

4. Strategic Vision for the Area

	Objective in Core Strategy	Outcomes in Sustainable Community Plan	number
4	Facilitate regeneration- to support a stronger more sustainable economy in a better quality environment	A place with a strong prosperous and diverse economy	4
5	Creating safer communities with better facilities	A place where communities feel safe and are safe A place where everyone can access the services they need	2,5

How will the objectives be achieved?

"To be a thriving and sustainable community"

4.3 Creating thriving and sustainable communities is all about making the present communities more attractive for living and working in and encouraging a range of activities that make the best use of the area's natural attributes. It is about providing for new growth in a way that contributes to a stable long term future for the area, while retaining its distinct qualities and reducing the carbon footprint. Viewed separately, the towns and villages in the Forest of Dean are all small and exist within the strong influence of other larger centres. Taken together they can develop in a complementary manner to the greater benefit of the district. The southern three towns have a strong inter dependence as do the nearby large villages. An example of this is that two towns have hospitals providing for the bulk of the district. Another is that the one of the biggest employment sites in the district is at Mitcheldean, one of the largest villages. The services, employment and other facilities on offer over the range of settlements is critical to the maintenance of thriving communities and the further development of them will be supported by this Core Strategy. Settlements not so closely linked to the forest core are just as important to their surroundings and the Core Strategy provides the context for their continued contribution to a more sustainable future.

4.4 In implementing the vision it will be essential to ensure that the transport network is developed in a safe and sustainable manner, both to serve new development and to improve its long term sustainability.

1. Providing quality environments

Providing quality environments throughout the district- to protect the environment for the benefit of the community and in order to attract new businesses: The Core Strategy will protect the environment by guiding the location of development and by requiring high standards of design. It will require development that is more energy efficient and provides a proportion of its energy through renewable means.

4.5 Using the natural and historical attributes of the area and respecting its landscapes and built forms is central to protecting and enhancing the environment. There are many protected areas within the district and these and its wider landscapes provide much of the area's identity. They include parts

4 . Strategic Vision for the Area

of two AONBs⁽¹⁾. The Forest of Dean itself, its landscapes and culture, is the key to much of the area's identity but there are several other landscapes of great significance (eg Severn Vale) with their own cultural and historical identities. The Core Strategy must maintain or improve the understanding of these. Many will be protected for their own sake and as part of the need to "market" the assets of the district to achieve the changes needed. The recognition, safeguarding and protection of the natural and historical assets of the area must be the starting point for its revitalisation. One example are the AAP's proposals for Cinderford which rely on the attractive forest location for their maximum effect. Another example of longer term sustainable regeneration is at Lydney where the harbour has been much improved to the point where it is already an important and attractive visitor destination. The Core Strategy seeks to improve the environment and make much more of the waterside location of Lydney in order to broaden its economy and achieve higher levels of investment. All of these proposals are based on using the natural assets of the area to the full, whilst co ordinating the delivery of change to make the best use of available resources for infrastructure.

4.6 Increased energy efficiency and the use of increased recycling are promoted within the LDF and at a national and county level. Waste management has a direct impact on the quality of the environment. The use of better standards of construction for new buildings and improvements to existing ones where possible are also promoted locally through LDF policy as well as by national and regional policy.

4.7 The quality of the environment is monitored in a variety of ways and the impact of development is also monitored while ensuring that changes do not have an adverse impact. Enhancement will also be achieved as part of the development process and by the implementation of improvement programmes and will be monitored accordingly.

2. Develop the local economy including tourism

Develop a more self contained and diverse local economy including tourism- to address out commuting and enable more sustainable transport patterns while providing a greater range and number of jobs, and improving the services and facilities that are accessible:

The Core Strategy contains strong policies for the development of the local economy especially in the towns of Cinderford and Lydney. It will enable new more diverse forms of mixed development. The service base of the towns will be improved by better retail and other facilities. A wide range of economic development is encouraged, together with enhanced educational provision, in a way that will ensure that the towns do not unduly compete with one another. The planned changes can be monitored through the policies below and by recording the permissions granted for various use, the nature of the workforce (type of job, educational attainment of persons of working age etc) and the extent of out commuting.

4.8 The economy of the area shows some traditional characteristics which mean it has been and still is vulnerable to sectoral change such as the decline in manufacturing, and before that extractive industry (e.g. coal mining). A broader base and a closer relationship to the natural assets of the area (for example using the setting of sites as part of their attraction for new forms of business) will be promoted through the Core Strategy. Diversification to match the needs and aspirations of residents will also be important, and will be promoted through the availability of land in suitable locations. Town centres provide employment while being the focus of the towns themselves and the strategy will

1 Areas of Outstanding natural beauty