

Shropshire Council

Employment Strategy **Topic Paper**

15 February 2022

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1. Introduction¹

- 1.1. Shropshire Council published an Employment Topic Paper² (document **EV112**) with the draft Submission Local Plan³ (DSLP) (document **SD002**) in September 2021. This first Employment Topic Paper principally explained the rationale for the employment land requirement of 300 hectares (ha) in the DSLP. This first Employment Paper may be regarded as the Employment (Requirement) Topic Paper (ERTP).
- 1.2. The ERTP made reference to key elements of the evidence base including the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy⁴ (SEGS) (document **EV044**), the Shropshire Economic Development Needs Assessment⁵ (EDNA) (document **EV043**) and the Shropshire Authority Monitoring Report⁶ (AMR) (document **EV012**).
- 1.3. The ERTP is structured to address the following key matters for the economic spatial strategy in the DSLP:
 - implications for the spatial strategy and the scale of growth from the SEGS and ‘Invest in Shropshire’ programme to achieve a ‘step change’ in the economic performance and productivity of the County;
 - key challenges and opportunities in building the economic spatial strategy and the development of the strategy through the preparation of preferred options for different elements of the DSLP;
 - key challenges and opportunities in determining the scale of growth and the employment land requirement;
 - application of the economic development needs assessment to the employment land requirement;
 - implications of the spatial strategy and the employment land requirement for the employment land supply and the spatial distribution across the County;
 - implications of the spatial strategy and the employment land requirement for the types of development, delivery of employment, supply of labour and the social and environmental sustainability of the County.
- 1.4. Following the submission of the draft Shropshire Local Plan on 3 September 2021, the Inspectors presented a series of initial questions to the Council through documents **ID1** and **ID2**. In **ID1**, issued to the Council on 3 November 2021, the Inspectors requested a second Employment Topic Paper to explain:
 - the details of the Council’s spatial strategy and the distribution of employment land and how it was arrived at?
 - whether the unmet employment need in the Black Country area (BCA) has been tested through an examination of any local plan that contributes to this unmet employment need?
 - the DSLP seeks to accommodate in Shropshire, some unmet employment land need from the BCA;

1 THIS PAPER USES ACRONYMS FOR RECURRING DOCUMENTS, NAMES OR TERMS THAT ARE EXPLAINED IN A GLOSSARY

2 Employment Topic Paper – EV112 (2021) prepared by Shropshire Council and available at:

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

3 SD002 - Regulation 19: Pre-Submission Draft Shropshire Local Plan 2016 – 2038 (December 2020) (as Proposed to be Modified) available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/core-submission-documents/>

4 Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021 – EV044 (2017) prepared by Shropshire Council and available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

5 Shropshire Economic Development Needs Assessment – EV043 (2021) prepared by Lichfields and available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

6 Shropshire Authority Monitoring Report – EV012 (2020) prepared by Shropshire Council and available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

- how the figure of 30ha of employment land to be provided through the DSLP was arrived at?
- where in Shropshire would the 30ha be accommodated, to contribute to the unmet employment need?

1.5. In **ID2**, issued to the Council on 24 November 2021, the Inspectors requested further information about the spatial strategy and the distribution of employment land to explain:

- the ‘urban focus’ to the distribution of development and how this objective is achieved in the DSLP;
- where evidence can be found to demonstrate that this ‘urban focus’ was implemented in the selection of the housing and employment allocations, including the ‘saved’ allocations, in the DSLP.

1.6. These further matters are addressed in this second Employment Topic Paper, which may be regarded as the Employment (Strategy) Topic Paper (this ESTP). This ESTP also draws on the evidence in the Shropshire Employment Land Review⁷ (ELR) (document EV044) prepared by Avison Young.

1.7. In relation to the Inspectors questions in ID1, this ESTP seeks to address the matter of the Council’s spatial strategy and the distribution of employment land and how it was arrived at. Shropshire Council presents this proposed strategy to the Examination of the DSLP.

⁷ Shropshire Employment Land Review – EV044 (2019) prepared by Avison Young and available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

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2. Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy

- 2.1. The SEGS presents a pathway for Shropshire to deliver qualitative improvements to the local economy. The DSLP follows this pathway to determine the spatial strategy and scale of growth to achieve the vision, aims and objectives of the SEGS.

Vision, Aims and Objectives

- 2.2. The SEGS identifies the vision for Shropshire: *“To be the best place to do business and invest, renowned for its pool of local talent and expertise. We will strive to maximise our economic potential and increase productivity by fully utilising the benefits of our special environment and high-quality assets”*. The DSLP in Policy SP2: Spatial Approach presents this vision and sets out the Council’s ambition and commitment to encourage the growth of the Shropshire local economy.
- 2.3. The SEGS pathway towards qualitative improvements to the local economy is captured in the principal aim to deliver a ‘step change’ in the performance and productivity of the Shropshire economy. This ‘step change’ is expressed through the aims of the strategy and is the core pathway for the DSLP to improve:
- demand into Shropshire by promoting the County as a good investment location and to provide services to businesses to build their confidence and skills to make successful investments;
 - inward investment potential by increasing the number and choice of strategic development opportunities and their distribution around the County;
 - workforce availability within Shropshire through education and training opportunities that build the skills needed by businesses or encourage entrepreneurship within the County;
 - sustainability and accessibility of the employment offer by focusing a significant proportion of future development into the strategic corridors and principal settlements in the County;
 - quality, range and choice of floorspace by increasing the supply and distribution of modern business units and commercial premises in Shropshire.
- 2.4. Together the SEGS and DSLP will harness Shropshire’s economic potential, increase our productivity and utilise our opportunities and assets including skills and expertise, focusing on the following objectives:
- **Strategic locations and economic relationships** – building on the significant role and location of Shropshire within the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership and the West Midlands and the collaborative cross border relationships with Mid Wales. This also recognises the proximity and strategic transport connections to the Northern Powerhouse as a further significant economic opportunity;
 - **Major employment sites and growth corridors** – making available a range of significant employment sites to drive growth and increase economic productivity particularly in settlements and at strategic sites along strategic corridors through the County;
 - the DSLP identifies these strategic corridors in Policy SP14: Strategic Corridors. These are the principal rail and road transport routes through the County, connecting together the main urban centres and linking with neighbouring areas in surrounding sub-regional areas in the West Midlands, Wales and the North-West, providing a focus for growth, investment and development. These strategic corridors comprise:
 - **Eastern Belt M54/A5, A41/A464 and A4169/A458/A454** – providing Shropshire’s motorway, road and rail links to the rest of the West Midlands region;
 - **A5 West corridor** – providing Shropshire’s rail and road link to the Northern Powerhouse through Cheshire and Mid / North Wales;
 - **Central Shropshire** – supporting Shrewsbury as the primary location for growth at the hub of the rail and road networks and focussing demand into the Strategic Centre of Shropshire;

- **North East Shropshire and the A41 corridor** – providing Shropshire’s links to the Northern Powerhouse through Cheshire and connecting east Shropshire including key settlements in the Green Belt at Shifnal and Albrighton to the West Midlands conurbation;
- **A49 corridor** – supporting key settlements within and around the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (SHAONB) in south Shropshire and providing Shropshire’s rail and road link to other English regions to the north and south (including Herefordshire and Worcestershire) and to South Wales.
- **Target growing and under-represented sectors** – supporting key businesses and clusters particularly in:
 - Construction;
 - Food and Drink Production;
 - Agri Tech Processes;
 - Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Production;
 - Environmental Sciences and Technologies;
 - Creative and Digital Enterprises;
 - Business, Professional and Financial Services;
 - Health and Social Care Sectors;
- **Enable businesses to start, grow and succeed** – assisting Small to Medium Enterprises, as our core business base, to overcome barriers to their successful growth, particularly through The Marches Growth Hub and our business support services to help support the revised UK industrial Strategy – ‘Build Back Better’;
- **Deliver Infrastructure to support growth** - increasing the connectivity of the County to support growth by focusing investment into transport infrastructure, digital connectivity, utilities capacity and local infrastructure to support communities and to build opportunities to support individuals in need;
- **Housing market opportunities** - delivering a better and more attractive housing mix with a broader range of affordable housing choices to provide the right type, size and quality of housing in the right locations. A key objective is to offer an affordable supply of housing that satisfies a broad range of demands, particularly for key workers, to ensure Shropshire is an attractive place for business owners and for their working age employees;
- **Skills needs and residents’ work aspirations** - supporting all segments of the working age population and those wishing to extend their careers beyond retirement age to access training and develop skills to gain employment and remain in the local labour market;
- **Promote Shropshire’s ‘offer’ to investors** - attracting local and inward investment from Small to Medium Enterprises and larger companies to build and diversity the business base in the County.

Implementation

- 2.5. The DSLP is an important mechanism for the implementation of the SEGS, alongside the ‘Invest in Shropshire’ programme of investment projects and business services. The SEGS and ‘Invest in Shropshire’ programme seek to promote Shropshire’s growth sectors and opportunity sites, provide funding advice and procurement, deliver investment projects and provide sound business support services. This engages the Council in an open dialogue with partners, stakeholders and the commercial markets to identify challenges and provide solutions to realise the County’s economic growth potential.
- 2.6. The ‘Invest in Shropshire’ programme enables the Council to engage with its partners and stakeholders and provide direct assistance to the commercial markets to remove barriers to investment. The programme also supports individual businesses with their investment and business growth needs and aspirations. This partnership is a key mechanism to deliver the SEGS, alongside the DSLP, and to:

- express the collective desire to shape new opportunities, build effective collaborative working and recognise and understand our collective economic achievements; and to
- promote Shropshire to local and inward investors through positive strategies and collaborative working to identify the investment offer in the County and the capacity and capability of the local economy; and to
- build Shropshire's reputation as a sound investment location based on sustained achievement, showing that the Council, its partners and its stakeholders are 'good to do business with'; and to
- showcase the County as an attractive place to live, work and play.

2.7. SEGS and the 'Invest in Shropshire' programme initially addressed a 5-year implementation timeframe starting in calendar year 2017 through to the end of calendar year 2021. The SEGS (on page 6) identified the specific economic milestones to be achieved during this period including:

GVA growth	+ 12% equal to £692 million
Private investment growth	+ £300 million
Employment growth	+ 3,700 jobs
Housing growth	+ 1,375 new homes per year

- 2.8. The current need to review the SEGS coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic affecting the national and local economy. The Shropshire response was to bring together the partners and stakeholders in the 'Invest in Shropshire' programme to form an Economic Recovery Taskforce. The Taskforce set itself three simple objectives: (1) to support the immediate restart of the local economy; (2) to initiate the short-term revitalisation of the local economy and (3) to plan for longer term growth through the review of the SEGS from 2022 to 2027 further assisted by the adoption and implementation of the DSLP.
- 2.9. The immediate economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the progressive release of the lockdown restrictions, the need for the local economy to restart business activity and to assess the impacts of Covid-19 in demand have all delayed the SEGS review, but it is now underway, with the aim to prepare a draft for consultation later in 2022. This has provided an assessment of local economic performance against the SEGS economic milestones, which is recorded in Table 1.

Table 1: SEGS economic milestones and achievements 2017 - 2021

Economic Milestones	Targets	Achievements	Difference
GVA Growth	12% increase from £5.77 billion to £6.46 billion	7.5% to £6.2 billion (2019)	£26.2 million (actual)
Private Investment Growth	£300 million	£325 million by 2021	+£25 million to 2021 (actual)
Employment Growth	3,700 jobs	3,300 to 2021 (projected) 2,900 by 2019 (actual)	-400 jobs (projected)
Housing Growth	1,375 new homes per year	1,795 homes built per year	+420 homes per year (actual)

- 2.10. The adopted Shropshire Development Plan (SDP) comprising the Core Strategy (2011) which established the spatial strategy for Shropshire and the SAMDev Plan (2015) which determined the distribution of development contributed to the achievements under the milestones for employment growth and housing growth. There was a significant upturn in housing demand in the County over the period of the SEGS strategy and this resulted in delivery rates in the County exceeding the planned housing requirement.
- 2.11. Shropshire experienced a significant delivery of employment to 2019 with 2,900 jobs (78% of the milestone) provided in the first 3 calendar years of the strategy. The projected out-turn of 3,300 jobs to 2021 (with a shortfall of -400 jobs) is influenced by the Covid-19 downturn based on the available evidence of the recovery and revitalisation of the Shropshire economy.
- 2.12. The AMR also records the delivery of employment from employment development arising from the employment land supply in the adopted SDP. In the E RTP, the contribution from the adopted SDP

towards the projected achievement of 3,300 jobs by 2021 is presented in Table 2 below for the financial years 2016 to 2020. This includes the year just before the adoption of SEGS and its positive effects on the 'Invest in Shropshire' programme and equates to a similar period (i.e. 4 to 5 years) for the data in Table 1.

Table 2: Employment generation from completed floorspace 2016 - 2020

USE TYPE	Total Floorspace	Employment Density	Employment Growth	
	sq.m	jobs/sq.m	Jobs	Rate
			number	jobs/year
SHROPSHIRE	81,848		1,733	433
B1a	13,446	12.5	1,076	269
B1b	874	50	17	4
B1c	20,244	54	375	94
B2	30,199	36	-	-
B8	17,084	64.5	265	66

(excluding anticipated Class B2 employment growth)

- 2.13. The EDNA anticipates that investment in the development of Class B2 general industry floorspace will occur in Shropshire but is unlikely to deliver new jobs in this industry sector. The exclusion of employment anticipated from Class B2 development in Shropshire reduces employment growth to 1,733 jobs from the development of the planned employment land supply in the adopted SDP. There will be additional jobs above the 1,733 jobs (in Table 2) through the development of sui generis uses but this delivery makes a significant contribution to the projected out-turn of 3,300 jobs recorded by the Economic Recovery Taskforce in the review of the SEGS.
- 2.14. The adopted SDP and its economic spatial strategy may be credited with contributing at least 1,733 jobs (or around 52%) of the 3,300 jobs projected to 2021 against the economic milestone in the SEGS (i.e. 3,700 jobs). This delivery was achieved from 2016 to 2020 against the period of adjustment to the Brexit decision with the emergence of the trading agreement with the European Union and also leading into the emergence of the Covid-19 virus and the effects of the pandemic, lockdowns and suspension of the economy across the UK.

3. Draft Submission Local Plan

- 3.1. The proposed economic spatial strategy in the DSLP (document **SD002**) seeks to achieve the aspirations in the SEGS to encourage appropriately located, high-quality new employment development to help make Shropshire more productive, prosperous and sustainable.

Policy Framework

- 3.2. The proposed economic spatial strategy in the DSLP is principally contained in Policy SP2: Spatial Approach which establishes the proposed scale of growth from 2016 to 2038 at around 300ha of employment land. Policy SP2 seeks to maximise investment opportunities in the County and achieve an appropriate and sustainable pattern of development.
- 3.3. The proposed economic spatial strategy is supported and explained in further detail in the strategic economic policies including Policy SP12 (Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy). This policy seeks to promote the economic potential of the County by positively supporting enterprise, developing and diversifying the local economy, targeting growing and under-represented sectors and by promoting Shropshire's high-quality assets and protecting the special environment of the County. Policy SP12 also seeks to increase the productivity of the County by improving digital and transport connectivity, making productive use of low carbon energy sources, meeting skills needs, and using local talent and business expertise.
- 3.4. Policy SP13 (Delivering Sustainable Economic Growth and Enterprise) seeks to provide certainty in the delivery of the SEGS by shaping the delivery of the strategic land supply and the use of established employment areas to satisfy the objectives of the strategy. The aspiration for this approach is to promote a 'step change' in the economic productivity of the Shropshire economy.
- 3.5. Policy SP14 (Strategic Corridors) contributes to the 'step change' by seeking to ensure that strategic corridors along the principal rail and strategic road routes through the County are the primary focus for major employment development, especially along corridors with both rail and road connectivity.
- 3.6. The proposed economic spatial strategy is expressed in settlement policies S1 to S21 which distribute and direct the delivery of the proposed 300ha employment land requirement.

Employment Land Supply

- 3.7. An explanation of the context for the proposed economic spatial strategy is provided in the AMR (document **EV012**) in Table 19 and the supporting text on pages 45 – 46 in relation to the adopted SDP in Policy CS1: Spatial Approach.
- 3.8. This is reproduced and discussed in the ERTS (document **EV112**) in Section 4 (Shropshire's Economic Performance for the Distribution of Development) in Table 12 and from paragraphs 4.30 – 4.32. The ERTS (and the AMR) present the following information.
- 4.30 *The distribution of the strategic land supply is identified in the AMR and reproduced in Table 12. This shows completed development from 2006 to 2020, current planning permissions at 31st March 2020 and employment allocations in the Development Plan, distributed around the County.*

Table 3: Employment completions and land supply by area (at 31st March 2020)

Spatial Zones	Policy CS1 Distribution		Completions		Commitments		Allocations		Windfalls		TOTAL SUPPLY		
	Average ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	Diff ha
North-West	60	21%	18	12%	10	10%	48	38%	9	29%	85	21%	25
North-East	55	19%	47	32%	38	37%	38	30%	6	19%	129	32%	74
Central	100	34%	42	29%	39	38%	9	7%	6	19%	96	24%	-4
South	40	14%	22	15%	8	8%	21	16%	6	19%	57	14%	17
East	35	12%	17	12%	7	7%	12	9%	4	13%	40	10%	5
TOTALS	290		146		102		128		31		407		117

4.31 *The AMR includes information on the distribution of development in the period to 31st March 2020 showing:*

- *the commitments for 102ha include planning permissions for 21ha on existing employment areas, 81ha on new employment sites and 128ha on remaining employment allocations;*
- *all the spatial zones except the centre (i.e. Shrewsbury) have sufficient employment land to satisfy the Policy CS1 distribution. This distribution does favour the north-west and north-east of the County but the supply to the south and east does highlight the capacity of these Place Plan areas to perform a greater role in the economic growth of Shropshire;*
- *The Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan addresses the distribution shortfalls in the centre, east and south, to support the further planned growth of the local economy.*

4.32 *The requirement for further provision of employment land recognises these shortfalls in the distribution of employment land in Shropshire:*

- *with further land allocations in the Submission Local Plan focusing allocations into the centre, south and east of the County to improve the employment land offer in Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Bridgnorth, Shifnal and Market Drayton with:*
 - *further provision in the Ironbridge Strategic Settlement in the east of the County; and*
 - *further provision at Clive Barracks Tern Hill in the north-east on the release of the site by the MoD providing access into the east of the County along the A41 Strategic Corridor.*

3.9. The proposed economic spatial strategy, the scale and distribution of the proposed growth and the distribution of the strategic employment land supply is presented in Table 4 below. This captures the effects of the existing, committed employment land supply, the contribution of the proposed 'saved' employment allocations and the effect of the new, proposed employment allocations in the DSLP on the employment land supply position presented in Table 3 above.

3.10. The proposed economic spatial strategy presented in Table 4 seeks to address the distribution shortfalls in the centre, east and south of the County identified in the AMR (document **EV012**) and the ERTTP (document **EV112**) in order to support the planned growth of the Shropshire local economy through the DSLP from 2018 to 2038.

3.11. The proposed economic spatial strategy presented in Table 4 is explained and justified in the further chapters of this ESTP in Chapter 4 in relation to the vision, aims and objectives of the economic spatial strategy, in Chapter 5 in relation to the economic development needs of Shropshire, Chapter 6 in relation to the unmet employment land need in the BCA and in Chapter 7 in relation to the proposed spatial distribution of development in the DSLP.

Table 4: Economic spatial strategy and strategic employment land supply (31st March 2020)

Location			Settlement Hierarchy			Proposed Settlement Guideline / Land Supply Position	Employment Land Supply (31st March 2020)						Windfall Allowance	
Place Plan Area	Strategic Corridor(s)	Settlement / Rural Area	Population	Service Score (range: 48 to 116)	Policy Designation(s)		Completions	Permissions		Saved Allocations	Proposed Allocations	TOTAL SUPPLY		
								Land	Premises					
							hectares							
SHROPSHIRE							375	50	81	21	128	134	413	38
CENTRE							100	8	37	2	9	50	107	7
Shrewsbury	A5 A49 A458	Shrewsbury	75,200	116	Strategic Centre	100 including saved allocations	7.96	35.73	2.1	9.0	50.0	104.8	4.8	
		Baschurch	1,705	66	Community Hubs	windfall pipeline								
	A49	Bayston Hill	5,156	80										
		Bicton	338	58										
		Bomere Heath	1,302	58										
	A458	Cross Houses	727	53		Neighbourhood Plan		0.15						
	A49	Dorrington	618	61										
	A458	Ford	699	51		windfall pipeline								
		Hanwood	1,100	53										
		Longden	332	50										
		Nesscliffe	218	52										
		Albrighton			Community Clusters									
		Grafton & Newbanks												
		Montford Bridge West												
		Rural Area												
				Countryside		0.30	0.47	0.4			1.2	1.2		
Minsterley & Pontesbury		Minsterley	1,558	67	Community Hubs	windfall pipeline and saved allocation		0.49				0.5	0.5	
		Pontesbury	1,897	80	Countryside	windfall pipeline								
		Rural Area				0.20					0.2	0.2		

Location			Settlement Hierarchy			Proposed Settlement Guideline / Land Supply Position	Employment Land Supply (31st March 2020)					Windfall Allowance	
Place Plan Area	Strategic Corridor(s)	Settlement / Rural Area	Population	Service Score (range: 48 to 116)	Policy Designation(s)		Completions	Permissions		Saved Allocations	Proposed Allocations		TOTAL SUPPLY
								Land	Premises				
SHROPSHIRE						375	50	81	21	128	134	413	38
NORTH WEST						66	7	8	2	48	0	65	-1
Oswestry	A5	Oswestry	19,113	109	Principal Centre	57	3.62	3.80	0.52	39.0		46.9	-10.1
		Gobowen	3,376	71	Community Hubs	windfall pipeline							
		Kinnerley	344	56									
		Knockin	181	50									
		Llanymynech	529	55									
		Pant	1,244	54									
	Ruyton XI Towns	1,062	62										
	St Martins	1,213	77	0.51			0.80	1.5			2.8	2.8	
	Trefonen	779	48										
	West Felton	730	55										
	Weston Rhyn	1,944	48										
	Whittington	1,498	54	0.07							0.1	0.1	
		Llanyblodwel, Porthywaen, Dolgoch, Llynclys, Bryn Melyn			Community Clusters			0.10					
		Park Hall, Hindford, Babbinswood, Lower Frankton						1.80				1.8	1.8
		A5					Rhoswel, Wern, Chirk Bank	0.35	0.30				0.7
		Selattyn, Upper/Middle/Lower Hengoed, Pant Glas											
		Rural Area					Countryside	2.51	0.90				
Ellesmere		Ellesmere	4,188	99		Key Centre	9		0.30		9.2		9.5
		Dudleston Heath	461	48	Community Hub	windfall pipeline							
		Cockshutt			Community Clusters								
		Elson											
		Welsh Frankton											
		Rural Area											
		Countryside											

Location			Settlement Hierarchy			Proposed Settlement Guideline / Land Supply Position	Employment Land Supply (31st March 2020)						Windfall Allowance
Place Plan Area	Strategic Corridor(s)	Settlement / Rural Area	Population	Service Score (range: 48 to 116)	Policy Designation(s)		Completions	Permissions		Saved Allocations	Proposed Allocations	TOTAL SUPPLY	
								Land	Premises				
SHROPSHIRE						375	50	81	21	128	134	413	38
EAST						109	6	4	3	12	73	98	-11
Bridgnorth	A458 A454	Bridgnorth	13,028	109	Principal Centre adjoining Green Belt	49 and saved allocation	2.09	0.32	0.6	8.2	28.0	39.2	-9.8
		Alveley	1,583	59	Community Hub inset in Green Belt	windfall pipeline and safeguarded land							
		Ditton Priors	831	59	Community Hub	windfall pipeline							
		Neenton			Community Cluster								
		Rural Area			Countryside		1.35	1.62	1.2			4.1	4.1
Albrighton	A41	Albrighton	4,870	94	Key Centre inset in Green Belt	5 saved allocation and safeguarded land		0.02				0.02	-5.0
	A41	RAF Cosford	1,752	48	Community Hub and Strategic Site inset in Green Belt	windfall pipeline							
		Rural Area			Green Belt								
Broseley		Broseley	5,372	87	Key Centre	3 distributed in Neighbourhood Plan			1.6	1.3		2.9	-0.1
		Rural Area			Countryside	windfall pipeline							
Highley		Highley	3,195	83	Key Centre	3		1.02				1.0	-2.0
		Rural Area			Countryside	windfall pipeline							
Much Wenlock	A458 A4169	Much Wenlock	2,357	89	Key Centre	2 and saved allocation	0.79			0.6		1.4	-0.6
	A4169	Ironbridge	-	-	Strategic Settlement	6					6.0	6.0	0.0
	A458	Cressage	719	50	Community Hub	windfall pipeline							
		Buildwas			Community Cluster								
		Rural Area			Countryside		0.42					0.4	0.4
Shifnal	M54 A464 A4169	Shifnal	6,991	97	Key Centre inset in Green Belt	41 saved allocation and safeguarded land	0.06	0.32		2.0	39.0	41.4	0.4
		Rural Area			Green Belt	windfall pipeline	1.73	0.23				2.0	2.0

Location			Settlement Hierarchy			Proposed Settlement Guideline / Land Supply Position	Employment Land Supply (31st March 2020)						Windfall Allowance
Place Plan Area	Strategic Corridor(s)	Settlement / Rural Area	Population	Service Score (range: 48 to 116)	Policy Designation(s)		Completions	Permissions		Saved Allocations	Proposed Allocations	TOTAL SUPPLY	
								Land	Premises				
SHROPSHIRE						375	50	81	21	128	134	413	38
NORTH EAST						67	22	26	12	38	6	103	36
Market Drayton	A53	Market Drayton	12,075	108	Principal Centre	35 and saved allocation	5.79	11.62		14.0		31.4	-3.6
	A41	Clive Barracks, Tern Hill	607	35	Strategic Settlement	6					6.0	6.0	0.0
		Hinstock	887	51	Community Hubs	windfall pipeline							
		Hodnet	669	58									
	A49	Woore, Irelands Cross, Pipe Gate	1,010	50		Neighbourhood Plan							
		Bletchley, Longford, Longslow, Moreton Say, Adderley, Norton in Hales			Community Clusters	windfall pipeline							
		Cheswardine											
		Marchamley, Peplow, Wollerton											
		Rural Area											
				Countryside		7.81	5.16	3.0			16.0	16.0	
Whitchurch	A41 A49	Whitchurch	10,104	110	Principal Centre	20	2.64	3.22	0.40	19.5		25.8	5.8
	A49	Prees	956	64	Community Hub	windfall pipeline	0.12	0.13				0.3	0.3
		Tilstock, Ash Magna/Ash Parva, Prees Heath, Ightfield, Calverhall			Community Cluster		0.10	0.85				1.0	1.0
		Rural Area			Countryside		3.95	0.39	4.0			8.3	8.3
Wem		Wem	6,151	102	Key Centre	6 including saved allocation	0.61	2.68	1.2	4.0		8.5	2.5
	A49 A53	Clive	537	54	Community Hubs	windfall pipeline							
		Hadnall	573	55			0.89					0.9	0.9
		Shawbury	2,322	72			0.04	0.98				1.0	1.0
		Grinshill			Community Clusters								
		Harmer Hill											
		Rural Area							Countryside	0.05	0.64	3.1	

Location			Settlement Hierarchy			Proposed Settlement Guideline / Land Supply Position	Employment Land Supply (31st March 2020)						Windfall Allowance
Place Plan Area	Strategic Corridor(s)	Settlement / Rural Area	Population	Service Score (range: 48 to 116)	Policy Designation(s)		Completions	Permissions		Saved Allocations	Proposed Allocations	TOTAL SUPPLY	
								Land	Premises				
SHROPSHIRE						375	50	81	21	128	134	413	38
SOUTH						33	6	7	1	21	5	40	7
Ludlow	A49	Ludlow	10,717	112	Principal Centre	11 including saved allocation	0.48	2.41	0.4	3.5	5.0	11.8	0.8
		Burford	1,202	87	Community Hub	windfall pipeline	1.80		0.8			2.6	2.6
		Clee Hill	916	57	Community Hub in AONB								
		Rural Area			Countryside		1.30	0.58				1.9	1.9
Bishop's Castle		Bishop's Castle	1,970	97	Key Centre in Clun Catchment	3 distributed in Neighbourhood Plan	1.06	1.80				2.9	-0.1
		Bucknell	722	66	Community Hub partially in AONB and in Clun Catchment	saved allocation and windfall pipeline	0.18			1.4		1.6	1.6
		Clun	687	72	Community Hub in Clun Catchment	windfall pipeline							
		Chirbury	213	50	Community Hubs			0.05					
		Worthen & Brockton	603	61 & 52									
		Abcot, Beckjay, Clungunford, Hopton Heath, Shelderton, Twitchen (Three Ashes)			Community Clusters								
		Brompton, Marton, Middleton, Pentreheyling, Priest Weston, Stockton, Rorrington											
		Lydbury North											
		Newcastle, Whitcott Keysett											
		Wentnor, Norbury											
		Rural Area							Countryside		0.12		
		Church Stretton	A49	Church Stretton	3,936		98	Key Centre in AONB	2 including saved allocation	0.11			1.3
	Rural Area				Countryside in AONB	windfall pipeline	0.58	0.2	0.1			0.9	0.9

Location			Settlement Hierarchy			Proposed Settlement Guideline / Land Supply Position	Employment Land Supply (31st March 2020)						Windfall Allowance
Place Plan Area	Strategic Corridor(s)	Settlement / Rural Area	Population	Service Score (range: 48 to 116)	Policy Designation(s)		Completions	Permissions		Saved Allocations	Proposed Allocations	TOTAL SUPPLY	
								Land	Premises				
hectares													
SHROPSHIRE						375	50	81	21	128	134	413	38
SOUTH					Overview	33	6	7	1	21	5	40	7
Cleobury Mortimer		Cleobury Mortimer	3,049	96	Key Centre	2 including saved allocation	0.23			0.4		0.6	-1.4
		Hopton Wafers, Doddington			Community Clusters	windfall pipeline							
		Kinlet, Button Bridge, Button Oak											
		Oreton, Farlow, Hill Houses											
		Silvington, Bromdon, Loughton, Wheathill											
		Stottesdon, Chorley, Bagginnswood					0.01						
		Rural Area			Countryside	saved allocation and windfall pipeline		0.06		0.3		0.4	0.4
Craven Arms	A49	Craven Arms	2,607	89	Key Centre	15 including saved allocations	0.07	0.57		14.0		14.6	-0.4
		Aston on Clun, Hopesay, Broome, Horderley, Beambridge, Long Meadow End, Rowton, Round Oak			Community Clusters	windfall pipeline							
		Bache Mill, Bouldon, Broncroft, Middlehope, Peaton, Seifton (Diddlebury Parish), Sutton (Great & Little), Westhope											
		Wistanstow											
		Rural Area			Countryside			0.87				0.9	0.9

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4. Economic Spatial Strategy

- 4.1 The DSLP establishes an economic spatial strategy that builds on a series of local delivery objectives in order to achieve the key aims in national policy to build a strong and competitive economy, using a clear vision and strategy that addresses the needs of the local economy.

National Context

- 4.2 The key aims of national policy provided the direction for the preparation of the DSLP as a guide for the local delivery objectives. NPPF Paragraphs 81 and 82 state:

“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.” (NPPF, Para 81)

“Planning policies should:

- a) set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;**
- b) set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;**
- c) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and**
- d) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances. “ (NPPF Para 82)**

Shropshire Strategy

- 4.3 Shropshire Council sets out a clear economic vision in the SEGS. This takes into account the economic aspirations of the County and also the infrastructure needs of the local economy, the characteristics of its labour force and the requirement to protect key environmental assets in the County. This has provided the pathway for Shropshire to deliver qualitative improvements to the local economy through the economic spatial strategy in the DSLP. This is presented and discussed in Chapters 1, 2 & 3 of this ESTP.

Local Delivery Aims

- 4.4 The economic spatial strategy in the DSLP builds on key delivery aims relating to the scale of growth established by the employment land requirement which seeks a high level of growth. The distribution of the employment land requirement seeks to achieve a sustainable pattern of development, aligning land investment opportunities with the tiers of the settlement hierarchy particularly to focus greater opportunity and stronger investment potential into the markets of the main urban centres.
- 4.5 This approach seeks to use the additional land provision in the DSLP, that will refresh the employment land supply, to achieve a greater urban focus in the delivery of economic development and employment opportunity. This approach considers the sustainability of these economic investment and employment opportunities in relation to the connectivity of this new development to businesses’ suppliers, their markets and the locations for their labour supply.
- 4.6 The economic spatial strategy seeks to build on the housing spatial strategy to ensure that a balance can be achieved between the scale and distribution of new housing growth and the increasing employment needs of the growing population. The employment opportunities and the labour needs created by the

economic spatial strategy seek to deliver a balanced growth strategy with the delivery of housing through the DSLP spatial strategy. This approach also builds on the connectivity of the main urban centres along strategic corridors that give access to the rail network, other public transport services, the strategic road and motorway network and the principal electronic communications networks across the County.

- 4.7 This approach also considers the sustainability of the proposed scale of growth to ensure the vision and spatial strategy and the key delivery objectives for promoting economic development and employment opportunities are achievable without significant impacts on key environmental assets in the County.

Scale of Employment Growth

- 4.8 The preparation of the DSLP began in 2017 with the publication of the Issues and Options consultation. This initial stage of preparing the DSLP set out three options for the scale of the economic spatial strategy. These options were:
- **Economic Option 1: Significant Growth** – to continue the current strategy in the adopted SDP maintaining the current level of aspiration, rolling forward the existing employment land requirement, providing a comparable level of employment land to the adopted SDP and delivering a similar level of new jobs;
 - **Economic Option 2: High Growth** - to establish a revised strategy to deliver a higher level of aspiration in the DSLP supported by an appropriate employment land requirement but providing a greater supply of employment land and delivering a higher level of new jobs;
 - **Economic Option 3: Productivity Growth** - to establish a new strategy that captures the potential for new investment in Shropshire, to influence the structure of the local economy, improve the productivity of its sectors and the range, type and quality of new employment. This would create a higher aspiration, providing more 'higher value' jobs whilst setting a lower employment land requirement with potentially, a lower overall provision of new jobs.
- 4.9 The responses to the Issues and Options Consultation provided significant support for Economic Option 2 to deliver a 'High Growth' strategy for Shropshire. It was suggested this high growth option should include further strategic objectives including: an 'urban focus' to locate opportunities where investment is most likely to be delivered; a good range and choice of suitably located and deliverable employment land and premises and strategic investment sites; the support of high-quality education and training opportunities; good quality housing to meet a range of needs and improvements to the highway and public transport networks.
- 4.10 The support for Economic Option 2 in the Issues and Options consultation, to deliver a 'High Growth' Strategy for Shropshire, was expressed in the Preferred Option for the Scale and Distribution of Development (PSDD) in 2017, as a further strategic objective for Balanced Growth. The scale of development in the PSDD consultation identified a very broad range of out-turns of land and floorspace but the local delivery option for Balanced Growth indicated a specific employment land requirement of 304ha. This scale of development to deliver Balanced Growth is set out in Table 5 (taken from the E RTP) which also shows the alternative growth scenarios in the PSDD consultation.

Table 5: Preferred growth option and alternative growth scenarios 2017

Preferred Option & Other Growth Scenarios	Need		Requirement Options
	Floorspace	Land	
	(hectares)	(hectares)	(hectares)
BALANCED GROWTH	121		304
Core Strategy (2011)	116		290
Productivity Growth	115		288
FOAHN Standard Methodology		268	
FOAHN Local Methodology		266	
Historical take-Up		222	267
Productivity Growth *		115	115
Baseline Growth *		55	55

- 4.11 The objective of delivering Balanced Growth is contained in the strategic policies SP2 and SP13 of the DSLP. This forms part of the spatial strategy and the employment land requirement for around 300ha of employment development. The justification for the preferred level of around 300ha employment development compared to the other options in the PSDD consultation and to the evidence of economic development needs in the EDNA is discussed further in Chapter 5.
- 4.12 The DSLP in Policy SP2: Strategic Approach, proposes the 300ha employment land requirement as a rounded guideline figure that seeks to deliver 14 ha/year (equal to 308ha) as a rounded annual requirement. The rounded requirement of 300ha over 22-years (below the predicted growth of 304ha - 308ha) would indicate an annual delivery rate of just 13.6 ha/year. It is considered that reducing both the requirement and the annual delivery rate would undermine the aspiration for 'high growth' in the economic spatial strategy to achieve the vision, aims and objectives of the SEGS.
- 4.13 The DSLP therefore proposes the two rounded requirements for 300ha overall to be delivered at a rate of 14 ha/year. This captures the corollary effects of rounding both the total and the annual requirements as shown in Table 6 (taken from the ERTF). This corollary effect will serve to drive the performance of the economy by acting as a moderate 'stretch' target on the delivery of employment development to 2038.

Table 6: DSLP - corollary effects of the rounded employment land requirement

Development Plan	Requirements	Lower Range	Higher Range
		hectares	
Submission Local Plan	Policy SP2	300	14.0
	Corollary Effect	13.6	308

- 4.14 The scale of growth in Table 6, proposed in the DSLP is expected to deliver the strategic objective of Balanced Growth and to manage the following material considerations for the economic spatial strategy:
- **Growth Aspirations** - 'Balanced Growth' seeks to achieve a significant 'step change' in the economic structure and performance of the Shropshire economy to support the SEGS. The delivery of this 'step change' will be particularly influenced by the emerging policies and new allocations in the DSLP that seek to determine the pattern of development in the County. This pattern of development will be particularly influenced by the scale, range, choice and location of new employment land in the DSLP;
 - **Assisting Neighbouring Unmet Needs** – the consideration of neighbouring unmet needs in determining the appropriate scale of planned new development is a minimum requirement to conform with the national policy and to implement the presumption for sustainable development. The proposal to increase new economic development and employment generation in the centre, east and south of the County will also help to improve the profile and investment offer of Shropshire beyond the County boundary. This is to be supported through a broader range and choice of housing opportunities that are also accessible to other key economic and employment markets. This will

include locations in the sub-regional area of the West Midlands, in need of additional support to meet their own economic needs and demands, which will further help to improve the economic potential of Shropshire. This matter is discussed further in Chapter 6 of this ESTP in relation to the contribution of 30ha from the employment land requirement to towards unmet need in the BCA;

- **Choice and Competition** – the effects of the growth aspirations for the County combined with recognition of the broader range of employment uses being promoted through the planning system, the need to manage the loss of employment land to other significant competing uses and the need to make more effective use of land is considered to have a significant positive effect on the economic spatial strategy. The response to these pressures is considered to have delivered an employment land requirement that seeks to improve the investment potential and employment opportunity by shaping an employment land supply that offers a greater range, choice and quality of investment locations and development opportunities in Shropshire. These changes should withstand the new focus on a broader range of employment generating uses and the traditional demand from other significant competing uses for employment land;
- **Employment generating uses** – strategic policy SP13 in the DSLP recognises the need to provide certainty in the delivery of the SEGS by shaping the strategic land supply and the use of established employment areas. It is also recognised that Shropshire has a diverse economic structure with a long-standing focus on ‘service industries’ and there will be a need for flexibility in the delivery of employment sites to allow other employment generating uses to be developed. The policy therefore identifies a broader range of land uses to be considered as ‘employment generating uses’. This also reflects the changes in 2020 to the Use Classes Order and the introduction of new Class E including offices, research and development, light industrial uses, professional and financial and other service and also the potential for demand from new Class F for community uses. The employment land requirement recognises the potential contribution of this broader range of land uses to the employment offer of the County and the likely demands this broad range of uses may place on the employment land supply and existing premises in the County;
- **Managing Losses of Employment Land** – in Shropshire, employment land provided through the SDP has traditionally been regarded as a repository of more affordable land for development. This pressure has traditionally drawn employment land from the supply to meet a range of other needs including housing, retail, professional/financial/health and other care services, recycling and environmental industries, community facilities and community uses even including allotments gardens. The EDNA recognises this significant loss of employment land to other uses in Shropshire. It records that in one single financial year from 2018-19, such losses totalled 7.9 ha. The EDNA suggests a replacement figure of around 4.2 ha per year as a sufficient rate of churn/loss replacement which equates to 92.4 ha over 22 years. The DSLP therefore takes the employment land requirement towards a higher level of growth to satisfy the SEGS and to help diversify the largely service based economy of Shropshire. In managing this approach, the DSLP has to take account of the much broader range of land uses now regarded as being ‘employment generating’ and the long-standing pressures on the employment land supply as a repository of more affordable land for development. The DSLP responds to these pressures through the scale and spatial distribution of the employment land supply which is being refreshed through new, proposed allocations in the DSLP. The DSLP therefore takes the employment land supply to a position where it might satisfy both the employment land requirement and meet some (but not all) of the demands from other significant competing uses. In meeting this objective, the employment land supply is supplemented by the protection of existing employment premises on established employment areas where the floorspace remains attractive to the market;
- **Land use efficiency** – the evidence from the EDNA focuses the economic spatial strategy on a Regeneration Scenario based on the SEGS strategy. The ERTS identifies this focus on the Regeneration Scenario by assessing the need to improve the efficient use of land (plot ratios) when

developing employment land in Shropshire. This seeks to deliver a more effective approach to the planning of development on allocated land; improving the efficiency of development in delivering built floorspace and increasing the out-turn of employment to meet the needs of the County. The intention of the DSLP is to seek a high growth strategy with an urban focus to encourage investors into the market, providing a range and choice of sites in attractive and sustainable locations in the County. This strategy seeks to initiate an improvement in the efficiency of development particularly within the urban markets of the County and in locations with proven records for commercial development and the provision of employment;

- **Managing Labour Supply** – the DSLP seeks to balance new economic development and employment generation with the delivery of new housing, focused in the main urban centres of Shrewsbury, the Market Towns and Key Centres of the County. This balance between the two principal aims of the DSLP seeks to ensure the key economic objectives of the strategic approach in Policy SP2 are met: providing for the delivery of a growing and diverse labour force; and in turn, supporting the delivery of an improving rate of economic growth with increasing overall productivity (GVA) in the local economy and individual productivity (GVA per Head) from those employed in the County;
- **Improving Spatial Distribution** - the DSLP seeks to deliver new economic development and higher employment generation principally by directing new employment sites into Shrewsbury, the Principal Centres and some Key Centres in the east of the County and to the strategic settlements reclaiming larger brownfield sites in the rural areas. The focus for this planned adjustment in the spatial distribution of development are the strategic corridors comprising the principal rail and road routes through County. This will improve Shropshire's economic potential particularly within significant commuting locations with higher concentrations of resident labour and higher levels of skills and academic attainment. This will provide an increased urban focus in the economic spatial strategy to capture the greater opportunity in urban markets and to achieve a more efficient level of development on employment land. This should deliver higher proportions of developed floorspace and employment (jobs) from land developed in the County;
- **Modernising Employment Floorspace** – the EDNA identifies that overall, Shropshire has a higher proportion of units constructed pre-1970 than might be expected nationally. This suggests a slightly higher rate of replacement of existing stock (churn) may be required to address the higher proportion of outdated stock likely to be unfit for modern-day occupiers. Other ELR studies have noted that approximately 20% of historic completions have been achieved through (former) B-Use Class redevelopment (i.e. the re-use of formerly Class B employment sites), with the remainder (80%) requiring new sites. This indicates a likely requirement for a high proportion of new Class B units on new employment sites to deliver a sufficient supply of premises to meet modern occupier needs. The employment land requirement includes a replacement allowance to reflect both the age of the stock and the need to replenish the supply with modern stock and to manage the significant loss of employment land to other uses;
- **Delivering Higher Quality Employment** - the SEGS recognises that the current ageing demographic of Shropshire is well evidenced and documented. It will be necessary to work within this context and to seek to maximise any opportunities to improve the supply of labour in Shropshire. This will include supporting the younger workforce by retaining the talent and skills of young people and graduates in the County. This is linked to the housing offer, the affordability of the area, and supporting cultural and vibrant hubs in the main urban centres. It will also be necessary to support the 'middle' range of our working population by encouraging people, especially professional individuals, couples and families to live and work in Shropshire. Providing the opportunities for good quality employment and future career advancement in the workplace for ambitious residents to progress are key factors for this demographic of the local population. Some of those working locally are under-employed, working in roles for which they are over-qualified. This creates two key problems, firstly, these people may leave Shropshire to seek 'better' employment outside of County and removing the skills

and resources (and those of their families) from the local economy. Secondly, whilst these people are in these roles and not progressing then lower skilled or younger people are not able to access employment in the County;

- **Improving Productivity** – the ERTTP identifies that a primary barrier to achieving a ‘step change’ in Shropshire’s economic performance is the sheer scale of Shropshire as the fourth largest Local Authority in England. An effect of the size of Shropshire is the challenge of coordinating the scale and quality of the employment land offer with the size and spatial distribution of the working age population and their movements between home and work. This is identified in the ERTTP as a key economic challenge for Shropshire as the largest and most economically productive Local Authority in The Marches LEP. This challenge translates into a significant effect on individual productivity (GVA per Head) where a comparison with the smaller County of Herefordshire shows Herefordshire has a much higher GVA per Head. A comparison of Shropshire and Herefordshire with the even smaller land area and younger population of Telford and Wrekin Council indicates Telford and Wrekin Council has the highest GVA per Head in The Marches LEP. The Shropshire economic spatial strategy seeks to address this economic challenge in part through better quality and more accessible employment opportunities in the County and by improving the quality of the employment offer to retain a younger workforce to balance our ageing demographic.

Urban Focus of the Economic Spatial Strategy

- 4.15 The PSDD set out the ‘urban focused’ spatial strategy for Shropshire which is now indicated as the preferred distribution in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The PSDD explained that the ‘urban focus’ for the spatial strategy would impact on the distribution of development through the proposed settlement hierarchy. The distribution would reflect the urban focus by placing the majority of development into Shrewsbury (30%) and Shropshire’s network of Principal Centres (24.5%) and Key Centres (18%) to place over 70% of development into the upper tiers of the settlement hierarchy, as shown below.

The preferred ‘Urban Focused’ distribution of development

Shrewsbury	around 30%
Principal Centres	around 24.5%
Key Centres	around 18%
Rural Areas	around 27.5%

- 4.16 The urban focused spatial strategy in the PSDD and SA established the proposed split between urban development in the upper tiers of the settlement hierarchy and the rural areas comprising the Community Hubs and Community Clusters (lower tier settlements) and the countryside. The proposed split is approximately 73:27 to favour the larger settlements. This establishes the expectation for the urban focus to deliver about 73% of the proposed housing and employment land requirements.
- 4.17 Rural areas will continue to see appropriate development but at a level below that in the currently adopted policy in the Core Strategy (2011). This will reduce the rural component of development from the adopted Policy CS1 at 35% to around the proposed level in the PSDD at 27.5%.
- 4.18 The move towards this urban focus responds to the objectives in the SEGS to prioritise investment along strategic corridors and growth zones, utilising existing rail and road connections and building on the electronic communications networks in the County. This also reflects the economic spatial strategy objectives to improve the spatial distribution by moving economic investment opportunities into the urban centres in each of Place Plan area providing better connectivity and greater resources to support economic investment and employment growth. This is discussed further in Chapter 7.

- 4.19 The spatial distribution is expected to support the objectives of improving choice and competition in the market. This is to be achieved by placing the majority of the development land in locations with a wider appeal to the market to attract a broader range of appropriate employment generating uses. The urban focus for the strategy is also expected to support the objectives of improving land use efficiencies, modernising the employment floorspace and delivering higher quality employment in the County.
- 4.20 The urban focus also reflects the opportunities for sustainable growth within Central Shropshire; East Shropshire including the M54 Corridor (providing for appropriate protection of the Green Belt); South Shropshire and the North East. This will place significant growth into Shrewsbury, each of the five Principal Centres and many of the Key Centres. This will offer the best opportunity to achieve sustainable housing and employment delivery and to enable Shropshire to utilise and respond positively to future investment demand. In particular the level of growth proposed in Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Shifnal and Market Drayton supported by the strategic settlements at Ironbridge and Clive Barracks, Tern Hill will maximise the benefits of Shropshire's unique geographic position within the West Midlands region. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.
- 4.21 This approach also reflects the need to achieve a realistic growth strategy which responds positively to the presence of environmental constraints, in particular the Shropshire Hills AONB in the south and the Green Belt in the east of the County.
- 4.22 The DSLP has implemented this urban focus through the preferred distribution of development in Policies S1 to S21. This directs the larger proportion of the planned provision of employment development into the urban centres and Strategic Settlements of the Place Plan areas. The two scenarios for the planned distribution of development in the PSDD/SA and the DSLP may be compared in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Proportionate distribution of employment guidelines in Policies S1 - S21 compared to the preferred distribution

Settlement Hierarchy	Projected Spatial Distribution		
	Preferred Distribution in SA	Policy S1 - S20 Guidelines	Policies S1 - S21 Distribution
	%	ha	%
Shrewsbury	30%	100	27%
Principal Centres	24.5%	172	46%
Key Centres	18%	91	24%
Strategic Settlements		12	3%
Rural Areas*	27.5%	0	0%
TOTAL		375	

* Rural Areas comprise Community Hubs/Clusters & Countryside

- 4.23 The DSLP proposes a different preferred distribution of development in Policies S1 to S21. This directs the distribution of employment development towards the upper tiers of the settlement hierarchy to achieve a strong urban focus. The effect of this different distribution is to achieve the desired urban proportion of development with 73% in just the largest settlements with Shrewsbury and the Principal Centres.
- 4.24 The Key Centres also have a much higher proportion at 24% than the PSDD/SA (at 18%) and the inclusion of the Strategic Settlements in the spatial strategy (at 3%) also increases the proportionate urban distribution of development with the Key Centres to 97% and with the Strategic Settlements to 100%. This adjustment to an entirely urban focus in the employment land requirement seeks to achieve a planned adjustment in the spatial distribution of the employment land supply. This directs new, proposed employment allocations to the higher tiers of the settlement hierarchy to help achieve the objectives of the economic spatial strategy.

- 4.25 This objective is identified and explained in the Shropshire Employment Land Review⁸ (ELR) (document EV046) as achieving a new economic geography for Shropshire by enabling Shropshire to stop their watching brief, to 'catch up' and drive forward their own ambitious economic growth plans, through delivering a balance of local and strategic employment sites as future allocations or via policies supportive of appropriate windfall employment development. This approach to changing the economic geography in Shropshire is explained in further detail in Chapter 2 from paragraphs 2.20 to 2.28 of the ELR.
- 4.26 The DSLP regards the allocation and development of the Strategic Settlements at Clive Barracks, Tern Hill at Ironbridge as part of this urban focus. These strategic settlements are reclaiming larger brownfield sites, albeit in rural areas, bringing forward an urban form of settlement regarded as making a contribution to neighbouring urban centres. This position is established in DSLP Policy SP10.1 in criterion 1 which states that: ***"The management of development in the countryside will reflect the Plan's urban focused development strategy which seeks to direct the majority of new development to the Strategic, Principal and Key Centres and new Strategic Settlements"***.
- 4.27 The projected spatial distribution of the employment land requirement in Policies S1 to S21 seeks to influence the spatial distribution of the employment land supply in the scale and distribution of the employment allocations. This will bring a stronger urban focus in the land supply as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Proportionate distribution of the employment land supply (at 31st March 2020)

Settlement Hierarchy	Cumulative Spatial Distribution of Employment Land Supply							ACTUAL DISTRIBUTION
	Commitments & Completions	%	Saved Allocations	%	Proposed Allocations	%	Total Employment Land Supply	
	ha		ha		ha		ha	
Shrewsbury	45.8	30%	9.0	20%	50.0	23%	105	25%
Principal Centres	37.9	25%	84.20	44%	33.00	45%	155	38%
Key Centres	12.4	8%	32.80	16%	39.00	27%	84	20%
Strategic Settlements					12.00	5%	12	3%
Rural Areas*	55.3	36%	1.70	20%			57	14%
TOTAL	151		128		134		413	

* Rural Areas comprise Community Hubs/Clusters & Countryside

- 4.28 Commitments and Completions are already determined and precondition the distribution of development such that existing commitments (with completions) produces an urban focus of about 64%. This leaves a significant, proportionate rural component of 36% which is currently policy compliant with the adopted Core Strategy but directs investment into rural locations, that are generally less attractive to the market.
- 4.29 The cumulative distribution has been positively affected by the remaining 'saved' allocations in the SAMDev Plan. This has the effect of reducing the rural component to just 20% of the land supply. This was achieved through a significant proportionate increase in the employment allocations in the Principal Centres (+19%) and the Key Centres (+8%). The 'saved' allocations shift the balance of the urban focus towards the larger settlements which consequently have 80% of the land supply and this reduces (by - 16%) the rural component to 20%.
- 4.30 The determining factor for moving the spatial distribution towards a much stronger urban focus is the distribution of the new, proposed employment allocations in the DSLP. The new, proposed allocations are influenced by the strategic approach in Policy SP2 with the new sites fully defining the urban focus into the main urban centres and strategic settlements to provide 86% of the employment land supply.

⁸ Shropshire Employment Land Review – EV046 (2019) prepared by Avison Young available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

This further reduces the rural component of the supply to just 14% leaving the majority of the employment development opportunities in locations likely to deliver higher densities of development with modernise premises offering better prospects for delivering higher quality employment.

- 4.31 In relation to the Inspectors questions in ID2, this section and the spatial distribution (Chapter 7) seeks to address the matter of the urban focus of the spatial strategy. Shropshire Council presents this proposed strategy to the Examination of the DSLP.

Balanced Growth between Housing and Employment

- 4.32 In relation to the scale of employment development proposed in the County through the DSLP, the management of the labour supply is a key objective. It has already been identified that the DSLP seeks to balance new economic development and employment generation with the delivery of new housing particularly in the main urban centres of Shrewsbury, the Market Towns and larger Key Centres.
- 4.33 This balance between the two principal aims of the Plan seeks to ensure the key economic objectives of the strategic approach in Policy SP2 will be met: providing for the delivery of a growing and diverse labour force; and in turn, supporting the delivery of an improving rate of economic growth with increasing overall productivity in the local economy and individual productivity from those employed in the County.
- 4.34 Again, the PSDD set out the 'urban focused' spatial strategy for housing delivery in Shropshire which is also indicated as the preferred distribution in the SA.

The preferred 'Urban Focused' distribution of development

Shrewsbury	around 30%
Principal Centres	around 24.5%
Key Centres	around 18%
Rural Areas	around 27.5%

- 4.35 The DSLP has produced a marginally different preferred housing distribution in Policies S1 to S21. The two scenarios for the planned distribution of housing development may be compared in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Proportionate distribution of housing guidelines in Policies S1 - S21 compared to the preferred distribution

Settlement Hierarchy	Projected Spatial Distribution		
	Preferred Distribution in SA	Policy S1 - S20 Guidelines	Policies S1 - S21 Distribution
	%	dw	%
Shrewsbury	30%	8,625	28%
Principal Centres	24.5%	7,500	24%
Key Centres	18%	5,150	17%
Strategic Settlements		1,350	4%
Rural Areas *	27.5%	8,175	27%
TOTAL		30,800	

* Rural Areas comprise Community Hubs/Clusters & Countryside

- 4.36 The proposed housing distribution from settlement guidelines in Policies S1 – S21 maintains the urban focus established in the PSDD/SA. The difference between the two scenarios arises from the inclusion of the Strategic Settlements at Clive Barracks, Tern Hill at Ironbridge. This causes a nominal shift in the distribution drawing some proportionate share from each of the other components of the housing distribution. The proportionate urban focus remains largely unchanged but with the greater effects of this nominal redistribution taking effect in Shrewsbury (at -2%) and the Key Centres (at -1%).

- 4.37 The impact of the urban focus distribution in the housing requirement has a positive effect on the proportionate distribution of the housing land supply shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Proportionate distribution of the housing land supply (at 31st March 2021)

Settlement Hierarchy	Cumulative Distribution of Housing Land Supply & Windfall Allowances (31st March 2020)								ACTUAL DISTRIBUTION
	Commitments & Completions	%	Saved Allocations	%	Proposed Allocations	%	Total Employment Land Supply	Windfall (Guidelines MINUS Supply)	
	ha		ha		ha		ha	dws	
Shrewsbury	5,390	32%	502	29%	2,560	29%	8,452	173	28%
Principal Centres	3,142	19%	1,661	24%	2,185	24%	6,988	512	24%
Key Centres	2,753	16%	547	16%	1,010	15%	4,310	840	15%
Strategic Settlements					1,350	5%	1,350		5%
Rural Areas*	5,575	33%	486	30%	2,005	28%	8,066	109	28%
TOTAL	16,860		3,196		9,110		29,166	1,634	

* Rural Areas comprise Community Hubs/Clusters & Countryside

- 4.38 This brings the overall distribution of the housing land supply very close to the required distribution shown in Table 9 (in column 4). The only significant changes are the introduction of the Strategic Settlements with the effect of a nominal decrease in the proportionate provision in Key Centres. The provision for rural windfall development also produces a nominal increase in the Rural Areas which also reduces the proportion provision in Key Centres.
- 4.39 Comparing the proportionate distributions of the housing and employment requirements. There is a demonstrable balance in Shrewsbury with the proportions of housing (28%) and employment (27%) being closely matched. The significant planned adjustments in the overall distribution of employment (Table 7 in column 4) increases provision in the Principal Centres (at +22%) and Key Centres (at +7%) above the relevant housing provision (Table 9 in column 4) to illustrate the Balanced Growth objective.
- 4.40 This planned adjustment in the employment guidelines in the economic spatial strategy seeks to achieve an explicit urban focus in the distribution of new employment development. This planned adjustment directs a significant proportion of the employment requirement and the land supply into the upper tiers of the settlement hierarchy to include the Strategic Settlements. This planned adjustment of employment provision provides a better alignment with and supports the housing distribution in the DSLP.

Strategic Corridors

- 4.41 The DSLP seeks to deliver new economic development and higher employment generation principally by directing new employment sites into Shrewsbury, the main urban centres in the east of the County and to the Strategic Settlements reclaiming larger, rural brownfield sites. A focus for this planned adjustment in the spatial distribution compared to the current approach in the SDP, are the strategic corridors along the principal rail and road routes through County.
- 4.42 The Strategic Corridors are identified in strategic Policy SP14 and the distribution of the employment land supply into these corridors is identified in Table 4: Economic Spatial Strategy and Strategic Employment Land Supply in Chapter 3. The actual and proportionate distribution of the employment land supply into the strategic corridors and the degree of urban focus in this distribution is summarised below.

Table 11: Scale and distribution of the employment land supply in the strategic corridors

Table 11: Scale and distribution of the employment land supply in the strategic corridors											
Strategic Corridors		Settlement Hierarchy									
		Principal Centres		Key Centres		Strategic Settlements		Rural Area			
		Location	ha	Location	ha	Location	ha	Location	ha		
M54 / A5		Shrewsbury	105								
A41 east / A464		Bridgnorth	39	Albrighton	0.02	Former Ironbridge Power Station	6				
A4169 / A458				Much Wenlock	1.4						
A454				Shifnal	41.4						
A5 West		Oswestry	47					Chirk Bank	0.7		
Central A5 / A49 / A53 / A458		(Shrewsbury)	(105)					Ford	-		
A41 / A53		Market Drayton	31			Clive Barracks, Tern Hill	6	Shawbury	1.0		
		Whitchurch	26								
A49		Ludlow	12	Church Stretton	1.4			Bayston Hill	-		
		(Whitchurch)	(26)	Craven Arms	15.0			Dorrington	0.15		
								Hadnall	0.9		
								Prees Heath	1.0		
								Woore	-		
Employment Land Supply	ha	Principal Centres	260	Key Centres	59	Strategic Settlements	12	Rural Areas	3		
	%		63%		14%		3%		1%		

- 4.43 The DSLP policies and proposals will direct 81% of the total employment land supply into the strategic corridors through the County. The primary corridor in the County is the M54 / A5 linking to Shrewsbury as the primary employment location in Shropshire, providing 25% of the employment land supply. The second most important strategic corridor location is the east of the County where the interconnecting A41 / A464 and A4169 link with the A458 / A454 route between Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Shifnal, smaller urban centres, Ironbridge and beyond. These eastern strategic corridors provide 21% of the employment land supply. The remaining corridors comprise the A41 / A53 north bound from the M54 along the A41 and from Shrewsbury along the A53 including Clive Barracks, Tern Hill which together provide 16% of the land supply. The A5 west to Oswestry providing 12% and the A49 north and south of Shrewsbury providing 7% of the land supply.
- 4.44 The distribution of 81% of the employment land supply into the settlement hierarchy along strategic corridors reveals that 77% of the land supply is within the upper tiers of the settlement hierarchy, 3% is in the Strategic Settlements and 1% is in the rural areas.
- 4.45 Of this 77% in the upper tiers of the settlement hierarchy, 63% is within Shrewsbury and the Principal Centres. The economic spatial strategy, therefore, demonstrably builds on the connectivity of those principal settlements on the strategic corridors. This provides access to the rail network, other public transport services, the strategic road and motorway network and the principal electronic communications networks across the County.

Environmental Assets

- 4.46 The economic spatial strategy considers the sustainability of the proposed scale of growth to ensure the vision and strategy for promoting economic development and employment opportunities and the key delivery objectives are achievable without significant impacts on key environmental assets in the County.

Green Belt

- 4.47 The urban focus in the distribution of development reflects the opportunities for sustainable growth within East Shropshire including the M54 Corridor and the significant growth potential of Principal Centres and Key Centres in east Shropshire.
- 4.48 This approach offers the best opportunity within the County to achieve sustainable housing and employment delivery and to enable Shropshire to utilise and respond positively to future investment opportunities and to achieve a sustainable pattern of growth. In particular the level of growth proposed in Bridgnorth and Shifnal supported by the Ironbridge Strategic Settlement reflects the opportunities presented by Shropshire's unique geographic position within the West Midlands region.
- 4.49 This approach seeks to achieve a realistic growth strategy that also responds appropriately to the presence of environmental constraints including the SHAONB and the Green Belt.
- 4.50 Table 12 below shows that prior to the identification of the proposed new employment allocations around Bridgnorth and Shifnal, the use of Green Belt land for 'appropriate' development under national policy (comprising 6 ha with all sites being around 1ha or less) represented only 1.4% of the total employment land supply proposed in Shropshire. This previously limited provision occurred over an area covering up to 10% of the administrative area of Shropshire with significant urban centres within and adjoining the Green Belt. The rationale for Shropshire to undertake a Green Belt Review is discussed in the Green Belt Topic Paper submitted in response to **ID1** and **ID2**.

Table 12: Employment land supply within the Shropshire Green Belt

Place Plan Rural Area	Settlements	Completions 2016 - 2020	Permissions at 31st March 2020		Allocations		TOTAL
			Existing Premises	New Land	Saved Allocations (SAMDev Plan)	Proposed Allocations (Submission Draft Plan)	
		ha					
SHROPSHIRE		50	21	81	128	134	414
Albrighton Rural				0.02			0.02
Bridgnorth Rural		0.05					0.05
	Allum Bridge		0.17				0.2
	Alveley	0.53					0.5
	Crowgreaves			1.15			1.2
	Claverley	0.60		0.33			0.9
	Quatford			0.13			0.1
	Stanmore			0.01			0.01
	Worfield	0.75				11.5	12.3
Shifnal Rural		0.19		0.32			0.5
	Redhill	1.50					1.5
	Sutton	0.11				39	39.1
Green Belt	ha	3.7	0.17	1.96	-	50.5	56.4
	% of Total	0.9	0.04	0.5	-	12.2	14

- 4.51 The additional impact on the Green Belt arises from two significant allocations proposed through the economic spatial strategy. These seek to achieve the objectives of the urban focus for development, the optimisation of the investment potential of the strategic corridors and the delivery of balanced growth between the housing supply and the delivery of employment to achieve a sustainable pattern of

development across the County. This matter is also addressed in the Green Belt Topic Paper⁹ and the Green Belt Revised Exceptional Circumstances Statement¹⁰ (document **EV051**).

Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (SHAONB)

- 4.52 Table 13 shows the DSLP responds positively to the presence of the SHAONB covering 25% of the administrative area of Shropshire across the south of the County. The use of land within the AONB for development is restricted under national policy to ensure major development may only occur in exceptional circumstances. This equally affects the significant urban centre of Church Stretton which lies within (and is washed over by) the AONB designation. Employment development in the AONB (comprising only 5 ha with all sites around 1ha or less) represents only 1.1% of the total employment land supply in Shropshire. Of this supply, only 3.2ha or 0.8% has either been completed or is committed on undeveloped land. A further 0.1ha (0.02%) is proposed for the redevelopment of existing premises and the remaining 1.3ha (0.3%) is a 'saved' employment allocation within Church Stretton in the DSLP.

Table 13: Employment land supply within the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Place Plan Rural Area	Settlements	Settlement Designation	Completions 2016 - 2020	Permissions at 31st March 2020		Allocations		TOTALS
				Existing Premises	New Land	Saved Allocations (SAMDev Plan)	Proposed Allocations (Submission Draft Plan)	
				ha				
SHROPSHIRE			50	21	81	128	134	414
Bishop's Castle Rural		<i>countryside</i>			0.12			0.12
Church Stretton Rural		<i>countryside</i>	0.47	0.10	0.20			0.8
	Church Stretton	Key Centre	0.13			1.30		1.4
Ludlow Rural		<i>countryside</i>			0.58			0.6
	Clee Hill	Community Hub	0.96					0.96
Much Wenlock Rural		<i>countryside</i>	0.79					0.8
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty		ha	2.3	0.1	0.9	1.3	-	4.6
		% of Total	0.6	0.02	0.2	0.3	-	1.1

9 Shropshire Green Belt Topic Paper (2022) prepared by Shropshire Council and available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

10 Shropshire Green Belt Revised Exceptional Circumstances Statement (2020) prepared by Shropshire Council and available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

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5. Economic Development Need

- 5.1 The DSLP approach to 'Balanced Growth' seeks to achieve a significant 'step change' in the economic structure and performance of the Shropshire economy to support the SEGS. The delivery of this 'step change' will be particularly influenced by the emerging policies and new allocations in the DSLP that seek to determine the pattern of development in the County. This pattern of development will be particularly influenced by the scale, range, choice and location of new employment land in the DSLP.
- 5.2 The evidence from the Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) (document **EV043**) focuses the economic spatial strategy on a Regeneration Scenario based on the SEGS strategy. The ERTTP identifies this focus on the Regeneration Scenario by assessing the need to improve the efficient use of land (plot ratios) when developing employment land in Shropshire. This seeks to deliver a more effective approach to the planning of development on allocated land; improving the efficiency of development in delivering built floorspace and increasing the out-turn of employment to meet the needs of the County. The intention of the DSLP is to seek a high growth strategy with an urban focus to encourage investors into the market, providing a range and choice of sites in attractive and sustainable locations in the County. This strategy seeks to initiate an improvement in the efficiency of development particularly within the urban markets of the County and in locations with proven records for commercial development and the provision of employment.

Employment Land Requirement

- 5.3 The combined effects of the growth aspirations for the County, recognition of the broader range of employment uses being promoted through the planning system, the need to manage the level of loss of employment land to other significant competing uses and the need to make more effective use of land is considered to have a significant positive effect on the economic spatial strategy. The response to these pressures in the economic spatial strategy is considered to have delivered an employment land requirement that will improve the investment potential and employment opportunity and offer a greater range, choice and quality of investment locations and development opportunities across the County. This is also expressed through changes to the employment land supply to help withstand the new focus on a broader range of employment generating uses and the traditional demand from other significant competing uses for employment land.
- 5.4 The ERTTP sets out the employment land requirement through a series of key steps in the preparation of the DSLP. The Balanced Growth option identified the employment land requirement for 304 hectares, now contained in the Submission Local Plan as a requirement for around 300 hectares with a rounded annual development rate of 14ha/pa increasing the requirement to 308ha. This is explained further in this ESTP at paragraphs 4.8 – 4.13.
- 5.5 The findings in Table 5 at paragraph 4.10 from the PSDD identified a very broad range of out-turns of land and floorspace even though the preferred strategic option for Balanced Growth indicated a specific employment land requirement of 304ha.

Shropshire EDNA

- 5.6 Shropshire Council commissioned an EDNA to determine the economic needs of the County for the DSLP. This addresses the recommendation in the SAMDev Plan Examination Report, paragraph 23 for the DSLP Submission Local Plan to objectively assess the future employment land requirements for the County.
- 5.7 The EDNA report presented the potential employment land requirements in Table 14:

Table 14: EDNA employment land scenarios

Scenario	Employment Land Requirement
	hectares
Experian Baseline Forecast (June 2020)	191.91
Regeneration Scenario	196.88
Standard Methodology - Housing / Labour Supply	170.86
Housing Requirement - Housing / Labour Supply	181.39
Past Take Up Scenario	263.82

- 5.8 The significant variation in these potential employment land requirements reflects the variety of options identified in the PSDD consultation in 2017 shown in Table 5 above. Consequently, it is considered that the Shropshire local economy does not lend itself readily to quantifiable assessments of its potential future performance and productivity and the necessary inputs (e.g. land and labour) to deliver growth. The effect is that Shropshire's future economic performance proves difficult to accurately predict using economic forecasting models.
- 5.9 The EDNA finds that the Council's own evidence from monitoring past take up and delivery of developed land and floorspace provide an equally strong method for assessing the further employment land needs of the Council. The EDNA recognises (at paragraphs 8.69 and 9.8) that the Shropshire monitoring systems is comprehensive, and there is a:
- ***"very substantial amount of employment land that is already in the development pipeline."*** [para 8.69] and also;
 - ***"The data provided by Council Officers relating to past take up since 2006/07 is particularly detailed, and hence it is considered that in this instance further weight can be attached to the past take up scenario than might ordinarily be the case."*** [para 9.8]

Land Use Efficiency in Shropshire

- 5.10 A key focus in the EDNA is the requirement to ensure sufficient, suitable employment sites are identified in the DSLP to achieve the Council's economic growth strategy. The EDNA considered a range of scenarios for the employment land requirement, briefly outlined in Table 14, to adjust the Shropshire economy over the DSLP period from 2016 to 2038.
- 5.11 To determine an employment land requirement, Planning Practice Guidance advocates translating employment (jobs) and floorspace output forecasts into land requirements by assessing a number of key relationships. The Standard Industrial Classification sectors used in forecasting must be translated into use classes; the employment (jobs) must be related to the different use of floorspace in these uses classes (employment density); and the use classes/floorspace use must be related to the gross site area (plot ratio based on industry proxies).
- 5.12 The EDNA (in paragraphs 5.24 and 8.58) recognises that the Council measured the employment land take up in relation to (former) Class B uses. At 31st March 2019, there had been 126ha of employment land developed in Shropshire. It was considered that applying a standard plot ratio of 40% would deliver over half a million square metres (sq.m) of commercial/industrial floorspace over the past 13 years, at an average of 38,970sq.m annually.

- 5.13 The evidence derived from the AMR monitoring data for employment development through to 31st March 2020 indicates the plot ratio in Shropshire is more accurately assessed at 26%. The AMR data also indicates that just over one third of a million sq.m of commercial / industrial floorspace (364,439sq.m) has been delivered over the past 14 years (assessed on an additional year of data to that available for the EDNA), at an average of just over 26,000sq.m annually.
- 5.14 The efficiency of the out turn of built floorspace from the actual plot ratio for Shropshire requires a re-assessment of the recommended employment land requirements from the growth scenarios assessed in the EDNA and presented in Table 14 above.

Re-assessment of the Growth Scenarios in the EDNA

- 5.15 These employment requirements are determined using the standard 40% plot ratio to identify the land area that would need to be developed. This indicates that each scenario assumes a net employment land requirement to support the amount of floorspace expected to be built which is shown in Table 20.

Table 15: Indicative employment land requirements

Scenario	Employment Land Requirement	Black Country Allowance	Gross Requirement	STANDARD Plot Ratio	Anticipated Net Out Turn
	hectares			%	hectares
Experian Baseline Forecast (June 2020)	161.91	30.00	191.91	40	76.76
Regeneration Scenario	166.88		196.88		78.75
Standard Methodology - Housing / Labour Supply	140.86		170.86		68.34
Housing Requirement - Housing / Labour Supply	151.39		181.39		72.56
Past Take Up Scenario	233.82		263.82		105.53

- 5.16 The anticipated net outturn from these employment land requirements are the levels of built development needed to deliver the objectives of each of the EDNA growth scenarios. The evidence of the actual plot ratios being developed in Shropshire from 2006 to 2020 at only 26% indicates, the assumed net employment land requirements in Table 15 would each require larger amounts of land to deliver the levels of built development. For example, if it is assumed that 100ha of land will deliver 40ha of floorspace at a 40% plot ratio, then at a lower plot ratio of 26%, the 40ha of floorspace would require 154ha of land.
- 5.17 The re-assessed employment land requirements taking account of the 26% plot ratio in Shropshire, are shown in Table 16.

Table 16: Revised employment land requirements

Scenario	Anticipated Net Out Turn	ACTUAL Plot Ratio	Gross Employment Land Requirement
	hectares	%	
Experian Baseline Forecast (June 2020)	76.76	26	295.25
Regeneration Scenario	78.75		302.89
Standard Methodology - Housing / Labour Supply	68.34		262.86
Housing Requirement - Housing / Labour Supply	72.56		279.06
Past Take Up Scenario	105.53		405.88

5.18 The revised employment land requirements indicate the preferred requirement of 300ha in the DSLP reflects the Regeneration Scenario (at 302 ha) identified in the EDNA. This Regeneration Scenario closely reflects The Marches Strategic Economic Plan strategy further refined by the key objectives of the SEGS. The EDNA considers that this Regeneration Scenario directs the work of the Economic Growth Service, its partners and stakeholders through the 'Invest in Shropshire' programme and is being used to guide investors, developers and businesses in the commercial markets in Shropshire. The EDNA recognises this at paragraphs 8.36 and 8.37 which state that:

- *“The Marches Strategic Economic Plan [SEP] (2019) sets out the vision and key objectives for the LEP over the period to 2038. The Strategic Economic Plan [SEP] seeks to drive forward the three local economies within the area to deliver 5,200 new businesses and over 58,000 new jobs. Following discussion with Shropshire Council Officers, we have refined the SEP’s analysis down to four sectors with the future growth potential to drive forward Shropshire’s economic profile”. [para 8.36]*
- *“As the largest local authority partner in the LEP, Shropshire will help to drive forward this growth within the LEP partnership. Lichfields has assessed the detailed classifications used in the Experian workforce projections to test whether there are any concrete policy justifications for modifying any of the categories in the light of these growth sector targets. The Shropshire Council’s Economic Development Officer’s knowledge of current opportunities/threats in the County over the coming years were also factored into the analysis”. [para 8.37]*

Supply of Land and Premises

- 5.19 The ERTTP set out the employment land supply position from the adopted SDP and the need for new land to meet the objectives of the DSLP.
- 5.20 The contemporary monitoring of development in Shropshire in the AMR, Section C - A Prosperous Economy (pages 43 to 66) identifies the strategic land supply position at 31st March 2020 for the adopted SDP from 2006 to 2026. This land supply position is summarised in Table 17. This shows the County has a good supply of employment land to achieve the current employment requirement of 290ha in the adopted SDP, although part of the supply comprises 146ha (36%) of completed development.

Table 17: SAMDev Plan - strategic land supply (at 31st March 2020)

Employment Land Requirement and Strategic Land Supply	Land
	hectares
EMPLOYMENT LAND REQUIREMENT 2006 - 2026	290
Completions 2006 - 2020	146
Planning Permissions on committed sites	81
Planning Permissions for existing premises	21
SAMDev Employment Allocations	128
Windfall Allowances	30
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY at 31 March 2020	406

- 5.21 The contemporary monitoring position for the DSLP is presented in Table 18. This shows the degree to which the current land supply including the saved allocations contributes towards the proposed employment land requirement for 300ha in the DSLP. The strategic land supply comprises 280ha but requires further provision of employment land to meet the requirement for 300ha and provide sufficient flexibility in the supply to satisfy the objective of the economic spatial strategy.

Table 18: DSLP - net land supply (at 31st March 2020)

Employment Land Requirement and Strategic Land Supply	Land
	hectares
EMPLOYMENT LAND REQUIREMENT 2016 - 2038	300
Completions 2006 - 2020	50
Planning Permissions on committed sites	81
Planning Permissions for existing premises	21
SAMDev Employment Allocations	128
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY at 31 March 2020	280

- 5.22 The further provision of employment land should be sufficient to provide a range and choice of sites to ensure the economic spatial strategy in the DSLP is sufficiently flexible to support the strategy for economic growth in Shropshire.
- 5.23 The preparation of the DSLP continued with the publication of the Preferred Sites consultation document in 2018 and continued with the Strategic Sites consultation in 2019. These preferred options presented the distribution of the proposed employment land requirement across the 18 Place Plan areas of Shropshire. The Preferred Sites consultation introduced 9 new employment allocations including two strategic mixed-use settlements totalling 134 ha, in the locations identified in Table 19.

Table 19: DSLP - Employment land allocations and strategic settlements

Location	Settlement	Site	Designation	Employment Land
				hectares
East	Bridgnorth	Tasley Garden Village	Employment Allocation	16
		North of Stanmore Industrial Estate	Employment Allocation	7
		Adjoining Hickman Road,	Employment Allocation	4.5
	Shifnal	East of Shifnal Industrial Estate	Employment Allocation	39
	Ironbridge	Former Power Station	Strategic Settlement	6
Centre	Shrewsbury	Preston Island	Employment Allocation	45
		Land between Mytton Oak Road and Hanwood Road	Mixed Use Urban Extension	5
South	Ludlow	South of The Sheet on A49	Employment Allocation	5
North-East	Tern Hill	Clive Barracks	Strategic Settlement	6
			TOTAL	134

- 5.24 This took the employment land supply to the position in the DSLP shown in Table 20.

Table 20: DSLP - strategic land supply (at 31st March 2020)

Employment Land Requirement and Strategic Land Supply	Land
	hectares
EMPLOYMENT LAND REQUIREMENT 2016 - 2038	300
Completions 2006 - 2020	50
Planning Permissions on committed sites	81
Planning Permissions for existing premises	21
Saved Employment Allocations	128
Proposed Employment Allocations	134
PROPOSED STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY	414

5.25 The Council commissioned an Employment Land Review¹¹ (evidence document **EV046**) which reached the following key findings and conclusions:

- Given Council growth aspirations and latent market demand in key locations (i.e. the Strategic and Principal Centres) the timing and conditions are right for Shropshire to drive forward their corporate economic growth objectives and bring forward strategic and local employment sites to meet market demand and diversify the economy by drawing in occupiers in higher value sectors that drive economic productivity and retain talent in the County;
- Reflecting on the findings of this study, the M54 Growth Corridor Study, and other available evidence, it is apparent that employment land opportunities can be divided into three categories: strategic, significant local and other local opportunities;
- Key locations for strategic employment opportunities include the Strategic Centre of Shrewsbury due to the size, location, prominence and critical mass of existing employment areas within the town; and/or key nodes on strategic corridors;
- Key locations for significant local employment opportunities include Principal and targeted Key Centres on strategic corridors, particularly adjacent to existing employment areas and/or at local transport nodes;
- Key locations for other local opportunities include other Key Centres, in the main adjacent to existing employment areas and/or at local transport nodes;
- It's time for Shropshire to stop their watching brief, to 'catch up' and drive forward their own ambitious economic growth plans, through delivering a balance of local and strategic employment sites as either future allocations, via policies supportive of appropriate windfall employment development or, in the case of locations within the Green Belt, safeguarding of land for future development;
- Market evidence indicates latent demand for 'fit for purpose' employment land, particularly within the Strategic and Principal Centres to meet the needs of the modern occupier for both inward investors and local occupiers which will help Shropshire meet their economic growth objectives.

5.26 The ELR reached the following conclusions for the selection of sites in the 17 settlements reviewed in the Study comprising Shrewsbury, the five Principal Centres and the eleven Key Centres:

- sites that are most suitable for employment use are, in the main, located adjacent to existing employment areas (with a critical mass to support further employment provision) and/or at key infrastructure nodes i.e. adjacent to strategic road junctions/roundabouts, proposed new routes, providing clear visibility to passing trade and in locations that are suitable, market facing and deliverable;
- the majority of sites assessed as being unsuitable for employment use are identified as such due to key constraints i.e. landscape, environmental, flooding, accessibility and unsuitable adjacencies. Some of these sites are potentially suitable for residential or non-Class B employment uses and we recommend that the Council gives further consideration to this;
- there is sufficient future employment land supply to meet growth aspirations in the Strategic and Principal Centres;
- it is clear that there is both opportunity and demand for the future provision of Class B employment land in the Strategic Centre of Shrewsbury and the Principal Centres of Bridgnorth, Ludlow, Market Drayton, Oswestry and Whitchurch. This reduces in many of the Key Centres;
- indeed, in some of the smaller Key Centres, it is likely there will be no significant demand for Class B employment uses due to a combination of market demand and viability which constrains delivery;

11 Employment Land Review – EV046 (2019) prepared by Avison Young available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

- as such non-Class B employment opportunities should be considered as an alternative means of increasing and diversifying employment opportunities.

5.27 The outcome of the assessment in the ELR to assist the selection of preferred new employment allocations took account of the proposed employment guidelines for settlements at that time, the land supply commitments, the shortfalls in the land supply and the preferred amount of land to be allocated in those settlements with land supply shortfalls. The outcomes of the ELR are summarised in Table 21.

Table 21: ELR Findings - proposed employment land allocations by settlement

Settlement	Council data				ELR Assessment		
	Employment land guideline	Commitments/all locations as of 31/03/17	Employment land shortfall	Employment land to be allocated	Supply suitable for employment use (Category A)	Category B land	Total
Shrewsbury	91	41	50	65	19.5	234.5	254
Bridgnorth	16	12	16	16	10	292	302
Ludlow	11	7	4	4	3.5	36	39.5
Market Drayton	13	35	0	0	18	35	53
Oswestry	19	57	0	0	2	91	93
Whitchurch	17	20	0	0	9	62	71
Albrighton	5	0	5	0	0	5	5
Shifnal	16	2	38	38	0	133.69	133.69
Bishop's Castle	2	3	0	0	2.5	2	4.5
Broseley	3	1	2	0	1.5	0.5	2
Church Stretton	3	1	2	0	1	0	1
Cleobury Mortimer	2	1	TBC	TBC	0	13	13
Craven Arms	5	14	0	0	15.5	1	16.5
Ellesmere	8	9	0	0	12.5	1.5	14
Highley	3	2	1	0	0	0	0
Much Wenlock	2	0.5	1.5	0	0	3	3
Wem	6	4	2	0	5.5	7	12.5

Source: Avison Young 2019

5.28 The sites selected for allocation in the DSLP below, were assessed in the ELR and considered to be:

Table 22:ELR Findings - assessment of proposed employment allocations

Shrewsbury	Preston Island	Category B
	Between Mytton Oak Road and Hanwood Road	Category B
Bridgnorth	Tasley Garden Village	not assessed (adjoins Category B)
	North of Stanmore Industrial Estate	Category B
	Adjoining Hickman Road, Stanmore Industrial Estate	Category B
Market Drayton	Clive Barracks Tern Hill Strategic Settlement	not assessed
Ludlow	South of Sheet Road	Category B
Shifnal	East of Shifnal Industrial Estate	Category B
Much Wenlock	Ironbridge Strategic Settlement	not assessed

5.29 The categories of land identified in the ELR were:

- **Category A:** Sites that are in sustainable locations which the market is expected to regard as attractive investment prospects, being assumed to be viable for development, and largely free of any significant environmental and/or technical constraints.
- **Category B:** Sites that are in generally sustainable locations which the market might regard as reasonable investment prospects, subject to the degree of environmental or technical constraints to be addressed, and their effect on the viability of the sites for development. For example, the need for remediation or demolition of previous land uses, the need for investment in infrastructure provision, or the need to improve the accessibility or prominence of the site. Identification of sites as Category B sites may indicate their potential suitability for consideration as part of a future, planned approach to the growth of a settlement.
- **Category C:** Sites that are not considered to be suitable for employment use, because they are in locations considered to be less sustainable for these uses, they are substantially affected by environmental and/or technical constraints, and/or are less likely to meet market requirements for employment development.

5.30 These groupings comprised the following land areas from the total land supply assessed in the Study.

Table 23: ELR Findings – land area assessed

Source	Hectares
Category A land suitable for employment use (from ELR)	100
Category B land (from ELR)	917

5.31 The proposed new employment land allocations, drawn from the more abundant supply of category B land, are considered to provide a robust, sustainable and deliverable supply of additional employment land to achieve the objectives of the economic spatial strategy in the DSLP.

5.32 The land to be allocated for employment development in the DSLP is also supported by protection of existing employment areas across the County. These existing employment areas are located in or adjoining settlements in the different tiers of the hierarchy and in the countryside. The protection of these sites is based on evidence in the Shropshire Strategic Employment Areas Study comprising:

- **Shropshire Strategic Sites and Employment Areas Assessment: Phase 1 – Shrewsbury**¹² (evidence document **EV0111.01**) setting out the location, scale, character description, economic profile and preferred uses for the strategic sites and employment areas in Shrewsbury;

¹² Shropshire Strategic Sites and Employment Areas Assessment: Phase 1 – Shrewsbury (2014) available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

- **Shropshire Strategic Sites and Employment Areas Assessment: Phase 2 – Principal Market Towns and Key Centres¹³** (evidence document **EV0111.02**) setting out the locations, scale, character description, economic profile and preferred uses of the strategic sites and employment areas in the five Principal Centres and eleven Key Centres of Shropshire.

Employment Growth and Labour Supply

- 5.33 The DSLP seeks to balance new economic development and employment generation with the delivery of new housing, focused in the strategic and principal urban centres of Shrewsbury, the Market Towns and Key Centres of the County. This balance between the two principal aims of the Plan seeks to ensure the key economic objectives of the strategic approach in Policy SP2 are met: providing for the delivery of a growing and diverse labour force; and in turn, supporting the delivery of an improving rate of economic growth with increasing overall productivity in the local economy and individual productivity from those employed in the County. The ERTS sets out the expectations for the delivery of employment (jobs) in the preparation of the DSLP. This initial assessment is partially reviewed in this ESTP.

Overview of Employment Generation

- 5.34 The ERTS expected the overall level of employment generated in Shropshire to be between 29,178 jobs (lower range) to 35,637 jobs (upper range). The office, industrial and warehousing/logistics sectors were expected to be between 48.1% to 61.5% of the lower range and between 39.4% to 50.4% of the upper range. This suggests the following levels of employment generation. At the lower range of 29,178 jobs there would be between 14,035 – 17,944 jobs in new office, industrial and warehousing/logistics uses. At the upper range of 35,637 jobs there would be between 14,041 – 17,961 jobs in new office, industrial and warehousing/logistics uses. This employment generation overall and for office, industrial and warehousing/logistics sectors is presented in Table 24.

Table 24: Shropshire employment generation 2016 - 2038

Employment Generation	Lower range		Upper Range	
	48.1%	61.5%	39.4%	50.4%
	Number	Number	Number	Number
Overall Employment Generation (Sensitivity Testing)	29,178		35,637	
Office, Industrial, Warehousing/ Logistics Employment	14,035	17,944	14,041	17,961

- 5.35 From these ranges, the most likely level of office, industrial and warehousing/logistics employment is expected to be 14,047 jobs in the lower range estimate reflecting the less efficient use of land in Shropshire. This includes current employment delivery to 2020 and the projected out turn to 2038, on the same basis with a lower out-turn of built development for each hectare developed.
- 5.36 There is considerable scope to further improve the efficiency of employment land use in Shropshire to increase the overall out-turn of office, industrial and warehousing/logistics employment in the County. There is the further possibility that growth in the general industrial sectors in Shropshire might surmount the contraction of these sectors and the losses of employment predicted in the national economy, to

13 Shropshire Strategic Sites and Employment Areas Assessment: Phase 2 – Principal Market Towns and Key Centres (2014) available at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>

actually deliver net employment growth. This is particularly true in the upper ranges for employment generation should a buoyant market drive investment within the County.

Delivery of Labour

- 5.37 A key step to sustaining the growth of the local economy and achieving the potential levels of employment growth will be the provision of sufficient labour to support business growth in the County.
- 5.38 This highlights one of the key challenges for Shropshire in that projected population growth is largely based on attracting in-migrants. The historical experience is that older age groups prefer Shropshire as a suitable location for their retirement lifestyle. Indeed, this very large County, offers many different environmental character areas including Shrewsbury, the Market Towns and villages, the exclusive opportunities created by the Green Belt and the AONB and with the flat topography of the Cheshire plain to the north and the upland, post-glacial landscape to the south of the County.
- 5.39 The EDNA records in relation to the 2014-Sub National Population Projections that an additional 25,695 persons will be living in Shropshire between 2016 and 2038 (+8.2%) with the vast majority of this growth being in the over-65 age groups. The already large cohort in the over 65 age groups will further increase by a very substantial 39,059 persons with in-migration and the ageing of the resident population. This will contrast with a significant decline in residents aged between 16 - 65 years which reduces by -12,794.
- 5.40 To further frame the demographic issue in Shropshire, the new jobs growth between 29,178 jobs to 35,637 jobs (and even with the lower estimate in the EDNA of 19,677 jobs) should theoretically be readily balanced by a labour supply of up to 60,634 persons. This comprises projected population growth of 25,695 persons and a balance of 34,939 residents of working age. However, projected population growth of 25,695 persons is expected to largely be people in the retirement age groups with the balance of 34,939 persons comprising residents who already commute out of the County for work. Therefore, labour supply in the County will be limited by the ageing demographic and working patterns of the population.
- 5.41 A factor not taken into account in the EDNA, is the movement of people from the four Local Authorities in the Black Country through the provision of new homes and jobs in Shropshire to contribute to their unmet need. A further factor is the effect this relationship may have on commuting patterns when Shropshire is established in the Black Country as a stronger destination for work.
- 5.42 The success of the SEGS and the delivery of the economic spatial strategy in the DSLP will be dependent on the delivery of a suitable labour force to support the anticipated jobs growth. This will be a dynamic situation where labour will be drawn from a number of sources within the County and from those coming to live and/or work in the County. Many of the sources may be quantified to build a picture of the factors that will drive success in delivering economic growth in Shropshire.
- 5.43 Some of these sources will be engaged through the dynamics of the spatial strategy. They will come into play as the anticipated development and employment are delivered and influence the delivery of labour. Engaging these sources of labour will ease the reliance on retaining existing labour that commutes from the County. This will make the strategy more deliverable and enable the County to deliver further investment as labour 'constraints' are lifted.
- 5.44 The EDNA recognises that whilst population growth will largely comprise older age groups within or entering retirement age, there is still a projected labour force growth of 2,079 persons (para 8.48). This was determined by applying adjusted 2018 OBR economic activity rates for Shropshire and factoring in an unemployment rate of 3.38% to the increase in projected labour (para 8.49). The EDNA recognises the following factors which are considered below:

- the County is affected by unemployment although usually at a relatively low rate of 2.5%, nevertheless the EDNA considers that the County has available 4,700 persons capable of entering employment but currently unemployed. Whilst it is expected that local economies will have ‘frictional’ unemployment including people in the process of moving between jobs, some of these people will enter employment as the new jobs are being created or programmes are designed to assist them to secure employment:
 - the labour market profile for Shropshire indicates that unemployment has risen over recent years to nearly 4% but now at 3.6% and is reasonable to expect to fall as some people regain employment;
- whilst many of these people will take new jobs, the heavier reliance must be placed on other sources of labour recognising that ‘frictional’ unemployment will be sustained in the County;
- the County can measure some success from its current economic strategy through the record of changing commuting flows in the EDNA (Table 4.2). Shropshire has experienced a net-commuting shift from -12,225 persons in 2001 to -5,665 persons in 2011 from increasing numbers of in-commuters during the previous inter-censal period. This reflected an increase of 8,488 persons in the number of in-commuters from +20,786 persons in 2001 up to +29,274 persons in 2011;
- Shropshire Council considers that a reliance on further increases of in-commuting leaves the growth strategy open to structural changes in neighbouring Local Authorities wishing to retain their own resident labour. This would affect the capacity of this County to achieve its own growth. Therefore:
 - Shropshire proposes a more sustainable approach to retain more of its resident working population to drive its economic growth strategy. The first step towards this objective is to achieve a ‘net commuting balance’ by reducing out-commuting from the level in the 2011 census making available a further +5,665 persons of working age;
- Shropshire intends the achievement of a ‘net commuting balance’ to partly deliver the objective to secure the necessary labour supply for economic growth in the County. The continuing reduction of out-commuting beyond the ‘net balance’ offers the highest possible return in labour supply in the County:
 - the delivery of 29,178 jobs up to 35,637 jobs (or the lower EDNA estimate of 19,677 jobs) being serviced by new labour force growth (2,079 persons), reducing unemployment (1,500 persons) and a net-commuting balance (5,665 persons) totalling 9,244 persons would still leave a residual requirement of between 19,934 persons to 26,393 persons (or possibly 10,433 persons to service 19,677 jobs) to be achieved by retaining existing out-commuters.

5.45 It is considered that further processes may be brought into play in the implementation of the economic spatial strategy including:

- the success of the economic strategy itself through the delivery of employment land and premises and increasing numbers of new jobs may deliver more balanced in-migration including working age people attracted to the offer of employment and deterring retiring migrants because of the increasing levels of economic activity in the County;
- a key driver may be a growing cross-boundary relationship with the Black Country Authorities (BCA) and the West Midlands Combined Authority. This has the capacity to drive changes in commuting and migration patterns into Shropshire as the County develops its functional relationships with those partner authorities;
- this will be supported by an improving housing offer in Shropshire. The housing strategy seeks to provide suitable residential accommodation for its ageing demographic but also a range and choice of housing suitable for younger age groups to live and settle in the County and secure employment;
- Shropshire Council recognises changes recorded through the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Shropshire moved closer to the worst levels in the UK with a 2nd ward at Ludlow East (with Harlescott, north Shrewsbury) entered the lowest 10% of wards. The Council will deliver social and economic responses to these complex issues and to provide opportunities to address worklessness and improve the prospects for a much-needed increase in labour within the County.

5.46 The assessment of the delivery of labour in the ERTF (in Table 43 and paragraphs 7.45 – 7.46) has been reviewed in Table 25 below, taking into account the potential for a more dynamic labour market.

Table 25: Shropshire labour supply balance

Table 25: Upside labour supply balance								
Factors	Influences	EDNA Regeneration Scenario	Employment and Labour Projections					
			Lower Range			Upper range		
			Future Projection		Future Projection with Actual Development		Future Projection	
			low	high	low	high	low	high
numbers								
PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT	Overall Employment Generation	19,677	29,178			35,637		
GROWTH	Office, Industrial, warehousing/logistics	7,609	14,035	17,944	14,047	14,041	17,961	
Projected Labour Force Growth	Impacts on working labour from:							
	- working age migrants from anticipated trends	2,079	2,079	2,079	2,079	2,079		
	- in-migration from ABCA through meeting 1,500 dwellings of unmet housing need	1,715	1,715	1,715	1,715	1,715		
	- employment growth attracting more working migrants to the County							
	- improving housing choice attracting more working migrants to the County							
Unemployment / Worklessness	Impacts on Economic Inactivity:							
NOMIS Labour Market Profile	- Unemployment (from 3.6% @ 5,400 to 2.6%)	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500		
	- Economic Inactivity: 7,200 want a job	7,200	7,200	7,200	7,200	7,200		
	- Extended Careers: 20% defer retirement of 9,500	1,900	1,900	1,900	1,900	1,900		
	- Health & Well-Being Agenda: inactivity at 21,400							
	- Social Inclusion Programme: reduced by 15%	3,210	3,210	3,210	3,210	3,210		
Balancing Net Out-Commuting	- to reduce out-commuting towards equilibrium	1,923	5,665	5,665	5,665	5,665		
	- in-commuting from ABCA through meeting 30 hectares of unmet employment need		2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300		
Achieving Net In-Commuting	- further reduce out commuting		3,609	3,609	10,068	10,068		
TOTAL LABOUR SUPPLY		19,527	29,178	29,178	35,637	35,637		

5.47 The assumptions for a dynamic labour market (Table 25) may be compared to the labour assumptions in the ERTF (in Table 43) using the NOMIS Labour Market Profile¹⁴ (September 2021) showing:

- that the working age in-migrants predicted to be 2,079 persons in the EDNA, will remain unchanged;
- that the working age in-migrants from the BCA predicted to be 1,715 persons will remain unchanged;
- a possible reduction in unemployment from the recently elevated levels at 5,400 persons or 3.6% decreasing to more realistic historical level at 3,900 persons or 2.6% as part of the economic recovery from the recent pandemic equal to an additional 1,500 persons;
- the economically inactive recorded in the labour market profile for Shropshire at 40,800 persons are a target market for new employment generated in the County reducing the figure by 7,200 persons who want a job (with a residual of 33, 600 persons). This figure includes the student population in the County representing in part, the capacity to attract younger people into the local labour supply;
- the broader and significant impact of worklessness for 33,600 persons is further evaluated to identify:
 - the positive effects of the health, wellbeing and social inclusion agendas in the County to draw home makers (7,200 persons), long term sick (10,200 persons) and other workless (4,000 persons) into employment equal to a 15% reduction in 21,400 persons comprising 3,210 persons;
 - the positive effect of those extending their careers by deferring their retirement through full or part time working equal to a reduction in 9,500 persons of 20% equal to 1,900 persons;
- reaching equilibrium in net-commuting in Shropshire remains unchanged at 5,665 persons
- leaving the retention of out-commuting at much lower levels but supplemented firstly by:
 - increasing in-commuting from the BCA by seeking to reach an approximate equilibrium with the level of out-commuting from Shropshire to the BCA equal to an increase of around 2,300 persons.

14 NOMIS Labour Market Profile (2021) prepared by ONS available at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157170/report.aspx?town=shropshire#tabempunemp>

6. Association of Black Country Authorities: Unmet Employment Need

Introduction

- 6.1 Shropshire Council is proposing, in the draft Shropshire Local Plan¹⁵, to support the development capacity of the Black Country Authorities (comprising Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton) through the period from 2018 to 2038¹⁶. This will be achieved by accommodating part of the Black Country unmet housing and employment needs forecast to arise within their combined administrative areas in the draft Black Country Plan¹⁷.
- 6.2 Shropshire Council proposes that 1,500 dwellings and 30ha of employment land will be accommodated in the County during the proposed Local Plan period to 2038, to contribute towards the forecast unmet needs in the Black Country from 2018. It is proposed that no specific sites will be identified in Shropshire to accommodate these contributions, rather the unmet needs will form part of the total housing and employment land requirements for Shropshire. The unmet needs will be delivered through the proposed spatial strategy for the level and distribution of development in the draft Shropshire Local Plan. This approach to contributing to the unmet employment needs of the Black Country will be influenced by the functional relationships and connectivity between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities. Consequently, the delivery of employment development contributing towards this unmet need is expected to favour principal settlements on strategic corridors in the centre and east of the County.
- 6.3 This proposed spatial strategy is principally contained in strategic policy SP2 (Spatial Approach) to achieve a sustainable and appropriate pattern of development. Further strategic, development management and settlement policies expand upon and support the proposed spatial strategy including the objectives of policies SP12 (SEGS), SP13 (Delivering Sustainable Economic Growth and Enterprise) and SP14 (Strategic Corridors).

Context

- 6.4 The purpose of this chapter of the ESTP is to:
- Confirm that the Black Country evidence forecasting the existence and level of their unmet employment need, has not been tested through an Examination of the draft Black Country Plan or any other Local Plans prepared by Local Planning Authorities contributing to the unmet development needs forecast to arise within the BCA.
- The unmet employment need in the Black Country and the requirement for a contribution towards this unmet need was considered in November 2019 at the Examination into the Development Consent Order¹⁸ for the West Midlands [Rail Freight] Interchange (WMI) located in South Staffordshire District. The Examining Authority recognised the importance of the economic growth aspirations for the Black Country and the significance of meeting some of their unmet employment need in South Staffordshire in close proximity to the Black Country Authorities. The decision to approve the Development Consent Order recognised that a significant area of employment land

15 Regulation 19: Pre-Submission draft Shropshire Local Plan 2016-2038 at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/core-submission-documents/>

16 Period 2018 to 2038 comprises commencement of the draft Black Country Plan (Reg 19 Consultation) from 2018 – 2039 and the conclusion of the draft Shropshire Local Plan (Regulation 19 Submission) from 2016 – 2038.

17 Regulation 18: Consultation draft Black Country Plan 2018-2039 at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t2/p5/>

18 WEST MIDLANDS RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE Examining Authority's Report of Findings and Conclusions and Recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport [TR050005] available on the Planning Inspectorate National Infrastructure Planning website at: [West Midlands Interchange | National Infrastructure Planning \(planninginspectorate.gov.uk\)](https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/west-midlands-interchange/)

within this Strategic Rail Freight Interchange should contribute towards the unmet employment need forecast to arise in the Black Country.

The Black Country Authorities subsequently commissioned Stantec consultants to determine what proportion of the site area could reasonably be attributed to meeting their needs and this Report was published alongside the Regulation 18 draft Black Country Plan in 2021. The Report suggested that of the 193 ha of developable strategic warehousing land, 72 ha could reasonably be assumed to meeting the needs of the growing Black County (and South Staffordshire) population within the service area. The Report recommended that the balance of the site could meet the needs of Greater Birmingham with a much smaller share based solely on displacement to the Stoke 'market area' should there be a need. Further work progressed through the Duty to Cooperate and was published on the Black Country Plan website showing that other Local Plan areas in the service area had a very limited 'claim' as they were seeking to meet Class B8 needs in full, presenting an opportunity for the Black Country to claim a higher proportion of the WMI towards meeting Black Country Class B8 needs.

- b. Provide an overview of the decision to propose a contribution in Shropshire towards unmet employment need forecast to arise within the BCA.
- c. Provide an overview of how the specific contribution of 30ha towards this unmet employment need was determined.

Meeting Unmet Needs

- 6.5 Shropshire Council is providing support to the Black Country Authorities to conform with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework¹⁹ (NPPF), paragraph 11 and particularly sub-section 11(b) [our emphasis] that ***“strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, [Footnote 6: established through statements of common ground] unless:***
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or*
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”*
- 6.6 NPPF, paragraph 11 establishes the critical first steps to ensure 'plan making' conforms with the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. These critical first steps are further explained in paragraph 35(a) that requires a strategy which seeks to meet both objectively assessed needs together with needs that cannot be met in neighbouring areas, where it is practicable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development. Shropshire Council recognises that these objectives are a minimum requirement for delivering sustainable development through the DSLP.
- 6.7 The objective to help accommodate unmet need in neighbouring areas is further explained in NPPF, Paragraph 26. This places a requirement on strategic policy-making authorities addressing unmet development need to determine under Paragraph 35(a), where else this unmet need could be satisfied to demonstrate a 'practicable' and 'sustainable' solution to the circumstances in which the unmet need arises. This will enable strategic policy-making authorities to identify in Paragraph 35(b) 'appropriate' strategies for their Local Authority areas that in Paragraph 16(c), are based on the requirement to undertake early, proportionate and effective engagement and in Paragraph 31, use relevant, up to date evidence that is adequate and proportionate.

¹⁹ National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [July 2021] MHCLG now DLUHC

- 6.8 In establishing the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’, the delivery of objectively assessed needs together with help to accommodate unmet needs in neighbouring areas, may only be constrained through Paragraph 11 in conjunction with Paragraph 35(a). This is required where the impacts of the strategy that meets these combined needs may be:
- shown to adversely affect the delivery of sustainable development (paragraph 11(a)); or
 - strongly proven to compromise the key objectives of protecting important assets or areas (paragraph 11(b)(i)); or
 - shown to significantly and demonstrably out-weigh the benefits of the spatial strategy (paragraph 11(b)(ii)).
- 6.9 The significance of these objectives for strategic policy-making authorities is explained throughout Paragraph 35, as being integral to the production of a positively prepared, appropriate and evidentially justified strategy for the Local Plan. This strategy should facilitate the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework.
- 6.10 These objectives should be achieved in the Local Plan through Paragraph 20, by providing strategic policies that set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places that make sufficient provision [inter alia] for housing and employment development and for the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment. These objectives are addressed in the strategic policies of the draft Shropshire Local Plan and will be considered in planning decision-making in the County, over the period 2016 to 2038.
- 6.11 It is considered that the draft Shropshire Local Plan achieves these critical ‘plan making’ objectives partly through the contribution towards the unmet development needs in the BCA.

Duty to Cooperate – relevant strategic matters

- 6.12 The ‘duty to cooperate’ was introduced by section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)²⁰ and the Localism Act (2011)²¹. It places a legal duty on Local Planning Authorities, and prescribed public bodies, to work together on strategic cross boundary matters.
- 6.13 Shropshire Council and the ABCA on behalf of the BCA are co-operating in the preparation of their separate Local Plans in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF set out above. Shropshire Council and the ABCA entered into these discussions in accordance with NPPF, paragraphs 24 and 25 that “**Local planning authorities...are under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries**” in order to “**collaborate to identify relevant strategic matters which they need to address in their plans**”.
- 6.14 The Localism Act states that the ‘duty’ requires that engagement should occur constructively, actively and on an on-going basis during the plan making process. This requires each Local Planning Authority to have regard to the activities of other authorities where these other activities may be relevant to the preparation of their own Local Plan. This is further explained in NPPF Paragraph 16(c) requiring Plans to be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement. In discharging these duties as a strategic policy-making authority, Shropshire Council identified the Black Country unmet needs as a strategic matter for the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 6.15 In reaching this conclusion, Shropshire Council responded positively to a ‘letter of invitation’ from the ABCA to co-operate in determining whether their unmet development needs could be partly

20 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act [2004] ODPM now DLUHC at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/33A

21 DCLG now DLUHC, (2011), Localism Act, www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/section/110

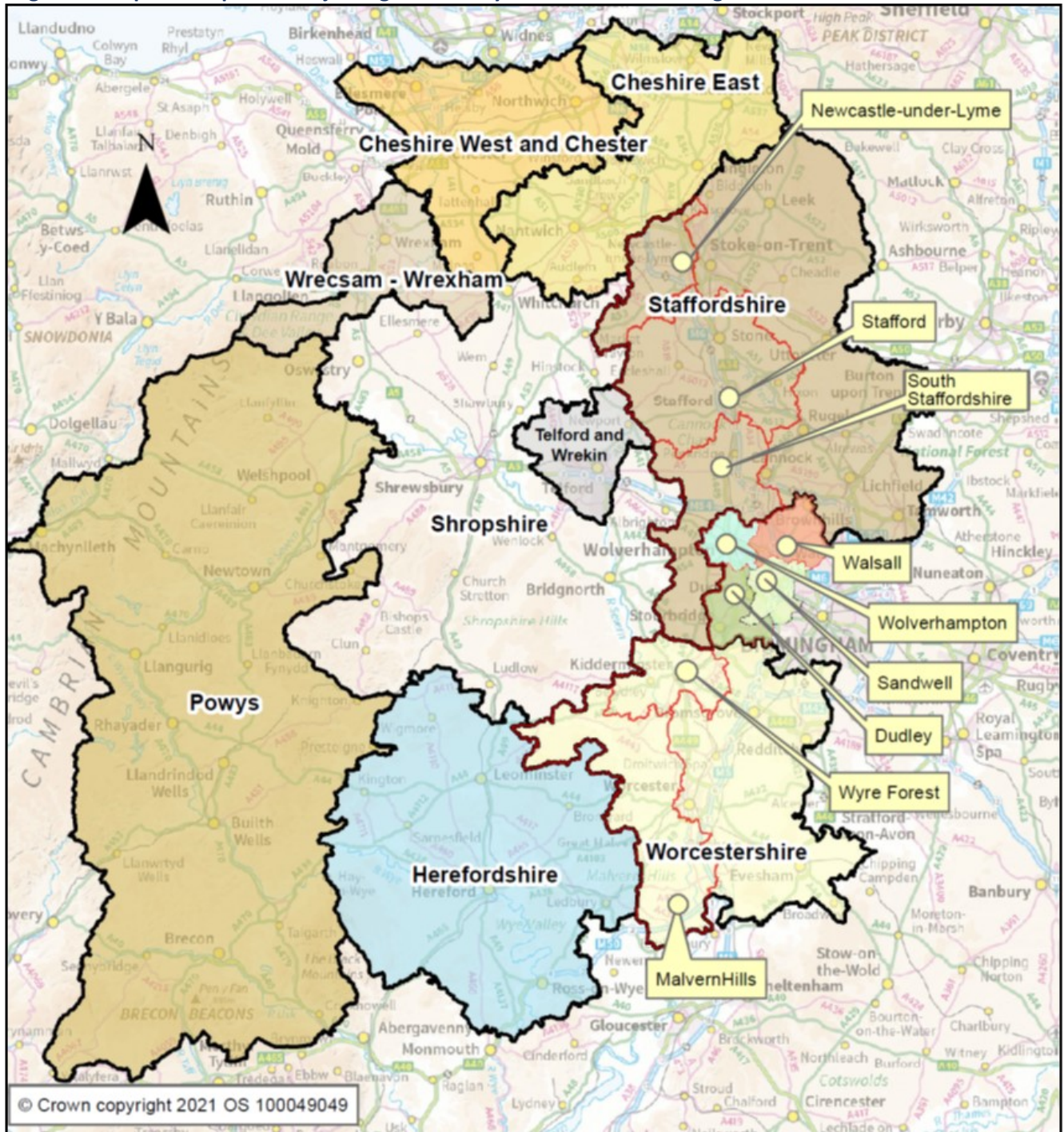
accommodated in Shropshire. This 'letter of invitation' reflected the commitment from the BCA to their duty to co-operate and their intention to deliver an appropriate strategy for their Local Authority areas. Together, our two strategic policy-making authorities wish to demonstrate a 'practicable' and 'sustainable' solution to the limited land resource capacity in the Black Country. This ESTP seeks to explain this practical solution to ensure the BCA may address their objectively assessed development needs to 2039 and this solution is considered to be sustainable, on the balance of considerations, set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF.

- 6.16 In accordance with paragraph 26 of the NPPF, Shropshire and the BCA recognise a 'mutuality' between the objectives of their two Local Plans that will assist both strategic policy-making authorities in the ***"production of a positively prepared and justified strategy"*** in the DSLPs for their respective Local Authority areas.
- 6.17 This 'mutuality' seeks to counter the challenges created by the more limited development capacity of the Black Country. This is proposed to be achieved in Shropshire by further facilitating the Black Country Authorities to access the strategic corridors, principal settlements and land resources in the adjacent sub-regional area. In turn, Shropshire Council seeks to use the land resource capacity of the County to support the sustainable growth of the Shropshire economy. This will be achieved in part, by helping to meet both the investment demands in the business markets and the employment needs in the labour markets within the BCA.
- 6.18 NPPF, paragraph 81 advocates this 'mutuality' in its principal advice on building a strong and competitive economy which directs Shropshire Council to ensure that (*our emphasis*): ***"Planning policies and decisions should help to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future."***
- 6.19 Shropshire Council considers this guidance to have a broad meaning. The authority seeks to ensure their strategy will build a strong and competitive economy in Shropshire and will also facilitate its neighbours to achieve the same objectives, where it is practicable to do so .

Strategic Relationship - Geography

- 6.20 Figure 1 overleaf, illustrates the strategic relationship between Shropshire and the adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities and adjoining County Councils in the sub-regional area. This helps to illustrate both the proximity and connectivity between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities and also the strategic potential of Shropshire to help support the objectives of the draft Black Country Plan.

Figure 1: Map of Shropshire - adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities



Strategic Relationship – Proximity of Shropshire FEMA and Black Country/Southern Staffordshire FEMA

- 6.21 There are significant strategic employment developments and proposals along the M54/A5/A41 and A458/A454 corridors through Shropshire and extending into the BCA.
- 6.22 These corridors cross through the adjoining boundaries of the Shropshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)²² focused within the administrative boundary of Shropshire Council and the adjoining Black Country/Southern Staffordshire FEMA along the western boundary of the South Staffordshire District Council administrative area. The proximity between these two FEMA and the focus of investment into the strategic corridors that cross the boundary between the FEMA enhances the strategic relationship between Shropshire Council and the Black Country/South Staffordshire Authorities in the exercise of their duties as 'strategic policy making authorities'.
- 6.23 Shropshire has a significant strategic link to the national motorway network through the M54 motorway linking at Junctions 10A, 11 and 12 to the M6 motorway. This M6 link connects south at Junction 10A into the wider West Midlands region and beyond to the M5. The M6 link connects north at Junction 11 to Staffordshire linking to the Stoke on Trent conurbation and on into the North West region and beyond. In Shropshire, the M54 motorway is the final route of the A5 Trunk Road linking Shrewsbury and Oswestry to the North-West motorway network at the M56 and the A55 North Wales coast route to the seaport at Holyhead, on the Isle of Anglesey.

Strategic Relationship – the Black Country Link

- 6.24 The M54 link to the M6 provides a significant connection to the Black Country. The M54 at Junction 3 in Shropshire leads onto the A41 route into Wolverhampton and on into Sandwell linking to the M5. At the M54, Junction 2 in South Staffordshire the motorway leads onto the A449 (south) into Wolverhampton via the Stafford Road employment areas and at Junction 1 the A460 (south) leads into Wolverhampton and the A460 (north) connects to the M6 at Junction 11.
- 6.25 The M6 link from Junction 10A provides a significant connection via Junctions 9 and 10 into Walsall with connections into Sandwell on the A41 eastern corridor, which itself connects with the M5 at Junction 1. This latter motorway connection lies immediately to the south of the national motorway interchange of the M6 and M5.

Strategic Relationship – the Staffordshire link

- 6.26 The M54 Junctions 1 and 2 are significant locations served by the A460 and A449 with access to the M6 Junctions 11 and 12. These junctions and strategic corridors provide foci for existing and proposed local and strategic investment opportunities and national infrastructure projects including:
- the existing campus at Junction 2 of the Jaguar Land Rover plant with its immediate suppliers and other manufacturing enterprises within the i54 employment area for which consent has been granted for an extension of up to 40ha to open the investment opportunity to further strategic and supply chain enterprises to benefit from the strategic location and investment potential of i54;

22 Document EV043 - Shropshire Economic Development Needs Assessment [2021] Chapter 4 at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/evidence-base-documents/>.

- proposed allocated employment areas in the South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document [2018]²³ at ROF Featherstone (36ha) situated immediately to the north of M54 Junction 2 and east of A449. At Featherstone village adjoining the M54 Junction 1 and served from the A460 (north) and Hilton Cross adjoining M54 Junction 1 and served from the A460 (south) listed in Table 26 below.
- M54 to M6 Link Road²⁴ pending a decision on the Development Consent Order anticipated on 21 April 2022 [TR010054] comprising a link road between M54 Junction 1 and M6 Junction 11 with a northbound M6 connection. This will improve highway capacity on roads in the surrounding area to manage the significant development pressures experienced in this locality.
- West Midlands [Rail Freight] Interchange (WMI) on the West Coast Mainline received approval for a Development Order Consent effective from 25 May 2020 [TR050005] comprising an intermodal rail freight terminal connecting to the West Coast Main Line providing 743,200 sq.m (GIA) of rail served warehousing and ancillary service buildings and associated infrastructure on 297 hectares of land close to Penkridge (south of Stafford) to the west of M6 Junction 12. In the Examining Authority Report the significance of this development and the importance of the location close to the Black Country Authorities was recognised:

paragraph 5.2.11 - Based on the evidence submitted to the Examination, it is apparent that there is an ongoing tension between maintaining existing Green Belt boundaries and meeting future development needs within the Black Country and South Staffordshire. It is also apparent that the question of release of further Green Belt land may have to be considered to help meet those needs.

paragraphs 5.3.12 & 5.3.14 – draft RSS policy (referenced) the proposed location of a SFRI [Strategic Rail Freight Interchange] within southern Staffordshire to serve the Black Country. Although the RSS was not adopted, I consider that weight can be attached to its evidence base. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the adopted Core Strategies (CS) for the Black Country and South Staffordshire recognise the need for Regional Logistics Site/SRFI.

paragraph 5.3.18 – the (*Black Country Core Strategy [2011]*) notes (paragraph 2.18) that the requirement is difficult to accommodate due to the Black Country's tightly knit urban form and lack of suitably large sites. Wolverhampton and Walsall Councils' response confirm that there are no suitable sites available in the Black Country.

paragraph 5.3.30 – (*South Staffordshire District Council*) accepts the methodology used to calculate the (*Black Country*) EDNA but questions the need for 800 ha. It states that, based on past development trends, the objectively assessed need would be for 540 ha. I see no objection to the use of the higher, aspirational figure for planning purposes given the continuing need for regeneration in the Black Country and the levels of unemployment referred to.

paragraph 5.3.33 - The EDNA identifies a shortfall of 537 ha against the 800ha requirement for employment land, taking account of land supply within the Black Country. The Black Country Authorities will, therefore, be seeking assistance from neighbouring local authorities to meet that shortfall. The Black Country's inability to meet its future land requirements for employment and housing development is confirmed in the Black Country Urban Capacity Review (May 2018).

paragraph 5.3.36 - It is too early to form any conclusion as to what contribution might be sought from SSDC to help meet the employment land shortfall within the Black Country. The extent to which SSDC

23 South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document [2018] with Interactive Map at: <https://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/planning/site-allocations.cfm>

24 M5 to M6 Link Road Transport [TR010054] available on the Planning Inspectorate National Infrastructure Planning website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/west-midlands/m54-to-m6-link-road/>

agrees to make any such contribution will, ultimately, be a decision for the Council. However, I consider that there is clear evidence that any contribution will be of particular value because South Staffordshire District is in the same Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) as 3 of the Black Country Authorities (Wolverhampton, Walsall and Dudley).

Paragraph 6.10.23 - In their combined responses Wolverhampton and Walsall Councils confirm their intention that a high proportion of the WMI employment opportunities could be filled by people living in the Black Country which has a number of significantly deprived areas, some falling within the 10% most deprived in the UK. Having regard to those responses and the evidence provide by SSDC and SCC in the SoCGs, I am satisfied that there would be an adequate labour pool to support the Proposed Development without a significant adverse effect on the ability of existing businesses to fulfil their employment needs.

- 6.27 The significant Staffordshire link at M54 Junction 2 leads onto the A449 (north) providing connections into Staffordshire to Penkridge and Stafford following the rail route of the West Coast Main Line and passing the site of the proposed WMI. The A449 also makes several further connections with the M6 at Junctions 12, 13 and 14. This northern route through Staffordshire continues on the A34 north from Stafford linking to Stone and on to the A500 around the Stoke on Trent conurbation (a secondary priority for the WMI in the conclusions of the Examining Authority) and making further connections with the M6 at Junctions 15 and 16. The A500 also connects with the A53 south into Shropshire and connecting with Shrewsbury where it will form the road route for the proposed North West Relief Road linking to the A5 Trunk Road.
- 6.28 The role played by South Staffordshire District in supporting the sub-regional economy and specifically the economy and strategic investment opportunity of the BCA is significant. This role might be regarded as considerably exceeding the strategic size and function of the district but has occurred as a consequence of the strong functional relationship between South Staffordshire and parts of the Black Country connected principally by the M54 motorway. The degree to which the role played by South Staffordshire District might be sustained at the level already being successfully achieved might be questioned and in future, this role might require the support of other sub-regional partners. This evidence recognises the strong labour market linkages between Shropshire and the Black Country²⁵ and the area of moderate transaction with the Black Country including Cannock Chase, Lichfield, Tamworth, Solihull, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest²⁶.

25 Black Country Economic Development Needs Assessment Update (May 2021) paragraph 4.4

26 Black Country Economic Development Needs Assessment Stage 1 report (2017) paragraph 4.18

Table 26: Strategic proposals at boundary of Shropshire FEMA and Black Country/southern Staffordshire FEMA

Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMA)	Strategic Corridors	Location	Employment Area	Planning Status	Employment Land Provision	INCLUDES New / Further Provision
					hectares	
Shropshire FEMA	M54 Inc.3 / A41 (north) / A464	Stanton Road/Upton Lane, Shifnal	Shifnal East	Proposed Allocation	39	39
		Lamledge Lane, Shifnal	Shifnal Industrial Estate	Existing Employment Area	12	-
	A454 / A458	Estate Road, Bridgnorth	Stanmore Industrial	Existing Employment Area	19	-
		Estate Road & Stewart Road, Bridgnorth	Stanmore I.E. extension	Proposed Allocation	11	11
	A458	Bridgnorth	Tasley Garden Village and	Proposed (16ha) / Existing (7ha) Allocations	23	23
Wolverhampton / Dudley / Walsall / South Staffordshire / Cannock FEMA	M54 Inc.2 / A449 (south)	Wobaston Road	i54 Regional Investment Site	Existing Employment Area part under construction	91	6
		Wobaston Road: Western	i54 Extension	Committed Employment	40	40
		Wobaston Road	Balliol Business Park	Existing Employment Area	7	-
		Wobaston Road	Owen's Trading Estate	Existing Employment Area	7	-
	M54 Inc.2 / A449 (south)	Stafford Road North,	Darlaston (IN0123)	Existing Employment Area	?	-
		Stafford Road North,	Darlaston (IN0124)	Existing Employment Area	?	-
		Stafford Road, Wolverhampton	Fordhouses Industrial	Existing Employment Area	?	-
		Stafford Road, Wolverhampton	Former London Works	Existing Employment Area	?	-
	M6 Inc.12 / A449 (north M54) / A5	Four Ashes, Staffordshire	West Midlands Interchange - Strategic Rail	Committed Employment Area: Development Consent	297	233 net area
	A449 (north M54 Inc.2)	ROF Featherstone, Staffordshire	Strategic Employment	Committed Employment	36	36
		Featherstone, Staffordshire	Four Ashes Industrial	Existing Employment Area	72	11
		Hilton Cross, Staffordshire	Hilton Cross Business	Existing Employment Area	18	5
		Hilton Cross, Staffordshire	Hilton Main Industrial	Committed Employment	7	-

Strategic Relationship – Connectivity of Shropshire with Black Country Authorities and South Staffordshire District

- 6.29 There are significant physical road and rail connections and public transport services connecting Shropshire with the Black Country Authorities and principal settlements in South Staffordshire District.

Table 27: Strategic corridor accessibility between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities

Black Country Districts	Corridor Networks	Strategic Corridors Accessibility	
		Black Country Routes	Shropshire Destinations
Wolverhampton	Strategic Highway Network	M54 Junction 2	Albrighton & Cosford (via Inc.3), Shifnal (via Inc.3 & 4), & SHREWSBURY
		A41	Albrighton, Cosford & Shifnal (via Inc.3), Clive Barracks, MARKET DRAYTON & WHITCHURCH
		A454	BRIDGNORTH , Much Wenlock, SHREWSBURY
	Rail Network	Wolverhampton, Bilbrook & Codsall	Albrighton, Cosford, Shifnal, [TELFORD], SHREWSBURY
Dudley	Strategic Highway Network	A456/A442 & A458 via Stourbridge	BRIDGNORTH , Much Wenlock, SHREWSBURY
		A41 via Wolverhampton & M54 Inc.3	Albrighton, Cosford & Shifnal (via Inc.3), Clive Barracks, MARKET DRAYTON, WHITCHURCH &
	Rail Network	Sandwell & Dudley, Dudley Port, Tipton & Coseley	Albrighton, Cosford, Shifnal, [TELFORD], SHREWSBURY
Walsall	Strategic Highway Network	M6 Inc.9/10 to M54 Inc.10A/4/3 & A5	Albrighton & Cosford (via Inc.3), Shifnal (via Inc.3 & 4), & SHREWSBURY
		A41 via Wolverhampton (& M54 Inc.3)	Albrighton, Cosford, Shifnal (via Inc.3), Clive Barracks, MARKET DRAYTON & WHITCHURCH
		A454 via Wolverhampton	BRIDGNORTH , Much Wenlock, SHREWSBURY
	Rail Network	Via Birmingham New Street	Albrighton, Cosford, Shifnal, [TELFORD], SHREWSBURY
Sandwell	Strategic Highway Network	A41 via Wolverhampton	Albrighton, Cosford, Shifnal (via Inc.3), Clive Barracks, MARKET DRAYTON & WHITCHURCH
		A456/A442 & A458 via Stourbridge	BRIDGNORTH , Much Wenlock, SHREWSBURY
	Rail Network	Smethwick Galton Bridge, Smethwick Rolfe Street, Sandwell & Dudley,	Albrighton, Cosford, Shifnal, [TELFORD], SHREWSBURY

Strategic Relationship – Migration between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities

- 6.30 Information on migration patterns was sourced from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) data on Internal Migration (matrices of moves between English and Welsh local authorities, Scotland and Northern Ireland)²⁷. This data represents the most up to date information available. Clearly, the larger the levels of migration movements (and the larger the proportion of total movements) the greater the relationship between areas.
- 6.31 Table 28 provides a summary of the internal migration movements from each of the Black Country Authorities into Shropshire over the last five years for which data is available (2016-2020). It identifies the proportion of total internal migration from each of the Black Country Authorities that moved to Shropshire and the proportion that this internal migration from the Black Country Authorities represents in the total migration moves into Shropshire. Finally, it provides combined figures for all of the Black Country Authorities but excluding movements between the Black Country Authorities. It is apparent from Table 28 that whilst there are internal migration movements from all four Black Country Authorities into Shropshire, these movements are more significant from Dudley and Wolverhampton. This focus on Dudley and Wolverhampton is also apparent in the amount of internal migration that occurred in each of the five years (total number each year from each Local Authority), the average amount of internal migration per annum over this five-year period (5 year averages of the total annual numbers from each Local Authority) and the proportion of these movements to Shropshire from the total internal migration movements (% of total moves from each Local Authority) from each of the Black Country Authorities.

Table 28: Internal migration flows from Black Country Authorities into Shropshire²⁷

Year	Dudley to Shropshire			Sandwell to Shropshire			Walsall to Shropshire			Wolverhampton to Shropshire			Black Country Authorities to Shropshire*		
	Total Number	% of total from Dudley	% of total to Shropshire	Total Number	% of total from Sandwell	% of total to Shropshire	Total Number	% of total from Walsall	% of total to Shropshire	Total Number	% of total from Wolverhampton	% of total to Shropshire	Total Number	% of total from The Black County Authorities*	% of total to Shropshire
2020	321	3.35	2.46	163	1.07	1.25	166	1.52	1.27	437	3.89	3.35	1,087	3.18	8.33
2019	390	3.29	2.59	233	1.32	1.54	194	1.53	1.29	560	4.37	3.71	1,377	3.49	9.13
2018	375	3.33	2.55	217	1.28	1.48	182	1.50	1.24	506	4.19	3.44	1,280	3.47	8.70
2017	360	3.22	2.41	170	1.04	1.14	200	1.68	1.34	510	4.20	3.41	1,240	3.46	8.30
2016	290	3.18	2.40	140	1.04	1.16	120	1.28	1.00	340	3.31	2.82	890	3.01	7.38
Average	347	3.27	2.48	185	1.16	1.32	172	1.51	1.23	471	4.02	3.37	1,175	3.34	8.41

Please note flows between the Black Country Authorities are excluded.

²⁷ ONS, (most recent data released in 2021), Internal migration: matrices of moves by local authority and region (countries of the UK), www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/migrationwithintheuk/datasets/matricesofinternalmigrationmovesbetweenlocalauthoritiesandregionsincludingthecountriesofwalescotlandandnorthernireland

- 6.32 The migration flows data for the Black Country Authorities combined, shows the extent of the relationship between the Black Country Authorities and Shropshire, with the average annual internal migration movements over the five-year period equating to some 1,175 people per annum. This also equates to an average of 3.34% of the total internal migration flows out of the Black Country Authorities (flows between the Black Country Authorities are excluded) over the five years. Conversely, the combined average internal migration flows over the five years out of the Black Country Authorities into Shropshire is much higher at 8.41% of total internal migration flows into Shropshire. Shropshire is not the strongest destination for migrants from the Black Country (the size of the total out-migration from the Black Country will influence this percentage) but the Black Country migration is an important source of migrants for Shropshire given the Black Country population is around 1.25 million people.
- 6.33 Table 29 summarises internal migration movements from Shropshire into each of the Black Country Authorities over the last five years. It identifies the proportion of total internal migrant moves originating in Shropshire that moved to each of the Black Country Authorities. It also shows the proportion that the total internal migrant moves from Shropshire represents in the total migration into the Black Country Authorities. Finally, it provides a combined figure for all of the Black Country Authorities but excluding movements between the Black Country Authorities. There are migration movements from Shropshire into all four Black Country Authorities, but again these are larger into Dudley and Wolverhampton.

Table 29: Internal migration flows from Shropshire into Black Country Authorities²⁷

Year	Shropshire to Dudley			Shropshire to Sandwell			Shropshire to Walsall			Shropshire to Wolverhampton			Shropshire to The Black Country Authorities*		
	Total Number	% of total to Dudley	% of total from Shropshire	Total Number	% of total to Sandwell	% of total from Shropshire	Total Number	% of total to Walsall	% of total from Shropshire	Total Number	% of total to Wolverhampton	% of total from Shropshire	Total Number	% of total to The Black County Authorities*	% of total from Shropshire
2020	114	1.13	1.12	53	0.40	0.52	44	0.41	0.43	160	1.57	1.57	371	1.18	3.65
2019	115	0.95	0.98	72	0.47	0.62	56	0.43	0.48	159	1.38	1.36	402	1.10	3.44
2018	128	1.09	1.12	54	0.35	0.47	66	0.52	0.58	162	1.38	1.42	410	1.14	3.59
2017	170	1.44	1.47	50	0.32	0.43	70	0.56	0.61	230	2.06	1.99	520	1.48	4.50
2016	100	1.12	1.00	40	0.33	0.40	60	0.59	0.60	200	2.14	2.00	400	1.43	4.00
Average	125	1.14	1.14	54	0.38	0.49	59	0.50	0.54	182	1.69	1.66	421	1.26	3.84

Please note flows between the Black Country Authorities are excluded.

- 6.34 The data for the Black Country Authorities combined, illustrates the extent of internal migration movements from Shropshire into the Black Country Authorities, with the average annual internal migration movements over the five-year period equating to some 421 people per annum. This also equates to an average of 1.26% of the total internal migration movements into the Black Country Authorities (flows between the Black Country Authorities are excluded) over the five years. Conversely, the combined average internal migration movements over the five years out of Shropshire into the Black Country Authorities, equates to 3.84% of total internal migration movements into Shropshire. Shropshire is not the strongest source of migration for the Black Country (the size of the total in-migration to the Black Country will influence this percentage) but the Black Country is an important destination for migrants from Shropshire. The

implications of these migration patterns are analysed in more detail in the Housing Topic Paper and the implications for labour supply in Shropshire are addressed later in this ESTP.

Strategic Relationship – Commuting between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities

6.35 Commuting patterns²⁸ provide an indication of the number of people travelling into and out of an area for the purpose of securing employment. The best available data on commuting is from the 2011 Census (all usual residents aged 16 and over in employment the week before the census). Clearly, the larger the number of commuters (and the proportion of total commuters into and out of an area) the greater the relationship between areas. Table 30 summarises the commuting data, which illustrates that, at the 2011 Census, the four Black Country Authorities, particularly Dudley and Wolverhampton, represented important commuting destinations for residents of Shropshire. Table 30 also demonstrates that Shropshire was an important destination for residents of Wolverhampton and to a lesser extent Dudley.²⁹ The implications of the commuting patterns between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities are addressed later in this Topic Paper.

Table 30: Commuting from Black Country Authorities to Shropshire²⁸

Dudley to Shropshire			Sandwell to Shropshire			Walsall to Shropshire			Wolverhampton to Shropshire			The Black Country Authorities to Shropshire		
Total	% of total from Dudley	% of total to Shropshire	Total	% of total from Sandwell	% of total to Shropshire	Total	% of total from Walsall	% of total to Shropshire	Total	% of total from Wolverhampton	% of total to Shropshire	Total	% of total from The Black County Authorities	% of total to Shropshire
658	0.54	0.59	237	0.21	0.21	227	0.24	0.20	1,085	1.21	0.97	2,207	0.53	1.98
Shropshire to Dudley			Shropshire to Sandwell			Shropshire to Walsall			Shropshire to Wolverhampton			Shropshire to The Black Country Authorities		
Total	% of Total to Dudley	% of total from Shropshire	Total	% of total to Sandwell	% of total from Shropshire	Total	% of total to Walsall	% of total to Shropshire	Total	% of total to Wolverhampton	% of total from Shropshire	Total	% of total to The Black County Authorities	% of total from Shropshire
1,143	1.11	0.98	622	0.57	0.53	504	0.57	0.43	2,346	2.50	2.01	4,615	1.17	3.95

²⁸ ONS, 2011 Census, Crown Copyright, NOMIS – Official Labour Market Data, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

²⁹ Shropshire still has a high level of self-containment with people both living and working in the area as summarised within the SHMA Part 1 (EV097.01).

Strategic Relationship – Travel to Work Areas between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities

- 6.36 Travel to Work Areas (TTWA's)³⁰ are a geography which approximates to labour market areas. They reflect the level of self-containment of areas in which most people both live and work. The extent of the overlap within these TTWA's will indicate the strength of the relationship between Local Authorities. This data again indicates a stronger relationship between Shropshire and Wolverhampton but also with Walsall and to a much lesser degree, with Dudley also.
- 6.37 The most recently defined TTWA's are derived from the data collected as part of the 2011 Census³¹. According to this data, there are six TTWA's covering Shropshire. These are Ludlow (covering 14.3% of the population of Shropshire); Oswestry (covering 15.8% of the population of Shropshire); Shrewsbury (covering 51.0% of the population of Shropshire); Stoke-on-Trent (covering 0.6% of the population of Shropshire); Telford (covering 15.6% of the population of Shropshire) and Wolverhampton and Walsall (covering 2.7% of the population of Shropshire).
- 6.38 Of these TTWA's, only one (Wolverhampton and Walsall, representing 2.7% of the population of Shropshire) also applies to any of the four Black Country Authorities. Specifically:
- 3.6% of the population of Dudley is within the Wolverhampton and Walsall TTWA (the remaining 96.4% of the population is within the Dudley TTWA).
 - Wolverhampton and Walsall TTWA does not contain any of the population of Sandwell (30.6% of the population of Sandwell is within the Birmingham TTWA and the remaining 69.4% of the population is within the Dudley TTWA).
 - 88.1% of the population of Walsall is within the Wolverhampton and Walsall TTWA (the remaining 11.9% is within the Birmingham TTWA).
 - 100% of the population of Wolverhampton is within the Wolverhampton and Walsall TTWA.

Our Understanding of unmet Need Forecast to Arise in Neighbouring Areas

- 6.39 The positive engagement and 'duty to cooperate' discussions undertaken to inform the draft Shropshire Local Plan, did not identify any unmet cross-boundary employment need within immediately adjoining Local Planning Authorities, which could be appropriately and sustainably met within Shropshire. This is summarised in the relevant Statements of Common Ground with these adjoining Local Planning Authorities (documents EV028-EV040) and in the Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance (EV042).
- 6.40 Shropshire Council was informed about the unmet housing and employment need forecast to arise within the Black Country. During the early stages of the review of the joint Local Plan for the Black Country, the ABCA contacted neighbouring and other closely related Local Planning Authorities (including Shropshire Council), regarding strategic planning issues. This correspondence, dated 12th July 2018, has been submitted as part of the evidence base for the draft Shropshire Local Plan (Duty to Cooperate Correspondence 1 - ABCA with Shropshire Council - EV041.01).

30 ONS, (2021), Listing of 2021 UK local authorities by component 2011 travel to work areas based on mid-2019 Small Area Population Estimates,
www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/adhocs/13386listingof2021uklocalauthoritiesbycomponent2011traveltoworkareasbasedonmid2019smallareapopulationestimates

31 ONS, 2011 Census, TTWA's, Crown Copyright

- 6.41 The Shropshire administrative area does not adjoin any of the Black Country Authorities administrative areas but is close to and accessible from the BCA and the ABCA considered Shropshire to be a 'neighbouring' area. Shropshire is not part of the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (GBBCHMA) or the Black Country and southern Staffordshire FEMA containing three (Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton) of the four Black Country Authorities. Shropshire is a self-contained Housing Market Area (HMA)³² and separate Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)³³ but there is a strategic relationship between the County and the BCA.
- 6.42 The information provided by ABCA about the forecast unmet housing and employment need in the Black Country was considered in relation to this strategic relationship outlined in this ESTP. Shropshire Council considered this forecast unmet need and accepted the issues within the Black Country were 'relevant strategic matters' for the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan. It was consequently determined, through duty to co-operate discussions with the Black Country Authorities, that part of their unmet housing and employment need could be appropriately and sustainably met within Shropshire.

Our Understanding of the unmet Employment Need Forecast to Arise in the Black Country

- 6.43 In the letter of invitation to cooperate with their unmet housing and employment need distributed by the ABCA, it was specified:
- a. their most recent employment evidence indicated their employment need could not be accommodated within the urban area, but this was subject to the preparation of the second stage of the Black Country Economic Development Needs Assessment;
 - b. Work was ongoing to determine how much development could be accommodated within their urban area before considering other locations in the Black Country or beyond; and
 - c. they were querying the status of Local Plan Reviews and whether these reviews could identify capacity to accommodate any unmet need in the Black Country including existing or proposed levels of provision above local need or by specifying sites to contribute towards their unmet need.
- 6.44 As part of the Shropshire Local Plan Review process, positive engagement and 'duty to cooperate' discussions were undertaken with the ABCA as summarised in EV041. As a result of this engagement, Shropshire Council understands that the ABCA's position with regard to employment need has further crystallised since its initial correspondence (EV041.01).
- 6.45 It is understood from the best available evidence for the joint Black Country Local Plan, there is a total employment need of 565ha and that a significant element of this need comprising 210ha is unlikely to be accommodated within the BCA. This is summarised in Table 31 using information taken from the (Regulation 18) draft Black Country Plan³⁴:

32 As documented within Part 1 of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment - **EV097.01** submitted as part of the evidence base of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, Shropshire is considered to represent a self-contained housing market area (HMA). A HMA is a geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work.

33 As documented within the Economic Development Needs Assessment – **EV043** submitted as part of the evidence base of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, Shropshire Council is also considered to represent a self-contained Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA). FEMAs are the spatial level at which local economies and markets actually operate.

34 Regulation 18: Consultation draft Black Country Plan 2018-2039 at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t2/p5/>

Table 31: Black Country Authorities combined employment need 2020 - 2039

Category	Employment Land
	ha
Total Employment Need	565
Forecast Black Country Employment Land capacity	355
Forecast Unmet Employment Land capacity	210

Our Understanding of the Response to unmet Need

- 6.46 The evidence of the unmet need in the Black Country relates to the preparation of the joint Black Country Local Plan which will replace the existing Black Country Core Strategy and significant elements of the existing ‘two-tier’ Local Plan documents. The evidence was not prepared to support the adopted Local Plan and so the level of unmet employment need has not been tested through either the examination of the joint Black Country Plan or through the Examination of any other Local Plans prepared by Local Authorities seeking to accommodate part of the unmet need in the Black Country.
- 6.47 The Examining Authority for the West Midlands Interchange did consider the Black Country EDNA and the Black Country Urban Capacity Review and found ***“no objection to the use of the higher, aspirational figure [of 800ha] for planning purposes given the continuing need for regeneration in the Black Country and the levels of unemployment referred to”***. The Examining Authority concluded ***“The Black Country Authorities will, therefore, be seeking assistance from neighbouring local authorities to meet that shortfall. The Black Country’s inability to meet its future land requirements for employment and housing development is confirmed in the Black Country Urban Capacity Review (May 2018).”*** Whilst the actual total employment need is now known to be lower at 565ha a significant element of this need at 210ha is unlikely to be met within the BCA.
- 6.48 Shropshire Council has responded to this position in accordance with national policy that:
- Paragraph 11 of the NPPF requires strategic policies to provide for both objectively assessed needs together with needs that cannot be met in ‘neighbouring’ areas as ‘minimum’ requirements for delivering sustainable development;
 - Paragraph 20 of the NPPF requires strategic policies to set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places that is appropriate and makes sufficient provision [inter alia] for housing and employment development;
 - Paragraph 26 of the NPPF requires effective cooperation between strategic policy making authorities as integral to the production of positively prepared and justified strategies;
 - Paragraph 35 of the NPPF states that Plans may only be sound where they are positively prepared (clause 35a), justified (clause 35b), effective (clause 35c) and conform to national policy (clause 35d) requiring Local Planning Authorities to:
 - clause 35a – meet development needs in accordance with Paragraph 11 where it is practicable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - clause 35b – deliver an appropriate strategy taking into account reasonable alternatives based on proportionate evidence;
 - clause 35c - ensure the delivery of the strategy including cross boundary strategic matters that have been effectively addressed and not deferred;
 - clause 35d – enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework³⁵.
 - Paragraph 81 of the NPPF advocates building a strong and competitive economy through a strategy which will also facilitate neighbouring authorities to achieve the same objectives.

³⁵ MHCLG now DLUHC, (2021), National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 6.49 National policy establishes the requirement for Local Planning Authorities to cooperate on unmet development needs as a strategic planning matter (paragraph 25 & 26). This should be addressed in the early stages of plan making (paragraph 16) using the best available evidence during any ongoing discussions (paragraph 27 & 31).
- 6.50 This was addressed in the examination of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan. Paragraph 37 of the Inspectors Report states *“The full extent of unmet need only became apparent to the Council following the consideration of the responses to the Regulation 18 consultation, after the DtC meeting on 11 September 2018, and during the preparation of the Regulation 19 Plan. Under the DtC, it is reasonable to expect the Council to have contacted its neighbours as soon as it became clear that it would not be able to accommodate its own needs. This would have allowed the authorities to engage constructively in an attempt to resolve this issue prior to the publication of the Plan at the Regulation 19 stage....”*³⁶ Paragraph 39 of the Inspectors Report then concludes *“However, in my view, earlier and fuller proactive engagement on this crucial issue, in accordance with national policy, would have been significantly more likely to result in an effective strategy for meeting Sevenoaks’ unmet need.”*
- 6.51 This is the approach taken by Shropshire Council, and a number of other West Midlands Local Planning Authorities, in progressing their Local Plan Reviews and proposing to make appropriate and sustainable contributions towards the Black Country unmet needs as summarised in Table 32:

Table 32: Contributions towards unmet needs arising in Black Country Authorities

Contributing Authorities	Type of Contribution	Contributions to Unmet Development Needs in Black Country Authorities	
		Proposals	Contributions to Unmet Needs
Shropshire FEMA	Housing	Land provided within strategic supply	1,500 dwellings
	Employment		30 hectares
South Staffordshire District Council	Housing	Land provided within strategic supply	4,000 dwellings
	Employment	Surplus committed / allocated employment land	19 hectares
	Strategic Investment Site	West Midlands Interchange - Strategic Rail Freight Interchange, Four Ashes on A449	72 - 94 hectares within investment site
Lichfield District Council	Housing	Land provided within strategic supply	2,000 dwellings
	Employment	No proposed contribution	-
Cannock Chase District Council	Housing	Land provided within strategic supply where sufficient infrastructure capacity is identified	500 dwellings
	Employment	Considering capacity to deliver employment land above local needs on land outside Green Belt	to be determined

Determining Whether it was Appropriate to Take Unmet Employment Need Forecast to Arise in the Black Country into Account

Overview

- 6.52 As documented above, Shropshire Council has been aware for some time, of the potential for unmet need to arise within the BCA. As the Shropshire Local Plan Review has progressed, evidence prepared by the ABCA has continued to forecast a likely unmet employment need within the BCA.
- 6.53 It is understood the best available evidence prepared by the ABCA forecasts an unmet employment need of 210ha from 2018 to 2039. Of this, at least 91ha has already been indicated in South Staffordshire District on the proposed WMI (at least 72ha), near Penkridge on the A449 north of Junction 2 on the M54 and in other areas of South Staffordshire District (at 19ha), to the west of the Black Country. Consequently, the western area of the Black Country and southern Staffordshire FEMA, close to the

³⁶ Planning Inspectorate (Inspector Karen L Baker), (2020), Report on the Examination of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan, file:///C:/Users/cc140648/Downloads/Sevenoaks_Final_Report.pdf

Shropshire administrative boundary containing the Shropshire FEMA, has historically been a principal focus for opportunities to contribute towards the unmet needs in the Black Country.

- 6.54 Shropshire Council recognises the significance of this strategic relationship in the context of the SEGS. The SEGS provides the pathway for the draft Shropshire Local Plan to deliver growth and qualitative improvements in the Shropshire economy. The draft Shropshire Local Plan focuses investment and development into the strategic corridors through the County, with a particular focus around the principal settlements along the strategic corridors of the M54/A5/A41 and A458/A454.
- 6.55 Shropshire Council also recognises the proximity and connectivity between the Shropshire FEMA and the Black Country and southern Staffordshire FEMA. The draft Shropshire Local Plan seeks to locate investment and development opportunities into the eastern area of the Shropshire FEMA situated close to the boundary with the Black Country and southern Staffordshire FEMA. This co-location of opportunity has the potential to support the existing 'mutuality' between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities and with South Staffordshire District.
- 6.56 The opportunities in Shropshire may support investment demands in the business markets of the Black Country and the employment needs in their labour markets, given their limited land capacity resource to secure the outcomes identified in paragraphs 11, 26 and 81 of the NPPF as outlined in paragraphs 6.5 - 6.19 and 6.48 of this ESTP.

Implications of Accommodating Unmet Housing Need arising in the Black Country within Shropshire

- 6.57 In offering assistance to meet the unmet needs of the Black Country Authorities, Shropshire Council proposes to deliver up to 1,500 new homes in Shropshire to support the needs of their combined populations. The provision of this development is expected to increase in-migration into this County from the Black Country, bringing around 3,700 additional people into the County and potentially increasing the labour supply in Shropshire.
- 6.58 It is expected that the Black Country in-migrants, who take a share in this additional 1,500 dwelling housing provision in Shropshire, will be structured relative to the size and demography of the populations in each of the Black Country Authorities. This would indicate that the migration stream should deliver a total of over 2,250 persons in the 16-65 year age cohort into the Shropshire labour supply.
- 6.59 This migratory labour stream from the Black County Authorities may be moderated against the economic activity rates in each Black Country Local Authority. This moderation seeks to recognise the potential structure and circumstances of households entering Shropshire to access the 1,500 homes up to 2038.

Labour Supply implications

- 6.60 These details are shown in Table 33 below (taken from paragraph 7.44 of the E RTP), indicating that Shropshire may receive an increase of just over 1,700 working age persons into the County labour supply from meeting unmet housing needs in the Black Country.

Table 33: Projected labour supply from migration into Shropshire from Black Country arising from meeting unmet housing need in Shropshire

Factors		Local Authority Area				
		Wolverhampton City Council	Dudley Borough Council	Sandwell District Council	Walsall Borough Council	ABCA
Population	number	264,407	322,363	329,042	286,716	1,202,528
Proportion of ABCA Population	%	22	27	27	24	
Number of homes in Shropshire from 1,500	number	330	402	410	358	1,500
Average Household Size		2.40	2.39	2.52	2.48	2.45
Population Migration Flow into Shropshire		792	961	1,034	887	3,674
Migration flow 16 - 65 age cohort		490	580	644	539	2,253
Economic Activity Rates	%	76.4	76.4	75.2	76.8	
Anticipated Labour Supply in Shropshire	number	374	443	484	414	1,715

- 6.61 The E RTP (paragraphs 7.45 – 7.46 with Table 43) anticipates that Shropshire will have to draw on a number of labour sources to deliver a sufficient labour supply for the anticipated employment growth in the County from 2016 to 2038. Table 43 in the E RTP is further updated in this Topic Paper to constitute Table 25 which identifies a broader supply of labour in Shropshire including these additional Black Country migrants.
- 6.62 However, in both the scenarios in the two Employment Topic Papers, it is expected that the additional labour from in-migration into Shropshire, from addressing unmet housing need in the Black Country, will be readily absorbed by the existing and projected labour needs of Shropshire businesses. Therefore, it is not considered necessary to make any specific further provision of employment land in Shropshire to employ the labour derived from meeting the Black Country unmet housing need. The labour demands of the spatial strategy will simply accommodate this small addition to the Shropshire labour supply.

Proposed Contribution in Shropshire to Unmet Employment Need in the Black Country

Overview

- 6.63 There is no defined methodology for calculating an appropriate contribution to unmet employment need arising within another Local Planning Authority area, other than a general expectation for it to be ‘taken into account’ in determining the employment land requirement as set out in the Shropshire EDNA (document EVO43). This is consistent with the position in paragraphs 11 and 35(a) of the NPPF that objective local need and the unmet needs of neighbouring areas are taken together as a minimum requirement for providing sufficient land for development. This is particularly pertinent in this instance, given that Shropshire Council recognises the strategic relationship between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities, but Shropshire does not adjoin and is not within the same HMA or the same FEMA as any of the Black Country Authorities.
- 6.64 Therefore, it is the responsibility of the relevant strategic policy making authorities³⁷ to determine what would constitute an appropriate contribution to unmet employment need arising within another Local Planning Authority area. Any such decision should be informed by constructive discussions with the affected Local Planning Authority with the unmet need and to undertake these discussions through the duty to cooperate process and to record the outcome through a Statement of Common Ground.

³⁷ It is agreed by Shropshire Council and the ABCA that it is inappropriate and beyond the powers of the adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities to establish the limits of sustainable development in neighbouring and closely related Local Planning Authority areas.

Initial Considerations

- 6.65 As indicated in paragraph 6.62 above, it is expected that labour derived from in-migration out of the Black Country to housing in Shropshire will be readily absorbed by the labour needs of businesses in Shropshire. In relation to the labour derived from this in-migration, it is not considered necessary to make any specific provision of employment land to meet their employment needs. Nevertheless, Shropshire Council considers it prudent to contribute to both the unmet employment and unmet housing needs arising in the Black Country. This reflects the evidence of a strategic relationship between Shropshire and the Black Country in paragraphs 6.20 – 6.38 and the findings in paragraphs 6.46 – 6.62 of this ESTP.
- 6.66 The ERTF captures the position of Shropshire Council on unmet employment need in the Black Country in relation to the principal decision to contribute towards their unmet housing need. In paragraph 7.37, it is recognised that in the assessment of the potential labour supply ***“A factor not taken into account in the EDNA, is the movement of people from the 4 Local Authorities in the Black Country through the provision of new homes and jobs in Shropshire to contribute to their unmet need. A further factor is the effect this relationship may have on commuting patterns when Shropshire is established in the Black Country as a stronger destination for work.”***
- 6.67 Shropshire Council is mindful of the need to safeguard against the labour market effects of an ageing population in Shropshire, which is further affected by significant levels of older in-migrants moving to the County. In responding to these pressures, it is expected that the land resource limitations in the Black Country and the response from other Local Authorities is likely to change the sub-regional supply, availability and movement of labour.
- 6.68 The Shropshire response does seek to retain more of the County’s resident working population, by managing out-commuting, to help drive its economic growth strategy. The first step towards this, is to achieve a ‘net commuting balance’ by reducing out-commuting to a level where it achieves an equilibrium with in-commuting. However, the effects of unmet employment need in the four Black Country Authorities is expected to create a surplus supply of labour in four, centrally located urban authorities in accessible, well connected locations in the region. The imbalance in the supply of employment to meet the labour needs of an urban area with a combined population of around 1.25 million persons is expected to drive the anticipated changes in the sub-regional supply, availability and movement of labour.
- 6.69 This would indicate that encouraging a modest increase of in-commuting into Shropshire from the labour supply in the BCA is unlikely to adversely impact the growth strategy proposed by the ABCA. Indeed, it should be recognised that ABCA have actively sought adjoining and closely related Authorities to accept an element of their forecast unmet employment land need as part of their Duty to Cooperate. The modest increase of in-commuting into Shropshire from the labour supply in the BCA, as a result of Shropshire accepting this level of unmet need, would serve to ‘foreshorten’ the gap between out-commuting and in-commuting in the County to assist the objective of achieving a ‘net commuting balance’. Alternatively, it would serve to increase in-commuting into Shropshire after the ‘net commuting balance’ had been achieved to drive the County into a position of net in-commuting. Shropshire Council have assumed that the latter outcome would take effect in the further discussion in this chapter.
- 6.70 It is considered that this increased level of in-commuting into Shropshire from the Black Country could have a positive and beneficial effect on the planned spatial strategy and the employment market in at least two of the four Black Country Authorities namely Wolverhampton and Dudley, located in the same Travel to Work Area that extends to areas in east Shropshire. This is considered to be achievable given the proximity of the eastern Shropshire FEMA boundary to the Black Country and the connectivity between Shropshire and principal urban centres in the Black Country.

Commuting Patterns

- 6.71 According to the 2011 Census there were 2,207 people commuting from the Black Country Authorities into Shropshire and 4,615 people commuting from Shropshire into the Black Country Authorities³⁸. These commuting patterns indicate that the significant employment opportunities in the Black Country, combined with the proximity of Shropshire and the connectivity between the two areas already places pressures on the Black Country possibly contributing to their significant unmet need.
- 6.72 Shropshire Council considers that, migration trends are the more reliable means through which to contribute to unmet need in the Black Country. However, commuting patterns may be taken to provide a further means by which Shropshire might assist the Black Country. This seeks to relieve the pressures on the Black Country, from businesses in need of development opportunities and from labour in need of employment, without causing an irreversible migration of labour into neighbouring areas to the detriment of the Black Country economy.
- 6.73 This matter was addressed by the Examining Authority for the WMI who made the precautionary statements that close to the WMI the ***“labour pool should support the scale of growth at WMI including residents who are unemployed and those who are not currently economically active but want a job”***. An important consideration for the Examining Authority was then that ***“there would be an adequate labour pool to support the Proposed Development without a significant adverse effect on the ability of existing businesses [in the Black Country] to fulfil their employment needs”***. In seeking to assist the Black Country Authorities with their unmet employment needs, it will be important to sustain the capacity of the Black Country to continue to meet their own labour needs in accordance with NPPF, paragraph 81. Seeking to support their employment need through commuting, in addition to migration, will help to achieve this important objective.
- 6.74 Shropshire Council considers there are two closely related scenarios to encourage changes to the commuting patterns from the Black Country to achieve this outcome:
- a. Scenario 1 - Encouraging an increase in the rate of out-commuting from the Black Country to Shropshire currently of 2,200 persons by achieving a doubling of this rate through the provision of sufficient employment land to provide a further +2,200 jobs in Shropshire;
 - b. Scenario 2 - Encouraging an increase in the rate of out-commuting from the Black Country to Shropshire currently of 2,200 persons to achieve an equilibrium with the out-commuting from Shropshire into the Black Country currently of 4,615 persons through the provision of sufficient employment land to provide a further +2,400 jobs in Shropshire.
- 6.75 It is recognised these commuting patterns are based on data recorded in the Census 2011 whereas data from the Census 2021 will soon be released and might change these patterns. Unfortunately, the provision of employment land in Shropshire and the contribution to unmet employment need in the Black Country requires a resolution before this updated data is available. The Local Plan proposals in this ESTP use the best available (proportionate) evidence and are considered to be adequate, robust and justified.

Wider Considerations

- 6.76 Reflecting upon these considerations and the principles of the ‘duty to cooperate’, Shropshire Council undertook further discussions with the ABCA, focused on confirming the level of unmet employment need

³⁸ ONS, 2011 Census, Crown Copyright, NOMIS – Official Labour Market Data, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

forecast to arise within the Black Country and identifying a proportion that could be appropriately and sustainably accommodated within Shropshire.

6.77 These discussions were informed by consideration of the following key matters:

- a. proposed spatial strategy for the level and distribution of development in Shropshire;
- b. interplay between the proposed spatial strategy and any proposal to accept a portion of unmet employment need arising within the Black Country;
- c. known constraints in Shropshire, particularly those elements of Shropshire in closest geographical proximity to the Black Country, including the Green Belt;
- d. known opportunities that exist in Shropshire;
- e. relationship between Shropshire and the Black Country (including the component Local Planning Authorities of the Black Country) – with particular regard given to such factors as level of proximity, migration patterns, commuting patterns, TTWA's and transport links;
- f. extent of the unmet employment need forecast to arise within the Black Country;
- g. potential for other Local Planning Authorities to positively contribute to meeting the residual unmet employment need forecast to arise within the Black Country, particularly those Local Planning Authorities within the same HMA and/or FEMA as the Black Country Authorities and/or with significant brownfield land opportunities; and
- h. need to 'future proof' any proposed contribution, recognising that the review of the joint Black Country Local Plan is ongoing and not all Local Planning Authorities may be able to make an appropriate contribution.

6.78 Following these positive discussions, Shropshire Council officers proposed a contribution of around 30ha towards meeting the unmet employment need forecast to arise within the Black Country. It was proposed that this contribution should not be met on a specific site allocation or within a specific settlement, but rather this unmet employment need would be incorporated into the Shropshire Employment Need.

6.79 This unmet need would be met in accordance with the proposed spatial strategy for the distribution of development in Shropshire. This would recognise that the contribution towards the Black Country unmet needs will be influenced by the functional relationships and connectivity between Shropshire and the Black Country Authorities. This would mean the unmet needs are most likely to be satisfied in principal Shropshire settlements on strategic corridors through the County that link to the BCA.

6.80 This contribution and the approach to its delivery was considered to represent an appropriate and sustainable means of 'taking into account' the unmet Black Country need within the employment land requirement of the Shropshire spatial strategy. This is because the level of provision:

- a. is positively informed by 'duty to cooperate' discussions with the ABCA;
- b. can realistically be provided in locations that will contribute to meeting the needs in the Black Country, as part of the proposed strategic approach in the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- c. will complement and contribute to the proposed strategic approach to the level and distribution of development in the draft Shropshire Local Plan;
- d. contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development in Shropshire.

Labour Supply and Land Requirement Implications

- 6.81 The proposed contribution of 30ha was intended to achieve a level of employment provision that would be generally equivalent to the two delivery scenarios of between +2,200 to +2,400 jobs. The delivery of this level of new employment was based on the performance of the Shropshire economy in the period from 2016 to 2020, presented in the ERT, in paragraph 7.40 and Table 39 as shown below:

Table 34: Employment generation in first years of DSLP 2016 - 2038

Class B uses	Completions 2016 - 2020 *		Employment Density	Employment Growth 2016 - 2020	
	hectares	sq.m	jobs/sq.m	number	jobs/year
Class B1a	9.0	13,446	12.5	1,076	269
Class B1b	0.3	874	50.0	17	4
Class B1c	11.0	20,244	54.0	375	94
Class B2	17.0	30,200	36.0	839	210
Class B8	8.4	17,084	64.5	265	66
SHROPSHIRE	46	81,848		2,572	643

- 6.82 The delivery of 81,848sq.m of floorspace from the 46ha of employment land and premises developed across the County between 2016 and 2020 represents a very low plot ratio of only 18%. Whereas the employment growth delivered of just over +2,500 jobs would suggest that achieving the commuting growth scenarios of +2,200 to +2,400 jobs to assist the Black Country Authorities might require a significant land provision of around 45ha.
- 6.83 The evidence considered on the proximity and connectivity of Shropshire to the Black Country and the anticipated source locations for the anticipated commuter flows (mainly from Wolverhampton, Dudley and Walsall) indicates a more refined delivery mechanism for the employment land is required than that indicated in Table 39.
- 6.84 Indeed, the unmet Black Country employment need is most likely to be satisfied in the principal Shropshire settlements on strategic corridors linking to the BCA. This more refined delivery mechanism is expected to achieve the much higher plot ratios for employment development identified in the ERT at paragraph 5.34 and in Table 25 which states:

“The projected delivery of development from permissions within the Principal Settlements that are located on the Strategic Corridors through the County is shown in Table 25. This strategic objective shows the highest increase in the overall plot ratio, up to 40% and with a further slight improvement on new sites again at 40% and a further slight improvement on existing employment areas at 28%. This indicates that even the out turns on existing employment areas in the more centrally located and accessible urban centres in the County should deliver a more efficient use of land and out-turn higher levels of floorspace and employment.”

**Table 35: Plot Ratios: permissions in principal centres on strategic corridors
(at 31st March 2020)**

Type of Site	Permissions March 2020		
	Land	Floorspace	Out Turn
	ha	sq.m	(%)
MD4 - New Sites	59.7	241,712	40%
MD9 - Existing Employment Areas	4.0	10,944	28%
SHROPSHIRE	64	252,656	40%

SAMDev Plan Policy MD4: Managing Employment Development
SAMDev Plan Policy MD9: Protected Employment Areas

- 6.85 The delivery of employment from 2016 to 2020 also indicates the proportions of this development between the different Use Classes. The proportionate distribution of development between the Use Classes in Table 36 may be used to indicate the likely job outputs from providing employment land to assist the Black Country unmet need.

Table 36: Proportionate distribution of development across use class types 2016 - 2020

Class B uses	Completions 2016 - 2020		Proportionate Completions by Use Class 2016-2020
	hectares	sq.m	sq.m %
Class B1a	9.0	13,446	16.4
Class B1b	0.3	874	1.1
Class B1c	11.0	20,244	24.7
Class B2	17.0	30,200	36.9
Class B8	8.4	17,084	20.9
SHROPSHIRE	46	81,848	

- 6.86 This data is relied upon as the most proportionate evidence available in the absence of monitoring data that more clearly identifies the impacts of Covid-19 and establishes the likely effects of the new Class E on employment development in Shropshire. This data therefore provides the closest indication of the pattern of employment development in Shropshire since the UK adjustment to the Brexit decision and just prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and the likely delivery of new Class E(g) uses (former Class B1a, b, c,).
- 6.87 It is expected, in the Shropshire EDNA, that Class B2 floorspace will be developed in the County through investment in manufacturing operations but this will not deliver additional, new employment. The proportion of Black Country commuters that might be attracted by Class B2 development (expected in Table 36 to be 36.9% of the provision) would therefore be deflected to other similar forms of employment. This is a trend expected across the region, due to a decline in manufacturing employment, as investment in manufacturing enterprises focuses on making production processes more efficient.
- 6.88 This deflection of 36.9% of employment from Class B2 uses to other use classes is expected to favour Class E(g)(iii) (formerly Class B1c) and Class B8. This deflection is expected to be proportionate to the relative levels of employment in these other two use classes. In effect, Class E(g)(iii) (Class B1c) at 24.7% and Class B8 uses at 20.9% when taken together would take a relative proportionate share of the Class B2 provision (at 36.9%) for Class E(g)(iii) (Class B1c) of 54.2% and for Class B8 uses of 45.8%.
- 6.89 This would indicate that the deflection of 36.9% of the labour demand into Shropshire away from Class B2 would increase the E(g)(iii) (Class B1c) share by +19.5% (**$24.7 \text{ divided by } 24.7+20.9 = 54.2\% \text{ equal to } +19.5\%$**) and would increase the Class B8 share by +16.5% (**$20.9 \text{ divided by } 24.7+20.9 = 45.8\% \text{ equal to } +16.5\%$**).
- 6.90 This indicates, the proportionate share of employment from the Use Classes expected in Shropshire (shown in Table 36) would increase for E(g)(iii) (Class B1c) to 44.2% (24.7%+19.5%) and for Class B8 uses to 37.4% (**$20.9\%+16.5\%$**). This also recognises that light industrial uses and Class B8 uses are both significant types of development delivered in Shropshire as identified in the Authority Monitoring Report³⁹ (document **EV012**).

39 Shropshire Authority Monitoring Report (2020) [EV012] at: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/other-background-documents/>

- 6.91 The anticipated employment land requirement to achieve the growth of +2,200 in-commuters in Scenario 1 is shown in Table 37 below. This seeks to encourage an increase in the rate of in-commuting into Shropshire from the Black Country of +2,200 persons to achieve a doubling of the current rate of 2,200 persons. This is to be achieved through the provision of sufficient employment land to provide a further +2,200 jobs in Shropshire. It is expected this will require the provision of 28ha of employment land within the total employment land requirement of 300ha identified in the E RTP (document EV112).

Table 37: Employment land (ha) required to double in-commuting to Shropshire from Black Country Authorities (Scenario 1)

Class B uses	Proportionate Completions by Use Class 2016-2020	Distribution of Employment Growth 2016 - 2021	Employment Density	Development Required	
	sq.m %	number	jobs/sq.m	sq.m	hectares
Class B1a	16.4	361	12.5	4,518	1.1
Class B1b	1.1	23	50.0	1,175	0.3
Class B1c	44.7	984	54.0	53,127	13.3
Class B2	36.9	-	-	-	-
Class B8	37.8	831	64.5	53,616	13.4
SHROPSHIRE		2,200		112,435	28

- 6.92 The anticipated employment land requirement to achieve the growth of +2,400 in-commuters in Scenario 2 is shown in Table 38 below. This seeks to encourage an increase in the rate of in-commuting into Shropshire from the Black Country of +2,400 persons to achieve an equilibrium with the out-commuting from Shropshire to the Black Country of 4,615 persons. This is to be achieved through the provision of sufficient employment land to provide a further +2,400 jobs in Shropshire. It is expected this will require the provision of 31ha of employment land within the total employment land requirement of 300ha identified in the E RTP (document EV112).

Table 38: Employment land (ha) required to reach equilibrium between commuting to/from Shropshire and Black Country Authorities (Scenario 2)

Class B uses	Proportionate Completions by Use Class 2016-2020	Distribution of Employment Growth 2016 - 2021	Employment Density	Development Required	
	sq.m %	number	jobs/sq.m	sq.m	hectares
Class B1a	16.4	394	12.5	4,928	1.2
Class B1b	1.1	26	50.0	1,281	0.3
Class B1c	44.7	1,073	54.0	57,957	14.5
Class B2	36.9	-	-	-	-
Class B8	37.8	907	64.5	58,490	14.6
SHROPSHIRE		2,400		122,657	31

- 6.93 Shropshire Council therefore proposed a contribution up to 30ha towards meeting the unmet employment need forecast to arise within the Black Country as part of the employment land requirement for Shropshire of 300ha. This provision to accommodate part of the unmet employment need in the Black Country makes it possible for Shropshire to achieve either Scenario 1 or Scenario 2 to increase in-commuting into Shropshire from the Black Country, as set out in paragraph 6.74 above.
- 6.94 This level of provision and the means of providing and delivering this support has been discussed with the ABCA and accepted as a contribution towards their unmet employment need. This proposed contribution is considered to be a practicable and sustainable solution to help address the circumstances affecting the Black Country Authorities. This proposed contribution shows how part of the unmet Black Country

employment need could be met elsewhere, in a neighbouring area in close proximity and with good connectivity to the BCA.

- 6.95 In relation to the Inspectors questions in ID1, Chapter 6 seeks to address the matter of the unmet employment need in the BCA being met in Shropshire. Shropshire Council presents this proposed contribution to the BCA unmet employment need to the Examination of the DSLP.

7. Spatial Strategy - Conclusion

- 7.1 The DSLP seeks to deliver new economic development and higher employment generation principally by directing new employment sites into Shrewsbury, the principal centres in the east of the County and to those strategic settlements that are reclaiming larger brownfield sites in the rural areas. The focus for this planned adjustment in the spatial distribution of development are the strategic corridors comprising the principal rail and road routes through County.
- 7.2 This will improve Shropshire's economic potential particularly within significant commuting locations with higher concentrations of resident labour and higher levels of skills and academic attainment. This will provide an increased urban focus in the economic spatial strategy to capture the greater opportunity in urban markets and to achieve a more efficient level of development on employment land. This should deliver higher proportions of developed floorspace and employment from land developed in the County.

Spatial Distribution – spatial context

- 7.3 Shropshire Council was constituted as a unitary authority in April 2009 and prior to that date, Shropshire was administered by a County Council with five district councils located in the north-west, north-east, central area, south and the east of the County. These former district areas continue to provide an appropriate spatial context to assess the impacts of policy that capture key considerations including the distribution of the population and settlement hierarchy, the impacts of different geographical character areas including upland areas, the southern reaches of the Cheshire plain and the river networks with their impacts on the transport and communications networks through the County.
- 7.4 The north-east of Shropshire comprises the southern reaches of the Cheshire plain descending into 'low country' with some characteristics of fenland but rising eastwards into the North Staffordshire foothills of the Peak District National Park. North-west Shropshire sustains some of the Cheshire plain characteristics to the north and east but rises steeply westwards into the uplands along the border with Wales. Central Shropshire is dominated by the river network of the Rivers Vyrnwy and the Severn through Shrewsbury providing the historical bridging point and centre point of the radiating strategic road network.
- 7.5 Central Shropshire rises steeply into the South where the Shropshire Hills and Clun Forest (in the south-west) form into the SHAONB permeated by the principal river network of the Onny, Quinny, Clun, Kemp, Corve and Teme that shape some of the main avenues of communication. The Shropshire Hills extend into East Shropshire principally along the renowned escarpment of Wenlock Edge and descend into the southern extent of the River Severn Valley surrounded by heathland extending into Worcestershire (south) and Staffordshire (east) forming into the Green Belt to the West Midlands conurbation.
- 7.6 The distribution of the current employment land supply comprising existing commitments and the saved allocations of the adopted Local Plan has been summarised in Table 39 for the Core Strategy (2011) and SAMDev Plan (2015). In the ERTD the discussion of the spatial distribution (now shown in Table 39 below), presented the following information.

4.30 *The distribution of the strategic land supply is identified in the AMR.....This shows completed development from 2006 to 2020, current planning permissions at 31st March 2020 and employment allocations in the Development Plan, distributed around the County.*

Table 39: SAMDev Plan - distribution of employment completions and land supply (at 31st March 2020)

Spatial Zones	Policy CS1 Distribution		Completions		Commitments		Allocations		Windfalls		TOTAL SUPPLY		
	Average ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	Diff ha
North-West	60	21%	18	12%	10	10%	48	38%	9	29%	85	21%	25
North-East	55	19%	47	32%	38	37%	38	30%	6	19%	129	32%	74
Central	100	34%	42	29%	39	38%	9	7%	6	19%	96	24%	-4
South	40	14%	22	15%	8	8%	21	16%	6	19%	57	14%	17
East	35	12%	17	12%	7	7%	12	9%	4	13%	40	10%	5
TOTALS	290		146		102		128		31		407		117

In this ESTP, the term Spatial Zones has been replaced and they now provide the spatial context.

4.31 The AMR includes information on the distribution of development in the period to 31st March 2020 showing:

- the commitments for 102ha include planning permissions for 21ha on existing employment areas, 81ha on new employment sites and 128ha on remaining employment allocations;
- all the spatial zones except the centre (i.e. Shrewsbury) have sufficient employment land to satisfy the Policy CS1 distribution. This distribution does favour the north-west and north-east of the County but the supply to the south and east does highlight the capacity of these Place Plan areas to perform a greater role in the economic growth of Shropshire.
- The Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan addresses the distribution shortfalls in the centre, east and south, to support the further planned growth of the local economy.

4.32 The requirement for further provision of employment land recognises these shortfalls in the distribution of employment land in Shropshire:

- with further land allocations in the Submission Local Plan focusing these allocations into the centre, south and east of the County to improve the employment land offer in Shrewsbury, Ludlow, Bridgnorth, Shifnal and Market Drayton with:
 - further provision in the Ironbridge Strategic Settlement in the east of the County; and
 - further provision at Clive Barracks Tern Hill in the north-east on the release of the site by the MoD providing access into the east of the County along the A41 Strategic Corridor.

7.7 The DSLP policies and proposals change the overall scale and distribution of the employment land supply to the position shown in Table 40 below

Table 40: DSLP - distribution of employment completions and land supply (at 31st March 2020)

Spatial Zones	Distribution Policies S1 - S20		Completions		Commitments		Saved Allocations		Proposed Allocations		TOTAL SUPPLY	
	Average ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%
North-West	66	18%	7	14%	10	10%	48	38%	0	0%	65	16%
North-East	67	18%	22	45%	38	37%	38	30%	6	4%	104	25%
Central	100	27%	8	16%	39	38%	9	7%	50	37%	106	26%
South	33	9%	6	12%	8	8%	21	16%	5	4%	40	10%
East	109	29%	6	12%	7	7%	12	9%	73	54%	98	24%
TOTALS	375		49		102		128		134		413	

7.8 The key findings of the revised employment land supply in Table 40 are:

- the DSLP delivers a nominal 6ha increase in the supply from 407ha to 413ha;
- the distribution in spatial context sustains the guideline for Shrewsbury as the Strategic Centre but with a significant provision of new land to refresh the local land supply;
- the spatial strategy alters the employment land distribution across the rest of the County as follows:
 - East Shropshire experiences a significant spatial redistribution of the employment land supply:
 - Bridgnorth as the second largest Principal Centre receives guidelines and land supply for:

- a 12ha extension to a principal employment area at Stanmore Industrial Estate;
- a 16ha employment provision into the Tasley Garden Village to the west of the town;
- Shifnal as the largest Key Centre receives a 39ha increase in the guideline and land supply to move towards a sustainable pattern of development and address its increasing dormitory status, the effects of limited infrastructure investment from sustained lower levels of development in the town;
- the Ironbridge Strategic Settlement with provision for 6ha of employment development on this brownfield, former power station which will assist Much Wenlock and the Ironbridge Gorge.
- South Shropshire experiences a reduction in the overall guideline from 40ha to 33ha due to the restrictions on major development imposed by the significant extent of the SHAONB. The supply is strengthened through the allocation (+5ha) of the previous windfall allowance for the South:
 - this provision is to be delivered in Ludlow, consolidating the saved allocation (of 3.5ha) on the edge of the town, to accommodate an appropriate range of land uses with larger footprint businesses;
- the guidelines in the North-West (from 60ha to 66ha) and North-East (from 55ha to 67ha) increase to reflect the significant land supply in the north where the rate and pattern of development is a key driver for delivery in the whole County:
 - the higher North-East guideline also reflects the proposed Clive Barracks Strategic Settlement with provision for 6ha of employment development on this brownfield, military site soon to be released to assist Market Drayton.

7.9 In relation to the Inspectors questions in ID2, the allocations ‘saved’ in the DSLP contributed towards these achievements.

Strategic Corridors

7.10 The distribution of the employment land supply into the strategic corridors and the settlements located along these corridors is presented in Table 11 in Chapter 4.

7.11 The discussion of the spatial distribution into the strategic corridors in paragraph 4.40 – 4.44 presented the following findings:

- The distribution into the strategic corridors:
 - the strategic corridors demonstrably build on the connectivity of the Principal Centres;
 - builds on the strengths of the main urban centres and their communities as the key locations for housing, labour, employment and services.
 - gives access to the rail network, other public transport services, the strategic road and motorway network and principal electronic communications networks;
- the strategic corridors contain over 80% of the employment land supply;
 - this comprises 77% in main urban centres, 3% in the strategic settlements and 1% in the rural areas;
- the primary corridor is the M54 / A5 linking to Shrewsbury and providing 25% of the land supply;
- the second significant strategic corridor location is east Shropshire providing 21% of the supply:
 - containing the interconnecting A41 / A464 / A4169 with the A458 / A454 between Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth and beyond;
- the remaining corridors comprise:
 - A41 north from the M54 along the A41 and the A53 north from Shrewsbury together providing 15% of the land supply;
 - A5 west from Shrewsbury to Oswestry providing 12% of the land supply
 - A49 north and south of Shrewsbury providing 7% of the land supply;

7.12 In relation to the Inspectors questions in ID2, the allocations ‘saved’ in the DSLP contributed towards these achievements.

Contribution to unmet employment needs in the Black Country

7.13 The strategic corridors of the M54/A5 and the other interconnecting corridors in the east of the County enabled Shropshire to consider the unmet employment needs in the BCA as a relevant strategic matter for the DSLP. This is addressed in Chapter 6 resulting which concludes:

- Shropshire Council officers proposed a contribution of 30ha towards the unmet employment need forecast to arise within the BCA within the requirement for 300ha in Shropshire;
- this provision will enable Shropshire to increase in-commuting into Shropshire from the Black Country without causing an irreversible loss of labour from the BCA;
- this provision and the means of providing and delivering this support has been discussed with the ABCA and accepted as a contribution towards their unmet employment need.

Shrewsbury and Principal Settlements

7.14 The distribution of the employment land supply into Shrewsbury and the Principal Centres is presented in Table 41 below. This shows the proportion of the land supply, the distribution around the County and the proportion in each of the six main urban centres. These settlements are all located on strategic corridors.

Table 41: DSLP - distribution of employment land supply - principal centres (at 31st March 2020)

Location	Distribution in Policies S1 - S20		Commitments & Completions		Saved Allocations		Proposed Allocations		TOTAL SUPPLY	
	Average ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%
North-West: Oswestry	57	15%	8	2%	39	9%	-		47	11%
North-East: Market Drayton	35	13%	17	4%	14	3%	-		31	8%
Whitchurch	20	7%	6	2%	20	5%	-		26	6%
Central: Shrewsbury	100	37%	46	11%	9.0	2%	50	12%	105	25%
South: Ludlow	11	4%	3	1%	3.5	1%	5	1%	12	3%
East: Bridgnorth	49	18%	3	1%	8.2	2%	28	7%	39	9%
TOTALS	272		84		93		83		260	63%

7.15 Key findings of the distribution of employment land supply into Shrewsbury and the Principal Centres are:

- the proportion of the total employment land supply distributed into Shrewsbury and the Principal Centres comprises 260ha or 63% of the total supply of 413ha;
- the supply of 260ha in Shrewsbury and the Principal Centres represents 96% of the guideline figures for these settlements totalling to 272ha, leaving:
 - around 10ha or 4% for windfall development;
 - a residual supply of 153ha or 37% for the Key Centres, Strategic Settlements and Rural Areas;
- Shrewsbury as the Strategic Centre provides the greater proportion of the supply at 105ha with 46ha already committed or completed at 31st March 2020;
- other significant locations in order of magnitude are:
 - Oswestry, Bridgnorth, Market Drayton, Whitchurch and Ludlow;
 - Market Drayton, Oswestry and Whitchurch have significant committed and completed development;
- the significance of Bridgnorth, Ludlow and Shrewsbury relates to the quantity of new land allocated in the DSLP.

7.16 In relation to the Inspectors questions in ID2, the allocations ‘saved’ in the DSLP contributed towards these achievements.

Key Centres and Strategic Settlements and Sites

7.17 The distribution into the Key Centres and Strategic Settlements is presented in Table 42 below. This shows the proportion of the total supply, the distribution around the County and the proportion in each Key Centres and in the Ironbridge and Clive Barracks Strategic Settlements.

7.18 Those located on strategic corridors are Albrighton (A41), Church Stretton and Craven Arms (both A49), Much Wenlock (A458 / A4169) and Shifnal (A464 / A4169) and the Ironbridge (A4169) and Clive Barracks (A41) Strategic Settlements.

Table 42: DSLP - distribution of employment land supply - key centres (at 31st March 2020)

Location	Distribution Policies S1 - S20		Commitments		Saved Allocations		Proposed Allocations		TOTAL SUPPLY	
	Average ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%
North-West: Ellesmere	9	2.4%	0.3	0.1%	9	2.2%	-		9.5	2.3%
North-East: Wem	6	1.6%	4.5	1.1%	4	1.0%	-		8.5	2.1%
Clive Barracks	6	1.6%	-		-		6	1.5%	6	1.5%
Central:	-		-		-		-		-	
South: Bishop's Castle	3	0.8%	2.9	0.7%	-		-		2.9	0.7%
Church Stretton	2	0.5%	0.11		1.3	0.3%	-		1.4	0.3%
Cleobury Mortimer	2	0.5%	0.23		0.4	0.1%	-		0.6	0.2%
Craven Arms	15	4.0%	0.64	0.2%	14.0	3.4%	-		14.6	3.5%
East: Albrighton	5	1.3%	0.02	0.0%	-		-		0.02	0.0%
Broseley	3	0.8%	1.6	0.4%	1.3	0.3%	-		2.9	0.7%
Highley	3	0.8%	1.02	0.2%	-		-		1.02	0.2%
Much Wenlock	2	0.5%	0.79		0.6	0.1%	-		1.4	0.3%
Shifnal	41	11%	0.38	0.1%	2.0	0.5%	39	9.4%	41.0	9.9%
Ironbridge Strategic Settlement	6	2%	-		-		6	1.5%	6.0	1.5%
TOTALS	103		12		33		51		96	23%

7.19 Key findings of the distribution into the Key Centres and Strategic Settlements are:

- the proportion of the total employment land supply distributed into the Key Centres and Strategic Settlements comprises 96ha or 23% of the total supply of 413ha;
- the supply of 96haha in Key Centres and Strategic Settlements represents 93% of the guideline figures totalling 103ha for these settlements leaving:
 - around 7ha or 7% for windfall development;
 - a residual supply of 57ha equal to 14% for rural settlements and the countryside;
- the main Key Centres for employment development provide 86ha (of the 96ha) comprising:
 - Shifnal (41ha), Craven Arms (14.5ha), Ellesmere (9.5ha), Wem (8.5ha) in the East, South and North;
 - the Strategic Settlements of Ironbridge and Clive Barracks;
 - largely offering new, proposed allocations in the DSLP;
- other locations for employment development in order of magnitude are:
 - Bishop's Castle, Broseley, Church Stretton, Much Wenlock, Cleobury Mortimer and Albrighton in the South and East of the County; and
 - their contribution comprises committed, completed development and 'saved' allocations.

7.20 In relation to the Inspectors questions in ID2, the allocations 'saved' in the DSLP contributed towards these achievements.

Rural Settlements and Countryside

- 7.21 The distribution of employment land supply into the rural settlements comprising Community Hubs, Community Clusters and the countryside is presented in Table 44 below. This shows the proportion of the total supply, the distribution around the County and the proportion in each location. Those settlements located on strategic corridors are Chirk Bank (A5), Woore, Prees Heath, Hadnall, Bayston Hill and Dorrington (A49), Shawbury (A53) and Ford (A458).
- 7.22 The residual supply for the rural areas comprises 57ha equal to 14% of the overall supply. This is distributed between the three rural tiers as shown in Table 43 below. This shows that (in magnitude) the residual supply is distributed principally to the Countryside (28ha), the Community Hubs (10ha) and the Community Clusters (4ha). This largely comprises commitments and completion with a small residual balance on a saved allocation in the Community Hub of Bucknell in the Bishop's Castle Place Plan area.

Table 43: DSLP – scale of employment land supply - rural areas (at 31st March 2020)

Location	Distribution Policies S1 - S20		Commitments & Completions		Saved Allocations		Proposed Allocations		TOTAL SUPPLY	
	Average ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%
Community Hubs	-		8.51	0.7%	1.4		-		9.9	0.7%
Community Clusters	-		4.38	0.6%	-		-		4.38	0.6%
Countryside	-		42.4	0.8%	-		-		42.4	0.8%
TOTALS	-		55.3		1.4		-		57	14%

- 7.23 The rural employment land supply has delivered a significant 24ha of development in the 4 years from 2016 to 2020. The committed supply of 31ha is still significant and is expected to have a significant lapse rate due to shorter consent periods for permissions in the current planning system.
- 7.24 The significant committed supply of 31ha will allow for a churn of windfall permissions with a proportion of these leading to development. At the rate established from 2016 to 2020 (24ha over 4 years = 6ha/pa) the commitment at 31 ha equate to a 5-year supply of windfall development.
- 7.25 This 5-year period is expected to bring a transfer of investment towards the urban centres onto land being made available in Shrewsbury, the Principal Centres, Key Centres and to the Strategic Settlements. The residual supply in the rural areas is distributed as shown in Table 44 below.

Table 44: DSLP - distribution of employment land supply - rural areas (at 31st March 2020)

Location	Distribution Policies S1 - S20		Commitments & Completions		Saved Allocations		Proposed Allocations		TOTAL SUPPLY	
	Average ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%	ha	%
North-West: Community Hubs	-		2.9	0.7%	-		-		2.9	0.7%
Community Clusters	-		2.6	0.6%	-		-		2.6	0.6%
Countryside	-		3.4	0.8%	-		-		3.4	0.8%
North-East: Community Hubs	-		2.2	0.5%	-		-		2.2	0.5%
Community Clusters	-		1.0	0.2%	-		-		1.0	0.2%
Countryside	-		28.1	6.8%	-		-		28.1	6.8%
Central: Community Hubs	-		0.6	0.2%	-		-		0.6	0.2%
Community Clusters	-		0.9	0.2%	-		-		0.9	0.2%
Countryside	-		0.5		-		-		0.5	0.1%
South: Community Hubs	-		2.8	0.7%	1.4		-		4.2	1.0%
Community Clusters	-		0.01		-		-		0.01	0.0%
Countryside	-		3.8	0.9%	-		-		3.8	0.9%
East: Community Hubs	-		-		-		-		-	-
Community Clusters	-		-		-		-		-	-
Countryside	-		6.6	1.6%	-		-		6.6	1.6%
TOTALS	-		55.3		1.4		-		57	14%

7.26 Key findings of the distribution into the rural areas are:

- the proportion of the total employment land supply distributed into rural areas comprises 57ha or 14% of the total supply of 413ha;
- the principal location for rural employment development is the North-East around the main urban centres at Market Drayton, Whitchurch and Wem. This reflects:
 - the flatter and more accessible landscape and topography in this part of the County;
 - the rich history of military activity leaving a legacy of employment areas on former military sites;
- other significant areas in magnitude are:
 - around Oswestry and Ellesmere in the North-West;
 - this reflects the slower delivery of urban employment land but partly addressed by investment to service and market plots on the Oswestry Innovation Park to the south-east of the town;
 - around Ludlow, Bishop's Castle and Cleobury Mortimer in the South;
 - these areas provide significant levels of employment land outside the SHAONB and areas affected by immediate proximity to the boundary;
 - around Bridgnorth where the presence of former military sites and redundant rural buildings deliver significant development;
 - around Shrewsbury where lower levels of development reflect the strong urban market with an abundance of employment investment opportunities;
 - there remains a significant number of rural settlements and existing employment areas encircling Shrewsbury capable of delivering rural employment development.

7.27 In relation to the Inspectors questions in ID2, the allocations 'saved' in the DSLP contributed towards these achievements.

7.28 In relation to the Inspectors questions in ID2, this section and the urban focus explanation (Chapter 4) seeks to address the matter of the urban focus of the spatial strategy. Shropshire Council presents this proposed strategy to the Examination of the DSLP.

GLOSSARY

References:

ABCA	– Association of Black Country Authorities
AMR	– Shropshire Authority Monitoring Report
BCA	– Black Country Authorities: (the four Black Country Authorities of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton)
DtC	– Duty to Cooperate
DSLP	– Draft Submission Local Plan
EDNA	– Shropshire Economic Needs Assessment
ELR	– Shropshire Employment Land Review
ERTP	– Employment (Requirement) Topic Paper
ESTP	– Employment (Strategy) Topic Paper
FEMA	– Functional Economic Market Area
ID1	– Inspector’s Document 1
ID2	– Inspector’s Document 2
PSDD	– Preferred Option for the Scale and Distribution of Development
SDP	– Shropshire Development Plan (Core Strategy adopted 2011 and SAMDev Plan adopted 2015)
SEGS	– Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy
SHAONB	– Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
SoCG	– Statement of Common Ground

Technical:

ha	– hectares
sq.m	– square metres
GIA	– ‘gross internal area’ of a building