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1 Introduction

1.1 This is one of a series of background papers which have been prepared by Wyre Forest District Council to support the submission of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD and to help inform the examination process.

1.2 The paper draws together elements of the evidence base and also responds to key issues raised from the recent consultation on the pre-submission publication version of the documents.

New Housing under Construction, Stourport-on-Severn



2 Population and household projections

2.1 Early results from the 2011 Census show that the population of Wyre Forest District has shown only a very modest increase over the last 10 years with an increase of only 1.1% to total 98,000 people. Worcestershire as a whole has increased in population by 4.4%. Redditch, Bromsgrove and Worcester City have all seen increases of over 5%.

Population Change 2001-2011

District	Population 2001	Population 2011	Difference	Percentage change
Bromsgrove	87,800	93,600	5,800	+6.6
Malvern Hills	72,200	74,600	2,400	+3.3
Redditch	78,800	84,200	5,400	+6.9
Worcester City	93,400	98,800	5,400	+5.8
Wychavon	113,000	116,900	3,900	+3.5
Wyre Forest	96,900	98,000	1,100	+1.1
Worcestershire	542,100	566,200	24,100	+4.4

2.2 As the above table shows, Wyre Forest District had the lowest actual increase in population at 1,100 people. In terms of the age profile of the district, the growth has occurred almost entirely in the over 60 age group which has seen a 30% increase over the 10 year period. Those over 60 years of age now outnumber those under 20 by 4:3. There has been a very small growth in the 0-4 and 20-24 age groups but this has been negated by an almost 10% fall in the school-age population. The main working age population (20-60 years) has fallen by 8% overall. The following table shows the age profile in more detail.

Population change by age group

Age group	2001	2011	Difference	% change
0 -4 years	5,150	5,300	+150	+2.9
5 - 9 years	5,650	5,000	- 750	- 13.3
10 - 14 years	6,150	5,400	- 750	- 12.2
15 - 19 years	5,650	5,500	- 150	- 2.7
20 - 24 years	4,850	5,100	+250	+5.2
25 - 29 years	5,700	5,300	- 400	- 7.0
30 - 44 years	20,500	18,500	- 2,000	- 9.8
45 - 59 years	21,550	19,700	- 1,850	- 8.6
60 -64 years	5,600	7,800	+2,200	+39.3
65 - 74 years	8,450	11,600	+3,150	+37.3
75 - 84 years	5,650	6,300	+650	+11.5
85 - 89 years	1,350	1,700	+350	+25.9
90+ years	650	800	+150	+23.1

2.3 The above table shows that by 2011, 29% of the population were 60 or over. Research has shown that much of this increase has come from in-migration with people keen to retire to the Wyre Forest. This is especially true of people from Birmingham and the Black Country.

2.4 Since the 2001 Census the number of households in Wyre Forest District has risen by 2,700 to approximately 43,000. Over this time the average household size has fallen from 2.4 to 2.28 persons. This roughly equates to 5 new households for every 2 people added to the local population. Virtually all of the increase has been in single person households. Between 2001 and 2011 another 2,872 dwellings were added to the housing stock. The latest household projections available (2008-based) show a projected increase of 6,000 households over the plan period (2006-26) with most of this growth expected to be from single-person households.

2.5 The Adopted Core Strategy policies DS01 and DS05 aim to deliver 4,000 net additional homes over the plan period. This figure evolved having regards to the formerly emerging West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) which set a requirement for the District of 4,000 dwellings (ie. 200 per annum) for 2006-26. This is the **minimum** level of new dwellings which the plan seeks to deliver for the district during the plan period. The Council promoted such growth through the Examination in Public on the basis that it fitted well with the strategic aim of focussing a higher level of growth in the West Midlands conurbation including Birmingham and the Black Country as well as suiting local circumstances. The Planning Inspector concluded that the Black Country and Birmingham will continue to deliver new housing and jobs at the above-trend levels anticipated in the formerly emerging WMRSS.

2.6 At the time of the Examination into the Core Strategy (summer 2010), the 2006-based household projections were available and these showed a projected increase of 8,000 households over the plan period. However, the Inspector concluded that it would be premature to conclude that the Core Strategy had seriously under-estimated the number of dwellings required. However, he thought it would be wise for the Council to closely monitor actual household formation alongside new dwelling delivery so that, if an apparent and serious mismatch between the two did occur, the strategy could be subjected to a review.

2.7 Since the start of the plan period in 2006, it is estimated that the number of households in Wyre Forest has increased by approximately 1,000 and over this time another 1,069 dwellings have been added to the housing stock. Therefore, at the current time, there is no evidence that housing provision is not keeping pace with household formation rates. Detailed monitoring of house types built is also undertaken and this shows that between 2006 and 2012, 68% of completions were of one or two bedrooms, thus catering for the smaller household.

3 Housing Need

3.1 In early 2011, the 6 Worcestershire Districts commissioned GVA to undertake an update of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). In total the SHMA suggests that there will be a requirement for between 3,240 and 7,050 additional dwellings in the district between 2011/12 and 2029/30 to meet the demands generated by new household formation. This equates to a need for between 170 and 370 new dwellings a year. This level of requirement factors in the historic supply of new housing between 2006 and 2011. The higher level of projected household growth and therefore dwelling requirement is generated as a result of a linking of forecast job growth with an ageing population. The population projection underpinning this level of growth therefore assumes a reversal of historic trends of a net out-migration of people from the authority and a net inflow in order to balance jobs and residents. The future review of policies will need to carefully consider the implications of meeting forecast job growth through new development and the continued role that commuting of residents into the authority may play if supported through the provision of sustainable infrastructure.

3.2 An analysis of population and household projections includes a detailed breakdown by age and household type. This shows that the population will age significantly over the plan period. It is projected that the number of older person households (those over current working age) will rise from 22% to as much as 36% by 2030. A rising demand for smaller properties based on a projected increase in couple and single-person households, many of which will be elderly, is likely. There is also projected to be an increase in the number of older family households which suggests there will be a continued demand for larger family housing. There is also a good supply of this type of housing, some of which is under-occupied. However, there will still be a requirement for this type of housing.

3.3 The most recent housing trajectory (SHLAA update 2012) estimates that housing completions will average almost 370 dwellings over the next 4 years before dropping back to 250 a year until 2021. This is at the top end of the estimated dwelling requirement given in the SHMA (170 -370 dwellings). Post 2016, it is expected that the Adopted Core Strategy will be reviewed. It should be noted that the SHMA (GVA2011) findings are not intended to directly challenge the District's figure of 4,000 dwellings 2006-26 as this has already been fully considered through the Core Strategy Examination process.

3.4 The SHMA also looks at the District's existing stock profile. The HSSA (Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix(2010) shows the following stock breakdown: 33% detached, 42% semi-detached (the highest in Worcestershire), 18% terraced and 7% flats. 15% of this stock is affordable. An analysis of housing completions shows that 11% of net completions 2001-06 were affordable with this figure rising to 21% in 2006-11, giving an average of 15% over the 10-year period. The SHMA analysis of the waiting list together with stock availability showed an annual need for affordable housing of 210 dwellings. It is estimated that 48% of newly forming households in Wyre Forest cannot afford to access market housing. The SHMA estimates that 17% of housing provision up until 2031 should be affordable in order to meet this need. Analysis of those on the waiting list shows that 60% require 1-bed accommodation, 29% require 2-bed, 9% require 3-bed and 2% require 4-bed. There is very little turnover of family sized housing in the social sector. One of the biggest issues facing the Wyre Forest is the quality of its housing stock with almost 20% being classed as non-decent. The 2011 West Midlands stock condition survey showed that 38% of private sector stock is unfit.

3.5 The Adopted Local Plan (2004) policy H.10 sought the provision of up to 30% affordable housing on sites of 15 or more dwellings or over 0.5 Ha in size. This was then amended by Adopted Core Strategy policy CP04 which seeks the provision of 30% affordable housing on sites of 10 or more dwellings within Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn and 30% on sites of 6 or more dwellings in Bewdley and the rural areas. This was in order to increase the number of affordable units coming forward via section 106 agreements as large numbers of schemes were coming forward for just below the threshold at 14 units. Policy CP04 also allows for this percentage to be reduced if a viability assessment proves that 30% affordable housing provision would undermine the development's viability.

3.6 The following table gives details of applications which have been approved since the start of the plan period which provide affordable housing (other than 100% affordable housing developments).

Developments providing Affordable Housing via S.106 Agreements

Location	Application no.	No. of open market dwellings	No. of affordable dwellings	Percentage affordable	Comments
Castle Locks, Castle Road, Kidderminster	06/1242	46	0	0	Original agreement was for 12 affordable (shared ownership) flats, but flats were not viable for RSL to take on, therefore off-site contribution of £180k agreed. Works finally completed once buyer found for partially completed scheme.
Baldwin Road, Stourport-on-Severn	05/0481	26	10	28%	Local Plan site - scheme not implemented - developer in administration - permission now lapsed.
Vale Road, Stourport-on-Severn	09/0509	45	0	0	No provision on-site as not suitable in a retirement flats complex. Off-site contribution shown to not be financially viable.
Franchise Street, Kidderminster	07/0362	59	25	30%	Miller Homes scheme later amended to provide 48 market and 26 affordable (35%). Now completed.
Morgan Matroc, Bewdley Road, Stourport-on-Severn	07/0469	105	45	30%	Scheme amended to 74 market and 24 affordable (24.5%) at reserved matters stage. Now under construction.
Former depot, Stone	07/0299	22	9	29%	Green Belt conversion scheme. Site sold and permission has now lapsed.
Land off Puxton Drive, Kidderminster	10/0633	46	25	35%	Greenfield site being developed by Bellway - due to complete late 2012.
Clensmore Street, Kidderminster	11/0163	174	49	22%	Phase One underway. Viability assessment has been subject to independent verification.
Former Carpets of Worth site, Severn Road, Stourport-on-Severn	11/0534	143 (127)	16 (32)	10% (20%)	Reserved Matters approved subject to outstanding issues being resolved with EA, NE and highways. Viability assessment has been subject to independent verification. % affordable housing depends on grant funding being available.
Former British Sugar Site, Stourport Road, Kidderminster	12/0146	220	30	12%	Outline approval of phase 1 subject to section 106 agreement. Reduced amount of affordable housing due to viability issues.

Location	Application no.	No. of open market dwellings	No. of affordable dwellings	Percentage affordable	Comments
Former nursery site, Belbroughton Road, Blakedown	12/0114	23	19	45%	Rural housing site has approval subject to section 106 agreement. Viability assessment has shown that 45% affordable housing is the best that can be achieved in the current financial climate.

3.7 It can be demonstrated that since the adoption of the Core Strategy, developers have used the viability clause in CP04 to justify a reduction in the percentage of affordable housing provided.

3.8 In addition to affordable housing provided through section 106 agreements alongside market housing, there have been a number of 100% affordable housing schemes approved since 2006. The following table provides details of affordable housing completions since April 2006.

Affordable Housing Completions

Location	No. affordable dwellings	100% site or via S.106	Year of completion
Brindley Arms, Stourport-on-Severn	8	Via s.106 agreement	2006/07
Doverdale/Coronation Way, Kidderminster	17	100% affordable	2007/08
Freeman Court, Parry Road, Kidderminster	8	100% affordable	2007/08
Horsefair, Kidderminster	25	100% affordable	2007/08
Adjacent Vale Business Park, Stourport-on-Severn	29	100% affordable	2007/08
Gaymore Road, Cookley	5	100% affordable	2007/08
Lichfield Basin, Stourport-on-Severn	15	Via s.106 agreement	2008/09
Franchise Street, Kidderminster	20	Via s.106 agreement	2008/09
Windsor Drive, Kidderminster	37	100% affordable	2008/09
Longfellow Green, Kidderminster	27	100% affordable	2008/09
Oxford Street, Kidderminster	6	100% affordable	2009/10
Wilton Avenue, Kidderminster	30	100% affordable	2009/10
Whittal Drive, Kidderminster	7	100% affordable	2009/10
134 Franche Road, Kidderminster	14	100% affordable (supported housing)	2009/10
Franchise Street, Kidderminster	6	Via s.106 agreement	2009/10
Lichfield Basin, Stourport-on-Severn	3	Via s.106 agreement	2009/10
Martley Road, Stourport-on-Severn	27	100% affordable	2010/11
Wordsworth Crescent, Kidderminster	1	100% affordable	2010/11
Canterbury Road, Kidderminster	1	100% affordable	2010/11
Lichfield Basin, Stourport-on-Severn	2	Home Buy	2010/11

Location	No. affordable dwellings	100% site or via S.106	Year of completion
East Street, Kidderminster	2	100% affordable	2011/12
Land off Puxton Drive, Kidderminster	25	Via s.106 agreement	2011/12
Former Wribbenhall School, Bewdley	46	100% affordable housing	2011/12
Churchfields, Clensmore Street, Kidderminster	15	Via s.106 agreement	2012/13

3.9 Out of the 376 affordable homes completed since the start of the plan period, 94 (25%) have been provided by private developers via a section 106 agreement. Despite the lowering of the thresholds for the provision of affordable housing, viability assessments are likely to be used more often to show that provision of 30% affordable housing will render a development unviable. With potential housing allocations in the Site Allocations and Policies DPD and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD being on brownfield sites, the likelihood of lower percentages being offered by developers is high. Lowering the threshold to 10 in Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn and to 6 elsewhere in the district, will help to deliver some affordable housing on sites that would have come in just underneath the previous threshold but 30% provision is unlikely in the current economic climate. Also, the number of 100% affordable schemes being developed is likely to fall with grant funding harder to attract. At October 1st 2012, there were 122 affordable dwellings under construction with 106 not yet started. Since 2006, the % of affordable housing completions has varied from only 3% of total completions in 2006/07 up to 39% in 2008/09. It has been above 30% for 4 out of the 6 years, mainly helped by 100% affordable schemes.

New Affordable Housing, Kidderminster



4 Housing Supply

4.1 The Adopted Core Strategy has an annual requirement for 200 dwellings (net of demolitions). Housing completions (net of demolitions) have averaged 209 since 2006. The following table shows the total number of completions by parish.

Completions by Parish 2006-12

Parish	Number of dwellings built (gross)	Number of dwellings demolished	Number of dwellings built (net)
Kidderminster	769	125	644
Stourport-on-Severn	397	11	386
Bewdley	119	2	117
Wolverley	43	4	39
Rock	20	5	15
Churchill & Blakedown	19	4	15
Broome	17	2	15
Chaddesley Corbett	8	0	8
Ribbesford	5	1	4
Kidderminster Foreign	4	1	3
Stone	4	1	3
Upper Arley	3	0	3
Rushock	2	0	2
Total	1,410	156	1,254

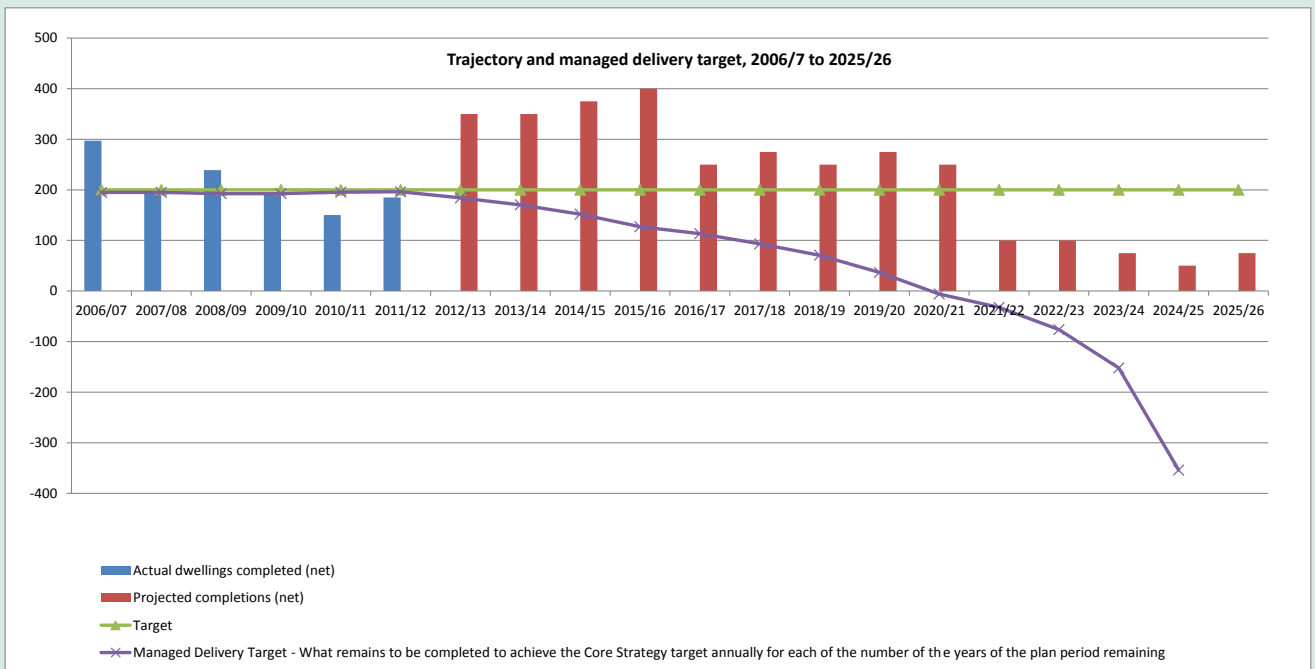
4.2 The above tables shows a large number of demolitions in Kidderminster over the last 6 years. Redevelopment schemes by Wyre Forest Community Housing has seen the demolition of 3 blocks of flats at Windsor Drive (44 dwellings) and 5 blocks of maisonettes at Grasmere Close (69 dwellings), both in the Churchfields area. There are no other major housing clearance schemes in the pipeline.

4.3 The latest Strategic Housing Land Availability Report (SHLAA) was published in August 2012 and gave an updated position as of April 2012 on housing supply in the District. There were 234 dwellings completed during 2011/12 with 49 demolitions, giving a net increase of 185 dwellings. Since 2006, net completions have averaged 209 dwellings demonstrating that even in a building slump completions remain on target. The number of new permissions coming into the supply during the year was 420. This high number was almost entirely due to regeneration sites in the Churchfields area of Kidderminster gaining planning approval. These sites are now well underway. There were 1,245 dwellings (net) with either full or outline approval, of which 231 were under construction at 1st April.

4.4 During 2012/13, it is estimated that over 300 dwellings will be completed. There are no more large-scale demolitions planned in the next few years. Large sites (those with 25 or more dwellings) are due to complete during the year at Vale Road Stourport-on-Severn (Churchill Retirement Homes) and Puxton Drive Kidderminster (Bellway Homes) whilst high numbers of

completions are expected to come through at Grasmere Close (Kier Homes) and Clensmore Street (Bellway Homes) in Kidderminster and Bewdley Road (Redrow Homes) in Stourport-on-Severn. The Grasmere Close site is for 100% affordable housing.

4.5 The housing trajectory gives an update on the projected completions up until the end of the plan period in 2026. It shows a total capacity of approximately 4,400 dwellings. It takes into account the estimated capacity that could come forward on sites included in the Site Allocations and Policies DPD and the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD but does not include an allowance for windfalls coming forward in future years.



5 Housing and the NPPF

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012. It places an emphasis on a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the role of planning in facilitating economic growth. One of the 'core planning principles' (paragraph 17) is to encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed. This is also a key aim of both of the DPDs. The Adopted Core Strategy established the strategic policy framework setting out broad locations for development and the amount of development required. This meant that a number of sites put forward by landowners during the SHLAA process were eliminated as potential development sites. The majority of new development is directed towards previously developed sites in Kidderminster and Stourport-on-Severn.

5.2 One of the key aims of the NPPF is to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes. It states at paragraph 47 that to significantly boost the supply of housing, Local Planning Authorities should:

- Use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the Housing Market Area.
- Identify, and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites, sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of housing against their housing requirements, with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase this buffer to 20%.
- Identify a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6 - 10, and where possible, years 11 - 15.
- Illustrate the expected rate of housing delivery through a housing trajectory for the plan period and set out a Housing Implementation Strategy demonstrating how a 5-year supply of housing land will be maintained.
- Set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances.

5.3 Wyre Forest District Council considers that it falls within those authorities who have a good record of housing delivery and thus a 5% buffer is appropriate. The housing trajectory shows that since 2006, despite a slow market, housing delivery has averaged over the 200 dwellings (net of demolitions) required. A five year supply plus a 5% buffer would equate to 1,050 dwellings. The trajectory shows that Wyre Forest District expects to deliver 1,725 dwellings over the next 5 years.

5.4 Paragraph 159 of the NPPF states that 'LPAs should have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area.' They should:

- Prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assess their full housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries.
- Meet household and population projections, taking account of migration and demographic change.
- Addresses the need for all types of housing, including affordable housing and the needs of different groups in the community (such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to build their own homes).

- Cater for housing demand and the scale of housing supply necessary to meet this demand.
- Prepare a SHLAA to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability and economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period.

5.5 The NPPF also makes provisions for the identification of a windfall allowance based on historic evidence. Historically, within the District, windfalls have made a significant contribution to housing supply although there is not currently a windfall allowance in the Core Strategy as this was adopted prior to the NPPF's publication. (PPS3 did not allow for windfalls.) The District Council could perhaps consider introducing a windfall allowance when the Core Strategy is next reviewed. This is not considered by officers to be a significant issue at the current time as there is a healthy 6.5 year land supply (April 2012).

5.6 Windfall approvals since April 2006 have been analysed. Until PPS3 (June 2010 revision) took garden land out of the definition of previously developed land, there were significant numbers of dwellings approved in side and rear gardens. A number of these permissions are still to be implemented. The following table shows windfall approvals since the start of the plan period. Garden land development is classed as BFR.

Windfall Approvals since 2006

Year	A Gr	B Gr	B FR	B OB	C Gr	C FR	C FE	C OB	R FE	R FR	R OB	Total no.
2006/07	0	0	19	0	7	16	8	23	5	25	158	261
2007/08	0	4	33	6	13	16	1	60	150	26	159	468
2008/09	12	0	10	1	12	7	7	3	0	37	70	159
2009/10	0	0	15	15	7	0	65	6	0	19	38	165
2010/11	0	3	1	6	9	4	1	7	0	6	85	122
2011/12	10	0	0	0	8	4	8	20	0	28	291	369
Total	22	7	78	28	56	47	90	119	155	141	801	1544
Average p.a	4	1	13	5	9	8	15	20	26	23	133	257

A - previously undeveloped land for 10 or more dwellings; B - previously undeveloped land for less than 10 dwellings

C - conversion; R - redevelopment; Gr - greenfield; FR - former residential; FE - former employment; OB - other brownfield

5.7 The table shows that there have been 78 approvals for dwellings in side or rear gardens prior to the change in the legislation. Many of the residential redevelopment schemes (RFR) involved not only the demolition of the original dwellings but the building of dwellings in the previous dwelling's grounds. This would now be contrary to policy. By far the highest number of windfalls approved are those involving the redevelopment of 'other brownfield' sites such as land at Clensmore and Wribbenhall First School. Once the two DPDs are adopted, the numbers of large windfalls (10+ dwellings) being approved should tail off considerably. There will still be small sites coming forward which may involve redevelopment for flats but most will be infill or conversion schemes for only a few dwellings.

6 Conclusion

6.1 In conclusion, Wyre Forest District Council has a proven track record of housing delivery, even remaining on target during the recent housing slump. The Adopted Core Strategy has a target of 200 dwellings a year 2006-2026. The net housing provision in the first 6 years has averaged 209 dwellings (net of demolitions). There were around 300 dwellings under construction at April 1st 2012. Officers therefore consider that there is no need for a change in the housing policy approach as set out in the Site Allocations and Policies DPD and Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan DPD.

6.2 The requirement for affordable housing remains a difficult issue. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2012) estimated that 17% of future housing provision up to 2030 should be affordable. Approximately 15% of the current housing stock is affordable. Since 2006 the percentage of affordable dwellings out of total gross housing completions has averaged 26%. Without the many 100% affordable schemes coming forward, this percentage would have been much lower. With reductions in grant funding, the number of affordable dwellings being delivered is likely to fall and this will need to be carefully monitored.

6.3 As a result of responses made to the pre-submission publication version of the Site Allocations and Policies DPD, it is proposed to make a minor amendment to the Sites for Residential Development Policy, SAL.DPL1. This will allow small windfall developments to come forward on previously developed sites allocated for residential development on the Proposals Map, within the three towns, including Bewdley. As stated in Policy DS03 of the Adopted Core Strategy, Bewdley's housing will be limited *primarily* to the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs on allocated sites. There are, however, limited opportunities for small infill developments of less than 6 dwellings where the threshold for affordable housing provision as set out in Policy CP04 would not be reached. These small windfall developments would either be conversions of buildings or parts of buildings or small redevelopments of, for example, redundant commercial buildings or garage blocks. It should be noted, however, that these limited opportunities would bring with them viability issues due to their previously developed land status and the proximity to or location within the Conservation Area.