The South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy
Summary of the Preferred Options Document
Open to Public Consultation from 19 September to 31st October, 2008

The South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy
Orchard House
Farrier Street
Worcester
Tel 01905 722233
Email contact@swjcs.org
www.swjcs.org

Why not join our online community?

Images, left to right:
Malvern Hills, Worcester City, Evesham riverside

Towards
The Big Plan

Planning Our Way to 2026

www.swjcs.org
1.0  Why have a joint Core Strategy?
2.0  What is the Joint Core Strategy Preferred Options Document?
3.0  What is our spatial vision?
4.0  What are the themes on which our objectives are based?
5.0  What principles do we apply to make any development more sustainable?
6.0  How did we go about finding sustainable locations?
7.0  Where are we proposing development?

Worcester and it’s surrounding area
Malvern
Droitwich Spa
Evesham
Tenbury Wells
Upton Upon Severn
Pershore
The Villages of South Worcestershire

8.0  What else is included in the Preferred Options?

Policy CS13 – Mix of Housing
Policy CS14 – Meeting Affordable Housing Needs in South Worcestershire
Policy CS15 – Rural Exception Sites
Policy CS16 – Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
Policy CS17 – Employment Protection and Generation
Policy CS18 – Shopping and Leisure
Policy CS19 – Energy Efficiency and Renewable
Policy CS20 – Managing Flood Risk
Policy CS21 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy CS22 – Open Space
Sustainability Appraisal

9.0  How do we intend to implement the Strategy?
10.0  How can you Comment on the Preferred Options?
1.0 Why have a joint Core Strategy?

1.1 According to the draft Regional Spatial strategy between 2006 and 2026, South Worcestershire will need to accommodate 24,500 dwellings (9,100 in Wychavon, 10,500 within the vicinity of Worcester and 4,900 in Malvern Hills) together with 183 hectares of land for offices, factories and warehouses (33 in Malvern hills, 81 within the vicinity of Worcester and 69 in Wychavon). This would require supporting amenities such as shops, schools, open spaces, health and other community facilities. A transport network would also be required to make services and amenities easily accessible, ideally without resorting to the car. (i.e. it needs to be sustainable).

1.2 In order to plan effectively for this growth Malvern Hills, Worcester and Wychavon Councils have joined together to prepare a document called 'The Joint Core Strategy for South Worcestershire'. The Joint Core Strategy will aim to ensure that the future development of South Worcestershire is planned in a sustainable manner.

2.0 What is the Joint Core Strategy Preferred Options Document?

2.1 This document is the next stage in the production of our Joint Core Strategy. It carries forward and builds on the responses with residents, businesses and other interested parties on the ‘Issues and Options’ document published in November 2007. The purpose of that consultation was to identify, with the help of those groups the main planning issues which will face our area over the next 18 years and to suggest options for addressing these issues.

2.2 This document sets out details of the options upon which we would welcome your views. It has been written taking into account:

> Feedback from continuous community involvement;
> Assessment against national, regional and local policies;
> Evidence gathered from a wide range of studies and strategies; and
> The Sustainability Appraisal (see paragraph 8.3).

2.3 This is a summary which gives a flavour of the contents of the Preferred Option and what each proposed policy aims to achieve. It does not include the detailed wording or all the relevant policy criteria. However, if you wish to complete and return a comments form please refer to the full version of the document.

3.0 What is our Spatial Vision?

3.1 By ‘Spatial Vision’ we mean looking forward to what South Worcestershire should be like in the future, and perhaps more importantly meeting the needs and aspirations of the people who live, work or visit the area. It needs to be based on the safeguarding the unique character of South Worcestershire and reflect how we wish to see our area develop up to 2026.
The proposed vision:

South Worcestershire in 2026 will offer a significantly higher quality of life than today, providing a basis for future development into the middle of the 21st century.

The greatest change will be at Worcester where housing and employment underpinned by investment in services and infrastructure, including environmental, social and transport, will establish the historic, cathedral and University City as a vibrant sub-regional centre. This will allow it to fulfil the role of a thriving retail, employment, education, leisure and tourist centre.

Significant positive changes will have taken place in the main towns of Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Malvern, which will continue to function as important service centres for a wider area.

Kidderminster, Upton-upon-Severn, Pershore and some Category 1 and 2 Villages will also have benefited from growth to meet local employment and housing needs.

All growth, most noticeably in the urban extensions, will be characterised by locally distinctive, exciting and innovative designs, incorporating efficient construction techniques. A forward looking approach to development will provide people with the opportunity to access work, shopping, health and leisure facilities without needing to rely solely upon the use of a car.

Overall commuting outside South Worcestershire will have reduced due to the marked investment in high technology industries within the Central Technology Belt.

More residents throughout South Worcestershire will be enjoying an active life courtesy of a comprehensive network of open spaces and corridors, focused on the Rivers Avon, Severn and Teme.

There will remain at the heart of the area’s character the traditional rural economy of farming and horticulture which will have been safeguarded and promoted as part of the specific rural developments that will have added to the vitality of the main villages.

Development, where everyone has access to decent affordable homes, jobs, health, education and community facilities, will have been accommodated in ways which reduce our carbon footprint, as well as protecting and enhancing the area’s natural beauty, its water environment, historic buildings, landscape and cultural heritage, and providing a diverse landscape that is adaptable to the impacts of climate change.

By doing all of this there will be a higher quality environment in South Worcestershire to make it an even better place to live, work and enjoy life.
4.0 What are the themes on which our objectives are based?

4.1 In order to achieve the vision we have developed our objectives based on the themes in the Community Strategies for the three districts.

These are:

**Stronger Communities** (Location of new housing and employment, reducing the need to travel and improving access by public transport, cycling and walking).

**Meeting the Needs of all Generations.** (mix of house types, affordable housing and access to opportunities for play, sport and recreation).

**Economic Success that is shared by all.** (Maintain Worcester as major retail, leisure, university and tourist centre; to develop thriving, vibrant and self-sufficient towns; protect, and enhance existing employment and attract new jobs; support farming and horticulture).

**A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow.** (Efficient design of buildings and use of land which respects our built heritage; protect, restore and enhance biodiversity and landscape character; reduce energy consumption and manage flood risk).

**Improving Health and Well-being.** (Provide and protect healthcare provision and green spaces; promote opportunities and access to a range of training and education).

**Communities that are safe and feel safe.** (To reduce crime and fear of crime; to ensure that schools, places of worship, health facilities, policing and other important community facilities are accessible to all).

5.0 What principles do we apply to make any development sustainable?

5.1 Sustainable development is defined as “Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. It is important to ensure that future development is considered in the context of our sustainability objectives. The creation of valuable public spaces, the promotion of building design to a high standard and the creation of distinctive developments are central to creating spaces and places that are valued by the local community, and should be built to a high construction standard.

5.2 In order to do this we are proposing an overarching policy on sustainable development. Policy CS1 will require all development to:
- be related in character, function and scale to the associated settlement;
- be of high quality design and construction;
- protect against flooding;
- ensure appropriate utilities and community facilities are provided;
- safeguard and enhance established landscape character, respect the built heritage and establish networks of open space;

6.0 How did we go about finding sustainable locations?

6.1 We have developed a Location strategy (policy CS2) based on a settlement hierarchy. At the top is Worcester which is identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy as a “Settlement of Significant Development”, and will be the focus for development. Beyond Worcester the urban areas and market towns should deliver growth on a smaller scale. Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Malvern fit into this category as they provide a wide range of services and employment opportunities. In terms of service provision and function, the towns of Pershore, Tenbury Wells and Upton-upon-Severn lie somewhere between the main towns and the villages. Finally the villages are categorised depending on the range of services and facilities they offer and access to public transport.

6.2 Utilising the evidence at our disposal we have created 8 spatial strategies (Policies CS3 to CS10).
7.0 Worcester City and surrounding areas (Policy CS3 – see diagram 1).
Worcester City is the County town and administrative centre for Worcestershire. It is recognised as being the location for major growth, but this needs to be achieved without losing its historic nature and rural setting.

We believe this can be achieved by locating development in the following order:

> 3200 homes on existing sites within the city boundary.
> 300 new homes between Kilbury Drive and Swinesherd Way immediately outside the city boundary.
> 500 new homes to the north west of Fernhill Heath outside the Green Belt together with new shops, social, health and community facilities along with an expanded first school.
> **Development extending** the existing built up area to the west/north west of the city made up of 3,500 new homes; 15 hectares of land for offices, factories and warehouses and a new district centre with shops, healthcare, community and leisure facilities, and primary school to meet the needs of the new area. In addition provision for the emergency services and a secondary school to serve the wider area.

> **Development to the south/south east** of the city made up of 3,000 new homes; 25 hectares of land for offices, factories and warehouses and a new district centre with shops, healthcare, community and leisure facilities, and primary school to meet the needs of the new area. In addition provision for the emergency services and possibly a small secondary school to serve the wider area.

### 7.2 In order to accommodate this growth it is essential that a modern, efficient transport system is implemented.

The strategy allows for:
- Dualling of the Southern Link Road to include a new pedestrian/cycle bridge by the railway line;
- Improvements to both junctions 6 and 7 on the M5.
- Possible new rail halts at Fernhill Heath, Rushwick, Battenhall/Norton and a new Worcestershire parkway station at Norton. These would need to include signalling improvements.
- Further Park and Ride sites at Grove Farm, A38 (south), A449 (Claines) and A4444 (Whittington) and at Worcestershire parkway.
- By-pass for Fernhill Heath
- New City Centre Bridge and seven high quality bus corridors.
- Quality pedestrian and cycle routes.

### 7.3 What else can we expect in the Worcester of 2026?

- The city centre would be the focus of expansion for shopping, leisure, tourism and offices.
- Education based at the new University of Worcester campus and at Worcester College of Technology.
- Significant improvements to the riverside and Cathedral square.

### 7.4 And on the edge of the City we envisage the following developments of regional importance to enhance the status of Worcester within the West Midlands region:

- A Regional Investment (offices, factories, and warehouses) Site on approximately 25 hectares of land near junction 6 of the M5 to cater for major high technology developments.
- A Community Sports development at Hindlip to include indoor cricket school, major football, tennis and hockey centres, multi purpose sports hall, 50 metre swimming pool and championship Golf Course.
- Specialist Criminal Justice Employment Centre based on the West Mercia Police Headquarters at Hindlip. This would provide offices for people working within the justice sector.
Employment requirement on 'Greenfield' land = 17ha

Housing requirement on 'Greenfield' land = 1,600 dwellings

Summary

Legend

SWJCS Area Boundary
Urban Area
Category 1, 2, 3 Village
AONB
Proposed Park & Ride Site
A Road
B Road
Railway Line
Railway Station
Flood Zone
Sewage Works (cordon sanitaire)
Preferred Option Housing Growth
Alternative Option Housing Growth
Employment Growth
Retail Growth

Spatial Diagram 2: Malvern

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office (c) Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. WDC Licence No. 100024324 (2008)

Herefordshire

Hanley Swan

Legend

SWJCS Area Boundary
Urban Area
Category 1, 2, 3 Village
AONB
Proposed Park & Ride Site
A Road
B Road
Railway Line
Railway Station
Flood Zone
Sewage Works (cordon sanitaire)
Preferred Option Housing Growth
Alternative Option Housing Growth
Employment Growth
Retail Growth

Summary

Housing requirement on 'Greenfield' land = 1,600 dwellings
Employment requirement on 'Greenfield' land = 17ha
7.5 Malvern (Policy CS4 – see diagram 2).

The constraints relating to the town by the large amount of common land, historic character and the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lead to limited areas suitable for growth.

However, we consider development should be accommodated in the following manner:

> To the north east of the town, in the vicinity of Newland but east of the railway line to accommodate some 1,100 homes and 10 hectares of land for offices, factories and warehouses together with a new primary school;

> To the south of Townsend Way, east of Mayfield Road, for 500 dwellings and 7 hectares of land for offices, factories and warehouses together with an extension of Townsend Way.

7.6 Accessibility to Malvern from the surrounding rural areas will be enhanced through:

> Improving the railway stations and the rail services by upgrading the single sections of track from Hereford to Worcester.

> Introduction of Rail Park and ride.

> Bus priority measures within the town;

> Additional and improved cycle and pedestrian routes

7.7 What else can we expect to see in the Malvern of the future?

> One or two large non food shopping areas in the town centre;

> two neighbourhood police posts;

> a larger ambulance station;

> More cemetery facilities and allotments;

> Public open space and recreation facilities, and

> Possible redevelopment of the QinetiQ site.
7.8 Droitwich Spa (CS5 – see diagram 3).

Due to limited land being available within the existing built up area, nearly all the growth will need to happen outside the existing development boundaries. We believe there are some locations which meet our criteria without jeopardising the role of the Green Belt.

These are:
- To the south mixed use development including about 1500 homes and 10 hectares of land for offices, factories and warehouses at Copcut Lane, and greenfield sites either side of Chawson Lane.
- 250 homes north of Pulley Lane.

7.9 What else can we expect in the Droitwich Spa of the future?
- Improved public transport to Worcester and Birmingham;
- 2,900 m² of new town centre shops.
- Additional and improved cycling and walking routes;
- Increased parking at the railway station;
- Expansion of Droitwich High school;
- Additional police posts.
Spatial Diagram 4: Evesham

Legend
- Urban Area
- Category 1 Village
- Village
- A Road
- B Road
- Railway Line
- Railway Station
- River
- Housing Growth
- Employment Growth
- Retail Growth
- Flood Zone

Summary
- Housing growth on 'Greenfield' land = 2,300
- Employment growth on 'Greenfield' land = 10ha

7.10 Evesham (Policy CS6 – see diagram 4)
The need to protect existing open spaces, avoid flood areas together with the limited amount of available previously developed land means that the majority of growth will have to be provided on the edge of the town as follows:

- 1,500 new homes to the East and within the A46(T) bypass on either side of Offenham Road;
- 800 new homes to the South West of Pershore Road at Hampton
- 10 hectares of land for offices, factories and warehouses adjacent to Vale Business Park.

7.11 What else can we expect to see in the Evesham of the future?

- 7,400 m² of new town centre shops.
- Improved parking facilities at the railway station;
- New first schools at Hampton and Bengeworth
- New cycle and pedestrian river crossing at Hampton;
- Enhanced hospital provision;
- Extend the police section station and provide two new neighbourhood police posts, and
- Improvements to the High Street.

Above top: Evesham riverside with cornfields and sculpture - an accessible biodiverse public open space.
Above middle: Market Square is a public space within a historic setting.
Above: New development at Four Pools Industrial Estate.
7.12 Tenbury Wells (Policy CS7 – see diagram 5)

For its population the town has more services than would be expected, but this reflects its important role as a service and commercial centre for a much wider area, and its close relationship with Burford north of the Teme. However, housing growth will be of a modest scale and the main aspiration will be to ensure that the development adds to the rural character of the town.

Therefore, there will be:

- 100 new homes to the South West.
- Development of the former cattle market with shops, offices and community facilities.
- More frequent bus services and transport initiatives to make the town more accessible.

Regular flooding of the river Teme prevents large scale development.
7.13 Upton Upon Severn (Policy CS8 – see diagram 6)

The town also, for its size, has a large range of facilities reflecting its service role for a larger rural area. There is little land in or immediately around the town that can be developed because of flooding. Therefore limited growth is suggested as follows:

> 50 homes at Tunnel Hill and 50 homes at Holly Green/Ryall;
> a small growth in jobs at the marina and small workshops and live work units in Tunnel Hill;
> Shopping development will take place in the town centre;
> Accessibility will be improved by enhanced bus services and other transport initiatives including cycling and walking routes.
7.14 Pershore (Policy CS9 – see diagram 7)

In considering the directions of growth for the town recognition has been given to the significant issues relating to physical and natural constraint. In particular the views into and out of the town, the historic settlement pattern, the flood plain of the River Avon, and Allesborough Hill.

- 450 new homes to the North East either side off Wyre Road;
- 400 new homes to the North off Station Road;
- 150 new homes to the South West off Three Springs Road;

Therefore, development is located as follows:
- 10 hectares of land for offices, factories and warehouses adjacent to Keytec 7.
- 2,900 m² of new town centre shops.

7.15 In order to ensure that sustainable communities are created the following will be required:

- Completion of an access road to the Wyre piddle by-pass from Keytec 7;
- Enhanced public transport links between Worcester, Evesham and Cheltenham;
- Provide more parking at the railway station, and improved links from the station to the town centre;
- Improvements at Pinvin crossroads (A44/B4082);
- Support the development of Pershore College and High School.
7.16 **The Villages of South Worcestershire (Policy CS10 – see diagram 8).**

In directing growth to our villages consideration will be given to those that are the most sustainable and can meet small scale residential development in terms of infrastructure and services. This will involve:

- 1,550 new homes in small developments within or adjacent to villages with the best range of local facilities and public transport services;
- Small scale, maximum 500m², office, factory or warehouse developments.
- Using all the powers available to resist the loss of community facilities in villages and providing new services and facilities wherever possible;
- Improving travel links and public transport is a priority, and community and environmentally-friendly transport options such as cycling and car sharing will be promoted.
8.0 What else is included in the Preferred Options?

8.1 The remainder of the document consists of 12 general policies, which we consider are required to deliver the strategy.

8.2 Government advice is that the Joint Core Strategy must not duplicate national or regional guidance, but general policies can be included to address the key issues affecting South Worcestershire. These are as follows:

**Policy CS 11 - Infrastructure Delivery**
The section proposes a framework to ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure. It includes an indication of how the new legislation relating to a new developer contributions towards the provision of infrastructure called the ‘Community Infrastructure Levy’ would be developed.

**Policy CS 12 - Moving Around South Worcestershire**
A significant change in how we get about is required. This policy seeks to ensure that residents, visitors and workers can access the facilities they need by the safest and most convenient form of transport. This means that new developments are accompanied by the enhancement of walking, cycling and public transport facilities so reducing the need to travel by car. In rural areas community transport initiatives will be supported.

**Policy CS 13 - Mix of Housing**
The delivery of sufficient high quality housing of the right type and mix in the most sustainable locations is essential to promote sustainable communities, and is a key priority. It is important that new housing meets the needs of the local community. We have evidence from local and sub-regional housing assessments to establish the general type of accommodation that needs to be provided in our area to create mixed communities. This policy indicates how this will be achieved, including setting a threshold that on sites of 5 or more dwellings an appropriate mix of housing should be provided on-site.

**Policy CS 14 - Meeting Affordable Housing needs in South Worcestershire**
The cost of dwellings relative to incomes, and household formation (e.g. single occupancy), means that the demand for affordable housing is increasing. The Policy proposes that all new residential development contributes to the provision of affordable housing as previous policies with a higher threshold have failed to halt the rise in need for affordable housing. Up to 40% should be affordable with a further 10% in the form of low cost market housing. Affordable housing will be provided on-site for developments of 5 units or more, and a financial contribution for off-site provision will be required for developments of less than 5 dwellings.

**Policy CS 15 - Rural Exception Sites.**
The second part of the policy sets the framework for how affordable housing will be provided in those rural areas where a local need is evident, but no housing development is proposed through the Preferred Options.

**Policy CS 16 - Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**
We need to make appropriate provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople having regard in the first instance to the outcomes of an assessment of Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs. The policy sets the framework for how sites will be identified in the future. Identifying sites first consideration will be given to the limited expansion of existing publicly controlled gypsy sites.

**Policy CS 17 - Employment Protection and Generation**
The South Worcestershire economy has high levels of economic and entrepreneurial activity. Employment sites are under sustained pressure for redevelopment for alternative uses that achieve higher land values, particularly housing. This policy sets the framework for the provision of additional employment land and how employment sites will be protected.

**Policy CS 18 - Shopping and Leisure**
This policy focuses retail and leisure development on existing centres in order to minimise travel by car and strengthen their attraction. It also aims to protect local shops. There is reference within the policy to the role of Worcester as the retail centre serving a large proportion of the county. New shopping and leisure sites will be identified through a City Centre Action Area Plan.

**Policy CS 19 - Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy**
We have adopted an approach that combines a reduction in the level of energy required by households and businesses with measures to increase the use of renewable energy sources.
The completed Comments Form should be submitted on-line or returned to The Joint Core Strategy Team, Orchard House, Farrier Street, Worcester WR1 3BB by 31st October 2008

Policy CS 20 - Managing Flood Risk
Within South Worcestershire flood risk is a significant issue, and has been taken into account in identifying broad areas of growth. We have adopted an approach that seeks to reduce the risk of flooding, and lays down criteria that any development would need to meet in order to be allowed. We need to do further work in assessing flood risk within our area before deciding on any areas on which to build. It is anticipated that from this will emerge a strategy that extends the general principles behind Worcester’s long-established flood protection policies across our three districts.

Policy CS 21 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
The green networks of South Worcestershire are important to maintain linkages of biodiversity for the movement of wildlife and to enhance people’s access to the natural environment from Worcester and towns within South Worcestershire. The policy has been informed by the strong public support for protecting, enhancing and re-creating important biodiversity sites, and seeking contributions to achieve it, as well as to continue to develop a network of linked greenspace.

Policy CS 22 - Open Space
The policy seeks to ensure that open spaces will be improved through the protection and enhancement of existing areas and the development of new high quality, varied and well connected provision, in accordance with local provision standards.

8.3 Sustainability Appraisal.
A Sustainability report has been published for consultation alongside the Preferred Options Document. It sets out the results of a sustainability appraisal on the Core Strategy. The appraisal examines the likely effects of the options against economic, social and environmental objectives. The purpose is to ensure the policy options support the principles of sustainable development.

9.0 How do we intend to implement the Strategy?
9.1 In order for the Preferred Options to be achieved many organisations and individuals will have to contribute through their policies and work programmes. Infrastructure will be funded through agencies (such as Severn Trent, County Council) capital programmes, legal agreements with developers and Government funding.

9.2 We will be monitoring the progress on implementing our plan each year, and we will publish this in the form of an Annual Monitoring Report.

10.0 Your Comments
10.1 We would like to know whether you agree with the Preferred Options for our Joint Core Strategy, or feel we should consider other ideas. Your views will help us to revise the Preferred Options ready for submission to the secretary of State next year. We would also welcome your comments on the Sustainability Report.

10.2 A full copy of all the relevant documents and the Comments Form can be viewed at:
Customer Service Centre, Farrier Street, Worcester WR1 3BB
Worcester Library, Forgate Street, Worcesterr WR1 1DT
Wardon Branch Library, Cranham Drive, Wardon WR4 9PA
St. John’s Branch Library, Bromyard Rd, Worcester WR2 5AX
Malvern Library and Customer Service Centre, Worcester Rd, Malvern WR14 2HU
Tenbury Wells Library and Customer Services Centre, Teme Rd, Tenbury Wells, WR15 8AA
Upton-upon-Severn Library and Customer Services Centre, School Lane, Upton-upon-Severn, WR8 0LE
Droitwich Community Contact Centre, 44 High Street, Droitwich Spa, WR9 8ES
Evesham Community Contact Centre, Abbey Road, Evesham WR11 4SB
Pershore One Stop Library, Civic Centre, Pershore WR10 1PT
Droitwich Spa Library, Victoria Sq., Droitwich Spa, WR9 8DQ
Evesham Library, Oat Street, Evesham WR11 4PJ
Pershore Library, Church St., Pershore, WR10 1DT
Broadway Library, Leamington Rd, Broadway WR12 7DZ.