

## 1. INTRODUCTION

**1.1** A Structure Plan is a long term planning document covering a time period of at least 15 years which establishes a strategic policy framework for development and land-use planning over a County area. County Councils have a legal duty to produce, monitor and keep under review a Structure Plan for their area.

**1.2** The Structure Plan, together with District Local Plans and the Minerals Local Plan comprise the development plan for Worcestershire. The Government is committed to the plan-led system, given statutory force by section 54A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Where an adopted or approved development plan contains relevant policies, section 54A requires that an application for planning permission or an appeal shall be determined in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Content of the Structure Plan

**1.3** The Structure Plan for Worcestershire covers the period 1996-2011 and has had regard to and interpreted National and Regional Planning Guidance. The Plan provides a statement of the overall strategy for development and the use of land in Worcestershire and in so doing indicates how the balance between development and conservation has been struck. The Structure Plan does not provide guidance for non-land use matters. It does however consider the land use aspects of key strategic areas and includes policies on:

- Housing, including figures for new housing provision in each District;
- Green Belts and conservation of the natural and built environment;
- The rural economy;
- The urban economy, including major industrial, business, retail and other employment-generating and wealth-creating development;
- Strategic transport and highway facilities, and other infrastructure requirements;
- Mineral working (including disposal of mineral waste) and protection of mineral resources;
- Waste treatment and disposal, land reclamation and reuse;
- Tourism, leisure and recreation; and
- Energy generation, including renewable energy.

**1.4** The Structure Plan was subject to the consultation process shown in the following programme. The Plan was formally adopted by the County Council on 4th June 2001.

### **Programme of Structure Plan Preparation**

March – June 1998	“ Shaping the New Worcestershire” Consultation Exercise on Options for Development
February 1999	Approval of the Consultation Draft Structure Plan by County Council
May – July 1999 (10 weeks)	Public Consultation on the Consultation Draft Structure Plan
November 1999	Approval of Deposit Draft Structure Plan by County Council
January 2000	Deposit Draft Structure Plan on public deposit
July 2000	Examination in Public
February 2001	Proposed Modifications to Deposit Draft Structure Plan
June 2001	County Council adoption of the Structure Plan