

Introduction

1. The Forest of Dean District Local Plan Review was adopted in November 2005. The Local Plan Review sets out the policies and proposals to guide development in the Forest of Dean up to 2011. The Forest of Dean District Local Plan Review is a detailed landuse plan concerning all matters except waste and minerals. It provides detailed guidance about how land will be allocated for change, and provides general guidance for development control purposes.
2. The Local Plan Review has been prepared following extensive consultation on both the consultation draft, which was published in July 2000, and the revised deposit version, which was published in January 2002. A Public Local Inquiry was held between October 2002 and April 2003 when an independent inspector considered all duly made objections. Following the inquiry the inspector prepared a written report, which was received in November 2003. The report made recommendations for amendments to the plan, the council considered and proposed modifications to the plan. The modifications to the plan were advertised for further consultation. In July 2004 the council advertised their intention to adopt the Local Plan Review. The Secretary of State directed the Council on 17th August 2004 that it shall not adopt the Local Plan until he has notified them of his decision as to whether to give a direction under section 44(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). This section confers power on the secretary of state to call in a local plan for his own approval. Further modifications were proposed after consultation with the Government Office of the South West (GOSW) and were advertised for further consultation. In October 2005 the Council advertised their intention to adopt the Local Plan Review
3. The Local Plan Review comprises of Part 1 - District Wide Policies and Proposals, and Part 2 - Settlement Policies and Proposals. The content of Part 1 is intended to be of general application and Part 2 to be of particular application to named settlements. The Plan Review is accompanied by a Proposals Map to illustrate the application of policies and proposals to areas of land. The Proposals Map is included as a separate volume (Part 3), and includes Inset Maps to show particular areas at a larger scale.
4. A number of supporting documents have been prepared to accompany the Plan Review. Some of these comprise Supplementary Planning Guidance and are intended to provide additional information to illustrate how various policies and proposals of the Plan will be applied.
5. Policies and Proposals in the Plan Review are distinguished by being shown as emboldened lower case text, with an accompanying policy reference. The remainder of the Plan Review principally comprises other text which is the written justification to explain policies and proposals.
6. The appendices to the Plan Review are for information only, and do not form part of the Local Plan.
7. This adopted version of the Local Plan Review will supersede the first Forest of Dean District Local Plan, which was adopted in December 1996.

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Council Offices,
High Street.
COLEFORD,
Glos.
GL16 8HG**

November 2005

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The Local Plan Strategy

Framework For The Local Plan Strategy

- 1.1 This chapter is concerned with setting out the strategy for the Local Plan. The first part identifies the principal influences which have provided the framework for the development of the strategy. The second part states the strategic objectives of the Plan and the strategic policies.
- 1.2 The key influences upon the Local Plan strategy have been:
1. The Council's Corporate Plan
 2. The Gloucestershire Structure Plan (Second Review)
 3. The principles of Sustainable Development
 4. National and Regional Planning Policy Guidance.

The Corporate Plan

- 1.3 The Forest of Dean Council commenced a fundamental strategy and policy review in 1995, the outcomes of which were set out in a document entitled "The Forest of Dean in the 21st Century" (May 1997). The conclusions of the review were that it was unacceptable to the Council and the community of the Forest of Dean to consider a continuation into the future of past trends, which included a relatively weak and unbalanced economy and a forecast of a declining population. Though this is not reflected in the recent mid-year estimates, an ageing population is clearly apparent, as is evidence of social exclusion. A lack of investment in the urban fabric combined with problems of town centre vitality and viability also feature within the District.
- 1.4 The above document, and the resultant Corporate Plan, set out a vision for promoting the economic, social and community revitalisation (regeneration) of the District. Amongst the objectives were to promote a scale of new development in the District (particularly of jobs and housing) greater than that which might be expected through the continuation of past trends. This aim of revitalisation is applicable to all communities in the District, but is of special relevance to the south Forest where the prevalence of the issues identified above is far more pronounced. (The south Forest principally lies to the south of the A.40).
- 1.5 The aims of the Corporate Plan are to promote a thriving economy, a sustainable environment and the improved social well-being of communities. The delivery of these corporate aims will be assisted by a Local Plan that provides for the necessary development opportunities to underpin the strategy of revitalising the District and its communities.
- 1.6 The achievement of the above corporate aims will require other action by the Council, its partners and the community both to address the recent trend of very significant job losses and to encourage new enterprise. The Local Plan therefore must be viewed in the context of the many other strategies and programmes adopted by the Council, aimed for example at economic development, poverty, recycling, energy and sustainability, housing investment, crime, health and community development. The Local Plan will provide opportunities which support these strategies.
- 1.7 The Corporate Plan identifies that Lydney offers the greatest strategic opportunity for development in the District, and that Cinderford has the greatest need for revitalisation.

The Structure Plan

- 1.8 The adoption of the above corporate vision for the future of the Forest of Dean, together with the second review of the Gloucestershire Structure Plan, have prompted the need to review the Local Plan. The Structure Plan process has provided the opportunity for the District Council to make representations to

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ensure that the needs of the Forest of Dean are properly represented in the Countywide strategy. The Structure Plan sub-strategy for the District is set out at paragraph 5.7.3 of the adopted Plan and is reproduced below.

“The strategy for the Forest of Dean is one of continuing restraint in the northern part of the Forest; whilst in the southern part of the Forest the strategy is one of encouraging economic regeneration. In the southern part of the Forest it is envisaged that the majority of development will take place in or adjacent to the principal settlements of Cinderford, Lydney and Coleford in accordance with other policies. The southern part of the Forest has traditionally been an area of growth in order to encourage economic regeneration. This forms a sub-strategy for the area, which is to encourage investment and increase the population base to broaden the labour supply and skills, and encourage growth in the service sector. Consequently, the strategy includes a significantly higher level of housing than that forecast”.

1.9 The Structure Plan sets out scales of housing and employment land requirements for the District, with which the Local Plan should comply. It identifies the three towns of the south Forest as the principal locations for development, and provides strategic policies on a variety of land use planning issues.

1.10 The strategy of the Structure Plan and the Council's Corporate Plan are compatible and share the same strategic aims with respect to the Forest of Dean. The Local Plan strategy therefore has a strong base and shared purpose on which to build.

Sustainable Development

1.11 Development plans are required to have regard to the principles of sustainable development in formulating strategies and policies regulating development. The Structure Plan expressly incorporates such principles, and forms the basis for more detailed interpretation at a local level. The Government view of sustainable development is concerned with more than the physical environment. It states that sustainable development should enable social progress which meets the needs of everyone, effective protection of the environment, the prudent use of natural resources and the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

1.12 The strategy of the Local Plan must provide the foundation for policies and proposals which will deliver sustainable forms of development. For example there will be the need to concentrate development at locations which maximise access to services and facilities (including public transport) and which make best use of existing infrastructure. The Plan will need to strike a balance so that proposals make the least demands upon the natural and built environment, particularly upon non-renewable resources such as land and energy from fossil fuels, while still providing for the economic and social well-being of the community.

National/Regional Planning Policy

1.13 Planning guidance at a national level is set out in a range of Government documents. Amongst the most important of these is the series of Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) notes. These are a series of documents each of which concentrates on a single subject or theme such as the countryside, retail development and town centres, or housing. Together they contain comprehensive advice to Planning Authorities covering most of the issues that Structure and Local Plans must deal with. The advice indicates those issues which ought to be incorporated into a Local Plan (and those which should not), and also the general stance that the authorities concerned should take on a number of important issues.

1.14 A large number of the policies in the Local Plan, therefore, will be rooted in guidance from PPGs. Where local circumstances dictate, then the Plan may include policies which provide a local interpretation of national guidance, whilst retaining the overall stance of the PPG. The Local Plan, therefore, will contain policies which are derived directly from and reflect government guidance. Examples of such guidance are:

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- Sustainable development principles should be applied to a wide variety of forms of development, including housing, transport, the natural environment and rural communities generally
- Mixed development - encouraging a mix of uses particularly within urban areas to reduce travel demand and enhance vitality
- Re-use of land - to reduce the need for greenfield sites and stimulate urban refurbishment
- Conserve and enhance the natural and man-made environment, and protect natural resources
- Locate development to minimise the consequent travel demands
- Protect the open countryside
- Sustain the rural economy.

1.15 Regional Planning Guidance also is rooted in national guidance and reflects the above principles. It is intended to form the framework for the preparation of Structure Plans. It is noteworthy that the South West Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 10, 2001) specifically acknowledges the need for further economic development in the Forest of Dean in its Policy EC2 and its identification of the Forest of Dean (meaning the south Forest) as an "Area of Special Need".

Summary

1.16 The cumulative impact of the above influences have a major significance for the strategy and policies of the Local Plan. Together they establish the basic principles upon which the Plan will be based. The role of the Local Plan is to apply these principles in a manner best suited to the prevailing conditions and needs of the present and future population of the Forest of Dean.

The Local Plan Strategy

Strategic Objectives:

1. To achieve the economic, social and environmental revitalisation of communities throughout the Forest of Dean, while recognising the particular needs of the south Forest
2. To promote the principles of and contribute to sustainable development, including locating development so as to minimise the travel demands arising, and the reuse of previously developed land
3. To concentrate development in the four towns of the District, and to develop their role and function as accessible employment, service and transport centres
4. To conserve, protect and enhance the natural and man-made environment
5. To provide for the economic and social well-being of rural communities.

Strategic Principles

1.17 The Local Plan strategy promotes and provides for development and change within the Forest of Dean in order to achieve the aim of community and economic revitalisation. The process of revitalisation will require inter alia provision for and the promotion of accessible job opportunities to meet the needs of the existing and planned new population. The planned population increase will support and stimulate the improved provision of local services and facilities, with attendant job creation. The outcome of the

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strategy will be an improved quality of opportunity for residents of the Forest of Dean, in terms of jobs, housing, services and facilities.

- 1.18 The strategy will incorporate the principles of sustainable development in pursuing the aim of revitalisation. The strategy will set out to achieve economic growth, while protecting and where possible enhancing the environment for the benefit of all.
- 1.19 New development will be located so as to provide a balance between the level of employment opportunities available in a community (or which would be easily accessible from adjacent locations by modes of transport other than the private car) and the amount of housing development proposed in that same community. The intention will be to reduce the energy demands associated with travel, make efficient use of and support existing services and facilities, and minimise the demand for land for development.
- 1.20 Full use will be made of redevelopment sites to accommodate new development to minimise the need to use greenfield land, this will in part be achieved by the phasing of housing allocations but also by the use of appropriate densities.
- 1.21 The Local Plan will identify and protect those environmental attributes of the Forest of Dean which are considered to be irreplaceable, including outstanding landscapes, sites of special significance for the habitats they support, buildings and structures of architectural and historic significance, and natural resources such as water and soils.
- 1.22 The aim of revitalisation will require the creation of substantial increases in employment. The strategy must ensure that a sufficient amount and variety of land is brought forward to meet this need. The Local Plan will identify and allocate sites which have the greatest potential to attract investment and development. There are three principal sources of new employment opportunity in land use planning terms. These are greenfield sites attractively located in accessible positions; development and redevelopment sites within towns, particularly town centres, where parallel investment in urban improvements can enhance development potential; and improvement proposals for existing industrial areas to raise their quality and attractiveness and stimulate increased investment. The aim will be to create a balanced employment structure, with opportunities in both services and manufacturing employment, and a reduction in the reliance upon a small number of large employers.
- 1.23 The principles outlined above will result in a strategy of concentration of most new development at a limited number of locations, principally the four towns, where a balance of opportunity can be achieved between housing, employment and service provision, and where the principles underlying a sustainable pattern of development can best be realised.
- 1.24 Most new development will be located in the south Forest of Dean, where the need for revitalisation is greatest. Development will be located principally at Lydney, Cinderford and Coleford. Lydney offers the greatest strategic opportunity for development. Approximately half of the housing land allocations in the Plan will be located at Lydney, together with about 40% of the employment land allocation. Cinderford has the greatest need for revitalisation, particularly with respect to improving the vitality and viability of the town centre, and in promoting improvements to the urban fabric of the town as a whole. Coleford has the opportunity to develop its market town role, principally in services, shopping and tourism. In the north Forest of Dean, generally lying to the north of the A.40 the strategy will provide for an appropriate concentration of development at the principal settlement of Newent. Overall however, there will be a strategy of restraint upon development in the north Forest, other than to provide for the local needs of rural communities, particularly with respect to providing opportunities for increased and accessible local employment.
- 1.25 The need to maintain the vitality of rural communities and the rural economy will be incorporated into the strategy, by providing for appropriate levels of development and economic activity related to localised needs in rural communities, and enabling continued investment in rural enterprises.

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Strategic Policies

Development to Assist Revitalisation

(R)F.Strategy 1

Provision will be made for the development of 78 hectares of employment land and about 6,950 dwellings between 1991 and 2011 to be located primarily in the four towns of Lydney, Cinderford, Coleford and Newent. Appropriate contributions will be required from new developments to meet the related social, economic, transport and infrastructure needs directly arising from the development.

- 1.26 The foregoing introduction to the strategy outlined the concerns of the community and Council of the Forest of Dean with respect to the structural problems of the local economy, the forecast decline and ageing of the resident population, the need for investment in the principal settlements and in local services, and the threat these trends pose to the vitality and the social and economic well-being of communities.
- 1.27 Consultation on the draft strategy for the Local Plan indicated support for an approach which would set out to reverse the above trends. A central element of the Local Plan strategy therefore is to seek the revitalisation of the District through:
- Providing for a higher level of population growth than would otherwise be likely to occur
 - Providing the opportunity for increased business investment to increase employment and balance job opportunities with the planned population increase
 - Increased investment in services to meet the needs of the new households and population
 - New investment and refurbishment in town centres to provide employment and increase local services
 - Increased investment in new infrastructure, services and facilities, including negotiating appropriate contributions from developments to provide for the needs directly arising from developments.
- 1.28 This strategic policy accords with the Structure Plan 'sub-strategy' for the Forest of Dean which seeks the economic regeneration of the southern part of District. Overall the revitalisation strategy envisages new opportunities being created across a broad range of jobs, housing, services, facilities and other community infrastructure. It is anticipated that the District population will increase significantly over the Plan period, as a result of the implied annual building rate of approximately 430 dwellings per year and that there will be a related need in the order of 3,000 additional jobs in the District.
- 1.29 The strategic revitalisation theme of the Plan is not led by any particular form of development. It is intended that a balance should be achieved both in scale and location between the provision of new housing, the availability of opportunities for investment in employment on existing and new employment sites, and investment in community infrastructure and facilities. The Plan will set out the contributions to be required from the development of individual sites towards meeting the needs of the occupiers, and towards mitigating the assessed impact of the development upon the community and the environment. These will be required where the developments concerned generate a need for particular facilities or infrastructure without which the development should not proceed. Improvements to transport infrastructure will be sought in appropriate cases.
- 1.30 The proposed concentration of development in the four towns will maximise the opportunities for achieving new investment at accessible locations in homes, jobs, services and facilities to benefit the community of the District as a whole. Around 90% of all allocated housing land will be in the four towns, together with nearly 85% of all employment land allocations.

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- 1.31 The development provisions of the Local Plan will complement the wide range of other actions by the District Council and its many partners aimed at achieving community revitalisation. These include the Economic and Tourism strategies, Community Development and Health strategies, Recreation and Arts strategy, the Transport strategy and others. In all the foregoing the Council will act as the catalyst or as an active partner with other organisations.

Sustainable Development Requirement

(R)F.Strategy 2

Proposals for development will be required to take account of the principles of sustainability, with respect to:

- 1. Minimising the energy demands arising from the need to travel**
- 2. Making the best use of existing or proposed infrastructure and services**
- 3. Ensuring the conservation or enhancement of the natural and man-made environment**
- 4. Minimising the use of natural resources**
- 5. Minimising the demands and impacts upon energy and water, and with respect to waste, arising from the construction and occupation of new development**
- 6. Providing for mixed land uses where appropriate.**

- 1.32 Paragraph 4 of PPG 1 proposes that sustainable development is concerned with the objective of “achieving now and in the future economic development to secure higher living standards while protecting and enhancing the environment”. A commonly used definition of sustainable development is:

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

- 1.33 The Government has developed the concept of sustainable development in the United Kingdom into four key objectives:

- Social progress which meets the needs of everyone
- Effective protection of the environment
- Prudent use of natural resources
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

- 1.34 The Local Plan is concerned primarily with the development and use of land and will play a primary role in achieving a sustainable form of development in the Forest of Dean, through policies and proposals for the environment, natural resources, housing and economic development. It can also contribute to the objective of social progress through its concern for the economic and social well-being of communities in the form of provision for and access to a range of housing (including affordable housing) and jobs, through supporting and improving accessible local services and facilities, and by providing a quality and safe environment.

- 1.35 The strategy of the Local Plan has been prepared to conform to the principles of sustainable development. An Environmental Appraisal of the strategy and its policies and proposals has been carried out to measure the performance of the Plan. The Council and the community are also preparing a Local Agenda 21 strategy and action plan to direct and implement sustainable actions and development at a more detailed level. The Local Plan and the Local Agenda 21 statement are intended to be compatible and mutually supportive documents.

- 1.36 Policy (R)F.Strategy 2 provides a context in which to assess development in terms of its contribution to securing a sustainable form of development in the Forest of Dean. The policy criteria will act as a primary set of benchmarks against which all proposals for development will need to be assessed.

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- 1.37 The Plan proposals provide for the allocation of around 90% of new housing and nearly 85% of new employment land to be allocated in the four towns of Lydney, Cinderford, Coleford and Newent. At the strategic level therefore the Plan provides for a sustainable form of development which maximises accessibility to houses, jobs and services, allows for best utilisation of infrastructure, and enables a maximum choice of modes of transport as alternatives to the private car.
- 1.38 Rural areas have particular characteristics which need to be taken into account in considering sustainable forms of development. The scale of jobs, services and infrastructure is much more limited and accessibility by modes of transport other than the private car is restricted. The Local Transport Plan identifies that the private car will remain an essential means of transport in rural areas for many trip purposes.
- 1.39 The Plan strategy must make a proper provision for the social and economic needs of rural communities. In assessing proposals for development in rural areas it would be unrealistic to adopt without qualification the location and accessibility standards applicable to urban areas. The criteria in the above policy are expressed as comparative standards; that is to say they seek to ensure the minimisation of travel demands, the best use of infrastructure and the minimisation of the use of natural resources and impact upon the environment.

Priority for the Re-use of Land

(R)F.Strategy 3

Priority will be given to proposals for the re use of land in urban areas when assessing proposals for development providing the land concerned is accessible by a choice of means of transport to jobs and services and the advantages of the re use of the site are not outweighed by environmental considerations.

- 1.40 The principles of sustainable development indicate that the use of greenfield sites should be minimised when considering the needs of all forms of development. Utilising to the full the capacity of previously used or under-used sites can help to achieve this objective providing the site has not acquired an ecological or amenity value such that it cannot be regarded as being appropriate for development. The benefits of this approach are several, including reducing the impact of new development on the natural environment, securing site refurbishment and improvements, and securing investment and accessible opportunities within settlements. Such sites however should be generally located to provide opportunities for access by a choice of means of transport to a range of jobs, schools, shopping, leisure and other services. This means that the sites to which this policy applies will be those within defined settlement boundaries, i.e. those that are regarded in the plan as urban. It should be noted however that there are separate policies which address further development in other appropriate locations, not all of which will be expected to be within existing settlements. For example the re use of land for employment may be permitted outside the defined settlements, and tourist related development may be permitted without giving priority to previously developed land.
- 1.41 Sites which have been previously used or are under-used may however present difficulties for development, typically in the form of the need for site clearance, site assembly, and dealing with contamination or instability. These factors may constitute a disincentive to early development. Conversely the nature of the existing use and in particular its own "sustainability" may provide a further incentive to redevelopment. The local planning authority will monitor progress on the re-development of such sites, and where appropriate will refuse planning consent for development on a greenfield site where it is considered that reasonable alternatives exist for development on previously used sites, which will have priority for development where they are located so as to provide for accessibility to jobs and services, particularly where located in the towns or other appropriate settlements.
- 1.42 To meet the revitalisation objective of policy (R)F.Strategy 1, a balance will need to be struck whereby necessary residential development takes place but priority is given to the to re-use of land, in accordance with the regional aim that 50% housing development takes place on previously developed sites but that land is retained in employment use where necessary. Greater detail is provided on the

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method of implementing policy (R)F.Strategy 3 in other chapters of the Plan.

Town Centre Development

(R)F.Strategy 4

Development proposals which support the vitality and viability of town centres will be permitted. Sites will be allocated in town centres for commercial uses, services and facilities, housing and mixed uses, and proposals will be made for amenity improvements, environmental enhancements, traffic management, improvements to accessibility by public transport and new infrastructure to develop the role and function of town centres.

1.43 The strategic aim of revitalising the Forest of Dean will rely considerably on enhancing the role of the four town centres in the District as the focus for commercial activity, and to realise their potential to accommodate increased levels of service employment. The trend towards a growth of employment in the service sector is already well-established nationally. In the Forest of Dean it is intended to further stimulate this trend by the measures identified in the above policy. In addition, the proposed increase in the town populations (and for the District as a whole) will support existing activity and create a demand for additional or expanded services and facilities, and associated employment. At present the towns of the District have large outflows of consumer expenditure. The improvement of town centres will aim to reduce this outflow, and provide additional local employment and services as a result.

1.44 The economic health and social well-being of the population of the District is dependant in large part upon the successful performance of town centres as the focus for jobs, services and facilities. Town centres act as the accessible focus for such activities and proposals for well designed improvements that are widely accessible will enhance the vitality and viability of the district's town centres. This is in accord with the aims of PPGs 1 and 6 where further general guidance can be found The Plan policies and proposals will identify and enable sites to come forward for a wide variety of development, for amenity improvements to take place together with the refurbishment of the built environment, and improvements to be made to the accessibility of town centres by a variety of transport modes.

Protection of the Natural and Man Made Environment

1.45 The Forest of Dean has a rich and complex natural environment, which has been influenced by local communities throughout the centuries. The area is recognised through existing statutory and non-statutory designations such as AONB, SSSI, ancient monuments, listed buildings and key wildlife sites. Other areas hold recognition such as the statutory forest (as shown on the inset maps). A recent study by the Countryside Agency and English Nature (Forest of Dean District Landscape Character Assessment) into the Landscape character of the Forests of Dean has provided insight into the individual character and cultural heritage of the Forest of Dean. The study identifies 15 landscape character types and 42 landscape character areas for the district, the study describes the physical and human influences, which have shaped the landscape character types and the attributes of the landscape character areas.

1.46 The Local Plan recognises and provides appropriate protection for existing designations and also those attributes that help to define the local character of the Forest of Dean. However, the Plan also identifies and gives protection to those other attributes that help to define the essential character of the local environment. Such attributes include the natural landscape, the character of buildings and settlements, which reflect the culture, and history of the District, artefacts relating to the long industrial history of the area, and the rural nature of the settlement pattern and landscape. The way in which these assets will be protected will be by the careful application of the Policies of the Plan that will allow development to take place in appropriate circumstances in accord with national and local guidance.

Locational Strategy

1.47 The Plan is based upon making provision for the economic and social revitalisation of the economy and communities of the Forest of Dean. This objective is applicable throughout the District. It is in the south Forest however that the need for positive action is greatest, and where most development will be concentrated to assist the Plan objectives.

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Development in the South Forest

(R)F.Strategy 5

In the south Forest land will be allocated for housing and employment primarily in the towns of Lydney, Cinderford and Coleford in accordance with policies (R)FH.1 and (R)FE.1.

- 1.48 In the south Forest, Lydney offers the greatest strategic opportunity for growth and has land readily capable of development for both housing and employment uses in accessible locations. The Plan therefore proposes the allocation of land for 1308 dwellings and 36.8 hectares of employment land.
- 1.49 Cinderford has the greatest need for revitalisation. The Plan will concentrate on supporting and developing the important industrial base of Cinderford, refurbishing its urban fabric, and supporting the weakly developed town centre. Cinderford suffers from a number of development constraints. However, land will be allocated for 585 dwellings and 26.1 hectares of employment land.
- 1.50 Coleford has the opportunity to develop its role as a market town and service centre for commerce, retailing and tourism. The Plan will promote these functions, principally in relation to the town centre. Land will be allocated for 348 dwellings and 7.8 hectares of employment land.

Development in the North Forest

(R)F.Strategy 6

In the North Forest new housing development will be limited to that required to meet the housing requirement arising from the existing population. Provision will be made for employment development greater than that required for the projected population increase of the north Forest over the Plan period in order to provide increased local employment opportunities. Land will be allocated for housing and employment in the town of Newent in accordance with policies (R)FH.1 and (R)FE.1

- 1.51 The north Forest (that part of the District principally lying to the north of the line of the A.40) comprises a settlement pattern of villages set in a lowland and high quality agricultural landscape, with the single market town of Newent. There are relatively few local employment and service opportunities within the north Forest in comparison with adjacent centres such as Gloucester, Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye. There is a consequent high level of out-commuting to work. Public transport is limited so that most travel to work and to services is by private car.
- 1.52 In the north Forest therefore the revitalisation needs of communities can best be met by providing new housing opportunities to meet forecast local need, by increasing local job opportunities, and by supporting local services, particularly the role of Newent as a market town.
- 1.53 The Plan strategy for the northern part of the District therefore seeks to provide for new housing development sufficient to meet need arising from the existing population, in order to achieve a sustainable pattern of development with regard to travel demand. The Plan will also provide for employment growth in excess of the projected population increase to reduce the need to travel to work. The role of Newent as a service centre will be promoted to provide for local services in an accessible location within the north Forest area. The general strategy of restraint upon new housing development will limit the increase in the growth of private car travel and will assist in protecting the open countryside from pressures for development.

Development in Villages

(R)F.Strategy 7

In villages new development will be limited to that required to meet the social and economic needs of communities as provided for in the Plan. Land will be allocated for housing and employment in certain villages in accordance with policies (R)FH.3 and (R)FE.1

- 1.54 The Plan strategy concentrates new development principally upon the towns in the District. Consequently, there will be only limited development proposed in villages. The economic and social

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well being of village communities must still be ensured however, as part of the overall aim of revitalising communities in the District. The policies and proposals of the Plan will provide for an appropriate scale of development in villages.

- 1.55 Where communities possess local and accessible employment, services and facilities, and transport alternatives to the private car then there is a case to be made for some additional housing development. A number of villages identified in the Plan meet these requirements and land will be allocated for housing. Plan policies also provide for small groups of housing and infill development in other specified villages.
- 1.56 The employment policies of the Plan will support appropriate small-scale employment development in villages, to assist in providing local job opportunities. In addition, opportunities to support the rural economy are provided through policies for tourism, recreation and leisure, as well as for agriculture and forestry. A small number of employment land allocations in villages are provided for in the Plan.

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Chapter 2

Housing

Introduction

- 2.1 The foregoing chapter set out the overall Plan strategy. This chapter is concerned with the delivery of the housing aims and objectives, and policies and proposals. Firstly, the Plan must ensure that there is an adequate supply of land for housing and that it is capable of providing the range and type of new accommodation that is needed. Secondly it must ensure that the new housing that is delivered makes best use of the available land and that the framework for its development ensures that it will be delivered in a sustainable manner. Although it is primarily concerned with the new dwellings required during the Plan period, the Housing chapter also considers the way in which existing stock may be adapted and how provision can be made for particular types of housing need.

Strategy

- 2.2 The population of the Forest of Dean District is currently about 80,000 (2001 census). This has increased slowly over the past few years and is expected to continue to do so during the Plan period. Forecasts from central Government (1996 Sub - National forecasts) which take no account of planning policy suggest a slight decline in population and imply a movement of economically active persons out of the area. The Local Plan strategy is intended to counter this trend by encouraging new employment and supporting housing in the District and in particular in the towns of the south Forest. The increase in population will occur because of the strategy of providing more new dwellings in the Forest of Dean District than the demographic trends in that area indicate would be required. This approach is now part of an approved Structure Plan and is considered more fully in Chapter 1 of this Local Plan. New dwellings will be required as additional households form from the existing population and in order to provide for persons moving into the District, especially in areas where there are major allocations.
- 2.3 The provision of new housing is an important part of the Plan's overall strategy. Policy (R)F.Strategy 1 aims to provide for balanced development within the District and in particular the south Forest towns. Balanced development means providing houses in locations where there are new or available job opportunities and also ensuring that the scale of new housing is in keeping with the scale of new employment provision. Where there is either a deficiency of employment or where the scale of the proposal is such that new job opportunities are needed in parallel with the housing then new employment allocations are made in the Plan. This aim of achieving a balanced form of development is to ensure that the basic criteria of sustainable development are met and it is therefore a fundamental requirement of the Plan as described in the Strategy chapter.
- 2.4 There are two governing principles regarding the distribution of new housing in the Plan. The first is that new sites should be allocated in locations that are accessible to a good range of services and can take advantage of a variety of forms of transport to meet the day to day requirements of travel for employment, shopping and access to other services. This means that the Plan places a firm emphasis on allocating new development in the existing towns and other larger settlements, (R)F.Strategy 2.
- 2.5 The second principle is that priority must be given wherever possible to the use of land other than greenfield sites for new housing. This will be achieved by making allocations where possible on land that has already been developed and which is suitable and available for an alternative new use. In practice much of the land in this category within the District has already been redeveloped or already has planning permission. Whilst the policies below allocate some of these so called "brownfield" sites and will enable others to come forward by way of windfalls, it is nonetheless the case that in order to implement the regeneration strategy for the Forest of Dean District there must be major new greenfield allocations of land for housing and other development.

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- 2.6 This chapter makes provision for meeting the housing requirements of the Local Plan strategy in terms of overall numbers and general distribution. It is also concerned with meeting the housing needs of the present population and of those who wish to reside in the area and have local employment or social connections, but cannot do so by reason of the cost of housing. The Local Plan will have a pivotal role in facilitating the provision of such affordable housing either as part of the development of new large housing sites, or as an exception to normal planning policy on land that would not be considered for general market housing. The Plan also has a close relationship with the Housing Strategy Statement which sets out the wider housing issues in the District. The Plan's policies set out how the provision of affordable housing will be sought on new housing sites within the District in accordance with the principles in DETR Circular 6/98 and in PPG3, using an up to date and detailed assessment of need. The scale of provision has to be secured by negotiation on a site by site basis and is guided by the principle that although there may be an overall target for affordable housing, the actual provision that is secured on particular sites depends on the ability of each individual site to contribute. All housing sites 15 or more dwellings or 0.5ha in the towns and settlements of over 3000 population and of 5 or more dwellings or 0.2ha in other villages will be regarded as having potential for making a contribution to affordable housing. Some sites may make a greater pro rata contribution than others where for example the development costs or the local need varies. Affordable housing as defined in the Circular includes both low cost housing for rent and for outright purchase. Both the overall needs of the Forest of Dean District as well as more localised patterns of need will govern what type of affordable housing provision is sought within the categories defined by the Circular. Detailed, reliable and up to date information relating to need will be an essential starting point to the negotiation process as it will demonstrate both the scale and type of housing need in the areas concerned.
- 2.7 The Housing chapter considers other matters which are chiefly concerned with providing overall guidance for the development control process. These include the policies that define criteria for evaluating proposals for the conversion of buildings to residential use, the establishment of sites for Gypsies and the replacement of dwellings that are no longer suitable for habitation. The Plan is not intended to be a comprehensive development control manual and further guidance for development control purposes can be found elsewhere. This Chapter is not concerned with matters of design or layout of housing areas. These most important issues are considered in the Built Environment chapter of the Plan and in the appropriate settlement chapters in Part Two. In addition the development briefs for the individual sites should be consulted. Further important guidance is available in the Council's supplementary planning guidance on the design of new residential development.

Objectives

1. To meet the overall housing needs of the community so that everyone may have the opportunity of a decent home
2. To allocate land in accordance with the overall strategy of the Plan sufficient to meet the identified requirement to provide about 6950 new dwellings between 1991 and 2011
3. To ensure that in meeting the above requirement, optimum use is made of "recycled" land and of opportunities arising from the conversion of existing buildings
4. To locate major new housing allocations in those settlements where new allocations will support the overall Plan requirement of revitalisation and sustainable development
5. To provide a range and mix of house types and to encourage the provision of those house types that are currently underprovided
6. To secure an appropriate provision of affordable housing on or in conjunction with the development of new housing sites
7. To provide general policies for the determination of planning applications for housing development.

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8. To reflect local distinctiveness in terms of the design of new housing
9. To locate new housing so as to reduce the overall need for travel and promote the use of alternative means of transport to the private car.

2.8 The Structure Plan (Second Alteration) period is from 1991 to 2011. Clearly a large part of this has elapsed and a considerable number of housing completions have taken place since 1991. In the period up to 1st January 2004, in the Forest of Dean District, approximately 3041 new dwellings had been completed. Approximately 875 additional dwellings can be assumed to be provided for on sites that have current consents or on those where revised permissions were pending following the lapsing of previous consents. This figure assumes that 80% of the number of dwellings currently with consent will eventually be constructed in the plan period. This leaves a balance of about 3034 to be accounted for. During the life of the Plan there will continue to be a steady supply of so called windfalls. This is composed of small sites not allocated in the Plan including those arising from the intensification of existing residential areas, and conversions, including those in town centres. In addition there is likely to be a supply of larger sites arising primarily through the redevelopment of land that does not at present appear to be available for housing. All of these unforeseen sites are estimated to be capable of providing a further 566 units, leaving a balance of approximately 2468. This balance is the number that must be allocated by the Local Plan on sites allocated wholly for housing and on sites allocated for mixed uses where an assumption is made of the number of dwellings that will be provided as part of the development concerned. If monitoring of the Plan indicates that these figures are no longer appropriate, then they will be reviewed. It is however necessary for the Plan to show how the remaining dwellings not yet built (approximately 3909 out of the total requirement of 6950) can be provided for at the present time. The table below shows how the various elements of supply are divided and how the plan proposes that the requirements be met. In practice it is considered that the estimate of windfalls is likely to be a cautious one, and this and the plan's reliance of only 900 of the major allocation at Lydney being completed during the period to 2011 will provide a degree of flexibility.

Housing Land Supply at 1 January 2004	Demand	Supply
Requirement 1991-2011	6950	
Completions to 1 January 2004		3045
Current Permissions and Likely Renewals (less permissions on allocated sites)		845
Sites Individually Allocated in this Plan#		
Towns [Policy (R)FH.1]		2483*
Villages [Policy (R)FH.3]		305
Additional Sources		
National Land Use Database		25
New Previously Developed Sites		70
Intensification of Residential Areas		120
Town Centre Upper Floors		28
Conversion of Existing Houses		8
Other Conversions in Settlements		34
Re-allocation of Employment Sites		0
Intensification of Existing Consents		36
Small Sites Inside Settlements		200
Small Sites Outside Settlements		120
		566
TOTAL PLAN PERIOD	6950	7244**

*includes 350 post 2011 on Land East of Lydney. **represents 6894 net in the Plan period

#Total allocations 2788

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- 2.9 The progress of the Plan in achieving its housing objectives will be the subject of regular monitoring. As well as an assessment of the overall numbers provided, the monitoring will look within the numbers at the locations of the new dwellings and at their type size and the nature of the sites on which they are built. The need to make, modify or delete allocated sites will also be monitored and the Plan will be modified or reviewed as necessary.
- 2.10 The majority of the new allocation of dwellings will be made on major sites most notably in Lydney, Cinderford and Coleford. There is also an allocation made at Newent in order to address the future needs of that town. The towns have over the past five years contributed approximately 60% of the area's new dwellings but at present have only about 47% of its outstanding consents. The allocations made in the Plan will alter this balance in order to concentrate on the development of the towns. These allocations will be supplemented by smaller ones, still made in accordance with the principles of sustainability, in some of the larger villages. Wherever allocations of an appropriate scale are made or where "windfall sites" of an appropriate scale are proposed, it will be policy to negotiate for the provision of affordable housing.
- 2.11 In order to implement the Structure Plan strategy for the south Forest, it is necessary to make some large allocations for both housing and employment. As part of such development there will be a requirement for providing essential infrastructure. Approximately two thirds of the new housing to be provided for between 1991 and 2011 is expected to meet the needs of the existing population, largely as a result of the trend to smaller household sizes. Given the current trends in population, the remaining third will accommodate in migration. Immigration is likely to occur in localities where there is a clear excess of new housing provision over that which would meet the needs of the existing population. Whilst this is the situation over the South Forest in general, it is most apparent in Lydney.
- 2.12 Policies (R)FH.1 and (R)FH.3 below allocate land for housing sufficient for approximately 2788 new dwellings to be provided on the land identified on the Proposals Map. In addition to this, other policies will allow continued additions to the overall housing stock in the form of small sites, conversions and other generally small areas within the existing built up areas in the District. Larger unidentified sites may also be permitted by way of windfall contributions. This supply will enable the Local Plan to meet its overall housing requirement when taken together with the land that currently has consent or is regarded as an existing commitment.

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Town Housing Allocations

(R)FH.1					
Land is allocated for residential development in the four main towns as follows:					
TOWN	SITE	PHASE 2 2003-2007	PHASE 3 2008-2011	SITE TOTAL	TOWN TOTAL
Lydney					
(R)F.Lydney 1 & 2	Land East of Lydney	600	650	1250	
(R)F.Lydney 3	Holms Farm	20		20	
(R)F.Lydney 4	Allaston	10		10	
(R)F.Lydney 5	Kings Buildings	18		18	
(R)F.Lydney 6	Hill Street	10		10	
		658	650		1308
Cinderford and Ruspidge					
(R)F.Cinderford 5	Newtown	70		70	
(R)F.Cinderford 6	Station Street	165		165	
(R)F.Cinderford 7	Valley Road North	20		20	
(R)F.Cinderford 8	St Whites Farm	75	75	150	
(R)F.Cinderford 9	Nailbridge	70		70	
(R)F.Cinderford 10	Valley Road South	30	60	90	
(R)F.Cinderford 11	Town Centre Mixed Sites	10		10	
		440	135		575
Coleford Group of Settlements					
(R)F.Coleford 2	The Marshes	8		8	
(R)F.Coleford 7	Angel Farm	100		100	
(R)F.Coleford 8	Owen Farm	70	70	140	
(R)F.Coleford 9	Poolway Farm		80	80	
(R)F.Coleford 10	Milkwall	20		20	
		198	150		348
Newent					
(R)F.Newent 1	Bennions Garage	30		30	
(R)F.Newent 2	Broad Street	15		15	
(R)F.Newent 6	Ross Road	27		27	
(R)F.Newent 7	Onslow Road	85	85	170	
		157	85		242
GRAND TOTAL OF TOWN ALLOCATIONS					2473
Elsewhere in the four main towns, single dwellings or groups of dwellings will be permitted if they comply with Policy (R)FBE.1 and other relevant policies of this Plan.					

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Phasing of development

~~(R)FH.2~~

~~The housing sites allocated for development in the towns will be phased as indicated in Policy (R)FH.1 in order to achieve a satisfactory release of land and completion of dwellings throughout the Plan period. Land allocated in phase 3 is safeguarded from development pending reconsideration and acceptance of its strategic justification.~~

- ~~2.13 — In order to ensure that development takes place in accord with the strategy of the Plan, the principal aims of which are to give priority to the re-use of land and to ensure that the major development proposals at Lydney can be satisfactorily implemented, it is necessary to phase the provision of the housing sites allocated in the Plan. This phasing will ensure that there will be a continuity of supply and will enable the process of monitoring and review. In order to achieve this, the total Plan period from 1991 to 2011 is divided into three phases. The first is from 1991 to the end of 2002, the second from 2003 to 2007 and the third from 2008 to 2011. Because of the timing of the Plan, it is not expected that allocated sites will come forward in the first phase. The first group of allocated sites are expected to come forward in phase 2 of the Plan period, and will accommodate approximately 1473 dwellings. The remainder, those allocated to phase 3 will accommodate about 1020. A proportion of the major release of land at Lydney, almost all of the “brownfield” sites and a proportion of certain other greenfield sites are included in phase 2.~~
- ~~2.14 — In the case of Lydney this will ensure that the major development can be achieved during the Plan period and that an early start can be made on development which will provide essential infrastructure and serviced employment land for the remainder of the site. In the case of the “brownfield” allocations, these are a priority over greenfield sites in order to make the best use of land and it follows that they should be able to be released as early as possible. Other greenfield sites are divided between phases two and three where it is considered that their housing contribution should be made over both phases. This will enable contributions to affordable housing to be realised relatively early on.~~
- ~~2.15 — No village allocations are proposed to be phased. This is partly in order to enable their benefits in terms of affordable housing to be realised as early as possible and is partly a reflection on their relatively small scale and hence their non-strategic effect on the overall Plan. These sites are included in the Plan for the benefit of individual settlements and their local services and it is considered that phasing is inappropriate~~
- ~~2.16 — The monitoring of the release of sites for development will be assisted by the phasing of such releases and in the event of shortfalls or an excess of land supply the Plan will be amended. Sites that are contained within phase two will be expected to contribute the bulk of their allocation well before the end of the Plan period, though not all will be assumed to be complete by the end of phase two. All sites will be assumed to be able to be completed by the end of the plan period~~
- ~~2.17 — The above policy is intended to set out how the development of the larger town housing allocations will be regulated in order to enable the approach of Plan Monitor Manage to be applied.* The case for the release of any plan allocation will be examined under the prevailing national, regional and other local guidance. Although this principle applies generally to all Plan policies it is especially important in the case of the development of the larger housing sites. It is expected that sites in phase two of the Plan period (2003-7) will be the subject of early applications. Sites in phase three (2008-2011) of the plan period will be permitted in accordance with their allocation only if necessary to meet the region's development needs up to 2011 when judged against the most up to date assessments of housing requirements which cover the likely period of their development.~~

~~*It will be necessary to review the Local plan / LDF to take account of the revised strategic policy context, in accordance with the plan, monitor, manage approach in PPG 3.~~

- ~~2.18 In addition to the above provision on allocated sites, the policy will allow new dwellings to be provided on sites within the defined boundaries of the four towns. This type of provision will be on sites too small to~~

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identify as allocations and on other windfall sites that cannot be foreseen at this time. A high proportion of this type of site is likely to be in the form of redevelopment. Policy (R)FBE.1 provides guidance on the acceptable form of such development.

- 2.19 In the case of Lydney, a major site capable of accommodating approximately 1250 dwellings is allocated to the east of the town inside the line of the bypass. The balance is made up from very much smaller allocations which are described in detail in Part Two of the Plan in the Lydney chapter. In addition there may be a modest contribution from the development of mixed town centre sites. There is a requirement for the housing development to support a number of major items of infrastructure which are necessary in order to allow the development to proceed and these will also benefit the town in general. The additional population will benefit the town centre in providing extra demand for the facilities there. Development of the scale envisaged will be required to take place in a comprehensive manner and new employment sites will be required to be made available in parallel with the housing development proposed.
- 2.20 The allocations for Coleford are somewhat different and will have the effect of reinforcing the existing settlement rather than making radical changes. The proposed new housing sites in Coleford are well related to the town centre and to local employment. The scale (approximately 358 new dwellings) will be in keeping with the anticipated provision of new employment. In the case of Cinderford, the Plan's overall effect will be to promote further economic development and maximise housing opportunity. There are physical constraints which limit the potential for the allocation of new land for development. There are however some significant opportunities to promote new sites on recycled land and the Plan seeks to maximise these. It is proposed to allocate sites sufficient for approximately 585 new dwellings.
- 2.21 The Plan's strategy for Newent is rather different from that which applies to the south Forest. It is to provide for the incremental growth of the settlement in accordance with meeting local housing needs and to provide additional employment to limit the need for out commuting. The parish, which includes Newent Town has a population of about 5000 but has few larger villages and relatively few services outside those in Newent. Additional housing will be required in Newent and its rural hinterland simply as a result of the national decline in household sizes. Having regard to this and recent trends in housing provision in the town, it is proposed to allocate land sufficient to accommodate 242 new dwellings on new allocations.
- 2.22 Newent, Cinderford and Coleford all have allocated sites for mixed use development including housing in or close to their town centres in addition to the allocations in policy (R)FH.1. It is expected that these sites will add further housing to the total new stock. Allocations have been made to allow for the development of these sites. A summary of the total supply of new sites follows paragraph 2.27.

Village Housing Allocations

(R)FH.3

Land will be allocated for approximately 305 dwellings on sites in the following villages:

Part 2, Chapter	Village	No of dwellings
10	Blakeney	15
11	Bream	12
16	Drybrook	40
30	Huntley	30
26	Longhope	15
29	Mitcheldean	75
31	Newnham on Severn	21
37	Ruardean	12
40	Sling	15
43	Staunton / Corse	20
47	Upper Soudley	10
48	Westbury on Severn	10
51	Woolaston	30
	Total	305

- 2.23 In accord with the Plan's strategy, around 90% of the new housing to be allocated will be accommodated in the town locations listed under policy (R)FH.1. There is however a need to provide for the incremental expansion of some of the larger villages in the District in keeping with the local needs of their communities. These allocations will enable negotiation for the provision of affordable housing in locations where there are clearly identifiable needs. Site specific detail is fully discussed in Part Two of the Plan. The above allocations include sites proposed in the largest villages in the District some of which have substantial employment and all of which have a good range of services and access to a variety of modes of transport.
- 2.24 Newnham on Severn is one of the largest villages in the District and has good communications along the A.48 (T). It has a wide range of services and is considered an appropriate location for modest further growth bearing in mind its overall size. The scale of new housing proposed is about 21 units.
- 2.25 Mitcheldean is a large village with local services and a large employment base. There are, however, very few areas where it can expand without detriment to the surrounding countryside. The above allocation of approximately 75 new dwellings on two sites reflects this constraint.
- 2.26 In the case of Drybrook, it is proposed to allocate land for about 40 new houses, on two sites the largest of which is very close to the village centre. In addition to the support this will provide for the village itself, the additional population will be within easy reach by public transport of employment opportunities in both Cinderford and Mitcheldean.
- 2.27 In addition to the above villages there are a group of relatively large settlements that have a generally good level of local services. Several of the locations proposed are redevelopment sites where housing is considered to make the best use of the available land. They are also locations where there is a readily identifiable need for housing on an affordable basis either in the settlement concerned or close by. The provision of affordable housing appropriate to the needs of each locality has therefore been a material consideration in the allocations made in each of these villages. A new allocation for about 30 dwellings is made in Huntley. In Longhope, Blakeney and Sling allocations for approximately 15 dwellings are proposed, whilst other sites in Bream, Upper Soudley, Staunton/Corse, Westbury and Woolaston are proposed. In the case of Woolaston, Blakeney and Upper Soudley, the majority of the sites concerned amount to redevelopment.

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Table 2 Allocations for Housing.

Source	Number of dwellings
Allocated sites in towns (R)FH.1	2483
Allocated sites in villages (R)FH.3	305
TOTAL:	2788

Housing in Villages - Small Groups, Single Dwellings and Infilling

(R)FH.4

Infilling, small groups of dwellings and single dwellings will be permitted on sites within the defined settlement boundary of the villages listed below where they:

- 1. Can be satisfactorily integrated into the framework of the settlement in a location with a satisfactory residential environment; and**
- 2. Would be compatible with the form and character of the settlement.**

Aylburton, Blakeney, Bream, Clearwell, Drybrook, Dymock, Hartpury, Huntley, Joys Green, Littledean, Longhope, Lydbrook, Mitcheldean, Newnham, Parkend, Redbrook, Ruardean, St. Briavels, Sling, Staunton and Corse, Tutshill and Sedbury, Westbury, Whitcroft/Pillowell, Woolaston, and Yorkley/Yorkley Slade.

2.28 Within the District there are a number of villages which possess a range of services and which are capable of accommodating new residential development in the form of single dwellings, infilling and small groups of dwellings. These are listed above under policy (R)FH.4. The list includes a wide variety of villages and their populations vary from a few hundred to over 3500 in the case of Tutshill and Sedbury. In some of these villages, allocations have been made for new development under policy (R)FH.3. In addition to these allocations, there will be further opportunities for new housing under the terms of this policy. Within the defined settlement boundaries of these villages, new development including single dwellings and small groups of dwellings will be permitted subject to the criteria set out in the policy. Some settlements present greater development opportunities than others and the fact that a particular village is identified under this policy does not imply that there are necessarily suitable sites for development. The villages identified under this policy have a range of services and other attributes that are considered to be appropriate to serve further modest development. They are also reasonably accessible and can and do serve as minor local centres for smaller settlements in their localities. It is therefore appropriate to allow modest additional development in these locations which will not prejudice the overall strategy of the Plan but which can provide additional support for local services and meet local needs for housing. An especially important aspect of this is in the sites that are developed being able to provide affordable housing through the appropriate process of negotiation. Having these attributes is the first requirement in assessing their likely suitability for further development. In satisfying the other criteria of policy (R)FH.4, the proposal's effect on the form and character of the individual settlement will be taken into account together with the other considerations referred to in the Plan.

2.29 The individual village Chapters (in Part Two of the Plan) provide additional information and in some cases detailed policies that will be used to guide development in these villages. This guidance includes the identification of areas where special restraints are to be applied. These local issues will always be of great importance as material considerations in the assessment of development proposals. With a wide range of villages and potential sites falling under this policy it is impossible to be specific about what may constitute a small group of dwellings. In all cases the test will be whether the development proposed will integrate well into the proposed location and be compatible with the range of facilities and services that are available. Although exceptions may arise from time to time it is unlikely that there will be many new developments comprising more than about 12 dwellings or on sites larger than 0.5 hectares other than on allocated sites. For the purposes of interpretation of this Policy therefore small groups of dwellings should be taken as a reference to developments of 12 or less. This definition is not however rigid and

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there will be cases where both the site and the settlement are capable of accommodating larger developments. The number of these exceptions is however not expected to be large. It should be emphasised that the only acceptable development in some villages may be a group of no more than three dwellings. In some villages there may be no obvious sites at all and in these cases the Plan could enable a redevelopment on an unforeseen site. In the evaluation of proposals, special attention will be paid to the extent to which proposals comply with other Plan policies, especially (R)FBE.8 (open areas) and (R)FBE.1 (design), and to the special requirements imposed by any other designations (Conservation Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) for example). Reference should also be made to the Council's supplementary planning guidance on the design of new development.

Housing Development in Smaller Villages

(R)FH.5

New housing developments of one or two dwellings will be permitted on sites within the defined settlement boundary of the villages listed below where they:

- 1. Can be satisfactorily integrated into the framework of the settlement in a location with a satisfactory residential environment; and**
- 2. Would be compatible with the form and character of the settlement.**

Alvington, Beachley, Brierley, Brockweir, Bromsberrow Heath, Edge End, Ellwood, English Bicknor, Kempley Green, Newland, Northwood Green, Oldcroft, Redmarley, Ruardean Hill, Ruardean Woodside, Staunton (Coleford), Tibberton, Upleadon, Upper Soudley, Viney Hill, Worrall Hill, Woodcroft.

- 2.30 The remainder of the villages that have defined settlement boundaries identified by the Plan are listed above. They do not generally have the range of services that those falling under policy (R)FH.4 have and most are not as large. Overall, they are not therefore considered suitable for development on the scale of small groups of dwellings. These villages may, however, be appropriate locations for carefully controlled developments of one or two dwellings within defined settlement boundaries. Development of this scale will not materially affect the overall demand for local services but may satisfy local needs for additional housing. The suitability of individual sites will be judged against the criteria in the policy and against the other policies of the Plan, in particular (R)FBE.8 (important open areas) and (R)FBE.1 (design). The villages listed above vary considerably in form and character and hence their suitability for further development. The individual village chapters should be consulted for detailed guidance and any particular policies that apply to the villages concerned. Some of the villages will have very little scope for further development and where this is the case it is stated in the relevant chapter.
- 2.31 In some cases there are constraints that will limit the suitability of some areas for development. These include the need to protect the form and character of the settlements of the Forest Ring as well as the need to ensure that development that takes place within Conservation Areas is compatible with the duty placed on the Council to preserve and enhance such areas. Again these detailed matters are dealt with under the individual village statements which also make use of local policies where there are particular characteristics exhibited within the above villages that are worthy of treatment that differs from the remainder of the settlement. Other relevant considerations will be the various protective designations that may apply to a particular village such as its location in an AONB.
- 2.32 This Policy is intended to allow the infilling of small gaps (normally developments of one or two dwellings) in existing frontages and single dwellings in suitable locations within the defined settlement boundaries of the settlements concerned. Exceptionally, there may be cases where larger developments are permitted, possibly as a result of a redevelopment but these will very rare. In all cases compliance with the Built Environment policies of the Plan will be expected and reference to the Council's supplementary planning guidance on the design of new residential development.

New housing in the Countryside

(R)FH.6

In the open countryside, outside defined settlement boundaries, new dwellings will only be permitted where they are essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry unless they are affordable homes constructed on “exceptions sites” under policy (R)FH.14, or created by replacement under policy (R)FH.15 or by subdivision under policy (R)FH.16.

- 2.33 Within the countryside new dwellings will not be permitted except where they meet the requirements of the above policy. This is a reflection of national and county-wide strategic policies which seek to protect the countryside. In the case of new residential development, only dwellings which are proven to be essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry will be permitted. An exception will be affordable homes built under the relevant policies (R)FH.12-14 below. These will be expected to be well related to existing defined settlements although probably outside defined settlement boundaries. Where a permission is granted, it will be subject to a condition limiting occupancy to persons employed or last employed in agriculture or forestry locally.
- 2.34 The Forest of Dean District has a somewhat diverse settlement pattern, varying from the agricultural lowlands in the north to the Forest Ring of almost continuous settlement in the south. Throughout the area, however, there is a scatter of small settlements and hamlets which to all intents and purposes form part of the open countryside. Policy (R)FH.6 will therefore apply. In these settlements new development would be likely either to have a significant detrimental effect on the settlement itself or be unlikely to be capable of being successfully integrated into the landscape. National planning policy clearly establishes the importance of protecting the countryside from piecemeal and sporadic development, and from development that does not need to be located in the countryside. In addition a single permission could set a precedent for other proposals, the cumulative effect of which would be severely detrimental to the area concerned. There are many such settlements and a representative cross-section includes the following:-
- Awre, Birdwood, Blaisdon, Blakeney Hill, Brand Green, Broadoak, Brockhollands, Churcham, Cliffords Mesne, Cold Harbour (St Briavels), Collafield, Forge Hill (Lydbrook), Furnace Bottom, Green Bottom, Hangerberry, Hawsley, Little London, May Hill, Mill Hill/Triangle, Plump Hill, Popes Hill, Sandford/Lower Common (Aylburton), Scowles, Shortstanding, Stantway (Westbury), Stowfield (Lydbrook), The Pludds, Tidenham, Upper Common (Aylburton), Yorkley Wood.
- 2.35 Over half the examples listed above are the result of incursions or squatting in the Forest or on Common land. These and others with common origin display the typical attractive and open settlement form which makes them an integral part of the countryside.
- 2.36 A further characteristic of many of these settlements is that they are served by narrow, sometimes steep access roads. Some are served only by tracks. The lack of suitable access and the limited capacity of the highway network is therefore a major constraint on further development.
- 2.37 In addition to exhibiting the above characteristics the settlements which are regarded as forming part of the open countryside tend to be one of the following types: -
- Small well defined blocks of development which are surrounded by the open countryside, and where further development would be likely to form an intrusive feature in the countryside or be detrimental to the character of the settlement. For example Brockhollands.
 - Areas of linear development, usually along a highway and generally not continuous, being punctuated by open land including fields. Areas of this type are especially vulnerable to infilling which can significantly alter the often pleasant rural nature of such areas. For example Birdwood.
 - Dispersed areas of development which can cover large areas, sometimes interspersed with

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small compact built up areas. These settlements have a generally open feel and often contain open areas of amenity value. Where this type of settlement occurs around the outcrop of the old Forest of Dean Coalfield (the Forest Ring) there is usually a particularly random pattern of dwellings. The consequent haphazard relationship between buildings makes it difficult to successfully integrate new development. For example May Hill, The Pludds.

- 2.38 For the above reasons therefore the settlements listed under this policy will be regarded as part of the open countryside to be protected by policy (R)FH.6 and other policies of the Plan and new housing development will not be permitted unless it meets the requirements of the policy.

General Development Policies

- 2.39 The above policies make the basic allocations for new housing and indicate the scale and location of new development considered appropriate in the various settlements within the District. The following policies set out other strategic considerations which apply to the consideration of housing development. Together with the allocation policies, they will help to ensure that the best use is made of the available land and that new development takes place at densities which are appropriate.

Housing on Greenfield Sites

(R)FH.7

In assessing proposals for housing development, priority will be given to the use of previously used sites in accordance with policy (R)F.Strategy 3. Where no such sites are available, then the development of new greenfield sites will be considered in accordance with the Plan policies for land allocations and policies which regulate the release of land. In all cases proposals should make the optimum use of the land concerned, and be compatible with the Built Environment policies of the Plan.

- 2.40 A judgement whether an alternative previously developed site is available within a time scale such that an adequate housing land supply can be maintained must be made in accordance with the monitoring procedures set down at Part 1 Chapter 10.
- 2.41 It is a requirement of the Plan's strategy that priority be given to making the best use of the available land. Greenfield sites not identified in the Plan will not be acceptable. This means that where possible new development should take place on land that has already been developed but is no longer required for the existing or former use. This principle applies to all land uses and will be applied in other chapters of this Plan. It will complement the phasing policy which applies to the allocated sites in the towns. In formulating the Plan's policies and allocations therefore consideration has been given to the allocation of such sites for housing and to how non allocated sites can be encouraged to come forward to maximise the use of previously developed land. Only about 24% of the allocated housing will be built on redevelopment land even after taking into account the changes made as a result of the capacity study. This is a reflection of three things. The first is that the practical supply of such land in a form that can be readily identified is relatively small with many sites having been developed already and others having a current permission. Secondly some of the redevelopment sites that are identified are considered to be more suitable for other uses, especially employment. The third is that such unidentified sites and redevelopment proposals that will come forward throughout the Plan period (and will contribute significantly to the dwelling supply) cannot at this stage be predicted. This is partly because many of the sites will be in some form of beneficial use at the present time. In considering applications for redevelopment it will be a material consideration as to whether they make the best use of the land concerned.

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Promotion of and Retention of Housing in Town Centres

(R)FH.8

The provision of new dwellings and the conversion of under used premises to residential use in town centres will be permitted subject to:

- 1. A satisfactory residential environment being provided**
- 2. The proposal not detracting from the vitality and viability of the town centre**
- 3. Appropriate provision being made for access and parking, using existing facilities where possible.**

2.42 The Local Plan encourages the use of premises in town centres for a variety of purposes. One of the overall aims of the Plan is to encourage the vitality of town centres within the District and one of the ways in which this can be achieved is to encourage a variety of uses and to attempt to retain residents in the centres of the towns. This can have very real benefits in terms of retaining the viability and vitality of a town centre, and improving security. The town centres themselves can be attractive places to live with easy access to a variety of services.

2.43 Proposals to use existing premises and to build new properties can often make use of town centre parking without the need for additional spaces being dedicated to the development concerned, or it may be possible to share such provision as is made between commercial daytime users and residents who may need the parking primarily at night.

Promotion of New Housing Stock through Conversions within Settlements

(R)FH.9

Unless indicated otherwise in the Plan, the conversion of existing dwellings to provide additional self contained accommodation and the conversion of other buildings to dwellings will be permitted within defined settlement boundaries where there are no unacceptable effects on the amenity of the area and a satisfactory residential environment can be provided. Conversions of existing dwellings will be required to retain the character of the existing building where appropriate, and must retain or provide adequate privacy, and must provide suitable access.

2.44 The above policy encourages the provision of additional housing in the form of conversions of existing buildings, including dwellings. It is a policy intended to make the best use of buildings that already exist to provide additional units of accommodation and may provide a variety of housing, including affordable homes. It is also intended that these should be located where they can benefit from the existing range of services and therefore this policy does not allow the conversion of buildings outside the defined settlement boundaries shown on the Local Plan Map. These are dealt with under policy (R)FBE.7. Conversions will be permitted within the defined settlement boundaries provided a satisfactory environment can be created for the new (additional) use and maintained for the existing properties. The provision of appropriate parking, will be important, though in town centres in particular the availability of nearby off street parking will be a consideration. Where the building(s) to be converted have particular attributes then the retention of these will be a material consideration, as will any designation (for example listing as of historical or architectural interest).

The Encouragement of Optimum Densities

(R)FH.10

Proposals for new housing development will be required to adopt appropriate densities to make optimum use of the site concerned taking account of:

- 1. The location of the site in relation to any available town or village centre and other services**
- 2. The location of transport facilities**
- 3. The characteristics of the site and its surroundings**
- 4. The type of housing proposed.**

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2.45 In order to make the best use of available land it is essential that development is designed in such a way as to provide for optimum densities. This does not mean that they should automatically be as high as can be achieved. Density is however a material consideration in determining planning applications and it is important that development proposals make the best use of available land. In practice this will mean generally having regard to the guidance contained in PPG3 and to the Council's supplementary planning guidance on design and to the built environment policies of the plan which indicate the principles that will be applied to the design of new development. In general, residential densities of less than 30 dwellings per hectare (net) when averaged over larger developments are unlikely to be acceptable. It is expected that the revised policies which require less provision for parking may help in achieving these densities. It is likely that sites in town centres will be developed at generally higher densities than the greenfield allocations. On smaller sites containing individual dwellings and smaller groups of dwellings there is expected to be some variation in density in accordance with the requirements of the particular site concerned. The design guidance is based on the same set of criteria that are embodied in PPG 13 in seeking to enable as many new dwellings as possible to be provided within easy access of services and facilities they may require in order to reduce the need for unnecessary travel, whilst providing a well designed environment.

Mix of Dwelling Types

(R)FH.11

On large housing sites a range of house types will be required in accord with local requirements. This will include where appropriate the construction of smaller dwellings. The latter provision will be independent of any requirement for affordable homes on the site concerned.

2.46 Policy (R)FH.11 is related to (R)FH.10 above which seeks to make the optimum use of available land. It is intended to ensure that the range of dwellings provided best meets the needs of the population to be provided for and to create mixed communities which avoid concentrations of particular types and sizes of housing.

2.47 The scale and distribution of the major housing allocations required in the Plan are such that there will be a wide range of sites developed over the Plan period. Most of the housing will be built by developers for sale and they will know the requirements of and cater for the market. It remains the situation however that there may be conditions where particular circumstances apply. Local Authorities are required to assess their local housing markets and to take steps to ensure that its needs are addressed by the provision of new housing. Where there are particular needs, these will be made known to developers for example by way of development briefs, in order that they may be provided for in the ensuing development. It may be appropriate by controlling density to ensure that a particular dwelling mix is achieved. This policy is intended to ensure a range of dwellings is available on housing sites for sale. The provision of smaller units of accommodation is necessary to meet the needs of an important sector of the market, and could extend the potential range of house ownership. Conversely it may be desirable to ensure that a proportion of larger homes are provided on a given site. This policy is not one which is intended to provide the type of affordable homes provided for in policies (R)FH.13 and (R)FH.14 but can usefully extend the range of dwelling types. Its application will be by negotiation with respect to individual sites with additional guidance provided by the development briefs and individual allocation policies in Part Two of the plan.

Affordable Housing - Eligibility and Continuing Availability

(R)FH.12

Affordable housing will be required to be available to successive occupiers at an affordable cost whether provided for sale or rent. This will usually require a Section 106 Planning Obligation or equivalent enforceable agreement but may exceptionally be achievable using a planning condition or conditions. Where the affordable housing is certain to be controlled by a Registered Social Landlord, detailed occupancy controls should not be necessary other than in rural exceptions schemes which are to be provided in accordance with Policy (R)FH.14.

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Affordable Housing on New Housing Sites- Negotiated Share Basis

(R)FH.13

An element of affordable housing will be sought by negotiation on all housing sites which are of 15 units or more or are larger than 0.5ha in towns and villages of greater than 3000 population or are of 5 units or more or larger than 0.2ha in other locations. The provision sought will be related to evidence of local need in the District, including housing need surveys, and to the suitability of the site in question. The provision of affordable housing should be made on the same site but exceptionally, and by agreement with the developer, a commuted sum may be sought equivalent to the appropriate affordable housing share on the site in order that the affordable housing may be provided closer to where the need for it arises.

- 2.48 Affordable housing is either low cost market housing or subsidised housing that is available to people who cannot afford to rent or buy in the open market. It is not tenure specific. The purpose of the Plan in including policies to enable the provision of affordable housing is to address the local situation in the District and to provide affordable housing in accordance with the locally assessed needs of the population. In practice this has to be done through the means of a survey which assesses the needs of the area against the supply of housing and is therefore able to say whether the need is for housing for sale or for rent, and what are the thresholds of affordability, given the knowledge of local incomes. The survey then expresses the need both geographically and numerically. In accordance with advice on page 58 of the Government Document 'Local Housing Needs Assessment: A Guide to Good Practice' (2000), those in need of affordable housing are defined as those for whom the cost of renting or of house purchase would exceed 25-30% of their net household income; that is their gross income minus tax, national insurance and other compulsory deductions from pay. All income sources including benefit income and contributions from concealed households to housing and household expenses should be included.
- 2.49 The current survey uses data from 1999; it has been partially updated during the early part of 2001. It revealed that there was a need for affordable housing of approximately 711 additional units over the District. This figure does not count persons on the Council's waiting list. The need was assessed as households who could not afford the prevailing market prices for the minimum standard of accommodation. There was a small need for housing to buy but the great majority was for rent.
- 2.50 The principle of affordable housing provision may sometimes be established by a planning condition. However, in order to ensure that affordable housing remains available to successive occupiers at an affordable cost, a Planning Obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) or an equivalent enforceable agreement will usually be required. Where a scheme is to be managed by a Registered Social Landlord, detailed occupancy criteria are unlikely to be needed other than on those exceptions sites which are intended to provide for the needs of rural settlements.
- 2.51 The most important way in which affordable housing is expected to be provided during the life of the Plan is by the provision of a share of affordable housing in conjunction with the development of the Plan's larger sites. The pattern of need revealed by the survey shows clearly the requirement for affordable housing both in the towns and the villages throughout the Plan area. It highlights particularly high levels of need in some rural areas, especially in the north of the District and suggests that provision for affordable housing will be required widely across the District. In some locations the requirements may not be large and some of these settlements may not be appropriate places for significant allocations. Accordingly, there is a need to encourage affordable housing on both exceptions sites and on sites that are allocated in the Plan. Some of the latter are sites below the thresholds referred to in Circular 6/98. It is considered essential that all reasonable opportunities are taken to provide affordable housing. The sites on which affordable housing will expected to be negotiated are therefore any housing sites (allocations, windfalls and previous commitments which fall to be considered {by way of lapsed permissions, the need to renew a consent, revisions or other means}) of 15 units or more or 0.5 hectare in the towns and villages with a population of more than 3000, and 5 units or more than 0.2ha in other locations. These thresholds are set in accordance with the enabling powers given by DETR circular

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6/98. Affordable housing will be sought on all eligible sites that the Plan allocates and on eligible sites which come forward as windfalls.

2.52 The principle of provision as well as the proportion of affordable housing to be sought on each site will have regard to the overall needs of the District and to the suitability of the site. The assessment of suitability will have regard to Government Guidance in Circular 06/98 or in subsequent guidance which amends or replaces that advice. In addition to the size of the site, current advice in Circular 06/98 requires regard to be had to: the economics of provision; the proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport; whether there will be any particular costs associated with development of the site; whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site; and the need to achieve a successful development. At the time of the survey (1999) a need of 711 was identified over the whole of the area. This is not the only element of need, as that arising from the Council's waiting list must be taken into account. At the time of the survey this totalled 1337 households. At the same time, an estimated supply of 386 available units was identified. There could therefore have been an outstanding need for 1662 dwellings in 1999 to meet the demand for affordable housing. This equates to almost 40% of the total remaining Structure Plan Requirement. The calculation of the proportion of affordable housing that should be sought is however not straightforward. If the present housing allocations are compared with the survey's measured need in 1999 of 711 dwellings, then 27% of the housing provided should be affordable. The survey however can only be assumed to look forward for three years (or five at the outside), at which point there will be a new unmet need to provide for due to the further formation of new households, and changes in circumstances. It is considered reasonable to suggest that within the life of the Local Plan the measured affordable housing need will be at least twice what it was in 1999. This would imply a requirement for 1422 dwellings, or 54% of the allocated number. Policy (R)FH.13 seeks provision of affordable housing on both allocated and unallocated sites where they meet the eligibility criteria set out above. The theoretical supply of sites which could contribute affordable housing is therefore larger than just the allocations. At the outside the total number of eligible sites is estimated to be capable of accommodating about 3500 dwellings (including larger windfalls), and sites with planning permission at present which fall to be re negotiated. This number equates to approximately 40%. This figure will be therefore be used as a starting point in all negotiations for affordable housing, though of course the actual provision will depend on the capabilities of the individual site concerned.

2.53 When the survey was conducted, persons already on the Council's Waiting List were excluded because the waiting list is a different measure to the survey. It is composed of households who need but cannot afford different accommodation to that which they currently have. This figure of 40% will therefore used as the starting point in all negotiations for affordable housing, although the actual provision will depend on the suitability of the individual site concerned.

Table 3 - Affordable housing need as measured in the 1999 survey (published in 2000) by area.

Parish/settlement as in 1999	Net affordable housing need from survey
Lydney	131
Cinderford and Ruspidge	70
Coleford parish and Berry Hill	238
Newent town	77
Bream	10
Drybrook	10
Mitcheldean	0
Newnham and Westbury	19
Tidenham	14

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Alvington, Aylburton, Woolaston	9
Corse and Staunton (Glos)	6
Churcham and Huntley	14
Hewelsfield/Brockweir and St Briavels	16
Dymock	9
Littledean	2
Lydbrook	2
Blaisdon and Longhope	5
Awre and Soudley (not Ruspidge)	15
English Bicknor and Newland	6
Pillowell Ward	15
Ruardean	0
Tibberton	4
Bromsberrow, Hartpury, Kempsey, Newent (rural) Pauntley, Oxenhall, Redmarley, Rudford, Taynton, Upleadon	38
TOTAL	711

- 2.54 Affordable housing provision will be judged against the definition of affordable housing in current government guidance, to include both housing to rent and to buy, but adjusted for local conditions of housing need as identified in the first instance by the Council's Housing Need Survey and its subsequent updates. This establishes for example the low requirement for low cost market housing. Whilst this is a type of affordable housing, the low requirement for it within the District will be a material factor in any negotiations for affordable housing. The aim to provide a mix of house types and sizes on new sites is a separate issue covered by policy (R)FH.11. The Council's Housing Need Survey is a public document available on request.
- 2.55 The means by which affordable housing is to be provided will principally be through developments by or for Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) Some of these will be carried out as independent free standing schemes as have almost all schemes in the past, often on the remaining (and diminishing) supply of land owned by the Forest of Dean District Council. Others will be expected to take place as a result of developer contributions negotiated on sites being developed for housing either as part of an allocation or as a "windfall" site. In the case of these types of development, the land is usually sought from the developer at nil value. This then provides the necessary subsidy for the scheme. In all cases the actual delivery of affordable housing will be the result of negotiation on individual sites against the District requirement and any local information.
- 2.56 There are however two important qualifications to the above. It is unlikely that all of the current supply of committed sites will in reality be able to provide the type of housing required. This would tend to increase the percentage that will be sought on eligible sites in order to compensate for those that are not (e.g. small sites, those with existing consents etc). Against this however must be weighed the fact that the Plan's overall strategy is one based on the allocation of new development in order to provide the Forest of Dean District with major benefits in terms of the overall revitalisation of the area. The major new housing allocations are therefore in areas where they are required to provide a number of direct benefits to their localities and which are necessary for the allocations themselves to proceed. The fundamental importance of this aim will be taken into account in any negotiation for the provision of affordable housing, as will the need to ensure that the developments allocated take place during the Plan period.
- 2.57 One effect of the Plan's strategy that is of considerable importance to the development of affordable

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housing, is the distribution within the District of new sites. The revitalisation strategy concentrates development in order to provide certain key items of infrastructure and to support the Forest towns. Over half of the allocated housing land is at Lydney. Whilst there is an identifiable need for affordable housing in Lydney, it may fall below the overall percentage sought over the District in general. The Council will therefore negotiate on the basis of commuting the provision of some of the housing to other locations in the District, in accordance with identified local need. The starting point for any negotiation will however always be the cost of providing the relevant share on the original site. Government guidance is that the commuting of the provision of affordable housing should only be sought in exceptional cases. The provision of affordable housing will usually be made on the same site in order to achieve a reasonable mix and balance of housing types and sizes. However, the site may be located in a settlement in which the full level of provision on this and other sites would be likely to exceed the identified need for affordable housing in that settlement and in adjoining settlements or parishes. This would be particularly likely to occur in Lydney but may also occur elsewhere. In that event some or all of the provision exceptionally may by agreement be commuted to provide affordable housing in, or adjoining, other settlements in the District where the need would otherwise remain unmet and where local provision would reduce travel needs for occupiers of the housing. In other cases, commuting may be possible where a more suitable site for affordable dwellings in the same settlement is in control of the applicant. In all cases the main consideration will be the best way of meeting the need for affordable housing, using any contributions that have been negotiated.

- 2.58 The Council will seek to negotiate the provision of affordable housing on all suitable allocated housing sites. In addition, because provision from these types of site is not likely to meet the full identified need, provision will be sought on windfall and other sites (current commitments that require either a detailed consent or a new application to be able to be implemented) in accordance with the guidance in Circular 06/98. Although the above provides guidance as to when an affordable share will be sought, it does not of course preclude applications being submitted from third parties for schemes which meet or exceed the target nor does it preclude provision on other smaller sites if required by the applicant.
- 2.59 As the policy makes clear, the negotiation process will be the key to actual provision and as part of its responsibilities the Council will need to ensure that it has up to date information regarding housing need at all times. The survey and other information will need to be regularly monitored and updated. In 2001 this process commenced with a supplementary study of changes in house prices since 1999 and further information which is expected to have increased the level of need will be presented when this study is complete. The updating of the survey is likely to be carried out for or on behalf of the District Council but situations may arise where a developer is asked for more information about local housing need. In this case, the Council will advise on the nature and type of information required. It will also require a rolling programme for the provision of housing in order to enable commuted sums to be sought. If developer contributions are obtained in the absence of a programme or if such a programme fails then any sum paid would be reimbursed to the developer concerned after an agreed period. The key to securing the actual provision will be each site's ability to provide the necessary subsidy and yet still be able to be developed.

Affordable Housing on Exceptions Sites

(R)FH.14

As an exception to the other housing policies in the Plan, the development of small groups of dwellings or single dwellings which provide affordable housing for local needs may be permitted within or adjoining the defined settlement boundaries of villages. In all cases proposals must:

1. Be capable of being integrated into the village without adversely affecting the amenity of the area
2. Be proposed in a village which possesses a reasonable level of services in relation to the scale of development concerned
3. Be accompanied by evidence that shows a genuine local need for the type, scale and tenure of the proposed dwellings and that they will be available at a rent or purchase price which those in need can afford
4. Be shown to be available on an affordable basis to each successive occupier
5. Be for dwellings that are to be limited to occupancy by persons in need of affordable housing. First preference is to be given to those already resident in the same village or parish as the scheme, or having a strong local connection (such as employment) with the village or parish. If within 6 months of completion of the scheme it cannot be filled by persons meeting these criteria, then residents of adjoining villages or parishes will be considered, followed by residents of the District and finally by persons with a strong local connection with the District and who have a need for affordable housing in the location concerned.

2.60 In rural areas there are often particular difficulties in securing an adequate supply of housing which local persons can afford. It is therefore intended to allow this supply to be supplemented by allowing in certain closely controlled circumstances the development of small groups of dwellings outside the normal policies of the Plan. Any such scheme must be capable of meeting the requirements of this policy. Policy (R)FH.14 sets out the criteria which will be applied to ensure any schemes benefit those in need and provide the most suitable type of accommodation at an appropriate price. The dwellings will normally be owned or controlled by a Registered Social Landlord. Suitable sites will usually be within or adjacent to the defined settlement boundary of the village and must be on land which is capable of meeting the criteria normally required of a housing site, except for its location which will usually be outside a settlement boundary. The policy does not rule out sites within a settlement boundary, but where these occur proposals will be evaluated against any other relevant policies of the Plan. Where justified by need, schemes for small groups of dwellings may be permitted in villages where the proposed scale of development (infilling and small groups) would be considered inappropriate for general housing under policies (R)FH.4 and (R)FH.5.

2.61 In order to ensure there is a bona fide need for affordable housing on exceptions sites, accurate information, usually in the form of a housing needs survey will be required to be submitted with a planning application. Supplementary planning guidance will be issued to assist applicants for planning permission for an exceptions site who are asked for more information about local housing need. Any successful scheme will be the subject of a Section 106 or similar agreement to ensure it is occupied only in accordance with the provisions of the policy.

2.62 Developments which contain a mixture of affordable and normal market housing will not be permitted on the exceptions sites referred to in this policy. It is unlikely that there will be adequate justification for schemes of this type in the smallest settlements as there is a need to ensure that all new dwellings have a reasonable level of access to local services and transport. This is the reason for the policy referring to villages that have a defined settlement boundary.

Housing for Special Needs

2.63 In addition to those who cannot afford market priced dwellings, there are a number of other special housing needs which the Plan must cater for. A proportion of these may be provided by the market as

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for example some of those requiring sheltered housing can pay for it. In other cases however the provision of housing for special needs may be assessed as part of the provision of affordable housing and in particular in the case of sites in the towns, such provision may be sought as part of a sites' contribution to the affordable housing requirement.

Conversion of Rural Buildings

- 2.64 Within the countryside there are a number of buildings, principally agricultural in origin that will cease to be appropriate for their present use or are presently redundant. A considerable number have been converted to provide dwellings. Government policy now rightly concentrates on the need to find alternative uses for these buildings that can make a positive contribution to the economy of an area and residential uses should only be seen as a last resort. Proposals for change of use will be evaluated for their impact on the built environment, landscape and the economy of the area under other policies of the Plan (principally policies (R)FBE.7 and (R)FE.5). Conversions of rural buildings will be unlikely to have a material effect on housing supply, although they are unlikely to cease entirely.

Replacement Dwellings

(R)FH.15

In locations where the development of new dwellings is contrary to the policies of this Plan, the replacement of an existing dwelling immediately capable of providing residential accommodation will be permitted where:

- 1. The present dwelling, though capable of occupation, is unable to provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation**
- 2. The new dwelling would not detract unacceptably from the amenity of the locality**
- 3. The new dwelling would be sited in the most advantageous position within the curtilage in relation to visual impact, its relationship to adjoining land uses, the amenity of neighbours and access and road safety considerations**
- 4. The original dwelling will be demolished if the new siting differs from that of the original dwelling**
- 5. The new dwelling is of a size that is in harmony with the scale and character of its surroundings.**

- 2.65 There may be circumstances where a dwelling though capable of occupation is unable to provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation. Where it is not possible to alter it in order to bring it up to modern standards, replacement may be permitted. The policy is not one intended to add to the total housing stock. It is intended to enable unsatisfactory accommodation to be replaced in locations where additional dwellings would be contrary to policy. In these locations, it is however essential that such a replacement fits in well with the locality and the safeguards set out in the above policy will therefore be applied. A replacement will be expected to occupy the most advantageous position within the curtilage in relation to its visual impact, and its relationship with adjoining land uses. Its presence should not detract from the amenity of the locality. If the siting is not the same as the original dwelling then the original dwelling will be required to be demolished. Finally the new dwelling will be expected to be of a size and character that is in harmony with its surroundings.

Sub-division of Dwellings

(R)FH.16

Proposals for the sub-division of existing dwellings to form additional dwellings will be permitted subject to:

1. Satisfactory provision being made for car parking
2. There being no adverse effect on the character and amenity of the surrounding area
3. The building concerned being capable of providing suitable habitable accommodation without major extension or alteration which would be detrimental to its character, appearance or setting
4. Satisfactory provision being made for the private amenity of residents
5. The proposal making no undue demands on services or infrastructure.

- 2.66 With changing average household sizes, there is a continuing need for the best use to be made of the available housing stock. One way in which this can be achieved is to allow, where satisfactory standards of amenity and accommodation can be provided, the sub-division of larger residential properties. Policy (R)FH.16 is intended therefore to permit such a change in all parts of the Plan area. There are important safeguards which will ensure any conversion does not harm the amenity or character of the area, and this will ensure that such conversions can be well integrated into their surroundings, whether within a settlement boundary or not. In the case of sites outside settlement boundaries, any new building work which extends the property concerned will be closely scrutinised, and the addition of newly built units of accommodation will not normally be permitted. This type of conversion can often provide more affordable accommodation in areas where it would otherwise be unavailable. The provisions of policy (R)FBE.3 will be a material consideration in respect of the need to demonstrate that development under the policy makes no undue demands on infrastructure and services. This will be especially relevant when considering proposals in rural areas where such services are often more difficult to provide and offer limited capacity for improvement.

Gypsy Sites

(R)FH.17

~~The use of land by Gypsies for the stationing of caravans or mobile homes or other non-permanent forms of accommodation will be permitted providing the following criteria are satisfied:~~

- ~~1. The proposal would meet a need for persons meeting the current legal definition of Gypsies~~
- ~~2. The proposal would not be visually intrusive in the landscape, and incorporates landscaping provisions to enhance the screening of the site~~
- ~~3. The proposal is well related to existing community, social, educational and other facilities~~
- ~~4. Adequate provision is made for vehicular access, manoeuvring and parking, and the proposal will not create or intensify a traffic hazard~~
- ~~5. The proposal is in all other respects environmentally acceptable and would not adversely affect the amenities of neighbouring properties.~~

- ~~2.67 The above policy is designed to make provision for Gypsies as currently defined in the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, 1994 and as referred to in DoE Circular 18/94. It is intended to allow consent to be granted for sites in locations where they can be accommodated satisfactorily without detriment to the environment. Further guidance is contained in DoE Circulars 1/94 entitled "Gypsy Sites and Planning" and 18/94 "Gypsy sites Policy and Unauthorised Camping" which requires District Councils to provide appropriate policies or allocate sites for Gypsies in their Local Plans.~~

- ~~2.68 The policy provides that the sites created for Gypsies will be well-screened and would not have adverse effects upon adjoining properties. While the policy does not place any specific limitation upon the size of any site, it is anticipated that sites will be relatively small in size.~~

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- 2.69 ~~The District Council is anxious to make proper provision for Gypsies in order to respond to the real needs of this group in the population, and to avoid the expenditure of public funds on the often meaningless task of dispersing illegal encampments only to see the problem transfer elsewhere. There are at present sites with planning permission at Chaxhill, Bromsberrow and near Blakeney. However, the above policy may be open to potential abuse if not tightly controlled, in order for example to create tourist uses or residential uses in locations which might not otherwise be considered suitable. Therefore, any permission given under this policy will be subject to detailed conditions or to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement to control the use of the site.~~
- 2.70 ~~In judging applications under this policy, regard will be had to the overall scale of need for provision for Gypsies judged against the regular counts carried out by the Council of the number of Gypsies in the District.~~

Travellers Sites

(R)FH.18

~~The use of land by travellers for the stationing of their caravans or mobile homes or other non-permanent forms of accommodation will be permitted providing the following criteria are satisfied:~~

- ~~1. The proposal would meet an identified need for travellers in the District~~
- ~~2. The proposal would not be visually intrusive in the landscape, and incorporates landscaping provisions to enhance the screening of the site~~
- ~~3. The proposal is well related to existing community, social, educational and other facilities~~
- ~~4. Adequate provision is made for vehicular access, manoeuvring and parking, and the proposal will not create or intensify a traffic hazard~~
- ~~5. The proposal is in all other respects environmentally acceptable and would not adversely affect the amenities of neighbouring properties~~
- ~~6. Each unit of accommodation on the site shall have been brought to the site by the occupier(s) for the time being who shall remove the accommodation from the site when ceasing to use it for their residential purposes.~~

~~In all cases planning permission initially will be limited to a maximum of three years and will be subject to conditions or the completion of a Section 106 Agreement which will restrict the use of the site to a maximum of ten units of accommodation, to permit use of the site for a maximum of nine months in any one year, and to limit the facilities to be provided on the site to an agreed basic minimum.~~

- 2.71 ~~In addition to Gypsies resorting to the District there are also other travellers who appear at various times and are essentially transient in nature. Although numbers are relatively small there have been periods when larger numbers overall have been present, and some encampments have reached a significant size. For this reason the Local Plan includes the above policy to enable a number of small appropriately located and equipped sites to be established to meet this need. There is no intention to provide for permanently occupied sites given that the regular counts of travellers in the District do not reveal the need for such provision. This policy therefore provides reasonable opportunities to meet anticipated needs, without the creation of permanently occupied sites with the attendant pressures to provide for the variety of permanent infrastructure associated with such use. Such provision should also reduce the possibility of illegal sites being created.~~
- 2.72 ~~The policy provides that the sites created for Travellers will be well screened and would not have adverse effects upon adjoining properties. In particular, the scale of any site would be limited to use at any one time by a maximum of ten units of accommodation, and the site should be occupied for only nine months of the year. In the remaining three months the site will be cleared. This will avoid the formation of a permanent residential mobile home site, and enable the ground to recover from any effects of over use. The nature of the use proposed is such that only very basic site facilities should be~~

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~~provided, as it is not intended either for permanent occupation or for tourist use. Therefore, only very basic hardstandings such as compacted stone should be provided, and services should be limited to stand pipe, waste skip or similar provision, and a chemical toilet disposal point.~~

~~2.73 The District Council is anxious to make proper provision for Travellers in order to respond to the real needs of this group in the population, and to avoid the expenditure of public funds on the often meaningless task of dispersing illegal encampments only to see the problem transfer elsewhere. However, the above policy may be open to potential abuse if not tightly controlled, in order for example to create tourist uses or residential uses in locations which might not otherwise be considered suitable. Therefore, any permission given under this policy will be subject to detailed conditions or to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement to control the use of the site which in either case will be strictly enforced.~~

~~2.74 In judging applications under this policy, regard will be had to the overall scale of need for provision for Travellers judged against the regular counts carried out by the Council of the number of Travellers in the District.~~

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Chapter 3

Employment

Introduction

- 3.1 The northern and southern parts of the District display very different employment characteristics.
- 3.2 The south Forest of Dean has a long history of mineral exploitation and associated metal industries and manufacturing. Coal mining has now ceased (except for small-scale “free mining”), although quarrying for stone continues. Manufacturing however remains a very substantial industrial sector, though it is at present undergoing considerable change with many job losses. There remain however a number of individual businesses of a considerable scale. Much of the industry and other economic activity is concentrated in the three south Forest towns. However, throughout the former mining area there are industries which have taken over the sites of former coal and iron mines, and of previous heavy industries and quarries. As a result there are frequent examples of industrial uses in detached locations within the countryside.
- 3.3 By contrast the north Forest of Dean displays a predominantly agricultural landscape with generally small villages. Business activities are mostly small in scale. With the exception of Newent, the only town, there are few concentrations of economic activity in the form of industrial estates.
- 3.4 Up to the 1960's over half of all jobs in the District were in the primary and manufacturing sectors with coal mining being a significant employer of the male workforce. All deep mining has now ceased, but manufacturing has continued as a major employer. However, in the recession of the 1980's one in three production jobs in the District were lost, contributing to an unemployment rate at the time which rose to over 18%.
- 3.5 The local economy has recovered greatly in the last decade but certain sectors are once more contracting giving rise to major problems as a result of significant job losses. Current unemployment is approximately 1.8% over the whole District and in the Cinderford/Ross travel to work area it is 1.9%. The latter figure is lower than the GB average (2.6%) and is marginally higher than the 1.7% figure for Gloucestershire. Nevertheless, the structure of the local economy continues to reflect its past. Manufacturing provides about 20% of all jobs, compared to the Great Britain figure of 18%. The service sector has overtaken manufacturing as the largest provider of employment, but it remains relatively undeveloped when compared with the figures for Great Britain (around 62% compared to 69%).
- 3.6 There are a number of vulnerable elements of the local economy which need to be addressed:
- The manufacturing sector is forecast to decline nationally
 - Relative under-development of the service sector
 - Persistently higher unemployment rates than in Gloucestershire as a whole, although currently lower than national figures
 - Lower economic activity rates than the County, particularly for females
 - Over-reliance on a small number of large employers
 - Relatively low levels of average earnings
 - Over representation of the lower skilled in the workforce

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- 3.7 Despite the difficulties noted above it is clear that the Forest of Dean economy has demonstrated the ability to respond to improvements in national economic circumstances. Evidence for this can be seen in the reduction of unemployment rates below the national average, the growth of the service sector which has substituted jobs for the loss of manufacturing employment and a tourism and leisure industry which is forecast to continue to grow.
- 3.8 The fluctuating fortunes of the local economy can partly be traced by reference to the external assistance given to the District over time. In 1984 the southern part of the District was designated a Rural Development Area and also an Assisted Area. The latter designation was withdrawn in 1993, but the former was re-confirmed and extended to encompass most of the District. In 1999 the south of the District was given a third tier Assisted Area status, a designation which now no longer exists, and also designated as a Coalfield Regeneration Area. The current draft Regional Planning Guidance and the Structure Plan both recognise the need for economic regeneration within the southern part of the Forest of Dean.
- 3.9 The relative vulnerability of the Forest of Dean economy contrasts with the situation in the County as a whole, which generally has a more prosperous and thriving economy. There are also related issues for the Forest of Dean which arise from its economic circumstances, including lower household incomes, higher levels of long-term illness, lower levels of educational attainment and lower economic activity rates. There are high levels of out-commuting from the District to adjoining employment centres, particularly Gloucester, which reflects both the absolute shortage of job opportunities locally and the greater diversity of opportunities elsewhere, particularly for higher skilled and managerial jobs, with their higher salary levels.
- 3.10 The above circumstances form the basis for the recognition in the Structure Plan of the need for economic and social regeneration in the southern part of the Forest of Dean, where the need for revitalisation is greatest. The draft Regional Planning Guidance identifies the Forest of Dean as an investment priority area, as does the Government through the Coalfield Regeneration area.

Issues

- 3.11 The principal issue for the Local Plan is to provide a basis for achieving a thriving and diverse local economy in the Forest of Dean, to contribute to the strategic aim of revitalisation.
- 3.12 The elements which will support this aim include provision of land and infrastructure for business development, support for increased business competitiveness, enhancing skills levels, developing community businesses, maintaining an attractive and high quality natural and built environment, and actively pursuing external funding opportunities for economic development. These are the key objectives of the Council's Economic Development Strategy.
- 3.13 The District Council with its partner organisations is committed to pursuing initiatives in all the strategic areas identified above. The Local Plan will contribute to this strategy by ensuring that the context for economic regeneration is supported by the policies and proposals of the Plan Review.
- 3.14 Between 1991 and 2011 the estimated additional job needs of the resident population is assessed to be around 3,000 jobs. Employment in the District remained roughly stable between 1991 - 1998, and therefore this increase will need to be accommodated over the Plan period 1996 - 2011.
- 3.15 It is anticipated that the majority of new employment will be in the service sector. Much of this will be accommodated within existing or expanded sites and premises, for example in the stock of town centre retail and commercial premises or in existing facilities such as schools, health services or public service offices. Plan policies and proposals must ensure that the opportunity for such forms of development exist, particularly in town centres, and include sites for refurbishment, redevelopment and new development. Service businesses are increasingly also seeking sites in good quality environments and accessible locations such as business parks. The Plan should make provision for such developments in suitably accessible locations. Sectors such as tourism, recreation and leisure are forecast to have

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significant growth potential, and the Plan will need to provide a policy framework to encourage such development.

- 3.16 The manufacturing sector is of great importance to the local economy in terms of jobs provided, especially by way of the existing businesses in the District. Unlike the national trends the sector is forecast to increase its employment locally over the Plan period. Recent losses of manufacturing jobs in the District emphasise the difficulty of forecasting at a local scale but over the entire plan period, the forecast may still be appropriate. To remain competitive manufacturing businesses will need to invest in plant, machinery and premises, including the possibility of site redevelopment or relocation. New businesses will also be formed to replace the expected workforce reduction amongst established businesses. Overall therefore the Plan will need to ensure that there is a plentiful supply of land suitable for a wide variety of industrial needs, from starter businesses to high quality business sites. Optimum use will be made of the development and redevelopment potential of existing employment sites. The Plan will need to provide most new employment opportunities in the towns, to complement the proposed housing land allocations at these locations. This will help to provide a balance of homes and jobs, reduce the growth of vehicle usage, and provide for social inclusion. Employment sites should where possible be accessible by car, cycle, public transport and by walking, and will in appropriate cases be required to contribute to the provision of access by these means.
- 3.17 A major issue for the Plan is to ensure an adequate supply of land for employment, to provide for a diverse range of sites to cater for the needs of both large and small businesses and to provide for high quality sites, together with sites suitable for businesses with less demanding needs. The Forest of Dean has for many years lacked larger sites which would provide for major new developments. At times this has undoubtedly inhibited investment plans by existing businesses, and has meant the District has been unable to compete either for major investment inquiries directed towards the region, or for the needs of businesses seeking high quality environments. The Plan will identify land at Lydney capable of accommodating such large scale development.
- 3.18 A feature of many of the existing industrial sites in the District, and of some of the additional sites allocated in this Plan, is that they occupy sites previously used for other purposes, including coal mining, iron mining, quarrying and heavy metal industries. Those re-occupied by successor industries often display relatively low environmental and amenity standards. There are three issues arising from these circumstances which the Plan must address. The first is the need to secure environmental improvements when new development is proposed, as well as programmes of improvements originated by the District Council. The second issue is that many sites allocated in the Plan have potential problems of instability and contamination which would inhibit development. The District Council will work with partner organisations and the private sector to overcome these problems and to assist the development process. The third issue arising is that some of these existing sites are not well-located, for example being adjacent to residential areas or being otherwise intrusive, in the open countryside for example. The Plan however must balance such problems, which are widespread, with the need to support the economy of the District, and normally to give priority to retaining these employment uses while also enabling beneficial changes to take place within the employment site. In all cases it will be necessary to ensure that new or intensified employment uses can be satisfactorily accommodated within the landscape and one of the considerations in the evaluation of development proposals will be any potential impact on the landscape. In mitigation, the use of appropriate designs, materials and landscaping will be sought.
- 3.19 Employment in traditional agriculture is forecast to continue to decline, although the sector overall may retain its share of employment through the growth of related contracting and other enterprises. The diversification of the rural economy will remain a trend, with new farm and countryside based businesses being established in tourism, leisure and food processing for example. The Plan will support such development in recognition of its contribution to the social and economic well-being of rural communities, and as a contribution to employment growth in the District.

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Strategic Framework

- 3.20 The revitalisation of the economy of the Forest of Dean is a fundamental element of the Plan strategy. The principal elements of the strategy include a sufficient and varied land allocation to provide for the approximate 3,000 additional job requirement to 2011, ensuring infrastructure provision to support development, promoting the vitality and viability of town centres, providing for a high quality environment for business development, and meeting the needs of the rural economy.
- 3.21 The strategy will concentrate most new employment development in the four towns of the District, where the greatest opportunities for growth exist, in locations accessible to the workforce, and supported by existing infrastructure and services. The great majority of new development will be in the south Forest area, where the revitalisation needs are the greatest. Within the south Forest Lydney will be the strategic focus for development. The revitalisation needs of Cinderford will also be supported, whilst in Coleford the emphasis will be on enhancing its market town role in retailing, tourism and commerce.
- 3.22 The Plan will support the economic and social well-being of rural communities by enabling business development in villages, supporting farm diversification, and promoting tourism, recreation and leisure enterprises.

Employment Objectives

1. To promote a sustainable, thriving and diverse economy
2. To provide for new employment in locations accessible to the workforce
3. To provide a wide choice of sites and premises suitable for business and in a high quality environment
4. To support the further development of existing businesses in the District
5. To ensure infrastructure is provided to enable business development to take place
6. To support the rural economy.
7. To ensure that new developments are sensitive to the character of the countryside
8. To ensure that where possible new developments are accessible by a variety of forms of transport.

Policies and Proposals
Principal Employment Land Allocations

(R)FE.1			
Land is allocated for employment development at the following sites:			
<u>Town and policy</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Area (ha)</u>	<u>Town total (ha)</u>
Lydney			
(R)F.Lydney 1	Land East of Lydney	9.0	
(R)F.Lydney 7	Hurst Farm	15.0	
(R)F.Lydney 8	Mead Lane	7.0	
(R)F.Lydney 9	Pine End Works, Harbour Road	5.8	
			36.8
Cinderford and Ruspidge			
(R)F.Cinderford.1	Forest Vale and Whimsey	10.0	
(R)F.Cinderford 2	Newtown Employment	3.0	
(R)F.Cinderford 3	Northern United	8.7	
(R)F.Cinderford 4	Lightmoor	1.0	
(R)F.Cinderford 5	Newtown Mixed	3.4	
			26.1
Coleford Group of Settlements			
(R)F.Coleford 4	Adjoining Glaxo SmithKline	6.8	
(R)F.Coleford 6	Whitecliff Quarry	1.0	
			7.8
Newent			
(R)F.Newent 5	Business Park Extension	4.2	
			4.2
Bream			
Policy (R)F.Bream 3	Whitcroft Road	0.6	
Parkend			
Policy (R)F.Parkend 1	Former Railway Sidings	2.4	3.0
GRAND TOTAL of Employment Allocations			77.9ha

3.23 Economic development is an integral element of the proposed revitalisation of the Forest of Dean. Therefore, new business investment will be provided for by the Plan throughout the District. In making provision for new jobs, the Plan strategy will concentrate development upon the four towns of the District, principally through employment land allocations and through policies and proposals for town centres. The emphasis of the Plan policies and proposals will be to provide for most new employment development in the south Forest, to accord with the strategic priority for revitalisation in that area.

3.24 It is estimated that there will be a need for around 3,000 additional jobs in the District over the Plan period. This is in addition to any which will be needed to replace those that may be lost through closures and other changes. The service sector is forecast to be the principal growth area for employment. Thus the Plan will need to place emphasis upon the capacity of towns and particularly town centres, to develop their roles as service centres and to provide the necessary opportunities and the quality environment required to accommodate business development. In addition, there will be a need for business sites away from town centres which offer accessibility and a high quality environment to accommodate the increasing number of service businesses which do not require a town centre location and which would not normally be expected to locate centrally because of the trips that they may be expected to generate.

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- 3.25 Manufacturing is a significant element of the local economy, and will continue to develop locally. The Plan will need to provide for the wide range of sites required, from start up businesses to large expanding companies. A key element of the Plan is to ensure that new investment is not inhibited by a lack of appropriate sites.
- 3.26 Despite the industrial history of the District it remains a largely rural area. Within this context specific industries make important contributions to the local economy, including agriculture, forestry, tourism and outdoor recreation. The Plan must ensure that policies enable these sectors to continue to contribute to the regeneration of the District, and the well-being of communities.
- 3.27 The Plan strategy recognises that the priority for revitalisation is the south Forest. As a consequence the principal land allocations for employment use are located in that area. The detailed employment land allocations will be made in the respective settlement chapters of the Plan Review.
- 3.28 A total of round 78 hectares of employment land is allocated in the Plan, of which around 71 hectares are located in the three towns of Lydney, Cinderford and Coleford and up to 74 hectares in the south Forest as a whole. The provision of this new land will be monitored annually in terms of new land developed and its location. Where possible, estimates will be made of the approximate numbers of jobs so that such provision can be evaluated against the rest of the plan strategy.
- 3.29 The above allocations are aimed at ensuring a diverse range of employment sites to provide for both large and small investment proposals, for high quality business park surroundings as well as traditional industrial estates, and for a choice of locations.
- 3.30 The concentration of employment land allocations in the towns is intended to maximise the accessibility of the resident population to jobs, to make use of existing infrastructure and facilities, and to provide for new job opportunities in those locations where the majority of the additional housing is to be constructed. In addition the transport policies of the Plan will ensure that new employment is provided in locations that are accessible by a variety of forms of transport.
- 3.31 A strategic emphasis of revitalisation is to utilise the potential for new development at Lydney, where the largest provision is made for employment development. This includes three “greenfield” sites (Mead Lane, land inside the by-pass and land at Hurst Farm) which have the potential to be key land allocations intended to provide for accessible and high quality employment sites suitable for a range of businesses including services.
- 3.32 The settlement pattern and industrial history of the District has resulted in significant employment areas being located in a large number of villages. There are further opportunities to allocate land for local employment at a number of these, at Bream, Parkend and Sling. Many other settlements have established employment sites which offer substantial local employment. These will be identified where appropriate in the settlement chapters, and support given to their further development where such potential exists. The Plan will support further employment opportunities in villages, where they can offer local jobs which are needed and are appropriate in scale and character.

Development on Established Employment Sites

(R)FE. 2

The expansion of existing business and the development of new business within the boundaries of established employment sites will be permitted where the proposals do not give rise to unacceptable environmental, traffic or amenity problems. Proposals for development will be required to incorporate appropriate measures to enhance the environmental quality and amenity of employment sites.

- 3.33 Existing employment sites can offer accessible local jobs for communities. The Plan will support the retention of local jobs, and will encourage new investment by business within established employment sites. The above policy provides for some limitations to be exercised to ensure that proposed new

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development does not have adverse impacts on the surrounding area, for example, where a site adjoins a residential area, or where there is a proposal for a process or product which may have implications for noise or atmospheric pollution. In many circumstances such impacts can be regulated to reduce the effects to acceptable levels.

- 3.34 The particular industrial history of the Forest of Dean has resulted in a somewhat haphazard relationship of employment sites interspersed with residential and other uses in settlements, and sites in the open countryside occupying former industrial areas. The above policy provides a framework for assessing the acceptability of further development of such sites.
- 3.35 A standard requirement for all proposals for development on established employment sites will be a need to address issues of environment and amenity, and to provide for appropriate enhancements. There is a legacy of sites of extractive and heavier industry in the District which have been subsequently re-occupied or redeveloped for more modern business. This evolution has meant that issues of environmental quality and amenity may have not been addressed in a planned way. The Plan specifically will seek environmental improvements as part of development proposals in these cases.
- 3.36 The above Policy will be applied to a variety of sites and should enable an increase in employment opportunities, whilst recognising that the sites themselves have to change through time. It will apply to small and large sites, and will include sites providing manufacturing and service employment. There are other major employers in the District and these are chiefly within the towns where other policies of the Plan would allow their expansion. One notable exception is Hartpury College which is located in the open countryside. This is both a major employer and a major educational facility and the Council wish to support its further development in recognition of its importance.

Change of Use of Employment Land

(R)FE.3

The change of use of employment land to non employment uses will not be permitted except where:

- 1. The present use gives rise to significant intrusive environmental problems detrimentally affecting adjoining land uses and which cannot be adequately addressed by existing environmental legislation or where**
- 2. The proposal is for a use or for mixed uses incorporating provision for employment development at a scale reasonably related to the prior employment use or the potential employment capacity of the site, or where;**
- 3. The site has been unused, or significantly underused for some time because of its unsuitability for employment and there is little or no prospect of employment use being resumed (whether or not the site is redeveloped).**

Where a mixed development is proposed a comprehensive development scheme will be required for the site. Where appropriate an agreement will be sought which provides for the phased implementation of the proposed employment development.

- 3.37 It is important for the employment strategy of the Plan that a wide choice of employment sites is available. The above policy provides that existing or allocated employment sites should be retained for that purpose. However, exceptions may arise. Non-conforming uses may give rise to environmental problems for adjoining land uses. Where these are significantly detrimental an alternative use will be considered, but only after it is clear that environmental legislation cannot adequately mitigate the causes of the problem. Similarly, an alternative use will be considered in cases where it can be shown that the site has been available for use but has remained unused or has been significantly underused for some time with little or no prospect of an employment use being resumed either with or without the redevelopment of the site. This will allow alternative uses to be considered in order to make the best

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use of what will be “brownfield land”. The site’s suitability for alternative uses (including housing) will need to be judged against the other policies of the Plan. The purpose of this policy is to safeguard sites that are able to contribute employment opportunities.

- 3.38 The continuing change in the structure of employment will give rise to proposals for the alternative use of employment land. For example, tourism, leisure and recreation are growing industries which can make use of former industrial sites. Although the level of jobs created may not be equivalent to a previous or current use, such proposals may be considered acceptable where the proposal gives rise to new jobs on a scale reasonably related to the former use of the site, or to the potential employment capacity of the site.
- 3.39 In some locations, particularly in the towns, there will be potential for the mixed use redevelopment of employment sites which may incorporate uses such as residential, commercial, retail, tourism or leisure. The policy provides for such developments. However, to ensure the continued employment use of the site in conjunction with other uses a comprehensive proposal for the site will be required. It may also be appropriate to seek an agreed phasing of the employment development in relation to other proposed uses of the site, to ensure the jobs will be forthcoming.

Employment in Villages

(R)FE.4

Proposals for employment development at villages which have a defined settlement boundary will be permitted within or adjoining those boundaries where:

- 1. They are well related in scale and nature to the size and character of the village**
- 2. They will not give rise to unacceptable environmental, amenity or traffic problems**
- 3. They will not give rise to significant additional levels of journey to work movements by private car**
- 4. In the case of proposals which are located outside but adjoining boundaries, there is no reasonably suitable alternative accommodation within any settlement boundary.**

- 3.40 Throughout their history villages have been places of work as well as places to live. This policy underlines that this dual function should continue in order to support the social and economic well-being of rural communities, and add to the economy of the District.
- 3.41 The Plan provides for the great majority of new employment to be located in accessible and sustainable locations, principally in the towns. The cumulative impact of small scale employment in villages therefore is unlikely to have a significant impact upon the sustainable development of the District. However, it will be material to consider the extent to which a proposal may give rise to additional journey to work movements by car. Where the nature of the job opportunities provided by a development can reasonably be expected to be available to the locally resident workforce, or there is suitable public transport available, then concerns about the sustainability of employment development in villages will be mitigated.
- 3.42 The criteria in the above policy indicate that appropriate developments in villages are likely to be small in scale and unobtrusive in nature. The Built Environment policies in the Plan provide an additional framework to regulate the impacts of any development.
- 3.43 In some cases the most appropriate location for small scale employment may be outside, but adjoining, the settlement boundary. This may be due to a lack of suitable sites or buildings within a settlement. In such cases it will be relevant before considering granting a planning consent to assess whether reasonable alternative accommodation exists either within the settlement concerned, or within another town or village.

Employment in the Countryside

(R)FE.5

Employment development in the countryside will be permitted where it meets any of the following requirements:

- 1. The location proposed is adjoining a settlement boundary and complies with Policy (R)FE.4**
- 2. The location proposed is an established employment site and complies with Policy (R)FE.2**
- 3. The use proposed is for tourism, recreation or leisure and complies with Policy (R)FTRL.2**
- 4. The proposal comprises the re-use of an existing building and complies with Policy (R)FBE.6**
- 5. The use proposed is for agriculture, horticulture or forestry, and a countryside location is essential to the efficient operation of the business proposed, and the potential for using any existing buildings to accommodate the use is fully utilised before new build is proposed.**

In all cases proposals must also comply with the provisions of Policy (R)FNE.1.

3.44 The Plan strategy seeks to safeguard the environment and amenity of the open countryside, and to locate development within settlements where there are supporting facilities. However, there are a variety of businesses which may require a countryside location for their efficient operation. This policy provides for those circumstances where such employment development would be permissible in the open countryside. In all cases existing buildings should be used to their full capacity before considering new building in the countryside.

3.45 It will always be material to consider policy (R)FNE.1 to assess the detailed requirements for an acceptable form of development, and policy (R)FT.2 with respect to highway and traffic matters. Policy (R)F.Strategy 2 is concerned with ensuring sustainable forms of development. There may be cases where development will be permitted under this policy only after improvements have been made to enable access by a variety of forms of transport. Each application must be assessed on its merits. Because of the proposed countryside location, it will always be relevant to consider the minimisation of the energy, water and waste impacts arising from the proposal in order to contribute to a sustainable form of development.

Agricultural Diversification

3.46 The agricultural industry has undergone a period of change in recent years, and further change is forecast for the immediate future. National projections assume a considerable area of land going out of food production, and reductions in direct agricultural employment. Given this context the Government has advocated agricultural diversification measures to supplement farm incomes. This might take many forms.

3.47 The policies of the Plan support the principle of employment uses in the countryside in appropriate circumstances. Possible diversification proposals include workshops, tourist accommodation, and leisure enterprises. Overall, the Plan gives support in principle to the diversification of agriculture, providing that proposals meet the criteria established in the various policies of the Plan. Policy (R)FE.5 above provides a framework for assessing relevant proposals for agricultural diversification.

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Chapter 4

Tourism, Recreation and Leisure

Introduction

- 4.1 Tourism is a significant industry in the Forest of Dean. In 2002 it is estimated there were some two million visitors to the District. The industry provides around 2000 direct jobs which amounts to 6% of the jobs available in the District. If indirect tourism jobs are added, the percentage rises to 7%. The estimated annual value of tourism was £94 million in 2002 with staying visitors accounting for almost half of this. (source: Economic Value of Tourism in Gloucestershire 2002, Gloucestershire Tourism.)
- 4.2 The principal attraction for visitors is the natural beauty, tranquillity and uncommercialised feel of the area. Outdoor recreation, therefore, is the key attraction for visitors, including walking, wildlife watching and leisure driving, together with more active outdoor pursuits such as horse riding, cycling, canoeing and climbing.
- 4.3 Particular natural assets that contribute to the popularity of the destination are the unrestricted access to the 10,700 hectares of the Dean Forest Park (managed by Forest Enterprise), the natural beauty of the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills AONBs, the valley of the River Severn, and the rich heritage of the rolling farmland and villages of the northern part of the District.
- 4.4 With the development of tourism in the District there has been a growth of investment in commercial attractions, which have principally reflected the history, culture and natural assets of the area.
- 4.5 Recreation and leisure activities are often closely linked with tourism, such as golf, walking, cycling, sightseeing, health and fitness pursuits and formal sport. There has been a considerable growth in these activities, and developments to cater for these needs are frequently available to both the resident population and visitors, with benefits for both. It is anticipated that there will be continually rising demands and expectations from the resident population, as well as visitors, for additional and improved facilities for both indoor and outdoor recreation and leisure.
- 4.6 Recreation and leisure comprises one of the fastest growing business sectors in the country. It is forecast to make a significant contribution to new employment in the District over the Plan period. It can be combined with tourism developments to increase the potential for such growth, by widening the range of users and increasing the viability of such developments.

Issues

- 4.7 The tourism, recreation and leisure industries are important elements of the local economy, and are also forecast to grow over the Plan period. The Plan must provide for this growth, to assist economic revitalisation.
- 4.8 However, the principal attraction of the District for visitors is its natural environment. The Plan, therefore, must ensure that these qualities of the District are maintained and enhanced if tourism is to continue to grow. The number of tourists is already considerable, but can largely be accommodated as there is a natural dispersion in the countryside, particularly within the extensive woodlands. At some locations there are visitor pressures, such as at Symonds Yat viewpoint. Some Forest Enterprise facilities can become crowded over limited peak periods.
- 4.9 The Plan must, therefore, contain policies which support tourism and leisure development, but which enable the protection of those natural assets of the Forest of Dean which underpin its success.
- 4.10 Day and touring visitors comprise a very high proportion (92%) of all visitors to the District. The further development of tourism will concentrate upon increasing the number of staying visitors, who may be

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expected to contribute proportionately more to the local economy. For this approach to be successful there is an underlying need to provide more, and good quality, visitor accommodation. At present there is a preponderance of camping and caravan pitches in the accommodation provision in the District, largely concentrated near Coleford. The Plan will support provision of a wider variety of visitor accommodation, particularly hotel and self-catering provision.

- 4.11 The management of large numbers of visitors in the countryside requires the provision of supporting infrastructure, such as car parks, refreshment facilities, toilets and visitor information. The Plan will support the provision of such facilities where appropriate.
- 4.12 The rising leisure expectations of the population will continue to result in demand for and the provision of further recreational provision. In recent years for example three new golf courses have been built, an indoor swimming pool, new tennis courts, all-weather pitches, a gymnastic centre and fitness facilities. The advent of lottery funding has supported a number of these developments, and further public and private sector leisure developments are anticipated to come forward over the Plan period. Policies must provide for such development, in suitable locations both to support new investment and employment and also to meet the aspirations of the local population and improve the quality of life in the District.

Strategic Framework

- 4.13 The revitalisation strategy of the Plan envisages a substantial growth in employment within the District. The tourism, recreation and leisure industries can make a significant contribution in terms of new job creation. The Plan will therefore support and promote such developments.
- 4.14 The Plan strategy emphasises the need to protect the natural environment, and to promote the principles of sustainable development. The natural environment is a fundamental asset for the tourism industry as it comprises the key attraction for visitors. The Plan seeks to ensure that the development of tourism will not compromise the protection of the natural environment.
- 4.15 Increasingly tourism strategies are being based upon sustainable principles, whereby the development of the industry is being guided to conserve and enhance the environment and manage and inform visitors as to their impact upon their surroundings. Indeed many visitors expect and wish to see such practices. The policies in the Plan will have regard to such principles in providing for appropriate forms of development.
- 4.16 Policies will provide for new tourism, recreation and leisure developments within settlements as well as in the countryside.

Objectives

1. To encourage the development of sustainable tourism, recreational and leisure facilities which meet the Plan's regeneration and environmental objectives, whilst meeting the needs and aspirations of local communities.
2. To balance tourism, recreation and leisure development with the protection and enhancement of the environment.

Policies and Proposals

Tourism, Recreation and Leisure Development within the Towns

(R)FTRL.1

Proposals for tourism, recreation and leisure development within the defined settlement boundaries of Lydney, Cinderford, Coleford and Newent will be permitted where they meet the requirements of the Plan with respect to the form, function and impact of the proposed built development, and are of a scale and nature which is well related to the size and character of the town in which they are to be located.

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- 4.17 Within the settlement boundaries of the four towns it is anticipated that most potential tourism, recreation and leisure development can be assessed within the same policy framework as other forms of development, for example housing or commercial businesses. Policy (R)FBE.1 emphasises this approach, as that policy is concerned with regulating the impact of a proposed development upon its surroundings, its design and the way in which it will function. Other policies of the Plan will also be relevant.
- 4.18 The scale of possible developments can vary greatly, from small guest houses which are largely indistinguishable from adjoining dwellings, to hotels, sports centres, conference centres or visitor attractions, which may give rise to large numbers of visitors. The scale of a proposal is therefore a significant factor in assessing the acceptability of a development, in terms of the physical size of buildings and the numbers of visitors associated with the use. The above policy therefore provides that development should have regard to the scale which is appropriate for the settlement. The nature of the proposal is also relevant. It would not be appropriate to introduce a type of use which would be fundamentally alien to the existing character of a settlement.
- 4.19 The above policy provides a framework for assessing proposals. It is expected that most forms of development within the four towns will be capable of meeting the policy requirements, including hotels, leisure facilities and visitor attractions, and that the industry will continue to develop and contribute to the economy of the District.

Tourism Recreation and Leisure Development in Villages and in the Countryside

(R)FTRL.2

Proposals for tourism, recreational and leisure development in villages and in the countryside will be permitted where they meet the following requirements:

- 1. Where the proposed location is outside any Defined Settlement Boundary, and concerns development other than the re-use of a rural building in accordance with Policy (R)FBE.6, the location proposed must be essential either to the effective operation of the proposal or to the future viability of an existing farm business, and there must be no reasonably suitable alternative site or premises available within any Defined Settlement Boundary**
- 2. The scale, nature and design of the proposal is consistent with the character and visual amenity of the area**
- 3. There would be no unacceptable impacts arising from additional visitor numbers, including impacts upon the natural environment**
- 4. The potential for using existing buildings to accommodate the uses proposed is fully utilised before new build is proposed**
- 5. In the case of visitor accommodation the proposal is for holiday uses and not as permanent or principal places of residence.**

In all cases proposals must provide for minimising the energy, water and waste demands and impacts arising from the development.

Where it appears that the proposal does not conform to policy (R)F.Strategy 2 then development will not be permitted.

- 4.20 The principal visitor asset of the District is the attraction offered by the high quality natural environment, and its undeveloped, tranquil and uncommercialised nature. A significant number of visitor attractions and recreation and leisure facilities in the District are related to the display and interpretation of the physical, natural or historic heritage of the area, or the use of open space, and have a location in villages or in the countryside. Examples are the former iron and coal mines, wildlife centres, historic buildings and farm based enterprises. Much of the visitor accommodation is similarly in a countryside location, particularly camping and caravan sites, self-catering complexes and farm based accommodation.

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- 4.21 Development within Defined Settlement Boundaries can make efficient use of existing infrastructure and support existing services, and contribute to their improvement, whilst avoiding intrusion into the open countryside. It is preferred that tourism, leisure and recreation development be located in Defined Settlement Boundaries. Some such developments nevertheless depend upon a location in smaller settlements without Defined Settlement Boundaries, or in the countryside, in order to operate effectively. In addition, diversification into tourism, recreation and leisure development may be vital to the continuing viability of farm businesses in the countryside. It is usually preferable for such farm diversification to re-use good quality existing buildings and put them to a new use. But new buildings for this purpose, either to replace existing buildings or to accommodate the expansion of enterprises, may also be acceptable provided that they satisfy sustainable development objectives and are of a design and scale appropriate to their rural surroundings.
- 4.22 The policy stresses the issues of scale, nature and design as being prime considerations in determining the acceptability of proposals in a village or a countryside location. Most new developments will be expected to be small in scale, consistent with existing provision, and will have relatively little impact on their surroundings. However, the lack of infrastructure in some villages and in the countryside, together with the need to protect the environment, gives rise to the need to assess the extent to which development will be environmentally sustainable in terms of the use of energy and water and the minimisation of waste.
- 4.23 Larger scale proposals pose more difficult issues with respect to environmental sustainability. If tourism together with recreational and leisure facilities are to increase in the District, it is inevitable that countryside and village locations will be proposed for their development. An environmental assessment will be requested in appropriate cases. The environmental assessment should contain forecasts of travel movements associated with the development, and the measures proposed to minimise use of the private car, for example by providing for bus and rail travel where possible. However, development proposals must provide for the minimisation of car use.
- 4.24 In 1999 over 90% of visitors to the District came by car and it is anticipated that private car access will continue to predominate. To offset any environmental debits associated with private car movements or other aspects of the proposed development in rural areas the environmental assessment must indicate the extent to which offsetting measures can be incorporated into the proposal. Such measures may include the design, orientation and energy strategy for the use which maximises energy conservation, the minimisation of the use of natural resources in the design and materials used for construction, and a waste strategy which minimises environmental impacts, and proposals which conserve or enhance the natural or man-made environment.
- 4.25 Environmental impact assessments will be requested where they can be required under the relevant regulations and proposals must meet the requirements of policy (R)F.Strategy 2. Where it appears that a reasonable balance has been achieved in terms of sustainable development within the terms of that policy then planning permission may be given notwithstanding that the location in itself does not minimise travel needs or maximise use of existing infrastructure.
- 4.26 The above policy is intended to enable the continued development of tourism, recreation and leisure in the countryside and in villages, subject to minimising environmental impacts. In assessing proposals for development, the potential cumulative effect of a number of proposals in the same area will be considered. In this context other Plan policies are also relevant, including (R)FNE.1 and (R)FT.2.

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Golf Courses and Driving Ranges

(R)FTRL.3

~~Proposals for the development of golf courses and golf driving will be permitted only where there is a satisfactory layout and design in respect of the landscape and surroundings. The following elements will be material to assessing such proposals:~~

- ~~1. The proposed layout of fairways, tees and greens~~
- ~~2. The location and a block layout plan of any ancillary buildings and their uses~~
- ~~3. Vehicle access points and parking areas~~
- ~~4. Strategic landscaping proposals~~
- ~~5. Information about existing wildlife features and proposals for their protection and enhancement~~
- ~~6. The existing and proposed position of all public rights of way within and adjoining the site~~
- ~~7. The position, height and illumination power of floodlighting~~
- ~~8. The proposed source of the water supply for the development.~~

~~Where possible existing buildings should be used for proposed ancillary golf facilities. New buildings which should be for ancillary uses only will be permitted only when any buildings existing on the site have been made use of or have shown to be unsuitable for the purpose. Such proposals will be treated on their merits having regard to other policies of the Plan.~~

~~Proposals for golf courses and driving ranges within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be evaluated against the priority accorded to the protection of the landscape and the need to preserve the natural beauty of the area.~~

~~4.27 Large scale developments such as golf courses will need careful evaluation against the relevant criteria of this policy and policy (R)FTRL.2, and in the case of proposals within the AONBs, also policy (R)FNE.4. In addition there will always be a concern that such development should not lead to the permanent loss of good quality agricultural land, as once a development is in place it is very unlikely that the land will ever be returned to agriculture.~~

~~4.28 Other aspects of concern relate to the possible impact on the landscape and disturbance to amenity arising from any floodlighting proposals, which may prove to be an intrusive element in the open countryside. Development proposals which affect the use of public rights of way must make satisfactory provision in accordance with appropriate guidelines for their retention or diversion and for the safety of users of the rights of way. It will be a material consideration to assess the effect of the proposal upon water resources, as golf courses can be very large users of water, and the use of private supplies will be encouraged. Golf courses often give rise to the demand for additional buildings. The principle should be to use any existing buildings where possible. Other forms of development proposed in association with golf courses, for example holiday accommodation, will be considered against the relevant Policies of the Plan.~~

~~4.29 The above policy primarily relates to the details of golf course development. This is necessary because of the extensive nature of the use and the potential therefore for a significant landscape impact. In all cases proposals for golf course and golf driving ranges will be assessed initially against the requirements of (R)FTRL.2 with respect to the suitability of the location proposed, the impact of the development upon its surroundings, and the sustainable nature of the development.~~

Provision of Recreational Access

(R)FTRL.4

The District Council will provide and improve recreational access to the countryside, and pedestrian and cycle routes between settlements. Where appropriate contributions will be sought from development proposals towards such routes.

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- 4.30 The District Council in recent years has provided a network of multi purpose cycling and walking links which provide for recreational access to the countryside, and provide links which can be used for a variety of purposes between settlements. In addition the Cinderford Linear Park has been completed, providing recreation and access links to the Forest and other locations. The Plan provides for extensions to the Linear Park. The Council intends to provide for further off-road or other safe routes between communities, and to ensure that new developments provide links to any adjoining footpaths in their vicinity, and to services and facilities in the locality. There may be further opportunities to provide cycle and pedestrian links between communities, including using old railway lines and Forest tracks, provided the use of any route has no unacceptable environmental impact on surrounding areas. In some instances such provision will enable pedestrian access and reduce the need to travel by car.

Protection of Rights of Way

(R)FTRL.5

Development proposals which adversely affect existing rights of way will not be permitted except where satisfactory provision is made for their retention or diversion.

- ~~4.31 The rights of way network is an invaluable asset for informal open-air recreation, providing extensive opportunities for access to the wider countryside. There is a government requirement to further develop footpath networks and routes other than roads and as part of this the existing network must be protected. Research by the Countryside Agency has shown that informal enjoyment of the countryside is by far the most popular form of recreation undertaken by the population at large. Similar research among visitors to the District has discovered that half of those questioned gave walking/rambling as their principal activity during their stay.~~
- ~~4.32 The District is fortunate in having an extensive network of rights of way. In addition the permissive 'right to roam' in the very extensive Forest Enterprise woodlands adds very greatly to countryside access opportunities. Because of the importance of rights of way to the local population, and to the tourism industry, the District Council will work towards maintaining and improving the network throughout the District and will support the completion of the western part of the Severn Way.~~
- ~~4.33 The principal responsibility for rights of way lies with Gloucestershire County Council, as Highway Authority. The District Council will co-operate fully with the County Council in the implementation of the County strategy for public rights of way in Gloucestershire. Diversions which are the responsibility of both the County and the District Councils must always be satisfactory in terms of both amenity and utility, as in the past some strictly functional diversions have not retained the character of the original route.~~

Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal

(R)FTRL.6

The District Council will safeguard the historic line of the former Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal and its associated works, buildings, features or operational land from development which could prevent restoration. Where the original line is already obstructed by permanent structures or cannot be followed for another reason an alternative route will be agreed and subsequently safeguarded.

- 4.34 Part of the former Herefordshire and Gloucestershire canal lies within the District. It is the long term aim of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust to restore the entire length of the canal between the River Severn and Hereford, a distance of 34 miles. Considerable effort has already resulted in the restoration of several sections of the canal and it is important that the ultimate reinstatement is not compromised by development. The Plan will therefore safeguard the historic line of the Canal where it is not already obstructed by permanent structures. Where so obstructed, the Council will safeguard any agreed diversion routes. The Plan will therefore safeguard the route of the canal and shall seek to ensure its restoration as part of any adjacent development. Where appropriate, the District Council may view favourably development that enables a significant contribution to the restoration of the canal. Where the canal has been restored, it offers considerable recreational opportunities and, when the

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restoration of this important water feature is complete, tourism, economic, and recreation benefits will accrue to the area. The Council will seek to ensure that the canal restoration does not have an adverse impact on water resources through the production of a management structure, if required, or on existing features of wildlife interest, and will encourage habitat enhancement wherever possible to provide nature conservation benefits. The Council supports the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust in their endeavours to restore the Canal to a fully navigable waterway.

Dean Forest Railway

- 4.35 The Dean Forest Railway has developed as a tourist attraction, operating a variety of locomotives and rolling stock between Lydney and Whitecroft, and will shortly extend the operating line to Parkend. It provides mainline connections at Lydney to the Cardiff-Birmingham rail route. It has the potential to grow as a visitor attraction in its own right, as well as providing passenger services and connections.
- 4.36 The operation of this important transport route for passengers, freight and tourism will be safeguarded by policy (R)FT.5 from development which would limit its effectiveness, and support is given to the increased use of this rail line for passenger, tourism and freight purposes.

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Town Centres

Introduction

- 5.1 Town centres perform a vital function. They are major sources of employment, the principal location for many of the services and facilities required by the population, and are the focus of transport routes which provide maximum local accessibility to jobs and services. The vitality and viability of town centres is an indicator of the performance of the local economy, and contributes significantly to the quality of life of the District.
- 5.2 The principal land use in town centres is shopping. Policies for town centres must give primacy to the continuation of this use and also provide opportunities for further such development. There must be provision also for the wide range of other uses found in town centres, including professional and public services, food, leisure and entertainment. Small towns such as those in the Forest of Dean also tend to have a residential component. It is the very mixture of land uses which help to generate the vitality of town centres, although shopping remains the principal attractor.
- 5.3 Existing shopping provision in the District is largely concentrated within the four principal towns of Lydney, Cinderford, Coleford and Newent. The three towns of the south Forest are located quite close to each other and have similar catchment populations. Unlike many rural areas therefore, there is no single dominant shopping centre in the District. There is competition between the three centres for shopping, and each provides a similar range of services.
- 5.4 The above features mean that there are limitations on the potential for further shopping development because of the limited catchment population and localised competition. This limitation is further emphasised by the existence nearby of other larger centres, particularly Gloucester and Cheltenham (sub-regional shopping centres) and towns such as Monmouth and Chepstow, all of which offer a wider range of services.
- 5.5 In the north of the District the town of Newent has a small and rural catchment population which limits the range of local services provided in the town centre. Other competing and larger centres are also accessible, including Gloucester, Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye.
- 5.6 One effect of the above characteristics is that a high level of both convenience and comparison goods expenditure arising within the District is diverted to larger centres outside the District. This has had the effect of limiting the potential for retail investment and expansion in the town centres of the District. Conversely there is also the opportunity for new retail development, particularly convenience goods operators, to re-capture a proportion of the expenditure currently diverted outside the District.
- 5.7 PPG 6 advises that town centre “health checks” should be carried out to establish an understanding of the functioning of centres, and to provide the basis for formulating policies and proposals in Local Plans. A health check study was carried out in 1999 for the four towns in the District. The results of that study form the basis for town centre policies in the Plan.
- 5.8 The town centre health checks study identified a significant growth in convenience and comparison goods expenditure over the Plan period to 2011 (around £10 million for convenience spending and £108 million for comparison goods). This is in line with national trends. Lydney will have the highest increase, because of anticipated population growth, and Newent the lowest as the catchment population will not grow significantly.
- 5.9 The study suggests there is limited interest by national and regional retail operators in developing new comparison goods floorspace in the District, primarily because of the relatively small catchment

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populations of the four towns. However, national and regional convenience goods retailers have demonstrated their interest in investing (for example Tesco, Co-op, Lidl), together with local developers. The Plan must enable further opportunities for such investment to be available. The study notes that while there are very high expenditure outflows for most categories of comparison goods, the retention rate for hardware/DIY goods is much higher. It suggests that large out of centre stores in these categories of goods would have an adverse impact on the town centres.

- 5.10 All four town centres have high outflows of convenience expenditure which are lost to competing centres outside the District. This does offer the potential for new convenience floorspace to be established which could retain higher levels of expenditure locally and add to the vitality and viability of the town centres.
- 5.11 The study concludes that Coleford and Newent are in a good state of health overall, measured in terms of the mixture of uses, the levels of activity and confidence in the future. Cinderford and Lydney are considered to be in a neutral stage of health, with local factors inhibiting the ability of the towns to perform well, including the quality of the shopping environment and the vulnerability to competition from other centres.
- 5.12 Further details of the performance of each of the town centres are provided in the respective chapters of the Plan dealing with the four towns (Part Two).

Issues

- 5.13 Government policy strongly emphasises the important role that town centres play in providing for the quality of life of residents, through providing a range of services and facilities in locations accessible to the widest number of people, and thereby also promoting social inclusion. Vital and viable town centres contribute to the local economy, and can provide a stimulating and vibrant environment. The Plan strategy emphasises the important role of town centres in assisting the social and economic revitalisation of the District.
- 5.14 Shopping is one of the principal uses which can contribute to achieving the above objectives. It is a major attractor of trips to town centres, and thereby stimulates other services, businesses and facilities to become established. The combination and concentration of these activities within a confined location provides the basis for a vital town centre. The town centre policies of the Local Plan therefore must provide for not only retailing uses but also enable a wide range of related activities to become established.
- 5.15 The trend towards larger retail units, for convenience goods particularly, can place difficult demands on town centres, which may not have the potential to provide sites of an appropriate scale. An important issue for the Plan will be to ensure that those town centre sites which exist, and have a realistic potential to be developed within the Plan period, are protected for primarily retail uses. This will also enable the Plan to manage more effectively any pressures for development outside the town centre. The Plan will adopt the sequential test provided for in PPG 6 to ensure that new retail development is directed towards town centre sites in the first instance, and that where alternative sites may be considered that their development is otherwise acceptable.
- 5.16 There is a strong inter-relationship between the shopping and other policies of the Plan. For town centres to operate effectively there is a need to provide not only for retail development but also for an attractive built environment, for the safety and amenity of pedestrians, for a diverse range of uses, and for accessibility by a choice of means of transport. The policies of the Plan acknowledge this relationship. At the more detailed level the Plan chapters dealing with the four towns specifically identify proposals which draw together these features in relation to the needs and opportunities of each.
- 5.17 For an extended period there has been little new retail or commercial development in any of the four towns. In more recent times however there has been increased activity, with developments underway or completed in Coleford and Cinderford, and other proposals committed or awaiting consent in Newent

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and Lydney. These have been primarily for convenience shopping, in town centre locations. The health checks study indicates that there is potential in each of the towns to retain higher levels of convenience expenditure than currently prevails. The Plan therefore should provide for development opportunities where practicable in each centre.

- 5.18 The health checks study indicates that there is a level of competition between the three towns of the south Forest, but that currently no single town dominates. Of the three however, Cinderford is the most vulnerable to the loss of trade to the other centres. The Plan should have regard to maintaining the broad balance between the three towns. It would not be in the interests of the overall strategy to support new shopping development of such a scale in any one centre in the south Forest that would lead to a significant loss of vitality and viability in either of the other centres.
- 5.19 The continuing decline of local shops, in neighbourhoods or in villages, is a matter for concern with respect to the reduced opportunity for those with least mobility, and the associated increase in car-borne trips. There is a need for Plan policies to support such local provision generally, and also to seek to provide for such facilities in new housing development where the scale and location of such development indicate that local services should be provided.
- 5.20 The Council has formed, or is working with, town centre Partnerships in each of the four towns. The Partnerships comprise a broad range of interests. The health checks study and the Plan policies will be used to develop an agreed strategy and action plan for each centre. The first of these is already in place, for Coleford. A programme has been drawn up to develop agreed strategies for the other three towns.

Strategic Framework

- 5.21 The Plan will identify, protect and promote sites in town centres to accommodate new retail and service development. Sites will be identified as appropriate for retail use, or for mixed development. An important objective will be to accommodate additional retail development to reduce the current high levels of expenditure diverted outside the District to competing centres.
- 5.22 The Plan strategy identifies the need to ensure the vitality and viability of town centres, in order to contribute to the quality of life of the District. A further important requirement is that town centres should contribute substantially to the additional jobs to be provided in the District over the Plan period. The strategy provides that retail development should be directed towards the town centres, to reinforce the role and functioning of those centres.
- 5.23 The prevailing competition between the three similar sized centres in the south Forest means that none is predominant. The Plan will seek to strike a balance between the three towns of Lydney, Cinderford and Coleford so that no town centre should be severely disadvantaged in its functioning with respect to the others. Within this approach however, it is recognised that Lydney is likely to grow somewhat faster than Cinderford or Coleford due to the strategic concentration of development proposed. In particular care will be exercised that Cinderford town centre should not be unduly disadvantaged, as it is the most vulnerable of the south Forest towns.
- 5.24 The strategy will emphasise the continuing need to improve the environment of all the four town centres as an essential component of local strategies to promote vitality and viability. This will require investment in the physical environment, management of movement to provide for improved pedestrian amenity, as well as promoting private sector investment and refurbishment. The Council will work with town Partnerships to achieve these objectives.
- 5.25 The trend towards a reduction of local (neighbourhood) facilities is well established. The Plan strategy is unlikely to be able to directly affect this trend. However, policies will enable local facilities to establish or develop further, will ensure that large developments are adequately provided with local services, and will provide for access to local facilities by a choice of mode of transport.

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Objectives

1. To promote the viability and vitality of town centres whilst ensuring the preservation and enhancement of their character and environment
2. To identify and protect for primarily retail use those town centre sites which offer realistic development potential over the Plan period
3. To provide opportunities for non shopping development in town centres which will add to the diversity of attractions
4. To ensure that development in any one of the three south Forest towns does not have an unduly detrimental effect upon any other
5. To support and provide for accessible local shopping opportunities.

Policies and Proposals

Town Shopping Development in Defined Town Centres

Policy (R)FS.1

Class A1 shopping development will be permitted in defined town centres provided that it will not:

1. **Cause harm to the Development Plan strategy**
2. **Adversely affect the vitality and viability of town centres when considered with any other recent or proposed development**
3. **Result in a significant increase in the length and number of car-based trips**
4. **Create an unacceptably adverse environmental or traffic impact**
5. **Result in an unacceptable limitation in the range and quality of allocated sites for other uses.**

In all cases development must provide for safe and convenient access by a choice of modes of transport, including public transport, cycling and walking.

Town Shopping Development Outside Defined Town Centres

Policy (R)FS.2

Class A1 shopping development will be permitted outside defined town centres only where there is a proven need for the development and there are no suitable alternative town centre sites or, in the absence of suitable town centre sites, suitable edge-of-centre sites, and provided it will not:

1. **Cause harm to the Development Plan strategy**
2. **Adversely affect the vitality and viability of town centres when considered with any other recent or proposed development**
3. **Result in a significant increase in the length and number of car-based trips**
4. **Create an unacceptably adverse environmental or traffic impact**
5. **Result in an unacceptable limitation in the range and quality of allocated sites for other uses.**

In all cases development must provide for safe and convenient access by a choice of modes of transport, including public transport, cycling and walking.

- 5.26 The above policy, (R)FS.1 supports the further development of shopping within town centres, as a means of continuing their essential role as accessible locations for retail, commerce and related activities. The chapters of the Plan dealing with the four towns will make provision for sites for

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development, together with a related series of proposals to enhance the vitality of the town centres.

- 5.27 Where shopping proposals come forward for locations not in town centres policy (R)FS.2 provides criteria to assess their acceptability. Only where there is a proven need for a development and there are no suitable town centre locations will such proposals be considered for approval, and only then after establishing that no suitable edge of town centre sites are available. Where these conditions exist, it will still be relevant to consider the impact of the proposal in terms of the remaining policy criteria.
- 5.28 The health checks study indicates that there is sufficient spending capacity within the catchment areas of each of the four towns to support additional retail floorspace. There is in addition evidence to suggest that the Forest towns lose trade to other surrounding centres and could therefore capture a proportion of this lost trade through the development of their centres. There have been some recent developments of significant new convenience shopping in the district and there is a realistic expectation that further such development will take place.
- 5.29 The above study suggests that there is relatively less potential for further comparison goods floorspace to be developed, largely because of the small size of the catchment populations. The study particularly notes that the four town centres perform relatively strongly in providing for hardware and DIY goods. It suggests that proposals for larger out of centre stores providing such goods would be likely to be detrimental to the vitality and viability of the town centres. In considering any such proposals against policies (R)FS.1 and (R)FS.2 the Council will have particular regard to the findings of the health checks study in this respect, and the potential impact of such a development on the vitality and viability of the respective town centres.
- 5.30 The health checks study noted that there is some movement of shopping expenditure between the catchment areas of the town centres. At present this does not significantly detract from the functioning of any of the centres, although Cinderford tends to suffer the greater loss of trade. The overall strategy of the Plan is to promote the effective functioning of each of the town centres. It would be harmful to this strategy if any one of the town centres were to suffer a substantial loss of trade, to the extent that its vitality and viability would be brought into question. The provisions of the above policies identify this requirement to assess the impact of shopping proposals in any south Forest town upon the functioning of the others, though it is not considered that the scale of additional opportunities identified or likely to be accommodated within the defined centres of the towns is such as to be to the detriment of the towns concerned.

Mixed Uses in Town Centres

(R)FS.3

~~The use of upper floors in town centres for commercial, retail and residential uses will be permitted. Proposals incorporating non-retail (Class A1) uses at ground floor level will be permitted where they comply with Policy (R)FS.4.~~

- ~~5.31 The use of upper floors is likely to increase the range and choice of services available to users of the town centre. It is also beneficial to the urban fabric in assisting with the maintenance and improvement of buildings. Such development therefore is likely to contribute to the viability and vitality of town centres. Introducing residential uses in town centres will also tend towards increasing security.~~
- ~~5.32 In applying the above policy it is clear that consideration must also be given to other Plan policies, such as those relating to the built environment, to ensure an acceptable form of development. However, the Plan can assist and encourage the use of town centre buildings, for example by having regard to parking policies which offer discretion to reduce the requirement for on-site parking or enable suitable provision elsewhere. The Council also provides grants for building repair and residential refurbishment, and will work with individuals and town centre Partnerships to focus activity on town centre properties to assist in implementing the above policy. Environmental improvement schemes in the town centres will also assist in supporting business confidence and stimulating investment. Mixed use schemes which incorporate non-retail uses at ground floor level must have regard to the need to maintain the vitality and continuity of~~

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the principal shopping frontages.

Primary and Secondary Retail Frontages

(R)FS.4

Within the primary shopping frontages defined on the Plan Inset maps, proposals for a change of use on ground floors from retail (Class A1) will only be permitted where the proposal does not create a continuous frontage of two or more non A1 uses. An exception may be considered where the proposal makes a positive contribution towards the vitality and viability of the town centre and would not adversely affect the retailing function.

Outside the primary shopping frontages, all other shopping frontages within the town centre boundary will be defined as secondary shopping frontages. Within secondary shopping frontages, a change of use of from retail (Class A1), financial and professional services (Class A2), or food and drink (Class A3) uses will only be permitted where the proposed use would be complementary to the retail function of the town centre and would not affect the overall continuity of A1, A2 and A3 uses.

Shop Fronts

(R)FS.5

Proposals for the alteration or replacement of shop fronts will be permitted where they meet the following requirements:

- 1. The proposed design and materials are compatible with the architectural style and materials of the building and surrounding buildings**
- 2. The proposal retains those elements of an existing shop front which contribute to the character or appearance of the building and the area, particularly in Conservation Areas.**

- 5.33 Primary shopping frontages have been defined for each of the town centres within the District. They represent the retail core of each centre and are generally those frontages that are most convenient for shoppers. In small and historic centres such as the towns of the Forest of Dean it is unlikely that the primary frontages will be fully continuous with A1 uses. While A1 uses will predominate, other uses such as hotels, public houses or professional offices will occur. Within these frontages the Council will aim to retain the dominance of retail uses together with appropriate non A1 uses so as to ensure the continuation of a viable shopping area, while preventing localised concentrations of non shopping uses such as restaurants, take away outlets, banks and estate agents. Limited exceptions to the general presumption against the loss of retail uses may be permitted for those service uses that complement the retail function and particularly for those that add vitality to the town centre.
- 5.34 Outside the primary frontages are secondary frontages where retail uses are intermixed with a wide variety of other commercial and non commercial uses. Secondary frontages are important elements of town centres in that they provide locations for many other town centre functions, including professional offices, prepared food, leisure businesses and specialist retailing. Within these secondary frontages the Council considers that other commercial and non commercial uses can make a positive contribution to the vitality of the town. A range of uses will therefore be considered acceptable. These include residential uses on upper floors and exceptionally on ground floors provided that the overall continuity of the frontage is not lost.
- 5.35 The health checks study provides the basis for determining the frontages which are identified on the Plan Inset Maps.
- 5.36 A related issue is that the appearance and function of retail frontages is strongly influenced by the presence of shop fronts, which undoubtedly provide interest and variety, and add to the attraction of town centres. The Plan must enable changes to take place to shop fronts to accommodate the needs of businesses. However, it will also be appropriate to ensure that proposals have regard to their

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surroundings in terms of design and materials, and respect the existing features and qualities of buildings and their surroundings. The town centres of Coleford and Newent are both Conservation Areas, and the historic built environment undoubtedly adds to the attractiveness of these centres for shoppers. Changes to shop fronts in these two town centres will need to take particular care to respect their historic character.

- 5.37 The Council has prepared supplementary design guidance on shop fronts which will be placed on deposit with the Plan.

Local Shopping Provision

(R)FS. 6

Within any of the defined settlement boundaries shown on the Proposals Map the development of shops and community facilities designed primarily to provide for neighbourhoods or villages will be permitted where the amenity of surrounding residents is not impaired and safe and convenient access and parking can be provided.

- 5.38 In recent years there has been a large decline in the number of stores and post offices in villages and in neighbourhoods within towns. Such services, though small in scale, are of great value to a community, particularly to older and less mobile people. Proposals for the dual use of community facilities to provide local shopping, for example Post Offices, will be supported by the above policy.
- 5.39 The above policy is designed to support such local services. Where appropriate the Plan will seek to secure local shops in proportion to the needs of the development concerned as part of large scale housing land allocations.

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Built Environment

Introduction

- 6.1 The Forest of Dean has a rich heritage and variety of vernacular architecture, with many towns and villages retaining clear evidence of their historic and industrial past. There is also a significant archaeological legacy in the District related to the complex development of the area, particularly the industrial heritage of the southern part of the District.
- 6.2 The Council has prepared (and has adopted as supplementary planning guidance) a Residential Design Guide. The Guide provides a general character description of the District which distinguishes the varying built environment of the Forest of Dean. The six areas identified comprise the Forest Core, the Commons (bordering the Wye Valley), the Wye Valley itself, the Severn Vale, the Northern Farmlands, and May Hill. The Guide provides helpful information on the typical settlement patterns to be found in these six areas, together with a description of the prevailing geology, building materials and topography. These factors, taken together, are a major influence upon the character of settlements.
- 6.3 The Forest Core character area displays a singular pattern of settlements, referred to as the Forest Ring, which is a virtually continuous belt of development encircling the boundary of the ancient Royal Forest. The history of the Forest Ring is related to the exploitation of the coal and mineral outcrops which occur on the edge of the Forest. The settlement form shows a haphazard relationship of buildings and land uses related to the sporadic exploitation of the minerals, together with a history of encroachment and squatting within the old Forest boundary.
- 6.4 The northern part of the District displays very different characteristics, being an open and rolling high quality agricultural landscape, with a typical rural settlement pattern of small and generally compact villages.
- 6.5 The variety of settlement character in the District is more fully described in the Residential Design Guide. It will always be important for development proposals to have regard to local character in the design of both individual buildings and groups of buildings in order to reflect a sense of place and local identity. Reference to the Design Guide will assist in achieving this objective. Local character results not only from the architectural features of individual buildings, but also from overall form and grouping, including open spaces and the public domain. In each settlement the relationship between groups of buildings and open spaces contribute to its own character, and to its setting in the landscape.

Issues

- 6.6 Public consultation at the time of preparing the existing adopted Plan revealed a strong concern over the quality of new development. There was clear evidence of a public desire to ensure that new buildings should be in harmony with existing development and their surroundings in terms of density, massing and the details of design and materials. The public response to the successive stages of the Local Plan Review has maintained this concern to ensure a high standard and quality of built environment.
- 6.7 The revised PPG1: General Policy and Principles (1997) stresses that new buildings and their curtilages can have a significant effect on the character and quality of an area, and that both urban design and the design of individual buildings are material considerations in assessing development proposals. PPG1 advises Local Planning Authorities to reject poor designs, particularly where such decisions are supported by clear Plan policies or supplementary design guidance which has been subject to public consultation and formally adopted. PPG1 notes that it is proper to reinforce local distinctiveness.
- 6.8 The policies of the previous Local Plan have proved effective in regulating new development with respect to issues such as infill development and the protection of open spaces and settlement form.

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There remained a concern over design however, which led the Council to prepare the Residential Design Guide in 1999.

- 6.9 An issue for the Plan is to ensure that the principles of the Design Guide are incorporated into new development proposals with the aim of securing a high standard and quality of building which is in sympathy with local character and identity. The Design Guide was placed on deposit with the Local Plan and comprises supplementary planning guidance with respect to design issues associated with new development proposals.
- 6.10 A further issue for the Plan is to provide proper protection for existing open spaces within settlements and to ensure new development adequately provides for play space and amenity space. Open spaces undoubtedly make a significant contribution to settlement form and character, and to the quality of life and amenity of residents.
- 6.11 Where possible development should be directed to vacant or under-used land and buildings in preference to the use of greenfield sites. Such an approach not only protects a non-renewable resource but can also bring direct benefits to the built environment through re-investment and improvements to land and buildings which have suffered from neglect or dereliction. The Local Plan will encourage such an approach, specifically through policy (R)F.Strategy 3, and related Plan policies.
- 6.12 The Local Plan must have regard to the principles of sustainable development with respect to new building. There is the opportunity at the design stage to incorporate energy efficiency features into new development which can reduce the consumption of fossil fuels, and this will be encouraged. There is also the opportunity to incorporate design measures for the efficient use of water, for example the collection of roof water for non-potable purposes such as toilet flushing. Other Plan policies will consider related sustainability issues, such as location, density, choice of modes of access and the impacts of development upon natural resources including landscape, wildlife and water.

Strategic Framework

- 6.13 The Plan sets out the importance of good design, both in terms of individual buildings and a wider view of urban design. This approach will be supported by supplementary planning guidance in the form of the Residential Design Guide. The Plan policies will also emphasise the importance of retaining the existing qualities of settlement form, character and setting. The importance of considering energy conservation as part of design will also be stressed, together with the need to minimise the impact of the development upon its surroundings in terms of mitigation measures to deal with for example surface water disposal and wastes. The need for properly planned infrastructure is an integral element of new development.
- 6.14 Open areas also are an important feature of urban design, and the Plan will protect existing important open spaces as well as seeking to secure both play and amenity space as an integral part of new development. Supplementary planning guidance on open space provision will be prepared.
- 6.15 Existing buildings provide an important opportunity for re-use to accommodate new development. Proposals for building re-use frequently came forward within settlements. They will be assessed against the policies in the Plan, particularly with respect to the built environment and the strategy for re-using land and buildings where possible. In the open countryside the Plan will seek to accommodate new uses within existing buildings wherever possible, in order to reduce the need for new building in the countryside.

Objectives

1. To conserve and enhance the physical environment and character of settlements
2. To ensure a high standard of layout and design in new development
3. To promote the re-use of vacant or under-used land and buildings

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4. To promote energy conservation in new building and the minimisation of environmental impacts arising from development
5. To ensure new development makes best use of existing infrastructure.

Policies and Proposals

Design of Development

(R)FBE.1

The design and layout of new development whilst making the best use of available land, will be required to be compatible with its surroundings with respect to the character, building design, materials, scale, density and mass of existing development and the character of the surrounding landscape and land uses. Proposals should:

1. Safeguard the amenities of adjoining properties and of the general location
2. Provide adequate access, parking, manoeuvring and amenity space
3. Provide convenient, safe and attractive access for pedestrians and cyclists, and where appropriate for public transport
4. Provide or safeguard boundary walls, fences and hedges which complement the existing character of the area
5. Retain any features of the development site which appear worthy of conservation
6. Minimise the impact of lighting upon the surrounding area.

Where development proposes the alteration or extension of existing buildings the proposal should, in addition to the above respect the scale, style character and finishes of the original building using where appropriate matching and / or complementary materials.

Locally Distinctive Areas

(R)FBE.2

Development within Locally Distinctive Areas will be carefully controlled to ensure that it complements its surroundings and is not detrimental to their distinctive open character. In addition to compliance with (R)FBE.1, proposals for development will be considered against the following criteria:

1. Proposals for all types of development will be required to complement the established and settled character of the area as identified in the character appraisals contained within each relevant settlement chapter.
2. Development will be resisted where gaps in existing frontages form important features within the settlement and/or allow attractive views to be gained of features beyond the site.

The replacement of unsubstantial or derelict buildings of little or no architectural merit, or the replacement of inappropriate uses may be permitted subject to other Plan policies. However it is not intended to favour the development of sites which are superficially untidy.

- 6.16 Ensuring quality in new development starts from a considered evaluation of the local characteristics which give a sense of place and identity. The Council's Design Guide identifies six areas of the District with differing characteristics of geology, topography and settlement forms. In addition it identifies four broad settlement forms. An appreciation of these characteristics at the outset will assist in ensuring that development proposals are compatible with (though they need not copy the appearance of) their surroundings.
- 6.17 Thereafter an evaluation of the site setting and its characteristics will further assist in preparing a development concept which pays regard to the criteria set out in the above policy.

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- 6.18 The criteria in Policy (R)FBE.1 are those which are standard planning considerations in assessing development proposals. Applicants for planning consent should give consideration to the above criteria and to the Council's Design Guide in preparing proposals. Reference to the County Council's publication, "Highway Requirements for Development should also be made."
- 6.19 Some areas of certain settlements possess an open and sporadic character as a result of their unplanned development at the Forest Fringe. Typically they contain a mix of dwellings, areas of Forest Waste or plantation, enclosed paddocks, tracks and verges. These features are important to the overall landscape and pattern of development in the Forest of Dean District. All development in these areas will therefore be carefully controlled to ensure that it complements its surroundings, or results in improvements to the built environment or the amenity of the area. Such improvements might include the replacement of unsubstantial or derelict buildings of little or no architectural merit, or the replacement of inappropriate uses. However, it is not intended to favour the development of sites which are only superficially untidy.

Infrastructure Provision

(R)FBE.3

Where there are deficiencies in existing infrastructure which would be further exacerbated by new development, if new development created a shortfall in existing services or if existing services cannot cope with the additional development, proposals for development will be required to make satisfactory provision for the infrastructure required to enable the development to proceed. Such provision may include education and social infrastructure, power and water supply, water and sewage disposal, surface water disposal (utilising where practicable innovative methods of drainage such as Sustainable Urban Drainage), transport and movement and other essential services. In all cases, the contributions sought from a particular development must be related to the needs of that development and any identifiable shortfalls.

Where existing infrastructure has insufficient capacity or is otherwise inadequate to provide for the development then development will not be permitted unless:

- 1. Appropriate arrangements are made to provide sufficient capacity or remedy the deficiency; or**
- 2. The development is phased to match planned infrastructure provision.**

In all cases proposals must minimise the environmental impacts arising from the provision of infrastructure.

- 6.20 The Plan strategy provides in policy (R)F.Strategy 2 that development should be located so as to make best use of existing or planned infrastructure and services. The proposals in the Plan reinforce this strategy by concentrating development in the towns and larger villages, where there has been the largest investment in infrastructure, and where spare capacity exists or can be economically provided.
- 6.21 Satisfactory arrangements for essential infrastructure provision are a prerequisite for development to proceed. Where there is insufficient capacity or a deficiency in existing infrastructure then development is unlikely to be able to proceed unless the situation is redressed. Developments will therefore be required to provide any infrastructure which is necessary for the development concerned to proceed. Where there is adequate capacity, such contributions will not be necessary. Examples may be the need to reinforce a water supply system or remedy a highway deficiency, to provide additional educational facilities or to provide for additional healthcare. Planning permission may be conditional upon satisfactory arrangements being made to secure the necessary provision. There may need to be an agreement for the development to contribute to the costs of such provision, where the need being addressed arises directly from the impact of the development proposed. In order to manage water resources on a sustainable basis development will need to be located where adequate resources already exist or where new provision can be made without detriment to existing users or the natural

environment. The proliferation of small package treatment plants and septic tanks will be discouraged because of the risk of pollution of the water environment and the provision of first time rural sewerage (connection to main provision) will be encouraged.

- 6.22 It may be appropriate to phase a planning consent to match a planned timetable for infrastructure provision, for example the planned increase in the capacity of a water treatment works.
- 6.23 There is increasing awareness that infrastructure can be planned and provided to minimise environmental impacts. The provision of sustainable surface water drainage systems for example can help attenuate run off and avoid the need for engineering works to water courses. Drainage methods such as these will be required wherever they are practical. The objective in such cases would be to retain and improve the natural habitats of watercourses rather than alter them to accommodate increased surface water flows.

Energy Conservation

(R)FBE.4

The design and layout of new development will be encouraged to incorporate energy conservation measures by:

- 1. Utilising passive energy saving through the orientation of buildings and the size and positioning of windows and other openings**
- 2. Providing shelter belts where appropriate**
- 3. Providing for pedestrian, cycling and public transport use**
- 4. Utilising locally sourced materials where possible.**

- 6.24 The above policy encourages new development proposals to consider the issue of energy conservation at the design stage. In order to accord with the principles of sustainable development, new buildings should seek to achieve high levels of building energy efficiency. This may be achieved for example through orientation to permit solar access for as many buildings as the constraints of the site allow and for the main glazed facades to maximise useful solar gains and minimise heat loss. At the design stage of residential development the buildings may be orientated so that the main habitable rooms are located on the south side and staircases, bathrooms, and kitchens are located on the north side of buildings so houses benefit from solar gain. In addition new development should use as high a proportion of locally sourced (especially reused) materials as local availability allows. Much of the energy efficiency of new homes will be a result of the design, location and orientation of the dwellings concerned. These factors are within the scope of the Local Plan. Other important matters relating to the internal construction and standards of insulation for example are not directly in the scope of the Plan but will be addressed elsewhere. The following paragraph details some of the ways in which energy efficiency will be encouraged.
- 6.25 On the larger housing sites allocated in this Plan the Council will consult with the developer on the potential for incorporating additional energy conservation measures into the development, such as small-scale combined heat and power provision, or the use of alternatives such as solar, wind or water power.

Flood Risk and Development

~~(R)FBE.5~~

~~Proposals for development will not be permitted where the development would:~~

- ~~1. ——— Itself be at risk from flooding or increase the risk of flooding~~
- ~~2. ——— Increase the risk of flooding elsewhere~~
- ~~3. ——— Require protection from flooding~~
- ~~4. ——— Reduce the capacity of the flood plain~~
- ~~5. ——— Impede the flow of flood water~~
- ~~6. ——— Affect the integrity of tidal or fluvial defences~~
- ~~7. ——— Raise the water table~~
- ~~8. ——— Increase river channel instability~~
- ~~9. ——— Damage wildlife habitats~~
- ~~10. ——— Cause unacceptable silt deposition~~
- ~~11. ——— Prevent proper maintenance of a watercourse~~

~~Exceptions will be made only in cases and in locations where proposals are able to incorporate satisfactory measures to provide suitable protection, attenuation or mitigation with respect to the matters identified in this policy, and which are environmentally acceptable.~~

~~6.26 — Flood plains and areas of low lying land adjacent to watercourses provide storage and conveyance capacity to floodwater by flooding under certain conditions. Development can reduce the capacity of the flood plain, impede the flow of water and increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The development itself can also lead to increased surface water run off, which can exacerbate flooding and drainage problems beyond the floodplain. In addition to the above, all development within the floodplain must respect the often open nature of the landscape and should be designed and positioned accordingly.~~

~~6.27 — The Council will consult the Environment Agency about development proposals located in areas at risk of flooding, as identified on the Agency's indicative floodplain maps. In some areas development may be permitted though there will be others, for example the so called "functional floodplains" where little or no development will be able to take place. Proposals will be assessed against the likely risk from flooding, but also on their possible effect on other locations which may be susceptible to increases in run off for example. Within some areas, development which would result in or increase the risk of flooding may be permitted subject to certain conditions. The Council must be satisfied that development proposals that are permitted within flood risk areas incorporate mitigation measures which are themselves environmentally acceptable. Developers should have regard to PPG.25: Development and Flood Risk and the Environment Agency's 'Policy and Practice for the Protection of Flood Plains'. Developers will also be expected to meet appropriate costs, through Section 106 Legal Agreements, for providing any appropriate measures to mitigate the effects of water discharge, surface water drainage impact and providing long term management.~~

~~6.28 — Developers should always seek the advice and, when required, consent of the Environment Agency before any works are carried out around and affecting watercourses. It should be noted that the Environment Agency will require a minimum open maintenance strip alongside water courses for maintenance purposes. It will normally be a 9m strip in the case of a main river and a 5m strip for an ordinary watercourse, with a clear access route from the nearest public highway with gated openings of a minimum 4m wide. These may need to be of greater width where floodplain, wildlife habitat or conservation factors so require.~~

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Non Residential Re-Use of Buildings in the Countryside

(R)FBE.6

Proposals for the re-use of existing buildings in the countryside for industrial, commercial, tourism (including holiday accommodation), recreational or community uses will be permitted where:

- 1. The form, bulk and general design of the building is in keeping with its surroundings and its setting within the landscape**
- 2. The nature and scale of the proposed use will not have a detrimental impact on the landscape and amenity of its surroundings**
- 3. The building is of permanent and substantial construction, and is structurally sound and capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction**
- 4. The building is reasonably capable of accommodating the proposed development without the need for substantial alteration or addition or ancillary buildings or uses which individually or taken together would adversely affect the appearance of the building or have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area**
- 5. The vehicular movements associated with the proposed use can be safely accommodated on the highway network and will not be detrimental to the rural character of the area.**

6.29 It is appropriate to support in principle the re-use and conversion of buildings in the countryside where they can be put to beneficial uses and support the rural economy and may add directly to farm incomes. In some cases this may lead to the retention of buildings which are attractive features in the countryside or may lead to their improvement. In other cases, even though buildings may be modern, they should not be precluded from consideration for re-use.

6.30 However, because of their location in the countryside it will always be relevant to assess the impact of the proposed development upon its surroundings. A primary consideration should be whether the building can reasonably be adapted for the proposed use. Evidence of the need for significant structural works, adaptations or extensions, or the use of surrounding land for ancillary purposes may suggest that the proposed development is inappropriate for the building concerned.

6.31 The countryside location also gives rise to a need for assessing whether the proposal is acceptable in terms of its impact on its surroundings, particularly in terms of the nature and scale of the development proposed and traffic implications. Policies (R)FNE.1 and (R)FT.2 of the Plan Review provide further guidance on the issues to be considered, together with policy (R)F.Strategy 2 concerned with the sustainability of development. With respect to the latter policy it will be relevant to consider the need for introducing appropriate measures to minimise the energy, water and waste demands of the proposal to mitigate the environmental impact.

Residential Re-Use of Buildings in the Countryside

(R)FBE.7

Proposals for the re-use of existing buildings in the countryside for residential purposes will only be permitted where:

- 1. Every reasonable attempt has been demonstrated over a period of at least one year to secure a suitable re-use within the terms of Policy (R)FBE.6.**
- 2. The proposal complies with criteria 1 to 5 inclusive of policy (R)FBE.6.**

6.32 Policy (R)FBE.7 provides for a wide range of potential non-residential new uses for existing rural buildings. The residential use of such buildings will only be considered where clear evidence is provided that such alternative uses have been actively sought, without success, over an extended period. Such a period might be at least one year.

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- 6.33 Planning policy does not encourage new residential development in the open countryside, particularly where an up to date Local Plan makes appropriate provision for housing, including affordable housing. The mere existence of a rural building cannot in itself be a conclusive argument for a residential re-use, even if an appropriate alternative use cannot immediately be found. However, the Plan does provide for an exception to be made under the specified conditions. The residential reuse of a building in the countryside may be considered appropriate, if it is undertaken as part of a larger scheme for the conversion of buildings to be used for primarily employment generating purposes. The business use will be the predominant use on the site. The conversion should be undertaken simultaneously and in conjunction with the business use. Where permission is granted, it will be subject to a condition limiting occupancy to persons employed in the adjoining business.

Protection of Important Open Areas

(R)FBE.8

Development on Important open Areas identified on the Proposals Map will only be permitted if it does not detract from the character of the settlement, its form and setting, visual amenity, or the quality of the existing environment.

- 6.34 Within each and every settlement there are open areas of varying types which make a positive contribution to the form and character of the settlement. This is particularly evident in those settlements located in and around the Statutory Forest boundary. Their value may be in the form of informal recreational space, their contribution to local amenity by providing the relationship between open and developed areas or the setting for buildings, in achieving pleasing views, or in links with the countryside. These open areas, which are referred to in this policy, may include forest waste, public open space used for leisure, recreation or amenity purposes, private open space used for similar purposes, land used for agricultural or horticultural purposes, enclosed open areas within the settlement, forestry land, watercourse corridors, or other incidental open areas (including privately owned land to which the public have no access) which themselves, or with other spaces, contribute to the form, character or layout of a settlement.
- 6.35 This Policy is particularly appropriate to the Forest Ring of nearly continuous settlements in the south Forest which developed initially around the boundary of the former Royal Forest. These settlements grew rapidly during the subsequent exploitation of the coal and mineral outcrop. They have a distinct character and appearance which results from the interweaving of housing and other development with forest waste and other forms of open land, including a typical pattern of small enclosures for keeping livestock as part of a former subsistence economy.
- 6.36 Many of these settlements have an industrial feel and are characterised by their haphazard and amorphous form, much influenced by a process of squatting and encroachment onto Crown land. Individually these open areas, which are of varying sizes and irregular shapes, make their own important contribution but cumulatively they are an outstanding feature of the Forest Ring settlements. It is the overall effect of the nature and variety of the open spaces within these settlements, the close relationship with the Forest, together with the widespread use in older buildings of local materials and vernacular design that produces a distinct and particular character with strong historic and cultural associations which is worthy of retention in its own right.
- 6.37 Outside the Forest Ring all other settlements also contain important open areas, including such traditional features as churchyards and village greens. The above policy is of equal relevance to open areas within settlements throughout the District.
- 6.38 The intrinsic value of such open areas can often be readily recognised, and they should be offered protection from development which would detract from the quality of the existing environment. The areas concerned have been identified against the attributes listed below. Because of their nature all of the sites will not possess all of the following attributes but all will show at least three in that they:

1. Are located within or adjoining a defined settlement boundary

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2. Are visible from a public place, or from a group of properties
3. Make a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the locality
4. Make a positive contribution to local character, whether individually or in combination with other areas

6.39 The smaller settlements in the District do not have Inset Maps prepared for them, and therefore do not have important open areas shown on the Proposals Map. However, these settlements are considered to be part of the open countryside where new development will not normally be expected to take place.

Protection of Forest Waste and Other Crown Land in the Statutory Forest of Dean

(R)FBE.9

Except where it is in accordance with an allocation for development elsewhere in this plan, the change of use of forest waste or other Crown Land within the boundary of the statutory Forest will not be permitted where it would detract from the amenity, or the recreational, environmental or historic value, or the integrity of the area of forest or forest waste concerned.

6.40 The boundary of the Statutory Forest is marked on the Proposals Map. Policy (R)FBE.9 applies only to Crown land within that area and not to land in other ownership. This includes areas of land referred to as Forest Waste and also land used for tree planting, whether enclosed or not. The term Forest Waste or Waste of the Forest has been used to include all non enclosed areas within the statutory forest owned by the Forestry Commission, but a more narrow definition has also been used, most notably in this Plan and its predecessors. This is land which is within the statutory forest in the ownership of the Forestry commission and not used or intended to be used for forestry purposes. Whichever definition is used, the intent of the above policy remains the same, that is the protection of Forest Waste and other crown land from inappropriate development. The land so protected includes patches of open Forest Waste within settlements. Many such areas are identified on the settlement Inset Maps as Important Open Areas, protected by (R)FBE.8. However there are also other areas of Forest Waste lying both within and outside Defined Settlement Boundaries. There are also areas of Forest Waste within settlements which do not have Inset Maps. Land protected by this policy may include open land, unenclosed areas of trees, and areas which have from time to time been used for mining, quarrying, industry and associated activities.

6.41 Some areas of Forest Waste form open spaces over which the public frequently gain access. These add interest and a particular character to the forest and to settlements within it; they provide recreational space, and add greatly to the amenity of the area. They are often attractive in their own right. They may be grassed areas maintained by sheep grazing or they may support tree cover of amenity value. They reflect the heritage of the area, as do some areas of Crown land with a history of mining, quarrying or industrial use. Areas of forest and Forest Waste are susceptible to loss through redevelopment or incorporation into the curtilages of adjoining developed sites. Incremental loss of small areas can cause cumulative harm. Also any paths or tracks across the land need to be safeguarded to maintain the integrity of the forest or Forest Waste and provide continued access. For the reasons quoted above, unless development is proposed in accordance with an allocation in the Local Plan, proposals to change the use of forest waste and other Crown land within the Statutory Forest will not be permitted where it is considered they are of amenity, recreational, environmental or historical value to their surroundings.

6.42 In all cases, the District Council will require the submission of a letter of authorisation from the Forestry Commission with any applications to change the use of Forest Waste or other Crown land within the Statutory Forest. (Town and Country Planning 'Crown Land Applications Regulations' 1992). Where the proposed change of use is demonstrated to be subject to the provision of compensatory land to be used for forestry purposes, the District Council will take account of that provision when assessing the overall effect of the proposal.

Protection of Outdoor Recreational Space

(R)FBE.10

Development which would lead to the loss of public open space or private outdoor recreational open space and facilities will not be permitted. Exceptions may be made where:

- 1. Compensatory provision is made which offers a similar or improved range of facilities within safe and convenient reach of anticipated users**
- 2. It is evident that there is no over-riding community need for all or part of the existing open space and facilities at the present time and in the foreseeable future.**

6.43 Recreational open space such as playing fields, tennis courts, public parks, bowling greens, or allotments provide a direct benefit to the community in satisfying needs for outdoor sport and leisure pursuits. It can also provide other very significant benefits as an open space within an otherwise developed area, thereby contributing to the quality of the local environment. Proposals which would lead to the loss of such space will not be permitted where there is, or would be, a deficiency in accessible open space usable by the local population. Other policies of the Plan may also be relevant, particularly (R)FBE.8 concerned with the value of open areas to the built environment and local amenity.

6.44 There will be circumstances in which it is acceptable to permit development of such open spaces. These include where alternative appropriate provision can be made, or where it is evident that the need for the existing provision is not a pressing community concern currently or for the foreseeable future.

Play Space Standards

(R)FBE.11

The overall standard of recreational open space provision required to meet the needs of the people of the District is 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population. Except where the demography of the local population is substantially different from the norm, the Council will seek to ensure that this area is provided in the following proportions:

Children's Play Space: 0.8 hectares of Play Areas

Youth/Adult Use: 1.6 hectares of Pitches and Sports Facilities

In assessing the appropriate provision of recreational open space for a new housing development a ratio of 2.5 persons per dwelling will be used to arrive at a starting point for calculating the area needed.

Play Space Provision

(R)FBE.12

Proposals for residential development involving additional dwellings will be required to make provision for recreational open space on the site, based on the standards set out in Policy (R)FBE.11 or to include proposals which will enable a satisfactory alternative provision to be made nearby. Such proposals will be required to provide for the maintenance of space provided.

Where it is proposed to make provision other than on the site the Council will seek arrangements to secure the alternative provision deemed necessary.

Factors material in assessing the level and acceptability of recreational open space provision for any new housing will include:

- 1. The adequacy of the existing level of open space provision in the locality in relation to the standard set out in policy (R)FBE.11**
- 2. The location of this open space relative to the site of the new housing proposal, and its suitability, adequacy and convenience**
- 3. The expected open space needs of those envisaged to be resident on the proposed development, having regard to the types of dwellings proposed and marketing considerations.**

- 6.45 The provision of recreational open space is an important consideration when determining proposals for residential development. The need for such facilities is widely recognised, and where there would be deficiencies in provision after the proposed development has been taken into account, developers will be required to provide for the needs of the development proposed. PPG.17 states that such facilities “can form an important component” of development proposals and suggests it may be appropriate for local planning authorities to enter in to planning obligations to secure provision of these facilities. Many communities in the District fall below the standards of provision provided for in policy (R)FBE.11. A survey of the area may be necessary in order to establish the adequacy of existing provision.
- 6.46 The Council has prepared supplementary planning guidance with respect to the provision, design, layout, equipping and maintenance of play areas. This guidance should be referred to in determining the play area provision to be made in relation to a development. The guidance has been reviewed and will be available for consultation in due course.
- 6.47 The Council will be prepared to adopt the play areas provided if required, subject to agreement on a suitable commuted sum to provide for future maintenance costs.

Public Art

(R)FBE. 13

The provision of public art as a part of development schemes will be encouraged by the local Planning Authority in appropriate cases by negotiation with a developer as part of a particular major development.

- 6.48 The provision of public art as a part of or in association with major development can be of benefit both to the developer and to the development. The Council will seek the developer’s co operation in providing publicly accessible art, design or craftwork as part of developments. Such provision will be by voluntary agreement but is intended to benefit both the development itself and the wider area.

Crime Prevention

(R)FBE.14

~~The layout and design of new development or alterations to existing buildings should take account of the importance of deterring crime and should incorporate features to achieve this objective.~~

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- 6.49 ~~Designing out crime at the planning stage is a comparatively recent concept in crime prevention, but growing evidence suggests that security can be incorporated into the design and layout of a development.~~
- 6.50 ~~Town centres and some housing developments may be perceived as unsafe places to be, especially after dark. The introduction of additional uses, including particularly residential uses, helps to increase the number of people around and lessen the fears of being alone and unseen. Crime on residential estates is perceived to be increasing with dangers for children and threats to personal property.~~
- 6.51 ~~Although building design is an important aspect in crime prevention the external environment can also contribute to the security of those who live or work in an area. Design and layout can be used to help deny opportunities for criminals and to allow control and supervision of buildings and spaces around.~~
- 6.52 ~~The District Council carries out regular consultations with specialist crime prevention officers in an effort to ensure that schemes take account of crime prevention in their design and layout. The Gloucestershire County Police offer advice through their Police Architectural Liaison Service and any developer involved in a large scale project is recommended to seek their advice on this important aspect of design. A "Manual of Guidance" giving practical guidance and advice is available from them. In addition the Council's residential Design Guide provides advice and guidance.~~

Advertisements and Signs

(R)FBE.15

The display of an advertisement will be permitted where the proposed advertisement meets all the following criteria:

- 1. It is integral to the use, building or location which it promotes**
- 2. It is sympathetic in style, siting, materials, location, number and design and where appropriate, illumination, to the building or location on which it is displayed, and to existing signs**
- 3. It does not prejudice public safety.**

- 6.53 The display of advertisements and signs is subject to detailed regulations. Signs vary greatly in their function and purpose and in the impact they have on their surroundings. Many parts of the District are particularly sensitive to potential environmental intrusions and the effect of signs and advertisements can be significant in these circumstances. The above policy will operate to control the potential proliferation of signs, and limit their display to the minimum required. The design and positioning of signs should be sensitive to the character of the site in order to minimise any adverse impact, whilst still performing their essential purpose. A large part of the Wye Valley AONB is an Area of Special Control where stricter regulations apply because visual amenity is a particularly important consideration in the outstanding landscape quality. Advertisements and signs can have a major impact upon Conservation Areas and need to be carefully controlled to avoid any adverse impact on these important areas.
- 6.54 In addition, shop fronts can be adversely affected by unsympathetic signs, and the cumulative impact on town centres can be detrimental. The Council has prepared supplementary planning guidance on Shop Front Design to assist in determining applications. This guidance was placed on deposit with the Local Plan and subsequently adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

Disabled Access and Mobility

(R)FBE.16

~~Development to which the public would reasonably be expected to have access will only be permitted if provision is made in the design for safe and convenient access by persons with impaired mobility.~~

- 6.55 ~~The welfare of the disabled can be significantly affected by the design and layout of new developments. The District Council will seek to ensure that new development, public open spaces and extensions to~~

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existing buildings, where the public have access, should facilitate their use by people with disabilities. Particular attention will be placed upon access to buildings. Simple features such as textured pavement surfaces, dropped kerbs and ramps should be provided, along with appropriate and convenient car parking facilities. The Building Control Section of the District Council will seek to control the physical layout and finishes of buildings to accommodate the needs of disabled people by implementing Part M of the Building Regulations, 1991.

Renewable Energy Development

(R)FBE.17

Proposals for development which enable the utilisation of renewable energy sources will be permitted where they do not have an unacceptable impact on any of the following:

- 1. The landscape, particularly in areas protected by the Plan**
- 2. The undeveloped Coastal Zone**
- 3. Areas or buildings identified as of architectural or historic interest**
- 4. The flora or fauna of an area, particularly in areas designated as of nature conservation importance**
- 5. The amenity of adjoining occupiers of land by reason of noise, traffic, visual or other disturbance.**

6.56 PPG.22: Renewable Energy stresses the national importance of developing sources of renewable energy to contribute to the national economy and to the limitation of greenhouse gas emissions. The Council, through its Energy Agency, has produced an analysis of renewable energy potential in the Forest of Dean. The burning of wood bio-mass offers the greatest potential.

6.57.1 Where proper consideration is given to the location and environmental impact of renewable energy installations then such development will be permitted.

Telecommunications Development

(R)FBE.18

Proposals for telecommunications development will be permitted where:

- 1. The proposed siting, design and landscaping minimises visual impact particularly in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and the undeveloped Coastal Zone, Conservation Areas and in the vicinity of Listed Buildings; and**
- 2. The proposal utilises existing structures where this does not compromise operational efficiency.**

6.58 Government advice identifies the need to provide for continuing investment and development in telecommunications. The provision of infrastructure often requiring to be close to transport links is becoming increasingly important. The above policy acknowledges this guidance while identifying the need to have full regard for the issues of siting, design and landscaping to minimise the impact of the proposal. Wherever possible new proposals should share existing structures to avoid the need for additional potentially intrusive features.

Proposals for Electrical Power Lines

(R)FBE.19

Electrical power lines should be placed underground wherever practically and economically possible. Where lines need to be placed overhead they should: be placed upon wooden poles following existing landscape features such as hedgerows; be positioned so as to avoid undue impact upon the landscape; and, where possible not located in areas safeguarded for their bird populations.

6.59 The installation of electricity poles and pylons, and the associated power lines, can have a significant visual impact upon the environment. Wherever possible cables should be laid underground. Where

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overhead lines are to be provided they must be routed so as to minimise their visual impact and any risk to bird populations.

Development Near Sewage Treatment Works

(R)FBE.20

Development involving human occupation will not be permitted in the vicinity of a sewage treatment works where the occupants would be likely to be adversely affected by any odour, noise, fly problem or visual amenity problem arising from the works. An exception may be made where the proposed occupancy is of a limited or periodic nature.

6.60 The operation of sewage treatment works may naturally give rise to problems of odour or noise or other occasional problems which could be a nuisance to the occupiers of proposed development in the vicinity. If such nuisance appears likely to occur and could not be avoided, prevented or adequately mitigated, the development will not be permitted. An exception may be made where the development would only be occupied for brief periods, such as a sports use

Contaminated and Unstable Land

(R)FBE.21

Proposals for development on land which is reasonably considered to contain contamination or to be unstable will not be permitted except where the proposal is accompanied by an appropriate survey which identifies the nature of the contamination or instability and proposes adequate measures to ensure that there will be no unacceptable risk of contamination, including contamination of controlled waters, as a result of the development, or to stabilise the site. Such proposals must take account of any wildlife which may be affected. Where such measures are proposed and agreed, they will be required to be implemented in an agreed programme in relation to the commencement of development.

6.61 Government advice on pollution and land instability is set out in PPG 23: Planning and Pollution Control and PPG14: Development on Unstable Land. There is also relevant legislation, particularly in the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The effect of the above is to provide a framework to ensure that sites known to be contaminated or unstable, or reasonably considered to be so, should be the subject of investigation to establish the nature of any risks and that development proposals should be accompanied by appropriate remedial and mitigation measures to deal with any problems identified. Any remediation measures required should be carried out in full prior to development commencing and must take account of the need to protect or safeguard any wildlife interests.

6.62 The long industrial history of the Forest of Dean has resulted in a large number of areas where such site investigations would be appropriate. The Council has embarked upon investigations to produce information about the location and past uses of potentially contaminated sites. Information is available locally through the Forest Enterprise Office concerning past coal working in the District.

Environmental Pollution

(R)FBE.22

Proposals for development will not be permitted where they would give rise to unacceptable loss of amenity by way of pollution likely to cause harm to air, water or land.

6.63 The principal legislation concerned with environmental pollution includes the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Water Resources Act 1991, Water Industries Act, 1991 and the Environmental Act 1995. A system of regulation and licensing under these and other provisions serves to control pollution of the environment, defined in the above 1990 Act as "the release (into any environmental medium) from any process of substances which are capable of causing harm to man or any other living organisms supported by the environment".

6.64 The planning and pollution control systems are separate but complementary. The planning system should not seek to duplicate the controls which are the statutory responsibility of other bodies, such as

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~~the Environment Agency. Applications for development must be judged on the basis that the pollution control regimes will be properly applied and enforced.~~

~~6.65 — However, it is proper to also consider the potential effects of releases from a proposed development on the wider use of land. In this context the planning system can have a wider definition of “harm” than the EPA (1990), extending to unsightly development and loss of amenity in the wider sense (paragraph 1.35 of PPG.23: Planning and Pollution Control). “Harm” in the context of the EPA (1990) includes in the case of man, offence caused to any of his senses or harm to his property. Harm would include harm caused by offensive smells. (Paragraph 1.14 of PPG.23).~~

~~6.66 — The above PPG identifies the following matters as likely to be material considerations in the context of this policy:~~

- ~~● — Location~~
- ~~● — Impact on amenity~~
- ~~● — Possible impact on other uses of land~~
- ~~● — Prevention of nuisance~~
- ~~● — Need and feasibility of land restoration.~~

~~6.67 — The Council will liaise with the appropriate pollution control bodies to locate and control development to mitigate environmental impacts arising from potential sources of pollution.~~

~~6.68 — Certain sites and pipelines are designated as dangerous substance establishments by virtue of the quantities of hazardous substance present. The siting of such installations will be subject to planning controls, for example under the Planning (Control of Major Hazards) Regulations, 1999, with the objective, in the long term to maintain appropriate distances between establishments and residential areas and areas of public use. In accordance with the Department of the Environment Circular 11/92, the Council will consult the Health and Safety executive about the siting of any proposed dangerous substance establishments. In a similar way to the need to control the location of these establishments, there is a need to consult the Health and Safety Executive about proposals to develop near them. The Council will do this in line with the prevailing guidance at the time.~~

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Transport

Introduction

- 7.1 Transport planning is a fundamental element of land use planning, as there is a direct relationship between the use of land and the need for movement to and from that use. The Local Plan strategy, and the policies and proposals of the Plan, must at all times have regard to the transport needs and demands arising from land use proposals.
- 7.2 This relationship has been brought into increasing focus as awareness has grown of the sustainability issues surrounding movement. The past increase in road traffic, and the forecast growth, is viewed by the Government as unsustainable in terms of climate change, impact on the natural environment, impact upon communities and on the economy, on health and on social exclusion. National planning guidance increasingly has emphasised the need to regulate and direct new development in a manner which will reduce the growth of traffic, offer safe and convenient alternatives to the private car, and control vehicle movements in the interests of safety and improving the quality of the built and natural environment. Traffic management and other measures to improve the environment must have as one of their primary aims that of supporting the local economy by improving the area's attractiveness for existing and new businesses.
- 7.3 The strategic responsibility for transport planning lies with the County Council, as highway authority. The County Council produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) which must integrate with the Structure Plan and with Local Plans produced by District Councils. It is a document that contains a summary of the transport issues and proposed actions over the whole County and forms the central part of the County Council's bid for central government finance. Many of the actions proposed in the LTP will be implemented by the County Council. However, District Councils through their Local Plans and other actions can contribute significantly to the LTP, for example by ensuring that new development is located so as to reduce the number and length of trips arising, by providing for realistic alternatives to the private car for travel needs, by implementing parking policies, and by implementing schemes which control and direct movement in the interests of public amenity and the environment.
- 7.4 Government planning guidance on transport is principally set out in PPG 13: Transport (March 2001) which states that development plans should aim to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, by influencing the location of development relative to transport provision, and fostering forms of development which encourage walking, cycling and public transport use. PPG 6 (Town Centres and Retailing) proposes that town centres should be the preferred location for large trip generators, such as shopping. PPG 3 (Housing) directs that most new housing development should be located in the principal urban areas, and that provision should be made for public transport, cycling and walking to be integrated into the design and layout of new housing areas. PPG 1 (General Policy and Principles) requires that in order to achieve sustainable patterns of development and to help reduce the environmental impacts of development then local authorities should integrate their transport programmes and land use policies to reduce the growth of traffic, encourage alternative means of transport with less environmental impact, and reduce reliance on the private car.
- 7.5 It follows from the above that there is a strong inter-relationship between the strategic transport policies of the Structure Plan, the detailed strategy and implementation programme of the LTP, and the role of the Local Plan. The policies in this Transport chapter therefore reinforce the strategic policies of the Structure Plan, and will assist the implementation of the Structure Plan and the LTP through adopting a complementary strategy, and through specific land allocations and proposals which will support the principles of sustainable forms of development and help to reduce travel demand.

Issues

- 7.6 The south Forest is a predominantly rural area with restricted levels of accessibility to the principal transport corridors of the surrounding area. The narrower employment choices available within the District mean that there are high levels of commuting out of the District to work. The main transport corridors within the District are essential to the efficient operation of the local economy, but each has deficiencies.
- 7.7 Some of the principal transport issues facing the District therefore are the need to provide a transport system which supports the development of the local economy, which in turn will impact upon the levels of car-borne commuting, and which can offer choice of transport modes within the rural context of the Forest of Dean.
- 7.8 Proposals for addressing these issues are contained in the LTP. The focus will be upon packages of localised improvements to the main access routes of importance to the local economy (particularly the A.48 and A.4136), promoting transport choice by bus and rail within transport corridors (which link to the towns of the south Forest), and supporting infrastructure and environmental improvements in the towns which will enhance employment opportunities and provide improved access to local services and facilities.
- 7.9 Much of the responsibility for implementing the above proposals will lie with the County Council as Highway Authority. The Local Plan will support these actions. The principal measure available will be to ensure that the bulk of new development is concentrated in the towns which will maximise opportunities for access to transport choice and to jobs, services and facilities. Land allocated for development will be located so as to make use of existing good levels of accessibility. Where appropriate development will be required to provide for improvements to public transport, walking and cycling, as well as off-site highway improvements to accommodate necessary vehicle movements. The Local Plan will also provide the framework for schemes to secure localised transport improvements which will benefit the environment, particularly in town centres.
- 7.10 The nature of rural areas is such that there is less scope for reducing reliance on the private car. This is specifically acknowledged by Government. Modal shift in rural areas therefore will be more difficult to achieve. In the long term land use policies will assist in bringing about a pattern of development which will reduce the need to travel longer distances, principally by locating jobs, homes and services close together. This approach should reduce the rate of traffic growth in rural areas, if not actually being able to prevent it increasing. However, in the medium term there will continue to be a higher level of continuing car usage in rural areas like the Forest of Dean.
- 7.11 Car ownership amongst rural households is high. However, there are important issues of social exclusion arising for those without ready access to a car. These include difficulties of access to basic services, to jobs and to training. To address these issues the County Council provides large scale financial assistance to the rural bus network, and to voluntary and community transport service. In the District voluntary and community transport services are very well organised, with plans to extend coverage to the entire area. The LTP specifically acknowledges however that scheduled bus services are largely inadequate within the Forest of Dean for journeys other than from the main towns.
- 7.12 It is acknowledged by the County Council that public transport in rural areas can never provide an effective alternative to the private car for many trips, particularly those attracted to larger centres more distant from rural areas. The strategy, therefore, will combine improvements to public transport corridors to promote choice, combined with a policy of providing park and ride sites on the approaches to the main urban centres of Gloucester and Cheltenham, and the management of the cost and supply of parking in town centres such as Gloucester and Cheltenham.
- 7.13 There is a single mainline railway corridor in the District, with one station at Lydney on the Cardiff to Birmingham line. The restricted level of stopping services at Lydney, and poor site facilities, mean that passenger usage is currently limited. The Local Plan and the LTP will promote the further potential of

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Lydney Station for both passenger and freight services. There is a rail connection at Lydney to the Dean Forest Railway, which runs to Parkend. The potential of this corridor will similarly be promoted for both passenger and freight.

- 7.14 The Local Plan will need to address the issue of car parking to support an overall strategy of promoting a sustainable transport system. The aim should be to encourage trips to be made by modes other than the car, to promote the economic and environmental well-being of town centres, and not to disadvantage town centres by the provision of high levels of parking for competing land uses outside the town centre. PPG.13 advocates that a range of maximum parking standards should be adopted with the aim of reducing reliance on the car and encouraging the use of other modes of transport. The LTP acknowledges that there are areas, particularly rural areas, where there is a lack of realistic alternatives to the car for some journeys, and that care should be taken not to overtly punish car drivers in such situations. It is recognised that in the Forest of Dean a central objective is to revitalise the four towns. The Local Plan should therefore apply policies for parking provision with discretion in support of the aims outlined above.
- 7.15 A transport strategy for the south Forest is set out in the LTP. It endorses the overall theme of ensuring the revitalisation of the District. Elements of the strategy include:
- Assisting in improving access in order to support employment opportunities, particularly in the towns
 - Improving town centre environments
 - Improving accessibility for those without access to a car
 - Reducing the level of car commuting to Gloucester
 - Promoting walking and cycling.
- 7.16 There is also a route corridor strategy for west of the River Severn, which encompasses the principal roads in the District (A.48, A.40, A.4136, B.4215/B.4221) and the rail route via Lydney. Together these routes form the principal accesses into and out of the District, and they have a residual role as long distance routes. Both the A.48 and A.40, presently the responsibility of the Highways Agency, are scheduled for de-trunking. The A.48 and A.4136 have great importance to the economy of the District, as they provide the main access to the three towns of the south Forest.
- 7.17 Issues for the District are the poor alignment of the A.4136 which carries high proportions of lorry traffic, the particular problems of gradient and alignment on the A.4136 between Monmouth and Staunton, the A.48 passes through several villages and also has high levels of HGV traffic, the A.40 has particularly poor alignment, there are relatively high speed levels on the B.4215/B.4221, the effect of quarry lorries particularly on the A.4136, and the presence of extra traffic (particularly HGVs) on these routes as a means of avoiding the Severn Bridge tolls. A key section of the A.4136, to the west of Staunton, lies within the Monmouthshire County Council administrative area. The District Council will continue to work with Gloucestershire County Council to press Monmouthshire County Council to give a priority to improving the A.4136 from Monmouth to Staunton.

Strategic Framework

- 7.18 The transport strategy will provide for essential access to support the local economy, promote increased transport choice, and aim to reduce the environmental impacts of traffic. Localised improvements to the principal transport corridors will be supported to complement the strategy of the LTP, together with support for increased modal choice in such corridors. The implementation of many of these measures will be by the County Council, but will be supported by the policies and proposals of the Plan.

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- 7.19 The principal elements of the LTP Strategy for the Forest of Dean are to:
- Upgrade the A.4136 to achieve safety improvement.
 - Control lorry movements and divert longer distance through traffic away from these roads
 - Reduce the impact of traffic (particularly HGVs) on the villages affected
 - Divert freight traffic to the rail network where possible
 - Improve public transport services along the principal routes between the towns of the District and Gloucester, Ross and Chepstow
 - Enhance passenger rail services at Lydney.
- 7.20 The Plan will reinforce the strategies and programme of the LTP by ensuring that new development is principally located in settlements providing the greatest access to jobs, services and facilities. In appropriate cases new development will be required to provide access improvements by a choice of modes of transport. The Plan will promote the potential to develop the role of rail for passenger and freight transport. Vehicle parking policy will assist the joint aims of promoting the vitality and viability of town centres and supporting travel by means other than the private car.
- 7.21 The Plan strategy is to provide for a sustainable form of development in the District. A crucial element of the strategy is to locate development so as to reduce the number and length of motorised journeys, and to provide for a genuine choice of modes of transport. The transport policies of the Plan will therefore reinforce the locational policies to assist in delivering the above strategic objective.

Objective

1. To locate development so as to reduce the growth in the number and length of vehicle trips
2. To promote alternative modes of transport to the private car
3. To provide a transport infrastructure which supports the local economy
4. To promote environmental improvements and traffic management measures which reduce the effects of traffic upon the environment
5. To assist in promoting public transport opportunities.

Policies and Proposals

The Location of Development

- 7.22 The location of development can contribute significantly over time to managing the demand for travel and thereby reducing the rate of increase in the volume and length of vehicle trips. Policy (R)F.Strategy 1 of the Plan provides for the concentration of new houses, jobs and services principally in the four towns. Policy (R)F.Strategy 2 provides a requirement that new development should be located so as to minimise the travel needs arising, and to maximise access to services and other infrastructure. Structure Plan policy T.1 forms a context for and reinforces the Local Plan strategy. These policies, taken together, help provide a framework for guiding the location of new development in the District.
- 7.23 It is not suggested that all new development should be located in the principal settlements in order to satisfy the principles of sustainability. To do so would ignore the social and economic needs of smaller rural communities. It would also not make best use of the potential for beneficial development in settlements outside the towns, it may not properly recognise the locational needs of industries such as tourism, recreation, leisure and agriculture, and could mitigate against proposals which would lead to the beneficial re-use of buildings. The Plan policies and proposals identify where such development would be acceptable.
- 7.24 Overall the Plan provides for the location of development in a sustainable manner in relation to transport

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principally by concentrating most development in the towns. The Plan also provides for limited development outside the towns, and recognises that some activities have specific locational needs. Therefore, while proposals for development will be assessed against the strategic policies of the Plan, and particularly (R)F.Strategy 2 in relation to transport, it will be accepted that within the principles of the Plan strategy there will continue to be limited development in smaller settlements and in the countryside.

Provision for Alternative Modes of Access

(R)FT.1

~~Proposals for development must make appropriate provision for accessibility by a choice of modes of travel, including public transport, cycling and walking. Where off-site improvements are necessary to achieve the appropriate choice of modes of access, these will be required as part of the development proposed.~~

- ~~7.25 Government policy, and the Local Plan strategy, seeks to limit growth in the use of the private car. For this approach to be successful it will be necessary to locate and design development in a manner that promotes modal choice. The above policy is concerned with ensuring that development proposals include practical measures to provide for cyclists and pedestrians, and also public transport where applicable. Each development proposal will be considered individually in order to establish what it may need to provide. The overall provision sought will be related to the needs generated by the proposals under consideration. Within a larger site, particularly a housing development, the layout should provide safe and convenient routes for cyclist and pedestrians, provision for bus access and turning, and have regard to providing access points to the adjoining highway and footpath network so as to encourage usage by cyclists and pedestrians.~~
- ~~7.26 The effect of the above policy may be partially compromised by off site features of the highway network which discourage use by pedestrians, cyclists, or buses. Examples may be busy roads without crossing points or traffic calming features, or discontinuous or inadequate pavements. Where such issues arise an agreement will be sought with the site developer to contribute to the cost of overcoming the problem in order to promote genuine accessibility by alternative transport modes. This may also include the need for developments to contribute to improved bus services to provide for a genuine choice of public transport accessibility.~~
- ~~7.27 The great majority of the sites allocated in this Plan have the capacity to be accessed by a choice of alternative modes of transport, and are accessible to nearby town centres, services and jobs. The allocation policies and development briefs for these sites will identify what off site contributions will be required to improve access choice. In rural areas a different set of considerations apply. The policy is intended to apply to these areas but clearly a realistic view will be taken as to the extent of provision required.~~
- ~~7.28 PPG 13: Transport proposes that local authorities should require the submission of a Travel Plan and/or a Transport Assessment to accompany a planning application in appropriate cases. Such instances include proposals for major developments (the thresholds are set out in PPG 13); for locally significant development proposals where there are local initiatives or targets for traffic management; and where there is a local traffic problem which would lead to a refusal of planning consent in the absence of an agreed management plan. The Council will require a Green Transport Plan to be submitted in these situations, and with the County Highway Authority will advise on the necessary content of such Plans. Those elements of submissions which serve a planning purpose and are enforceable will be secured through conditions to a planning consent, or through a planning obligation.~~

Site Development Requirements

(R)FT.2

Proposals for development will be required to:

1. Provide for vehicular access of an appropriate standard to a highway in a manner which has no unacceptably adverse effect on the function of the highway from which the access is gained
2. Ensure that the traffic arising from the development will not have an unacceptably detrimental effect on the highway network in respect of the movement of traffic and road safety
3. Ensure that the traffic arising from the development will not have an unacceptably detrimental effect upon the surrounding environment by reason of noise, vibration or reduced amenity
4. Provide for safe and convenient access for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and the disabled, including cycle parking.

- 7.29 Most land uses give rise to the need for movement to and from the site concerned. It will always be a material consideration to ensure that the site access does not give rise to highway problems, and that the traffic movements arising from the proposed use can be accommodated on the wider highway network having regard to the environmental impacts and highway safety issues related to the additional movements. Access and movement will be assessed in terms of suitability for vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and the disabled.

Parking Provision

(R)FT.3

~~Proposals for development should not provide more than the following maximum levels of parking provision:~~

- ~~Food retail – one space per 14m²~~
- ~~Non food retail – one space per 20m²~~
- ~~B1 including offices – one space per 30m²~~
- ~~B2 employment – one space per 50m²~~
- ~~B8 warehousing – one space per 200m²~~

~~In assessing the amount of vehicle and cycle parking to be provided regard will be had to ensuring account is taken of the potential for access by means other than the private car, taking into account any improvements in accessibility and modal choice secured under Policy (R)FT.1.~~

- ~~7.30 The Government has issued guidance on the level of parking provision which should be provided for development. Local authorities must take account of the need to discourage increases in car borne traffic, which may arise from over-generous provision of car parking. In particular, realistic estimates should be made of the level of movements which could be expected to arise from walkers, cyclists and public transport users. In this context local authorities should assess a maximum level of car parking which takes into account the number of trips likely to use these alternative means of transport, and which could be expected to reduce the amount of car parking required for a development. This assessment will take account of any improvements to accessibility and to modal choice secured in relation to Policy (R)FT.1~~

- ~~7.31 The policy sets out the maximum levels of parking provision that will be permitted. Its primary purpose is to bring about a change to a more realistic level of provision and promote a more efficient use of land. It does not therefore list all types of development. In addition to the primary policy the Council has adopted supplementary planning guidance setting out maximum parking standards for all forms of development.~~

- ~~7.32 The Council will have regard to the opportunity for developments to use existing car parking without the need for providing additional spaces. This is likely to be most appropriate for town centre developments.~~

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Provision for Reduced Car Parking

- 7.33 There are circumstances where it is desirable to permit development notwithstanding that the parking provision which would otherwise be sought cannot or desirably should not be provided on the site. This may apply particularly in town centres where there is an existing good level of accessibility and choice of modes of transport. The same circumstances may apply elsewhere, in some of the larger villages in the District. The desire to increase densities and encourage brownfield site development in such accessible locations is also a strategic aim, and is referred to in PPG 13.
- 7.34 Where it is proposed to agree a reduced level of parking provision a planning obligation may be sought to achieve a financial contribution to the provision or improvement of parking elsewhere in the settlement concerned, or the provision or improvement of other transport modes. Any such obligation will be directly related to the movement needs of the development concerned.

Protection of Railway Facilities

(R)FT.4

Proposals for development will not be permitted which would detract from the effective operation of railway services, or which would limit the potential for the further development of passenger or freight services, including railfreight terminals, transport interchanges or car parks.

- ~~7.35 There is potential for increasing both passenger and rail freight services in the District. The background is set out in the LTP. The Lydney chapter of the Plan Review will set out an allocation policy for Lydney Station to promote transport interchange and railfreight opportunities~~
- ~~7.36 The Dean Forest Railway has a junction with the main Cardiff Birmingham line at Lydney. There is the potential for further developing passenger services along this route, particularly for tourism.~~
- ~~7.37 The above policy provides a general context for controlling development in the vicinity of the two railway routes in the interest of safeguarding the potential for increased rail services over the Plan period.~~

Walking and Cycling

(R)FT.5

A network of walking and cycling routes will be developed in the towns of Cinderford, Lydney, Coleford and Newent over the Plan period. Proposals for walking and cycling routes between communities will be permitted where they are safe, convenient and environmentally acceptable.

- 7.38 The principal opportunity for developing a network of safe and convenient walking and cycling routes is in the four towns of the District. The County Council has prepared a strategic framework of walking and cycling routes for the four towns, particularly related to the principal land allocations proposed in the Local Plan. The District Council will work with the County Council to implement proposals over the Plan period in all the towns, and will consider the extent to which development allocations may be reasonably expected to contribute to implementing such proposals.
- 7.39 Elsewhere in the District it is likely that more limited schemes may be feasible, for example to overcome particular safety problems or to link residential areas with principal trip attractors such as schools. The District Council will seek to implement such schemes where appropriate, in conjunction with the County Council. There may be further opportunities to provide cycle and pedestrian links between communities, including using old railway lines and Forest tracks, provided the use of any route has no unacceptable environmental impact on surrounding areas. These together with parking for cycles will be permitted and supported by the Council within the terms of the above policy.

Road Schemes - Safeguarding

- 7.40 The emphasis in transport policy is on managing demand and usage rather than on constructing new roads. However, there are limited schemes which address local highway safety issues, or are required

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to provide for the development and the functioning of the local economy. In particular there is a perception that the District suffers from poor accessibility. This perception may contribute to a difficulty in securing inward investment by business.

- 7.41 The A.4136 does have physical limitations which inhibit the free movement of traffic. It is an important route in the District as it links the two towns of Coleford and Cinderford to the surrounding road network. The County Council has given a high priority in the LTP to securing funding for a package of localised schemes on the route which will assist with economic regeneration, highway safety and environmental improvements. The District Council will work with Gloucestershire County Council to press Monmouthshire County Council to give a priority to improving the A.4136 west of Staunton.
- 7.42 In addition there are road schemes proposed in Lydney, and Cinderford. These respectively assist the implementation of the Local Plan strategy. Each is safeguarded by a separate policy in the relevant town chapter in Part Two of the Plan.
- 7.43 Lydney is the strategic focus in the District for new development over the Plan period. The scale of development proposed requires a package of measures to be implemented, including some highway construction, enhanced bus services, cycling and walking routes and improvements to Lydney rail station. The bulk of the need for these improvements will arise from the movements associated with the large scale housing development proposed in Lydney. This relationship is discussed in greater detail in the Lydney chapter, including the extent to which development contributions will be sought to assist in implementing the transport network required.
- 7.44 In addition to the above schemes there are a small number of other schemes promoted through the Plan for implementation in the Plan period. These include improved strategic access for Cinderford, and a new access road in Coleford town centre. These are discussed in the relevant chapters, and shown on the respective Proposals Map Insets. All schemes will be subjected to the appropriate environmental appraisals when they are designed in order to ensure that they are of an appropriate design.

Public Transport / Community Transport

- 7.45 The principal responsibility for public transport lies with the County Council. The LTP sets out the strategy for supporting future services. It is accepted that many journey needs in the District cannot realistically be provided by either bus or rail, and this situation is likely to persist. However, services based on the main towns, and running along specific corridors connecting with surrounding centres, do offer scope for improvement in reliability, convenience and perceived cost. The LTP proposes measures to improve these services, along with associated initiatives to manage commuter traffic and car parking in order to manage demand. The District Council endorses the approach of the County Council with respect to public transport.
- 7.46 The County Council also takes a lead role in supporting community and voluntary transport schemes, with the active assistance of the District Council. These schemes primarily provide for the transport needs of the less mobile, and are an essential element of a strategy to combat social exclusion. Within the District there are proposals to link existing schemes to provide a unified and comprehensive service throughout the area. The District Council will support such proposals.
- 7.47 The Local Plan strategy will assist public and community transport principally by concentrating development, services and facilities at the most accessible locations in the District. In addition, development allocations will have regard to providing for the needs of public transport, and town centre improvement schemes will also make provision for priority for bus access where appropriate, and passenger facilities.

Traffic Management

- 7.48 Traffic management plays an important role in providing a safer and better environment for people, and in resolving highway traffic problems. The LTP identifies a range of matters which require action in the District, including ameliorating the effect of traffic on settlements through which they pass (particularly

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along the A.48 and A.40), urban traffic management schemes, lorry routing and speed controls. The County Council will be principally responsible for implementing schemes to address these issues.

- 7.49 The District Council will play a significant role as a partner with the County Council on town centre traffic management schemes, promoted as part of the Local Plan proposals. These proposals will have a wide range of objectives, aimed particularly at enhancing the vitality and viability of town centres. Schemes are underway or planned in Coleford and Cinderford. Other proposals, for all four towns, will be included in the Local Plan for which the active support of the County Council will be sought for implementation.

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Chapter 8

Natural Environment

Introduction

- 8.1 The Forest of Dean remains largely rural in character, despite a long history of mineral extraction and processing in the southern part of the District. The majority of the land area is in agricultural or forestry use.
- 8.2 The diversity of the underlying geology of the District has helped to create a rich variety of landscape types and the resultant structure forms an important aquifer, including public water supply sources. Upland areas cover a large proportion of the south of the District, bordered on the west by the deeply incised valley of the River Wye and to the east by the more open landscape of the River Severn. The north of the District is characterised by an open, rolling agricultural landscape.
- 8.3 The District Council has produced a Forest of Dean Landscape Assessment (1991), identifying 15 different landscape areas in the District, each with its own character.
- 8.4 One of the landscape areas is the ancient Forest of Dean, which traces its history back to its use as a Royal hunting forest. In 1938 the Forestry Commission designated the 10,700 hectares of the Forest of Dean and the adjacent woodlands of the Wye Valley as the first National Forest Park in England. This recognised both the scenic value of the woodland landscape and the desirability of promoting the recreational role of the Forest.
- 8.5 The District includes a substantial part of the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and a small area of the Malvern Hills AONB. The original proposals for the Wye Valley AONB were drawn up by the Hobhouse Committee in 1947 and included most of the southern part of the Forest of Dean District. Although the boundaries of the AONB were eventually drawn more tightly, it is clear that the areas excluded were considered at that time to be of significant value in landscape terms. This view was later reinforced by the designation of an Area of Great Landscape Value in the County Development Plan, and a listing of Special Landscape Areas in the Structure Plan, both of which reflect the conclusions of the Hobhouse Committee.
- 8.6 The landscape qualities of this area have been further reinforced by a study in 1999 (Forest of Dean - Review of Special Status). This study was commissioned by the Countryside Agency. Its conclusions support the case for recognition of the special landscape qualities of the southern upland areas of the Forest of Dean. Since 2000 the Countryside Agency has been running a pilot project exploring whether integrated rural development (IRD), as a way of working towards sustainable rural regeneration, can deliver a locally owned and managed mechanism for protecting the important landscape heritage of the Forest of Dean, as well as contributing effectively to the regeneration of the district. In April 2003, following the collation of information contained in a four new initiatives; a landscape character appraisal, the Forest of Dean by Definition project, an archaeology contract and a biodiversity contract, the Countryside Agencies board agreed that the special nature of the Forest of Dean meant that AONB designation was not the most appropriate way forward.
- 8.7 The board agreed to extend the IRD project a further two years. The second phase "Building on what's special" will look at how statutory planning processes, partnership working, community plans and voluntary agreements can effectively protect, enhance and manage the Forest of Dean's distinctive landscape, cultural heritage, natural heritage and biodiversity, and how local distinctiveness can be an important driver of social and economic regeneration. The option of AONB designation could be considered again at some time in the future.
- 8.8 The predominantly lowland agricultural areas of the District have their own special qualities. The land

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adjacent to the River Severn is considered to be a unique landscape of visual and natural history value, which affords qualities of distinctiveness, rural nature and tranquillity and is particularly sensitive to development. Further north, the lowland agricultural area is more akin to the rest of Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. It is a generally fertile, rich and well managed landscape with its origins in the enclosures of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The legacy of vernacular buildings and settlements reflects the rich agricultural past.

- 8.9 The geology and variety of land uses have resulted in a wide range of wildlife habitats, including nature conservation sites of International, National and Countywide importance. In order to provide some general guidance and an insight into the general landforms and natural habitats that are present throughout the country, English Nature has defined a series of Natural Areas which complement the Countryside Agency's Character Areas (which are general areas of similar landscape character). Each of the Natural Areas has a characteristic range of landscapes, vegetation and animal communities. The Natural Areas related to the District are the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley, the Severn Vale and the Malvern Hills.
- 8.10 Both English Nature and the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust recognise the Forest of Dean as an important area of nature conservation interest, as illustrated by the large number of sites identified for their nature conservation importance within the District. Site designations include Ramsar Sites and Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation (inclusive of candidate designations), National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. These are complemented by a number of non-statutory sites variously managed as Nature reserves by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Woodland Trust and Forest Enterprise. There are also a large number of locally designated Key Wildlife Sites (Sites of Nature Conservation Importance) identified by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust.
- 8.11 Important sites for nature conservation within the District include: -
1. The Severn Estuary, which contains two sites of Special Scientific Interest, namely the Upper Severn and Severn Estuary sites. Both are designated Ramsar Sites, Special Protection Areas, and possible Special Areas of Conservation. The Upper Severn Estuary is an important wintering site for wild fowl whilst the Estuary as a whole is an important run for migratory fish. The coastal zone abutting the estuary is the subject of a Policy which identifies the need to provide additional protection from development for this vulnerable area.
 2. Walmore Common SSSI, a Ramsar Site and Special Protection Area important for regularly supporting a wintering population of Bewick swans and several other species of wildfowl.
 3. Caerwood, Dean Hall coach house and cellar, Sylvan Barn and Blaisdon Hall, are all examples of SSSI's which form part of a candidate Special Area of Conservation for Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats for which the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean are internationally important.
 4. National Nature Reserves at Highbury Wood and Lady Park Wood, both of which are included on the list of candidate Special Areas of Conservation.
 5. The Wye Valley Woodlands consisting of 8 SSSIs notified for their woodland interest, forming part of a candidate Special Area of Conservation, together with a number of sites in Monmouthshire. These sites include The Hudnalls, Upper Wye Gorge and Shorn Cliff and Caswell Woods. The Wye Valley is also an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 8.12 A list of designated nature conservation sites is included as an Appendix to the Plan. Within the district here is currently no systematic process of survey to identify Key Wildlife Sites, however the district has

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recently (2003) been surveyed in more detail as part of the Integrated rural development project. The survey is expected to identify a number of additional, potential Key Wildlife Sites in the future. A revised map of non-statutory wildlife sites will be available as supplementary information following the re-surveying of the District.

Issues

- 8.13 The strategy of the Plan Review concentrates new development primarily in the four towns of the District, and enables limited development in other villages. The principal development needs of the District over the Plan period have been provided for in these Plan policies and proposals. Development in the countryside therefore will be carefully controlled, in line with Government policy. The Plan strategy supports the conservation of the countryside, its enhancement where needed and its protection from inappropriate development, the promotion of biodiversity, and the protection or enhancement of sites and habitats of nature conservation importance.
- 8.14 There are great pressures upon the agricultural industry to diversify into new activities and alter farming practices to increase returns. The most obvious examples of these changes are the conversion of redundant buildings, seeking new uses for agricultural land such as golf courses, and facilitating intensive production through the removal of hedgerows, though this may now be declining. Agricultural change needs to be handled in a sympathetic manner if a well-managed, attractive and wildlife rich countryside is to be retained. The nature of the change will need to be carefully assessed, in order to maintain the character of the different landscapes of the District.
- 8.15 Much of the District is of considerable importance for outdoor recreation and tourism, in particular the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean. This inevitably leads to visitor pressures in some locations, together with a wider demand for facilities such as car parks, toilets, play areas, golf courses, attractions, accommodation and associated buildings. It will be important to ensure that these are sympathetic to their surroundings and draw on the history, culture and features of their setting for inspiration. Such developments must be integrated sympathetically into the landscape, having regard to their individual and collective impacts. The local economy can also benefit from locally based value added products which are then sold or “exported” after their value has been enhanced.
- 8.16 Woodlands and forests are one of the most significant landscape features of the District. An important issue is to ensure that their future management maintains this contribution. Forest Enterprise, in particular, has responsibility for large areas of woodland, including the Dean Forest Park, but there are also large areas of important privately owned woodland. It is developing Forest Design Plans, which will eventually cover all Forest Enterprise Woodland. These include all aspects of woodland management including a management plan for broadleaved woodland, archaeological conservation, recreation and nature conservation. Woodland areas, particularly ancient semi-natural woodlands, are also of great value and interest for nature conservation.
- 8.17 There are significant deposits of workable stone in the District, including locations adjoining the Wye Valley. Quarrying produces a significant localised impact in the process of winning the material. The transport of quarry materials extends the impact of this industry through the presence of large vehicles on the highway, particularly where routes pass through communities. As the Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) the County Council is responsible for preparing mineral policy and the determination of planning applications for mineral development. The MPA has prepared a Minerals Local Plan which was adopted on 23rd April, 2003. The District Council is concerned at the potential impacts of mineral working on the area. It is especially concerned about the impacts on the landscape of mineral working and of the effects on local communities of transport to and from quarries and will work with the County Council to minimise the impacts of quarrying upon the landscape and local communities.
- 8.18 The only working of coal deposits in the District is via a small number of active free-mines. These generally have little or no impact on the surrounding countryside. The District Council considers that proposals for the winning of coal by opencast methods will generally prove to be unacceptable, because of the impacts likely to arise on the landscape, on recreation and tourism, and on amenity generally in

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terms of the extent of lorry movements required to transport the coal.

Strategic Framework

- 8.19 The District Council will keep under review the issue of any further landscape and related designations for the Forest of Dean arising from the report on the case for Special Status for the southern part of the District.
- 8.20 The Plan will adopt national planning guidance with respect to the priority to be given to the conservation of the natural beauty of the two AONBs in the District, and the Council will continue to contribute to and support the active management of the AONB areas.
- 8.21 Overall, the policies in the Plan Review with respect to the natural environment will seek to ensure that the rural economy is properly supported, while protecting the countryside from inappropriate development.
- 8.22 The Plan policies will need to ensure the proper conservation and enhancement of the significant nature conservation interests in the District, as well as generally encouraging and enhancing biodiversity as part of the development process.
- 8.23 The Plan strategy acknowledges the importance of protecting the countryside from inappropriate development and safeguarding it as a natural resource. This will include ensuring that development respects the key characteristics of the landscape, and that the natural environment is protected and nature conservation interests promoted. The Plan must also provide for essential development in the countryside and the social and economic well being of rural communities. The policies of the Plan will provide the framework for clearly identifying the interests to be taken into account when assessing the impact of development proposals upon the natural environment.

Objectives

1. To protect the countryside from inessential development
2. To promote biodiversity
3. To conserve and where appropriate to enhance sites, habitats and species of nature conservation interest
4. To sustain an attractive and diverse countryside and landscape, and a sustainable rural economy.
5. To protect, conserve and where appropriate to enhance the landscape and cultural heritage

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Policies and Proposals

Protection of the Countryside

(R)FNE.1

In order to protect the open countryside development will be strictly controlled and will only be permitted where the development:

- 1. Will not result in the unacceptable loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land, or woodland**
- 2. Will not create amenity problems for adjoining or nearby land users**
- 3. Will not result in development of a scale, form, design or appearance that would be visually intrusive or detrimental to the character and appearance of the area**
- 4. Will not result in an unacceptable impact on the biodiversity of the area or on sites or features of archaeological or historic importance**
- 5. Will not create unacceptable traffic generation or highway safety problems**
- 6. Makes appropriate provision for access**
- 7. Makes provision for a high standard of landscaping and screening to assimilate the development into its surroundings**
- 8. Ensures that adequate services exist, or are reasonably accessible, or can be readily and economically provided.**

- 8.24 A fundamental aim of the Plan is to protect the open countryside from unnecessary development. Without such control the cumulative impact of development would lead to an irretrievable erosion of the landscape character and quality of the Forest of Dean District. Many policies of the Plan seek to ensure that only development requiring a countryside location will be permitted in the countryside, an approach supported by Government advice in published Planning Policy Guidance. This policy is intended to ensure that development which may be permitted in the open countryside is able to be satisfactorily accommodated within it. The basic tests as to whether a particular type of development may be permitted are found elsewhere in the Plan, (for example Policy (R)FH.6) and in other guidance (for example PPG7).
- 8.25 Where a proposed development in the countryside satisfies other policy criteria, consideration will also be required of its accessibility by means other than the car, its traffic generation implications, and the provision of safe access and any necessary parking. Small-scale business development including farm diversification can reduce the need for long-distance out-commuting and may be acceptable without alternative means of access if it would only give rise to modest additional traffic movements in comparison with uses already permitted on the site. Larger developments for employment, tourism, leisure, recreation or other purposes which would generate significant traffic movements should be located where alternative means of transport are available or can realistically be provided.
- 8.26 The Plan provides for development opportunities throughout the District in the towns and villages where employment, housing and other facilities can be provided close together. With a concentration of development in the towns and larger villages there is no general need for new development in the countryside. However, some development proposals may well require a rural location, including agriculture, horticulture, forestry, recreation, leisure and tourism. Other policies in the Plan provide for the circumstances in which these uses in the countryside may be permissible.

Conservation and Enhancement of Landscape

(R)FNE.2

Proposals for development will be expected to conserve, and where appropriate enhance, the key characteristics of their surroundings with respect to the natural and historic landscape, wildlife and natural features.

- 8.27 Within built-up areas planning policies seek to ensure that development has regard to the character of its surroundings. The same approach is appropriate to development in the open countryside, and can be

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even more essential given the generally undeveloped nature of the countryside where new buildings or uses may be potentially more intrusive.

- 8.28 The Landscape Character Appraisal of the Forest of Dean, (originally prepared in 1991), is available as supplementary planning guidance.. The Landscape Appraisal identifies 15 different areas of the District, each of which is identified on a map within the document. Each of the 15 areas has an accompanying description of the nature of the landscape, the key characteristics thereof, and the issues to be addressed in considering development or enhancement proposals. A further landscape assessment has now been prepared in conjunction with the work of the Countryside Agency referred to below. It follows the same principle as the earlier document in setting out the various landscape character types of the District. Because of this approach it is able to be used to provide guidance in assessing the potential impact of development on the landscape, just as the 1991 Appraisal is. This newer document is already an important consideration in assessing applications and its related strategy is expected to become more significant during the Plan period. Where any landscape enhancement is sought by the Council with respect to policy (R)FNE.2 then this will be based on relevant issues identified in the supplementary planning guidance on Landscape Character Appraisal, and will in all cases be compliant with the provisions of Circular 1/97 (Planning Obligations).The District Council will have regard to this guidance in the application of the above policy, and will also take account of the contents of the Character Map prepared by English Nature and the Countryside Agency. The Landscape Types identified by the Council in the 1991 Appraisal are listed below.

List of Landscape Character Areas

1. Forest of Dean
2. Forest Fringes and Settlements
3. Undulating Plateau
4. Wye Valley
5. St. Briavels Common
6. Severn Escarpment: Upper Wooded Slopes
7. Severn Escarpment: Lower Undulating slopes
8. Severnside Grazing Marshes
9. Ridges and Valleys
10. Limestone Hills
11. Leadon River Valley
12. Rolling Agricultural Plains
13. Sandstone Hills
14. Malvern Hills
15. Hereford Country

- 8.29 Various designations have been applied to certain landscapes within the District in the past. The Structure Plan and the previous District Local Plan adopted "Special Landscape Areas" and there remains the two AONBs. The more recent designations and other studies of landscapes have focused on the nature of the various landscape types and have sought to identify the essential characteristics of these rather than to place them in some kind of hierarchy. The policy above is intended to build on this approach, highlighting that the primary consideration in evaluating proposals for development in a particular landscape will always be how well it can fit into, complement or in exceptional cases, become a positive feature in a particular landscape. The Policy therefore seeks to ensure that development will be compatible with the landscape in which it takes place. Whilst it would be wrong to say that one type of landscape is more important than another, some of the characteristics of one area may be more susceptible to change than another and there are clearly some areas which merit a high degree of protection.

- 8.30 The 1991 Landscape Character Appraisal and the Countryside Commission's (now Countryside Agency) Review of Special Status identified a large generally upland area of the District was identified as being of high landscape quality worthy of some form of national recognition. This reflected the much earlier view

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of the Hobhouse Committee in 1947 that this area shared with the Wye Valley a landscape character which then merited AONB status. This area is the focus of an on going project led by the Countryside Agency which is looking at ways in which the physical and cultural character of the area can be protected whilst enabling an appropriate scale of change. The landscape is the product of both natural and man made processes and many of its key characteristics are the result of historic patterns of settlement or other activity (eg mining). The safeguarding of these characteristics is as important as the protection of natural features and character.

Protection of Important Natural Features

(R)FNE.3

Proposals for new development will be required to retain or enhance important natural features. These include ponds, river valleys, watercourses, hedgerows and trees. Where appropriate the submission of a landscaping scheme will be required with the planning application to show how this will be achieved. Where the loss of some natural feature is unavoidable, and its loss is not so severe in itself as to render the proposal unacceptable, replacement features of an at least comparable standard will be required as part of the development proposal.

- 8.31 This policy is complementary to Policy (R)FNE.2. The latter primarily is concerned with a broader definition of landscape types and their key characteristics. An awareness of these key characteristics provides a general context for the design of development proposals to ensure that they have regard to their setting. Policy (R)FNE.3 is concerned primarily with the immediate site and surroundings of a development proposal, and the need to assess the specific features of that site.
- 8.32 The effects of new development on the landscape can be positively mitigated by ensuring that important natural features of the site are retained and enhanced wherever possible. Development proposals therefore should demonstrate how such features can be incorporated into a design, as well as showing the means by which replacement features can be provided if any are lost. New culverts should be avoided and bridges should be kept to the minimum length required for access. Opportunities for opening up culverted watercourses should be taken where appropriate.
- 8.33 In some instances a landscaping scheme will be required in the early stages of the consideration of an application to identify how a development proposal will affect important natural characteristics of a site. In the preparation of landscaping schemes, consideration must be given to the use of landform, drainage patterns, and vegetation appropriate to the site. The use of native trees and shrubs will be encouraged.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

~~(R)FNE.4~~

~~Within the Wye Valley and Malvern Hills AONBs, priority will be given to the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape. The environmental effects of new development proposals will be a major consideration whilst regard will also be had to the economic and social well-being of the areas. Development for recreation may be appropriate so far as that is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses. Major developments should be demonstrated to be in the public interest and consideration of such applications will include an assessment of:~~

- ~~1. The need for the development, in terms of national considerations, and the impact of permitting it or of refusing it upon the local economy;~~
- ~~2. The cost of and scope for locating the development elsewhere outside the AONB or for meeting the need for it in some other way;~~
- ~~3. Any detrimental effect on the environment and the landscape, and the extent to which that should be moderated.~~

~~8.34 AONB's are statutory designations, comprising areas where the landscape is considered to be of national importance, and have the highest level of protection as far as landscape and scenic beauty are concerned. The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act gives the aim of designation as 'to preserve and enhance the natural beauty, natural features, flora and fauna'. It is anticipated that this aim will be achieved inter alia by a co-operative approach by Local Authorities, landowners and other interested parties, by the preparation and implementation of Management Plans, and by strict development control.~~

~~8.35 The Wye Valley AONB was designated in 1971. It extends into the Counties of Monmouthshire, Gloucestershire and Herefordshire. Approximately 18% of the AONB (23 square miles) falls within the Forest of Dean District. In the north of the District, only a very small portion (5%) of the Malvern Hills AONB falls within the Forest of Dean District, comprising 2 square miles.~~

~~8.36 The District Council will have regard to the stated statutory purposes of AONB designation when considering proposals for development in the AONB's, together with the guidance in the above policy which reflects national planning advice with respect to major industrial or commercial development.~~

~~8.37 The District Council will continue to work closely with the Joint Advisory Committees of the two AONBs, and will co-operate in the implementation of their respective Management Plans.~~

Protection of Agricultural Land

~~(R)FNE.5~~

~~The best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1,2,3A) will be protected from development. Planning permission for development affecting such land will only be granted exceptionally if there is overriding need for the development and either:~~

- ~~1. Sufficient land of a lower grade (Grades 3B, 4, 5) is unavailable; or~~
- ~~2. Available lower grade land has an environmental value recognized by a statutory wildlife, historic or archaeological designation that outweighs the agricultural considerations.~~

~~If the best and most versatile land needs to be developed and there is a choice between sites in different grades, land of the lowest grade should be used except where other sustainability considerations suggest otherwise~~

~~8.38 Only about one third of agricultural land in England and Wales is classified as Grades 1, 2 and 3A by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This is the land which is the best and most versatile for agricultural production, and is an important resource to be protected. Development~~

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should take place on previously developed sites and on land of lower quality wherever it is possible. It is important to continue to protect sites of nature conservation interest, important open areas and other protected land areas not in agricultural use so a balance must be struck. To accommodate the future needs of the Forest of Dean it has been necessary to make a number of housing and industrial allocations on greenfield sites, some of these being on high grade agricultural land. The concept of sustainable development does not preclude the possibility of developing greenfield sites.

- 8.39 — Exceptions should only be made where the need for the development outweighs the need to protect the land in question. In judging whether or not this is the case, the Council has undertaken appropriate consultations in order to establish both the importance of the agricultural land concerned and the importance of the development proposals. This Policy will always be a fundamental consideration when considering any proposal affecting the higher grades of land, because when such land is lost from agricultural production through development it is seldom possible to consider that it will ever be returned to that use. Within the protected grades, the higher quality land will generally be given priority for protection. While at present policies such as “set aside” operate to assist in regulating agricultural production, these policies generally would enable such land to be returned to agriculture. It should not be assumed that potentially productive agricultural land may not be required to return to agriculture in future.
- 8.40 — In considering proposals for development under this policy, it will be a material consideration to assess the effect of the proposal upon the viability of the farm unit and surrounding holdings, as a development may have a serious effect by introducing, for example, incompatible uses, nuisances, or loss of important buildings or parts of a holding. All these factors can lead to a cumulative loss of productive farmland.

Protection of the Coastal Zone

~~(R)FNE.6~~

~~Proposals for development within the undeveloped coastal zone as defined on the Proposals Map will not be permitted except where essential to agriculture, for the purpose of creating or enhancing habitats for wildlife conservation, or for other development that would be permitted in the countryside. In all cases proposals should comply with criteria 1- 6 below.~~

~~Proposals for development within the developed coastal zone as defined on the Proposals Map will be permitted only where they:~~

- ~~1. — Are not within flood risk areas~~**
- ~~2. — Do not increase the risk from flooding, erosion or land instability~~**
- ~~3. — Do not require additional sea or tidal defence works prior to or over the lifetime of the development~~**
- ~~4. — Do not alter the water table~~**
- ~~5. — Do not alter the integrity of the sea or tidal defence works, or the ability of the responsible body to maintain them~~**
- ~~6. — Do not have an unacceptable impact on the conservation value of the coastal zone especially international and national designated areas.~~**

~~Where it is considered that a development would have a significant impact upon the coastal zone then an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required to accompany the proposal. Appropriate alterations to sea defences to enable planned retreat may also be permitted.~~

- 8.41 — The coastal environment is susceptible to change as a result of human activities. Current Government advice (Planning Policy Guidance 20: Coastal Planning) emphasises that development requirements should be reconciled with the need to protect, conserve, and where appropriate, improve the landscape, environmental quality, wildlife habitats and recreational value of the coast. Therefore any development along the Severn estuary must safeguard its ecological value and its conservation for the enjoyment of future generations. The Severn Estuary is a designated Ramsar Site, Special Protection Area and

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possible Special Area of Conservation. As a result the area will benefit from protection under other sections of the Local Plan. Inter Agency has resulted in a Severn Estuary Strategy and Management Plan. The District Council will continue to support and encourage the preparation of this Plan.

8.42 The eastern boundary to the Forest of Dean District from Minsterworth to Beachley is formed by part of the Severn Estuary. The coastal lowlands in this area are essentially low lying, open and rural and retain much of their natural character. It is a distinctive and very sensitive landscape which cannot easily absorb change and would be particularly vulnerable to intrusive new build development. The main exception within the coastal zone are the already developed areas, which are shown as such on the Proposals Map.

8.43 Proposals that require a coastal location will be directed to the developed part of the coastal zone where other development will also be permissible where it accords with the policies of the Plan. Within the developed coastal zone planning applications that are likely to have a significant effect on the coastal environment must be accompanied by an assessment of the environmental impact of the proposal.

8.44 The coastal zone for the Forest of Dean is shown on the Proposals Map.

Definition of the Coastal Zone

8.45 The coastal zone extends seaward and landward of the coastline. For the purposes of the District Local Plan the limit of the coastal zone in the seaward direction is the mean low water mark and the limit of the coastal zone in a landward direction is based on information supplied by the Environment Agency which uses as a starting point the area covered by the Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board. The coastal zone has been divided into two parts, the developed coastal zone and the undeveloped coastal zone. The undeveloped coastal zone is essentially open countryside where the general assumption is the need to protect the environment from unnecessary development and where policy (R)FNE.6 will apply in conjunction with other relevant Plan policies. PPG 20 states that few developments require a coastal location.

Promotion of Biodiversity

(R)FNE.7

Where development is proposed, consideration will be given to the need to conserve biodiversity and to mitigate any adverse effects of the development upon it. Encouragement will be given to opportunities to enhance biodiversity and such enhancement may become a requirement of development where an associated planning obligation or planning condition would satisfy the relevant legal tests for obligations and conditions set out in Government guidance. Where enhancement opportunities exist, emphasis will be placed upon creating or enhancing habitats and populations of species identified as priorities in the Biodiversity Action Plans for Gloucestershire, the South West Region and the United Kingdom.

8.46 It is expected by the government that Local Authorities will play a key role in the conservation of biodiversity. This can be achieved in part by the conservation and enhancement of key habitats as identified in the U.K. and South West Region Biodiversity Action Plans and in the Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan. New development will be expected where possible to provide for the planned retention of existing habitats and wildlife features. Where appropriate, the creation or restoration of habitats will be encouraged as a part of new development and in addition developers will be required to include measures for the mitigation of any adverse effects arising from their proposed development. Guidance will be sought from English Nature or other organisations about the appropriateness of particular proposals and monitoring against targets set elsewhere will be established during the Plan period.

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Nature Conservation Sites

~~(R)FNE.8~~

~~(a) International~~

~~Development not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site, proposed European site or a Ramsar site and which is likely to have a significant effect on the site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) will be subject to the most rigorous examination. Where it cannot be ascertained that the development would not adversely affect the integrity of the site it will not be permitted unless:~~

- ~~1. There is no alternative solution; and~~
- ~~2. There are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development.~~

~~Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, development will not be permitted unless it is necessary for imperative reasons of human health or public safety or for benefits of primary importance for the environment.~~

~~Where development is permitted in accordance with the Habitats Regulations, the use of conditions or planning obligations will be considered in order to avoid and minimise harm to the site, to enhance the site's nature conservation interest and to secure any compensatory measures and appropriate management that may be required.~~

~~(b) National~~

~~Development in or likely to have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest will be subject to special scrutiny. Where such development could have an adverse effect, directly or indirectly, on the special interest of the site it will not be permitted unless there are demonstrable reasons of overriding public interest.~~

~~In any case where development is permitted, harm to the nature conservation interest must be avoided where possible and minimised. The appropriate use of conditions or planning obligations will be considered in order to protect and enhance the site's nature conservation interest and to provide appropriate compensatory measures and site management.~~

~~8.47 Sites of Special Scientific Interest are areas of land or water identified by English Nature as being of outstanding value for their flora and fauna, geological or physiographical features. Since their conception in the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, statutory measures for the protection of the environment have been applied and strengthened by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1985.~~

~~8.48 There are at present 39 designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the District which are listed in an Appendix to the Plan. Some have additional actual or proposed designations which give them international importance. Sites in this category are protected not only by national legislation but by European law or international convention for example. All the above sites contribute significantly to nature conservation interests and also to the amenity and quality of the landscape of the Forest of Dean District. All International and Nationally important sites as defined in the policy are shown on the District Plan Proposals and Inset plans. The Council will work in partnership with English Nature and local conservation bodies, and with landowners, to ensure the most effective management and protection for the above sites.~~

~~8.49 As a result of both their international and national importance, the Council will give priority to protecting these sites from development. Development proposals that are likely to have a significant effect on an identified site of international, national, or regional importance will not be permitted unless there are demonstrable reasons of overriding public interest. To determine whether an application (individually or in association with other proposals) is likely to qualify as having a significant impact upon the integrity of a site, the Council will take account of advice from English Nature and other appropriate bodies through~~

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the statutory consultation process for such sites.

- 8.50 ~~If it is determined that development will adversely affect the integrity of a site (i.e. the coherence of its ecological structure and function as listed within Annex C of PPG.9), permission for development will be refused except in closely defined circumstances. The Council must be satisfied that in meeting the criteria outlined within The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 (the Habitats Regulations), there are no alternative solutions to the proposal. These may include reasonable alternatives to the proposed development itself, or different, practical approaches which would have a lesser impact. An applicant will be required to show they have considered all solutions. The Council will be mindful of advice from English Nature in determining alternative solutions.~~
- 8.51 ~~If there do not appear to be alternative solutions to a proposed development, and the proposal site does not host a priority natural habitat or species as defined in The Habitats Regulations, permission will only be granted where the proposed development has to be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, inclusive of social and economic factors. Any proposal will need to demonstrate sufficient importance to override the ecological importance of the designation. If a site hosts a priority habitat or species, and there is no alternative solution to a proposed development, the only reasoned justification for the granting of planning consent are those relating to human health, public safety, or beneficial consequences of primary importance to the environment.~~
- 8.52 ~~In cases where planning permission is granted for a development proposal which would adversely affect the integrity of a Special Protection Area or Special Area of Conservation, Annex C of PPG 9 states that compensatory measures will be required from the applicant to meet the requirements of regulation 53 of The Habitats Regulations which requires the Secretary of State to secure the overall coherence of the community-wide network of Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation.~~
- 8.53 ~~Sites of Special Scientific Interest can be damaged or even destroyed by development that takes place outside their defined boundary. Consultation will also be required for any development within the immediate vicinity of a SSSI, or where an application is likely to affect the interests of either existing or proposed site designations. Specific consultation areas around sites of international importance are to be introduced by English Nature.~~

Requirement for an Environmental Statement

- 8.54 Where a development proposal is subject to a statutory requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment under current Regulations, an Environmental Statement will be required from a professional and reputable source, to include sufficient detailed information for the likely environmental effects of the development on nature conservation interests to be properly assessed.
- 8.55 Development proposals which are not subject to statutory Environmental Impact Assessment but would be likely to have an adverse affect on the nature conservation interests that occur on a site, will be required to submit additional information in order to ascertain the impact of development proposals on sites with acknowledged nature conservation interests.

Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest

~~(R)FNE.9~~

~~Proposals for development affecting sites of local nature conservation interest will not be permitted unless:~~

- ~~1. The key features of that interest would not be damaged; or~~
- ~~2. The use proposed can be limited to times of the year which are not sensitive to the continued existence of the main habitats or species for which the site was designated; or~~
- ~~3. The social, economic or environmental benefits of the proposed development clearly outweigh the potential harm likely to be caused to sites or features of substantive nature conservation value. Where development is allowed in such cases, proposals will be required to provide compensation for those nature conservation features that would be harmed or lost as a result.~~

~~In all these cases the unavoidable harm to nature conservation interests must be minimised.~~

~~Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest are:~~

- ~~1. Key Wildlife Sites identified by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust~~
- ~~2. Local Nature Reserves~~
- ~~3. Non-statutory nature reserves~~
- ~~4. Ancient woodland inventory sites.~~
- ~~5. Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS)~~

~~8.56 Sites of Local Nature Conservation Interest comprise designations awarded by local conservation organisations such as the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, national conservation bodies such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and local authorities. Sites identified by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, known as Key Wildlife Sites, are non-statutory site designations of nature conservation interest and are judged to comprise a significant proportion of Gloucestershire's irreplaceable wildlife habitats. Non-statutory nature reserves are reserves under the management of nature conservation organisations (RSPB, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust). Ancient woodlands are of great importance for their ecological and historical value and are identified in the Gloucestershire Inventory of Ancient Woodland. The Forestry Commission should be consulted on development proposals for sites which are in or immediately adjacent to ancient semi-natural woodland or ancient replanted woodland, or in the case of proposals with a site area greater than 0.5ha, fall within 500m of such areas. Sites falling under the above designations are presently being reviewed. The bodies responsible for the review of these designations should be consulted if up to date information is required. Once the designations are reviewed, a map will be published and made available as supplementary planning guidance.~~

~~8.57 Where development proposals come forward which encompass part of or a complete Site of Nature Conservation Interest, the Council will look to the implementation of planning conditions or obligations in seeking to alleviate the effects of development on such sites. Examples of the implementation of planning conditions could include a restriction of times of operation, reducing conflicts between site operations and wildlife species that may exist on all or part of the site at certain times of the year, such as over-wintering bird populations, or, where areas of unimproved grassland may exist, it could be agreed that these areas be fenced off and protected when a prospective development takes place, together with agreeing and implementing a future management cycle and funding once development is complete. A thorough investigation of the impact of the proposed development upon the site must be carried out, in the appropriate seasons, and submitted with the planning application.~~

~~8.58 In exceptional circumstances where a proposed development is deemed to be necessary in respect of overriding public interest, or in connection with the economic or social well-being of the locality, the Council will consult with the relevant nature conservation body in respect of determining the implementation of planning obligations in respect of the provision of compensatory nature conservation features for those lost when the development is implemented. It should be noted however, that in many instances habitats cannot be satisfactorily transferred or relocated. For example, a geological feature~~

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~~could not be recreated elsewhere and some wildlife habitats could not be precisely replicated. These circumstances would need to be weighed against the benefits of permitting the development. However it may be possible to create a different form of provision of equal or greater value to that which would be lost. The aim overall is to ensure no net loss of biodiversity and to enhance it wherever possible.~~

- ~~8.59 Consideration will be given by the Council to the designation of Local Nature Reserves over the period of the Plan.~~

Features of Habitat Interest

(R)FNE.10

Proposals for development will be required to minimise the loss or significant damage to features of habitat interest. Where development is permitted which would adversely affect features of habitat interest the permission will be conditional upon securing appropriate arrangements for the necessary creation or retention and the management of the habitats concerned. Features of habitat interest include heathland, hedgerows, woodland, unimproved grass land, marshes, water courses and their flood plains, ponds, parks, disused quarries, natural rock outcrops, and green lanes and wildlife corridors which because of their linear structure are important for the migration, dispersal or genetic exchange of wild flora and fauna.

- 8.60 It is essential to protect wherever possible nature conservation features that do not fall within designated sites safeguarded by other policies of the Plan. It is recognised that the bulk of wildlife exists outside of designated sites. Reference should be made to the Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan for information about habitats requiring protection, enhancement or re creation.
- 8.61 Through the implementation of the development control process, the Council will reinforce the need to protect and enhance the nature conservation interests of development sites. This can be achieved through planning conditions, Section 106 Agreements, or when considering landscape assessment proposals for a site.
- 8.62 Developers must take account of existing features on development sites with the intention of 'working around' these features and retaining existing habitats. If it is impossible to retain existing site habitats/features, then provision should be made for the creation of new habitats elsewhere on the development site to ensure there is no net loss of biodiversity. European protected species are identified in the Annex of the Habitats and Species Directive and their protection is contained in the Conservation (of Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994.
- 8.63 The District Council will seek to complement this proposal through the designation of Tree Preservation Orders and highlighting the need for hedgerow/pond management where they form important habitat features. Agricultural hedgerow removal is controlled by the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. The Council will aim to ensure the retention of hedgerows identified as important under those Regulations.

Species Protection

(R)FNE.11

~~Development will not be permitted which would have an adverse effect upon a site supporting rare or endangered species protected by law, unless adequate provision is proposed to safeguard such species. Important populations of other species listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the South West Region and Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plans will be protected wherever possible.~~

- ~~8.64 Government advice and legislation highlight the need to protect and conserve the habitats of endangered species. This primarily concerns the protection of rare and endangered species as listed within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 particularly those important in a local context within the District including bats, barn owls and great crested newts. Badgers are specifically protected and developers will need to employ reputable consultants to provide the necessary specialist advice. The~~

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Council recognises the pressures put upon these species through habitat loss, pollution and changing agricultural trends and recognises the need for the protection of their dwindling numbers.

- 8.65 ~~In addition to the statutory protection of species, protection will be given wherever possible to important populations of other species listed in the above Biodiversity Action Plans. This will be achieved by a variety of methods including the application of planning conditions or agreements.~~

Severn Estuary

- 8.66 English Nature have established as a priority the preparation of Management Plans for England's estuaries as a means of co-ordinating action for the enhancement of these areas in the interests of wildlife and the local community. The Severn Estuary, a designated Ramsar Site, Special Protection Area and proposed Special Area of Conservation, is a particularly complex area in which to secure such coordination due to the very large number of bordering local authorities, across national boundaries. Its nature conservation interests have the statutory protection of the various designations but in management terms a co-ordinated approach is required because of the many and various bodies that currently share the role. The Forest of Dean District Council currently supports a group of relevant agencies, now called the Severn Estuary Partnership. In preparing a Management Plan consideration should be given to the defined coastal zones adjacent to the Estuary which are shown on the Local Plan Proposals Map and referred to in policy (R)FNE.6. In order to co ordinate the conservation issues relating to the Severn Estuary, a body known as ASERA (Association of Severn Estuary Relevant Authorities) has been formed.

Groundwater Protection

(R)FNE.12

Proposals for development will not be permitted which would adversely affect the quantity or quality of groundwater resources or the management and use of these resources.

- 8.67 ~~The Environment Agency has responsibility for conserving and managing water resources, including groundwater resources. It has prepared national and regional water resource strategies, and Local Environmental Action Plans (LEAPs). It has also prepared a 'Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater', with supporting maps defining groundwater protection zones, including identifying their vulnerability to pollution.~~

- 8.68 ~~Groundwater resources are an essential element in the provision of potable water supplies and in maintaining the base flow of rivers. Development which might affect these functions, including the proper future management of the resource, will not be permitted. The Council will have regard to the policies and information provided by the Environment Agency in assessing proposals for development and will note the fact that pollution of groundwater resources is almost invariably irrevocable.~~

Development Affecting Surface and Coastal Waters

(R)FNE.13

Proposals for development will not be permitted which would adversely affect the quality and ecology of rivers, watercourses and other bodies of water.

- 8.69 ~~Maintaining, and where this is necessary, enhancing the water quality of rivers, lakes, ponds and coastal waters is crucial to sustaining bio-diversity ensuring human health and providing for a range of uses including recreation and the economy. The Environment Agency has published guidance on best practice with respect to the management of risks of pollution or damage to the water environment arising directly from development, or via surface water or sewerage systems. In particular the disposal of surface water run off from development can be effectively managed by the adoption of sustainable drainage techniques. The Council will expect development proposals to have regard to the published advice of the Environment Agency, and will expect proposals to incorporate the recommended measures wherever possible.~~

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~~8.70 — Water bodies and coastal margins have the potential to provide facilities for water related recreation, which are growing activities. The policies for tourism, recreation and leisure provide a framework for assessing such developments. However, proposals will also need to comply with policy (R)FNE.13 to ensure the maintenance of the quality of the water body concerned.~~

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Historic Environment

Introduction

- 9.1 The historic environment of the Forest of Dean is rich and varied, a reflection of the long period of occupation by man and the exploitation of its resources of timber, water, stone, coal, mineral ores and soils. The District is particularly rich in the archaeological remains of industrial activity of all periods, including features such as quarries, mines, railways, tram roads, canals and buildings, and associated features reflecting the working of natural resources. Many of these features have largely been lost as a result of neglect or redevelopment. The lowland agricultural areas also display important buildings and features reflecting their long history of occupation and exploitation.
- 9.2 The survival of the ancient Forest of Dean, a former royal forest, is a major feature of the historic landscape in its own right. Its relatively intact survival has also resulted in the preservation of many features of historic interest, including the former railways and tram roads, and the remains of the mineral workings they served.
- 9.3 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990 provides the basis for giving enhanced protection to areas of special architectural or historic interest by designating appropriate areas as Conservation Areas. There are 26 Conservation Areas in the District, each of which displays its own individual character. They vary from nucleated agricultural settlements in the rich farmlands in the north of the District to former industrial villages in the coalfield areas of the south of the District. They are listed as an Appendix to the Plan.
- 9.4 Individual buildings of special architectural or historic interest may be Listed as such under the 1990 Act. There are around 1,450 Listed Buildings in the Forest of Dean. PPG 15, Planning and the Historic Environment, states that such buildings are a “finite resource and an irreplaceable asset”, and that there should be a general presumption in favour of the preservation of Listed buildings.
- 9.5 The overriding character of the District is one of a diverse series of landscapes carrying strong imprints from a variety of human activity. This is seen, for example, in the basic settlement pattern of the Forest Ring, in the relatively undeveloped Forest itself and in areas such as the former Chartist settlements in the North. Although the traditional Forest, with its history of timber and mineral extraction, is perhaps the area where the legacy of past activity is most apparent, there are small and large features which individually and collectively form an integral part of the overall landscape throughout the District. These features of the natural and man-made environment are to be conserved by the implementation of the policies of the Plan in line with Strategic Objective No 4. More specifically, the Plan protects certain statutorily designated areas of national significance, as well as locally important sites where careful interpretation helps to explain their historic development and particular character. There is an increasing awareness of the importance of the interrelationship of individual sites within the landscape. These matters are the subject of policy (R)FNE.2 on the Conservation and Enhancement of the Landscape, and all development proposals must take into account archaeological interests in line with policies (R)FHE.6 and (R)FHE.7.

Issues

- 9.6 The Plan must provide a framework of policies that give proper protection to retaining the historic environment, and enable appropriate enhancement, re-use and investment to take place to safeguard future preservation. There has been a significant increase in the number of conversions of historic buildings. Great care is necessary to ensure that changes do not result in the loss of important features of the original, or a change in the overall appearance of buildings and their setting. As many historic buildings and features are in the core of settlements they are frequently under pressure for alteration to accommodate the changing needs of commercial occupiers. A balance must be struck between

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supporting growth in the local economy, securing investment to aid in the preservation of the building, while ensuring that the integrity of the historic building or feature is preserved for future generations.

- 9.7 The Council has embarked upon the preparation of Character Assessments for each of the Conservation Areas in the District. The Assessments identify the principal features and the underlying character of a Conservation Area. They also identify the actions required for enhancement. As such they offer important additional guidance to the application of the Plan policies in such areas. To date five Character Assessments have been completed.
- 9.8 The Council will provide advice and guidance with respect to development proposals affecting the historic environment. A limited historic building grant scheme is available to provide financial assistance for the improvement of historic buildings. The Council has operated Town Schemes and a Conservation Area Partnership, in conjunction with English Heritage, which have provided targeted financial aid to historic building renovations. Further partnership schemes will be promoted during the Plan period. The Council will also participate in joint schemes to develop proposals for particular sites requiring positive management, such as Lydney Docks, which is an Ancient Monument. The special needs of buildings at risk are also being addressed by the Council, through the preparation of a register of such buildings, continual monitoring of their condition, and measures to promote their preservation and re-use.

Strategic Framework

- 9.9 The Plan will provide for the protection and enhancement of historic buildings and areas, and sites and features of archaeological importance. Proposals for development will be required to have regard to the importance of preserving the historic environment.
- 9.10 The Plan policies will provide the necessary provisions to enable appropriate investment in change and development affecting the historic environment which will help secure the future preservation of this finite resource.
- 9.11 The Council will continue to prepare Conservation Area Character Assessments to assist in the preservation and enhancement of such areas. Advice, guidance and where possible funding will be provided to assist proposals for development with respect to the historic environment.

Objectives

1. To safeguard the character and setting of buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest
2. To protect or enhance areas containing important groups of buildings of architectural or historic importance and sites of archaeological interest
3. To ensure that proposals for development have regard to safeguarding the historic environment.
4. To encourage the development and re use of buildings which are of historical or architectural merit in order to assist with their preservation

Policies and Proposals

Preservation and Enhancement of Conservation Areas

(R)FHE-1

~~The Council will seek to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of designated Conservation Areas and will review from time to time the need for further designations. Development which would detract from the visual, historic or architectural character of such areas or their settings will not be permitted. Consideration will be given to the use of Article 4 directions where permitted development would be likely to have an adverse effect, particularly upon a programme or scheme of conservation works, or on buildings which have been grant aided.~~

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- 9.12 ~~Areas of special architectural or historic interest can be designated Conservation Areas. Within such areas there is an increased level of control over development, including restrictions on the demolition of unlisted buildings, protection for trees, and certain works require planning permission which in other circumstances would be permitted development. These powers, together with the duty to formulate and publish proposals for preservation or enhancement, are designed to assist in the safeguarding of the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas. A full list of Conservation Areas in the District is given in an Appendix to the Plan, together with the Conservation Area Character Assessments which have been completed. There is a programme which will see the completion of further assessments early in the Plan period and these together with those already completed will form useful background guidance for developers making proposals in Conservation Areas. The latter provide additional guidance with respect to the distinctive features of Conservation Areas.~~
- 9.13 ~~New development is not precluded in Conservation Areas, but new buildings or additions must pay due regard to the need to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area. New development which would be detrimental to features which create the distinctive character of individual Conservation Areas will not be permitted. The Design Guidance prepared by the Council provides a context for the design of alterations.~~
- 9.14 ~~There are currently 26 designated Conservation Areas in the District. No new designations are proposed in this Plan. However, the Council will consider further designations, or amendments to existing boundaries, where changing circumstances dictate.~~
- 9.15 ~~In order to ensure as far as possible that new development will complement and enhance the existing character of a Conservation Area, the Council will generally seek a full application for development. Where outline applications are submitted the Council will seek sufficient additional information to fully illustrate their effect.~~
- 9.16 ~~It is open to the Council to seek controls over what would otherwise be permitted development by making a direction under Article 4 of the General Development Order. Directions could be useful where permitted development would be unsympathetic to a programme or scheme of conservation works or to buildings which have been grant aided.~~

Demolition in Conservation Areas

(R)FHE.2

~~Where buildings or walls in any Conservation Area make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of that Conservation Area, their total or substantial demolition will not be permitted unless:~~

- ~~1. All reasonable efforts have been made to sustain existing uses or to find viable new uses~~
- ~~2. Preservation in some form of charitable or community ownership is not possible~~
- ~~3. Redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community that would decisively outweigh the loss resulting from demolition.~~

~~Where the buildings or walls make little or no positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, their demolition will be permitted, but only if the demolition proposal is accompanied by fully detailed and acceptable plans for the redevelopment proposed after demolition which demonstrate that the redevelopment scheme will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.~~

- 9.17 ~~In Conservation Areas there are additional planning controls, which extend to the need to seek permission to demolish buildings and other structures. In most cases the aim will be to seek the refurbishment of buildings and their retention in order to maintain the continuity of the appearance and character of the Conservation Area. However, there will be existing buildings which can be shown to contribute little to the Conservation Area. In these circumstances, and where a replacement proposal~~

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would enhance the area, then demolition may be possible. Consent for demolition will only be given where there are acceptable and detailed plans for the redevelopment of the site. In considering proposals for demolition in Conservation Areas it will be relevant to consider the criteria set out in paragraph 9.20 below, relating to the demolition of Listed Buildings.

Alterations to Listed Buildings and their Settings

(R)FHE.3

Proposals for development involving internal or external alterations or additions to a Listed Building, or which are in close proximity to a Listed Building, will be permitted only where:

- 1. The proposal preserves the features of special historic or architectural interest which have contributed to its Listing**
- 2. The proposal will not adversely affect the setting of a Listed Building**
- 3. The proposal complements the Listed Building in design and materials.**

9.18 Buildings listed under Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 are regarded as being of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. They reflect a living record of the past in terms of the use of materials, skills, technology, land use and styles of living. Buildings which are Listed are given a special protection by statute. The above Policy does not preclude alterations or extensions to Listed Buildings, but it does require that a special duty of care should be exercised to ensure that any change is sympathetic and in character with the building, its internal spaces, its historical context and its setting. Government circulars and advice, particularly PPG.15, stress the need to consider the following matters:

1. The importance of the building, both in itself and in relation to its surroundings in the neighbourhood
2. The architectural and historic merit of the building which includes its building construction details and its importance in representing an historic period
3. The extent to which the proposed works would bring substantial benefits for the community, particularly to the economic regeneration of the area, or the enhancement of the environment and including other Listed Buildings in the area.

9.19 The Council currently operates an Historic Buildings Grant scheme which makes available limited grant aid to support the restoration of Listed Buildings. Advice on methods of repair and restoration, materials and skills available in the area are also freely available. A Conservation Area Partnership is operating in Coleford town centre as part of the Coleford Partnership. The effect of a Conservation Area Partnership scheme is to attract additional resources and higher grant levels to building repair in a concentrated area and over a short period of years. The Council will investigate the opportunities for the designation of further such partnership schemes.

Demolition Affecting Listed Buildings

~~(R)FHE.4~~

~~The demolition of Listed Buildings will be permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Exceptions will be made only where compelling evidence is available that shows:~~

- ~~1. Every possible effort has been made to repair and restore the building and to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use for the building; and~~
- ~~2. Redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community which would outweigh the loss resulting from the building demolition; and~~
- ~~3. There is no interest by prospective occupiers or purchasers following the property being offered on the open market.~~

~~Where consent for the demolition of a Listed Building is granted it will be conditional upon the appropriate archaeological recording of the building prior to demolition.~~

~~9.20 There is a statutory duty to secure the preservation of Listed Buildings. The great majority of Listed Buildings are capable of continuing beneficial use and with skilled and sympathetic treatment new development can usually be made to blend happily with the old. Guidance to local authorities on the criteria for determining whether to allow the partial or total demolition of a Listed Building is set out in central government circulars and advice, particularly Planning Policy Guidance 15: Planning and the Historic Environment. The advice stresses the need to consider the following matters in addition to those set out in paragraph 9.18 of this section:~~

- ~~1. The condition of the building, the cost of repairing and maintaining it in relation to its importance and the value derived from its continuing use~~
- ~~2. The adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use. This could, in certain circumstances, include the offer of the unrestricted freehold of the building on the open market at a realistic price reflecting the condition of the building~~
- ~~3. The merits of alternative proposals for the site. There may be exceptional circumstances where the proposed works would bring substantial benefits to the community which have to be weighed against the arguments in favour of preservation.~~

~~9.21 Applications for the demolition of most Listed Buildings have to be referred to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions for consideration. Where a consent is forthcoming it may be conditioned to prevent demolition until a contract has been signed for works to erect a replacement building. In the case where demolition or partial demolition is permitted or where permission is given for the removal of features the proper recording of the building will be required before changes are made.~~

~~9.22 The Council is empowered to take action where Listed Buildings appear to have been allowed to fall into disrepair, and will consider such action where circumstances demand it.~~

Change of Use of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Importance

~~(R)FHE.5~~

~~Where an alternative use is proposed for a Listed Building or a building of local historic or architectural importance planning permission will be granted where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will preserve the historic and architectural character of the building in its setting and that no other reasonable alternative use exists which would better safeguard the architectural or historic importance of the building.~~

~~9.23 It is sensible to keep historic buildings in active use to improve their chances of remaining in good condition. However, not all old buildings are suitable for conversion and some of the new uses proposed might be inappropriate. For instance, many former agricultural buildings are often more suitable for use for commercial and industrial purposes rather than residential purposes. The extent of alterations~~

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required for the new use, for example to provide openings in previously solid walls, and the changes to the settings of such buildings, are often incompatible with their architectural and historic character. The degree of internal and external alterations and extension required will be of primary importance when considering the acceptability of alternative uses for historic properties.

~~9.24 In addition to those buildings that are on the statutory list, the Council is able to maintain a register of buildings of local historic or architectural importance. This is likely to be commenced during the Plan period and will be an important tool in recognising the importance of locally distinctive building styles and the buildings themselves. Such buildings will be protected by the various policies of the Plan and its supplementary planning guidance.~~

~~9.25 The Council will adopt a positive attitude in considering the future use of these important buildings. In particular, a sympathetic view can be taken of potential new uses where this would assist the preservation of the building. However, regard will also be given to the advice in PPG 7 with respect to the most appropriate uses for redundant rural buildings, which suggests that commercial uses may be preferable to residential uses. Policy (R)FBE.6 identifies the criteria for the commercial re-use of rural buildings.~~

~~9.26 Many old buildings of interest have a strong relationship with their surroundings. Inappropriate development affecting the setting of these buildings can cause as much harm as an alteration or extension to the building itself, particularly where there is an extensive curtilage and other curtilage buildings.~~

Development Affecting Archaeological Sites

(R)FHE.6

Nationally important archaeological remains whether scheduled or not will be required to be preserved in-situ. Planning permission will not be granted for development which would involve significant alteration or damage to such remains or which would have a significant impact on the setting of visible remains.

Where proposals affect remains of lesser importance, planning permission will only be granted where the need for the development outweighs all other material considerations, and where appropriate and satisfactory arrangements have been made and can be implemented for the excavation and recording of any remains.

Where permitted, development affecting remains of archaeological importance must be implemented in such a manner as to minimise any adverse effect on the remains concerned.

In all matters relating to this policy the Council and the developer will be expected to take appropriate specialist advice.

Requirement to Provide Archaeological Information

(R)FHE.7

Development proposals likely to affect sites of archaeological interest and their settings or within areas of known or likely archaeological potential must be accompanied by an archaeological assessment and where appropriate the results of a field evaluation appraising the likely extent or nature of the archaeology, together with an indication of how the impact of the proposals on the archaeological remains will be mitigated. This information will be a material consideration when determining an application.

~~9.27 Known archaeological sites and areas in the Forest of Dean are recorded on the County Sites and Monuments Record which contains information on over 4000 entries. The Record includes all Scheduled Ancient Monuments, which are shown on the Proposals Map of this Plan, and also listed in an Appendix to the Plan. Such scheduled sites comprise only a small proportion (less than 2%) of the known archaeology. There is a presumption in favour of the preservation of such scheduled remains. In~~

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~~addition the Secretary of State has published guidance on the criteria which should be referred to in determining the national importance of other, as yet unscheduled, remains. English Heritage is undertaking a review of County Sites and Monuments which is leading to a significant increase in the number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments.~~

- ~~9.28 — The Plan will seek to resist development proposals which would adversely affect nationally important sites and their settings in recognition of the importance of preserving irreplaceable evidence of the past, and as an educational and tourism resource. The policy will also only allow development affecting sites of lesser importance where the need for the development outweighs the importance of the remains. In these cases development will only be allowed subject to the proper recording and/or excavation of the affected site. The Council will have due regard to the advice given in Planning Policy Guidance notes issued by the Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions in the implementation of this policy.~~
- ~~9.29 — It is important to consult the County Sites and Monuments Record at an early stage for advice and information since it offers the most comprehensive index to archaeological and historic remains in the area. Advice is available from the County Council's Archaeology Service on the archaeological implications of a proposed site. It should be noted that a separate application for consent to English Heritage will be required for any development affecting an Ancient Monument.~~
- ~~9.30 — Archaeological assessment and evaluation is sometimes recommended even if there are no known archaeological remains, for example, where the proximity of known sites, historical sources or environmental factors such as soil or geology, suggest a high probability that archaeological remains will be present. With information from a preliminary appraisal of a site, the Council and the applicant can consider how the archaeology of a site can be protected. The assessment and any field evaluation required should be prepared from reputable and qualified sources. Often the applicant can prepare sympathetic designs which minimise disturbance to the remains, and avoid the need for rescue excavations. Alternatively the assessment may pick up little of interest and all that is required is a simple watching brief. In all cases however, the preferred solution will be a design and layout which minimises the adverse impact of the development on the archaeological remains.~~
- ~~9.31 — Where it is proposed to allow development which affects an archaeological site the preferred option with respect to archaeological remains will be their physical preservation in situ. In exceptional circumstances where this is not feasible, permission will only be granted subject to satisfactory provision being made by the developer to ensure that appropriate and satisfactory provision is made for the investigation and recording of the site. Such arrangements may be specified by planning conditions or through a legal agreement, depending upon the particular site.~~
- ~~9.32 — Where development proposals affect a site with archaeological remains the District Council will always consider whether there is potential for the management and display of the remains as part of the development. In other cases the Council will support and encourage landowners and other interested groups in such proposals.~~

Historic Parks and Gardens

(R)FHE.8

Development proposals within, adjacent to, or otherwise likely to affect the setting of sites included in the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest and locally identified historic parks and gardens will only be permitted where the proposals:

- 1. Would not involve the loss of features considered to form an integral part of the special character or appearance of the park or garden; and**
- 2. Would not otherwise detract from the enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance, or setting of the park or garden.**

In granting consent, special consideration will be given to matters of design, including landscaping and visual impact, in order to preserve the character and setting of the designated area.

- 9.33 The true value of Historic parks and gardens has only recently been recognised as an important part of the national heritage which should be protected. The Forest of Dean District contains a number of historic parks and gardens, some of which are included on the English Heritage register of parks and gardens of special historic interest. These are listed in an Appendix to the Plan, together with others which at present are regarded as being of more local significance. This list of registered parks and gardens and those of local significance is likely to increase as the register is reviewed and more sites of local importance are identified by the Gloucestershire Gardens Landscape Trust and English Heritage.
- 9.34 All these sites contribute significantly to the heritage and environment of the District. They may contain parkland, ornamental gardens or kitchen gardens, and possibly may contain listed buildings, structures, or ornaments and important archaeological features. Although historic parks and gardens have no separate statutory protection, it is important to ensure that their character and setting are not adversely affected by new uses or other development proposals.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Introduction

- 10.1 The Forest of Dean District Local Plan provides a positive and pro-active approach to managing development. In order for the policies and proposals contained within the Plan to be effective in providing a long-term framework for development, they must be constantly monitored. Monitoring of policies will give an indication as to whether the Plan is achieving the aims and objectives of the District Council and highlight changing concerns and emerging issues throughout the Forest of Dean District. This process reflects Government Guidance (PPG 12 - Development Plans).

“Local planning authorities are required to keep under review the matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area or the planning of that area”.

- 10.2 A detailed framework outlining the key characteristics of policies and proposals contained within Part One of the Local Plan and implementation and monitoring indicators is set out within Local Plan Document 18 (LPD 18). This document will provide a basis for future monitoring reports published by the District Council.

Implementation

- 10.3 Policies and proposals within the Plan will be implemented through the administrative powers of the District Council in deciding planning applications. The Council receives approximately 1200 planning applications per annum. In processing these applications the Council is required to have regard to the provisions of the Plan and any other material considerations. The Forest of Dean District Local Plan is therefore pre-eminent in making decisions on planning applications. The policies of the Plan are supported by powers held by the District Council to request additional information, for example requirement for an environmental assessment where proposed development is considered likely to have a detrimental effect on the environment due to its size, nature or location. Material considerations including Government planning policy guidance and circulars and supplementary planning guidance adopted by the District Council will be considered alongside the Local Plan.
- 10.4 In order to bring forward development proposals set out within the Plan detailed investment plans will need to be prepared. These plans can be prepared and implemented by both public and private agencies. The District Council is one of these agencies and will play an important role in Plan implementation through its role in co-ordinating, promoting and enabling the actions of other public and private bodies. During the Plan period it is likely that financial resources available to the public sector will continue to be restricted. The private sector will therefore be responsible for the majority of resources invested in the District over the Plan period. In view of this assumption the Plan sets out clear guidance on acceptable forms of development and principal standards required, including contributions to the cost of additional infrastructure, local services and facilities which become necessary as a direct consequence of development proposals.
- 10.5 In processing planning applications the District Council will negotiate with applicants any changes which would limit any harmful impacts which the development may have upon the environment. This is reinforced by the use of planning conditions, obligations and agreements (Section 106 Agreements). Generally all planning permissions granted are done so subject to conditions which seek to enhance the quality of development and ameliorate any adverse effects which may result from development taking place. In addition the District Council may enter into an agreement or obligation with an applicant under Section 106 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, with the purpose of restricting or regulating development or use of land.

- 10.6 The District Council has adopted supplementary planning guidance on residential design and play area provision, further guidance has been prepared in regard to shop fronts, car parking and employment, housing and mixed use land allocations. The guidance is based upon the policies of the Plan and provides a greater level of detail than is provided within policy justification. All supplementary planning guidance adopted by the District Council will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 10.7 The Forest of Dean District Council Corporate Plan 1999 - 2004 sets out the mission of the Council. This mission seeks to:
- “Work with the community and all organisations in the Forest of Dean to ensure that the area is revitalised and the quality of life improved”.*
- 10.8 The District Council sets out to achieve this mission through the production of action plans which seek to develop a thriving economy, ensure a protected and sustainable environment and promote the social well being of the community. The strategies adopted by the District Council and strategies scheduled within the Corporate Plan period will contribute towards the implementation of Local Plan policies.
- Monitoring**
- 10.9 The main way in which the Plan will be monitored will be through the annual monitoring reports that are to be published. These will consider the easily quantified matters that need to be measured but also some of the more subjective matters where the effects of particular policies can be commented on in this way.
- 10.10 There is a well established regional monitoring network which collects data on an annual basis within the southwest. Much of the data which is relevant to Local Plans and which appears in the annual reports can and will be used for the monitoring of the Plan itself. Totals of housing constructed and types of dwellings are two examples, as would be the number of affordable homes constructed. The take up of employment land will be monitored as part of the Plan process, using similar indicators to those in the Southwest’s monitoring manual.
- 10.11 Subjective monitoring will also be used to determine how well the plan’s policies are performing. It could for example indicate the need to strengthen or delete certain policies which are shown to be under performing or not to be being used at all.
- 10.12 One major way in which the Plan will need to be measured is in the delivery of the allocated development. This can be assessed reasonably easily as the quantities of development are specified in the plan’s allocation policies and any required phasing is also made clear. The performance of the allocations made on previously developed land will be particularly important as the under achievement in this area could necessitate the review and possible bringing forward of alternative sites at present allocated to the later (2008-11) phase of the plan.
- 10.13 The Plan’s allocations for housing allow for a certain degree of flexibility especially with regard to the way in which the land allocated at Lydney is not necessarily assumed to be making its full contribution of 1250 dwellings by 2011. It will however be necessary to monitor the way in which the allocated sites are developed in order to assess densities, house types, parking provision etc. These and other measures are incorporated into the annual indicators referred to above.
- 10.14 An environmental appraisal prepared by the District Council is one of a number of methods used to monitor the performance of the Plan. The Appraisal includes 21 environmental and socio-economic indicators against which all Plan policies have been appraised. This appraisal forms an integral part of the Local Plan Review process, all policy changes will be re-appraised using the criteria and indicators set out within the environmental appraisal.

Unsaved policies are shown ~~thus~~

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Alteration and Review

- 10.15 An alteration to the Local Plan will be required where the monitoring process indicates that part or parts of the Plan have become out of date or are no longer appropriate. In these circumstances it may be necessary to review the Plan. Alternatively, if a major proposal comes forward which has not been anticipated by the Plan, an alteration may be necessary. Any proposed alteration to the Plan would be open to public consultation prior to any formal changes being adopted.
- 10.16 Under Part II of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, local planning authorities are required to keep all matters under review that are expected to affect the planning and development of their area. If at any stage there is an indication that circumstances have significantly changed and the Local Plan requires to be reconsidered then the District Council will undertake a complete review of the Plan. This would in effect mean preparing a new Local Plan with full public consultation on all aspects of the Plan. It is anticipated that a review of the Plan would be undertaken in any event approximately mid-way through the Plan period, within five years of the adoption.

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Appendix A

Summary of Large Housing Sites Available As November 2005

Parish	Site Name	Site Area	Total Capacity
Cinderford	Land At Station Street , Cinderford	3.60	100
Cinderford	Land At College Road, Cinderford	0.32	21
Cinderford	90, High Street, Cinderford	0.09	13
Cinderford	Kings House, Cinderford	0.06	6
Cinderford	Bellmaster Site, Cinderford	0.10	10
Cinderford	Cannop Foundry, Cinderford	0.58	30
Coleford	Land At 19 South Road, Broadwell	0.22	8
Coleford	Broadwell Boys Club, Broadwell	0.18	7
Coleford	Land At Wynols Court, Broadwell	0.26	10
Coleford	Field At Rear Of 27 - 41, Coalway Road, Coalway	1.03	30
Coleford	Land At Lords Hill, Coleford	0.40	9
Coleford	Linda Vista, Coleford	0.20	10
Coleford	High Meadow Farm, Coleford	0.58	6
Coleford	Land At Station Road, Milkwall	0.28	8
Coleford	Land At Forest Road, Milkwall	0.15	6
Corse	Corse Grange, Corse	0.17	7
Corse	Land At Grangebrook, Staunton	1.54	10
Drybrook	Land Adjacent Woodland Road, Drybrook	1.24	21
Huntley	Land At Orchard Golf Club, Huntley	1.04	33
Lydbrook	Land At Ex Rothdean Depot, Lydbrook	2.50	40
Lydney	Former Council Offices, Lydney	0.54	14
Lydney	Land At Primrose Hill, Lydney	0.60	8
Lydney	Former Allotment Gardens, Lydney	0.60	29
Lydney	Kings Court, Lydney	0.58	28
Lydney	Highland Inn, Lydney	0.09	10
Lydney	Land At Court Road, Lydney	0.30	11
Lydney	Land At Whitecross School, Lydney	0.21	8

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Mitcheldean	Land Off Dean Meadow, Mitcheldean	1.50	35
Mitcheldean	Land At Lining Wood House, Mitcheldean	1.86	51
Newent	Newent Garage, Newent	0.30	38
Newent	Scillonia, Newent	0.13	6
Newent	Former Co-Op Store, Newent	0.08	7
Newent	18 - 20, Broad Street, Newent	0.24	32
Newnham	Aldrex Works, The Green, Newnham	0.14	7
Newnham	Land Off Sheens Meadow, Newnham	0.72	21
Newnham	The Old Station Yard, Newnham	0.26	6
Ruardean	Land At School Lane, Ruardean	0.48	13
Ruspidge	Land Adjoining 19b, Cinderford	0.25	8
Ruspidge	Land At Peacock Lane, Cinderford	0.35	6
Ruspidge	Land At Bracken Close, Cinderford	0.45	6
Ruspidge	Land Off Hudson Lane, Cinderford	0.14	9
Ruspidge	St. Whites Farm, Cinderford	8.16	75
Ruspidge	Land At Rear Of Railway Road, Ruspidge	0.95	10
Staunton N	Land Off Chartist Way, Staunton	1.24	20
Tidenham	Park View Works, Sedbury	0.50	14
Tidenham	Land Adjacent To Bigstone House, Tutshill	1.18	44
West Dean	Dukes Travel, Berry Hill	0.26	7
West Dean	Land At Bream Woodside, Bream	0.32	12
West Dean	Site Adjacent To Princess Royal Road, Bream	0.25	8
West Dean	Land At Bream Eaves, Bream	0.37	6
West Dean	Land At Marsh Lane, Sling	0.31	8
West Dean	Land Adjoining The Miners Arms, Sling	0.63	23
West Dean	The Old Bakery, Yorkley	0.41	14
Westbury	Land Adjacent Church View, Westbury	0.32	9
Woolaston	Woolaston Village Hall, Woolaston	0.37	12

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Appendix B

List of Conservation Areas

	Designated Conservation Areas	Date Designated	
1	Alvington	15/03/1990	
2	Awre	21/09/1989	
3	Aylburton	31/01/1990	
4	Blaisdon	31/01/1990	
5	Blakeney	08/11/1979	
6	Brockweir	21/09/1989	
7	Clearwell	10/09/1981	
8	Coleford	27/03/1980	
9	Dymock	29/06/1989	
10	English Bicknor	21/09/1995	
11	Hewelsfield	31/01/1990	
12	Littledean	22/09/1988	
13	Longhope	15/03/1990	Amended 19/04/2001
14	Lowbands (Redmarley D'Abitot)	21/07/1977	
15	Lower Lydbrook	21/09/1995	
16	Lydney	04/08/2005	
17	Mitcheldean	29/06/1989	
18	Newent	27/09/1979	
19	Newland	20/12/1979	
20	Newnham	07/02/1980	
21	Pillowell	18/09/1999	
22	Redmarley	31/01/1990	
23	Ruardean	15/03/1990	
24	St. Briavels	19/07/1979	
25	Staunton (Coleford)	31/01/1990	
26	Staunton/Corse - Sniggs End	21/07/1977	Amended 19/11/2001
27	Westbury-on-Severn	29/06/1989	

Unsaved policies are shown ~~thus~~

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Unsaved policies are shown thus
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Appendix C

List of Historic Parks & Gardens

Designated Sites *

1. Clearwell Castle
2. Flaxley Abbey
3. Westbury Court Gardens

Non-designated Sites **

4. Hartpury House (Agricultural College).
5. Lydney Park.
6. Sedbury Park.
7. The Down House, Lowbands, Redmarley

* These sites are included on the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest.

** These sites are not included on the above Register, but are of great local interest, and may be suitable for inclusion on the Register at a future review.

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Appendix D

Nature Conservation Site Designations Within the Forest of Dean District

Sites of International Importance

RAMSAR Sites - Listed under the Convention on Wetlands International Importance

	Name	Grid Reference	Parish
1.	Upper Severn Estuary	SO 720060	Awre
2.	The Severn Estuary	SO 720060	Various
		SO 540890	
3.	Walmore Common	SO 745150	Westbury-on-Severn

Source: English Nature

Special Protection Areas (SPA) - Classified under the EC Directive on the conservation of Wild Birds

	Name	Grid Reference	Parish
1.	Upper Severn Estuary	SO 720060	Awre
2.	The Severn Estuary	SO 720060	Various
		SO 540890	
3.	Walmore Common	SO 745150	Westbury-on-Severn

Source: English Nature

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Designated under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive). Please refer to www.english-nature.org.uk for further information.

	Area Name	Grid Reference	Parish
1.	River Wye	ST536963	Various
		SO569335	Various
2.	Severn Estuary	ST580960	Tidenham, Woolaston
		SO640000	Lydney, Aylburton, Alvington & Awre
		SO720060	Awre
3.	Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites	SO697169	Blaisdon
		SO698169	Blaisdon
		SO672130	Littledean
		SO661166	Mitcheldean
		SO654198	Mitcheldean
		SO578087	Newland
		SO663103	Ruspidge
		SO655120	Ruspidge
		SO534023	St. Briavels
		ST546965	Tidenham
		ST547965	Tidenham
		SO605045	West Dean

Unsaved policies are shown thus

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4.	Wye Valley Woodlands	SO561155	English Bicknor
		SO556142	English Bicknor
		ST537966	English Bicknor
		ST547973	English Bicknor
		SO560155	English Bicknor
		SO544106	Newland
		SO546086	Newland
		SO540088	Newland
		SO533030	St. Briavels
		SO538040	St. Briavels
		SO546063	St. Briavels
		SO541006	Tidenham
		ST539990	Tidenham

Source: English Nature, February 2006

Sites of National Importance - National Nature Reserves (NNR's) - Declared under National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949 or Section 35 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

	Name	Grid Reference	Parish
1.	Highbury Wood	SO 540086	Newland
		SO 550140	Staunton
2.	Lady Park Wood (Part of)	SO 549140	Staunton

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) - Notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

	Name	Grid Reference	Parish
1.	Clarks Pool Meadow	SO 668061	Awre
2.	Woodgreen Quarry & Railway Cutting	SO694166	Blaisdon
3.	Malvem Hills (Chase End Hill)	SO 766472	Bromsberrow
		SO 758350	
4.	Dingle Wood	SO 562115	Coleford
5.	Puddlebrook Quarry	SO 646183	Drybrook
6.	Dymock Woods	SO 684288	Dymock
		SO 692290	
		SO 697283	
7.	Brooks Head Grove	SO 586145	English Bicknor
8.	Kempley Daffodil Meadow	SO 676301	Kempley
9.	Hobbs Quarry	SO 695194	Longhope
10.	Longhope Hill	SO 693185	Longhope
11.	May Hill	SO 695214	Longhope
12.	Lydney Cliff	SO 654020	Lydney
13.	Land Grove Quarry	SO 672185	Mitcheldean
14.	Edgehills Quarry	SO 660167	Mitcheldean
15.	Scully Grove	SO 657186	Mitcheldean
16.	Stenders Quarry	SO 659183	Mitcheldean
17.	Highbury Wood	SO 540086	Newland
18.	Tudor Bank Farm	SO 573081	Newland
19.	Collinpark Wood	SO 750278	Pauntley/Upleadon
20.	Soudley Ponds	SO 662122	Ruspidge

Unsaved policies are shown thus

Forest of Dean District Local Plan Review: Adopted November 2005, showing saved policies November 2008.

21.	The Hudnalls	SO 533030 SO 540042 SO 545046	St. Briavels
22.	Poors Allotment	SO 560990	Tidenham
23.	Pennsylvania Fields	SO 542929	Tidenham
24.	Meezy Hurst	SO 638089 SO 647091	West Dean/Ruspidge
25.	Nagshead	SO 608090	West Dean
26.	Oakenhill Railway Cutting	SO 630069	West Dean
27.	Speech House Oaks	SO 622123	West Dean/Cinderford
28.	Garden Cliff	SO 718128	Westbury-on-Severn
29.	Slad Brook	SO 564055	St Briavels

Source: English Nature, July 2000

Sites of Regional / Local Importance (Not shown on Proposals Map)

Key Wildlife Sites - Identified by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT)

	Name	Grid Reference	Parish
1.	Alvington & Aylburton Meadows	SO 614007	Alvington
2.	Keat's Grove & Clanna Wood	SO 585025	Alvington
3.	Old Park & Old Bargains Woods	SO 610040	Aylburton
4.	Priors Pool	SO 598048	Aylburton
5.	Blakeney Hill Wood North	SO 658080	Awre
6.	Upper Severn Estuary SSSI	SO 720060	Awre
7.	Blaisdon Railway Line	SO 697164	Blaisdon
8.	Blaisdon Wood	SO 699178	Blaisdon
9.	Nottwood Hill	SO 706182	Blaisdon
10.	Welshbury Hill Woods	SO 676156	Blaisdon
11.	Wood Green Quarry SSSI	SO 696165	Blaisdon
12.	Bromsberrow Bank	SO 739332	Bromsberrow
13.	Coalhill Coppice	SO 757356	Bromsberrow
14.	Hayes Coppice	SO 755347	Bromsberrow
15.	High Wood	SO 753355	Bromsberrow
16.	The Coalhill Coppice Field	SO 758357	Bromsberrow
17.	The Malvern Hills SSSI (Chase End Hill)	SO 758335	Bromsberrow
18.	Toney's Coppice	SO 748351	Bromsberrow
19.	Whites Farm Meadow	SO 718329	Bromsberrow
20.	Bulley Wood	SO 768200	Churcham
21.	Demesne & Bulley Bench Woods	SO 765203	Churcham
22.	Little Bulley Wood	SO 768197	Churcham
23.	Oakle Street Pond	SO 758179	Churcham
24.	Cinderford Linear Park	SO 646152	Cinderford
25.	Hawkwell Inclosure (Compartment 219a)	SO 640156	Cinderford
26.	Haywood Inclosure (Compartment 318a)	SO 657146	Cinderford
27.	Laymoor Quag GWT Reserve	SO 644146	Cinderford
28.	New Beechenhurst Inclosure (Compartment 497)	SO 642128	Cinderford
29.	Serridge Inclosure (Northcamp Inclosure)	SO 612135	Cinderford
30.	Speech House Oakwoods SSSI	SO 624124	Cinderford

Unsaved policies are shown ~~thus~~

Forest of Dean District Local Plan Review: Adopted November 2005, showing saved policies November 2008.

31.	Spion Kop Quarries GWT Reserve	SO 598103	Coleford
32.	Oridge Street	SO 794278	Corses
33.	School Meadow	SO 792289	Corse
34.	Corse Wood	SO 807283	Corse
35.	Fairplay Iron Mine Reservoir	SO 658164	Drybrook
36.	Mitchelean Meends GWT Reserve	SO 647180	Drybrook
37.	Puddlebrook Quarry SSSI	SO 646183	Drybrook
38.	Westbury Brook Mine Reservoir	SO 658168	Drybrook
39.	Allums Grove & Haind Park Wood	SO 682313	Dymock
40.	Castletump Meadows	SO 713279	Dymock
41.	Dymock Woods SSSI	SO 684288	Dymock
		SO 692290	
42.	Lodge Farm Meadows & Oaklea	SO 696253	Gorsley and Kilcot
43.	Longbridge Field	SO 693321	Dymock
44.	Moors Farm Field	SO 703289	Dymock
45.	River Leadon Meadows	SO 723310	Dymock
		SO 715312	
46.	Ryton Coppice	SO 730313	Dymock
47.	Spring Wood	SO 695243	Dymock
48.	Vell Mill Daffodil Meadow	SO 710314	Dymock
49.	Wigsty's Coppice	SO 703294	Dymock
50.	Woodend Coppice	SO 714301	Dymock
51.	Brooks Head Grove SSSI	SO 586145	English Bicknor
52.	Court Wood	SO 570156	English Bicknor
53.	Lord's Grove & Great Collins Grove	SO 580164	English Bicknor
54.	Mailcot Wood (Compartment 567c)	SO 562143	English Bicknor
55.	Mailcot Wood	SO 556140	English Bicknor
56.	Upper Wye Gorge SSSI	SO 560155	English Bicknor
57.	Carter's Grove	SO 798244	Hartpury
58.	Catsbury Wood	SO 790245	Hartpury
59.	Darley Wood	SO 795230	Hartpury
60.	Hartpury Meadow	SO 796245	Hartpury
61.	Rudgeley Wood	SO 790237	Hartpury
62.	Highnam Woods	SO 772199	Highnam
63.	Birdwood Coppice	SO 733187	Huntley
64.	Broomhill Wood	SO 711186	Huntley
65.	Great Adam's Wood	SO 724203	Huntley
66.	Huntley Hill Wood	SO 706192	Huntley
67.	Huntley Quarry & GWT Reserve	SO 710196	Huntley
68.	Friars Court Meadow	SO 668328	Kempley
69.	Kempley Daffodil Meadows SSSI	SO 676301	Kempley
70.	Stone Redding & Yew Tree Coppice	SO 676327	Kempley
71.	Dean Hall Coach House & Cellar	SO 672130	Littledean
72.	Morse's Grove	SO 685137	Littledean
73.	Ash Wood	SO 679212	Longhope
74.	Beech Grove	SO 692207	Longhope
75.	Colemans Wood	SO 695191	Longhope
76.	Hobb's Quarry SSSI & GWT Reserve	SO 690195	Longhope
77.	Kiln Wood	SO 695197	Longhope
78.	Marshall's Grove	SO 671201	Longhope
79.	May Hill SSSI	SO 695214	Longhope
80.	Mountjoy Wood	SO 679199	Longhope
81.	Old Farm Wood	SO 687204	Longhope
82.	Pycox Meadow	SO 679213	Longhope
83.	Sculchurch Wood & Parish Wood	SO 693197	Longhope

Unsaved policies are shown thus

Forest of Dean District Local Plan Review: Adopted November 2005, showing saved policies November 2008.

84.	Ferry Wood	SO 600167	Lydbrook
85.	Hangerberry Hill GWT Reserve	SO 598158	Lydbrook
86.	Lydbrook School Meadow	SO 604154	Lydbrook
87.	Lydney Town Marsh & Sidings	SO 636022	Lydney
88.	Naas Cliff (Lydney Cliff)	SO 655024	Lydney
89.	Upper Forge & Ten Acre Woods	SO 630049	Lydney
90.	Warren Grove	SO 656033	Lydney
91.	Edgehills Bog GWT Reserve	SO 660154	Mitcheldean
92.	Edgehills Quarry SSSI	SO 661168	Mitcheldean
93.	Horsepool Bottom GWT Reserve	SO 657165	Mitcheldean
94.	Land Grove Quarry SSSI	SO 672185	Mitcheldean
95.	Meeting Meend GWT Reserve	SO 658169	Mitcheldean
96.	Plump Hill Dolomite Quarry GWT Reserve	SO 661172	Mitcheldean
97.	Scully Grove Quarry SSSI	SO 657818	Mitcheldean
98.	Stender's Quarry SSSI & GWT Reserve	SO 659183	Mitcheldean
99.	Wigpool GWT Reserve & Pit House Pool	SO 652196	Mitcheldean
		SO 653193	
100.	Wilderness Pasture	SO 663177	Mitcheldean
101.	Woodgreens Lake & Marsh GWT Reserve	SO 630127	Mitcheldean
		SO 699254	
102.	Acord Wood & Appletree Grove	SO 702241	Newent
103.	Carswalls Wood	SO 743268	Newent
104.	Conigree Court Bank	SO 707256	Newent
105.	Ell Brook Meadows	SO 730262	Newent
106.	Gorsley Meadows	SO 686261	Gorsley and Kilcot
		SO 687252	
107.	Grinnell's Wood & Price Grove	SO 756261	Newent
108.	Hay Farm Wood	SO 696225	Newent
109.	Kilcot Wood	SO 697245	Gorsley and Kilcot / Newent
110.	Mantley Chase Orchard	SO 718254	Newent
111.	Newent Woods	SO 705221	Newent
112.	Norman's Wood Daffodil Meadow	SO 724237	Newent
113.	Norman's Wood (East)	SO 727238	Newent
114.	Norman's Wood (West)	SO 727236	Newent
115.	Springbank	SO 702254	Gorsley and Kilcot
116.	Staunton Coppice	SO 782300	Newent
117.	Stonybridge	SO 710259	Newent
118.	Astridge Wood	SO547088	Newland
119.	Bigswear Woods SSSI (including Wyeseal & Slip Woods)	SO 546060	Newland
120.	Cadora Grove	SO 535085	Newland
121.	Great Lambsquay Wood & Little Eddie's	SO577091	Newland
122.	Wood Highbury Wood SSSI	SO 540086	Newland
123.	Noxon Pond	SO 583065	Newland
124.	Swan Pool & Furnace Grove	SO 541107	Newland
125.	The Grove (including Cadora Grove)	SO 536073	Newland
126.	Bessy's Wood	SO 680112	Newnham
127.	Newnham Haie Bog	SO 674106	Newnham
128.	Round Wood & Long Wood	SO 677116	Newnham
129.	Betty Daw's Wood GWT Reserve	SO 696284	Oxenhall
130.	Greenaway's Wood	SO 697278	Oxenhall
131.	Gwen & Vera's Fields GWT Reserve	SO 696277	Oxenhall
132.	Hay Wood, Little Hay Wood & Shaw	SO 688272	Oxenhall
133.	Common Hereford & Gloucestershire Canal (Oxenhall Section)	SO 713265 SO 709277	Oxenhall

Unsaved policies are shown thus

Forest of Dean District Local Plan Review: Adopted November 2005, showing saved policies November 2008.

134.	Holder's Farm Daffodil Meadow	SO 704276	Oxenhall
135.	Oxenhall & Brandhill Woods	SO 688283	Oxenhall
		SO 684277	
136.	Park Wood	SO 690279	Oxenhall
137.	Collinpark Wood GWT Reserve	SO 747276	Pauntley
138.	Collinpark Wood SSSI	SO 750278	Pauntley
139.	Herridges Wood	SO 734298	Pauntley
140.	McKecknie's Daffodil Bank	SO 728304	Pauntley
141.	Poolhill Wood	SO 734293	Pauntley
142.	Redlea Farm Wood (Ashbed Wood)	SO 739294	Pauntley
143.	Darkham Wood	SO 741299	Redmarley
144.	Downhouse Coppice	SO 774307	Redmarley
145.	Glynch Brook Meadows	SO 761325	Redmarley
146.	Grove Copse	SO 745313	Redmarley
		SO 743306	
147.	Hazeldine Wood	SO 753322	Redmarley
148.	Princehill Wood	SO 751299	Redmarley
150.	Glasp Farm Fields (The Tump)	SO 607174	Ruardean
151.	Pinchfield Wood	SO 772205	Rudford
152.	Prior's Wood	SO 774206	Rudford
153.	Spark's Gutter	SO 774203	Rudford
154.	Foxes Bridge Bog GWT Reserve	SO 630125	Ruspidge
155.	Foundary Woods	SO 665107	Ruspidge
		SO 667105	
156.	Lightmoor Ponds	SO 642122	Ruspidge
157.	Meezy Hurst SSSI	SO 638089	Ruspidge
		SO 647091	
158.	Soudley Ponds SSSI	SO 662112	Ruspidge
159.	Blakes Wood	SO 558118	Staunton (Coleford)
160.	Dingle Wood SSSI	SO 562115	Staunton (Coleford)
161.	Knockalls Inclosure, Bunjumps Wood & Birchen Wood	SO 540118	Staunton (Coleford)
162.	Rodge (Buckstone) Wood & Staunton Meend	SO 542124	Staunton (Coleford)
163.	Quarry Wood GVT Reserve	SO 550055	St. Briavels
164.	Slade. Leyshall & slade bottom Woods	SO 570053	St. Briavels
165.	The Hudnalls SSSI	SO 533030	St. Briavels
	(including The Tuffs & The Nedge)	SO 540042	St. Briavels
166.	The Tuffs, Redhill Grove & Mocking Hazel Wood	SO 545046	St. Briavels
167.	Wyeseal & Slip Woods	SO 545060	St. Briavels
168.	Castle Hill & Cherry Woods	SO 715210	Taynton
169.	Grove Wood	SO 741210	Taynton
170.	Rock's Wood (North)	SO 718223	Taynton
171.	Tuns Wood	SO 714215	Taynton
172.	Dean's Road	SO 772202	Tibberton
173.	Holder's Wood	SO 768202	Tibberton
174.	Ban-Y-Gor Wood	ST 540968	Tidenham
175.	Beachley & Sedbury Salt Marshes	ST 551920	Tidenham
176.	Beachley Grassland	ST 545922	Tidenham
177.	Caerwood SSSI	ST 547956	Tidenham
178.	East Wood GWT Reserve	SO 561001	Tidenham
179.	Ladysmith	ST 563943	Tidenham
180.	Lancaut GWT Reserve	ST 541960	Tidenham
181.	Lancaut Salt Marsh	ST 532960	Tidenham

Unsaved policies are shown thus

Forest of Dean District Local Plan Review: Adopted November 2005, showing saved policies November 2008.

182.	Lippets Grove GWT Reserve	SO 54202	Tidenham
183.	Lower Wye Gorge SSSI	ST 548983	Tidenham
		ST 537967	
184.	Park Grove	ST 555946	Tidenham
185.	Pennsylvania Fields SSSI	ST 542929	Tidenham
186.	Poors Allotment SSSI	ST 560990	Tidenham
187.	Redding Well Alder Wood	ST 570982	Tidenham
188.	Ridley Bottom GWT Reserve	ST 563985	Tidenham
189.	Shorn Cliff & Caswell Wood SSSI	ST 540990	Tidenham
190.	Shorn Cliff & Caswell Wood SSSI (Part)	SO 540005	Tidenham
191.	Wimberry Quarries GWT Reserve	SO 594121	Tidenham
192.	Wimberry Slade	SO 595123	Tidenham
193.	Heaver Piece Wood	SO 752267	Upleadon
194.	Severn Estuary & Upper Severn Estuary SSSI (See GVT schedule for sites)	SO 665035	Various
195.	Broughton's Wood	SO 706147	Westbury-on-Severn
196.	Garden Cliff SSSI	SO 718128	Westbury-on-Severn
197.	Merestones	SO 723167	Westbury-on-Severn
198.	Walmore Common SSSI	SO 745150	Westbury-on-Severn
199.	Severn Estuary SSSI	ST 598982	Woolaston
200.	Woolaston Lime Coppice	SO 571005	Woolaston
201.	Cannop Bridge Marsh GWT Reserve	SO 609113	West Dean
202.	Cannop Ponds & Woods	SO608110	West Dean
203.	Fairmoor Green	SO 612095	West Dean
204.	Moseley Green (Compartment 257a)	SO 635089	West Dean
205.	Nagshead & Barnhill Plantations	SO 605090	West Dean
206.	Nagshead SSSI (including Fetter Hill & Fairmoor Green)	SO 608090	West Dean
207.	Oakenhill Railway Cutting SSSI	SO 630079	West Dean
208.	Princess Royal Tip, Bream	SO 613064	West Dean
209.	Russell's Inclosure	SO 625093	West Dean
210.	Russell's Inclosure Bank	SO 625090	West Dean
211.	Russell's Inclosure (Compartment 542b - East)	SO 619090	West Dean
207.	Russell's Inclosure (Compartment 542a - West)	SO 615087	West Dean
207.	Vallets Wood	SO 610120	West Dean
208.	Vallets Wood (Compartment 156a)	SO 608122	West Dean
209.	Christ Church Gorsley churchyard	SO687258	Gorsley and Kilcot

Source: Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. Key Wildlife Sites Schedule, July 2000

Non -Statutory Nature Reserves - RSPB Reserves

	Name	Grid Reference	Parish
1.	Highnam Woods	SO 772199	Highnam
2.	Nagshead & Bamhill Plantations	SO 605090	West Dean

Source: Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. Key Wildlife Sites Schedule, July 2000

Unsaved policies are shown thus

Forest of Dean District Local Plan Review: Adopted November 2005, showing saved policies November 2008.

Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) - Sites qualifying for RIGS designation in the Forest of Dean District as identified by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. (Not shown on Proposals Map)

	Name	Grid Reference
1.	American Cinema Quarry	SO 654198
2.	Bailey Gate	SO 644189
3.	Beacon Hill Quarries	SO 666152
4.	Bearse Farm Quarry	SO 572052
5.	Bixhead Quarries	SO 598108
6.	Bluerock Quarry	SO 653108.
7.	Brinchcombe Tunnel Outcrop	SO 652109
8.	Bromsberrow Sand Quarry	SO 73803280
9.	Chase End Hill	SO 75653565
10.	Chimney Scowles	SO 652106
11.	Dark Hill Quarries	SO 594084
12.	Euroclydon	SO 643187
13.	Flaxley Quarry	SO 694151
14.	Gatcombe Cliffs	SO 683057
15.	Hay Farm Quarry	SO 69722220
16.	Howbeech Slade Quarry	SO 647090
17.	Larnsquay Quarry	SO 581090
18.	Lea Bailey Mine Adit	SO 644195
19.	Nailbridge Quarry	SO 644165
20.	Newnham Cliffs	SO 689112
21.	Parkend Railway Cutting	SO 616081
22.	Puzzle Wood	SO 578092
23.	Reads Quarry	SO 691191
24.	Ruspidge Halt	SO 651126
25.	Sedbury Cliffs	SO 558935
26.	Shakemantle Sand Quarries	SO 651112
27.	Shakemantle Quarries	SO 651112
28.	Shakemantle Road Cutting	SO 651113
29.	Shapridge Quarry	SO 676161
30.	Soudley Railway Cutting	SO 655104
31.	Stallion Hill Gulley	SO 71512405
32.	Staple Edge Quarries	SO 648116
33.	The Beeches Quarry	SO 659183
34.	Tintern Quarry	SO 531006
35.	Upper Boxbush Cutting	SO 68042075
36.	Woodgate Pits	SO 71352309
37.	Yartle Farm	SO 68742124
38.	Stowe Green Quarry	SO 565065

Source: Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, July 2003