members will recall that informal consultation was undertaken in September 2005 the results of which were reported to the working group on the 25th October 2005. Following on from this consultation, initial drafts of both documents have now been prepared for inspection, and can be found in appendices A and B attached to this report.
- 3.2 The new planning system introduced in September 2004 requires that proposed SPDs are published for a formal 4 - 6 week consultation period in order that all interested parties are given the opportunity to respond to the proposed policy direction.

4. Next Steps

4.1 As indicated in PPS12 there are three main stages in the production of an SPD,

- Pre Production,
- Production,
- Adoption.

We are currently in the production phase, with the pre production element having been completed

4.2 The production phase contains three further sections,

- Preparation of draft SPD,
- Public participation on draft SPD,
- Consideration of representations and finalising the SPD.

We are currently at the drafting stage with the draft SPD due to be published for a formal consultation in February 2006. It is envisaged after the formal consultation ends a further 12-14 weeks will be required to finalise to document before adoption in June 2006.

- 4.3 As outlined previously another element of the process is the undertaking of a sustainability appraisal of each SPD. For this part of the process we have commissioned Hyder Consulting to carry out the appraisal and produce a Sustainability Appraisal Report. This work had already been approved in the LDF Working Group meeting on the 8th February 2005.
- 4.4 One final aspect of producing the SPD is the publication of a consultation statement which clearly details whom, how, and when people were consulted in respect to the SPDs, and also provides a summary of responses/views expressed.
- 4.5 Both the sustainability appraisals and the consultation statements will be published alongside the drafts of the SPDs in February 2006. Members will have a chance to see these documents before formal publication at the February meeting of the working group.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Hyder Consulting were commissioned to undertake the sustainability appraisal element of the SPD production, through already approved planning delivery grant monies. There are no additional costs to the council in undertaking this work.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 None

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Appendix A

Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Planning Policy Framework**
- 3. Defining Affordable Housing**
- 4. Assessing Affordable Housing Need**
- 5. Delivering Affordable Housing**
- 6. Monitoring**

1 Introduction

1.1 The Government believes that everyone should have the opportunity of a decent home which they can afford in a community in which they want to live and work. The aim of this document is to give clear guidance for the provision of new affordable housing development. Once adopted it will form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Bromsgrove. The guidance contained in this document is intended to supplement Worcestershire County Structure Plan saved policies D.6, D.7, and D.8 concerning affordable housing and will supercede policies S15 and S18 of the Bromsgrove District Local Plan.

2 Planning Policy Context

2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all documents within the planning system sit within a recognised chain of conformity; consequently this document conforms with all other relevant policies and plans. The most relevant plans and policies are currently PPS1 Delivering sustainable development, PPG 3 Housing, the West Midlands Spatial Strategy, the saved policies in the Worcestershire County Structure plan, the Adopted Bromsgrove District Local Plan, and the emerging Core Strategy for Bromsgrove.

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)

2.2 This is a key policy document that outlines the Government's vision of strong vibrant and sustainable communities in both urban and rural areas. A key element in achieving this vision is the promotion of development that creates socially inclusive communities, with a suitable mix of houses, which would include an element of affordable where a local need is identified.

PPG3 Housing (2000, 2005 updates)

2.3 Although this document is currently under review until its replacement is published the current version is still relevant. Upon the publication of PPS3 all amendments deemed necessary will be made to later drafts of this document.

PPG3 sets the national planning policies for the provision of new housing, its principle aims are

“everyone should have the opportunity of a decent home... that there should be greater choice of housing and that housing should not reinforce social distinctions. The housing needs of all in the community should be recognised, including those in need of affordable or special housing in both urban and rural areas. To promote more sustainable patterns of development and make better use of previously developed land, the focus for additional housing should be existing town and cities. New housing and residential environments should be well designed and should make a significant contribution to promoting urban renaissance and improving the quality of life.”

In line with PPG3 local plan policies on affordable housing should:

- Define what local affordable housing is;
- Indicate what types and how many affordable units are required including rural dwellings;
- And identify suitable areas and sites as well as the amount of provision that will be sought.

2.4 Other important guidance contained within PPG3 is that concerning rural exception housing. Rural exception policies allow permission to be granted on rural sites, which under other planning controls would not be allowed. Where there is an identified local need for affordable housing permission can be granted provided the scheme is 100% affordable. The 2005 update to PPG3 indicated that local planning authorities should be looking to make land in and around existing rural settlements available for affordable housing. Should the Council need to produce an allocations DPD, this could allocate sites to meet affordable housing needs in rural communities provided that adequate evidence of such need exists and that suitable sites are available.

Circular 6/98 Planning and Affordable Housing

2.5 Circular 6/98 identifies that a community's need for affordable housing is a material planning consideration, and that land should be made available in development plans for affordable housing. It also highlights that policies for affordable housing should have an up-to-date evidence base such as a housing needs assessment, and that a key element in affordable housing provision is the involvement of RSLs to ensure that such housing is maintained for this purpose.

2.6 A key section is that concerning the potential thresholds for securing affordable dwellings on as many housing sites as possible. The Circular recommends that sites over 25 dwellings or 1 hectare, irrespective of the number of dwellings, should have to provide affordable housing. If exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated local planning authorities can seek to adopt thresholds lower than those recommended although not below 15 dwellings and 0.5 hectares. In smaller rural settlements which have a population under 3000, appropriate thresholds can be sought which may be below those recommended for larger settlements. Subsequent policy in the Worcestershire County Structure Plan and the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy has indicated that if

exceptional circumstances are demonstrated local planning authorities can set thresholds lower than those indicated in the Circular.

The West Midlands Spatial Strategy 2001 - 2021

2.7 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands indicates that authorities should co-operate with developers and social housing providers to create balanced communities that have a range of housing types and tenures. This is intended to be achieved by identifying any affordable housing need through a housing needs assessment and through partnership working across the region to secure the delivery of affordable housing across housing market areas. Local authorities are also encouraged to indicate how many affordable homes they intend to supply, and in more rural areas specify the balance to be achieved between rural and urban areas. The adoption of thresholds lower than those stated in Circular 6/98 are also supported if local authorities can justify why these lower thresholds are required.

Worcestershire County Structure Plan (1996 – 2011)

2.8 Policies D.6, D.7, and D.8 are those concerned with affordable housing provision. Policy D.6 outlines the need for local authorities to make adequate provision for affordable housing, based on an assessment of the affordable housing need. Local authorities should look to agree levels, range, and type of provision on a site by site basis although indicative targets should be set. Planning condition/obligations should be used to control the range of occupants and ensure that dwellings stay in affordable housing use. Policy D7 advocates the adoption of thresholds lower than those suggested in Circular 6/98, and policy D.8 supports the implementation of rural exception schemes.

Bromsgrove District Local Plan (2004)

2.9 Detailed elements of affordable housing policies contained in the current local plan (policies S15 & S16) are to be superseded by this SPD. Although the majority of the guidance remains the same new thresholds and targets will be adopted resulting in some changes in approach. The principle of affordable housing provision, however, will remain.

Bromsgrove's emerging Local Development Framework

2.10 As LDF documents are produced they may render elements of the current adopted local plan obsolete. As and when this happens any changes which need to be made to this SPD will be made in accordance with the new adopted LDF policies.

3 Defining Affordable Housing

3.1 There are many similar definitions of affordable housing. For this document the definition used is that contained in *Circular 6/98 "Planning and Affordable Housing"*

Affordable housing or Affordable homes encompass both low-cost market and subsidised housing (irrespective of tenure, ownership – whether exclusive or shared – or financial arrangements) that will be available to people who cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally available on the open market

This means that affordable housing is accommodation for sale or rent that is available at a price identified as being genuinely affordable to those people living or working in the area who are unable to access housing on the open market.

3.2 The three main types of units to be provided in Bromsgrove are:

Low cost Market Housing - Housing available at a price considerably lower than market value where a Registered Social Landlord maintains it at an affordable level in perpetuity, but where the occupier benefits from changing house prices.

Shared Ownership Housing - Housing where a tenant buys a proportion of the property from a Registered Social Landlord, and rents the rest with the option to buy an increased share of the entire property.

Low cost Rented Housing - Housing rented by a Registered Social Landlord at a price below the cost of renting privately

Low Cost Market Housing and Shared Ownership schemes are also referred to as intermediate affordable housing.

Other methods of providing affordable housing are also welcomed provided they conform with all relevant plans and policies.

Defining Affordability

3.3 The following information is based on a housing needs assessment carried out by Fordham Research in 2004, which attempted to identify the housing requirements of the District.

The measure of affordability used in the survey was:

A household is unable to afford private sector housing if: the weekly cost of housing (either to rent or to buy - whichever is cheaper) exceeds 25 – 35% of net weekly household income.

3.4 This figure is based on estimating how much it costs to own/rent differing property sizes using mortgage data and then comparing this with how much people on varying incomes can afford to spend on owning/renting a property. It is assumed as the income increases so does the proportion of that income which can be spent on rent/mortgage payments. Currently 14.5% of the households in the District are unable to afford market housing. Of these unable to afford 86% are currently renting 19% privately and 67% in RSL controlled property. This leaves 14% who are owner occupiers who are unable to afford their current housing.

3.5 Table 1 below shows the suggested price of social rented property per week and the cheapest price to rent second hand housing on the open market (which is cheaper than owner occupation). Households who can afford more than the level of social rent, but who cannot afford to rent on the open market are classified in the intermediate bracket of affordable housing. These figures can be adjusted as income change and new mortgage information is released.

Table 1 – Cost of Housing in Bromsgrove (per week)

Size Requirement	Social rent (£/week)	Minimum priced second hand market housing (£/week)
1 Bedroom	£46	£82
2 Bedrooms	£59	£100
3 Bedrooms	£63	£118
4 + Bedrooms	£67	£167

4 Assessing Affordable Housing Need

4.1 Affordable housing need can be defined in a number of ways. For a household to be in need of affordable housing they must be able to demonstrate, that they cannot afford to purchase or maintain a dwelling on the open market which has the smallest number of rooms appropriate to the size of the household.

In order for this need to be classed as a local need the household must also:

- i) Be existing residents in the District requiring separate accommodation, due to changing circumstances, E.g. newly forming households, or where a change in financial circumstances means they can no longer afford open market prices;
- ii) Be employed and living within a community where Bromsgrove is the main administrative area;
- iii) Have a long-standing association with the District, and need to move closer in order to provided support for others.

4.2 As outlined in PPG3 it is important for local planning authorities to base any policies for affordable housing on an identified need. The criteria of eligibility for rural exception schemes are strictly controlled buy a separate lettings policy, see section 5 for more information on rural exception housing.

4.3 The housing study outlined a number of key features which along with other guidance helped to inform the policy decisions contained within this document.

4.4 The housing needs assessment indicated that in order to meet the affordable needs 682 units are needed to be provided per annum. Currently 243 units are provided mainly through the re-letting of existing properties. This leaves a shortfall of 439 additional units annually. Although this appears to demonstrate a considerable need for additional affordable housing it should be viewed against policy CF2 of the RSS, which indicates new housing should be provided for local needs and not for migrants from outside the District especially the MUAs (in this case the West Midlands

Conurbation). It is unpractical to expect that we will not provide an element of affordable housing need for people from outside the District. There could potentially be many people who would meet requirements set down in the local lettings policy and therefore eligible for affordable housing in this District who currently live elsewhere. With this in mind it is possible to adjust the figure for the identified housing need using information provided in the Housing Needs Survey (2004).

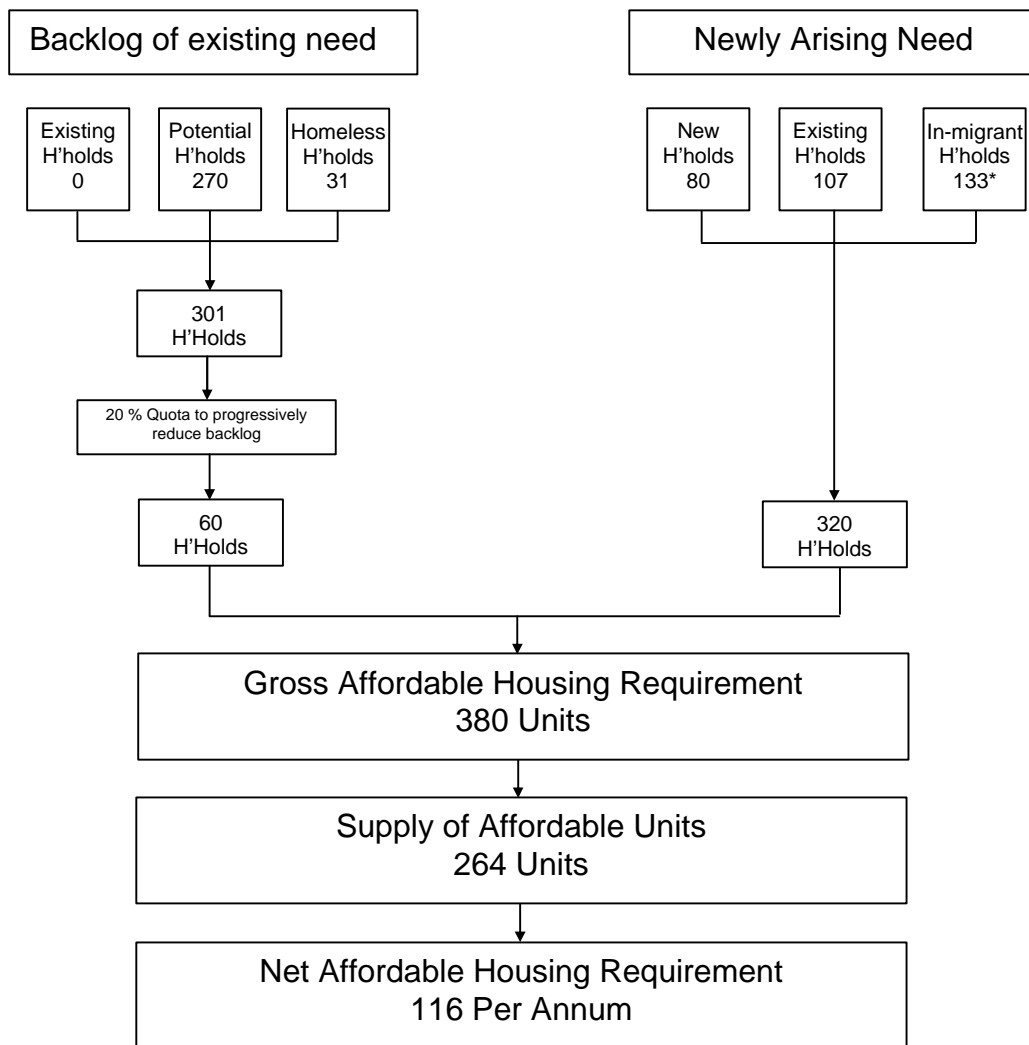
Table 2 below shows the locations of the previous homes of those who have moved into the District in the last two years.

Table 2 – Locations of previous homes

Location	Percentage of in migrant households
Birmingham	39%
West Midlands	25%
Worcestershire	11%
UK	22%
Abroad	3%

Using these proportions it is possible to adjust the figure for newly arising need for in-migrants to show the impact of various locations on the affordable need of Bromsgrove. As outlined above it would be impossible for Bromsgrove to restrict housing to only those people who currently live in the District. Chart 1 below shows the identified need for affordable housing in Bromsgrove taking into account the existing backlog of affordable housing progressively reduced over a 5 year period and the expected newly arising needs per annum. These figures have been adjusted to show the identified need from not only Bromsgrove but also the identified in-migrant need from Worcestershire and 50 % of the identified needs from Birmingham. These locations have been chosen because it is felt that other Worcestershire districts and parts of the Conurbation may have residents who previously lived in Bromsgrove but can no longer afford to do so. They may therefore have justifiable claims for affordable housing provision in Bromsgrove District. It should be noted that while this approach determines an overall level of affordable housing need, it would be necessary for any individual seeking affordable housing to provide sufficient evidence that their circumstances warrant consideration.

Chart 1 - Identified Affordable Housing Need



* Identified in-migrant need of 435 households which is then broken down into the relevant proportions of in-migrants to the District as identified in the housing needs assessment,

<i>Birmingham</i>	<i>39%</i>	<i>170 households</i>
<i>West Midlands</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>109 households</i>
<i>Worcestershire</i>	<i>11%</i>	<i>48 households</i>
<i>UK</i>	<i>22%</i>	<i>96 households</i>
<i>Abroad</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>13 households</i>

The figure is then adjusted to only represent in-migrants from Worcestershire (48) and 50% of Birmingham's needs ($170 / 2 = 85$)

Worcestershire 48 + Birmingham 85 = 133 new in-migrant households

5 Delivering Affordable Housing

5.1 The delivery of affordable housing is the major element of this guidance. As outlined above there is an identified need for affordable housing within the District. While it is important to address this shortfall in provision it is also important to take a balanced approach in order to achieve successful new developments.

5.2 The Council recognises that the development process cannot deliver all of the affordable housing identified. Once the housing moratorium is removed or changed efforts will be made to achieve as much as possible while not neglecting other planning considerations, such as the need to create balanced communities. In order to facilitate as much development as possible thresholds and targets have been identified to introduce an element of affordable housing on as many new housing sites as possible.

Targets

5.3 The new targets set out in the RSS indicates that Bromsgrove should now be providing fewer dwellings per annum than under the Structure Plan. The requirement for affordable housing identified in the housing needs assessment is based on the elimination of the existing backlog over a five year period and also the identified newly arising need each year. Taking this into account table 3 below shows the percentage of all completions which need to be affordable over the next 5 years in order to meet the identified need in the Housing Needs Assessment

Table 3 - Required Affordable Housing Completions

RSS Housing Requirement 2006 - 2011	1204
Housing needs assessment affordable housing requirement 2006 – 2011	2090
Housing needs assessment affordable housing requirement adjusted to exclude migrant need (not including Worcestershire and Birmingham)	580
Percentage of total completions required to be Affordable in order to meet local housing needs assessment targets and RSS targets (not including current oversupply)	48%

5.4 These figures do not take into account the oversupply of residential development in the District and the effect the current moratorium will have on the number of completions over the next few years. The current over supply position reduces the number of completions required even further, so much so that even if 100% of completions were affordable units the District would still exceed its phased RSS housing targets to 2011, provided all current outstanding permissions were completed.

5.5 It is accepted that applying these percentage targets would render many developments unviable. Instead, and in order to maximise the number of affordable units provided it is necessary to set a minimum target that 50% of dwellings on new residential sites must be affordable.

Thresholds

5.6 The Council will require that for all housing sites in the urban areas of Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Bromsgrove (including Lickey End) Catshill (including Marlbrook), Grimes Hill, Drakes Cross and Hollywood, Hagley and Rubery a proportion of affordable housing will be sought on all sites equal to or over 0.5 hectares or 10 dwellings.

For settlements where the population is 3000 or less the threshold will be reduced to 5 dwellings or all sites equal to or over 0.25 hectares. On both rural and urban sites the minimum target that 50% of all new dwellings are affordable units will apply

Tenure

5.7 The majority of the existing affordable housing stock in the District is controlled by a small number of RSLs. It is envisaged that any new affordable housing developments would normally be supported by these RSLs although there is no restriction placed upon any RSL or other suitable provider operating in the District. However, planning permission will not be granted until a developer has entered into an agreement with an RSL to manage the properties upon completion. The varying types of affordable housing tenures will be provided based on an identified need in that location.

Highways / Car Parking Standards

5.8 Steve Hawley to provide statement from the HPU on this issue

(In an effort to make affordable housing schemes more viable the council will accept lower levels of car parking provision on schemes with elements of affordable housing. The reduction in the number of car parking spaces will be inline with the proportion of affordable housing supplied on site. The number of cars owned by residents eligible for affordable housing are typically less than those who can afford market housing.)

Open Space provision on Affordable Housing Sites

5.9 Current guidelines for the provision of open space for new residential developments is contained within SPG11 Outdoor Play Space. It is recognised that the levels of provision required by this guidance would render many affordable housing developments uneconomical. Any open space provided for affordable housing schemes will be provided to reflect the nature of the development. For example where single or dual occupancy units (typically 1 bedroom) are constructed the type of open space required will reflect this i.e. amenity space rather than formalised play space. On developments where family units are required play space must also be included, although the requirement for an element of open space should not render the development unviable. The level of open space/amenity provision will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Education Contributions

5.10 Education contributions will not be sought for the affordable housing element of any scheme in accordance with Worcestershire's SPG on Planning Obligations for Education Facilities. Should amendments to this guidance mean a contribution is required the Council will ask for the appropriate contribution to be made in line with the most recent policy.

Design and Location

5.11 The design and location of affordable housing is just as much of an issue as for market housing. Permission will only be granted where the proposal demonstrates it has considered these elements and approached them in the same manner as it would a residential development consisting of entirely market housing. Although it is

recognised that rural exception schemes by their nature are often in locations which would not normal by suitable for residential development.

Off site affordable housing provision and S106 agreements

5.12 Although in the majority of cases the provision of affordable housing will be expected on site the Council recognise in certain circumstances it may preferable to accept the provision on another site, or a financial contribution to fund affordable housing by other means. Where an alternative site is identified this must be acceptable to the Council as local planning authority and must be capable of accommodating the provision for the original site, and any new provision generated by the inclusion of open market dwellings on the new site. In addition it must be in the same settlement as the original site.

5.13 Only in exception circumstances will financial contributions in lieu of on site provision (commuted sums) be accepted due to the difficulties associated with finding and delivering new affordable housing sites. The length of time it takes to develop the original site to a point where commuted sums are required and the additional time of developing a new site often devalue the original financial amount rendering it inadequate for its original purpose.

5.14 Where financial contributions in lieu of on site provision are agreed these will be negotiated through a section 106 agreement. Contributions will only be accepted where sites are deemed to be unsuitable for affordable housing provision, and no other site in the identified settlement can be delivered. In these circumstances the Council will negotiate an amount in line with current financial indicators associated with housing provision. Typically the level of social housing grant that would have been allocated to the development had the provision been on site will be used as a baseline figure when assessing the level of contribution.

5.15 Table 4 below shows the base contribution required for each dwelling size based on the Housing Corporation Total Cost Indicators although the effects of various development specific multipliers could have an effect on the amount to be provided. The percentage of this figure to be provided is also dependant on variables outlined by the Housing Corporation. The housing grant calculator provided by the Housing

Corporation should be used when assessing the level of contribution developers will be required to make.

Table 4 – Contributions required by property size

Unit Floor Area M ²	Probable Occupancy (Persons)	Contribution Required
Up to 25 m ²	1	£51084
25 – 30 m ²	1	£56268
30 – 35 m ²	1 and 2	£61452
35 – 40 m ²	1 and 2	£66636
40 – 45 m ²	2	£71712
45 – 50 m ²	2	£76896
50 – 55 m ²	2 and 3	£82080
55 – 60 m ²	2 and 3	£87264
60 - 65 m ²	3 and 4	£92340
65 – 70 m ²	3 and 4	£97524
70 – 75 m ²	3, 4 and 5	£102708
75 – 80 m ²	3, 4 and 5	£107892
80 – 85 m ²	4, 5 and 6	£112968
85 – 90 m ²	4, 5 and 6	£118152
90 – 95 m ²	5 and 6	£123336
95 – 100 m ²	5 and 6	£128520
100 – 105 m ²	6 and 7	£133596
105 – 110 m ²	6 and 7	£138780
110 – 115 m ²	6, 7 and 8	£143964
115 – 120 m ²	6, 7 and 8	£149148

Delivering Affordable Housing – Rural Areas

5.16 Guidance contained in PPG3 and Circular 6/98 advocates the use of rural exception sites. The Council will implement a rural exceptions policy controlling how these sites will be released and the conditions which will be applied to them.

5.17 Where a need is clearly identified in rural areas the Council will allow new affordable housing development to take place on land which would previously be deemed unsuitable for development due to other planning considerations. In Bromsgrove the main factor preventing this type of development would be green belt policy. Under this rural exceptions policy green belt restrictions may be lifted allowing for schemes to be built where they are 100% affordable housing to address an identified local need and provided at an affordable level in perpetuity.

5.18 Any rural exception schemes proposed must be accompanied with evidence of local need in the form of a current local housing needs assessment. Early consultation with the Council's Planning and Housing sections is recommended to ensure that key issues are taken fully into account. A rural housing enabler is also available to help with the identification of rural affordable housing needs.

5.19 A lettings policy has been agreed by the Council and is intended to ensure that any dwellings constructed under the exceptions policy are allocated to those who are in most need. The lettings criteria can be found in appendix A

5.20 It will remain a fundamental requirement that any rural exception dwellings have to be provided at affordable levels and remain available to meet future affordable needs in perpetuity. Schemes which cannot demonstrate the necessary arrangements for doing so will not receive planning permission.

6 Monitoring

6.1 The Planning Policy section regularly monitor residential development and under the new planning system are required to produce an annual monitoring report each December. Should any of these surveys along with other relevant evidence from other council departments such as updated housing needs assessments produced for the housing strategy section identify a changed need for affordable housing then this document will be updated to reflect the most recent information.

Appendix A

CRITERIA AND ALLOCATIONS POLICY FOR THE LETTING AND ALLOCATION OF RURAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPED UNDER 'EXCEPTION SITE' POLICY.

The Registered Social Landlord (Housing Association) managing the affordable housing development will assess all applications made requesting the allocation of a dwelling on the scheme **in the following order:**

- 1. All applicants wishing to be considered for Rented Housing within the proposed scheme must be registered on the Bromsgrove District Council Housing Register.** The Council will also nominate applicants registered on the Housing Register for consideration for Shared Ownership or Fixed Equity units where applicants have specified their wish to be considered when completing their application form.
- 2. The following Local Connection Eligibility Criteria will be applied:**
(The first phase of eligibility will be considered initially, and only if insufficient applicants are eligible will the other phases be considered in order.)

The first phase of eligibility will be restricted to:

- i) Local residents within the parish, with a minimum term of residence who want to remain in the locality but cannot afford to do so.
- ii) Those who have previously resided in the parish for a number of years and who need to return to the parish but cannot afford to do so and who qualify as one or more of the following :
 - a) Those who need to return to the parish to provide or receive support to / from a close family member living in the parish.
 - b) Those who are employed within the parish.
 - c) People with a confirmed offer of employment in the parish but who are deterred by the difficulty of finding and affording suitable accommodation.

A second phase of eligibility would include applicants who live outside of the parish but within an immediately adjoining parish (within the District of Bromsgrove) who need to live in the parish but cannot afford to do so and who qualify as one or more of the following:

- a) Those who need to return to the parish to provide or receive support to / from a close family member living in the parish.
- b) Those who are employed within the parish.
- c) People with a confirmed offer of employment in the parish but who are deterred by the difficulty of finding and affording suitable accommodation.

A third phase of eligibility would include applicants who live outside of the parish but within the District of Bromsgrove who need to live in the parish but cannot afford to do so and who qualify as one or more of the following:

- a) Those who need to return to the parish to provide or receive support to / from a close family member living in the parish.
- b) Those who are employed within the parish.
- c) People with a confirmed offer of employment in the parish but who are deterred by the difficulty of finding and affording suitable accommodation

A fourth phase of eligibility would include applicants who live outside of the parish and outside of the District of Bromsgrove who need to live in the parish but cannot afford to do so and who qualify as one or more of the following:

- a) Those who need to return to the parish to provide or receive support to / from a close family member living in the parish.
- b) Those who are employed within the parish.
- c) People with a confirmed offer of employment in the parish but who are deterred by the difficulty of finding and affording suitable accommodation.

3. Applicants who qualify under the Local Connection Eligibility Criteria (Sect 2. Above) will then undergo an affordability assessment to establish that they are not in a position to afford an open market dwelling in the area. (The process will also establish an applicant's ability to afford shared ownership and fixed equity options).

Completed forms will be assessed in accordance with:-

- o Current data on house prices and rents in The Parish;
- o Financial requirements of average mortgage lenders and their lending policies;
- o The availability of appropriate properties to meet identified needs e.g. accommodation to meet disabilities or health issues and tenure required.

4. Where applicants have both a relevant local connection (Sect 2 above) and fit the affordability criteria (Sect 3 above), their housing need will be prioritised in accordance with the Council's Allocations Policy & Housing Register Points Scheme, with the exception of:-

- Any points awarded in the section headed Local Connection. These will be removed, as local connection will have already been assessed under Sect 2 above.

- Any points which were awarded for needs which will not be met by the offer of a dwelling in The Parish e.g. medical or welfare needs which would not be improved by living in The Parish;

Offers will be made in descending points order and where applicants have the same number of points, those with the longest local connection will have priority. Where applicants are purchasing an equity share but are unable to complete within a reasonable timescale they will be given a reduced priority.

5. Applications will be further prioritised in accordance with Bromsgrove District Council's policy on the allocation of property by family size to property type/size (Section 5 of the Council's Allocation Policy & Housing Register document).

In the event that no households can be identified from the above criteria within 3 weeks, allocations will be made to the most suitable applicants, having regard to their reasons for seeking a home in The Parish.

Definitions

The Parish	The Civil Parish within which the affordable housing is located.
Immediately Adjoining Parish	A Parish with a common boundary and immediately next to the parish within which the affordable housing is located.
Minimum term of residence	Normally 5 years.
Number of years	Normally 5 out of the past 15
Close Family Member	Means parents, siblings, grandparents and children and such relationships through adoption. In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of Bromsgrove District Council, more distant relatives may fall within the definition if they give to the applicant a level of support normally associated with those listed above. (' In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of Bromsgrove District Council, other parties may fall within the definition if they can provide evidence that they give the applicant a level of support normally associated with those listed above'.)
Want	A specific reason to reside in the Parish within which the affordable housing is located.

Appendix B

Draft Managing Housing Supply Supplementary Planning Document

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Planning Policy Context**
- 3. Housing Land Supply**
- 4. Managing Housing Supply Policy**

1 Introduction

1.1 Bromsgrove's location on the edge of the West Midlands Conurbation has historically placed enormous pressure on the District to provide large amounts of new housing. This pressure has led to a problem of housing oversupply with many more new houses being built than current planning policy indicates. The adoption of the Regional Spatial Strategy as part of the development plan has now shifted the emphasis with regards to new residential development back into the Major Urban Areas (MUA) and highlighted that rural areas on the urban fringe should not be catering for the needs of the Conurbation but should generally only be looking to provide dwellings for local needs.

1.2 The aim of this document is to provide a framework for the release of residential development land until new figures emerge through the partial review of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). It will attempt to tackle the current oversupply of housing in relation to the strategic requirement outlined in the Worcestershire County Structure Plan, and the RSS. It is intended to be a supplementary planning document forming part of the Bromsgrove District Council, Local Development Framework (LDF)

1.3 Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) has already been adopted on the issue of housing supply, this document will replace the current SPG10 - Managing Housing Supply, which was produced under the former planning system.

2 Planning Policy Background

2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all documents within the planning system sit within a recognised chain of conformity; consequently this document conforms with all other relevant policies and plans. The most relevant plans and policies are currently PPG2 Green Belts, PPG 3 Housing, the West Midlands Spatial Strategy, the saved policies in the Worcestershire County Structure plan, the Adopted Bromsgrove District Local Plan, and the emerging core strategy for Bromsgrove.

2.2 PPG2 Green Belts (1995)

Over 90% of the Bromsgrove district is green belt land and as such this document is of major importance. PPG2 states the general intentions of Green Belt policy, including its contribution to sustainable development objectives; as well as identifying the specific purposes of including land in Green Belts which are:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

the document also confirms that Green Belts must be protected as far as can be seen ahead, and maintains the presumption against inappropriate development within Green Belts.

2.3 PPG3 Housing (March 2000)

PPG3 introduced a new approach to the way in which sites were to be released for residential development. The Plan, Monitor, and Manage approach identified that housing sites should not only be allocated in enough volume to meet the strategic requirement for the district but they should also be released over the plan period in order to control the pattern and speed of urban growth. This should be managed by constantly reviewing housing supply and meeting the needs accordingly. PPG3 also placed an emphasis on

site selection for residential development, setting out a methodology which should ensure that previously developed land (Brownfield) is developed before less sustainable or Greenfield sites. PPG3 is to be replaced by PPS3 in the near future and as such any changes of policy dictated by the replacement will be reflected in subsequent drafts of this document.

2.4 West Midlands Spatial Strategy (formally RPG11)

The spatial strategy for the West Midlands was adopted in June 2004. This guidance identifies the housing requirement up to 2021 for Worcestershire. The strategy aims to reverse a long term trend whereby more houses were being built in the areas surrounding the Major Urban Areas (MUA) than in the actual MUA itself. It is the intention to move towards a ratio of 1 house built in the MUA for every 0.7 house built in other regions, with a specific reduction in the scale of development within towns such as Bromsgrove, close to the MUA. The effect of this will be to reduce the District's housing requirements from past rate identified in the structure plan. Phase 2 of the RSS revision will be re-evaluating the employment and housing requirements in the light of an updated evidence base and disaggregating housing figures down to district level. This is due to be completed in late 2008. Should this revision alter the requirement for the District this document will be updated accordingly.

2.5 Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996-2011

Although elements of this guidance has now been superseded it is important to consider how the current situation arose. RPG proposed that 41,300 dwellings should be constructed in Worcestershire between April 1991 and March 2011. This was then further disaggregated between the districts with Bromsgrove receiving a target of about 3950 dwellings to be completed between April 1996 and April 2011. Policy D.2 proposes that this target be phased with 3000 dwellings to be completed by April 2006 and the remaining 950 by April 2011, this was to enable the managed release of housing sites over the plan period in order to control the pattern and speed of housing growth, subsequently ensuring that new infrastructure is co-ordinated in tandem with new housing development. This document is still relevant as the percentage of Worcestershire's housing allocation that Bromsgrove was to provide under this plan 14%, is to be rolled forward and the same percentage applied to RSS figures, until such time as detailed allocations are known.

2.6 Bromsgrove District Local Plan 1986 - 2001

Although this plan is now out of date it is still the current adopted plan. As the Local Development Framework is produced elements of the local plan will be replaced. Until such a time all proposals which meet the criteria for one of the exceptions outlined in section 4 will also be judged against all the other current relevant policies in this plan.

2.7 Bromsgrove Emerging LDF - Core Strategy Preferred Options

Although this document is only at a draft stage it is important to consider as it indicates the District's intention with regards to new housing development. Once the Core Strategy is adopted the SPD will then be amended to link formally to the Core Strategy, but until this time this document will accord to policies in all the documents identified above.

3 Housing Land Supply

3.1 The Council monitors the supply of housing land on a regular basis, and produces a housing land availability report each April. Under the new planning system it is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) each December. The latest monitoring reports identified that Bromsgrove has had a significant oversupply for a number of years even taking into account new phasing targets identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The new RSS policy direction outlined in section 2 means the future provision for Worcestershire and subsequently Bromsgrove will reduce over the coming years.

3.2 As shown in the table 1 Worcestershire should now be providing 1900 dwellings per annum up to 2007, which then reduces to 1200 dwellings per annum in the years 2007 – 2011, and further reduces to 1000 dwellings per annum 2011 - 2021. The housing figures in the Structure Plan have now been superseded by figures contained in the RSS. As these new figures have not been disaggregated down to district level, the proportions identified in the structure plan are still to be used. Bromsgrove currently provides 14% of the Worcestershire total. Table 1 also shows the numbers of new dwellings the District should be providing when applying the structure plan proportions to the RSS phasing targets.

Table 1 - RSS Housing Provision

Planning Area	Annual Average Rate of Housing Provision		
	To 2007	2007-2011	2011-2021
Worcestershire	1900	1200	1000
Bromsgrove	266	168	140

3.3 Table 2 below shows the current housing land supply for April 2005, it indicates that 2057 of the 3668 dwellings to be provided over the period 2001 - 2021 have already been completed at April 2005 with a further 814 granted permission, this leaves only approximately 797 dwellings to be provided between 2005 and 2021 assuming all current permissions are implemented.

Table 2 – Housing position April 2005

Housing land position at April 2005	No of Dwellings
RSS requirement 2001 – 2021	3668
RSS requirement 2001 – 2005	1064
Completions 2001 – 2005	2057
Remaining requirement 2005 - 2021	2604
Balance to be provided 2005 - 2021	1611
Current supply	814
Currently unidentified balance to be provided 2005 - 2021	797

3.4 The current completions from 2001 to 2005 and the existing permissions at April 2005 represent the amount of dwellings which should have been completed between 2001 and 2015 taking into account the phasing targets identified in the RSS. Therefore the District currently has 10 year oversupply.

3.5 The consultation paper planning for housing provision (July 2005) identified new guidance concerning the amount of housing supply that local authorities should be identifying for new housing development. It is recommended the plan horizon should be extended to 15 years. Authorities should allocate land capable of satisfying 5 years of housing need. A further 10 year supply should also be identified beyond that. This 10 year supply is then rolled forward into the allocated 5 year supply once earlier sites have been completed. The intention of this shift in policy is to place less reliance on windfall development. The reliance on windfall development is of particular importance to Bromsgrove table 3 below shows the completions by type from 1996 to April 2005.

Table 3 - Completions by type 1996 - 2005

	Allocated Sites	Large Windfall	Small Windfall	Total
1996 – 1997	0	210	81	291
1997 – 1998	0	163	91	254
1998 – 1999	0	85	114	199
1999 – 2000	146	91	94	331
2000 – 2001	335	141	107	583
2001 – 2002	224	183	132	539
2002 – 2003	237	184	97	518
2003 – 2004	56	248	170	474
2004 – 2005	0	414	112	526
Total	998	1719	998	3715
% of completions since 1996	27%	46%	27%	100%

3.6 As the table clearly shows the majority of housing completions have been from windfall development, although a large amount of this windfall development is contained on two large sites, Breme Park on part of the Garringtons forging work, and redevelopment of the former Barnsley Hall Hospital. A large number are also contained on smaller sites, and individual plots. The development of these sites has been a major factor in increasing the oversupply before 2001 and also the current oversupply; whilst individually they do not appear to have an effect collectively they amount to a significant amount of development over and above what is required.

3.7 Although currently Bromsgrove is not in a position to allocate land for residential development, through the previous plan process sites throughout the District have been identified as Areas of Development Restraint (ADRs). It is envisaged that these sites and other brownfield sites in key locations could form part of a 15-year land supply.

4 Managing Housing Supply Policy

4.1 The focus of new house building initiatives in the West Midlands is the regeneration of existing urban areas, and the provision of housing in rural areas for identified needs, including affordable housing. Therefore in Bromsgrove only new housing for identified needs in the District should be allowed. The council should no longer cater for the needs of people outside the District, especially the West Midlands Conurbation, as indicated in the RSS.

As section 3 shows there is a significant oversupply of market housing in the District currently, therefore:

New residential development will not be allowed on any site unless it meets one of the following exceptions.

- 1. It is an allocation contained in a statutory Development Plan Document (DPD)**
- 2. Proposals are for agricultural or forestry workers dwellings that comply with the requirements of Policies C21, C22, and C23 of Bromsgrove District Local Plan.**
- 3. Proposals are for 100% affordable housing schemes to meet a proven local need.**
- 4. The scheme will result in replacement dwellings, where there is only a one-for-one replacement.**
- 5. Where new residential dwellings are an enabling factor in major mixed-use schemes in sustainable locations.**
- 6. Where new dwellings are formed over existing shops in identified shopping areas.**
- 7. Where development sites are identified at key public transport interchanges.**
- 8. Where proposals provide supplementary family accommodation in sustainable locations.**

1. It is an allocation contained in a statutory Development Plan Document (DPD).

Should the need arise through revised RSS figures or any other means to allocate land for development any allocation will be contained in an allocations DPD. Land allocated for residential development will be phased in accordance with the RSS in order to control the supply of new residential development and therefore will not be subject to the housing moratorium.

2. Proposals are for agricultural or forestry workers dwellings that comply with the requirements of Policies C21, C22, and C23 of Bromsgrove District Local Plan.

PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) allows for agricultural workers dwellings providing evidence is displayed as to the genuine need of the agricultural dwelling, and also the financial stability / viability of the agricultural business it serves. If possible it is preferable such dwellings are located with existing settlement or farm holdings before isolated sites in the countryside are released. Policies C21, C22 and C23, SPG5 (Agricultural Buildings Design Guide) and SPG6 (Agricultural Buildings and Occupancy Conditions) also give further advice on such proposals.

3. Proposals are for 100% affordable housing schemes to meet a proven local need.

Although the District has a recognised over supply in market housing, the provision of affordable housing remains low therefore schemes for 100% affordable housing will be allowed. This includes green belt areas, as long as they conform to other relevant policies. Further guidance on affordable housing provision is contained within in the Affordable Housing SPD.

4. The scheme will result in replacement dwellings, where there is only a one-for-one replacement.

One for one replacement schemes do not further contribute to the overall housing supply and therefore will be allowed.

5. Where new residential dwellings are an enabling factor in major mixed-use schemes in sustainable locations.

Mixed-use schemes are seen as an important way of not only regenerating previously badly or under used sites they can also be a vital tool in attracting new or different uses to

sites contributing to the quality and appeal of an area. Where mixed-use developments are proposed, the residential element must not be the majority use on site and other policies will apply such as affordable housing provision, education contributions, open space provision/contributions as well as more general design and development planning policies. Policy UR3 of the RSS identifies that city town and district centres should be enhanced to play a leading role in urban renaissance, part of this enhancement can include

“adopting strategies to encourage more people to live in or close to centres through the reuse of sites, development of mixed use schemes, the conversion of property and initiatives such as ‘living over the shop’.”

6. Where new dwellings are formed over existing shops in identified shopping areas.

Living over the shops schemes (LOTS) can be an important feature in the vitality and viability of town centres and are a valuable way of reducing unused spaces in many buildings. Many retail properties contain multiple floors of badly or unused space. These areas can be put to much better use as residential properties. Not only can they offer a financial return on previously vacant space, they can also help to ensure the security of the building, and introduce a much needed residential element to streets which were previously deserted once the shops had closed. This increased presence in retail centres can help to maintain other key uses which would previously not have survived in town centre locations.

7. Where development sites are identified at key public transport interchanges.

Encouraging the use of alternative transport other than the private motorcar is a key principle behind sustainable development. Sites which are adjacent to, or within public transport interchanges will be released for development providing the developer can display evidence that all other available brownfield sites within typical walking distance of the interchange have been developed. For clarity a typical walking distance has been identified as 400 metres.

8. Where proposals provide supplementary family accommodation in sustainable locations.

More commonly called ‘granny flats’ this form of accommodation will be allowed if the applicants can provide evidence of the need for such units. Furthermore any dwellings

granted permission under this exception will have planning obligations placed upon it via a legal agreement to prevent the creation of independent living accommodation. What constitutes supplementary family accommodation will be decided on a case by case basis, although typically single storey, one bedroom dwellings will be view as supplementary family accommodation.