

# Local Plan 2021-2041

## Spatial Options Consultation results



# Engagement Statistics

## Visitors to the websites during the Spatial Options Consultation

- Herefordshire Council – 814
- Common Place – 3624

Over 550 Respondents have commented on the Local Plan project so far

Including the following:

Members of the public

Parish and Town Councils

Neighbouring County Councils

Statutory Consultees such as Welsh Water; Environment Agency; Natural England; National Grid;

Woodland Trust; Wildlife Trust; CPRE; NFU

NHS Property Services; West Mercia Police; Coal Authority; Mineral Products Association

Businesses, Developers and Consultants

954 comments

25 Settlement/site land submissions



# Option preferences

## Strategic Spatial Options Results



### **Option 3: (39%) Focus Growth across market towns and Hereford**

Option 1: (23%) Housing Need Baseline

Option 2: (15%) Focus on Market Towns and Rural Based Growth

Option 5: (11%) New Rural Settlement With Growth Focused in Leominster and Bromyard

Option 4c: (5%) Ledbury as a Growth Town

Option 4a: (5%) Leominster as a Growth Town

Option 4b: (2%) Ross-on-Wye as a Growth Town

# Option preferences

## Rural Options Results



Rural Areas Option 4: (30%) Focus growth within settlements outside AONBs and conservation areas.

Rural Areas Option 2: (25%) Focus on larger settlements.

Rural Areas Option 1: (23%) Current Strategy. Dispersed approach across settlements.

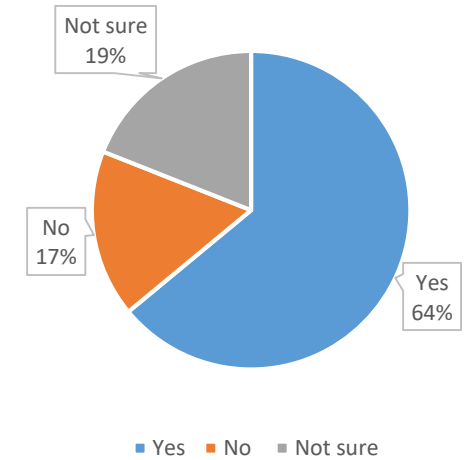
Rural Areas Option 3: (22%) Focus growth on rural hubs.



# Vision and Objective results

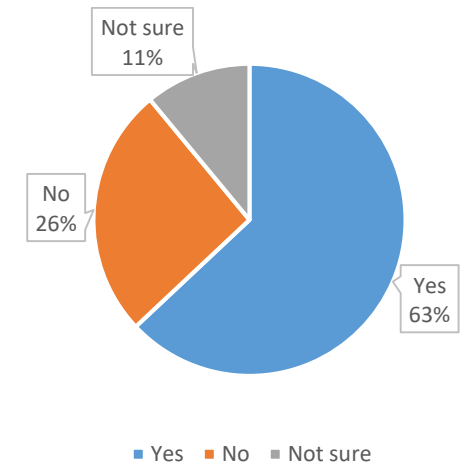
## Vision

Q1 - Do you agree with the vision and does it reflect your priorities for the county?



## Objectives

Q2 - Do you agree with the objectives and do they reflect your priorities for the county?



# Some recurring themes

## Travel/Transport/Movement



- Investment in infrastructure and transport links
- Support increased use of electric vehicles
- Consideration of the disabled and elderly in safety of routes and methods of transport
- Practicalities of Active Travel in urban and rural settings
- Potential for new development linked to railway stations/lines

# Some recurring themes



## Climate Change and sustainability

- Relationship between protection of habitats for wildlife; natural infrastructure and Climate Change
- Improved drainage and flood defences
- Renewable energy and sustainable heating methods for new development
- Enabling communities to cope with effects of Climate Change
- Importance of sustainable farming practises and protection of soil

# Some recurring themes

## Housing and Design

- Emphasis on good quality, sustainable affordable housing
- Opportunity to address all aspects of environmental issues
- Recognition of new technologies and changed working lifestyle practices
- Right house, right place
- Second homes and making housing unaffordable
- Need for key services where there is development





# Local Plan 2021-2041

Policy Options Consultation – 4 April to 16 May 2022



# Policy Options

- Introduction to Policy Options Consultation
- Currently underway - until 16<sup>th</sup> May
- Place based consultation to take place Summer 2022
- Policy themes
- Q & A



# Climate change

- *Climate Change Act – target: UK to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.*
- *2019 Herefordshire Council Climate & Ecological Emergency – target: carbon neutral by 2030*



Fact: average household consumption emissions in **Herefordshire: 17.8 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e per year**, compared to **national average of 13.1 tonnes**

- **National guidance:** plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating & adapting to climate change – top priority for planning
- Significant areas of Herefordshire are low-lying and liable to flooding
- Herefordshire is a rural county – challenge to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>



# Suggestions for your comments...

- How can we ensure that the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change are fully addressed?

Would this be best through:

- a single detailed policy on climate change; or
- wording embedded throughout all policies;
- or a combination of both?



# Natural and Historic Environment

- **Environment Act 2021** seeks Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategies to address degradation of habitats and species.
- Green/Blue Infrastructure evidence out of date and requires updating.
- **National guidance:** States that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of **landscapes** which includes **townscapes**.
- **National guidance:** States that local Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the **historic environment**.



# Suggestions for your comments...

- Options for a separate townscape policy as well as a dark sky policy?
- Maximise **biodiversity net gain** from 10% baseline? Close the gap between the strategic and local biodiversity policies with the use of Design Codes? Consider a separate policy for Biodiversity Net Gain?
- Current **green infrastructure** needs updating in line with current guidance. Should the policy be strengthened to ensure it applies to all types and scale of development?
- Is the current policy framework for the **historic environment** broadly effective?



# Design

Local/National Guidance on design policy making:

- Have greater emphasis on design and community involvement.
- Build well designed places that are sustainable and of a better quality, greater emphasis on National Model Design Code and Guide
- Raise standards to develop more low carbon energy efficient homes
- Include design codes in the local framework, with community involvement in local Design Codes.



# Suggestions for your comments...

- How do we create better and well designed places in Herefordshire?  
More detailed policies in the Local Plan? More place based policies or county level/local design guidance?
- How should we include local communities in design policy/guidance?  
Should Parish Councils continue to develop local policy through NDPs?
- How should design policies proactively deal with the climate emergency?  
Promote low carbon/zero carbon developments in additional policy?





# Transport

- National Level: Decarbonising Transport Strategy for Britain
- Levelling Up White Paper and Active Travel England
- Herefordshire: Climate emergency declaration, Hereford Masterplan
- Emerging Evidence Base: Transport Scoping Report



# Suggestions for your comments...

- Should more emphasis be on the climate emergency in transport policy, such as a requirement of electric car charging points for new developments?
- Should the rural nature of the county be further addressed, for example through rural cycle highways?
- Could transport policy be further integrated to design policies, in line with the new national design code?



# Q & A session

- Climate Change
- Historic and Natural Environment
- Design
- Transport



# Access to Housing

- Housing affordability a big issue in Herefordshire- particularly in rural areas. Poorer affordability ratio compared with the West Midlands region as a whole.
- Attaining affordable housing and range/mix difficult on smaller housing schemes.
- Assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers is underway. Local Plan will need to address these needs through site allocations.
- Government is keen to promote different means of housing delivery to boost supply, encourages councils to increase the provision of self build plots in their areas.



# Suggestions for your comments...

- What types of specialist housing are required to respond to the needs of the local population?
- How can we better address the need for affordable housing in rural areas?
- How can we identify good sites for the travelling community?
- How can housing policies proactively promote alternative means of affordable housing delivery? e.g. Self build, community led housing projects?



# Community, open space and health

The health map: Barton and Grant 2006 developed from a concept by Whitehead and Dahlgren 1991

- Local Plan must ensure that Herefordshire's Communities have good access to community and health services.
- New developments should be designed in a way to enable healthy and active lifestyles for all.
- Maintaining good quality open space for range of sport and recreational purposes, as well as extending green and blue infrastructure networks, will be key requirement.



23% of population provide unpaid help to any group(s), club(s) or organisation(s) at least monthly (34% in 2012) (Herefordshire Community wellbeing survey, 2021)



8% of people surveyed said that parks and open spaces needed improving (4<sup>th</sup> highest concern) (Herefordshire Community wellbeing survey, 2021)



Physical activity rates within Herefordshire are similar to England, although over 20% are considered to be physically inactive. (Understanding Herefordshire, 2017/18)

# Suggestions for your comments...

- How can we ensure that land use planning promotes good health and well-being in the county?
- How can we ensure that existing social and community facilities in the county are retained? Place based approach needed?
- How can open space incorporate opportunities to allow biodiversity to thrive and for rewilding?
- How do we ensure that health issues are embedded throughout the plan?
- How can open space accommodate more community growing and other local sustainable food production practices to support community cohesion?

# Rural Areas

- Definition of “exceptional quality design” where dwellings in open countryside are proposed.



- Inclusion of reference to potential for self build dwellings, possible size limits on isolated dwellings, and exploring opportunities for carbon reduction.



- Consideration of the approach to the re-use of rural buildings – can they be limited to sustainable locations and be demonstrably redundant.

- Rural economy policy- should agricultural and food production development in the countryside be addressed.





# Suggestions for your comments...

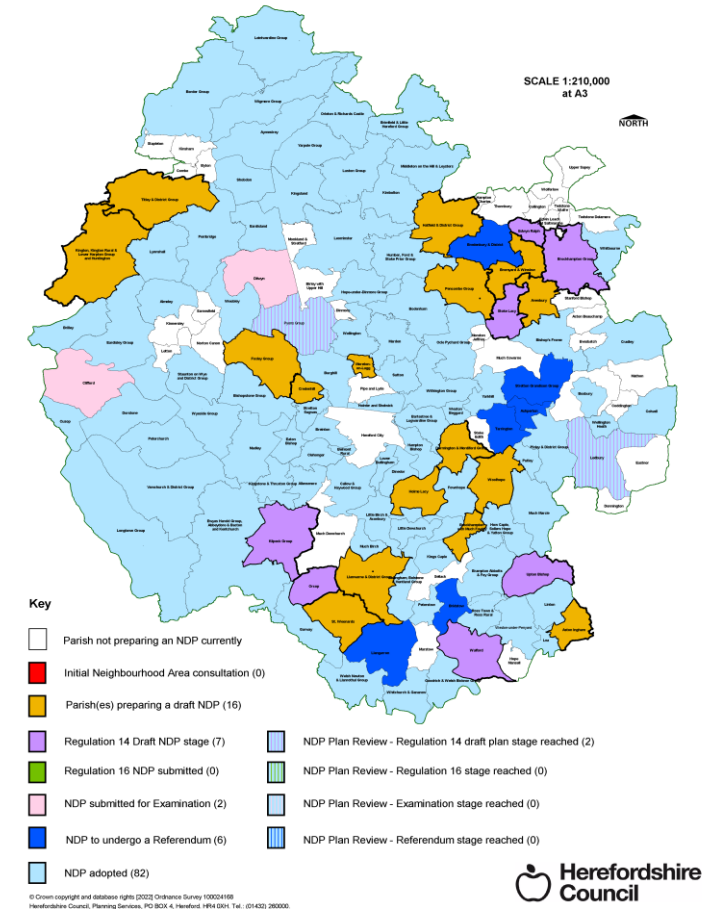
- Should new rural area policies go beyond updating to reflect changes to national guidance?
- Should rules for developments in the open countryside take a local based approach?
- Should policies regarding size limits be for isolated housing in the countryside be introduced?
- Should there be policies regarding adaptable living opportunities within the open countryside?
- Should there be a policy specifically for seasonal workers accommodation?

# The role of Neighbourhood Planning

- Herefordshire has taken a positive approach to Neighbourhood Planning since their introduction in The Localism Act 2011, with a high take up rate.
- These must conform with the county wide policies in the Local Plan
- After 10 years in practice, it is appropriate to review their role, and how they may align with the next Local Plan 2021-2041.



Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) in Herefordshire



# Suggestions for your comments...

- Should we continue with the current approach?
- To revert the site allocations and settlement boundary delineation back to the Local Planning Authority?
- Town and Parish councils could prepare design codes for their local area rather than a Neighbourhood Development Plan?



# Q & A session

- Housing
- Community, open space and health
- Rural areas
- The role of Neighbourhood Planning



# Employment

- Herefordshire currently has lowest economic output in England- 19% below national average.
- Low unemployment- but also low wages.
- Under delivery of strategic employment sites.
- Employment Land Requirements Study Underway.
- Existing sites harder to protect with changes to UCO.
- Transition to low carbon economy- attracting creative and green tech industries.



# Suggestions for your comments...

- Should the Local Plan seek to designate protect existing areas in employment use?
- Should this chapter of the Local Plan include a policy to enable home working and home based businesses?



# Town Centres

- Decline of physical retail use, impact of Covid-19 Pandemic
- Internet sales as percentage of total retail sales has increased from 19% to 29% from 2019-2021.
- Changes to Use Class Order classification
- Emerging evidence base- Town Centre and Retail Assessment



## Suggestions for your comments...

- Town centre and retail- is the use of the term *primary shopping areas* still relevant?
- Could an additional policy be drafted in regards to the use of upper floors within town centres?





# Tourism

- Tourism an important contributor to the economy of Herefordshire.
- Increasing demand for less traditional forms of rural accommodation e.g. glamping.
- Tension between locating sustainably and recognising attraction of the rural areas.
- Definition of “Sustainable Tourism”?



## Suggestions for your comments...

- Should the Local Plan seek to define “sustainable locations” in which rural visitor accommodation can be permitted?
- Should the Local Plan provide specific policy guidance on tourist accommodation, such as glamping sites?
- Are there other aspects to tourism in the county that should be considered in planning policy?



# Q & A session

- Employment
- Town Centres
- Tourism

