



Shaping Places Local Plan



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1 Introduction

1 Introduction



Picture 1 Southwater - Town Centre, Telford

1.1 Shaping Places

1.1.1 'Shaping Places' is the new Local Plan for the borough which will replace the existing *Core Strategy* (2007) and policies saved from the *Wrekin Local Plan* (2000). It is scheduled for adoption in early 2015 and will run to 2031.

1.1.2 The Local Plan will help shape a prosperous borough, address current priorities regarding the economy and housing, support growth and maintain an attractive quality environment. The Plan will also assist developers and investors by providing certainty and clarity regarding planning issues and by promoting development opportunities.

1.1.3 The Council is committed to creating the borough as a destination of choice. The Local Plan links directly with other key Telford & Wrekin Council strategies such as *Invest in Telford* which supports the growth of the local economy, delivers new jobs and makes the borough an outstanding place for living, working and visiting.

Background

1.1.4 Decisions on development proposals are currently made using the planning policies within the *Core Strategy* (2007), the *Central Telford Area Action Plan* (2011), the *Wrekin Local Plan* (2000) and a number of supplementary planning documents. Since the *Core Strategy* was adopted there have been significant changes in the rules of plan making together with the publication of the *National Planning Policy Framework* in March 2012 which emphasises the '*presumption in favour of sustainable development.*'

1 Introduction

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1.1.5 Having an up-to-date Local Plan in place is a legal requirement and the Council has pledged, in its *Business and Development Charter*, to ‘*maintain an up-to-date Development Plan providing certainty to the market and enabling the delivery of investment and growth.*’

1.1.6 The new Local Plan will help support investment programmes including Southwater and the Building Schools for the Future programme, widen the range of jobs and housing and enable the borough to take advantage of the opportunities for investment. In doing, so the borough will benefit from the finance from the New Homes Bonus, Council tax, business rates and developer contributions which will help support economic growth and help sustain local communities.

1.1.7 The *National Planning Policy Framework (2012)* and the *Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations (2012)* set out the requirements for producing a Local Plan. Work on the Plan began in early 2012 with a 6 week public engagement exercise to raise awareness of the Shaping Places Local Plan, identify groups and individuals wishing to participate in the Local Plan process and provide an opportunity for stakeholders to express ideas of what they felt the plan should include. A full summary of comments made at this stage can be found at <http://www.telford.gov.uk/shapingplaces>. These comments have helped guide the production of the Strategy & Options document.

1.1.8 As illustrated below, following a 6 week consultation period on the Strategy & Options document, the Council will work towards producing a draft plan for consultation in February/March 2014. During this time the Council will be engaging further with stakeholders on subsequent developments of the plan.

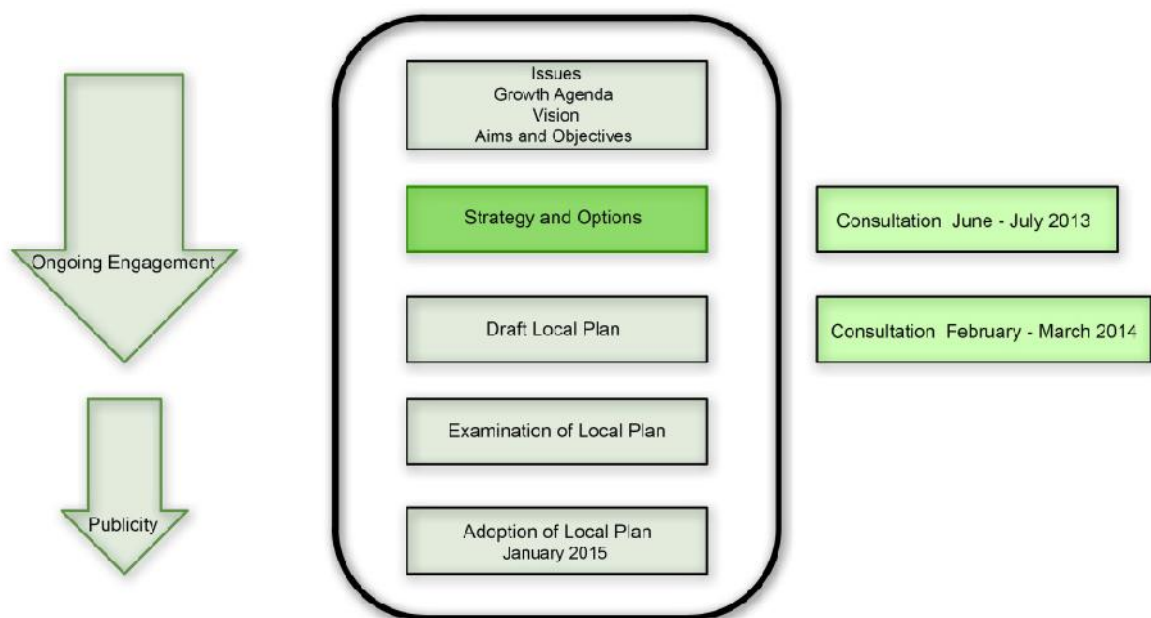


Figure 1 The Council's Local Plan process

1 Introduction

1.2 The Strategy & Options document

1.2.1 The Strategy & Options document is a non-statutory document that provides the community and other stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on and influence the proposed scale and location of development at an early stage of the plan making process. Consultation on this document is not part of the statutory process to adoption.

1.2.2 Over recent months the Council has been working with a number of stakeholders, including Parishes, businesses, developers, the Homes & Communities Agency and Council Members to identify the objectives and opportunities for growth. This engagement will continue through the course of the local plan process and will include:

1.2.3 **The Duty to Cooperate** is a requirement of section 110 of the *Localism Act* (2011) and is explained in detail in the *National Planning Policy Framework*. Both require local planning authorities to engage in cross boundary planning issues and matters of strategic infrastructure when preparing development plan documents. The Council will undertake a series of specific engagement sessions with neighbouring planning authorities and prescribed bodies as listed in part 2 of the *Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations* (2012), as part of the Local Plan's engagement strategy and in accordance with Duty to Cooperate legislation.

1.2.4 **The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership** is a partnership between Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire and Herefordshire Councils. Discussions have been held with the Partnership in the preparation of this document and this will continue as the work is taken forward to the draft plan stage.

1.2.5 **Neighbourhood Planning** is a requirement of the *Localism Act* (2011) and the *National Planning Policy Framework*, which sets out that neighbourhood plans must be in conformity with the Local Plan. The Council has been working with four Parish and Town Councils in the borough to help them develop neighbourhood plans that complement the Council's Local Plan proposals.

1.3 How the document is organised

Sections 1 & 2 provide the context to the Local Plan process. They explain how the Council has engaged with a variety of stakeholders on what the Local Plan could include and they describe and identify the key characteristics of the borough.

Sections 3, 4 & 5 seek comments and views on the vision and objectives of the Plan, three housing growth options and three spatial options, identifying the Council's preferred approach for each.

Sections 6 - 23 seek comments on policy areas.

1 Introduction

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1.4 How to comment

1.4.1 Your views are important to help the Council develop a Plan that addresses local needs and priorities. Please view the document and complete the questionnaire in the following ways:

On line:



At <http://www.telford.gov.uk/shapingplaces>

You can join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TelfordWrekin and Twitter at www.twitter.com/TelfordWrekin

In person: at the following locations;



Your local library <http://www.telford.gov.uk/libraries>

Business & Planning First Point Telford: Telford & Wrekin Council Wellington Civic Offices, Larkin Way, Tan Bank, Wellington, Telford. TF1 1LX during weekdays 8:30am to 5:30pm

First Point Telford: Telford & Wrekin Council Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford. TF3 4NT during weekdays 8:30am to 5:30pm

By post:



Environment & Planning Policy Team, Business & Development Planning, Telford & Wrekin Council, PO Box 457, Telford. TF2 2FH



Contact us by telephone: (01952) 384241



Get Involved:

Shaping Places Local Plan: Strategy & Options - Public Open Sessions

Wednesday 26 June 2013

Listen to a short presentation

View the Strategy & Options document

Ask any questions

Let us know what you think

11am – 1pm and 6pm – 8pm

Oakengates Theatre @ The Place

Limes Walk, Oakengates, Telford. TF2 6EP

Shaping Places Local Plan 2011-2031

The Local Plan sets out priorities and policies for development in relation to housing, green space, shops, businesses, transport and community facilities.

There are many stages of local plan making with opportunities to have your say.

We are at the Strategy & Options consultation stage. This means we have gathered all the views and feedback from the public to help us decide where and how development could take place in 2031.

Get involved by commenting on the Strategy & Options document during the consultation period Monday 10 June until Sunday 28 July 2013.

Creating our local plan...

- 2013** Strategy & Options: Setting out where and how development could take place.
- 2014** Draft: Setting out the detail of where and how development will take place.
- 2014** Pre-submission: Publication of the final plan before its submission in public.
- 2015** Approval: Final approval by external inspector and adopted by the Council and the community.

Telford & Wrekin Council

1 Introduction

1.4.2 The deadline for comments is 5pm Friday 26 July 2013.

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

The borough of Telford and Wrekin is a place of opportunity.

*90% of the borough is covered by **green open space and natural features** and with a landscape that combines **historic and modern living**, the borough offers something for everyone.*

***15 minutes from the M6 and M5** via the M54 and with an **established International Railfreight Park** run by Europe's premier operator, the borough offers fast, efficient and effective connections to the West Midlands region and beyond.*

*A **workforce catchment area of 300,000** people and some of the **best value rents in the UK**, the borough is a clear choice for investment.*

***House prices represent great value for money** and with a steady year on year **growth in the number of homes**, the borough offers choice, quality and affordability.*

***The population is predicted to rise to over 200,000 by 2026** and therefore Telford is set to grow to the size of cities like **York and Oxford**, with the education and employment service offer to match.*

People already choose to come to the borough because it is a good place to live, work and visit. The Council's ambition is that the borough builds on its attractiveness and opportunities to become **the** destination of choice.

The following section describes the borough's offer in more detail as well as the issues that the Local Plan will need to address over the next 20 years.

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

2.1 The Best of Both

*Over 90% of the borough is covered by **green open space and natural features** and with a landscape that combines **historic and modern living**, the borough offers something for everyone.*

The borough of Telford and Wrekin is a dynamic mix between old and new, urban and rural, traditional and modern and natural and man-made. This quality has attracted many people to live and work in the borough.

Natural and man-made

Over 90% of the borough is covered by green space and natural features⁽¹⁾. Much of this green space within Telford is a legacy of the new town and the pioneering vision for a 'Green Network' which provides residents and visitors alike with access to informal and formal open space.

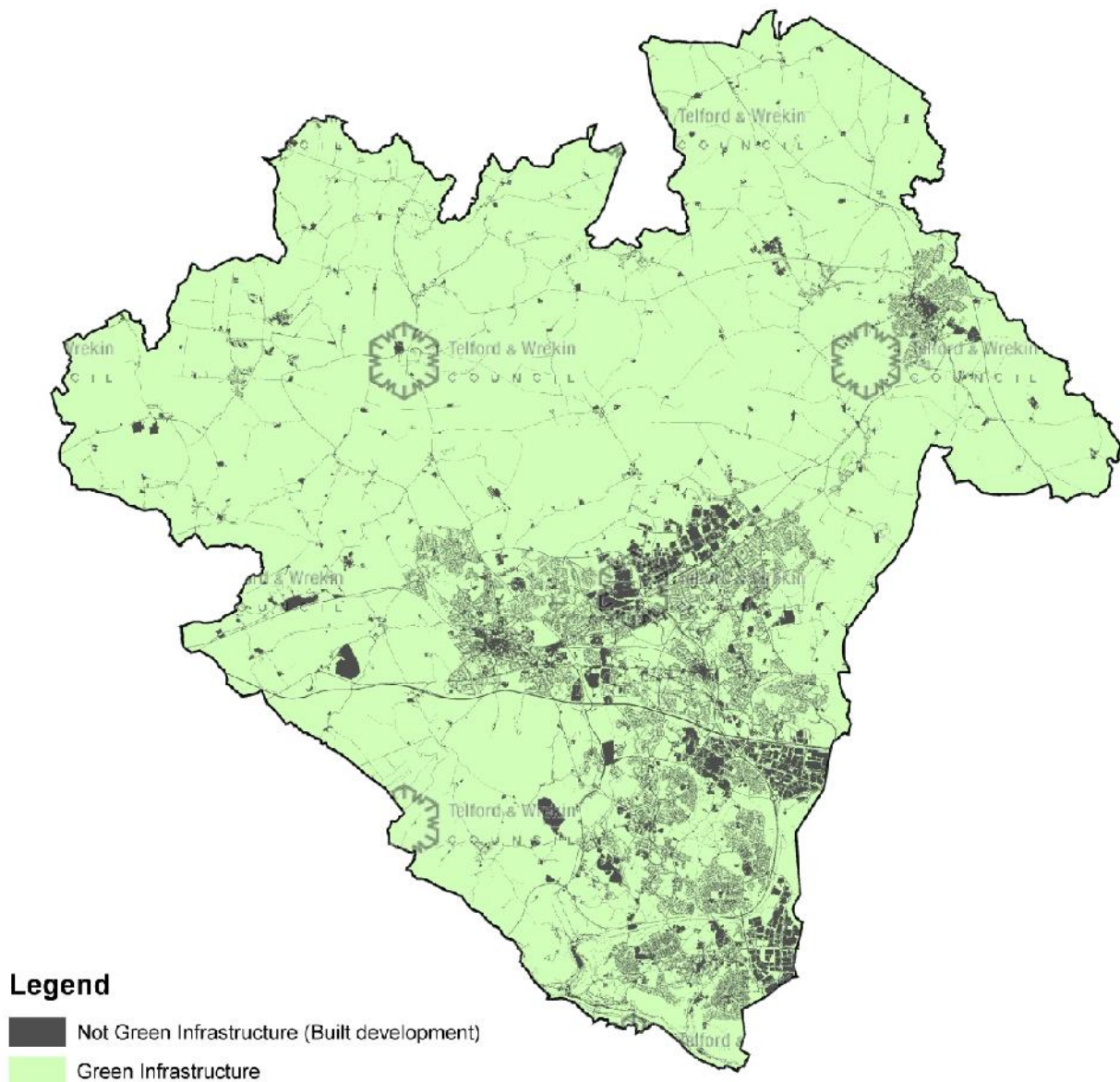
During the 2012 early engagement⁽²⁾ green space was one of the primary reasons why many people choose to come and live and invest in the borough. The Plan provides an opportunity to harness this considerable resource and to help ensure a balance is achieved between the ambition for growth of the town and the protection of its important green spaces.

1 Green Infrastructure

2 *Shaping Places Local Plan - Results of Early Engagement 10th January - 27th February 2012* http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5404/early_engagement_feedback_report

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

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Map 1 Green Infrastructure in Telford and Wrekin

Rural and urban living

Telford is set within an attractive rural area to the north and west. The vast majority of this area is agricultural land of varying quality but is set with a number of villages and historic centres that feature high quality developments and a variety of housing that offer an alternative to urban living.

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

Telford is the primary town within the borough. It offers a variety of urban living from the former industrial centres such as Ironbridge to the market towns such as Wellington and Newport and modern exemplar housing developments including Lawley and the Telford Millennium Community in the west and north respectively.



Picture 2 Ironbridge, Wrockwardine (Shaping Places photo competition winner) and Newport

Historic and modern

The old market towns including Wellington and Newport, historical areas such as the Ironbridge World Heritage Site and the borough's seven conservation areas offer residents and visitors a choice of picturesque places in which to live and explore. The Ironbridge World Heritage Site, the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution is listed in Trip Advisor as the second most recommended World Heritage Site in the world. It offers many places of interest including the Ironbridge itself, as well as a wooded landscape and access to the open countryside that can be explored via a network of roads, footpaths and cycleways.

The Telford town centre and Southwater Development, together with exemplary housing developments including the Telford Millennium Community, Lawley and Lightmoor offer a modern and exciting environment in which to live, work and socialise. The Telford International Centre is one of the UK's largest conference venues that attracts over 450,000 delegates per year and the Southwater development will help create a new vibrant convention quarter within the town.

In realising the potential of the borough's unique character and heritage, the Plan will promote its towns as places of interest and Telford town centre and Southwater as a primary focus for retail and leisure combined with new residential development.

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

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2.2 Strategically Located



Map 2 Excellent Connections

15 minutes from the M6 and M5 via the M54 and with an established International Railfreight Park run by Europe's premier operator, the borough offers fast, efficient and effective connections to the West Midlands region and beyond.

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

2.2.1 The borough is in the West Midlands, on the borders of Staffordshire and Shropshire, 30 miles west of Birmingham and 15 miles east of Shrewsbury. The M54 motorway which runs through Telford links to the M6 and M5 motorways establishing Telford's position as an important economic growth hub within the West Midlands. The borough is connected to the national rail network and less than forty minutes to Birmingham International Airport. The borough has an International Railfreight Park providing railfreight opportunities to west coast ports and the mainline rail system.

2.2.2 The M54 offers uninterrupted access to and from all parts of Telford complimenting the modern, uncongested and efficient road system.

2.2.3 Telford was originally planned as a New Town with a low density of development that makes the provision of public transport services challenging. While there is good accessibility by car and public transport, access to jobs and services by public transport could be improved. The Plan provides an opportunity to ensure that all services and facilities, housing and jobs are accessible by an integrated network of sustainable transport. The Plan will also promote an improved network of walking, cycling and bus routes and support improvements to important rail links.

2.3 A Focus for Economic Activity

A workforce catchment area of 300,000 people and some of the best value rents in the UK, the borough is a clear choice for investment.

2.3.1 Telford and Wrekin is a place of innovation and entrepreneurship that builds on its legacy as the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution. The borough continues to offer opportunity to new enterprises and high growth start ups. Recent examples include ChoiceShops and Eurofit Autocentres⁽³⁾. Telford is served with excellent transport connections with road and rail second to none. The A5 and M54 are part of the UK/Ireland-Benelux road axis of the Trans-European Network and the M6 is just 15 minutes away, providing access to the M5, M42 and M1 motorways. Telford International Railfreight Terminal and the Wolverhampton-Shrewsbury railway provide excellent connections to the national rail network.

2.3.2 The borough therefore continues to be an attractive place for industry. Business start ups have increased since mid 2009, with 603 new businesses starting up in 2012. This has led to a net increase in the number of businesses operating in the borough⁽⁴⁾. Additionally, 73% of the borough's businesses have increased their output or stayed the same over the past 12 months⁽⁵⁾. This places the borough in a strong position to be *the* place of innovation, enterprise and partnership.

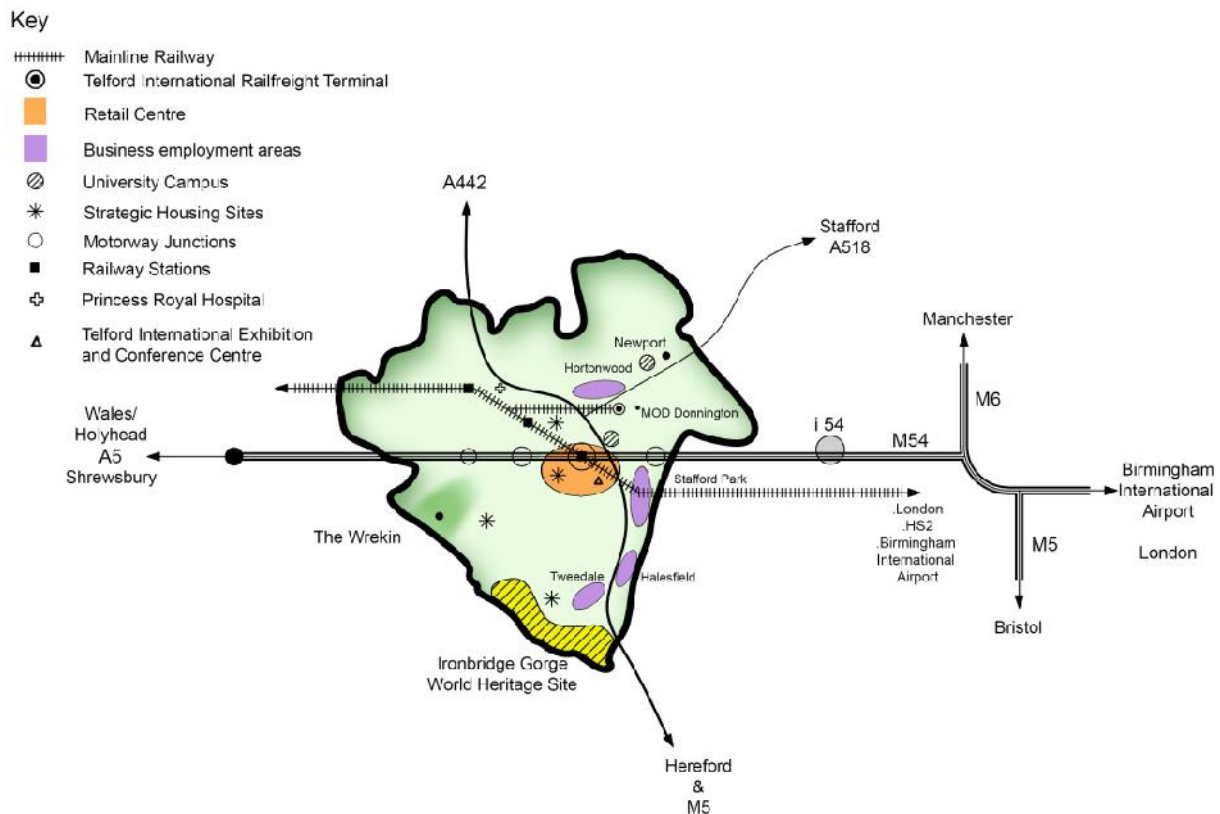
3 Telford & Wrekin Council, Estates and Investments Testimonials: <http://www.estatesandinvestments.co.uk/info/7/testimonials/6/testimonials>

4 Duport Business Confidence Report: <http://www.duport.co.uk/telford>

5 Worcester Research (2013) Telford & Wrekin Employers Survey

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

2



Map 3 The Well Connected Economic Offer

2.3.3 A large amount of serviced developable land, the majority of which is public sector owned, and some of the lowest rents in the UK has helped to attract many multinational firms to the borough, including high-tech companies such as Epson, Makita and Ricoh, and facilitated growth in small and medium sized enterprises. Advanced manufacturing, polymer industries, engineering, construction, retail, food and drink, and tourism industries are amongst our priority sectors that are helping to deliver the economic growth and success of the borough.

2.3.4 Many of the existing high-tech firms and large employers are centred around the industrial estates and business parks of Halesfield, Hortonwood, Tweedale and Stafford Park. As identified in the concept map above, this employment land is highly accessible to the new i54 development and Wolverhampton and Birmingham beyond. The borough therefore offers a compelling strategic location to customers, suppliers and investors.

2.3.5 The £250 million of investment in the redevelopment of Southwater in Telford town centre will see a new library and media centre along with a new Premier Inn hotel, Cineworld cinema, and high brand retail and restaurants including Bella Italia, Chimi Changa, Harvester, Pizza Express, Nandos, Wagamama and Zizzi. Alongside the expansion of the Telford International Centre, this will create a vibrant heart for the town and it will create over 300 local jobs by 2014.

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer



Picture 3 The Borough's Economic Offer - Telford Town Centre, Madeley and Hortonwood.

2.3.6 While recognising there is a need to address youth unemployment, Telford and Wrekin's unemployment rate (8.4%) is falling and is now below the regional rate (8.6%)⁽⁶⁾. New business and employment opportunities on a major scale are increasing in the automotive industry as a direct result of the new Jaguar Land Rover plant at i54, only a 10 minute drive away from Telford. This will enable the borough to capitalise on its strengths in existing automotive supply chain and distribution industries and provides opportunities for Telford based employers to expand. The Shaping Places Local Plan will support an increase in the number of jobs over the Plan period, identifying a range of sites to help meet the needs of local people and businesses.

2.3.7 Newport and the rural area's existing economic strengths are in agriculture and food production industries. To the south east of Newport in and around Audley Avenue there is a concentration of small industrial units and warehouses. There has been a decline in large format employers in the rural area in recent years with the closure of Allscott sugar beet factory and the Dairy Crest creamery plant at Crudgington which is due to close in 2014. The plan provides an opportunity to consider the redevelopment of these sites in a way that brings benefits to the local community and the economy.

2.4 A Wide Range of Housing

House prices represent great value for money and with a steady year on year growth in the number of homes, the borough offers choice, quality and affordability

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

2.4.1 There are currently around 67,000 homes in the borough with overall house prices representing great value for money. The average house price in 2011 was £136,500 compared to £180,000 nationally. Furthermore the pace of housing development, measured in completions per year, has increased steadily year-on-year since 2008⁽⁷⁾.

2.4.2 Housing within the borough can be divided into three broad areas, Telford, Newport and the rural area.

Telford

2.4.3 84% of the borough's population live in Telford, the most diverse of the three areas with a varied housing market offer.

2.4.4 Originating as a New Town, Telford has quite a different dwelling type profile to England as a whole with a far greater proportion of its stock being relatively new. Much of Telford's housing is accommodated on housing estates and includes more detached and semi-detached houses than in the region or in England.

2.4.5 Some of the most recent housing within the borough has been of exemplary standards. The Telford Millennium Community and Lawley have become renowned nationally, setting a precedent for good quality housing. Lawley, for example, represents the perfect balance of urban living and country life, overlooking the Wrekin Hill which is in the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and with a wide range of houses close to local services and facilities such as schools and shops.

2.4.6 Southwater will enable people to live within the heart of the town within high quality apartments. Residents will also have good access to a wide range of new leisure and retail facilities, new employment opportunities and the popular Telford town park.

2.4.7 Generally house values in Telford are lower than elsewhere in the borough making it attractive to first time buyers. Mirroring the national position, there is a shortfall in affordable housing. A *Strategic Housing market Assessment* is being updated which will quantify this need. The Plan is an opportunity to ensure that the affordable housing required can be met through development. At this stage it is proposed that the Plan will set targets seeking a proportion of affordable units on private market schemes.



Picture 4 Telford Millennium Community, Wellington Civic and Leisure Centre and Lawley

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

2.4.8 Being a former New Town, Telford has a number of older housing estates and areas of public sector housing. The plan provides an opportunity to help develop balanced communities with a mix of uses in these areas and help to ensure that income generated through the New Homes Bonus, business rates and Council tax is reinvested in upgrading the borough's housing and improving the quality of the surrounding environment.

Newport

2.4.9 The picturesque market town of Newport is the second largest town in the borough with a population that is close to 11,000. The town is a vibrant centre and an important focus for employment, leisure and community facilities including a selection of fine restaurants and historic buildings.

2.4.10 As with the rural area, Newport has a shortfall of affordable homes, despite higher than average incomes. This poses particular problems for newly-forming households.

The Rural Area

2.4.11 Around 15,061 (9.3% of the borough's population) live within the rural area. The main service centres are High Ercall, Tibberton and Waters Upton.

2.4.12 The rural area is full of contrasts, it contains many of the highest valued properties which are predominantly owner occupied and a limited supply of affordable housing. This has prevented many local people from accessing the housing market, particularly those who have employment or family ties. The Council has prioritised rural affordable housing in its *Local Investment Plan* and the Local Plan will give equal emphasis. There is also an opportunity for the plan to include a policy approach that supports rural communities with an appropriate provision of services and facilities and an accessible range of housing.

2.4.13 The borough already offers an excellent choice of housing, however, there is a need to increase the supply of adaptable and affordable housing to address demographic changes within the borough and support those already living within the borough but in housing unsuited to their needs. The plan will need to respond to the implications of recent welfare reform proposals. It will also need to prioritise the provision of a mix of housing of different types, sizes and tenures and champion exemplary developments, such as the Telford Millennium Community, to help promote high standards of design and bring forward good quality housing. In identifying a range of sites, the plan can help address the identified need for all types and sizes of new housing.

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer



Picture 5 Housing diversity - Lawley, Waters Upton and Newport

2.5 A Young and Changing Population

The population is predicted to rise to over 200,000 by 2026 and therefore Telford is set to grow to the size of cities like York and Oxford, with the education and employment service offer to match

2.5.1 Telford was originally planned to accommodate the overspill from Birmingham and grow to a town of at least 220,000 by 1991. The town has yet to reach this size; as of mid 2010 the population of Telford and Wrekin was estimated at 170,300 (*Telford & Wrekin Population Estimates & Projections* (2011)).

2.5.2 The *State of the Borough Report* (2013) provides a detailed profile of the borough's population. Of particular note is the high percentage of young people (the 0-4 population has grown by 8% from 2001, faster than the overall population growth) and an ageing population (the borough's population has aged faster than the national position and is forecast to increase by 37% by 2026). There is an opportunity for the plan to promote accessible and adaptable homes to enable an ageing population to live independently.

2.5.3 Youth unemployment within the borough remains a challenge. Currently 29.8% ⁽⁸⁾ of 16-24 year olds are without a job. The Council has committed £200m to regenerating and building new schools to help stimulate the local economy and deliver new opportunities to the next generation through the Building Schools for the Future programme. The government placed the Hadley Learning Community in the top 100 nationally in 2011, for the progress its pupils made ⁽⁹⁾. As well as continuing to support the Building Schools for the Future programme, there is a role for the Plan to ensure that people can access employment, education and training opportunities in accessible locations.

2.5.4 The majority of the population live in Telford. The more prosperous areas of Apley Castle, Shawbirch and Newport North (10% least deprived areas nationally) contrast with more deprived areas (top 10% most deprived) such as Woodside, Malinslee, Cuckoo Oak and Brookside. Within the more deprived areas there is a need to address problems of low incomes, poor health and low numbers of people in education or training. The Plan will support the Council's programme of regeneration in the Targeted Intervention Areas of Donnington, College, Woodside, Malinslee, Brookside and Cuckoo Oak. Within these areas the Council is seeking to reduce the gap in employment skills and training and improve the physical environment.

8 Telford & Wrekin Council (April 2013) *Economic Profile*
9 <http://hadleylearningcommunity.org.uk/secondaryphase/>

2 Telford and Wrekin's Offer

2.5.5 In the rural areas and Newport there is an opportunity for the Plan to promote prosperous communities. The Plan can help to ensure that everyone has access to everyday services and facilities and a good choice of quality, adaptable and affordable housing.

2.6 Planning for Change

2.6.1 The borough's offer has the infrastructure and opportunities to help address the challenges identified. The Council is committed to creating the borough as the destination of choice and has embarked on a programme to attract businesses and visitors to the town. This programme is focused around the following Council priorities:

- put our children and young people first
- protect and create jobs as a 'Business Supporting, Business Winning Council'
- improve local people's prospects through education and skills training
- protect and support our vulnerable children and adults
- ensure that neighbourhoods are safe, clean and well maintained
- improve the health and wellbeing of our communities and address health inequalities
- regenerate those neighbourhoods in need and work to ensure that local people have access to suitable housing

2.6.2 The Local Plan has a significant role to play in helping to address the council's priorities. The next section sets out a proposed vision, aims and objectives which begin to articulate how the opportunities and challenges identified can be addressed and sets out the broad direction of the Local Plan.

3 Vision, Aims and Objectives

3 Vision, Aims and Objectives

3.1 The Vision

3.1.1 The proposed vision reflects the views of the stakeholder's engaged to date and the priorities contained in the Council's Community Strategy. It has been clear from engagement so far that people want the borough to be a place they are proud of, recognising the importance of it growing to become a destination of choice for those wanting to live, work, set up business or visit the area.

By 2031 Telford and Wrekin will have grown to serve a population of over 200,000. Development will realise the borough as an outstanding destination for living, working and visiting that its residents are proud of and combines the best of town and countryside.

The following aims and objectives have been derived through close collaboration with a range of internal and external stakeholders and have paid close attention to the Council's priorities set out within the *Medium Term Plan (2012/13 - 2014/15)*

3.2 Aim 1: Cohesive, healthy and prosperous communities

Objectives

1. To provide a sufficient quantity and range of good quality homes that are well designed, affordable and sustainable.
2. Locate new housing to support services, education and employment opportunities.
3. Ensure housing in the rural areas meets local needs.
4. Ensure that the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community are met.
5. Encourage Lifetime Homes that meet the needs of vulnerable and older people and promote independent living.
6. Reduce inequalities by raising the quality of the built environment and improve access to services and facilities and employment and education within the Targeted Intervention Areas of Brookside, College, Cuckoo Oak, Donnington, Malinslee and Woodside.
7. Promote healthy and active lifestyles by providing safe and secure environments across the borough, improving access to health and leisure facilities and open space

3.3 Aim 2: Economic prosperity

Objectives

8. Increase the number of jobs over the Plan period
9. Support a wider range of employment sectors focusing on high tech and advanced engineering industries to diversify the local economy and enable the Council to become a regional hub of innovation and entrepreneurship
10. Identify a range of sites that can help meet the needs of existing and new businesses of all types and size
11. Support the development of serviced accommodation for new businesses
12. Support continued investment in the rejuvenation of Telford Town Centre as the borough's principal town centre and enhance the economic prosperity of the other urban centres
13. Support rural communities by allowing rural enterprise to flourish
14. Consolidate and strengthen Newport's role as a market town

3 Vision, Aims and Objectives

15. Reduce the skills gap between employers and the local workforce
16. Ensure that green infrastructure is valued, protected, and managed in a way that enables it to contribute to meeting social, environmental and economic needs

3.4 Aim 3: Transformation of education

Objectives

17. Plan positively to support the development of the sports and learning communities
18. Encourage the provision of a range of education facilities to meet local need, including higher education facilities
19. Ensure that people can access employment, education and training opportunities by providing a range of services and facilities in accessible locations

3.5 Aim 4: Accessible and integrated transport network

Objectives

20. Support the development of a highly accessible and integrated transport network
21. Utilise the borough's green infrastructure as a means of improving accessibility around the borough, connecting people with local services and facilities and encouraging healthy lifestyles.
22. Support improvements to rail links and access to rail stations and associated facilities
23. Reduce unsustainable travel
24. Improve public transport provision within the rural areas

3.6 Aim 5: Rich cultural experience

Objectives

25. Expand the borough's leisure, tourism and business visitor offer, increasing the number of visitors to the borough each year and bringing benefits to local communities
26. Support the development of Telford town centre to create a centre with a vibrant night time economy and a high quality retail and leisure offer
27. Safeguard and strengthen the urban centres, capitalising on their identity and ensuring that they develop as vibrant, attractive, distinctive, safe and welcoming places to live, work and visit
28. Conserve and enhance the character, integrity and setting of the historic environment including the designated World Heritage Site
29. Ensure development protects and enhances the cultural and environmental assets of the borough

3.7 Aim 6: Environmental enhancement

Objectives

30. Promote design solutions that reduce energy demands, connect to alternative renewable forms of energy supply, and minimise impacts on the environment.
31. Mitigate against and adapt to the effects of climate change.
32. Support a reduction in landfill and an increase in household waste recycling rates during the Plan period.

3 Vision, Aims and Objectives

33. Ensure that new development helps to improve the local character and identity of the built environment and the individuality of the urban centres through high quality inclusive design
34. Encourage new development to take advantage of existing buildings where appropriate through refurbishment and redevelopment of existing property or alternatively, contribute to the regeneration of neighbouring and existing communities.
35. Promote high quality buildings to enable everyone to raise their aspirations through personal development

3.7.1 To help ensure that the vision, aims and objectives contribute to achieving sustainable development they have been developed alongside a sustainability appraisal. While this work is ongoing as part of developing the Local Plan, early findings suggest that many of the Plan's objectives are compatible with the Sustainability Objectives and therefore help contribute towards sustainable development.

Question 1

Do you agree with the Council's vision, aims and objectives for the borough?

Please explain your answer.

4 Scale of Growth

4 Scale of Growth

4.0.1 The previous sections have identified some of the main challenges that face the borough now and in the coming years. A key aspect of the Local Plan will be to demonstrate how the opportunities that exist in terms of land supply, infrastructure, green space, and the borough's attractive and varied living environment can be harnessed to deliver the growth aspirations of the Council and its partners in order to tackle those challenges effectively.

4.0.2 Identifying development targets for homes, jobs and other uses will help to deliver the vision and objectives of the plan, in particular the promotion of economic prosperity and fostering more cohesive, healthy and prosperous communities. It will also provide local business and the development industry more widely with the certainty and confidence to invest in the borough, making it a 'destination of choice'.

4.1 Housing growth options

4.1.1 A number of housing growth options are presented here. It identifies a preferred approach which the Council believes will deliver the scale of growth required to deliver the vision and objectives of the plan, and which aligns most closely with the national 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' agenda. The move away from a regional planning approach by government means that the Council must establish a locally derived housing target taking into account past trends and land availability.

4.1.2 Three options are proposed, and a summary of the options is set out in table 1 below.

	Option	Annual rate of development	of Target 2011-2031 (approx)
1	Housing Completion Led	682	13,640
2	Planned Growth	890	17,800
3	Hub for Growth & Business	1,325	26,500

Table 1 Housing Growth Options

Option 1: Housing Completion Led

4.1.3 This figure is based on a past three year trend in housebuilding (net completions) plus an allowance for small windfall sites using data presented in the Council's Annual Monitoring Reports.

Option 2: Planned Growth

4.1.4 This figure is based on an assessment of likely completions from known development sites together with other sites, principally through partnership working with the Homes and Communities Agency, that could be brought forward during the plan period. The key data sources are the Annual Monitoring Reports and the *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment*.

Option 3: Hub for Growth & Business

4 Scale of Growth

4.1.5 This figure builds on option 2. It is derived from an assessment of local land capacity at the local level carried out by the Council, which would support the potential development opportunities and delivery of future growth to underpin Telford and Wrekin's role in the sub-region. The delivery of this level of development would allow the Council to plan effectively for the future of the borough, by supporting services, regenerating communities and delivering new investment and jobs. It would place the borough in a position to respond quickly to future changes in economic outlook, and create greater certainty and choice for the market.

Preferred approach

4.1.6 The Council's view is that option 3 is most appropriate, for the following reasons:

- option 1 is based on past trends only and does not provide any scope to plan effectively to deliver on the economic opportunities that exist or support the continued sustainability of local services. Consequently, this is considered to be a more short term option rather than looking longer term and into the future. This, therefore, does not provide the Council with the opportunity to plan effectively to deliver development at the scale envisaged;
- options 1 and 2 lack the flexibility to respond to opportunities for development and lessens the ability of the Council to plan for the needs of local communities, or deliver the economic growth aspirations of the plan.

4.1.7 Option 3 provides the opportunity to invest in local communities to address service deficiencies, tackle housing need and improve existing infrastructure and the quality of our centres. Option 3 also:

- allows the borough to become a focal point for business investment offering new job opportunities;
- acknowledges Telford and Wrekin's role as focal point for housing and jobs growth, and as a 'destination of choice'
- supports the town to achieve it's original planned size of over 200,000 people;
- supports the growth and development of Telford town centre and the regeneration of the borough's older neighbourhoods

Question 2

Do you agree option 3 is the most appropriate approach to growth?

Please explain your answer.

If 'no', which development approach do you consider most appropriate or are there any other alternative approaches?

For alternative options please provide evidence.

4.2 Jobs growth

4.2.1 Providing growth in employment opportunities for people who live and work in the borough is a key objective of the Local Plan. Telford and Wrekin benefits from a large availability of land for economic development. Coordinated delivery of this valuable resource, ensuring that

4 Scale of Growth

development is located and phased correctly, is essential in ensuring that the economic benefits of job creation and more productive businesses can be realised. This will enable Telford to attract investment, facilitate business expansion and deliver more jobs.

4.2.2 Despite unemployment being below the regional rate, in the last quarter of 2012 there are still 6,700 residents out of work. 3,000 of these are in the aged 16 to 24, representing 29.8% of the economically active population in this age group. This was an increase of 600 people in this age group on the previous quarter and it is now a major priority for the Council to tackle. Additionally, the age of some of the existing industrial estates has seen a decline in quality and there have been reductions in Government grants to support local investment and growth.

4.2.3 The Council's proactive 'Business Supporting, Business Winning' approach and initiatives such as *Invest in Telford* and *Destination Telford* are focused on tackling these issues and ensuring that sustainable economic growth can be achieved in the long term. The Local Plan will need to take forward and deliver on these approaches by continuing to build on Telford and Wrekin's economic strengths, supporting existing business growth and inward investment.

4.2.4 This section takes forward Option 3 for 26,500 new houses up to 2031 and sets out what the implications of this scale of development would be for the jobs growth to be delivered in the Local Plan.

The Need for Jobs Growth

4.2.5 Economic projections calculated using the Telford and Wrekin Population Model⁽¹⁰⁾ show that delivering 26,500 new homes by 2031 will increase the number of people who live and work in the borough by 19%.

4.2.6 Existing commuting patterns are broadly balanced between those who travel in to the borough for work and those who travel out⁽¹¹⁾. Telford and Wrekin's ambition is to achieve high levels of development which will maximise Telford's role as a regional growth hub and destination of choice for development, business investment and employment opportunities⁽¹²⁾.

4.2.7 To tackle unemployment, especially amongst 16 to 24 year olds, it is imperative that the Local Plan can deliver on its objective to increase the number of jobs in the borough. The Targeted Intervention Areas are also the wards in the borough that have the highest levels of unemployment, so economic development that can reduce unemployment and increase economic investment in these areas will be essential in delivering this objective.

4.2.8 The ambition for the scale of jobs to be delivered by 2031 is to meet local employment needs and to provide a regional hub for the labour market. Sufficient development will therefore have to be accommodated within the new plan to ensure that jobs can be created for the existing and new population of the borough and of the sub-region.

4.2.9 The options for the most effective delivery of the borough's employment land resource to meet this scale of jobs growth are set out in the Spatial Distribution and the Economic Development chapters.

10 Telford & Wrekin Council (2011) *Telford & Wrekin Population Profile* http://www.telford.gov.uk/info/200088/statistics_and_census_information/1448/population_and_lifestyles

11 Census (2001)

12 Telford & Wrekin Council (2013) *Shaping Our Future: Telford & Wrekin's Journey to 2020, A New Community Strategy for Telford & Wrekin*; Telford & Wrekin Council (2013) *Medium Term Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16*

4 Scale of Growth

4.3 Deliverability of options

Housing

4.3.1 An important area of work has been to assess whether the options are 'deliverable.' This means whether there is a 'reasonable prospect' that the number of homes could be built within the plan period. A key part of this assessment is to identify if there is a sufficient supply of development land for those homes to be built on. The key evidence base sources are the *Strategic Housing Land Area Assessment* and the *Annual Monitoring Report (2012)* which shows the performance of planning policy within the borough over the year, using data from the financial year of 1st April 2011 - 31st March 2012.

Committed development

4.3.2 An assessment of this supply highlights that a significant amount of the supply that would form part of the growth strategy is already 'committed' for housing. Existing commitments are categorised as sites either under construction or not yet started, sites with a resolution to permit subject to a legal agreement, and sites allocated in an adopted development plan (namely *Wrekin Local Plan 2000*, *Core Strategy 2007*, or *Central Telford Area Action Plan 2011*). These sites could provide in the region of 11,500 dwellings. If housing completions for the period 2011 -12 (this being because the plan period starts in 2011) and an allowance is made for small windfalls⁽¹³⁾, then this figure rises to approximately 13,000 dwellings. In addition and specific to Telford, there are a number of sites that were granted planning approval under Section 7(i) of the New Towns Act, under the ownership of the Homes and Communities Agency that would also need to be included as commitments.

4.3.3 This means that a significant number of new homes proposed are already in the pipeline. Housing completions across the borough have remained robust despite the recent economic recessions, putting the borough in a strong position to attract inward investment, enabling the delivery of future homes and businesses. Following the adoption of the new *Business and Development Charter* in February 2013 the Council is working with landowners, developers and house builders to ensure sites with planning permission are completed.

4.3.4 As part of the '*Invest in Telford*' initiative Telford & Wrekin Council is supporting the delivery of these sites, which includes the following measures:

- a Housing Delivery Team has been established to address stalled sites. The team is linking developers with sites and funding opportunities. For example, Bellway Homes are now building 52 affordable homes on a site in Brookside, in association with Telford & Wrekin Council who are helping to establish a link between the developer and the registered social landlord involved, Sanctuary Housing
- the Council is working with developers to identify the financial barriers preventing sites coming forward for development and identifying agreeable solutions in line with the National Planning Policy Framework which allows Council's to take viability into consideration

13 Windfall sites are sites that have not yet been identified, either through a planning application or development plan allocation.

4 Scale of Growth

- in March this year, a Building Magazine survey of local authorities featured Telford & Wrekin Council amongst the top 10% in terms of positive planning and economic conditions for investors
- through other initiatives, which include measures to speed up the planning process, the Council is maintaining its reputation as one of developer's favoured locations for development

4.3.5 The Local Plan will support these measures by providing help to manage the location, scale and pace of development and providing certainty to the market, enabling the delivery of investment and growth. The Plan will also provide more certainty about the financial contributions required to support services and facilities such as education, highways and open space so that developers are in a stronger position when negotiating to purchase a site.

Land supply

4.3.6 The *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment* provides an indication of land that may come forward for development. Given the existing development pipeline, the plan only needs to consider availability of sites for the remaining 13,500 homes over the plan period.

4.3.7 The site suitability criteria used in the *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment* was partly based on current adopted planning policies, for example the current development boundary (Core Strategy CS3) and the policies which prevent development in the green network (Wrekin Local Plan OL3, OL4, OL5). On this basis, the assessment identifies sufficient land to deliver 8,695 homes. However, in developing the plan existing policies will be reviewed and are therefore likely to change as a result of Shaping Places. The Council will be reviewing the urban boundary and the quality of those sites within the green network to consider if there are sites that could reasonably be developed for housing.

4.3.8 Table 2 below shows the land available if all policy constraints were removed, thus showing ample supply of land. This is a significant asset for the borough and provides a unique opportunity that is not available in many parts of the region. While it could be argued to exceed the target of 26,500 is challenging, the approach taken is a pragmatic one, balancing ambition with achievability.

4 Scale of Growth

Source	Dwellings
Existing commitments	8,192
Sites with resolution to permit	921
Allocations in adopted development plans	2,431
Sub total	11,544
Completions (net completions 2011-2012)	720
Windfalls	800
Sub total	13,064
SHLAA sites identified as 'deliverable'	8,695
SHLAA sites with boundary and green network policy implications	28,082
Sub total	36,777
TOTAL	49,841

Table 2 Housing Land Supply, at April 2012

Jobs

4.3.9 The Jobs Growth section established that Shaping Places will need to deliver high levels of employment in the borough by 2031 to fulfil the ambition for Telford and Wrekin to be a regional hub for jobs growth and economic activity. The borough has a large supply of readily available land for economic development. The effective coordination and delivery of this resource is essential to achieve this ambition.

Committed Development and Land Supply

4.3.10 The *Annual Monitoring Report 2012*⁽¹⁴⁾ identified that the borough has 176 hectares of land that is readily available for employment development (this includes land that has a valid planning approval or is currently allocated for employment development). In addition to this, the Council has been reviewing the availability of potential employment development land that is not currently part of this committed supply. The findings of the April 2012 Employment Land Review identified in the region of 229 hectares of this potential additional capacity. Although this provides a general indication only, it emphasises the significant potential supply of land that could support business growth or other development.

4.3.11 165 hectares (94%) of the committed supply in the Annual Monitoring Report is former New Town land that is now in the ownership of the Homes and Communities Agency. The Homes and Communities Agency is therefore an essential partner in delivering this land resource. As part of the *Invest in Telford* initiative, the Council has agreed a protocol with the Homes and Communities Agency whereby the Council's Property Team promote and manage the development of agency owned employment land to facilitate growth, take decisions locally and

4 Scale of Growth

provide a single point of contact for investors to increase confidence and certainty in local investment decisions. The Shaping Places Local Plan will support and facilitate this approach by providing the planning framework to ensure that this land resource is delivered efficiently and effectively in order to support business growth and investment.

4.3.12 Engaging with other land owners, whether in the public or private sector, will also be essential to broaden the offer and maximise the availability of land for employment development. The Council's 'Business Supporting, Business Winning' and Co-operative Council approaches are already ensuring that engagement with these wider stakeholders is taking place.

4.3.13 The borough's land supply provides flexibility and choice, with a range of sites to cater for the needs of different business sectors and their operations. It also provides a further opportunity for some of this land supply to be considered for the development of other land uses in order to support the proposed delivery of 26,500 new houses.

4.3.14 Having proposed the scale of growth which the Council considers appropriate for economic development up to 2031, the next stage is to identify opportunities where this growth in housing and jobs could go. Section 5 explores this in more detail.

Infrastructure

4.3.15 Telford was planned on the basis of approximately 220,000 people. As such, it has considerable infrastructure in place to support future growth. However, new development will require some improvements and new provision, where necessary. An infrastructure delivery plan will be produced alongside the draft plan in early 2014. This will consider in detail the infrastructure required to support the delivery of the plan, including transport, health and education facilities, as well as parks and open space. New development, as well as supporting the viability of new and existing services, will generate a financial contribution through council tax income, New Homes Bonus payments and increased business rates. This will support regeneration and delivery of new infrastructure.

5 Spatial Distribution

5 Spatial Distribution

5.0.1 The aim of spatial planning is to direct and manage the location, type and amount of development in the most balanced, effective and successful way.

5.0.2 The purpose of this section of the Strategy & Options document is to describe our approach to the spatial distribution of two key aspects of development; housing and employment. It provides a description and reasons for the approach and concludes with options including a preferred approach which the Council believes aligns most closely with the national 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' agenda and the need to deliver the scale of growth required to deliver the vision, aims and objectives.

Housing and Employment

5.0.3 The location of new homes has both a direct and indirect relationship with employment. It includes the need to provide housing which:

- enables good access to places of work and particularly sustainable access for example by foot, cycle or public transport;
- enables a choice of type, size and tenure which is attractive to and provides housing for unskilled and semi skilled workforce as well as managers, owners and investors.

5.0.4 It is important for the economic prosperity of the borough that all options regarding the distribution of new homes is directed at increasing employment and the opportunities associated with it, helping to improve skills and approached in tandem with the availability, location and the managed sequential release of employment land.

5.0.5 In particular, the spatial distribution of housing should seek to provide new homes for both younger and older age groups (ref. evidence contained in section 7 Economic Development) and it must relate the location of housing to provide good access to educational provision. It should support the rural economy by locating housing in existing rural settlements and be provided as part of mixed use developments (developments which are a combination of homes and employment provision) and facilitate an adaptable approach to the provision of new homes to enable flexibility in the use of land such as change of use between residential and employment.

5.1 Committed development

5.1.1 The previous section explained that approximately 50% (13,064) of the proposed housing provision over the plan period is already committed. 99.5% of this committed housing is located within the existing urban areas of Telford and Newport with by far the greatest number located within Telford.

5.1.2 This section of the Strategy & Options document is primarily a description of the possible distribution of the remaining residual 50% new homes.

5.2 Spatial options

5.2.1 Housing can be located in three strategic areas in the Borough; urban, urban fringe and rural.

5 Spatial Distribution

Urban

5.2.2 This concerns housing development located in the urban areas of Telford and Newport with a particular emphasis upon Telford Town Centre and urban centres such as Wellington, Newport town centre, Hadley, Donnington, Oakengates, Dawley Lawley, Lightmoor and Madeley and the Sports & Learning Communities such as Wellington Learning Community, Ercall Wood Learning Community, Madeley Academy Learning Community, The Catholic Learning Community, Lakeside Learning Community, Newport Learning Community, Dawley Learning Community, Oakengates Learning Community and the Hadley Learning Centre & The Bridge Learning Community.

5.2.3 Housing development can maximise the sustainable benefits of being located close to existing services and facilities; housing close to existing market towns can help regenerate and sustain the services and facilities in these areas and housing around Sports and Learning Communities helps sustain the excellent education facilities within the borough and support the borough's growing entrepreneurial culture.

5.2.4 Housing focused within the urban areas also helps to satisfy a number of the proposed Plan objectives including objectives 1 and 2 which support the regeneration of the Donnington, College, Malinslee, Brookside, Woodside and Cuckoo Oak Targeted Intervention Areas.

5.2.5 Development in the urban area must be carefully integrated into existing areas so that it makes a positive contribution. In Telford and Wrekin this particularly involves achieving a balance between protecting, enhancing and providing an appropriate amount of the right type of green infrastructure in the right location (one of the borough's key resources) and the need to build new homes, businesses and infrastructure.

Urban Fringe

5.2.6 This concerns development within the area immediately adjoining the boundary of the existing urban areas of Telford and Newport. Sites within this location are usually referred to as Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUE's). Sustainable Urban Extensions are new areas of development beyond the existing urban boundary which are planned in such a way that they have sustainable characteristics and qualities.

5.2.7 Housing located in this area can help increase the choice of new homes offering a 'best of both' location close to the urban and rural areas of the borough. It can also help enhance the quality of the environment between the urban and rural areas by replacing inappropriate development with high quality housing that blends more appropriately with the countryside.

Rural

5.2.8 Housing in the rural area can help support rural communities which is an objective of the *National Planning Policy Framework* as well as making good use of previously developed land. It offers the potential to help address affordable rural housing need as well as providing other house types.

5.2.9 Housing in the rural area has its challenges including the distances from centres, access to facilities and services as well as the need for infrastructure and the impact upon rural character.

5 Spatial Distribution

5.2.10 The plan proposes to locate housing development in all three strategic areas because:

- it maximises the ability to achieve all proposed aims and objectives within the Plan;
- it enables the Council to harness the different opportunities provided by each area;
- it enables the Council to adopt a more proactive and positive approach to development given the broader range of locational options available;
- it provides a wider choice of sites and therefore the opportunity to avoid areas with technical and designated site constraints;
- it enables the Plan to be more responsive to land availability (*the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment*) and viability.

Amount

5.2.11 The borough of Telford and Wrekin is fortunate in possessing a generous amount of land which has the potential for new housing. The challenge for the borough is therefore not one of finding housing land but about the choices that must be made in deciding not only where housing might be located but also the amount of housing in those locations.

5.2.12 To help inform those choices the housing options have been prepared with regard to a number of issues.

- How the option contributes to achieving the six key strategic aims listed in the vision and objectives section of the Plan:

Aim 1 : Cohesive, healthy and prosperous communities

Aim 2 : Economic prosperity

Aim 3 : Education transformation

Aim 4 : Accessible and integrated transport network

Aim 5 : Rich cultural experience

Aim 6 : Environmental enhancement

- How the option is in conformity with the *National Planning Policy Framework*
- How the option is in accordance with sustainable urban design principles
- How the option is responsive to technical, physical and policy constraints
- How the option is responsive to market economics and viability

5.2.13 This is a local approach and it is recognised that the Plan will need to undertake further work to fully assess the implications of the options.

5 Spatial Distribution

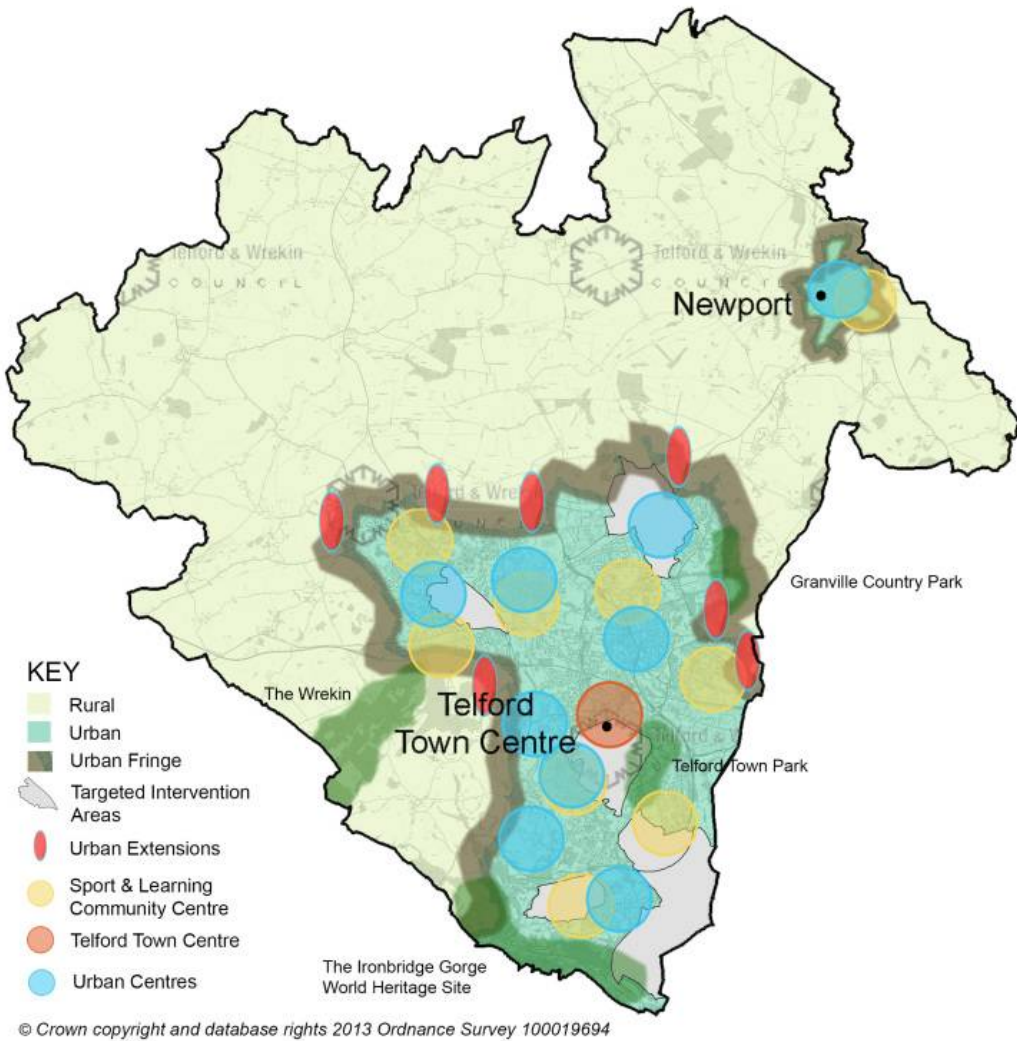
Options

5.2.14 3 options have been identified which are considered to be achievable scenarios.

5.2.15 Options 1 and 2 are relative extremes based upon a comparatively unconstrained and dispersed development (Option 1) or a highly urban focused pattern of development (Option 2). Option 3 is based upon providing a choice of development opportunities and managed supply.

5 Spatial Distribution

5.2.1 Option 1 : Dispersed Development



Map 4 Option 1 : Dispersed Development

5 Spatial Distribution

Strategic Area	%	Approximate Housing Numbers
Urban	High	19,250
Urban Fringe	High	5,250
Rural	Medium	2,000

Table 3

5.2.1.1 This option is strongly market led and involves a dispersed pattern of development across all three areas. Whilst it provides the greatest choice for development particularly by allocating a high proportion of development on the urban fringe as urban extensions, it risks placing housing in locations which may reduce its ability to support regeneration or help sustain existing services and could involve extensive new infrastructure.

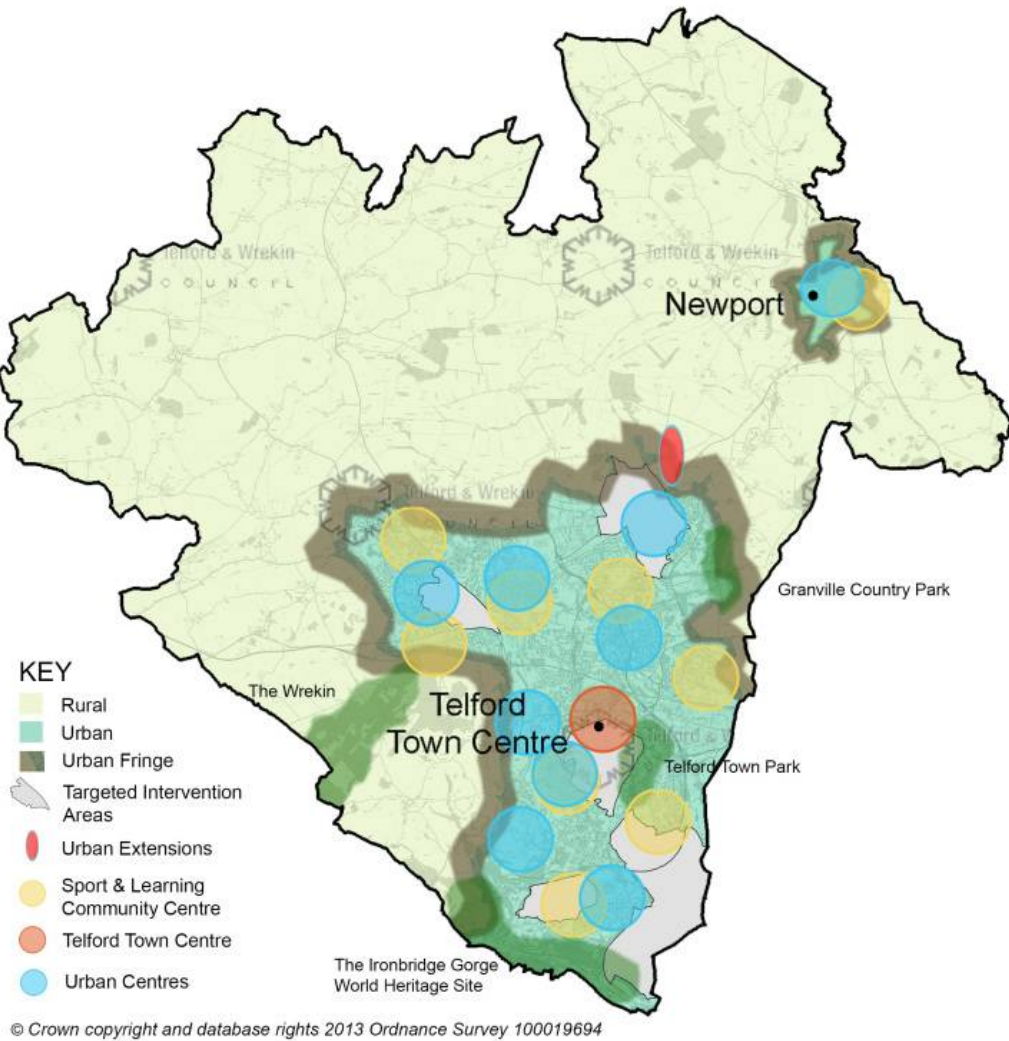
5.2.1.2 Guidance indicates that an urban extension should be of a sufficient scale for local services and facilities such as schools and public transport facilities to be viable and 7 locations within the urban fringe identified from the *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment* appear to be large enough to accommodate this number of dwellings.

5.2.1.3 This option continues to involve a high number of dwellings in the urban area in recognition that almost all of the committed housing development is already located within this area, particularly Telford. This development would be focused around existing urban centres and Sports and Learning Communities in recognition of the benefits of proximity to existing facilities and services as well as achieving social, economic, environmental and regeneration benefits associated with the Targeted Intervention Areas.

5.2.1.4 The option suggests an amount of development in the rural area which is considerably greater than recent rural housing delivery levels (*Annual Monitoring Report 2012*). A large proportion of this delivery could be provided on previously developed land in the rural area.

5 Spatial Distribution

5.2.2 Option 2 : Urban Concentration



Map 5 Option 2 : Urban Concentration

5 Spatial Distribution

Strategic Area	%	Approximate Housing numbers
Urban	Very high	25,250
Urban Fringe	Low	750
Rural	Low	500

Table 4

5.2.2.1 Option 2 concentrates housing in the Telford urban area and restricts development in the urban fringe to one sustainable urban extension where there are links to the Donnington Targeted Intervention Area and the Ministry Of Defence. The option includes the development of one previously developed site in the rural area and to conform with paragraph 55 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* in respect of promoting sustainable rural development where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

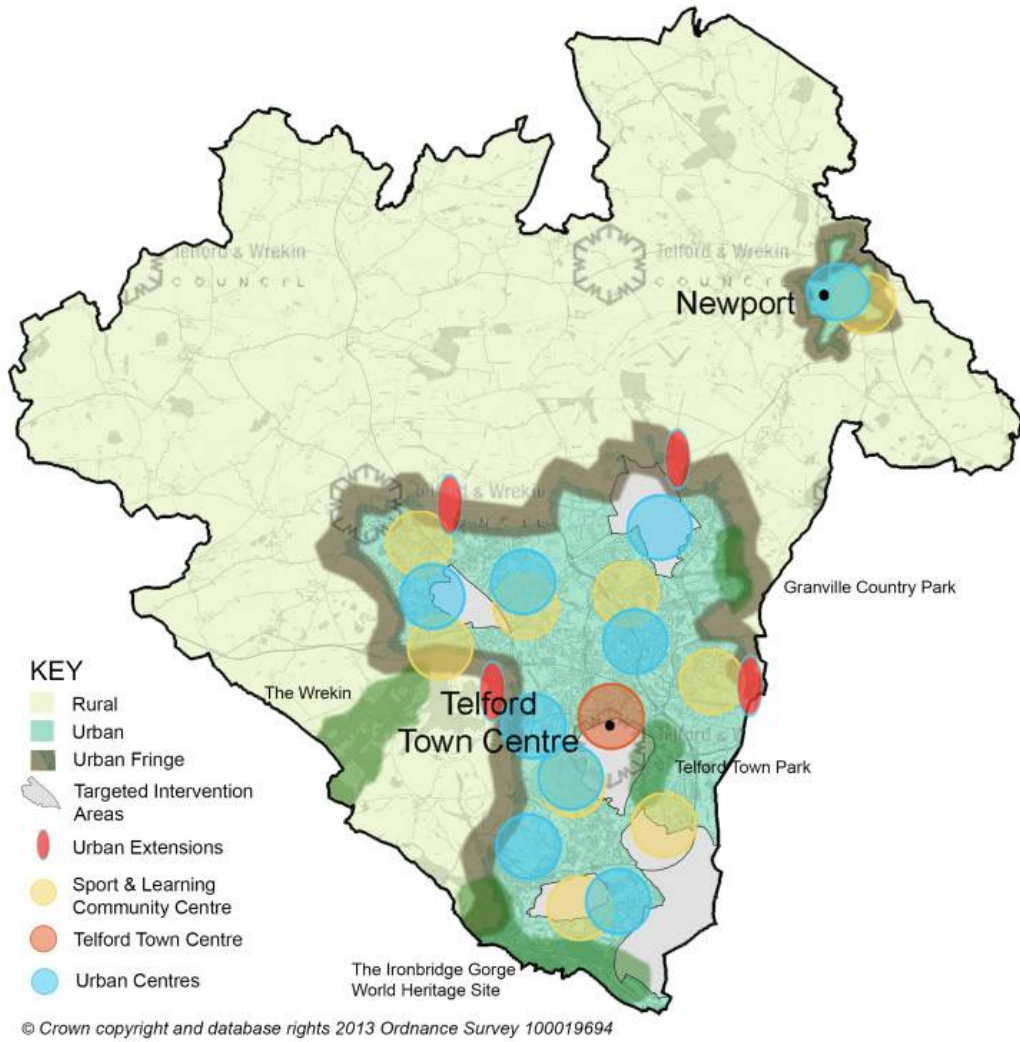
5.2.2.2 This option continues the existing emphasis of committed housing within the urban area which recognises the social and economic benefits that can be gained by being located close to existing centres and areas of employment.

5.2.2.3 It also provides the greatest opportunity to support the Targeted Intervention Areas with the associated benefits to education, skills, youth employment and regeneration.

5.2.2.4 This option restricts choice for developers, investors and home buyers and increases the development pressure on urban green space.

5.2.3 Option 3 : Growth Hub

5 Spatial Distribution



Map 6 Option 3 : Growth Hub

5 Spatial Distribution

Strategic Area	%	Approximate Housing Figures
Urban	High	22,500
Urban Fringe	Medium	3,000
Rural	Low	1,000

Table 5

5.2.3.1 Option 3 provides a managed approach offering choice to the market that uses development to deliver local priorities and maximise growth opportunities. It continues to pursue strong housing growth within the urban area in recognition of the regeneration benefits of this location and it recognises and responds to the development market's interest to develop within the urban fringe. It also indicates growth in the rural area which is higher than recent levels of housing delivery (the *Annual Monitoring Report*) in recognition of the opportunities afforded by the development of previously developed land.

5.2.3.2 The option is responsive to the development industry interest in the urban fringe ⁽¹⁵⁾ but indicates that this is limited to four sustainable urban extensions to ensure a balance of opportunities and to avoid detrimentally affecting the delivery of urban sites.

5.2.3.3 The allowance of a managed number of new urban extensions provides the opportunity to increase the choice for home buyers, developers and investors, helps to support the regeneration of the Donnington Targeted Intervention Area and locates new housing in a way that makes the best use of existing highway infrastructure and links to i54 and the West Midlands conurbation.

5.2.3.4 The option recognises the opportunities afforded by previously developed sites within the rural area to create mixed use development and the ability to support the rural economy in accordance with paragraph 55 of the *National Planning Policy Framework*.

5.2.3.5 Future work is necessary to assess locations within each strategic area in all options regarding viability and environmental constraints.

Preferred Approach

5.2.3.6 The preferred approach is Option 3: Growth Hub for the following reasons :

- It best reflects the ambition of the council and the community for managed growth
- It is responsive to market demand
- It provides greatest choice and opportunity both for development and home buyers
- It recognises the regeneration benefits associated with urban locations
- It enables housing development to support the Targeted Intervention Areas
- It recognises the sustainable value of urban locations
- It provides for a generous amount of development in the rural area in response to sites of previously developed land
- It supports rural communities

5 Spatial Distribution

Question 3

Do you agree with the Council's preferred spatial approach (Option 3: Growth Hub)?

Please explain your answer.

If 'no', which spatial approach do you consider most appropriate or are there any other alternative approaches?

For alternative options please provide evidence.

5.3 Employment

5.3.1 The scale of growth section identified that Telford and Wrekin is to become a regional hub for jobs growth and economic activity. It focuses upon providing employment opportunities for existing and new residents, responding to existing levels of unemployment, maximising the borough's regional economic offer, and establishing Telford and Wrekin as a hub for regional employment opportunities.

5.3.2 In subsequent iterations of the Local Plan and the spatial distribution of development, it will be important to provide flexible employment choices and employment opportunities associated with the Targeted Intervention Areas and Sports and Learning Communities. In the meantime, the next section, in setting out policy issues and options, discusses the Council's proposed approach to economic development, housing, transport and other important topic areas.

6 Introduction to Policy Issues and Options

6 Introduction to Policy Issues and Options

6.0.1 The purpose of this section is to assist the preparation of the draft plan. It sets out policy issues and options and builds upon the vision, objectives and spatial strategy set out above. The Council's proposed approach to each policy area is indicated as far as possible at this point. Key choices have been identified and are set out as "options", along with a series of questions. The Council welcomes feedback on these and also on other policy approaches that could be considered. In some cases, where the *National Planning Policy Framework* does not require a specific policy there is an option which seeks views on whether a local policy is considered necessary.

6.0.2 The detailed policies for the final plan will be developed following consultation, further evidence work and testing of the options. There could be changes in the proposed policy approach, additional policy areas to add to the draft plan or areas where no policy is required.

6.0.3 Prior to the preparation of the draft plan, all the "reasonable options" will be subject to appraisal. An interim sustainability appraisal of the policy options identified below has been produced. This interim sustainability appraisal and the comments upon it will inform the Council's choice of preferred options to be developed into policies.

6.0.4 The policies will be set out in a draft Local Plan and, as part of the statutory process, you will have the opportunity to provide your views on this prior to independent examination.

6 Introduction to Policy Issues and Options



Picture 6 Telford Millenium Community - Ketley, Telford

Presumption in favour of sustainable development

6.0.5 The proposed Shaping Places Local Plan vision and objectives reflect the principles of sustainable development by seeking to provide for the economic and social needs of the area, whilst addressing environmental issues such as climate change. This policy section follows on from these principles.

6.0.6 As noted at the start of this document, the *National Planning Policy Framework* includes a "presumption in favour of sustainable development". The government's approach is that "...*proposed development that accords with an up-to-date plan should be approved...*". The Local Plan must make this clear by including a specific policy in this respect⁽¹⁶⁾.

6.0.7 The Plan will therefore include a policy that requires that development proposals contribute towards the objectives of sustainable development. This will set out core criteria against which all proposals will be considered. These will include:

- support for the local economy
- provision of social benefits (for example local housing and/or community facilities)
- protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment

6 Introduction to Policy Issues and Options

6.0.8 The Council, like the *National Planning Policy Framework*, is pro-growth. The overall approach will be a positive one, in line with the Telford & Wrekin Council *Business & Development Charter* (2013), seeking to support a responsive development management service by giving greater certainty on development opportunities and supporting investment and growth. The Council will work with applicants in a collaborative and positive development management approach, ensuring that proposals have sustainability integrated from the outset.

7 Economic Development

7 Economic Development

7.0.1 Telford and Wrekin has a long history as a major focus for economic activity in the West Midlands. Ironbridge Gorge and the East Shropshire Coalfield played an essential role in the Industrial Revolution and Telford New Town was planned as a regional focus for employment development, a role which is continuing to be fulfilled today. The main employment areas are now established in Donnington Wood, Hadley Park, Halesfield, Hortonwood, Stafford Park and Telford Town Centre. These areas contain a range of existing businesses including key sectors such as advanced manufacturing, automotive industries and defence industries, and they continue to have an ample supply of highly accessible and serviced land available for development, which provides room for the borough's economy to grow.

7.0.2 Industries in Newport and the rural area are more strongly related to agriculture and food production. The Audley Avenue area in south east Newport contains a mixture of small industrial units and warehouses. In the rural area, employment development is dispersed. Large format employers have been in decline in recent years with the closure of the Allscott sugar beet factory and the announced closure of the Dairy Crest creamery at Crudgington. Smaller enterprises have grown within new developments such as Rodenhurst Business Park.



Picture 7 Employment Development - Hortonwood, Telford

7.0.3 The Council is committed to building a strong and resilient economy. With Telford continuing to fulfil its role as a regional hub for economic growth, job opportunities are to be maximised by making the most effective use of its large land resource and continuing to re-address skill levels in the workforce. Existing businesses are being supported to expand and new investment is being attracted that will deliver Telford and Wrekin's potential as a business growth hub.

7 Economic Development

7.0.4 The Local Plan will support this investment and growth by providing certainty on development opportunities, ensuring flexibility in the land opportunities that are available and addressing the need for new and improved infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth.

7.0.5 The plan can support economic growth by:

- identifying a range of sites to meet the needs of new businesses of all sectors and sizes
- supporting a wide range of employment opportunities and increasing the number of jobs over the plan period
- supporting education and the development of the skills of the workforce to address employer skills gaps
- improving the quality of the built environment, including the existing employment areas
- support the regeneration of the urban centres, enhancing their unique character and economic offer
- support the development of Telford Town Centre as a focus for retail, leisure and office development at the heart of the town
- planning for excellent transport infrastructure that provides access to employment opportunities for all parts of the borough

7.1 Attracting and supporting business growth

7.1.1 The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires Local Planning Authorities to set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area that supports economic growth. Policies should support existing businesses, attract investment, be flexible to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan and to allow a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances over the plan period. The location, promotion and expansion of clusters⁽¹⁷⁾ is to be planned for positively, as are networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries.

7.1.2 A key priority of Telford & Wrekin Council's *Medium Term Plan for 2013/14 to 2015/16* is to "...protect and create jobs as a Business Supporting, Business Winning Council". This means working co-operatively with local people, organisations and partners in the public, private and third sectors to support existing businesses and to attract new businesses and investment into the borough in order to create jobs. Targets to be achieved in the next two years are for a net increase in the number of jobs in the borough, to reduce unemployment with a particular focus on the 16 to 24 age group, and to increase the number of young people in education, employment or training.

7.1.3 The *Economic Development Strategy* (2005) identifies two key economic challenges; arresting the decline of economic output and; stimulating an economic revival and transforming the local economy to one that is higher value added and more knowledge intensive. This strategy's vision is for the economy to be diversified, with existing businesses supplemented by new investment to consolidate long term growth, and to deliver the highest economic output in the West Midlands. A range of business sector clusters are prioritised for development, including; advanced engineering, polymer industries, tourism and leisure, information and communications technology, specialist business and professional services, food and drink, and building technologies.

¹⁷ Clusters are concentrations of similar types of business that are able to support each other through networking and the exchange of business.

7 Economic Development

7.1.4 Many of these sectors already have a presence in the borough. For example there are already many tier one automotive supply chain industries such as Denso and GKN. These will continue to have potential to grow by taking advantage of opportunities presented by the Jaguar Land Rover development at i54, just 12 miles from junction 4 of the M54.

7.1.5 MOD Donnington continues to provide opportunities for defence logistics industries in the north of Telford, and tourism and leisure industries are particularly focused on Ironbridge Gorge, Telford Town Park and Southwater in Telford Town Centre. Telford International Centre in Southwater is the primary focus for conferencing and business tourism in the borough. Food and drink industries are largely focused on Newport and the rural area and Harper Adams University is a particularly vital asset in developing skills and knowledge in this sector.

7.1.6 Capitalising on all of these existing strengths effectively will provide a strong basis for Telford and Wrekin to continue building on its role as a regional growth hub. The Council will seek to identify the most effective policy approach to help attract and support jobs and productivity growth in the local economy as a whole, whilst continuing to focus on promoting the borough's existing strengths in these key sectors.

7.1.7 Early engagement⁽¹⁸⁾ showed that 93 out of 225 people who responded (41%) favoured the growth of manufacturing industries. This was followed by small scale enterprises (17% of responses) and tourism (15%). Manufacturing and production industries have traditionally been the biggest employers in the borough and they clearly continue to have a lot of local support.

18 *Shaping Places Local Plan - Results of Early Engagement 10th January - 27th February 2012*
http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5404/early_engagement_feedback_report

7 Economic Development

Evidence 1

The latest local economic statistics at April 2013⁽¹⁹⁾ show that:

- 6,700 people were unemployed in the working age (16 to 64) population in 2012. At 8.4% this has declined by almost 1% since 2011 but it is 2.9% higher than in 2008. This is below the West Midlands rate (8.6%) but above the national average (7.8%). 2,100 more people were unemployed in 2012 than in 2008, although this number fell by 900 people between 2011 and 2012
- youth unemployment is high at 29.8%, an increase of 5.7% since 2011 and 18.7% since 2008. In comparison both the national and regional rates declined between 2011 and 2012 to 20.8% and 21.9% respectively
- manufacturing employs the most people and this increased from 14,100 employees in 2008 to 14,400 in 2011. Employment in health industries grew the most, from 6,500 employees in 2008 to 7,900 in 2011. Public Administration & Defence saw the biggest decline over the same period (from 7,900 employees to 5,500), followed by Business Administration & Support Services (8,900 to 6,900)
- the borough's economic productivity (Gross Value Added) grew by 1% from £2.98 billion to £3.01 billion between 2010 and 2011. This is half the regional and national growth rates over the same period. Production makes up the biggest contribution (24.8% in 2010). Public Administration, Education and Health are the only sectors to have grown consistently between 2005 and 2010

The *Local Economic Assessment*⁽²⁰⁾ found that inward investment in the borough is high and that major building projects such as Building Schools for the Future and the Southwater development have helped in creating jobs. It did however identify a high dependency on public sector employment and a disparity between local labour market skills and the needs of business. Priorities for the Council to address include growing and increasing the number of jobs in the borough, liaising with and understanding the needs of employers, retaining the skills of the workforce leaving the public sector and supporting and connecting growing sectors such as automotive industries, retail, tourism, food and drink.

7.1.8 The Council's preferred policy approach is to support the growth and expansion of all business sectors, consolidating existing and diversifying sector representation in borough. Where businesses already exist, their growth will be supported. Where businesses do not currently have a presence they will be encouraged to locate here through the provision of suitable and readily available land and buildings for development.

7.1.9 The alternative option identified is to focus on prioritising the growth and investment of the borough's existing economic strengths in typically large format manufacturing and productions industries. This would ensure that the sectors identified above, including automotive related industries, continue to be the largest employers in the borough and contribute the most to the local economy.

19 Telford & Wrekin Council (April 2013) *Economic Profile* http://www.telford.gov.uk/info/200088/statistics_and_census_information/1450/economy_and_jobs

20 Telford & Wrekin Council (2011) *Local Economic Assessment* https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/download/1077/economy_and_jobs

7 Economic Development

Option 1

Set out a policy approach to secure economic growth through attracting new types of businesses to diversify the economy, whilst also supporting the long term success and growth of existing business sectors.

Alternative options would be:

- Focus on our existing strengths by prioritising the growth and development of our existing traditional large scale manufacturing and production businesses, including protecting sites for these industries.

Question 4

Do you agree with the Council's preferred approach for attracting and supporting business?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative approaches that should be considered?

7.2 Locating economic development

7.2.1 The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires Local Planning Authorities to identify strategic sites for employment development, where this is appropriate. Policies may also focus on supporting the location, promotion and expansion of key sectors or networks and should establish policies that support inward investment, economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement.

7.2.2 Telford & Wrekin Council's *Medium Term Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16* aims to establish Telford as the destination of choice for development and business investment in the region. The Council's *Invest in Telford* initiative actively promotes the borough to potential businesses and investors. This initiative has identified a need to improve gateways in to and around the borough, improve the environment of older industrial estates and prioritise road and rail improvements.

Locating Economic Development

7.2.3 In order to enable Telford and Wrekin to continue its role as a regional growth hub for employment and economic activity, the effective and coordinated delivery of its large supply of serviced and readily available land for economic development is essential.

7.2.4 This section begins to identify policy approaches for development opportunities in Telford, Newport and the rural area that can accommodate this business and jobs growth. This expands on the Council's proposed approach to pursue spatial option 3 in the spatial distribution of development. The draft plan will provide further detail about which specific sites and locations have been selected for future economic development.

7 Economic Development

Telford

7.2.5 Telford has the vast majority of the land available for employment development in the borough. This is a direct result of its previous New Town status, with 170 out of the 176 hectares of land identified as committed for employment development in the *Annual Monitoring Report* (2012). Donnington Wood, Hadley Park, Halesfield, Hortonwood, Nedge Hill and Telford Town Centre contain the vast majority of this land. There are also a smaller number of sites that stand alone from these employment areas, including Horsehay, Lightmoor and Shawbirch.

7.2.6 The choice for Telford is which sites within the urban area should be prioritised for future employment development. If the priority is to focus on developing the large availability of land within the established employment areas first then this will mean a greater focus on bringing forward the publicly owned former New Town land. This would support the local priority to invest in and improve the industrial estates and it will allow for greater clustering and networking of employment uses, but it would also mean that there would be less mixture of land uses overall. Under this policy approach employment land elsewhere may be considered for other land uses, such as housing development.

7.2.7 Another approach would be to encourage a greater overall mixture of land uses across Telford. This could be achieved by locating employment development in closer proximity to where people live and where there are other services and facilities to serve the workforce. This would mean prioritising some or all employment development on land in closer proximity to urban centres and the six Targeted Intervention Areas which have the highest levels of unemployment in the borough (Brookside, College, Cuckoo Oak, Donnington, Malinslee and Woodside). This approach would support the council's priorities to regenerate and reduce unemployment in these locations.

7.2.8 Apart from Central Telford, there is currently very little potential development land identified within or close to existing centres, so further development opportunities would need to be sought in order to pursue this policy approach. This may be achieved through a call for further development sites or it could be addressed through a 'sequential' policy approach whereby future proposals coming forward for employment development would need to be considered within or adjoining these locations in first preference to locations elsewhere. Any such approach would also need to be considered in conjunction with the retail and town centres policies of the Local Plan.

7.2.9 In the case of sustainable urban extensions under this policy approach, some of the land adjoining Telford's development boundary could be brought forward where the urban extension would be of sufficient scale to balance housing and economic development. This would also be a suitable option where an employment led extension would be accessible to an existing centre or Targeted Intervention Area, or if a larger mixed use extension would involve the creation of a new centre.

7.2.10 The final policy approach would be to not prioritise areas for employment development in Telford and instead apply general criteria. This would mean that the Council would be less able to focus economic development in specific existing employment areas, centres or areas of high unemployment in preference to other locations.

7 Economic Development

Option 2

The following options have been identified for the policy approach to locating future economic development in Telford:

- prioritise development within the established employment parks and industrial areas of Donnington Wood, Hadley Park, Halesfield, and Hortonwood
- identify opportunities for economic development within or close to existing or new centres and Targeted Intervention Areas
- apply general criteria instead of identifying priority areas for employment development

Question 5

Which option for the location of future economic development in Telford do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options that should be considered here?

Newport

7.2.11 Newport is a market town with a concentration of mixed uses focused on the town centre, including small scale offices and warehouses alongside retail, residential, leisure and other land uses.

7.2.12 To the south east of the town there are larger scale industrial and warehousing uses concentrated at Audley Avenue and there are smaller concentrations of employment development in different locations such as at Springfield Industrial Estate. The Audley Avenue area contains a 3.05 hectare site that was allocated for employment uses in the *Wrekin Local Plan* and an adjoining site that has planning permission for employment development. Both of these sites are currently undeveloped and have had new proposals submitted for mixed use development that includes housing as well as employment.

7.2.13 The Council has commissioned and published a study of employment land in Newport in order to inform the Local Plan⁽²¹⁾. This study found that there is a demand for at least 8 hectares of employment land to be developed in Newport in the period up to 2026. 4 hectares of this is currently anticipated to be met through the current planning approvals and applications for employment development within and adjoining the town. There is also the possibility that older employment uses such as those at Springfield Industrial Estate will need to be replaced in new locations over the next plan period. The Council's preferred approach for the future development of employment land in Newport is to therefore identify opportunities for a minimum of 4 hectares of additional land within or adjoining the town.

7.2.14 An alternative option would be not identifying further land for employment development and instead consider development proposals against general criteria developed from national policy. This would mean that the Council would be less able to coordinate the location of

21 Peter Brett Associates LLP (November 2012) *Newport: A Review of the Need for Employment Land*

7 Economic Development

employment development in Newport which could limit the supply of available land (through potentially suitable sites being developed for other uses), or it could lead to less sustainable forms of development.

Option 3

Identify an additional 4 hectares of land for employment development within or adjoining Newport.

An alternative policy approach could be to apply general criteria for economic development in Newport.

Question 6

Do you agree with the Council's preferred approach for the location of future economic development in Newport?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options that should be considered here?

Rural Area

7.2.15 The current policy approach in the *Wrekin Local Plan* and the *Core Strategy* is for development in the rural area to be focused on a small number of key villages. Development elsewhere is strictly controlled. Since the adoption of these development plans there have been significant changes in rural employment. Large employers such as British Sugar at Allscott and Dairy Crest at Crudgington have closed or are due to close and newer, smaller scale enterprises have developed, for example at the Rodenhurst Business Park. Some other large employers have remained and continue to grow, most notably Harper Adams University at Edgmond.

7.2.16 National policy does not contain specific requirements for the location of economic development in rural areas. Instead there is an emphasis on supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise. This includes both the conversion of existing buildings and the development of well designed new buildings. Wider benefits including the diversification of agriculture and land based businesses and the retention and development of services and facilities in villages are to be prioritised.

7.2.17 The closure of the large employment sites in the rural area present opportunities for brownfield redevelopment schemes that can bring forward new economic development. Focusing economic development on redeveloping these larger brownfield sites would be a sustainable approach, although the sites are largely concentrated in the west of the borough, with no such supply identified in the north or north east. Further consideration would also be needed as to whether these brownfield sites may be more appropriate for housing or for mixed use development, as many of them are also included in the *Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment*.

7 Economic Development

7.2.18 An alternative approach would be to continue with the current strategy of focusing development on rural villages, potentially with an exploration of broadening out the number of villages where development should be focused. This would help to support services and facilities in the villages and is likely to result in greater re-use of existing buildings. It could however deliver much smaller amounts of rural economic development than could be accommodated on the brownfield sites. There is currently a lack of known potential development sites identified within or adjoining existing villages so pursuing this option would require the identification of further sites.

7.2.19 The final option is not to identify locations for economic development in the rural area and use general criteria inspired from national policy. This would mean that future proposals for development would be considered on their own merits but it could also see new developments taking place in many areas of the countryside, both within existing settlements and in more isolated locations.

Option 4

The following options have been identified for the approach to locating future economic development in the rural area:

- prioritise economic development on the larger brownfield sites
- continue the current strategy of prioritising new development within or adjoining key rural villages
- apply general criteria for employment development in the rural area

Question 7

Which option for the location of future economic development in the rural area do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

8 Housing

8 Housing

8.0.1 This section covers general housing policies, it follows on from the scale of growth and spatial distribution sections in the earlier part of the document, where housing targets and location of housing development are covered. The key issues identified for the plan to address here are:

- housing mix, including meeting the needs of specific groups and responding to changing demographics and welfare reform over the plan period
- affordable housing percentage targets, site size thresholds and on/off site provision
- housing in rural areas
- gypsy and traveller accommodation

8.0.2 The home is of critical importance to everyone; to health, wellbeing and 'life chances' and to bring a sense of identity. The investment in new housing is of critical importance to Telford and Wrekin's residents and in promoting growth. The Local Plan must help achieve an appropriate housing stock to meet the future needs of the population across the area including an appropriate mix of housing tenures and types to meet the needs of different groups (including specialist accommodation). As covered elsewhere in this document housing should also be in accessible locations and meet environmental standards.

8.1 Housing mix

8.1.1 Housing mix refers to types of dwellings such as houses, flats or bungalows. It also refers to unit size, which can be described in terms of the numbers of bedrooms or floor area. Housing mix can also relate to tenure, in particular the need for affordable housing and specialist housing such as housing for the elderly or for people with special needs. These elements of housing mix will be considered in separate sections below.

8.1.2 The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires that the Council "...plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community" and the plan should "...identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required".

8.1.3 As a result of the new town origins of Telford, the borough has a greater proportion of relatively new housing stock when compared to England as a whole. Telford and Wrekin also has considerably more detached and semi-detached houses, than the region or England, offset by far fewer terraced houses and flats.



Picture 8 Housing - St Johns Walk, Lawley, Telford

Evidence 2

2011 census data is currently becoming available. In 2001, the most common dwelling type in Telford and Wrekin was the semi-detached house (37% of households), followed by detached houses (31%) and terraced houses (22%). Only 9% of dwellings were flats.

The *Telford & Wrekin Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (2010) advises that demographic demand for market housing would suggest a focus on smaller units. A mix of provision between houses and flats, mainly two and three bedroom units, is advised. The study also notes the borough has a shortage of stock in the price bands above £300,000 (at base date 2007), so seeking some higher value provision is also appropriate.

The *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* suggests that new affordable housing should mainly be in the form of two and three bedroom units, mostly houses but with around 33% in the form of flats. This was broken down into an overall annual need for:

- 984 social rented housing units (79%)
- 256 intermediate housing units (21%)

8 Housing

8.1.4 A new *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* is being undertaken to support the Local Plan. The ageing population and impact of national welfare reform are issues that may have a considerable impact on the private rented and social sector. 2011 Census material will also help clearer conclusions to be drawn on the types of dwellings and unit size that will best fit demographic trends, market trends and local housing needs.

8.1.5 The Council proposes to include a policy setting out a requirement for a broad mix of different types and sizes of housing on all large housing development sites. Such a policy would help meet the full range of housing needs in the borough as identified in an updated *Strategic Housing Market Assessment*. This approach aims to deliver mixed communities, meet changing demographic needs and encourage housing affordability. The implementation of this policy would also need to be supported by the new *Strategic Housing Market Assessment*. Large sites would need to be defined, for example over 10 units as a "major" site, or 15 units in view of the previous national threshold on requiring affordable housing.

8.1.6 Affordable housing need was broken down in the *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* into c80% social rented housing units and c20% intermediate housing units (21%).

8.1.7 These percentages will be reviewed in the light of updated evidence (*Strategic Housing Market Assessment*) and to take into account the new "affordable rent" tenure.

Option 5

Set out a policy to apply to all large housing development sites across the borough requiring a specified mix of:

- different types of housing
- sizes of housing unit and
- tenure of affordable housing

Question 8

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach to include a policy for housing mix in the plan?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

8.2 Affordability

8.2.1 Local planning authorities should help meet the housing needs of the whole community by supporting the delivery of affordable housing. The *National Planning Policy Framework* defines affordable housing as "Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled

for alternative affordable housing provision". Homes that do not meet the definition of affordable housing, such as "low cost market" housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes. The government's aim, as expressed in the *National Planning Policy Framework*, is that housing policies meet objectively assessed needs.

8.2.2 New affordable homes can be delivered through wholly affordable schemes developed by a registered provider and also via policy targets seeking a proportion of affordable units on private market schemes.

8.2.3 The economic recession has reduced the availability of mortgage finance and falling or constrained incomes has meant that for many, especially first time buyers, the difficulty of being able to purchase a property has increased. It has reduced the viability of much new housing development, affecting the percentage of affordable homes that can be funded through planning obligations.

8.2.4 The Homes and Communities Agency national *Affordable Homes Programme* (to 2015) provides grants to Registered Providers to build affordable homes. This funding is focused on the new affordable rent tenure and grant levels per unit are lower than under previous programmes.

8 Housing

Evidence 3

The Telford & Wrekin *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (2010 update) considers overall housing need, requirements by size type and tenure and the existing affordable housing supply. It identifies a net affordable housing need of 1,240 units per annum throughout Telford and Wrekin to fully meet housing needs to 2016.

Nationally levels of affordable housing delivered via planning obligations have been impacted by the recession. In Telford the average was around 25% at 2008, but currently averages around 15% with specific sites at lower percentages due to extreme abnormal ground conditions and increased pressure on viability.

Affordable housing completions⁽²²⁾ for the last 5 years have been rising steadily but remain below overall identified need:

- 2007/8: 73
- 2008/9: 139
- 2009/10: 184
- 2010/11: 202
- 2011/12: 275

The *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* notes that:

- the Telford housing market generally has lower housing values and higher levels of social rented and privately rented housing;
- the rural areas have higher values and are predominantly owner-occupied;
- Newport also generally has higher values.

An *Affordable Housing Viability Study*, carried out in late 2009, identified a number of separate market value areas and various affordable housing targets were tested. It was concluded that the policy targets of 35% in Newport and 40% in the rural area remained broadly appropriate in viability terms. All market areas in Telford, except south east Telford, were found to be viable at a policy target of 20% affordable housing.

In order to inform the preparation of new policies, and to cover the Local Plan period to 2031, the *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* will be revised and further viability work will be undertaken, taking account of any changes to market conditions.

8.2.5 Market conditions may change and viability evidence will be critical preparation of policies and their implementation. This will be kept under review in respect of changed viability conditions.

22 Telford & Wrekin Council (2012) *Annual Monitoring Report*
http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/3531/annual_monitoring_report_2011

Percentage targets for affordable housing

8.2.6 At present, on sites of 15 or more units, or sites of over 0.5 ha, the Council's current targets are 38% affordable housing in Telford (20% for the Central Telford Area), 35% in Newport and 40% in the rural area. These targets are applied with reference to local viability and implemented via negotiation.

8.2.7 The Council's *Business and Development Charter* (2013) makes clear that responding to the economic downturn and creating the conditions for the continued growth and regeneration of the borough is a top priority for the Council, including ensuring the viability of development. The Charter sets out the Council's current approach to viability in respect of housing developments. Where viability is raised as a concern, a robust, open and transparent viability assessment is required. While viability may lead to a reduction in affordable homes delivered via planning obligations. This has helped ensure the continued delivery of overall housing development locally and, despite the weakness of the housing market in recent years, the average levels of affordable housing delivered have been around 15%. This can be compared with Shropshire Council who use a dynamic model that currently has a 13% requirement.

8.2.8 It is proposed that the Local Plan set targets seeking a proportion of affordable units on private market schemes. It is important to note at the outset that the local housing market is not uniform and house prices and affordable supply varies. Lower targets in certain areas would be supported by viability evidence and the preferred option is likely to be a range of area-based targets, covering Telford, Newport and the rural area. Furthermore in applying targets it should be noted that significant variations in viability can occur site to site which would need to be taken into account in applying the targets.

8.2.9 Setting high targets would prioritise the need for more affordable units to be provided and contribute to reducing overall housing need locally. However, fewer sites may get released for development due to impact on viability and land values. Targets above the level indicated by viability evidence are also unlikely to withstand public examination or legal challenge and are therefore not considered a realistic option.

8.2.10 Setting affordable housing targets that are lower than the level indicated by viability evidence would be an alternative option and this may encourage some developers and landowners to bring forward sites and could incentivise overall housing delivery in certain areas. Such targets would however fail to maximise opportunities to address the assessed local need. Lower targets could also be used to prioritise growth and regeneration in certain areas.

8.2.11 The targets to include in the final plan will be subject the findings of a new *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* and further viability work on the plan. Review points could be built in with reference to more up-to-date evidence. The targets would also need to be applied with reference to specific considerations regarding site viability and implemented via negotiation.

8 Housing

Option 6

Set separate affordable housing targets for Telford, Newport and the rural area. These would apply to qualifying sites at levels advised by local viability evidence (currently 20% in Telford, 35% in Newport and 40% in the rural area).

Alternative options might be:

- to set targets for each of the 3 areas at lower levels than current local viability evidence suggests could potentially be achieved;
- set a single borough-wide target (as advised by current local viability evidence this should be at 20%);
- to set a greater variety of targets in relation to locations.

Question 9

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach of setting affordable housing targets for Telford, Newport and the rural area in the Plan?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

Affordable Housing Thresholds

8.2.12 National policy does not set out a threshold at which residential sites should be expected to provide a proportion of affordable housing.

8.2.13 The Council's previous approach has been to set a development threshold of 15 units (or 0.5ha) in line with former national policy (*Planning Policy Statement 3*). The *Affordable Housing Viability Study* (2010) endorsed this threshold.

8.2.14 A threshold higher than 15 would apply to far fewer sites and needs to take into consideration the previous national figure. A lower threshold could be an appropriate option in parts of the borough where sites coming forward have been predominately below 15 units in size (such as in Newport or the rural area). This could be set for example at 10 units ("major developments").

8.2.15 Policy thresholds can lead to developers favouring schemes of a size just below the threshold size. A further option would be to set no threshold at all and seek affordable housing provision, or a contribution in lieu of on-site provision, on all residential developments.

8.2.16 Both these approaches would ensure that affordable housing contributions are sought from a greater range of sites. The bulk of supply however comes from sites of over 15 units and fewer smaller sites may be released for development due to viability and impact on land values. The percentage requirement policies would also be more difficult to apply to very small sites, with on-site provision being difficult or impossible to achieve and a need to consider off-site provision or commuted sums.

Option 7

The following options having been identified in respect of residential sites providing a proportion of affordable housing:

- set a borough-wide threshold of 15 units or 0.5 hectares and above for residential sites to provide a proportion of affordable housing
- set separate lower thresholds for Telford, Newport and the rural area
- seek affordable housing provision or a contribution in lieu of on-site provision on all residential developments irrespective of size
- set a single lower threshold borough wide

Question 10

Which option for affordable housing thresholds do you feel most appropriate to the borough?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

On-site or off-site provision of affordable housing

8.2.17 In order to support delivery of mixed and balanced communities the *National Planning Policy Framework* states that affordable housing contributions should be met on-site unless off-site provision or a financial contribution of equivalent value can be robustly justified. Commuted sums also place the burden of responsibility for the delivery of the affordable housing on the Council but may offer greater viability and value, particularly in areas where there is already a high concentration of affordable homes.

8.2.18 The Council's interim approach is set out in the *Development and Business Charter* (Feb 2013). The provision of affordable housing on the application site is sought as part of the overall scheme, but the critical importance of viability in ensuring the continued growth and regeneration of the borough is recognised. Only where the applicant has demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that with on-site provision of affordable housing at the target rate the development scheme will not be viable will the Council vary this approach. In particular, in line with the *Development and Business Charter*, for schemes in Telford of less than 50 units, where robust evidence through viability assessment indicates it is acceptable, a commuted sum may be accepted in respect of all or part of the affordable housing requirement.

8.2.19 In applying such an approach, the Council could also consider a lower level of on-site affordable housing or an alternative dwelling mix to increase scheme viability.

8 Housing

Option 8

The following options having been identified in respect of on-site/off site provision of affordable housing:

- set out a policy to require that on qualifying sites affordable housing should be provided on the application site as part of the overall scheme following the approach set out above and to state a preference for a lower level of on-site affordable housing or an alternative dwelling mix, prior to considering developer contributions for off site provision
- an alternative approach would be to take a more favourable approach to either off-site provision or financial contributions in lieu of provision. This could potentially involve having criteria related to factors such as viability and the surrounding housing mix

Question 11

Which option in respect of seeking on-site provision of affordable housing on residential sites do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

8.3 Rural housing

8.3.1 The Local Plan's approach to rural housing should support rural vitality and the economic viability of existing communities. The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that housing in rural areas should reflect local needs and should be focused where it will enhance and maintain rural communities. Isolated homes in the countryside should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

8.3.2 The amount and distribution of housing required in rural areas is considered in the Spatial Distribution section, earlier in this document.

Rural affordable housing

8.3.3 Rural housing should meet the needs of rural communities. High house prices in rural areas have prevented many local people, even on reasonable incomes, from accessing the housing market. There are few social rented properties available and local people who have employment or family ties are often unable to access local housing. This has wider implications for rural communities as businesses, schools and social networks decline.

8.3.4 At a local level, Telford & Wrekin Council has prioritised rural affordable housing in its *Local Investment Plan*, developed in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency. The Agency has also identified rural affordable housing as a priority.

8.3.5 The *Telford & Wrekin Strategic Housing Market Assessment* highlights a high level of need for this provision. The Council's current policy approach allows development of affordable housing in rural areas including 100% affordable developments ("rural exceptions"). The number of recent rural affordable developments has however been limited.

Evidence 4

Parish level *Rural Housing Needs Surveys* (2010 - 2012) show a small but significant local affordable housing need in all parishes surveyed. The identified need includes rental and shared ownership properties, 2 or 3 bed accommodation and also specific provision for people with disabilities.

The *Affordable Housing Viability Study* (2010) showed viability of market schemes to support associated affordable provision was strongest in the rural area, where 40% was considered an appropriate target for affordable housing.

8.3.6 The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances, planning development to meet local needs for affordable housing and in particular consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.

8.3.7 The Local Plan could therefore include a policy approach supporting mixed private / affordable housing within or adjoining any rural settlement where there is robust evidence of local need for affordable housing (a Council study or evidence submitted by a Housing Association, private developer or an individual where sufficiently robust). Occupancy would be conditioned to ensure they remain affordable "in perpetuity". The number of affordable units would be expected to relate to the need identified locally and the proportion of private units be limited to that which is required to make the required number of affordable units viable. Up-to-date viability evidence could be required in order to demonstrate this.

8.3.8 Working with a Registered Provider, an agreed Local Lettings Plan could be put in place for each new rural development to ensure that people with a local connection (such as employment, a period of residence or caring responsibilities) receive initial priority (and to apply to subsequent lettings/sales).

8.3.9 This cross subsidy approach responds to funding and viability issues and will help deliver new market housing and affordable housing in the rural area, retaining the character of the rural area and ensuring that affordable properties are allocated to local people and remain affordable in perpetuity.

8 Housing

Option 9

Set out a rural exceptions policy to:

- allow for cross subsidy development with market housing to support an affordable element;
- on the basis of need, allow a larger number of dwellings than currently permitted;
- widen the range of settlements in which such development is permitted.

An alternative option would be to continue the existing policy approach for 100% affordable rural housing exceptions.

Question 12

Do you agree with the Council's proposed rural exceptions approach?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

8.3.10 The *National Planning Policy Framework* sets out specific exceptional circumstances in which isolated homes in the countryside can be permitted. These are:

- the need for a rural worker to live at or near their place of work
- where such development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or secure the future of a heritage asset
- where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting; or
- the exceptional design quality or innovative nature of the proposal.

Question 13

Does the Council need a policy permitting isolated homes in the countryside in exceptional circumstances?

Please comment on your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

8.4 Specialist housing

8.4.1 The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that a mix of housing to meet the needs of different groups in the community should be planned for, including older people and people with disabilities.

Evidence 5

The borough has an ageing population. The proportion that are over-65 is forecast to increase by 37% by 2026 and the over-85s are forecast to increase by 17%.

Around 8,300 residents aged 18-64 have a moderate physical disability and a further 2,500 have a severe physical disability⁽²³⁾.

8.4.2 Specific forms of housing will be needed to meet increased demand from an ageing population. The *National Planning Policy Framework* defines older people as "People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs." It is important to differentiate the needs of "active" and "less active" older people. Increasingly, older people are enjoying better health and many continue in employment into later life.

8.4.3 Many older people are seeking to live independent lives in their own homes and, with increasing care costs, the ability to stay at home, or defer a move to residential accommodation, will help to contain these costs. Flexible or adaptable housing (lifetime homes) will allow older people to stay in their homes for longer and can help meet the needs of people with disabilities. This would reduce the demand for adaptations arising from declining mobility in old age and help older people avoid remaining in under-occupied and unsuitable homes.

8.4.4 We need to consider how to meet the needs and aspirations of the "active older people" and also ensure that housing can continue to remain suitable as they become "less active". Bungalows are often identified as well suited to meeting the needs of older people and retirement communities could be encouraged.

8.4.5 "Less active" older people have specific needs in terms of type of housing and location. Sheltered housing and extra care housing are needed. Sites should be well located in order to provide good access to public transport, health, leisure and other facilities.

8.4.6 The Local Plan should encourage a greater range of options and choices for older people. A criteria-based policy to guide the provision of housing appropriate for the needs of older people and people with disabilities could be included and in particular the Local Plan could require an element of supply on larger sites is lifetime homes compliant. The size of qualifying sites and the percentage requirement would need to be defined.

8.4.7 The *National Planning Policy Framework* defines people with a disability as those who "have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs". Specific provision is needed such as residential/nursing homes.

8.4.8 A Local Plan policy could require a proportion of provision for people with disabilities, for example we could set a target for the proportion of homes built to full wheelchair standard.

8 Housing

8.4.9 The alternative to the inclusion of a policy approach to specialist housing would be to leave such matters to the development market. Any policy targets that were proposed would need to be considered in relation to site viability.

Option 10

The following options have been identified for the approach to specialist housing:

- to require a proportion of new residential development to be lifetime homes compliant
- to encourage provision of specialist housing appropriate for the differing needs of older people
- and to encourage provision of specialist housing appropriate for the needs of people with a range of disabilities.

Question 14

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach to provision of specialist housing?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

8.5 Gypsies and travellers

8.5.1 It is important to consider the accommodation needs of all parts of the community. Gypsy and traveller families often face a lack of appropriate accommodation and poor access to services such as health or education. A lack of local sites can increase unauthorised encampments and impact upon local communities, businesses, and make it difficult for gypsy and traveller families to access education and services. ⁽²⁴⁾

8.5.2 There are currently two Council run traveller sites in Telford and Wrekin and a number of small private sites. There are no transit sites or authorised stopping places.

24 Whilst referring to "travellers" this section considers the planning issues relating to gypsy, traveller and travelling show people sites, both permanent accommodation and sites for people moving through the area.



Picture 9 Gypsy and Travellers site - Telford

8.5.3 National policy⁽²⁵⁾ requires that the Council set local targets for traveller accommodation in line with objectively assessed need and to plan for sites to meet these targets over a reasonable time scale. National policy requires that the Council be proactive in meeting local targets and demonstrate that 5 years' worth of new supply against these targets is in place.

8.5.4 The Local Plan will therefore need to provide a local basis for future decisions on applications for traveller sites and will address the number of unauthorised encampments by:

- setting pitch targets for traveller sites and for travelling show people's plots;
- setting criteria to use when considering traveller site proposals;
- allocating sites to meet these targets.

8 Housing

Pitch targets

Evidence 6

The *Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, Herefordshire and Powys Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment* (2008) identified a shortfall of provision in Telford & Wrekin and proposed the following local targets to 2017:

- 34 residential pitches
- a transit site
- 5 travelling show peoples' plots

Seeking provision of new residential pitches was recommended by the study in order to respond to locally arising need. Transit provision would help address issues in respect of groups passing through the area. Local evidence relating to unauthorised encampments indicates an urgent need to provide additional permanent pitches and transit provision.

This evidence is being updated to inform the Local Plan to 2031.

Criteria for considering traveller site proposals

8.5.5 National policy requires sites to be allocated and criteria-based policies to be set out. In advising upon criteria to use in allocating sites and considering proposals, the national policy statement identifies issues including the following:

- promoting peaceful co-existence between the site and the local community
- promoting access to appropriate health services, schools
- considering the effect of local environmental quality, such as noise and air quality or and flood risk on the health and well-being of travellers
- avoiding placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services

8.5.6 Other issues could also be considered in a local approach to traveller sites. These might include: reducing impact on sensitive landscapes, making efficient use of previously developed land, highway access, adequate space for vehicle parking and turning, potential for screening sites and access to utilities including electricity, water, drainage.

Option 11

Allocate sites to provide additional permanent pitches and transit provision along with a policy setting out criteria for assessing other traveller site proposals coming forward. This policy could cover the issues identified above.

An alternative option would be to include further criteria in the policy.

Question 15

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach of allocating sites to provide additional permanent pitches and transit provision and setting out a policy regarding the local factors to consider in respect of the location of traveller site proposals?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

9 Transport

9 Transport

9.0.1 Transport is key for supporting economic growth.

9.0.2 Telford lies in the heart of the UK, adjacent to the M54 motorway only minutes from the national network at junction 10a M6, and excellent access to Birmingham International Airport. As a new town Telford has a modern road network providing fast, easy access to all parts of the town.

9.0.3 The local section of the national rail-network links mid and north Wales to England via the Midlands through hubs at Shrewsbury in the west and Birmingham New Street and Birmingham International in the east. Telford has three passenger rail stations: Wellington, Oakengates and Telford Central, along with an International railfreight terminal at Donnington. The International Railfreight Park is at the heart of Telford's industrial and development land and has excellent links to the highway network and to all national ports.



Picture 10 Wellington Bus Station, Telford

9.0.4 The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires local authorities to produce Local Plans with clear transport policies and local level. The *National Planning Policy Framework* also requires that Local authorities:

- set out policies to deliver transport infrastructure
- work with other authorities and providers to assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for transport, and take account of the need for strategic infrastructure including nationally significant infrastructure within their areas
- locate key facilities such as primary schools and local shops within walking distance of most properties, especially for large-scale residential developments
- locate and design development, where practical, to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements

- aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities
- identify and protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice

9.0.5 There is strong national guidance for transport policy. Transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives⁽²⁶⁾.

Evidence 7

The third *Local Transport Plan* (LTP3) for Telford and Wrekin sets out how we plan to manage, maintain and develop the borough's network over the period 2011 to 2026.

The six Local Transport Plan goals which will help achieve the overall vision to 2026 are:

1. Making travel more reliable and efficient, to attract jobs and support growth and regeneration.
2. Maintain highways effectively and efficiently
3. Reduce carbon emissions to help tackle climate change
4. Allow everyone to access jobs, education, healthcare, shops and leisure
5. Improve safety and security on the transport network and promote active travel choices which encourage people to be healthier
6. Improve the quality of life by reducing the visual, noise, air quality and other impacts of transport on people and the local environment.

The *Local Transport Plan* comprises an overarching strategy and a series of individual strategies to tackle specific topics such as the *Rights of Way Improvement Plan*, *Asset Management Plan* and *Road Safety Strategy*.

9.0.6 As part of the early engagement⁽²⁷⁾ the question was asked '*How can we change our towns, villages and countryside so that you can get to where you need to go more easily?*'. The most popular response to this question was to improve public transport.

9.0.7 Providing high quality, convenient access to jobs, services and the facilities people need to live their lives whilst accommodating growth is a significant challenge. When considering the location of new development and the identification and delivery of new transport infrastructure, the Council aims to minimise the need to travel and promote sustainable forms of transport.

9.1 Area Travel Plans

9.1.1 Reducing car miles not only benefits the environment and reduces congestion but it can also produce financial benefits and productivity for businesses, saving both time and money for the business and their staff.

26 Department for Communities and Local Government (2012) *National Planning Policy Framework*
 27 *Shaping Places Local Plan - Results of Early Engagement 10th January - 27th February 2012*
http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5404/early_engagement_feedback_report

9 Transport

9.1.2 Most businesses within the borough will have site-specific travel related issues which will dictate what type of measure or incentive they may wish to implement or adopt for their workplace in order to support travel for their employees.

9.1.3 An Area Travel Plan identifies the travel options and issues for a particular area for example Telford town centre. Businesses will be able to look at travel issues relating to their business and its location and collectively 'buy-in' to a range of incentives attached to the Area Travel Plan which will together influence a change of travel patterns of employees and a shift towards sustainable alternatives for travel to and from work and in conducting business during the working day.

9.1.4 The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that all developments which generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a Travel Plan. The Council proposes a policy supporting the adoption of travel plans as a means to reduce the number of trips made by private motor car, and will require this for all new strategic developments. It is envisaged that strategic developments will include developments within Telford town centre, and large-scale development that generates a significant increase in travel. The size of qualifying sites/type of development would need to be defined. All travel plans will be developed, implemented and managed in accordance with the travel plan guidance published by the Department for Transport (DfT) in *Good Practice Guidelines: Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process* (2009).

Option 12

Develop a policy that requires large-scale strategic developments and developments in Telford town centre to prepare an Area Travel Plan.

Question 16

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach of requiring Area Travel Plans?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

9.2 Accessibility and public transport

9.2.1 Good access to services, jobs and facilities is vital to supporting local communities and economic development. The Council will ensure transport infrastructure is in place to enable people to access work, education, skills and training and key services.

9.2.2 Telford was originally planned as a New Town with a low density of development. Furthermore, previous policies promoted the segregation of land uses in Telford. Travel other than by car is less attractive. Access to jobs and services by public transport in particular could

be improved. Considerable progress has been achieved in recent years in improving the urban bus network, with five quality bus routes introduced across the borough to help reduce levels of social exclusion.

9.2.3 The Plan provides an opportunity to ensure that all services and facilities, housing and jobs are accessible by an integrated network of sustainable transport. The Plan will also promote an improved network of walking, cycling and bus routes and support improvements to important rail links.

9.2.4 Increasing rural accessibility is also a major issue. A limited number of bespoke public transport initiatives exist for the rural area.

9.2.5 The Council has worked closely with public transport operators and other partners to improve the quality of bus services and rail services. The current *Local Transport Plan* includes proposals to introduce real-time passenger information systems, additional bus priority measures and bus stop improvements. Additional quality bus routes are intended to be introduced to improve bus services into Telford town centre. These will be introduced in particular, from the strategic housing sites of Lawley and Lightmoor as the significant new communities here develop.

9.2.6 To ensure provision is linked with growth proposals it is proposed to include a policy to improve accessibility and public transport provision.

Option 13

Develop a policy ensuring all new development is accessible by public transport and contributes to the borough's wider aims and objectives for improving accessibility.

Question 17

Do you agree with the Council's approach to improving accessibility and public transport through new developments?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

9.3 Rail

9.3.1 The Council are lobbying for re-establishment of a direct passenger link to London. In addition the Council will be working hard to ensure Telford receives the benefits that High Speed 2 will bring to the region in terms of reducing journey times to London and improved connectivity to the wider national network.

9.3.2 The *Local Transport Plan* promotes new rail lines and improvements to the Shrewsbury-Wolverhampton rail line and also aims to improve transport links to Telford's key visitor attractions, including development of a sustainable access and a rail access strategy for the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

9 Transport

9.3.3 The *Local Transport Plan* identifies the need to improve surface access to rail stations and as a result funding has been secured to improve access between Telford Central and the Town Centre. The Council has also invested in relocating the bus station in Wellington to create a rail/bus interchange. An access action plan has been established at Wellington Station to improve short term accessibility problems with a long term view to secure funding to install lifts and a bridge.

9.3.4 In terms of rail, Telford is already well placed to develop the sustainable movement of freight through the Telford International Freight Terminal at Donnington and the Council will continue working with local businesses to further enhance use of this highly accessible and quality facility.

Option 14

Develop a policy improving access to rail facilities and supporting business usage of rail facilities.

An alternative approach would be to have no specific policy regarding these facilities and rely solely on national policy when assessing development proposals.

Question 18

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach to improving access to rail as part of improving public transport?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

9.4 Walking and cycling

9.4.1 Walking and cycling have many benefits in terms of health and well-being as well as reducing vehicle trips and carbon emissions, improving air quality and reducing congestion.

9.4.2 Existing transport infrastructure can create significant barriers between residential and employment areas for travel by walking and cycling, emanating in the traditional segregation of land uses in Telford.

9.4.3 Telford and Wrekin has an extensive walking and cycling network which includes over 1000km of footways and just over 200km of cycle paths. In addition to this Telford is well served by three National Cycle Routes (81, 45 and 55) and together these make up 60km of the total cycle network across the Borough.

9.4.4 The Council is currently developing a cycle hierarchy across the borough which includes designating routes as Strategic Cycle Routes and Local Cycle Routes in addition to the National Cycle Network.

9.4.5 The Strategic Cycle Routes provide interconnecting routes between the National Cycle Routes and the main Town Centres, residential areas and employment areas. Targeted improvements to the signing and infrastructure along these routes will provide Telford with a comprehensive walking and cycling network.

Option 15

Set out a policy approach that promotes and enhances facilities and infrastructure to enable walking, cycling and other forms of non-motorised transport?

Question 19

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach for improving the walking and cycling network in the borough?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

9.5 Parking

9.5.1 National policy now provides flexibility for councils to set local parking standards for residential and non residential development.

9.5.2 Parking is a concern for developers marketing properties and for attracting new residents and investment. It is important that design principles take into account local circumstances to ensure that appropriate levels of parking are available. Striking the right balance between the availability, location and quality of parking is important to the provision of a safe, accessible and pleasant environment. The Council will develop locally appropriate design guidance for parking in residential areas.

9.5.3 The Council's approach to parking must complement planned improvements to public transport and the walking and cycling infrastructure, and support the overall strategy for regeneration and economic growth and the Council's *Local Transport Plan*.

9.5.4 The Council could set maximum parking standards⁽²⁸⁾ in the Local Plan. This would be clear to developers and easy to implement. Alternatively the Council could develop an approach that reflects location. This would be tailored to circumstances and locations but could be more complex to implement.

9 Transport

Option 16

The following options have been identified for parking policy approach:

- setting maximum parking standards or
- adopting more flexible approaches based on location.

Question 20

Which approach to parking policies do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

9.6 Road network

9.6.1 The quality and connectivity of the road network is critical to help support growth and plays an important role in facilitating the movement of people and freight.

9.6.2 Through the centre of Telford, the M54 motorway cuts an east-west line linking mid-Wales in the west to the Midlands in the east. The M54 reduces through-traffic on local roads, and the A442 Queensway acts as a north-south artery road.

9.6.3 Much of Telford New Town was planned for fast and easy vehicular use. It has a low density layout in comparison with many other towns with separate zones of land uses connected by a high capacity road network and separated by areas of open space.

9.6.4 *Manual for Streets 2* will be used as a basis for future highway design principles in residential areas.

9.6.5 The Council has developed a detailed highway model to allow studies into the future capacity on the network and the potential impacts of new developments and shifts in travel patterns to be undertaken. This will assist in identifying what improvements the highway network needs to accommodate growth over the lifetime of the plan and reduce congestion, and can be used as sites are identified.

9.6.6 This plan must mitigate the potential for increasing congestion from growth through the plan period and address the maintenance of the highway network. The Council propose to help mitigate the impact of developments on the existing transport network and to improve access by public transport to and from new development through contributions from developers. This is supported by the *National Planning Policy Framework* and would still be the Council's approach without a local a policy in place. A policy would however help add clarity and consistency here.

Option 17

Set out a policy approach which requires the effects of development on the road network to be taken into account and delivered through new development and via contributions from developers.

Question 21

Do you agree with the Council's approach to requiring consideration of impacts on the road network from new development?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

10 Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment

10 Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment

10.0.1 Green infrastructure is the term which is used to describe all types of green open space and natural features. It includes all public and private green areas such as parks, sports pitches and private gardens as well as all urban and rural green features such as highway verges, street trees and planters, hedges, woods and fields.

10.0.2 The Council currently also includes elements of blue infrastructure (rivers, streams, ponds, lakes and sustainable drainage features) within its definition of green infrastructure. Whilst there are very clear relationships and links between green and blue infrastructure for instance many sustainable drainage systems employ green infrastructure, to approach blue infrastructure in a more comprehensive and holistic way including water quality, water supply and flooding this subject is primarily addressed in the water and urban design sections.

10.0.3 The term green infrastructure provides open space and green features with the same degree importance as other forms of infrastructure such as transport infrastructure and education infrastructure. Approaching green space and the natural environment in this way helps us to recognise that they have many functions and a significant role in helping to attract people, employment and investment to the borough, to meet many social and health needs and helping the borough to be resilient to climate change

10.0.4 To be most effective green infrastructure must be approached as an integrated component of urban design - bringing together and enhancing both the natural and the built environment.



Picture 11 Green Infrastructure - A442, Telford

10 Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment

10.1 Green infrastructure

Evidence 8

Local evidence is provided by *the Green Infrastructure Framework Evidence and Analysis document (2013)* and the *Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2008)* which shows that :

- Green infrastructure covers over 90% of the borough, far exceeding all other land uses
- Approximately 62% of the borough is rural countryside
- Green infrastructure represents over 75% and 60% of the urban areas of Telford and Newport respectively
- The borough's green infrastructure is extremely varied
- The borough contains a wealth of green infrastructure of strategic significance including 1 Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 8 Sites of Special Scientific Interest , 5 Local Nature Reserves, 38 Local Wildlife Sites, 4 District and 1 regional park (Telford Town Park)
- Telford has extensive tree cover with over 403 hectares of managed woodland and over 15 million trees in its parks and public open spaces

The borough has a very strong green image, partly due to the large quantity of green infrastructure within Telford. The generous quantity of urban green infrastructure is a legacy of the 'landscape masterplanning' of Telford New Town and the industrial heritage of the borough which has resulted in a large amount of incidental green space associated with housing and highways and many ecologically rich urban habitats.

- There is an overall low provision of allotments, woodland, formal parks
- Green infrastructure is not located in the most accessible locations
- The green feel of the town is very popular with local residents, and sometimes there is a perception that important existing green infrastructure is under threat from new development
- There is a need to improve the ecological value of the rural area
- The amount and type of green infrastructure is not always located in the right place or harnessed for maximum value to meet local need
- There is a need to provide sufficient sport and recreation provision to meet current needs and the needs created by growth over the plan period
- There is insufficient funding to manage and maintain existing and new green infrastructure

10.1.1 The *National Planning Policy Framework* places considerable value on green infrastructure⁽²⁹⁾. The requirements of the *National Planning Policy Framework* with respect to green infrastructure include:

- recognising the multi functional value of green infrastructure and its relationship to meeting social (including health), economic and environmental priorities (paragraphs 94, 109)

10 Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment

- positively planning for the creation, protection enhancement and management of green infrastructure (paragraph 70)
- setting out a strategic approach (paragraph 114)
- providing relevant and up to date information (paragraph 73)
- providing criteria based policies (paragraph 113)
- promoting the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats and ecological networks (paragraphs 74, 115, 116)

10.1.2 Green infrastructure has been a significant component in the planning of the borough. It was significant in the planning of *Telford New Town Landscape Structure Plan (1971)* *Telford Development Corporation* and a key component in both the *Telford Local Plan (1991 - 2001)* and the *Wrekin Local Plan (2001-2006)*.

10.1.3 The most significant feature of green infrastructure planning in both the *Telford Local Plan* and the *Wrekin Local Plan* was The Green Network. The purpose of this designation has been to protect green spaces within Telford from inappropriate development in accordance with a set of six overall aims.

10.1.4 There are also important cross boundary green infrastructure planning issues and initiatives including the Local Nature Partnership and the Shropshire Biodiversity Partnership which co-ordinate a strategic approach to ecosystem services.

10.1.5 However, despite a very strong history of planning for green infrastructure in the borough:

- There has been no comprehensive detailed assessment of the Green Network since before its initial adoption in the *Telford Local Plan* in 1993
- There is a need for a more comprehensive approach to green infrastructure in the borough as the current Green Network designation only applies to Telford
- There is a lack of evidence to justify the Green Network designation in many areas
- Recent changes are indicating a change from a presumption against development in the Green Network to a presumption in favour, unless there is strong evidence to demonstrate otherwise

10.1.6 The Local Plan proposes to revise the Council's approach to the planning of green infrastructure. This approach will:

- optimise its performance for economic, social and environmental benefit
- show how and when green infrastructure is addressed in the planning process
- provide a clear, fair, viable, objective and balanced approach to the provision of green infrastructure, which can be applied consistently
- provide an easy to use process by which the Council can assess the green infrastructure merits of a transparent basis for communication and negotiation between the local planning authority and developers regarding the provision of green infrastructure
- provide clear workable policies and processes regarding on site and off site green infrastructure provision and developer contributions including management

10.1.7 The new approach is based upon two types of green infrastructure information and an assessment process.

10 Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment

10.1.8 Green infrastructure which is considered to be of "strategic significance" will be identified, that is green infrastructure protected by formal designations and/or performing a national, regional or borough wide role.

10.1.9 Development which is proposed in, adjacent to or in an area which would affect green infrastructure of strategic significance will carry additional responsibilities. The extent and nature of the response would be determined by the following categories of protection:

10.1.10 Category One: 'Maximum' Protection. Locations where green infrastructure is performing a strategic role and function⁽³⁰⁾ at an international, national, regional or borough wide level. Development would not normally be permitted in these areas unless it is of an overriding national importance and there are no alternative sites. This includes all national designated sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Importance. Also included in this category would be land designated as a "Local Green Space" ⁽³¹⁾

10.1.11 Category Two: 'Special' Protection. Locations of special quality where green infrastructure is a significant feature of the area and where special conditions will apply such as the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Conservation Areas.

10.1.12 Land which is not covered by the green infrastructure of strategic significance designation will be classed as "Category Three: 'Standard' Protection", i.e. all other locations – where development will be subject to the normal green infrastructure policies contained in the local plan.

10.1.13 The *Local Green Infrastructure Needs Study* shows where there are deficiencies in the amount and type of green infrastructure in the borough. It provides information about the quantity, quality and distribution of green infrastructure with regard to meeting local needs for:

- Health and wellbeing (including sport, leisure and recreation provision)
- Biodiversity (including designated sites)
- Spatial quality (including landscape setting and green travel route provision)
- Environmental Resilience (including adapting to climate change)

10.1.14 The document sets out the minimum standards of green infrastructure provision to meet these needs. Associated policy will require that new development should address any existing deficiency of green infrastructure in an area either with on site provision or by off site provision or contribution.

10.1.15 A Green Infrastructure Assessment process will enable developers, planners and communities to appraise and maximise the role and contribution of green infrastructure to a site or area according to its needs and requirements identified by local evidence, central of which is the information contained in the *Green Infrastructure of Strategic Significance* and the *Local Green Infrastructure Needs Study*. The process will form the basis of a negotiation regarding on and off site provision of green infrastructure.

10.1.16 It is therefore proposed the planning of green infrastructure be approached as follows:

30 See *Green Infrastructure Framework Evidence & Analysis* document for list of green infrastructure functions.

31 *National Planning Policy Framework*: paragraph 76

10 Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment

Option 18

Set out a policy to require green infrastructure on all developments. The green infrastructure requirements criteria will be informed by;

- Information about the assessment process (for establishing the appropriate type, amount and distribution of green infrastructure in an area or site)
- the *Local Green Infrastructure Needs Study* standards including sports, recreation and leisure provision
- the Green Infrastructure of Strategic Significance including ecological and landscape designations / protection
- the *Green Infrastructure Framework Evidence & Analysis Document*
- Information about when, where and how green infrastructure planning is used in the planning process
- instruction and guidance regarding non-green infrastructure ancillary provision, exceptions, management, funding and viability

Question 22

Do you agree with the Council's proposed policy approach to green infrastructure?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

11 Health

11.0.1 The World Health Organisation defines health as *"A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."*⁽³²⁾. Health includes matters such as poor diet and obesity.

11.0.2 Health and wellbeing in Telford and Wrekin is improving and more people are maintaining good health for longer and later in life. The Local Plan should seek to support this continued improvement and Aim 1 for the Plan, as set out earlier in this document is to seek *"Cohesive healthy and prosperous communities"*. The Local Plan needs to contribute to improving health and addressing local health inequalities, including specific policies or proposals regarding health where necessary.

11.0.3 Health is determined by numerous factors, many of which are beyond the scope and influence of spatial planning. Nevertheless a well-planned and successful borough will demonstrate many characteristics that can contribute to a healthier population and help prevent poor health.

Evidence 9

Just under a fifth (18.6%) of Telford and Wrekin's population has a long-term health problem or disability that limits their daily activities in some way⁽³³⁾.

- around 8,300 people (aged 18-64) have a moderate physical disability, with a further 2,500 people having a severe physical disability
- around 17,200 people are estimated to have a mental health disorder
- in 2010 an estimated 1,600 people aged 65 and over in Telford & Wrekin were suffering from dementia
- the prevalence of excess weight (overweight and obese combined) in four and five year olds during the past five years of 24.9% is significantly worse than the national average of 22.6%
- early death rates (before 75 years) from cancer (122.6 per 100,000) and, heart disease and stroke (80.3 per 100,000) are both significantly worse than the national averages of 110.0 and 64.7 respectively
- the proportion of the population over 65 is forecast to increase by 37% by 2026

11.0.4 A fundamental review of health and social care services in England has taken place, with new arrangements in place from April 2013. Primary Care Trusts have been disbanded and Clinical Commissioning Groups created, responsible for commissioning of services and for 80% of the overall NHS budget. This process is being overseen by new NHS Commissioning Boards. The new Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust will aim to provide high quality health services delivered, wherever possible, close to where people live.

11.0.5 In addition, the responsibility for public health has passed from the NHS to Telford & Wrekin Council. The Telford & Wrekin Health and Wellbeing Board has been set up and includes representatives from the Clinical Commissioning Group, the NHS Commissioning Board, the

32 World Health Organisation (1946) *Constitution of the World Health Organisation* <http://apps.who.int/gb/bd/PDF/bd47/EN/constitution-en.pdf>
 33 Telford & Wrekin Council (2013) *Telford & Wrekin State of the Borough Report*

11 Health

Council and Healthwatch (representing service users). A *Health and Wellbeing Strategy* was agreed in March 2013 and the Board will seek to drive improvement in and closer working across health and care services.

Evidence 10

The *Health and Wellbeing Strategy* (March 2013) identifies the following priorities:

- reduce excess weight in children and adults
- reduce teenage pregnancy
- improve emotional health and well being
- support people with autism
- reduce the number of people who smoke
- reduce the misuse of alcohol or drugs
- improve carers health and well being
- improve life expectancy and reduce health inequalities
- support people to live independently
- support people with dementia

The Local Plan needs to consider how it can promote action to address these priorities.

11.0.6 Health inequalities are a particular issue: there are clear health inequalities across the borough with a strong association between socio-economic deprivation and both life expectancy and early death (before 75 years). Life expectancy for men living in the most deprived areas (2006-2010) was seven years shorter than for men living in the least deprived areas.

11.0.7 The ageing population presents a particular challenge. The projected growth of 65+ age groups in Telford and Wrekin noted above is particularly high. This reflects the large young population that moved in to Telford new town in the 1960s and 1970s and who are now within or approaching retirement age, as well as their children who are projected to make up a large proportion of this increase in the future. An older population will significantly increase local need for health, care and protective services. It will be important that planning policies help public services to prepare for this demographic change.

11.1 Improving health and addressing health inequalities

11.1.1 The Council has a duty to promote action to improve population-wide health and reduce health inequalities. The *National Planning Policy Framework* suggests “...the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities”. It does not include specific policy requirements in respect of health and well-being and sees health as part of “promoting healthy communities” covering matters such as access to community facilities and open space.

11.1.2 It is proposed that the Local Plan address health as a cross cutting issue, an integral part of many policy areas. Planning can, for example, support a healthy population by providing a supply of good quality homes, by preventing and reducing pollution, by ensuring access to local services and facilities, promoting a high quality pedestrian and cycle friendly environment and the support of active recreation through access to good quality open space.

11.1.3 The Council's early engagement provided feedback on local people's views. When asked "How can we improve our towns, villages and countryside to make us healthier?" the four most popular responses were: improving footpaths, high quality green spaces, better leisure centres and improved cycle routes. Other suggestions included to increase local provision of allotments.

11.1.4 Across the wide range of topics that will be covered by the Local Plan the Council has identified the following as the main areas where the Local Plan as a whole can help improve health and address local health inequalities:

- support regeneration and help address concentrations of deprivation
- plan to reduce crime and fear of crime by creating safe and secure environments
- locate jobs, services and facilities within a reasonable walking/cycling distance of local communities linked by public transport and a pedestrian and cycle friendly environment
- developments (residential and non-residential) should provide good quality cycle parking facilities
- ensure the provision of sufficient housing to meet local needs and ensure a range of housing types and sizes that meets the needs of all sectors and ages of the community
- plan for an ageing population so that all sections of our society will be able to access community facilities and suitable housing. The policy approach to housing design for example could require a defined proportion of new residential development to be "lifetime homes" compliant
- where new development is occurring require developers to contribute to provision of accessible new health and social care services
- secure high quality and accessible leisure, sport and recreation and high quality and accessible parks, green and open space and recreation opportunities and facilities, such as green gyms, to encourage exercise
- ensure high quality design with attractive and well-managed environments that encourage a sense of place and personal well-being
- help reduce air pollution and support efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change, including flooding and risk of water shortages
- the Local Plan retail and centres policies could manage the location of new hot food takeaways to support efforts to combat the increasing levels of obesity and poor diet. Whilst hot food takeaways can have a useful role to play offering convenience and choice to the customer, evidence shows that many of the foods typically sold here can contribute negatively to health (for example due to high salt and saturated fat content). There could be a policy approach targeted in relation to the young as a vulnerable group, by limiting the proximity of new hot food takeaways to existing schools, or it could be a wider policy approach to limit the number/percentage of units in any one centre.

Question 23

Do you agree with the ways the Local Plan can address health issues?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

11 Health

11.1.5 It is proposed to include a range of policies across the Local Plan that address the health issues as set out in the bullet points above. An alternative structure would be to bring health-related policy content together as one planning policy on health.

11.2 Health facilities

11.2.1 The provision of health facilities in accessible locations is an important aspect of supporting the wider objectives of promoting health and well-being, as well as tackling social exclusion. The evidence the Council has assembled on health facilities is briefly set out in the box below.

11.2.2 Information supplied by NHS Telford & Wrekin (now NHS Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group) provides a baseline of health facility provision at 2011:

Evidence 11

- There are 20 GP surgeries in Telford and 2 in Newport. Two additional "walk in" practices have recently been introduced, situated within Telford town centre and at the Princess Royal Hospital. Other investments to take place between 2010-2014 include the redevelopment and expansion of Donnington GP surgery
- The average number of patients per GP is 1,858. This is reasonable compared with elsewhere in the UK, although there are specific practices where there are far more patients per GP
- There are 27 dental practises with 71 registered dentists. Whilst no particular issues were identified there is currently no up to date assessment of dental provision for Telford and Wrekin. The Clinical Commissioning Group are considering options for how best to address this gap in local knowledge
- There are 34 pharmacies and one dispensing GP practice (March 2013). The NHS review previously considered this level of coverage sufficient to provide adequate choice and accessibility
- The local hospital network comprises the Princess Royal Hospital at Telford and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. A major reconfiguration of their services is underway. Under the proposals, a Women's and Children's Centre is being developed at Telford and acute surgery being centralised at Shrewsbury, however people will continue to go to the same hospital as they do now for the majority of their care (both hospitals will continue to provide accident & emergency and outpatients services). The main planning implication is that physical remodelling, new buildings and new parking is planned at Telford Princess Royal Hospital.

11.2.3 In delivering the planned level of new homes and seeking to create sustainable communities, it will be important that the health infrastructure to support this is in place. The Council will seek the views and comments of health infrastructure providers on the proposed level of growth to 2031 and the spatial distribution options. NHS Telford & Wrekin and the Council have worked together to map out existing housing commitments and their proximity to

GP and dental practices. This analysis will be continued in respect of the proposals for the additional development to 2031. This will allow the Council and its partners to plan effectively for the infrastructure to support future growth.

Question 24

What health infrastructure do you consider is needed in order to support the proposed level of growth to 2031?

Please comment on your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

12 Retail and Town Centres

12 Retail and Town Centres

12.0.1 The retail and leisure offer of Telford and Wrekin makes an important contribution to the borough's economy, representing a valuable source of employment. It is also important to sustain the vitality and viability of the facilities and services upon which communities depend.

12.0.2 Retail is one of the most dynamic sectors of the economy and is constantly changing, therefore it is important that retail strategy and policy is flexible enough to accommodate this. Planning can also help ensure retail and leisure facilities are located in the most suitable locations to serve the population.



Picture 12 Retail - Town Centre, Telford

12.0.3 The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires that local policies and proposals for retail and town centres be founded on a thorough, clear and up-to-date understanding of local needs and the opportunities and constraints which operate in the area. Policies should provide for the management and growth of centres over the plan period. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:

- recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their vitality and viability
- define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes
- define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations

12 Retail and Town Centres

- promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres
- where town centres are in decline, local planning authorities should plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity

12.0.4 The *National Planning Policy Framework* also requires policies to:

- allocate suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure and office development needed
- where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available, explore the potential to expand existing primary shopping areas
- if sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, set policies for meeting needs for main town centre uses in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre

12.0.5 Telford Town Centre principally comprises a privately-owned shopping mall containing shops, banks, restaurants and cafes, and extensive car parking. There is large-scale regeneration underway in the Southwater area of the town centre. The ease of accessibility by car and proximity to M54 motorway, mean that the town centre serves a wide sub-regional catchment area.

12.0.6 Newport market town serves a catchment that includes its rural hinterland, including the student population of Harper Adams University College. Its range of goods and services reflect the needs of this area.

12.0.7 Telford contains a number of important historic urban centres and smaller local centres serving their immediate neighbourhoods.

12.0.8 Telford has out-of-centre retail warehouse developments: Telford Bridge and Telford Forge Retail Parks at Colliers Way in central Telford and Wrekin Retail Park, at M54, Junction 6.

12.0.9 Retail provision in the rural area is limited, both in quantity and range.

12.0.10 This policy section follows up and expands upon the plan priorities and objectives. The main retail and town centre matters for the Local Plan to address are:

- identifying the network and hierarchy of centres
- the future role and function of Telford Town Centre, building on the strategy set out in the *Central Telford Area Action Plan*
- leisure uses and the evening and night-time economy offer
- the need for future office development within the Telford area and the role that established centres could play in meeting this need

12 Retail and Town Centres

Evidence 12

The Council's existing evidence base for retail supported the development of the existing *Core Strategy* (adopted in 2007) and the *Central Telford Area Action Plan* (adopted in 2011), and included a series of evidence documents:

- The *Telford and Wrekin Retail & Leisure Study* (2006) advised on the future retail and leisure strategy for the network of centres in the borough. The principal centres identified were Telford (Town); Newport (Market Town); Dawley, Donnington, Hadley, Madeley, Oakengates and Wellington (District Centres). Local Centres were not identified.
- In 2008 and again in 2009 updates to the study were completed to take account of more up-to-date expenditure data. The updates also reviewed the effect of internet trading, the proposed level of household growth set out in the *Regional Spatial Strategy Preferred Option* (2007) and assisted in planning for the development and expansion of retailing in Telford Town Centre to inform the *Central Telford Area Action Plan*.
- The Council is currently in the process of undertaking an update of the *Retail & Leisure Study* which will report later this year. The update includes new empirical research, including a household shopping survey. The survey will allow for a detailed appraisal of existing shopping habits and allow informed decisions to be made about the scale and location of future provision.

12.1 Hierarchy of centres

12.1.1 It is important to consider carefully the role and relationship of centres so that they are resilient to economic change and meet the needs of local people across the Borough. National Policy is clear that authorities need to define a network and hierarchy of centres to support future growth.

12.1.2 Existing local policy identifies Telford Town Centre as the principal retail centre and sub-regional hub, and the District Centres of Dawley, Donnington, Hadley, Madeley, Oakengates, and Wellington as well as the Market Town of Newport in a second tier of shopping hierarchy.

12.1.3 The Council is considering the establishment of a network of centres as the focus for retail and other main town centre uses⁽³⁴⁾, and support a network of local centres that meet the everyday needs of local communities. An updated retail and leisure study is being completed to advise on the future role of retail and town centres in the borough and will consider identifying additional centres, as appropriate, in identifying an appropriate hierarchy of retail centres.

12.1.4 The Council will also seek to support the continued vitality of local shopping facilities, recognising that local centres provide a valuable role in meeting local community needs and are important in sustaining vitality and reducing the need to travel. Previously the Council has not formally identified local centres through policy and the Council will explore options for designating local centres as part of the hierarchy of centres.

34 National Planning Policy Framework (2012) - main town centre uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

12 Retail and Town Centres

12.1.5 The borough has recently experienced significant strategic housing growth in areas such as at Lawley, Lightmoor and Ketley with new facilities built to cater for these communities. We are also considering the potential for further strategic urban extensions. The plan approach to locating new retail proposals could reflect new development, based on new evidence from the forthcoming *Retail & Leisure Study*.

12.1.6 In order to grow Telford and Wrekin's economy it is important the borough responds to changing market conditions to promote economic development and competitiveness. There is a need to accommodate further growth in the Town Centre as the principal destination, along with directing an appropriate amount of development to the other identified centres.

Option 19

Continue supporting retail development in the existing retail hierarchy of Telford Town Centre, Newport and Dawley, Donnington, Hadley, Madeley, Oakengates, and Wellington.

Or propose a new retail hierarchy including new centres and locations, supported by new evidence.

Question 25

Which of the options for retail hierarchy do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options that should be considered here?

12.2 Telford Town Centre

12.2.1 Currently Telford and Wrekin Council's planning policies promote Telford Town Centre as a sub-regional hub for retail and leisure facilities. The *Central Telford Area Action Plan* promotes a... "*better range of leisure, cultural and community uses, bars and restaurants adding vitality to the area throughout the day and into the evening*". This vision is being delivered through the Southwater development of the Town Centre, providing cultural, leisure, retail and event facilities as well as new homes and offices, that will ensure Telford becomes an even more attractive town for local residents and business, as well as for visitors and for business tourism.

12.2.2 There will be increased major retail and office floorspace and significant hotel and conferencing facilities and housing will be introduced into the centre for the first time. Pedestrian circulation will be improved and a better interface with Town Park created. ⁽³⁵⁾

12 Retail and Town Centres

12.2.3 The new retail study will provide an updated forecast of the growth expected. It is anticipated that there will be significant opportunities for the expansion of Telford Town Centre's role and function over the life of the plan.

12.2.4 The Council remains committed to the continued development and promotion of the town centre as the focus for leisure, retail, residential and office development within the borough and sub-regionally. The new plan will consider how policies contained in the *Central Telford Area Action Plan* can be developed and strategy taken forward to 2031.

Option 20

Continue with the strategy for expanding the Town Centre as set out in the *Central Telford Area Action Plan*.

Question 26

Do you agree with the Council's proposal to continue the current approach to Telford Town Centre?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

12.3 Leisure and the evening and night-time economy

12.3.1 Non-retail uses such as restaurants and leisure facilities are often interspersed with shops and offices to add vibrancy to centres. This integration is vital to the success of the Borough's centres in terms of both daytime activities and the evening economy.

12.3.2 The leisure sector is playing an increasingly important role in adding to the vibrancy and overall offer of centres, increasing visitor's length of stay at a destination, creating an evening and night-time economy⁽³⁶⁾. This in turn helps make centres more attractive places and attract new housing development.

12.3.3 The Council are keen to protect and promote a choice of activities within the borough's centres, integrated with other uses such as offices and residential development to provide economic benefits.

12.3.4 The management of the evening and night-time economy is vitally important to ensure that the public are both safe and feel safe so that they may fully enjoy their visit to the borough's key centres.

³⁶ Telford & Wrekin Council (2011) *Central Telford Area Action Plan*. Evening and night-time economy: bars and pubs, restaurants, cafes, take-aways, night clubs, theatres, cinemas, concert halls, live music venues, and other arts, cultural and leisure venues that are open in the evening and in some cases, into the night

12 Retail and Town Centres

Option 21

Include policies to protect and promote non-retail facilities, such as for leisure and the evening and night-time economy, in identified Town and District Centres.

An alternative approach would be to have no specific policy regarding these facilities and rely solely on the *National Planning Policy Framework* when assessing development proposals.

Question 27

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach regarding leisure and evening and night-time economy facilities?

Please comment on your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

12.4 Offices

12.4.1 National policy identifies offices as a main town centre use.

12.4.2 The *Central Telford Area Action Plan* establishes the role of the town centre as the focus for office development.

12.4.3 Business park locations have been successful in attracting investment and jobs and even where central sites are available, the high cost of developing offices means that it may only be viable to do so as part of a mixed-use development. As such mixed-use schemes proposed for town centres should be encouraged to include some office accommodation.

12.4.4 All these factors suggest that, while the Council will need to apply a sequential approach that gives preference to town centres for office development wherever possible, there will be occasions when other locations could be chosen.

12.4.5 In addition, small scale rural office schemes, which are not subject to town centre tests, form an important element of delivering a prosperous rural economy. Employment development in rural areas is covered in the Economic Development section.

Option 22

The following options have been identified for the policy approach to office development and town centres:

- beyond defined centres strictly apply the sequential test to office use
- or be more flexible to secure investment in available and accessible locations

12 Retail and Town Centres

Question 28

Which of the options for office development do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

13 Telecommunications and Broadband

13 Telecommunications and Broadband

13.1 Telecommunications and broadband

13.1.1 High quality telecommunications are a key issue for existing businesses and new investors.

13.1.2 Fast internet access is critical to many employers and changing working practices have resulted in more work being carried out, from home, or in other locations away from traditional work places. Outside the work environment there has also been an increase in the demand for people, wherever they are, to keep in contact with family and friends as well as to access a wide range of entertainment media.

13.1.3 There is also a need to consider the impact of the siting and design. The *National Planning Policy Framework* recommends that existing masts, buildings or structures should be used where possible and that new equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

Evidence 13

The regulator for communications networks, OFCOM, provides data on the availability and take up of broadband and mobile phone coverage. With regards to broadband, all authorities are ranked on a scale of 1-5, Telford and Wrekin is at the top of the scale, higher than all the neighbouring authorities. Mobile phone coverage is ranked in a similar fashion and the borough is also ranked at the top of the scale, above the neighbouring authorities⁽³⁷⁾.

13.1.4 Certain communications development is permitted development under the *General Permitted Development Order*. Some other developments also only need a notification application. Therefore only a small amount of the new infrastructure requires permission.

13.1.5 The adopted *Telecommunications Supplementary Planning Document* gives detailed guidance on the consideration of planning applications for telecommunications. The document advises on the issues that can be considered in determining a planning application, including: alternative sites, mast sharing, site sharing, use of existing structures, siting and appearance, design, as well how to treat any health concerns raised.

13.1.6 While some new base stations will be required, it is considered unlikely that the introduction of new technologies will have a significant increase in site requirements since the existing 2G and 3G infrastructure could potentially be reused.

13.1.7 A policy could be put in place to help guide the siting and design of new development, linking to the Council's adopted *Telecommunications Supplementary Planning Document* whilst also promoting provision of high quality broadband in association with larger new developments in the area.

13 Telecommunications and Broadband

Option 23

To set out a policy to help guide the siting and design of new telecommunications development and promote high quality broadband development that links to the existing *Telecommunications Supplementary Planning Document*?

An alternative approach would be to have no specific local policy regarding telecommunications development and rely solely on the *National Planning Policy Framework* when assessing development proposals.

Question 29

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach of a specific policy regarding telecommunications development?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

14 Tourism & Culture

14.1 Tourism

14.1.1 Telford and Wrekin possesses an outstanding range of tourism, leisure and cultural assets. Leisure facilities include cinemas, an ice rink, bowling alley, bars and restaurants in Southwater and Telford Town Centre, a wide range of recreational facilities in Telford Town Park, an artificial ski slope in Madeley and a superb theatre at The Place in Oakengates. The borough benefits from beautiful countryside and spectacular scenery, including landscape assets such as the Wrekin hill (part of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), Granville Country Park and the Weald Moors. Heritage attractions include Telford Steam Railway and the Shrewsbury-Newport Canal (which includes the listed Longdon-Upon-Tern aqueduct, designed by Thomas Telford). The borough is also recognised as the Birthplace of Industry with the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, a major leisure tourism destination with its visitor attractions, natural landscape, restaurants, bars, accommodation and 10 world class heritage museums.

14.1.2 Leisure tourism is of vital economic value to the borough, it provides job opportunities and generates investment. It also has educational and cultural value, and contributes to good health and wellbeing. Leisure tourism is a priority in the growth and development of Telford's destination economy. The Council also recognises that the provision of adequate cultural infrastructure is essential to the creation of sustainable communities. Culture, the arts and recreation are able to bring people together, create links between different communities and encourage people to feel a sense of pride and belonging in their area.

14.1.3 The borough also has a significant and growing business tourism sector. This reflects Telford and Wrekin's central location within the UK and its good accessibility to national motorway and railway networks. Hotel and conferencing facilities are concentrated at Southwater, particularly at Telford International Centre which is one of the largest conference centres in the UK. Telford is fast becoming one of the UK's convention capitals, competing with places such as Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham.

14.1.4 The Southwater development in Telford town centre is a major public and private sector led regeneration programme that will see the development of a new cinema, bars, restaurants, shops and a hotel, opening in 2014. Adjoining this is Telford Town Park which contains with a new visitor centre, adventure ropes course, festivals and events and offers a wide range of walking and cycling routes, some of which extend south towards the Ironbridge Gorge.

14.1.5 Early engagement⁽³⁸⁾ asked 'What type of new businesses would help Telford and Wrekin to grow?' 15% of responses favoured tourism industries, making it the third most popular answer and underlining the importance of tourism to the area.

14.1.6 The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires Local Planning Authorities to address the following:

- plan positively for the provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services.

38 *Shaping Places Local Plan - Results of Early Engagement 10th January - 27th February 2012* http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5404/early_engagement_feedback_report

14 Tourism & Culture

- the allocation of sites in town centres where they are suitable for tourism development⁽³⁹⁾
- Support sustainable tourism developments in rural areas that benefit businesses, communities and visitors and also respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where needs are not currently met by existing facilities⁽⁴⁰⁾.

14.1.7 Visit England's *Strategic Framework* contains a vision 'to maximise tourism's contribution to the economy, employment and quality of life' by 2020. The following objectives are to be pursued in order to achieve this vision to:

1. increase England's share of global visitor markets
2. offer visitors compelling destinations of distinction
3. champion a successful, thriving tourism industry
4. facilitate greater engagement between the visitor and the experience

14.1.8 Telford & Wrekin Council's *Medium Term Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16* recognises that business and leisure tourism has a key role to play in mitigating the effects of the economic downturn. The council is already providing investment for land stabilisation works in Ironbridge Gorge, the redevelopment of the Southwater area and improvements to Telford Town Park, including promoting it as a major festival destination.

14.1.9 The *Economic Development Strategy* (2005) identifies tourism and leisure industries as one of seven priority business clusters to be promoted and supported. Further growth and development of visitor accommodation, attractions and public realm will all help to enhance the offer for leisure and business tourism in the borough.

39 Department for Communities & Local Government (2012) *National Planning Policy Framework*: paragraph 23

40 Department for Communities & Local Government (2012) *National Planning Policy Framework*: paragraph 28

Evidence 14

The Telford & Wrekin Council *Tourism Economic Impact Assessment* (2011) found that:

- 93% of overnight stays in commercial properties in the borough were from UK visitors
- the biggest proportion of overnight stays were to visit friends and relatives (42%), followed by holidays (37%)
- business tourism made up 16% of overnight stays - these show that there is potential to increase overnight stays for the holiday and business tourism markets
- overnight stays only currently make up 10% of the visits the Borough, the remaining 90% were from day visits
- In 2011, the total amount spent by overnight visitors on their trips to the borough was £54,604,000, whilst day visitors spent £104,842,000. 59% of this spending was on retail and catering.

The *Telford Hotel Futures Study*⁽⁴¹⁾ is currently being updated. Relevant findings from the previous report were:

- the town centre is the favoured location for future hotel development
- Ironbridge and Wellington contain a significant number of small independent hotels
- the corporate market is the primary source of weekday hotel demand, with the International Centre generating significant demand. Wedding guests and leisure break customers provide the bulk of the weekend market
- the main obstacles to investment were a lack of profile and awareness of Telford, a perceived weakness in some elements of the business base, and a perception of Telford being slightly off the mainstream network of Midlands towns, cities and motorways. The availability of sites for hotel development was also identified as a particular issue

The *Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Management Plan* seeks "...a sustainable approach to the future management of the World Heritage Site which balances conservation of the historic environment; preservation and enhancement of local character and amenity; and development of sustainable tourism":

- approximately 1,930 tourism related jobs and an additional 620 non-tourism jobs were identified as being dependant on the visitor economy of the World Heritage Site area. 350 of the directly related jobs were in accommodation, 640 in catering, 540 in retailing, 330 in leisure/attractions and 80 in transport services. Many of these jobs will be provided by or connected with the Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust.
- whilst tourism is important to the area, the Management Plan also recognises the need to manage the impact of tourism on local communities.

The Wrekin Hill forms the northern spur of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Management Plan for the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty identifies that there is visitor pressure on the hill and appropriate management is the main priority for the future:

14 Tourism & Culture

- A 'Wrekin Forest' area has been identified which includes the Wrekin and surrounding countryside that provides a setting for the AONB. Within this area there is a recognised need for better visitor facilities, including more appropriate parking provision and improvement of the former Forest Glen site which is the main visitor access point to the Wrekin Hill.
- recommendations for policies include; encouraging small scale tourism developments, including holiday letting accommodation, smaller caravan and camping sites. There should be less built development and accommodation should be spread throughout the countryside.

14.1.10 The key tourism and culture issues for the Local Plan to address are:

- how to continue developing Telford as a business tourism destination
- how to continue developing leisure tourism and attractions in the borough
- the provision of cultural community facilities

14.1.11 Leisure tourism development in this policy area includes museums, tourist accommodation (including camping and caravanning), food and drink and visitor facilities. Business tourism includes hotels, conferencing facilities, food and drink and related uses.

14.1.12 Ironbridge Gorge continues to be Telford and Wrekin's most important leisure tourism asset. The Wrekin is also highly important but it has a greater draw for local visitors than those from farther afield. The Southwater redevelopment and the expansion of Telford International Centre have consolidated and grown the business tourism offer. All of these assets are already performing strongly and they continue to have potential to grow.

14.1.13 The Local Plan will need to consolidate growth in these areas and increase the tourism offer in other parts of the borough, including Madeley, Newport, Wellington, and the rural area. The unique offer of each of these areas will need to be promoted by joining up and packaging settlements and centres together with nearby natural and historical attractions. For example Wellington's offer in combination with the Wrekin Hill, and Newport with the Shrewsbury to Newport Canal.

Option 24

The following options for the policy approach to tourism development have been identified:

- prioritise the growth and development of our existing major tourism assets such as the Ironbridge Gorge, The Wrekin and Telford Town Park for leisure tourism, and Southwater/Telford International Centre for business tourism
- prioritise the growth and development of tourism in other parts of the borough that are currently less well developed for the visitor economy, including Madeley, Newport, Wellington and rural villages
- an alternative approach would be to have no local policies for the future development of business and leisure tourism and rely solely on the *National Planning Policy Framework* when assessing development proposals

Question 30

Which of the options for future tourism development do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

14.2 Culture

14.2.1 The Local Plan will recognise the value of culture to communities and help support the provision of cultural infrastructure such as a full range of social, leisure and community facilities and services. It can also, through appropriate urban design policies, provide adequate public realm for communities to express themselves. Culture supports our sense of place, our identity and our values.

Option 25

Include policies to protect existing arts, culture, faith and leisure facilities, continuing to provide opportunities for cultural expression, with particular focus on building capacity in new communities and areas of growth.

An alternative approach would be to have no local policies regarding these facilities and rely solely on the National Planning Policy Framework when assessing development proposals.

Question 31

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach of including a policy regarding cultural facilities?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

15 Climate Change and Energy

15 Climate Change and Energy

15.0.1 Climate change is a significant global issue with changes as small as a 2°C increase in global temperature impacting on our economy and the natural world. In the UK, we are already feeling the effects with rising temperatures, heatwaves, and more frequent winter storms impacting on our lives, our environment and the economy.

15.0.2 The *National Planning Policy Framework* defines the role that Local Plans will need to play in order to address climate change:

- through securing cuts in greenhouse gas emissions;
- minimising vulnerability;
- providing resilience to the impacts of climate change.

15.0.3 The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that local authorities should set local sustainability standards in a way consistent with the Government's zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards.

Evidence 15

Key facts:

- The per capita local CO₂ emissions for the borough including those from industry, domestic and transport sectors reduced by 16.09% between 2005 and 2010⁽⁴²⁾
- Fuel poverty is estimated to affect 16.7% (11,279) of households in the borough⁽⁴³⁾, with rising fuel prices this figure is likely to rise
- Projected data illustrating how the UK climate is projected to change as a result of climate change, shows that temperatures in Telford and Wrekin are set to rise by between 1.8 °C and 2.3 °C⁽⁴⁴⁾ respectively by 2050. There are likely to be more extreme weather events such as heat waves and storms causing severe incidents such as flooding.

15.1 Sustainable construction

15.1.1 It is important that new development proposals can clearly demonstrate that they have been designed with our changing climate and enhancement of environmental performance in mind. Nationally sustainable construction standards have been developed for both new homes (the *Code for Sustainable Homes*) and new non-domestic buildings (*BREEAM*). Both rate the environmental impact of a wide range of design aspects, not just energy efficiency and carbon emissions, with each aspect awarded credits.

15.1.2 The use of the *Code for Sustainable Homes* and *BREEAM* as the basis of policy development would utilise nationally described construction standards that will be familiar to developers. This approach will help to ensure that consideration is given to the wider elements of sustainable development, such as the use of materials with low environmental impact,

42 DECC (2010) Carbon Dioxide Emissions at Local Authority and Regional Level

43 DECC (2013) Sub-regional fuel poverty estimates

44 UKCIP (2009) UK Climate Projections (UKCP09), <http://ukclimateprojections.defra.gov.uk/21976>

15 Climate Change and Energy

enhancement of biodiversity and consideration of the impact of building design on the health and wellbeing of building occupants. These are elements that are not covered by Building Regulations but should be integral to a holistic approach to sustainable development.

Evidence 16

The *Viability Study of Low Carbon Opportunities for the Central Telford Area* (2010) has assessed the impacts of requiring specific levels of the Code for Sustainable for more than 15 new housing developments in Telford Centre, and more than 1000sqm for non-residential developments. It concludes that it would be feasible for developers to meet Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM 'Very Good' to ensure that sustainability is incorporated into all aspects of the design and construction of new homes and non-residential developments.

15.1.3 A similar study will be undertaken for the rest of the borough to gain an understanding of the levels of *BREEAM* and Code for Sustainable Homes that may be applicable, as achieving the highest ratings, requires low or zero carbon technologies, which can add substantially to building costs.

15.1.4 There are two ways in which targets based on the *Code for Sustainable Homes* and the *BREEAM* could be applied, standard targets applied borough-wide or variable targets.

15.1.5 The standard target approach does not recognise that the viability of achieving targets can vary by the location within Telford and Wrekin, the characteristics of the scheme, and its scale.

15.1.6 Variable targets could be set on an area or select size basis and/or based upon the housing threshold in the *Central Telford Area Action Plan*, fifteen homes. For industrial and commercial developments, a 1000 square metres to apply targets may be appropriate thresholds.

15.1.7 Further work is required to identify local issues that could influence targets and the impact of these on the viability of development.

Option 26

Set out a policy requiring residential and commercial developments over a size threshold across the borough to comply with targets relating to *Code for Sustainable Homes* and *BREEAM*.

An alternative approach would be to introduce varied targets reflecting the impact on scheme viability of the scale location or characteristics of the proposal, or to have no policy approach.

15 Climate Change and Energy

Question 32

Which of the policy options for sustainable construction above do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

15.2 Renewable and low carbon energy

15.2.1 National guidance requires policies to be designed to plan positively for renewable and low carbon energy development. The Local Plan and subsequent planning decisions, however, need to balance the theoretical capacity with the local effects of development on the community and environment. Of particular note are the effects of wind energy generation on landscapes.

Evidence 17

The *Renewable Energy Capacity Study for the West Midlands* has broadly assessed the borough's potential for renewable and low carbon energy generation (this study does not take account of specific constraints and the capacity is unlikely to be deployable in full). The study suggests that renewable energy capacity for the borough⁽⁴⁵⁾ could be:

- 799 megawatts potential capacity of commercial wind within Telford & Wrekin, with a further 52 megawatts identified for small scale wind. Only 27% of the potential capacity is likely to generate electricity due to varying wind speed. It is assumed that 9 megawatts of capacity per KM² can be installed
- Microgeneration offers the second largest opportunity for renewable energy generation - 374 megawatts. The key sources being integrated into buildings
- Energy crops provide a opportunity which could be capitalised upon.

15 Climate Change and Energy



Picture 13 Renewable Energy - Wellington Civic, Telford

15.2.2 As part of the early public engagement on the new Local Plan the question 'How should we plan our day to day lives to use less energy?' was asked. Many people responded in favour of using more renewable energy, the majority of these preferred solar power generation, followed by wind. However, there were also a number of responses expressing concern with wind power.

15.2.3 National policy does not require renewable energy targets to be set locally. Given the rapidly changing legislative and policy framework relating to renewable energy, the Council considers that a flexible approach should be adopted.

15.2.4 It is not, therefore, proposed to set Telford and Wrekin specific targets but to seek to meet national aspirations in respect of climate change and renewable energy generation taking into account Telford and Wrekin's specific circumstances.

Question 33

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach for the delivery of renewable energy?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

15.2.5 The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that applications for renewable and low-carbon energy developments should be approved if the impacts are, or can be made acceptable, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. There is no requirement for the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy to be demonstrated.

15.2.6 Two potential policy approaches to renewable and low-carbon energy have been identified:

15.2.7 In order to ensure that only appropriate renewable energy schemes are implemented the Local Plan could include a criteria based policy to include matters such as:

15 Climate Change and Energy

- the anticipated effects resulting from development, construction and operation;
- the effect on the landscape character, agriculture and other land based industries;
- the effect on nature conservation sites and features;
- the effect on cultural heritage and archaeological features and;
- accessibility by road and public transport.

15.2.8 The Local Plan could also identify broad opportunity areas by aligning areas of resource with those which are least sensitive to development. Such an approach may assist in guiding future development to particular locations, although the Plan must provide a basis to consider proposals borough wide.

Option 27

Set out a criteria-based policy for determining planning applications for the renewable energy and low carbon sector

Or, in addition to this criteria-based approach, identify broad areas of opportunity or specific locations for the renewable energy and low carbon sector.

Question 34

Which of the options for a policy approach to renewable energy and low carbon sector development do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

16 Waste

16.0.1 The Local Plan needs to make appropriate provision for waste management, recycling and treatment facilities within Telford and Wrekin.

16.0.2 European, national, regional and local legislation are driving changes in the way wastes are managed in the UK. They all aim to reduce the production of waste and then maximise recycling and reuse of what is produced. Landfilling wastes, historically the disposal option most widely used in the UK, is now the least favoured option and fiscal measures are increasingly penalising its use.

16.0.3 These changes require considerable change to the traditional methods of waste collection, treatment and disposal and as a consequence will impact on infrastructure requirements within the borough and cross boundary movements of waste.

16.0.4 The two landfill sites in the borough, Candles and Granville, are privately owned and their operators are free to enter into disposal contracts to bring waste into Telford & Wrekin. The Candles landfill site is expected to be restored by the end of 2015 and the planning permission to tip imported waste at Granville expires on 31st December 2025. It is difficult to determine at this stage whether the licensed landfill capacity at Granville will be fully utilised by 2025 or an extension of time will be required. However, in view of the drive to move municipal waste away from landfill and the lack of alternative treatment capacity in the borough, Telford & Wrekin will be an exporter of municipal waste throughout the plan period (until 2031). The Council is undertaking a procurement exercise covering municipal waste collection, treatment and disposal during the life-span of the plan period.

16.0.5 The same fiscal measures to reduce reliance on landfill apply to industrial and commercial wastes as they do to municipal. However, as yet they have not produced the significant changes in management of these wastes seen in municipal waste. Reduced landfill capacity required for municipal waste, could give rise to increased import of commercial and industrial wastes to Telford & Wrekin.

16.0.6 The Local Plan needs to establish policies which facilitate waste minimisation, maximising re-use and recovery.

16.0.7 The *National Planning Policy Framework* does not contain specific waste policies. Therefore, *Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management* defines the requirements for waste.

16.1 Quantities of waste

Local Authority Municipal Waste

16.1.1 Municipal waste includes waste from households collected by the Council.

16 Waste

Evidence 18

The total amount of municipal solid waste collected in 2010/11 was 88,682.71 tonnes. This figure is around 837.28 tonnes lower than the previous year. In 2010/11 just over 58% of total waste collected was sent for disposal.

With regards to household waste the proportion that is either recycled, reused or composted has increased from 35% in 2006/7, to 43.7% in 2010/11. Residual household waste per household – that which is not sent for recycling, reuse or composting – stood at 45,514.32 tonnes in 2010/11, a reduction of 1949.91 tonnes in comparison to the preceding year. It is important to note that the majority of these reductions are attributed to the downward turn in the economic climate.

16.1.2 During the plan period the amount of waste produced by the borough is set to increase, based upon household and population growth. Therefore greater emphasis will be required to treat more of the waste rather than send it for disposal.

16.1.3 A forecast of how much municipal waste is expected to be produced over the Local Plan period and how this will be managed as the basis for determining the waste management capacity for municipal waste will be undertaken.

Commercial and Industrial Waste

16.1.4 In common with most other regions, accurate data on commercial and industrial waste in the West Midlands is nowhere near as good as that for municipal waste. The best source of information comes from a national Environment Agency survey which was carried out in 2004/5 and relates to waste quantities in 2002/3. This shows that in the West Midlands the total amount of commercial and industrial waste generated was 7,265,000 tonnes.

16.1.5 The regional figures are broken down into the following percentages:

16.1.6 Breakdown of Commercial and Industrial Waste⁽⁴⁶⁾

Waste Type	Tonnes ('000s)	%
Chemical	741	10.2
Metallic	696	9.6
Non-metallic (mainly paper and card)	1442	19.8
Organic	608	8.3
Mixed	2328	32.0
Mineral	1325	18.2

Waste Type	Tonnes (‘000s)	%
Other	125	1.6
TOTAL	7265	

Table 6

16.1.7 Of the above, 40% was sent to landfill and a further 40% was reported as being recycled or re-used.

Other waste streams

Waste stream	
Demolition and excavation wastes	This waste stream has traditionally been disposed of locally through exempt activities which use waste as a fill material or licensed activities (often on site) which restore or reclaim land for beneficial use using waste as engineering or fill material. Therefore there is difficulty in quantifying the amount of construction, demolition and excavation waste generated.
Hazardous wastes	The West Midlands Regional Assembly ⁽⁴⁷⁾ projected that 221,000 tonnes of waste will be produced by the borough during 2005 – 2021. We export this waste stream for treatment.
Agricultural wastes	No information is available on the quantities of wastes that are generated in Telford and Wrekin.
Low level radioactive wastes	Nuclear sites, of which none exists in Telford and Wrekin, generate 98% of all UK arisings of low level radioactive waste with the remaining 2% generated by non-nuclear users such as hospitals, educational establishments and industrial sites. While there is no Telford and Wrekin specific data, it is considered that the quantities will be small, especially when compared with other areas of the UK.
Sewage and water treatment sludges	No information is available on the quantities of wastes that are generated in Telford and Wrekin. It is, however, known that the majority of these wastes are recycled through existing management arrangements.
Mining and quarrying waste	No information is available on the quantities of mining and quarrying waste generated in Telford and Wrekin, although they tend to be inert and are managed on site as part of the site restoration.

Table 7

47 The West Midlands Regional Assembly's report of Future Waste Management Facilities (2004)

16 Waste

16.1.8 The Local Plan will need to make appropriate provision for recycling, recovery and treatment, drawing upon estimates of waste generation to 2031. Projections over the Plan period will be prepared, i.e. the quantities of waste generated and where we expect it to be treated and/or disposed. Additionally, the types of facility needed will be identified.

16.2 New waste capacity

Management of municipal waste

16.2.1 Telford and Wrekin is currently undertaking a procurement exercise for the management of the borough's municipal waste. The contract to be let will provide for the waste to be managed until at least 2034. Due to the small quantities of waste involved, a dedicated single large treatment facility would be uneconomic. Therefore the Plan does not propose to allocate a municipal waste site. Instead it is likely that a bulking facility will be built to enable the wastes to be transported out the the Borough for treatment.

16.2.2 Recent changes in waste management, notably green waste food waste have demonstrated that facilities to treat small fractions of the municipal waste stream in small local facilities can be economic. The Plan will therefore make provisions for facilities to treat elements of municipal waste including by technologies that may develop in future.

16.2.3 Changing the way in which municipal waste has to be treated in order to divert from landfill has changed the way in which wastes are collected. The Plan will therefore consider how developments will be designed to accommodate current and future collection requirements including space for the storage of waste collection containers.

Management of non-municipal wastes

16.2.4 Telford and Wrekin will need facilities to manage commercial and industrial wastes and construction and demolition wastes. In order to gain a current understanding of the situation within the borough we will need to compare projected arisings with the capacity to identify gaps in waste management capacity in Telford and Wrekin. Based upon the outcome of this assessment, it will probably be necessary to identify new facilities in the Local Plan. Whether the same applies to the other waste streams identified in the table above is dependent upon the assessment. The main focus for new waste management facilities should be on employment land.

16.2.5 Proposals will be expected to come forward over the plan period and a policy approach would be needed to guide these. The plan will need to consider:

- The spatial distribution of the facilities;
- The types of location that would be suitable for waste facilities; and
- The criteria for considering the acceptability of individual proposals.

16.2.6 The development of waste facilities within the rest of the borough, and in more rural areas of Telford and Wrekin, may be acceptable where the proposed facility is of an appropriate scale. Examples could include small-scale community facilities, on-farm anaerobic digestion and composting facilities and construction and demolition recycling at operational quarries.

16.2.7 The approach to inert landfill, which typically manage construction and demolition wastes, is to rely on opportunities to use materials in land reclamation schemes and the restoration of mineral extraction sites. Additionally, the New Acres Landfill site at Blockleys has

the capacity to provide a long term supply for any remaining construction and demolition wastes. At the current time the Council does not believe there is a requirement for a new specific inert landfill site.

16.2.8 Based on national policy and local considerations, it is suggested that the following principles should be applied to the location of new or enhanced waste management facilities:

- The on-site management of waste where it arises
- The extension of existing facilities / co-location with existing facilities
- Designated industrial estates where the proposed development is suitable for that industrial estate in terms of its proposed design and operation; and
- Open countryside but restricted to facilities requiring open location or where the facilities are associated with farms and are of an appropriate scale to the location
- On-site management of waste where it is to be used
- Adjacent to sites where energy, including heat, produced can be utilised.

16.2.9 It is also considered that the Local Plan should have specific policy criteria on the siting, design and operation of new or enhanced waste management facilities, ensuring that their environmental effects are acceptable. This should include:

- The scaling and mass of the proposed development
- The extent to which the operations are enclosed within a building
- Conflict with neighbouring land-uses, including intended future uses where applicable
- The suitability of the road network and site access to cope with the proposed traffic movements
- The potential effect of noise, dust and odours on nearby sensitive receptors; and
- The potential effect on the local environment.

Option 28

Set out a policy approach for the:

- detailed criteria to apply to the location of new or enhanced waste management facilities;` and
- detailed criteria to apply to the siting, design and operation of proposed developments as set out above.

Question 35

Do you agree with the proposed policy approach?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

17 Water

17 Water

17.0.1 It is important to consider Telford and Wrekin's water environment when planning where new development is located, to avoid areas at greater risk of flooding.

17.0.2 The design of new development is also important, to ensure that it is resilient to flooding, that water flows are managed, and that water is used efficiently. This is especially important if an exception is made to the sequential test which allows development to be located in an area of flood risk. Additionally, there needs to be careful consideration of the potential impact on water quality, water supply and sewerage facilities and whether the borough's infrastructure can cope with extra development.



Picture 14 Flood Defences - Ironbridge, Telford

17.0.3 This section follows and builds upon the aims and objectives, and there are four main matters that the Local Plan needs to address:

- Managing flood risk
- increasing the resilience of development to flooding
- how to improve water quality; and
- ensuring we deliver water supply and sewerage facilities

17.1 Flood risk

17.1.1 National guidance set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* states inappropriate development in flood risk areas should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Local Plans should be supported by Strategic Flood Risk Assessments

and develop policies to manage flood risk from all sources. The new Local Plan must therefore apply a sequential and risk based approach to the location of development taking account advice from the Environment Agency and other flood risk management bodies.

17.1.2 The *Flood and Water Management Act* (2010) gives local authorities a new role to manage local flood risk in their area. The Council, as a Lead Local Flood Authority is now responsible for local flood risk management.

17.1.3 When planning new development we must ensure that the development will not add to and should reduce flood risk. In areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure.

The Council completed a *Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment* (SFRA) in 2007 and a *Level 2 SFRA* in 2008. The purpose of this was to be used as a planning tool to aid in the location of future development away from areas of high flood risk. The SFRA remains appropriate evidence for developing policies and for development management.

A *Water Cycle Scoping Study* was completed in 2012 which advised the Council to continue to refer to the *Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment* for both developing policy and development management.

17.1.4 The sources of flood risk within Telford and Wrekin area have been identified as:

- fluvial flooding - due to watercourses spilling over their banks into the floodplain;
- surface water flooding - due to the pooling and flow of surface runoff during storm events;
- groundwater flooding - due to the level of the groundwater in an aquifer exceeding ground level;
- sewer flooding - backing up and surcharging of wastewater in the sewerage network due to either maintenance issues or capacity being exceeded; and
- flooding from reservoirs - the flooding if a reservoir were to fail and release the water it holds.

17.1.5 The *Level 2 SFRA* provides detailed flood zone information for six watercourses in Telford and Wrekin, assessing the flood hazard posed by these watercourses and the residual risk from partial blockage of selected culverts.

17.1.6 A number of policy recommendations are made for possible development sites, based on the detailed hydraulic modelling results. Guidance for planning applications and potential developers required to produce site-specific Flood Risk Assessments, is also included.

17.1.7 The findings and recommendations of the SFRA will be crucial for landowners, developers and interested parties to understand the nature of flood risk for specific sites. Developers submitting planning applications in the borough will need to be guided by the maps, recommendations and appendices to consider how to address the risk of flooding as part of specific development proposals.

17 Water

17.1.8 Local authorities are required to co-ordinate and lead local flood management activity, having knowledge of where all local flood risk and drainage assets are and who owns them. Telford & Wrekin Council is a Lead Local Flood Authority and as required by the *Flood Risk Regulations (2009)* produced a *Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment*. The aim of the *Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment* is to provide an assessment of local flood risk across the study area, including information on past floods and the potential consequences of future floods.

17.1.9 The Council is also currently drafting a *Local Flood Risk Management Strategy* as a requirement under the *Flood and Water Management Act* as a Lead Local Flood Authority.

17.1.10 It is proposed that the Local Plan include a flood risk management policy which would:

- minimise flood risk to people, property and infrastructure
- clearly set out flood risk zones
- avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk from flooding, through the application of a 'sequential test' to look for alternative sites with a lower flood risk where appropriate, utilising the findings and recommendations of the Council's SFRA
- ensure that, where new development is exceptionally necessary in flood risk areas, such development is safe and does not increase flood risk elsewhere and where possible, reduces flood risk overall.

Option 29

Set out a flood risk management policy in line with the findings of the *Strategic Flood Risk Assessments 1 & 2*, and to comply with the *Local Flood Risk Management Strategy*.

Question 36

Do you agree with the Council's approach to flood risk management?

Please explain your answer.

Are there further specific local flood risk considerations that should be addressed in the new Local Plan?

17.2 Sustainable drainage systems

Evidence 19

As part of the *Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment* the council commissioned a *Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) overview* to advise on the most appropriate techniques applicable to future developments. It is envisaged that SuDS techniques will be a mandatory requirement in all future developments to ensure urban flood risk and water quality is adequately managed.

17.2.1 Relatively small changes in hard surfacing and surface gradients can cause flooding (for example, garden loss and reuse of brownfield sites). As a result, surface water flooding can become more frequent.

17.2.2 The installation of SuDS can help reduce surface run-off and help with improving the quality of water, especially when low river levels occur during the summer. Creating areas which can be used for water storage will help the borough to cope with increased rainfall and can provide valuable wildlife habitats.

17.2.3 There are many types of SuDS that can be used in new development. These include: permeable surfaces, filter drains/strips, swales, basins, ponds and wetlands, soakaways, infiltration trenches, rainwater re-use and green roofs.

17.2.4 These drainage systems are being strongly promoted and legislation is coming into force which will make them compulsory elements of future developments. In relation to surface water issues, it is considered that the Local Plan should ensure that new developments aim to control, separate and minimise surface water runoff.

17.2.5 As part of the role as a Lead Local Flood Authority the Council will become a SuDS Approval Body. New development will require approval from this body. The Council will be preparing local specific guidance and standards that development will have to comply with for the incorporation of SuDS.

Option 30

Develop a SuDS Approval Board policy requiring that development comply with criteria regarding incorporation of SuDS.

Question 37

Do you support the Council's proposed approach to sustainable drainage?

Please comment on your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

17.3 Water supply and sewerage facilities

17.3.1 Safeguarding water supplies and their quality now and for the future is a key issue.

17.3.2 The borough area lies within the Severn River Basin District which covers an area of 21,590 square km. Potable water is supplied to the area by Severn Trent Water Limited. Severn Trent is responsible for collecting and treating wastewater across the borough.

17 Water

Evidence 20

A *Water Cycle Scoping Study* was completed in September 2012 to initiate the Council's approach to ensuring development and growth is sustainable with respect to the water environment and water infrastructure.

17.3.3 The Council is developing an *Outline Water Cycle Study* which will consider the impacts surrounding water supply and waste water management of the final growth options.

17.3.4 At present the range of development options available prevents the assessment of site-specific infrastructure requirements. The *Water Cycle Study* will ensure that water services infrastructure required is delivered alongside the plan.

Option 31

Set out a policy ensuring development location and phasing are in keeping with the strategy recommended in the Water Cycle Studies

Question 38

Do you support the Council's proposed approach to water supply and sewerage?

Please comment on your answer.

Are there any further issues or alternative options to consider?

18 Minerals

18.1 Mineral resource

18.1.1 The geology of the borough is complex and contains a wealth of commercially valuable minerals. A range of minerals have been worked by surface and underground mining methods since at least Roman times. These include: coal, fireclay, pyrites, oil, coal gasification, brick clay, limestone, sand and gravel, sandstone, igneous rocks, brine, walkers earth, minestone and ironstone.

18.1.2 The key issues for the Local Plan to address are:

- Determine the borough's contribution to sub-regional aggregate apportionment targets and maintenance of landbanks
- The need for a 25 year supply of brick clay for Blockleys Brickworks, Hadley
- Establish whether securing future mineral supplies requires additional provision through some combination of extensions to existing sites, allocations, preferred areas and areas of search
- The need to safeguard minerals resources for future generations
- The need for policies to control different types of mineral working (including developing environmental criteria)

18.1.3 The *National Planning Policy Framework* and retained *Minerals Planning Guidance*⁽⁴⁸⁾ State that in preparing Local Plans Local Authorities should:

- include policies for extraction of mineral resource of local and national importance
- take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the supply of materials
- define Minerals Safeguarding Areas
- set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, where practicable and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place
- set out environmental criteria, to ensure that permitted operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health
- recognise that some noisy short-term activities, which may otherwise be regarded as unacceptable, are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction and
- put in place policies to ensure worked land is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity
- maintain landbanks of 7 years for sand and gravel and 20 years for crushed rock

48 MPG4: Revocation, Modification, Discontinuance, Prohibition and Suspension Orders, MPG8: Planning and Compensation Act 1991: Interim Development Order Permissions - Statutory Provisions and Procedure, MPG9: Planning and Compensation Act 1991: Interim Development Order Permissions: Conditions, MPG14: Environment Act 1995 - Review of mineral Planning Permissions.

18 Minerals

Evidence 21

The *National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England 2005-2020* still set the quota for minerals to be provided by each region. These quotas are then distributed between sub-regional areas by a regional working party, in this case the West Midlands Regional Aggregate Working Party. The county of Shropshire and the borough of Telford & Wrekin are combined as a single sub region for the purpose of aggregates supply allocations.

The *West Midlands regional aggregates working party annual report (2010)* sets an apportionment for Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin of:

- 0.820 million tonnes annually for sand and gravel
- 2.662 million tonnes annually for crushed rock.

Local Policy

18.1.4 At a local level the existing Core Strategy does not contain minerals policies. The Inspector's Report noted that the Core Strategy should have identified areas of mineral working that could be worked during the plan period and areas that should be safeguarded. It also suggested including more detail on minerals currently worked or where proposals might come forward for extraction. This will be addressed by the Local Plan.

18.2 Sand and gravel

Evidence 22

The *Assessing sand and gravel sites for allocation in Shropshire sub region report (2010)* was jointly commissioned by Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Council to assess potential sand and gravel sites. It considered which sites were most suitable to deliver future supplies and therefore meet the sub region's targets. The sets out potential sites and ranks them in order of preference.

The only site in Telford and Wrekin that has been considered potentially suitable as a future allocation is an extension to a site at Pave Lane site, though this is classed as 'least preferred' meaning that it is a reserve site if an increase in supply is required.

There are serious issues with the deliverability of the Pave Lane Site within the Plan period. It has several environmental constraints, firstly, in the form of the Woodcote Hall, a retirement and nursing home, which lies between the site and the nearby Woodcote Wood site (in Shropshire). Secondly, there are landscape issues when viewing the site from nearby Staffordshire, and thirdly, there are highways issues accessing the A41(T).

The nearby Woodcote Wood site received Shropshire Council resolution to grant planning permission, subject to the signing of a section 106 Agreement in 2006, however, this has not yet occurred. Therefore there are the issues regarding whether, or when, the Woodcote Wood site will become operational.

If in the future the Pave Lane Site is to be considered for permission, either as a freestanding site, or as an extension to the Woodcote Wood Site, the issue of cumulative impact would need to be considered.

18.2.1 Duty to cooperate discussions with Shropshire Council have indicated that the sub-regional apportionment for sand and gravel is likely to be fully met up to 2031 by sites within Shropshire. Shropshire Council is preparing a Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan that will identify and allocate these sites. However, the Woodcote Wood site (in Shropshire) is included in the sub regional sand and gravel landbank. It is some 7 years since it received resolution to grant planning permission and if the site is not eventually brought into production, its loss will have to be made good by other sites.

18.2.2 In these circumstances, and given the evidence of limited ability to develop any sites in Telford and Wrekin it is proposed that the Council will not seek to allocate sites for sand and gravel extraction in the Local Plan. The use of recycled aggregates will also be encouraged.

Option 32

Do not allocate sand and gravel sites in the Local Plan, with the presumption that the required landbank will be met by sites located within Shropshire.

An alternative option would be to further explore the potential for allocating sites and seek to identify deliverable sites within Telford and Wrekin.

18 Minerals

Question 39

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach to sand and gravel provision for the plan period?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

18.3 Crushed rock

Evidence 23

Leaton Quarry provides the borough's contribution to the sub-regional crushed rock supply requirements and 10 year landbank requirements (currently fully met by existing permitted reserves). It is anticipated that permitted reserves will be sufficient to maintain production to the end of the plan period. In the event that increased production results in the site's permitted reserves becoming exhausted earlier, then subject to environmental constraints, an extension to Leaton quarry would be considered to replenish reserves.

18.3.1 The crushed rock resources of the borough consist of limestone, igneous rocks and the Wrekin Quartzite. Limestone outcrops exist at Steeraway, near Wellington, Little Wenlock, Lincoln Hill, Benthall Edge and Lilleshall. Igneous rocks outcrop in the Wrekin Hills and at Little Wenlock, Doseley and Lilleshall Hill.

18.3.2 It is considered that these resources are either virtually exhausted (Doseley, Lincoln Hill, Steeraway), permanently sterilised or environmentally unacceptable to develop .

18.3.3 The limestone reserves at Benthall Edge lies within the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, an Area of Special Landscape Character. It is wooded, has public rights of way and Benthall quarries is a geological Site of Special Scientific Interest. There are also ground stability issues that renewed mineral working in the Gorge could cause.

18.3.4 The village of Little Wenlock lies on outcrops of limestone and basalt, but the existing built development and the need for stand offs from it effectively sterilises these minerals. Similarly extraction at Lilleshall Hill would affect the local amenities by removing a prominent hill with public rights of way and a wildlife site. There would also be significant highways and access problems to overcome.

18.3.5 The Wrekin Hills is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. They contain a local nature reserve, wildlife sites, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, ancient woodland, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Wrekin hillfort) and are a recreation facility for the general public. Furthermore, any renewed quarrying in the Wrekin Hills could lead to deforestation and create a significant visual scar, given the high relief.

18.3.6 The use of recycled aggregates will also be encouraged.

Option 33

Based on the evidence above it is proposed that the need for crushed rock will be met solely by Leaton Quarry, with no further sites allocated. Duty to cooperate discussions will be held with Shropshire Council and a formal agreement regarding the required landbank will be drawn up.

An alternative option would be to further explore the potential for allocating sites and seek to identify deliverable sites within Telford and Wrekin.

Question 40

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach to crushed rock provision for the plan period?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

18.4 Brick clay

18.4.1 Brick clay is worked within the borough at Hadley quarry supplying the adjoining Blockleys Brickworks. In 2005 planning permission was granted to extend this quarry, increasing the permitted reserves by some 2.8 million tonnes. This is expected to be worked and progressively restored with inert materials for 20 years. After this the workable brick clay deposits will be exhausted at this site.

18.4.2 Due to the virtual exhaustion of alternative supplies of brick clays not already been permanently sterilised by built development within the borough, it is unlikely that any further provision for brick clay can be made. National Planning Policy Guidance makes it clear that the Council has a duty to manage a 25 year supply of brick clay for Blockleys Brickworks. This is not the same as a landbank and mineral planning authorities can, if necessary, look beyond their local authority boundaries to meet these supply needs. It is anticipated that for the Blockleys Brickworks to continue production, once its own brick clays in the surrounding quarry are exhausted, it will have to rely completely on other supplies it is already importing from Caughley, near Bridgnorth, Shropshire and Staffordshire for blending purposes.

Question 41

Do you agree with the Council's approach of relying on supplies from outside the borough to supply Blockleys Brickworks?

Please comment on your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

18 Minerals

18.5 Coal and fireclay

18.5.1 The borough has been heavily mined in the past for its coal deposits. The coal resources of the borough lie within the shallow Coalbrookdale coalfield centred on Telford and the deep extension in the Lilleshall/Lilyhurst area. The last deep mine, Granville Colliery, closed down in 1979 and the last shallow drift coal mine, at Shortwood, near New Works, closed in 1970. There is a surface coal and fireclay mine at Huntington Lane currently working and expected to be restored by mid 2014.

18.5.2 There are opencast coal and fireclay prospects around Little Wenlock, the area around the existing Huntington Lane site, including Shortwood itself, immediately west of the existing Huntington Lane extraction area, and the area between New Works Lane and Dawley Road and at Muxton. However, there are severe environmental constraints with all these sites and it is therefore considered unlikely that any of these sites will be worked in the future.

18.5.3 There are substantial amounts of unworked deep mined coal resources in the Lilleshall/Sheriffhales area. These were last worked by Granville Colliery until it closed in 1979. However, these deep mine coal resources are heavily faulted and whilst it is for industry and not mineral planning authorities to determine what is commercially viable to work, it is considered unlikely that there will be a resumption of conventional deep underground coal mining within the plan period.

Question 42

Do you agree with the Council's approach of not allocating sites for further coal and fireclay extraction?

Please comment on your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

18.6 Building stone

18.6.1 The use of stone in restoration and minor restoration works means that demand is relatively low compared to other construction materials such as bricks. There are no active building stone quarries currently worked or that have extant planning permissions in the borough.

18.6.2 Many parish churches and other local buildings have been constructed of local building stone and it is possible that some localised small scale building stone sites will come forward to meet local needs for historic building and/or structure repair. Such operations are likely to be small scale and infrequent it is not considered appropriate to create a landbank policy.

Question 43

Do you agree with the Council's approach of assessing building stone site applications as and when they come forward according to the policies in the Local Plan?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

18.7 Peat

18.7.1 There is a large peat resource within the Weald Moors, north of Telford, which is identified as an Area of Special Landscape Character designation⁽⁴⁹⁾ and also contains wildlife sites and the Iron Age Wall Fort, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. In line with the very clear policy approach of the *National Planning Policy Framework* no sites will be permitted for peat extraction.

18.8 Oil and gas

18.8.1 In the past oil and gas have been exploited from the coalfield, for example, natural bitumen from the tar tunnel, Coalport, and until the 1970s coal gasification from the former Granville Colliery.

18.8.2 There are potential coal bed methane supplies in the exposed and concealed extension to the Coalbrookdale coalfield where it can be pumped from the coal seams between 200 metres to 1,500 metres below ground level. The Lilleshall/Sheriffhales area offers the best potential. The exposed or shallow coalfield upon which the majority of Telford is built, is unlikely to offer much potential since the coal seams lie close to or at the surface, meaning significant quantities of the gas are likely to have escaped to the atmosphere.

Question 44

Are there any other mineral resources the Council should consider planning for?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

18 Minerals

Option 34

Set out policies which set out environmental criteria, to ensure that permitted operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts.

An alternative policy approach could be, as there is no major mineral extraction anticipated, rely on national policy and have no local policies regarding adverse impact.

Question 45

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach to include criteria for the environmental acceptability of minerals extraction?

Please explain your answer.

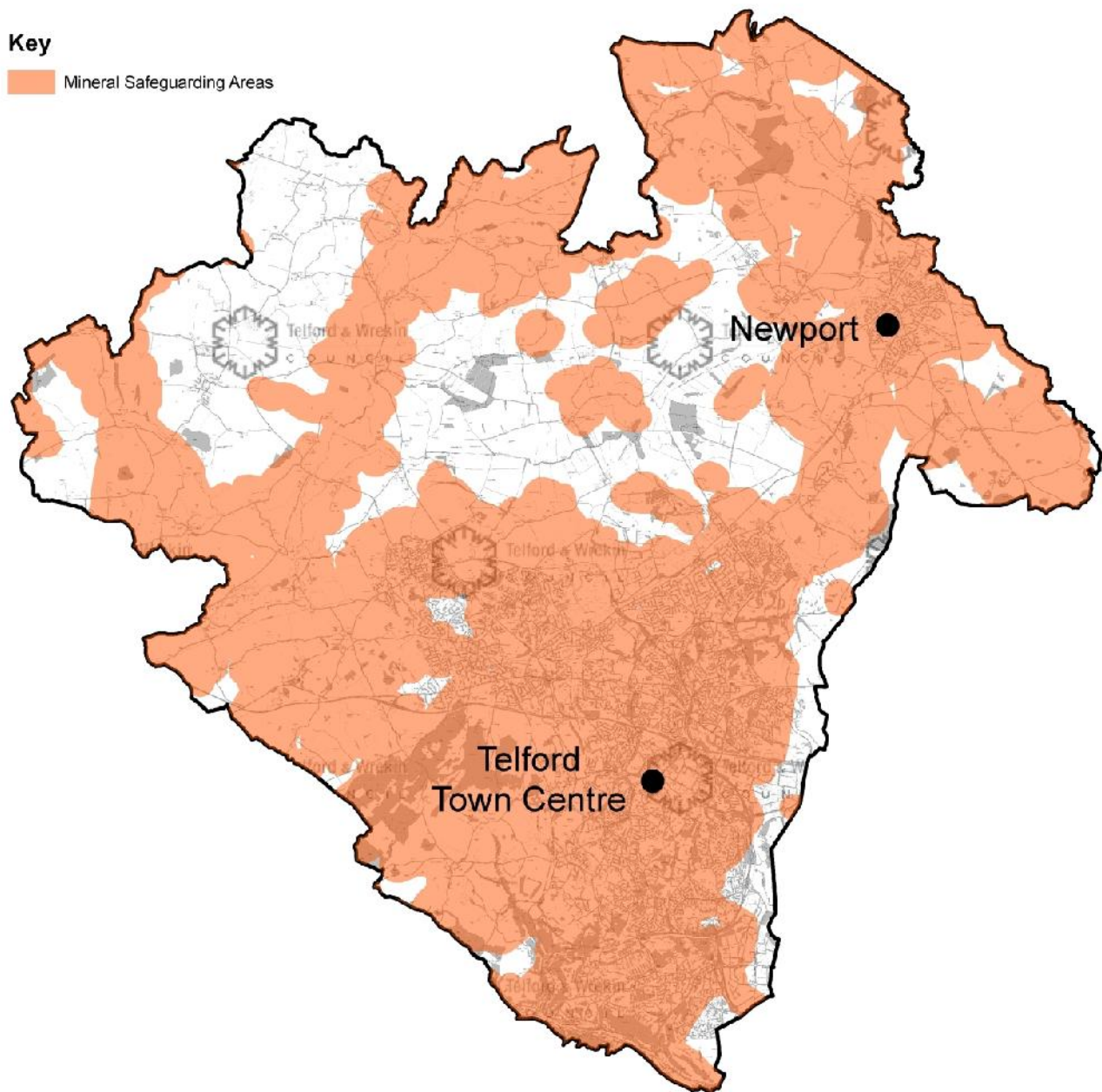
Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

18.9 Mineral safeguarding areas

18.9.1 Although it is not expected that any further mineral workings will take place in the borough within this plan period, this does not mean there are no mineral resources available. For example, there are sand and gravel resources in several locations, un-worked crushed rock resources, coal seams, brick and fire clay and building stone.

18.9.2 The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires minerals planning authorities to define Mineral Safeguarding Areas. Mineral Safeguarding Areas are areas of known mineral resources that are of sufficient economic or conservation value to warrant protection for generations to come. Defining these areas carries no presumption that any areas within them will ultimately be environmentally acceptable for mineral extraction. The purpose of Mineral Safeguarding Areas is to ensure that mineral resources are adequately and effectively considered in land-use planning decisions, so that like other finite resources, they are not needlessly sterilised, compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

18.9.3 In 2008 Shropshire County Council and Telford & Wrekin Council commissioned the British Geological Survey to delineate Mineral Safeguarding Areas in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin using the methodology outlined in “*A guide to mineral safeguarding in England*”⁽⁵⁰⁾.



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Map 7 Mineral safeguarding areas in Telford and Wrekin

Option 35

In line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* the Council intends to adopt policies to ensure Mineral Safeguarding Areas and existing, planned or potential transport routes are not sterilised by non-mineral development.

18 Minerals

Question 46

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach to Mineral Safeguarding Areas and transport routes?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

19 Pollution and Land Stability

19 Pollution and Land Stability

19.0.1 Due to past heavy industry and mining, there are a large number of mineshafts, extensive undermining, tipped areas and contaminated land in parts of Telford and Wrekin.

19.0.2 Through the *National Planning Policy Framework* requires that policies seek to protect the environment and ensure that development is not affected by or be the cause of land instability or pollution. The Local Plan can help by identifying land which is suitable for development and ensuring that where issues exist, the developer mitigates appropriately against these.

19.1 Pollution

19.1.1 The location of new development needs to be considered relative to existing sources of pollution and planning has an important role to play in determining the location of potential development which may give rise to pollution.

19.1.2 Pollution is controlled through various legislative acts such as the *Clean Air Act* and the *Environmental Protection Act*. These seek to improve the control of pollution and support enforcement. The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that plans should also seek to remediate and mitigate contaminated land.

19.1.3 With regards to air quality, the *National Planning Policy Framework* suggests planning policies should sustain compliance with and contribute to EU limit values for pollutants. Also that the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas should be taken into account. It promotes through good design, minimising the impact of light pollution.

19.1.4 According to the *National Planning Policy Framework* planning policy and planning decisions should ensure that noise and significant adverse impacts on health through development should be avoided. Any other adverse impacts on the quality of life through new development should be mitigated and reduced to a minimum.

19.1.5 It should however be recognised that development will often create noise and businesses will want to develop and should not have restrictions put on them due to changes in surrounding land uses since they became established. Therefore consideration should be given to allocation of land.

Evidence 24

The Council has an adopted *Contaminated Land Strategy*. The aim of this document is to set out how the Council intends to ensure that use of land within Telford and Wrekin does not give rise to significant harm (either to human health or the environment) due to contamination.

The Council has produced several air quality progress reports, the latest being the 2011 version which was published in October 2012. This sets out what the objectives are to be met with regards to air pollution. That report states that all the concentrations measured are below the objectives.

19 Pollution and Land Stability

19.1.6 It is proposed that through Local Plan the Council will ensure that the borough continues to comply with the air quality objectives. This could be done using the following methods:

- working with environmental health officers to set standards for development to meet with regards to pollution, which will inform any new development, ensuring that objectives are still met. This will include both industrial and commercial development
- ensuring the separation of uses, where use classes are not compatible

Option 36

Set out a policy with locally specific criteria regarding development and pollution

An alternative would be to set a simple policy that ensures development does not have an adverse impact on noise and air quality, or to simply rely on national planning policy along with guidance given within other Acts.

Question 47

Which of the two approaches to pollution do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

19.2 Land stability

19.2.1 The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that the planning system should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location and adverse effects caused by land instability, must be taken into account. This includes from natural hazards as well as from former activities such as mining.

19.2.2 The geological history of Telford and Wrekin, combined with the extensive mineral extraction over the centuries, has led to significant problems of slope instability, undermining of areas and the creation of made-up ground in certain locations within the borough. These issues will often not preclude development in these locations, but careful consideration must be given to development proposals which may be affected by these factors.

Evidence 25

In 2005 High Point Rendel completed ground investigation studies to provide general guidance and information on ground stability conditions along the valley slopes of Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale⁽⁵¹⁾, and the plateau near Madeley. It also produced several series of maps which are intended to assist decision-making by informing the planning process, as well as providing a basis for assessing the requirements for stability investigations and reports in support of future development proposals.

The studies concluded that existing property in specific actively unstable areas will probably continue to experience damage due to ground movement. New development in such areas should be avoided. More stable (but affected) areas are likely to remain largely free from significant building damage and may be successfully developed, so long as necessary stabilisation measures are made by the developer.

A study was also produced by Jacobs in 2009⁽⁵²⁾. This extended the planning guidance given within the 2005 High Point Rendel study, to include the whole World Heritage Site.

19.2.3 It is proposed that the Local Plan could take an approach that where development is proposed in an area known to be affected by land instability, the developer will need to supply evidence to the satisfaction of the Council that:

- the design will not be of detriment to the slope or compromise slope stability;
- the design will not be at risk from ground instability;
- the design will be able to tolerate the ground conditions;
- and that instability will not be exacerbated by the design.

19.2.4 This approach would be in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* and not preclude appropriate development.

Option 37

Set out a policy approach to development in an area known to be affected by land stability issues as described in 19.2.3 .

An alternative approach would be to have no local policies regarding land stability issues and rely solely on the *National Planning Policy Framework* when assessing development proposals.

51 http://www.telford.gov.uk/site/scripts/download_info.aspx?fileID=1396&categoryID=595

52 https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/4253/ironbridge_gorge_geomorphological_mapping_report

19 Pollution and Land Stability

Question 48

Which of the two approaches to land stability do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

20 Built Heritage

20.0.1 Telford and Wrekin benefits from a rich and diverse heritage. This heritage includes the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, urban conservation areas of Newport, Wellington and Horsehay, rural conservation areas of Edgmond, High Ercall and Wrockwardine along with numerous listed buildings, locally listed buildings, monuments and archaeological features. This built heritage is important not only for its historical significance but also in terms of community identity and education.

20.0.2 The *National Planning Policy Framework* advises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Planning should support proposals that secure viable uses consistent with their conservation.

20.0.3 The Council will seek to set out a positive strategy for conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment whilst recognising the desirability of new development which can make a positive contribution.

20.0.4 The *National Planning Policy Framework* also states that local planning authorities should have up to date evidence on the local historic environment so they can adequately assess the significance of heritage assets and predict the likelihood of further assets being discovered.

20.0.5 The plan could therefore include a policy approach to ensure all elements of the diverse range of heritage assets found in the borough are sustained and enhanced. This could be in a number of policies or, more likely, a single policy for the conservation, protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their setting. For clarity the policy approach is considered separately for listed buildings, conservation areas and the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site below.

20.1 Listed buildings

20.1.1 Telford and Wrekin has a significant stock of listed buildings. Listing marks and celebrates a building's special architectural and historic interest. Listed buildings do already benefit from protection through the *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. Here demolition, part demolition, alterations or extensions to a listed building requires consent to be granted by the local planning authority.

20 Built Heritage



Picture 15 All Saints Church - Wellington, Telford

Evidence 26

Within Telford and Wrekin, there are currently 804 entries in the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest of which 11 are Grade I and 53 are Grade II*.

The Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER) is a continuously expanding resource covering all aspects of the historic environment. It includes not only archaeological sites, finds and features, but also historic buildings, structures and landscapes. The HER is compiled and maintained by the Historic Environment Team at Shropshire Council. It covers the whole of the historic county of Shropshire, including Telford and Wrekin.

20.1.2 One of the key issues for listed buildings is the potential harm from inappropriate development. The Local Plan could set out policies on how the listed buildings within the area will be protected and seek to ensure development does not have a detrimental effect on the special interest of the listed building and its setting.

20.1.3 The policy approach should not prevent well designed sympathetic new development or changes to buildings.

Option 38

The Council could set out locally specific policy guidelines for works to listed buildings to ensure development does not have a detrimental effect on the special interest of the listed building and its setting.

An alternative approach would be to have no local policies and rely solely on the *National Planning Policy Framework* when assessing development proposals.

Question 49

Which of the options for listed building protection do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

20.2 Conservation Areas

20.2.1 Within Telford and Wrekin there are 7 conservation areas. Ironbridge, Newport, Wellington, Horsehay, Wrockwardine, Edmond and High Ercall. The character of these conservation areas varies from the rural nature of Wrockwardine and High Ercall, through the industrial nature of the Ironbridge and Madeley, to the commercial feel of the historic market towns of Wellington and Newport. These conservation areas form a significant part of the borough's built heritage, important to residents and visitors alike forming a key part of the borough's destination character appeal.

20.2.2 The designation of a conservation area is a recognition that an area, town or village has a special character, beyond a collection of individual buildings. This townscape value may include such things as historical development and layout, street patterns, structure of open spaces, materials and views. It is important that the plan provides a policy framework for ensuring that these broad townscape qualities are preserved and enhanced where appropriate.

20.2.3 The *Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990* states the character and appearance of conservation areas must be preserved or enhanced. The *National Planning Policy Framework* gives guidance on conservation areas and how they should be protected and ensure that any development enhances them and there setting.

20.2.4 Following the gradual erosion of traditional shopping streets in district centres the Council has put in place a *Shopfronts and Signage Design in Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Document*. The Supplementary Planning Document acts as a guide to operators, owners, ensuring security and shop front design is appropriate to the setting, usable and functional.

20 Built Heritage

Evidence 27

Conservation area appraisal and management plans

English Heritage guidance suggests that it is good practice to produce an appraisal of an area to underpin planning decisions. An appraisal can help to develop a management plan for the conservation area and identifies opportunities for beneficial change or the need for additional protection and restraint.

Of the conservation areas in Telford and Wrekin, 4 have character appraisals and management proposals. The areas of Newport, Wrockwardine and Horsehay do not.

Conservation Area	Hectares	Character Appraisal	Management Proposals
Edgmond	24.2	Yes	Yes
Newport	22.4		
Wrockwardine	26.9		
High Ercall	9.5	Yes	Yes
Wellington	8.2	Yes	Yes
Horsehay	25.1		
Ironbridge	417.9	Yes	Yes
Borough	531.9	-	-

Table 8 Conservation Areas

20.2.5 Although the *National Planning Policy Framework* sets out criteria for the protection of heritage assets, the Local Plan can go further setting out policies to guide any potential development as well as encouraging the development of character appraisals management proposals.

Option 39

The Council could set out policies which give locally specific guidelines, in line with the management proposals

An alternative approach would be to have no local policies and rely solely on the *National Planning Policy Framework* when assessing development proposals.

Question 50

Which of the proposed approaches regarding conservation areas do you support?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

20.3 Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site

20.3.1 The Ironbridge Gorge offers a powerful insight into the origins of the Industrial Revolution and also contains extensive evidence and remains of that period when the area was the focus of international attention from engineers, artists, and writers. The site contains substantial remains including:

- Mines
- Foundries
- Factories
- Workshops
- Warehouses
- Ironmasters' and workers' housing
- Public buildings
- Infrastructure
- Transport systems
- All this is set within the traditional landscape and forests of the Severn Gorge.

20.3.2 The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site is the only World Heritage Site in the West Midlands. It is a unique historic and living environment. Key issues for the World Heritage Site include:

- The need to preserve the unique character of the Gorge
- Management of visitors and their access to the World Heritage Site
- Land stability
- The management of the river and its banks

20.3.3 The *National Planning Policy Framework*, identifies that World Heritage Sites are irreplaceable heritage assets. It also goes on to say that substantial harm or losses of the World Heritage Site should be wholly exceptional. Not all elements necessarily contribute the the significance of the Gorge, loss of elements that do make a positive contribution to it's significance will however be treated as significant harm. The *National Planning Policy Framework* encourages policies that plan for appropriate development within the World Heritage Site which enhances the outstanding universal value of the site. Development that will lead to harm or loss of a World Heritage asset should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Where developments lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals.

20 Built Heritage

Evidence 28

Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Management Plan and Outstanding Universal Value

The *Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Management Plan* aims to protect and strengthen the qualities within the World Heritage Site. The Management Plan was prepared in order to conserve the outstanding universal value of the cultural heritage assets of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site. 'Conservation', includes not only ensuring the physical survival of archaeological sites and historic buildings, but also enhancing the visual character of their landscape setting; improving the interpretation and understanding of the cultural landscape to visitors; and social and economic regeneration. It also seeks to work in conjunction with partner organisations and residents to ensure that the interests and quality of life of the local residents and businesses are protected and enhanced.

The draft Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Statement on Outstanding Universal Value lists the following features (summarised below):

1. The Coalbrookdale blast furnace - relating to Abraham Darby's discovery of coke iron in 1709.
2. The Coalbrookdale blast furnace and the Iron Bridge - their great influence on the development of industrial techniques and architecture.
3. Ironbridge Gorge - a coherent ensemble that shows the development of an industrial region in modern times.
4. Ironbridge Gorge - as a world renowned symbol of the 18th-Century Industrial Revolution.

20.3.4 The Local Plan should support the preservation and enhancement of the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site (as set out above). A policy should be put in place to require that development within the World Heritage Site reinforces its essential character and that development that would result in the loss of important townscape or landscape features will be strongly opposed.

20.3.5 Development opportunities that help with the management of visitors and access, deal with land instability issues and the management of the river and its bank could also be looked upon favourably.

Option 40

Set out a policy stating that the World Heritage Site will be preserved and enhanced by ensuring that only development which is appropriate for this setting is allowed and that development proposals that address management of visitors and access, land instability issues and the management of the river and its bank are encouraged.

Or the Council could have no local policies and rely solely on the *National Planning Policy Framework* when assessing development proposals.

Question 51

Do you support the Council's proposed approach of setting out a policy regarding the World Heritage Site?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

21 Urban Design

21 Urban Design

21.0.1 The borough of Telford and Wrekin is a mix of old and new, urban and rural, traditional and modern and natural and man-made. The quality of its rural and urban landscapes has attracted many people to live and work in the borough. The purpose of urban design in the local plan is to enhance the borough as a prosperous destination to live, work and do business.

21.0.2 Urban design is concerned with both the quality of the borough as well as the processes involved in helping to shape the quality of the borough. It is about the quality of the everyday places as well as the special places in the borough and how, where and when urban design processes such as frameworks, masterplans, design briefs, codes should be applied.

21.0.3 Urban design is about the relationships between the landscape, the highways and public realm, the buildings and structures, their uses and how places in the borough are used.

21.0.4 The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that the "...government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, it is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people..."⁽⁵³⁾.

21.0.5 The *National Planning Policy Framework* requires local plans to promote and plan for high quality design and to pursue creative successful development solutions which are viable, attractive and fit for purpose.



Picture 16 Local centre - Lightmoor, Telford

21.1 Urban design

Evidence 29

National evidence includes: *Design - urban design in the planning system: towards better practice (2000)*⁽⁵⁴⁾ and *The value of good design (2005)*⁽⁵⁵⁾.

Local evidence includes results from engagement⁽⁵⁶⁾ It identifies the following:

- many people have chosen to live in the borough because of the quality of its environment
- its urban areas are dominated by comparatively low density suburban development
- there are large areas of single uses for example employment areas, housing areas
- 74% of the borough is rural countryside and that there is above average green infrastructure in the urban area
- a need to improve access and connections for non car based movement particularly in Telford Town Centre and the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site
- there are areas of prosperity and areas of multiple deprivation in need of environmental regeneration
- there is a need for continued regeneration and enhancement of urban centres and Telford Town Centre
- the age profile of housing in the borough is much younger than the average for England

21.1.1 Urban design issues for the local plan relate to both the physical quality of the borough as well as the processes involved in shaping that quality.

21.1.2 Issues relating to the physical quality of the borough include:

- enhancing the borough as *Destination Telford*
- achieving high quality viable development that adds to the attractiveness of the borough for new investment
- reconciling the benefits of a fast and efficient car based highway infrastructure with the need to shape a place which encourages and facilitates sustainable movement
- reconciling the legacy of zoned residential and industrial areas with the benefits of mixed use
- reconciling the desire for 'more of the same' and the vision for growth
- reconciling the protection of a generous green infrastructure with the need for growth
- harnessing the green infrastructure for maximum economic, social and environmental benefit
- protecting the architectural and townscape heritage
- improving the existing quality of the built environment
- continuing to create a strong recognisable urban town centre

54 Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2000) *Design - urban design in the planning system: towards better practice*

55 CABE (2005) *The Value of Good Design*

56 *Shaping Places Local Plan - Results of Early Engagement 10th January - 27th February 2012*
http://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/5404/early_engagement_feedback_report

21 Urban Design

Question 52

Do you agree with the issues relating to the quality of the borough?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

21.1.3 Urban design issues relating to the processes involved in shaping the quality include:

- the need to establish clear, succinct set of policies to guide and deliver good urban design but which are not over prescriptive
- the need to provide principles by which we define and can measure design quality
- the need to direct how, when and where urban design is applied in the planning and development process such as the use of frameworks, masterplans and design codes
- the need for policies that address the following subjects:
 - sustainability
 - health
 - viability
 - green infrastructure
 - blue infrastructure
 - architecture
 - public realm
 - location and mix including housing tenure
 - scale, density, layout, massing, height
 - Conservation Areas, the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site and Listed Buildings
 - design review
 - self build

Question 53

Do you agree with the issues relating to the processes involved in shaping the quality of the borough?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

21.1.4 The Local Plan may also need to adopt design quality standards such as *Building for Life 12* (2012)⁽⁵⁷⁾, *Manual for Streets 1 and 2* (2007 and 2011)⁽⁵⁸⁾, *BREEAM Communities*⁽⁵⁹⁾, *Trees in the Townscape* (2012)⁽⁶⁰⁾.

57 CABE/Design Council (2012) *Building for Life 12*

58 Department of Communities and Local Government, Department for Transport (2007 and 2011) *Manual for Streets 1 and 2*

59 <http://www.breeam.org/>

60 TDAG (2012) *Trees in the Townscape*

Question 54

Should the council adopt national design standards and if so, which ones?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues or alternative options to consider?

Options

21.1.5 The Local Plan can approach urban design policies in one of three ways:

Option 41

Provide urban design policies within each section and policy area in the Local Plan.

Option 42

Provide a number of urban design policies in one section covering all subjects, such as green infrastructure, housing and heritage.

Option 43

Provide two primary urban design policies supported by a comprehensive supplementary planning document produced in parallel with the Local Plan:

- policy 1: aims, objectives and obligations
- policy 2: general criteria

The supplementary planning document would contain:

- direct links to the urban design policy
- information related to an assessment of local character, which is currently under production
- when, where and how urban design is used in the planning process
- detail information regarding principles, criteria and standards
- detail information regarding the all key topic areas

21.1.6

21 Urban Design

Question 55

Which of the options do you prefer?

Please explain your answer.

Are there any other alternative ways of approaching urban design in the local plan?

22 Delivery & Monitoring

22 Delivery & Monitoring

22.0.1 The previous chapters of this document provide a commentary on the emerging vision, objectives, growth strategy and policy areas of the new Local Plan. This chapter focuses on the issues relating to how the plan will be delivered and its performance monitored.

22.0.2 The Council is committed to delivering growth and development across the borough to promote and attract new investment, supporting the needs of local households and businesses, and securing the future viability of local services. The delivery strategy of the new Local Plan will be key to achieving this objective.

22.0.3 One of the tests of the Local Plan will be its deliverability. To demonstrate this, the *National Planning Policy Framework* requires Local Authorities to pay careful attention to viability in plan-making. The framework emphasises that the scale of development identified in the plan should not be subject to development 'obligations' or policy 'burdens' that threaten the viability and, ultimately, the deliverability, of that development⁽⁶¹⁾.

22.0.4 The delivery strategy for the plan could comprise four elements:

- Implementation;
- Infrastructure provision;
- Developer contributions;
- Phasing of development.

Implementation

22.0.5 It is important to recognise that the vision and objectives of the plan can only be delivered through effective implementation of plan policy. There are a number of ways by which this will happen.

- **Development Management process:** decisions will be made in line with the policies and proposals set out in the Local Plan and other adopted plans that are still relevant and up to date such as the *Central Telford Area Action Plan*⁽⁶²⁾. As part of the Council's drive towards being more responsive to the needs of the development industry, the Council has issued a *Development Management Guidance Note - Planning Obligations*, which provides clarity for applicants on how planning applications will be dealt with, to ensure the process is as efficient as possible
- **Neighbourhood Development Plans:** are likely to form a key element of delivering the policies and proposals of the plan at the local (Parish) level. They must be in 'general conformity' with the higher level Local Plan so effective engagement between the Council and residents at parish level, at an early stage, will be key to ensuring the process of preparing plans is as effective as possible.
- **Supplementary Planning Documents:** can be useful in providing applicants with greater, detailed advice on specific policies or topics. Should such a need be identified, the Council will work with relevant bodies to ensure that any further advice is clear, practical and succinct.

61 *National Planning Policy Framework 2012: paragraph 173*

62 'Local Development Documents' are defined under regulation 5 (1) of the *Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012*

22 Delivery & Monitoring

- **Related corporate strategies:** prepared by the Council, for example the local transport plan should be integrated with the plan and assist in the delivery of the plan's vision, objectives, and policy areas.
- **Working in partnership:** with delivery partners, local businesses and residents will be crucial to the implementation of the plan's vision and objectives. At a local level the adoption of a clear, up to date Local Plan will create greater certainty for the development industry to invest in the borough and support economic growth and job creation. An effective working relationship with key delivery partners such as the Home and Communities Agency will be crucial in bringing forward public land assets to the market to help support the local construction industry and supply chains. At a broader level, the Local Plan will provide a clear direction for the borough as part of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership, assisting the Council in accessing funding through the partnership to deliver local development.

Question 56

Do you agree with the Council's proposed implementation approach? If so, why?

If not, please explain your answer.

Are there any other relevant issues for the Council to consider regarding implementation?

Infrastructure Provision

22.0.6 The *National Planning Policy Framework* states that local plans should plan positively for the development and infrastructure required in the area⁽⁶³⁾ and ensure that there is a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure is deliverable in a timely fashion⁽⁶⁴⁾.

22.0.7 In response to these issues, the Council will work with its key delivery partners, including the Homes and Communities Agency, utility companies and others to establish a schedule of key infrastructure projects required to support the levels of growth promoted in the plan. This will be set out in a infrastructure delivery plan, which the Council will publish alongside the draft plan. This will address provision of:

- physical infrastructure: transport (roads, buses, cycle routes), utilities (electricity, gas and water supplies), waste facilities, and flood defences;
- social infrastructure: schools, health facilities, extra care provision, community centres, emergency services, and cultural and arts facilities;
- green infrastructure: open space provision (play areas, playing pitches, multi use games areas, allotments, cemeteries).

22.0.8 Clearly, this is potentially a very wide range of services and facilities to be catering for, each with their own capital and revenue costs attached to them. It is important, therefore, for the Council to consult at this stage on the infrastructure required to support the policy approach and identify any particular gaps or issues in provision. The infrastructure delivery plan

63 National Planning Policy Framework 2012: paragraph 157

64 National Planning Policy Framework 2012: paragraph 177

22 Delivery & Monitoring

must also address the costs involved in providing any new or improved infrastructure, and the anticipated funding sources. This will need to be developed further following more detailed engagement with key service providers as the process moves towards the draft plan.

Developer Contributions

22.0.9 It is clear that a plan strategy that promotes growth and investment will give rise to a need for supporting infrastructure. Delivery of new or improved infrastructure necessary to support new development will include contributions from developers. These comprise three elements:

- Planning conditions;
- Planning obligations (Section 106 agreements);
- Community Infrastructure Levy;

22.0.10 National planning policy advice makes it clear that development schemes should not be subject to obligations or burdens that would render them unviable⁽⁶⁵⁾. The Council has adopted a *Business & Development Charter*⁽⁶⁶⁾, which includes a commitment to improve cost certainties through a 'clear, transparent and viable system of planning obligations'. In addition, the Council has issued a *Development Management Guidance Note for Planning Obligations*, which seeks to ensure that local planning provides the conditions for growth and supports viable development⁽⁶⁷⁾.

22.0.11 The government has responded to investors concerns with planning obligations by allowing Councils to introduce the Community Infrastructure Levy ('the levy'). The levy is a single charge or tariff, based upon a predetermined level of contributions for education, open space and highways, intended to give both the developer and Council greater certainty when considering development proposals. Local Authorities can choose whether or not to introduce a levy and can continue to use Section 106 agreements. The development industry has mixed views towards the levy with some welcoming the transparency and certainty of a clear set of charges but with the majority concerned at the viability and inflexibility of tariff levels.

22.0.12 Nationally a north/south divide has emerged with few authorities in the Midlands/North (aside from pilots such as Shropshire Council) finding a levy viable to implement at this point. Locally, there are a number of factors which are relevant to considering the introduction of a levy. These are:

- the borough, at April 2012, has around 8,200 residential plots with planning permission that are in the pipeline and are therefore levy exempt (the levy cannot be charged retrospectively). On current build rates that represents many years supply
- recent analysis indicates that low sales values and high abnormal costs make it unviable to impose a levy charge on the majority of development in the Telford urban area
- affordable housing is not part of the levy and as such there would still be a need to negotiate an additional Section 106 agreement for this contribution

65 *National Planning Policy Framework 2012*: paragraph 173

66 In April 2012, Cabinet approved a report entitled '*Encouraging Growth - A New Way of Working*'. This recognised the challenges facing businesses and developers wishing to invest in the Borough both from global economic conditions, but also those identified by investors as local barriers. The report launched a *Business & Development Charter* which pledged to ensure a more streamlined, consistent, personalised and supportive service to all our customers

67 Telford & Wrekin Council Cabinet Report *Invest in Telford - a Programme for Change*, 28th February 2013

22 Delivery & Monitoring

22.0.13 At this stage, it is not considered that a levy offers a viable alternative to Section 106. However, this position will be kept under review and when and if it is considered to be viable levy preparation will run in line with the work underway to prepare a new Local Plan. An assessment would need to follow examination of the Local Plan anticipated in 2014/15. The Council is committed to promoting growth and in addressing investors concerns, and to establish the borough as an attractive, competitive investment opportunity for new investors. The Council is to publish a Development Management Guidance on Planning Obligations, which will support and enable the effective implementation of adopted policy and the delivery of viable development.

22.0.14 To ensure that any approach to developer contributions can support investment and deliver new or improved facilities that support development, the plan will need to create a supportive policy framework that ensures that any planning obligations are clearly justified and do not inhibit development, but which also ensure development is delivered in line with relevant local plan policies.

Question 57

Do you agree with the broad approach to developer contributions outlined in paragraph 22.0.14? If so, why?

If not, please explain your views.

Are there any other relevant issues for the Council to consider regarding developer contributions?

Phasing

22.0.15 The issue of phasing is predominantly linked to the delivery of new housing. It is expected that the Council illustrates the 'expected rate' of housing delivery through a housing 'trajectory' covering the plan period. It should also describe how it will maintain delivery of a five-year supply to meet the adopted housing target, to be set out in a 'housing implementation strategy' as required by national planning guidance. In order to prepare a housing trajectory it will be necessary to identify the full range of sites and locations that will contribute to achieving the overall target, along with all the other sources of housing land supply. An assessment will then need to be carried out as to when those sites should be brought forward, either in the short or long-term, depending on the overall plan strategy. Therefore the phasing of land release will, to a large extent, determine how a trajectory will work in practice.

22.0.16 The *Annual Monitoring Report* (2012) demonstrates that in the short term at least (years 0 to 5), the supply of new dwellings will include predominantly those sites with existing planning permission (or 'commitments'). This may appear obvious but does have a major influence on how phasing might be planned. This is because the vast majority of those commitments are located within the built up area of Telford, and so it is expected that the strategy in the early years at least will be driven by the build out of sites within this part of the borough. Indeed, this would support the plan vision which seeks the 'completion' of the town at least some way towards the total number of homes originally planned for, as well as supporting the regeneration and investment where it is needed most acutely.

22 Delivery & Monitoring

22.0.17 Clearly, a growth strategy that seeks delivery of new dwellings at the higher end (option 3) will require a significant increase in the annual completion rate compared to past trends. It is also recognised that, whilst completion rates have increased in recent years contrary to performance nationally, in the short-term at least current market conditions dictate that a significant increase in development is likely to be problematic. However, the new Local Plan looks forward over a 20-year time frame and so must be driven by a longer-term view of development and delivery. As highlighted above, there is a commitment to increase the overall rate of growth, for example through measures that are intended to speed up the planning application process as part of the Council's new *Business & Development Charter*. In addition, the Council will work with key partners to tackle sites where delivery has stalled, and will implement its viability appraisal approach with developers to ensure schemes are both viable and sustainable, and so can be brought forward without undue delay.

22.0.18 In summary, any approach to the trajectory and phasing in the early years needs to reflect the scale and nature of land supply across the borough, as well as current market conditions. This is likely to result in a trajectory that broadly follows recent completion rates and then increases as the plan progresses over the medium to long-term. In applying a phased approach to the delivery of future development, it will also be necessary to consider in broad terms the order or sequencing of sites, balanced against the need to maintain flexibility to ensure the market can bring forward sites in a timely manner.

Monitoring and review

22.0.19 Under previous guidance issued by government all Local Authorities were required to issue Annual Monitoring Reports. Recent updates to the regulations⁽⁶⁸⁾ mean that local authorities are no longer required to submit the report to the Secretary of State. However, the Council considers these to be an important means of presenting all relevant information regarding the effectiveness of plan policies measured against the objectives of the plan. The report, therefore, will continue to be issued on an annual basis.

22.0.20 To undertake this task, the delivery of the plan will be measured against the plan objectives identified earlier in the document. To do this, a set of indicators and targets relating to each policy will need to be established. This will form the basis for a the plan's monitoring framework. However, as the plan is still at the informal stage of consultation the policies have not yet been drafted. Consequently, it is intended to present the draft monitoring framework at the draft plan stage once the policies and proposals of the plan have been prepared for consultation.

22.0.21 *National Planning Policy Framework*⁽⁶⁹⁾ stresses that local plans should be kept up to date. Based on the findings of the the annual monitoring process, the Council will consider at regular intervals whether the plan should be reviewed in part, or as a whole. A key determinant of whether the plan does need reviewing is performance of the plan in delivering the level of growth that will be planned for.

22.0.22 The plan will be monitored based on a range of information collected by the Council, which will inform the decision to undertake a formal review. With uncertainties around how the wider economy will perform in the short to medium term, and the effect this might have on development activity locally, it may be appropriate to consider an early review should economic conditions change markedly over a short time period. For example, an improving economy may

68 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, regulation 34

69 National Planning Policy Framework 2012: paragraph 157

22 Delivery & Monitoring

improve the viability of certain types of development, which may then necessitate changes to the standards and thresholds set out in the plan. Therefore, in order to allow some flexibility in the process it is not proposed to apply any specific time frames for plan review at this stage.

Question 58

Do you agree with the Council's proposed approach to monitoring and review of the plan?
If so, why?

If not, please explain your views.

Are there any other relevant issues for the Council to consider regarding monitoring and review of the plan?

23 Glossary

23 Glossary

23 Glossary

Affordable Housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Allocated Land: Land which has been set aside for a specific land use within a development plan, for example for housing, retail or office development.

Annual Monitoring Report: A document which assesses the extent to which local planning policies are being achieved

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: An area of countryside which has been designated by Natural England as an area considered to be of significant landscape value.

Brownfield: Previously developed land.

Central Telford Area Action Plan: A local planning policy document that sets out a strategy and policies for the spatial development of Central Telford (including the town centre, Hollinswood, Malinslee, Central Park and Old Park)

Committed Land: Land that has planning permission for development or has been allocated for development in a development plan.

Development Plan: A document that sets out the priorities and requirements for future development to take place in an area. This includes plans that have been formally adopted by a Local Planning Authority (Local Plan) and Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums (Neighbourhood Plan).

District Centres: Economically and commercially self sustaining, comprising core services and facilities, often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as public facilities such as a library.

Duty to Cooperate: A requirement set out in section 110 of the Localism Act, for neighbouring local authorities to plan strategically across boundaries.

Flood Risk Assessment: An assessment of flood risk required to be completed and submitted alongside a planning application

General Permitted Development Order: The *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (1995)* sets out developments that, which provided that it is carried out in accordance with the terms of the Order do not need planning permission.

Greenfield: Land which has not previously been developed.

Green infrastructure: All types of green open space and natural features. It includes all public and private green areas such as parks, sports pitches and private gardens as well as all urban and rural green features such as highway verges, street trees and planters, hedges, woods and fields.

Homes and Communities Agency: The national housing and regeneration agency for England, who contribute to economic growth by helping communities realise their aspirations for prosperity and deliver high-quality housing that people can afford.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan: A planning document which sets out what infrastructure is needed to support delivery of the Local Plan for example transport, open space, schools, utilities and health and leisure services.

Local Enterprise Partnership: A voluntary partnership between Local Authorities and businesses set up to determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth and job creation.

Local Plan: The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

Local Transport Plan: A document prepared by the Council which sets out a strategy and action plan for improving local transport.

National Planning Policy Framework: The government's national planning policies (issued in March 2012) It replaces national Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes along with some circulars.

Neighbourhood Plan: A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area.

Public right of way: Public rights of way are open to everyone. They can be roads, paths or tracks, and can run through towns, countryside or private property.

Sequential Approach: This approach is adopted when selecting sites for new retail, commercial leisure developments, other key town centre uses or housing. First preference should be for town centre sites, where sites or buildings suitable for conversion are available, followed by edge of centre sites, and only then by out of centre sites in locations that are, or can be made, easily accessible by a choice of means of transport.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment: An assessment of the nature and extent of all types of flooding in the Borough and the implications this may have for land use planning.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment: An assessment of housing needs and demand, designed to ascertain the need for market housing, affordable housing and understand the housing requirements for particular groups in society.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment: An assessment which identifies sites with housing potential and assesses how deliverable they are.

Supplementary Planning Document: Policy documents which provide policy guidance to supplement policies and proposals contained within Development Plan Documents.

Sustainability Appraisal: An appraisal of the potential impacts of policies from an environmental, economic, and social perspective. This will inform the Council of the potential implications of different alternatives. Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal will be undertaken together.

23 Glossary

Sustainable Development: Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Targeted Intervention Areas (TIAs): Six electoral wards in the borough that are within the 10% most deprived nationally and have been prioritised by the Council for investment and support. These are Brookside, College, Cuckoo Oak, Donnington, Malinslee and Woodside.

Trajectory: A projection of the expected rate of housing delivery for the plan period.

Unitary Authority: A local government authority with responsibility for all local government functions in that area.

Windfall: Windfall sites are sites that have not yet been identified, either through a planning application or development plan allocation

World Heritage Site: A place that is listed by the UNESCO as of special cultural or physical significance.

